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THE

# LIVES

OF

## GEORGE WASHINGTON

AND

## THOMAS JEFFERSON:

WITH A PARALLEL.



“MARCUS CATO and CAIUS CÆSAR were both extraordinary men, but of a genius widely different. Greatness of soul they equally possessed, and they equally reached the summit of glory; yet it was a glory peculiar to each, and certainly acquired by very opposite methods.”—SALLUST.

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BY STEPHEN SIMPSON.

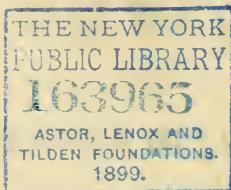
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PHILADELPHIA:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY HENRY YOUNG,  
N.-E. Corner of Passyunk Road and Slippen Street.

1833.



*Eastern District of Pennsylvania, to wit :*

BE IT REMEMBERED,



That, on the twenty-second day of March, A. D. one thousand eight hundred and thirty-three, STEPHEN SIMPSON, of the said District, hath deposited in this Office the title of a book, the title of which is in the following words to wit :

*'The Lives of GEORGE WASHINGTON and THOMAS JEFFERSON, with a Parallel.'*

'Marcus Cato and Caius Cæsar were both extraordinary men, but of a genius widely different. Greatness of soul they equally possessed, and they equally reached the summit of glory; yet it was a glory peculiar to each, and certainly acquired by very opposite methods.'—SALLUST. BY STEPHEN SIMPSON. The right whereof he claims as Author, in conformity with an Act of Congress, entitled 'An Act to amend the several Acts respecting Copy-rights.'

FRANCIS HOPKINSON,

Clerk of the Eastern District.



# DEDICATION.



TO THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES.

FELLOW CITIZENS,

THIS volume, containing the Lives of the TWO GREAT FOUNDERS OF THE AMERICAN REPUBLIC, GEORGE WASHINGTON and THOMAS JEFFERSON, is respectfully dedicated to you by the Author, in the hope and expectation, that their common services to their Country, and their joint labours in rearing the inestimable fabric of our FREE CONSTITUTION, may endear their virtues, wisdom, and patriotism to *future generations*: and that POSTERITY may derive as useful a lesson from the history of their lives, as their own generations experienced blessings from their labours.

In the example of great and illustrious men, our children will always find the best and most instructive lessons of social duty, and public spirit: and however you may be divided by party, or differ in principle, you cannot fail to derive a lesson of wisdom and tolerance from the *historical fact*, that the *two great Fathers of our Republic*, who differed so vitally upon the genius and nature of our federal government, both administered its *supreme functions*, under the *same Constitution*, with an equal measure of liberty, happiness, and prosperity to all.

STEPHEN SIMPSON.

HAMILTON, March 17, 1833.



## TO THE READER.

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A DESIRE to diffuse among the people a more intimate knowledge of the origin, progress, adoption, and administration of the Constitution and government under which they live and flourish; and to give them a more distinct and accessible history of the *two great Founders of the Republic*, have been among the chief inducements to this publication. Having remarked, that, no work of this kind was to be procured in a cheap, popular, and current form, it occurred to the Editor, that much prejudice might be removed, and much information imparted by presenting in a shape susceptible of general perusal, the leading events of history, and the prominent traits of character, peculiar to the two Statesmen, whose lives are here delineated. Popular information on these points, is certainly a desideratum; and the Editor, without presumption, ventures to indulge the hope, that this volume may contribute to supply a deficiency, which on all hands is acknowledged to be a reproach to our national character. Ignorance on any subject is disreputable; but to be ignorant of the genius, virtues, and achievements of GEORGE WASHINGTON, and THOMAS JEFFERSON, ought justly to raise a blush to the cheek of every American.

In selecting the incidents of the life of WASHINGTON, I have followed a guide, whose love of truth, and ardour of patriotism, was an ample guarantee that he would not mislead me as to facts; and could not seduce me as to principles; his integrity of mind being only equal to his purity of purpose, and lofty independence of character and sentiment—attributes and virtues, which have secured to MARSHALL'S LIFE OF WASHINGTON, the reputation of an elegant and sterling history of that great man; which must cause every American to regret, that its voluminous size, places it beyond the reach of the popular reader.

Towards the venerable author of that work, now in the age of the Patriarchs, after having consummated the labours of the Patriot, I cannot withhold the homage of my

entire esteem; not less as the friend and historian of the Father of his Country, than as the impartial and unprejudiced expounder of the laws and Constitution of the United States, who, combining the highest genius with the purest virtue, presents us with a model of those Statesmen, who flourished in the *days of Washington*, as ornaments of their country, and the best friends of rational Liberty.

The disinterested patriot, might now be permitted to cherish the hope, that the time has at length arrived, when difference of political opinion need not beget inveterate personal animosity; and that variety of views in respect to national policy, may be tolerated without that impeachment of motive, which would originate accusations of harbouring schemes of monarchy on the one hand, or disorganizing tenets of jacobinical licentiousness on the other. In this matter, the *venerable* CHIEF JUSTICE has set us an example, every way worthy of the father of his Country, whose biography he has so elegantly composed, and whose creed of political tolerance, he has so faithfully illustrated. And whatever may be our opinion of the powers of the Court over which he presides, with so much genius, learning, and dignity, we cannot abstain from yielding him the homage of our veneration and gratitude; veneration for his unspotted patriotism, and gratitude for his public services; to say nothing of the esteem we cherish for his virtues, the admiration in which we hold his talents, and the encomiums we are ever ready to lavish on his beautiful literary productions; his profound legal investigations, and his honest juridical expositions of the laws and Constitution of our country.

The sources from which I have drawn the facts of Mr. Jefferson's life and history, are too authentic to admit of dispute; being his own pen, and his own letters. We have too, on all important points, preferred that he should give *his own sentiments in his own language*; so that instead of being seen through a mirror, he might be contemplated in his own naked proportions of truth and reality; not like the statue of Jupiter, in a cold and doubtful resemblance, but like the living Deity himself, full of life, and breathing immortality.

THE  
**L I F E**  
OF  
**GEORGE WASHINGTON.**



FEW men, either of ancient or modern times, have extorted such universal homage from mankind, as the subject of this biography; whose virtues and prudence seem to have supplied what was deficient in his genius—and whose genius appears to have supplied whatever might be wanting in those political perfections, which are always implied in the unity of a great and illustrious character. Equally distinguished for public services, and private virtue—as eminent in the cabinet for wisdom of council, as he was skilful in his plans of war, and brave in the conflicts of the field—endowed with the highest patriotism, or love of country, mixed with a wholesome ambition, whose end and aim was true glory—it is not surprising that mankind should have become, as it were, fascinated, by a concentration of rare qualities in the person of **GEORGE WASHINGTON**, which have seldom, if ever, been found so happily united in the same individual—or allotted, in such harmonious proportions, as to produce a character so exempt from all vicious excess, as to border close upon perfection; yet, at the same time, presenting the full force of all those passions, which are so apt to run into violence, degenerate into evil, or become pernicious and disgusting by their extravagance.

The contemplation of the life of such a man must ever excite the curiosity of mankind, and kindle a feeling of laudable pride in the bosom of every American citizen, who values the principles of liberty, or appreciates the glory of the country to which he is indebted for the enjoyment of happiness, and the exercise of the rights and dignity of a

human being. Identified with the rise, history, and independence of his country, the life of Washington becomes a subject of double interest to all, as combining the great events of the most memorable revolution recorded in history, with the genius and virtues of an individual, who realises the grandeur of ancient heroes, blended with the best traits of virtue peculiar to the sages and philosophers of Greece and Rome.

GEORGE WASHINGTON was born on the 22d of February, 1732. He was a native of Virginia, the son of Augustin Washington, and first drew his breath at Bridges Creek, in the County of Westmoreland of that state, in the family mansion of his great grandfather, John Washington, who had emigrated from the north of England about the year 1657. He was the eldest of five children, by the second marriage of his father, with Miss Mary Ball, a lady of fortune, who had descended from one of the first families in Virginia. The first wife of his father was a Miss Dandridge, by whom he had two children.

By the death of his father, he was left an orphan at the tender age of ten years; but his patrimonial estate being small, his education was necessarily limited to a mere English course of study, while his youth, from the same cause, was devoted to pursuits of useful industry; and it appears that his first profession was that of a Surveyor, which is said to have given him a knowledge of vacant lands, that materially contributed to the subsequent increase of his fortune.

Being a favourite son, left at a tender age to the care of an affectionate mother, he naturally became an object of great solicitude to his surviving parent.

At fifteen, his propensity for military life became so far developed, that he succeeded, by his importunity, in obtaining the berth of *Midshipman* in the British navy; having manifested that irresistible enthusiasm for war, which characterises an inherent propensity for a particular profession, upon the occasion of hostilities being declared by England against France and Spain.

But the fears of his mother induced her to oppose this perilous destination of her son, and for a time suspended the commencement of his military career.

At the age of nineteen, he was appointed an Adjutant General of Virginia, when the militia were in training for

actual service; which shews that his military talents were, even then, highly appreciated.

At this early period did he develop those clear perceptions, and that sound judgment, which so far contribute to the formation of a vigorous understanding, and ensure success in the undertakings of life. Nature, indeed, seems to have fashioned his mind in that happy scale of modulated and restricted power, which, while it endowed him with sufficient perspicacity, yet, at the same time, so interposed the restraints of judgment and sound sense, as to prevent his imagination from exaggerating or distorting the real proportions, and true magnitude of objects. Thus, though his imagination was not vivid, his understanding was vigorous, so as to admirably qualify him for the duties of military life, as well as the ordinary concerns of the world. These traits of his character are delineated in a peculiar and striking manner in the various journals which he composed, when despatched on public business, particularly that which he kept on the occasion of the appointment which was now conferred on him.

On the 31st October, 1753, having *volunteered* his services to Governor Dinwiddie, he was commissioned to bear the remonstrances of Virginia to the commander of the French posts, against their encroachments on the English settlements; a perilous duty, which he discharged to the satisfaction of the government and the public; but the French, being indisposed to retire from the Ohio, the Assembly of Virginia determined to resort to compulsory measures, and a regiment was raised, to which Washington was appointed Lieutenant Colonel. In this predatory campaign against the French and Indians, Washington first distinguished himself for that ability to manage a retreat, and that prudent valour which awaits occasion for victory, or can seize opportunity to escape disaster, which afterwards so eminently characterised him. For his conduct on this occasion, the Legislature of Virginia passed him a vote of thanks.

The applause bestowed on his judgment and discretion, his valour and his skill, had inflamed his natural passion for a military life; but a distinction having been adopted between the officers of the crown and those of the provincial troops, giving precedence of rank to the former, Washington retired from the service in disgust, under a deep sense of intended injury and dishonour.

In this interval between his civil and military life, his eldest brother, Lawrence Washington, who had been engaged in the expedition against Carthagera, having paid the debt of nature, bequeathed him the plantation of *Mount Vernon*, a large estate on the banks of the Potomac, and named by him after *Admiral Vernon*, under whom he served. George now removed to this delightful residence, with the fixed purpose of spending the remainder of his days in the pleasures and avocations of private life. But how feeble are all human resolutions !

Being invited by *General Braddock*, to enter his family as a volunteer aid de camp, under very flattering professions, Washington, in whom the love of military life was a passion, could not resist the temptation, and he accordingly joined the forces of that commander. In this campaign, his advice was proved by experience, to have always been dictated by the spirit of wisdom ; and his assistance was of inestimable advantage to the commanding general, who never suffered adverses, but when he neglected the suggestions of the sagacity, or undervalued the admonitions of the experience of Washington.

In this disastrous campaign against *Fort Du Quesne*, Braddock was defeated and killed ; and Colonel Washington, only escaped by one of those miracles of war, which sometimes reserve brave men for greater achievements of glory.

Braddock's defeat proved a real victory to *Washington*, whose advice, as events proved, had it been followed, would have resulted in the victory of the day, and the success of the expedition. His conduct was applauded—his discretion extolled—his valour admired—so that he was considered the flower of Virginia chivalry—and honored as the pride and ornament of his native state.

A new regiment of sixteen companies was now raised by the Assembly, and the command tendered to Colonel Washington, who accepted the trust under discretionary powers never before granted to an officer ; so rapid was the growth of his fame as a military captain, and with such exclusive zeal did he devote the energies of his mind to the art of war.

The year 1755 was remarkable for the horrid ravages perpetrated by the French and Indians on the frontier settlements of Virginia ; and Washington was active in stay-



ing the progress of massacre and destruction: but his utmost exertions did not completely succeed, in this arduous undertaking—a deficiency, however, more ascribable to the State Assembly, than to their military commander, who, being left destitute of troops, could not accomplish in his own person, what would have required a large army to effect.

In the subsequent spring of 1756, a similar irruption of the enemy again desolated the inhabited borders of the State; and again, from the inadequacy of his means, was Washington incapable of rendering the country any efficient service. His mortification and grief, on this occasion, were intense; and wrung from his benevolent heart the wish that he had never accepted his commission. But, undismayed, and unwearied, he now directed his energies to exhort the Assembly to provide sufficient means to repel their savage invaders; and all that wisdom, skill, and humanity could accomplish, was done by Washington, in the way of advice, appeals and exhortation, to provide competent means of defence and aggression.

Insubordination among the troops, was a vital defect in their means of efficiency; to remedy which, Washington appealed in the most forcible manner, until he procured a partial remedy for the evil. But the frontiers long continued to suffer terrible desolation from the inroads of the Indians and French, who came down from the Ohio, like a torrent, overwhelming in destruction all that opposed their passage, or presented an object for plunder, violence, and massacre.

This era is only important and interesting, in the life of Washington, as it affords the first great display of that consummate military genius, which stamped him with features so superior to the common order of men. Under public disasters which paralysed the very faculty of thought in others, he rose with vigour to the emergency of the crisis—detected at once the cause of defeat—penetrated to the means of victory—devised remedies for defects—supplied deficiencies by his invention—explored the country with a military eye, that seemed like intuition itself—suggested plans of organising the army—selected scites for forts and garrisons—and, in fine, demonstrated to the conviction of all, that the commander of the Virginia forces, had been gifted by nature with the highest military genius, which

only required to be sustained by competent means, and displayed on a suitable theatre, to raise him to an eminence of glory, not exceeded by ancient, or modern heroes. Such must be the conviction of all, who read the papers which he submitted to the Governor and Assembly of Virginia, upon the state of the country, at that period; and in which he strongly recommended them to carry the war into the enemy's country, in order to obtain peace and security at home. Looking attentively at his conduct, and his writings, of that epoch, there is discernible throughout them a spirit breathing the purest ambition of military fame, and enthusiastically absorbed in this one darling object of his mind.

From the time of Braddock's defeat, Washington had his thoughts fixed on the reduction of Fort Du Quesne, as the only means of securing the frontiers from the murderous incursions of the savage foe; and from letters written by him, under the influence of an impatient thirst of glory, and a depressed ambition, denied its proper field of action—the impetuosity of his temper—the irritation of his spirit—and the great perspicacity of his intellect in military matters, break forth with a lustre, which while it presaged his future greatness, at the same time extorts our admiration.\* It was evident, from his own confessions, that, notwithstanding his constitutional modesty, he thought himself somewhat neglected, and that his merits were not justly appreciated by those in power in the mother country, however sincerely his services had been applauded by the Provincial Assembly.

The capture, or more properly speaking, the evacuation of *Fort Du Quesne* by the French—and the cessation of Indian hostilities, chiefly to be ascribed to that event, now released Washington from all obligations of honor, or patriotism, to remain in the army: and, as his ambition could not be gratified by being placed on the permanent establishment, he now resolved to retire, especially as his impaired health, as well as his private affairs, demanded his attention, to place both on a sounder footing. He accordingly resigned his commission as Colonel of the First Virginia Regiment, and commander in chief of the troops of the Colony. On this occasion, the regret and attachment

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\* See Vol. 2, chapter 1, Marshall's Life.

of his officers were feelingly manifested in a complimentary address highly flattering to his private worth, as well as military genius.

Shortly after his retirement from the army, he became united in wedlock to Mrs. Custis, a young widow of large fortune, fine person, splendid accomplishments, and those amiable qualities of the heart and mind, which, operating in the circle of love, tend so much to promote the permanent happiness of the conjugal state—to inspire and to enjoy which, in the highest degree of perfection, appears to have been one of the peculiar felicities of his constitution. At the time of his marriage, he was in his twenty-seventh year.

Let us here pause, at what we may term the first great stage of the life of Washington, to indulge in those natural reflections upon his genius and character, which are indispensable to a just and rational appreciation of the complexion of his principles, and the power of his understanding, as they afterwards became more fully developed, in the progress of the Revolution—the establishment of Independence, and the adoption of the Federal Constitution.

The first object for reflection that occurs in the survey of this part of his life, was his scanty education, being denied the benefit of classical instruction, and cast into active life at so early an age as fifteen. It is evident, that whatever knowledge, or science, he had acquired at school within that term, must have been very limited, if not superficial; yet neither in his letters, nor in his active duties, does any deficiency from that cause appear: his genius happily supplying all defects, and omissions, which there may have been in his education. The style of his letters, and public papers, was copious, flowing, lucid, and elegant. His conceptions are clear—his diction vigorous—his reasoning close and logical—as if his very exemption from the fetters of the classics had given a freedom, boldness, and elasticity to his mind, which, under their cumbersome weight, it might otherwise have wanted: and when we consider the inherent power of his mind, it is doubtful, whether he could have derived any advantage from more profound studies, in the profession which his genius had impelled him to embrace with so much enthusiasm and success.

Viewed in this light, WASHINGTON presents us with a

striking example of that native force of the American character, in its unsophisticated grandeur, and inartificial strength, which has so often caused it to be compared to the colossal magnitude of our mountains, and the expansive majesty of our lakes and streams. Too great by nature, to require the auxiliary aids of art, he could not well have been improved by those classical refinements, which add vigor to feebler minds, and give grace to the uninspired labors of dulness.

Yet his education was appropriate to his destination in life—it was the education of a soldier. He did not, of course, aspire to the profound speculations of the philosopher; the elegance and taste of the man of letters; or the comprehensive and deep researches of the statesman. It does not appear that his studies and reading ever led him to those elaborate disquisitions, which would have enabled him to grasp the theories of government, or conduct him to the highest eminences of civil, judicial, or political life. No yearnings of his spirit after such distinctions, are, therefore, to be detected in the early part of his life; no political pantings—no civil aspirations, ever interfered to jostle his thirst of military fame, or cause him to seek distinctions which lay out of the natural path of his genius. We are, therefore, not to be surprised, that during the whole course of the Revolution, he never indulged in an inclination for the studies of civil law, philosophy, science, or belles-lettres; and that, feeling his strength to lie in the military line, he chose to confine it, where it would obtain most splendour and achieve most good for his country. It is true, that, prior to his marriage, he had been chosen to the Provincial Assembly; and that, at a subsequent period, he took his seat in the Congress that declared Independence; but on these occasions he was confessedly out of his element—he never shone—he never felt at home—and always availed himself of the first opportunity to resign the honor which he could not embellish with splendour, or convert to his own glory; and which did not gratify his feelings, or minister to his favorite passion of military fame.

It was in accordance with this trait of his genius, that, in the incipient stages of the Revolution, he appeared so little on the civil theatre of action; and became rather a spectator, than a participator in the political convulsions, which, on every side, were distracting the country. In the first

Congress, although his name is enrolled among the delegates from Virginia, yet he does not appear to have taken a prominent part on any of the important committees, on which he was placed, or to have borne an active share in their proceedings; so adverse were his habits and genius to civil and political pursuits—yet, it is not to be inferred from this inaptitude of his mind for the discharge of parliamentary duties, and political functions, that his heart was not warmly devoted to the cause of liberty and independence. Still, we have no reason to believe that he ever fomented the discontent of the Colonies; or inspirited the people to sedition, complaint, or remonstrance, against any of the oppressive and illegal acts of the mother country. Approving, rather than instigating, the revolutionary movements around him, he became an efficient, though not active friend to the cause of liberty and emancipation; and while *Patrick Henry* was hurling the thunders of his eloquence against the tyranny of the King—whilst *Jay* was composing manly and spirited appeals to the justice of the British Ministry—and whilst *Paine* was captivating the ear, and winning the hearts of the people to the cause of liberty, and the rights of man, through the columns of the public journals, and the medium of a free press—Washington, reposing on the rock of his military genius, was serenely awaiting the final catastrophe of the struggle, when, argument being exhausted—patience wearied—and negotiation ineffectual—the time to draw the sword would arrive, and usher him, in the fulness of his vigour, and the maturity of his judgment, on his native element of war, to save his country, or perish in vindicating her rights, liberty, and independence.

At the same time, however, that he was exempt from the effervescent fervor of sedition, there is ample reason to believe that sound whig principles had taken a deep root in his mind, and that, although he might not be found enthusiastic in the cause of Independence, yet that he had no objection to see the royal government overturned, and a republican constitution substituted in its place. His military ambition, which was unquestionably the absorbing passion of his heart, (if the harmony of his constitution admitted a ruling passion,) had been mortified and disappointed by that system of *court favour*, in military promotion, which had obstructed his advancement on the regular esta-

blishment of the royal troops, and confined him to the subordinate rank of a provincial officer—a circumstance which had so frequently exposed him to the most acute mortification, when compelled to yield to the arrogant claims of precedence set up by the *king's officers*, on all occasions, over the provincial officers of the colonial governments; which not only checked his ambition, but mortified his feelings, at the same moment that it obstructed his advancement, chilled his enterprise, and baffled the natural bent of his powerful genius, which panted to reach the climax of military perfection and renown.

When we reflect upon the infatuation of the British government, in the preposterous policy of *humiliation*, which they adopted towards the colonies at that period, we are struck with astonishment that so little knowledge of human nature should have entered into their views and measures, and that they should systematically attempt to *hold us in vassalage* by the very means that were calculated to move us to revolt and independence—that is, by treating a proud spirited people as their inferiors, and attempting to degrade men whose besetting sin, if they had one, was a restless ambition, and a soaring spirit of enterprise and invention, which transcended all that history had ever recorded of any other people—a system of policy which directly excited the self-love of every man to react against them, and which arrayed wealth, talents, and all other possessions in opposition to the royal government, notwithstanding the peril of the contest which they were compelled to wage. For the case of Washington was also the case of a thousand others, who, notwithstanding their enjoyment of opulence, ease, pleasure, and social distinction, yet panted to attain that public eminence which a government of *their own* only could bestow; without much caring *what kind* of government should be substituted in the place of the *foreign despotism* that then degraded as well as oppressed, insulted, and rebuked them; without even resorting to the common expedient of selecting their choice spirits for preferment, or delegating some portion of the power of court favour, and royal patronage to the lordly Governor, who, from time to time, represented the imperial majesty of England.

Next to his passion for war and military pursuits, the propensity of Washington was towards agriculture, and those collateral avocations connected with the management

and improvement of his estate, whose value and increase had now swelled his fortune to a splendid magnitude, which claimed his attention, and occupied the greater portion of his time; and from the period of his resigning his commission to the Assembly of Virginia, he had divided his thoughts between public affairs and the concerns of his plantations.

As a member of the Virginia Legislature, he was always respected, though never conspicuous; but he was repeatedly elected as a delegate to the State Assembly.

When the independent companies of the northern parts of Virginia had completed their organisation, they chose Washington for their Commander. So that, whether in military or civil pursuits, whenever honor was to be conferred, or confidence reposed, Washington was always sure to be selected as the prominent object of attachment and regard to the people.

Having been elected to the first Congress, he took his seat in that body, when it met at Philadelphia, and was always chosen as a member of those committees, which were appointed for military or defensive purposes; in which situations the soundness of his judgment, the firmness of his purpose, the integrity of his character, and the imposing dignity of his person and address, combined with his unquestionable patriotism, enabled him to be of essential service to his country; and although we have from his pen no exposition of the abstract principles that constituted the basis of our revolutionary struggle, yet he has said enough to show that he approved of the ground of resistance, and embarked all his feelings and wishes in the great contest for national independence.

To the dignity of his personal deportment, and the awe inspiring expression of his noble countenance, Washington was, perhaps, as much indebted for his eminence through life, as to the pure integrity of his soul, and the unblemished disinterestedness of his devotion to the good of his country. Physically adapted to inspire awe, to kindle enthusiasm, or to extort devotion to his person, he was, of all the public men of that time, the best qualified to lead our troops to victory, or to protect and shelter them under defeat. Various and irresistible were the inducements that influenced Congress to invest him with the chief and exclusive command of the Armies of the United Colonies; to which post he was unanimously chosen by Congress on

the 14th of June, 1775. Among other considerations that operated in favor of his selection, may be mentioned his great opulence—his experience in military affairs—his known ambition to achieve military renown—his valour, firmness and prudence—his penetrating sagacity—his comprehensive grasp of mind—his faculty of combining detached parts into one great whole—his power of conceiving the great—executing the dangerous—and embracing the vast—together with indomitable courage—exhaustless patience—and unconquerable fortitude:—a combination of attributes and circumstances so rarely found united in one person, that the living example of the model might, without departing from the tone of reason, be justly demonstrated a prodigy of nature.

Endowed with unaffected modesty, this great man, when presented with his commission, avowed his sincere diffidence of his ability for the important trust.

To add to his merit, he refused to receive any compensation for his services; with an understanding that Congress should discharge his expenses only; of which he pledged himself to keep a strict account. How widely different from modern patriots, who only seek to serve their country for emolument and pay! It is not, however, to be doubted, but that the gratification experienced by Washington, in his love of military life, proved in itself a profuse remuneration for all his toils and perils.

A more popular choice of a commander in chief, could not have been made. The whole country rang, with one united shout of unanimous applause, that an individual so well fitted, in all respects, for the arduous duty of the crisis, had been chosen to discharge it.

Still the spirit of liberty was startled into jealousy, by the almost absolute military power, with which he had been invested; and the address of congratulation presented to him by the Provincial Assembly of New York, upon his arrival in that city, on his way to assume command of the army at Cambridge, contained this prudent and jealous clause:—

“We have the fullest assurances, that, whenever this important contest shall be decided by that fondest wish of every American soul—an accommodation with our mother country, you will cheerfully resign the important deposit committed into your hands, and reassume the character of our worthiest citizen.”



To this candid and undisguised requisition, that he would put off his armour, and resign his military power the moment that the object of his assuming it should be accomplished, he replied, in the true spirit of the patriot, aware of the danger to which the allusion was directed; and willing to dispel, or assuage all apprehensions of evil, by an explicit avowal of his desire to comply with their requisition. To the flattering address of the Massachusetts Legislature, he thus replied:—

“Your kind congratulations on my appointment and arrival, demand my warmest acknowledgments, and will be ever retained in grateful remembrance. In exchanging the enjoyments of domestic life for the duties of my present honorable, but arduous situation, I only emulate the virtue and public spirit of the whole province of Massachusetts, which, with a firmness and patriotism without example, has sacrificed all the comforts of social and political life, in support of the rights of mankind, and the welfare of our common country. *MY HIGHEST AMBITION is to be the happy instrument of vindicating these rights, and to see this devoted province again restored to PEACE, LIBERTY and SAFETY.*”

There seems to have been a constitutional trait of diffidence and modesty in his character; for when the president of Congress communicated his appointment, he is said to have felt great distress from the consciousness that his abilities might prove incompetent to the task. On that memorable occasion, he uttered the following remarkable sentiment:—

“ . . . . “But, lest some unlucky event should happen unfavourable to my reputation, I beg it may be remembered by every gentleman in the room, that I this day declare with the utmost sincerity, I do not think myself equal to the command I am honored with.”

Upon his arrival at the army at Cambridge, Washington found the disorganization so great, as to demand his immediate and exclusive attention, in order to place it on a more systematic and substantial basis; well knowing that without harmony, discipline, and subordination, even strength becomes weakness, and numbers lead to defeat, instead of commanding victory. Although he was mortified to find not only defects in discipline, and an alarming deficiency of ammunition, yet these very evils, by calling up all his energies into action, not only conduced to his own fame,

but contributed to the ultimate safety of the country, and the immediate success of the American arms. Thus, the very first effort of the military genius of Washington, by being directed to the efficient organisation of the army, demonstrated the wisdom of the choice which Congress had made, in conferring on him the chief command of the continental forces; to which, it cannot be doubted, we were solely indebted for the triumph of our arms, and the final establishment of our independence.

Whatever of military glory beams around the imperishable laurels of Washington, and it is sufficiently brilliant not to want increase, still it must be lamented, that he did not participate in the fame of Breed's Hill, or what is commonly termed "*the Battle of Bunker's Hill.*"

To make up for this stroke of ill-fortune, or omission of fortune, Washington devoted himself so assiduously to the blockade of Boston, that the British not only found it impossible for them to harass the surrounding country, or attempt a battle, that they became streightened for provisions, and suffered much from this deprivation, which, owing to the perpetual vigilance of the American commander, they found it impossible to remedy.

But the short terms of enlistment on which the army had been formed, now began to occasion serious embarrassment to the commander, who, the more his desire increased to drive the British from that town, the more his means of accomplishing such an object vanished from his grasp; a disappointment the more mortifying, because public opinion had long been anticipating its reduction, under a false impression of the exaggerated strength of the forces under General Washington, who, as the blockade became further protracted, began to be an object of public censure; indeed the popular clamour against him proceeded so far, as to insinuate aloud, that he was more desirous of prolonging the war, in order to continue his own importance, than to terminate it by a battle, which might consign him to private life. Although not insensible to this unjust censure, yet he could not repel the imputation without exposing the real weakness of the American troops; and he preferred to suffer in his own reputation for the moment, than to injure the cause of freedom, by disclosing a weakness which might prove fatal to the triumph of whig principles. The conviction of his own judgment against the policy of an

attack, was strengthened by the concurrence of a council of war; fortified by which, he even ventured to disregard the wishes of Congress in favour of an attempt to expel the British forces from Boston.

Although averse to an immediate attack, Washington continued to make gradual approaches towards the town, by erecting fortifications on Plowed Hill, Cobble Hill, and Lechmere's Point; positions considered favorable to present, or ulterior operations: and these approaches having been carried within half a mile of the enemy's works on *Bunker's Hill*, gave rise to occasional cannonading which drove their floating batteries from their original stations.

Up to this period, the winter of 1775, the professed object of hostilities against Great Britain, had been an *accommodation* with the royal government, on condition of having the principle of non-taxation without representation, recognised by the mother country. A redress of grievances, not national independence, was the avowed object: it was said to be a war against a corrupt ministry, not against the British Crown. But this fallacy could not long delude the public mind; or blind men of the most doltish perception to the real tendency of a contest, which had assumed an attitude so mortal, inveterate, and exterminating. It was natural, too, that a people who only started for a redress of grievances, should, as they progressed, and felt themselves strong enough for self-government, and powerful enough to vanquish their oppressors, at last turn their thoughts to the subject of national independence, and project the total abolishment of the King's authority, and the royal government. No doubt the most discerning and sagacious politicians foresaw, from the commencement of the collision, that it must ultimately assume the character of Revolution and Independence. No doubt a majority of the great leaders of oppugnation wished, if they did not directly design it to be so; but with the great mass of the people, it wore a more humble, a more just, and a more practicable complexion, in the mere object of guarding the *substance* of the privilege of representation in the Imperial Parliament, by conceding to the Colonies *the sole and sovereign right of self taxation*; being excluded by local circumstances from a representation in Parliament. But open and avowed measures for the establishment of a government *independent* of the mother country were now adopted.

MASSACHUSETTS and VIRGINIA were the first to open the path to this arduous and dangerous enterprise, by making application to Congress for advice as to the best mode of conducting their affairs, under existing revolutionary movements; and other provinces following the example, the question of *separation* from the mother country naturally arose, in opposition to those who maintained that the connection which formerly subsisted should still be preserved. Governments for the Colonies totally independent of the mother country, were advocated by some, whilst others, more timid, or less inclined to liberty, espoused the restriction of such governments to the continuance of the dispute then pending with Great Britain—thus leaving open a door by which to return into the arms of monarchy and dependence. At this period, indeed, the idea of *separation* was so little countenanced, that great opposition was made to a resolution granting to New Hampshire even the *restricted* government to which I have just alluded—that is, “during the continuance of the present dispute with Great Britain;” and every endeavour was systematically made to impress on the public mind, that a *separation* was not intended: an effort which contributed to produce an impression, if not an effect, the very opposite of what was designed.

How far Washington participated at this period in these opinions, or whether he interfered in them at all—to which party he inclined, whether in *favour of separation*, or of *monarchy*, I have no means of ascertaining; but it is most probable that he did not anticipate the growth of popular opinion, or attempt to quicken it into maturity in favour of a separation. This conjecture is rendered probable, because it accords with his general reserve, political coolness, passive observation, strict prudence, and lofty habits of dignity, reflection, and acquiescence; for, except in matters of military bearing, his intellect seems rarely to have been quickened to that stage of excitement, which would impel him to take a deep interest in the mere political questions of the day. This conjecture, too, is strictly conformable to his military attitude, which might in some measure forbid a zealous and active espousal either of *separation*, or prolonged adhesion to the monarchy of Britain.

The siege of Boston was now prosecuted with renewed vigour by Washington. A plan of attack was matured and adopted; and, on the 4th of March, 1776, the American

troops took possession of the heights of Dorchester, from which they poured a heavy cannonade on the besieged. Counteracting movements were made by the British general (Howe) to dislodge the troops of Washington from this position; but the forces of the former being dispersed by a storm, while in their boats, the whole plan of defence was changed; and the English evacuated Boston on the 17th of March, much to the chagrin of the American general, who had projected a scheme of assault upon the town, which he did not doubt, would prove entirely and splendidly triumphant.

The recovery of Boston by the American army constituted an important event in the war; and the whole colonies rang with peals of joy upon the achievement. It was "resolved, that the thanks of Congress, in their own name, and in the name of the thirteen United Colonies, whom they represent, be presented to his excellency General Washington, and the officers and soldiers under his command, for their wise and spirited conduct in the siege and acquisition of Boston, and that a medal of gold be struck, in commemoration of this great event, and presented to his excellency; and that a committee of three be appointed to prepare a letter of thanks, and a proper device for the medal."

The expedition into Canada in 1775, especially that against Quebec, although planned with consummate ability, as far as it respected the *military* arrangement of the operation, yet proved extremely disastrous to the American arms, notwithstanding the heroic bravery displayed by the Generals, Montgomery, Arnold, and Thomas; who, as soldiers and commanders, performed all that genius, valour, and judgment could accomplish. But the great defect of the plan, was the vast disproportion that existed between the means and the end. The project having originated with Congress, on the avowed expectation of annexing Canada to the thirteen United Colonies, it met with the concurrence of Washington, and has been made to redound to his glory, although fraught with nothing but defeat, disaster, and a useless, or worse than useless, expenditure of lives, money, resources, and credit. The enterprise was altogether too vast, and the scene of its execution too remote, to be justified on any principles, or views, not exclusively military. It was based on an assumption of exaggerated resources in the United Colonies, which not only did not

exist, but it is difficult to conceive how any impartial mind could have imagined that it was possible to exist. Although I am willing to concede to Washington, therefore, as much applause as he could justly lay claim to, for the *military* arrangements of the expedition into Canada, yet, as it respects the *political* elements of the design, as far as they implicate the character of the *statesman* for policy, knowledge, judgment, and a correct appreciation of all the comprehensive relations involved in it—it must be admitted to detract in some measure from his civic character, and to impair the aggregate of that greatness, which belongs to inherent fame, apart from the splendour of military glory.

It may be said, however, that Congress, by adopting the scheme, made it their own, and so far exonerated the General from all censure due to a project, which aimed at such colossal ends, by such pigmy and disproportionate means. But this cannot well be admitted; for it was the habit of Congress to adopt all his suggestions, according to the *pledge* of adhesion which it had originally given to him, when it invested him with the absolute and unlimited powers of a military Dictator—powers justified by the crisis, and indispensable to the triumphant issue of the struggle between the Colonies and the Monarchy. It was, too, peculiarly incumbent upon Washington, to restrain, rather than excite, to enterprises of such stupendous magnitude; for, to him was practically known the insufficiency and feebleness of the military material of the United Colonies, as well as their deficiency in the great sinew of war, *money!*—and had he expressed his dissent from the enterprise, no doubt can exist that it would never have been attempted.

It was more unfortunate, however, in its leaving the colonies naked of the means of vigorous defence, as it expended resources, which, at home, would have proved infinitely more advantageous than abroad, even had complete victory attended the Canada expedition. And when we reflect, that all the troops engaged in that disastrous campaign, underwent hardships, and endured sufferings, as well as achieved romantic deeds of heroic courage, never surpassed, if equalled—we cannot but express our astonishment and regret, at the wanton temerity of an enterprise, which gave occasion to such brilliant displays of heroism, and involved such terrible consequences of defeat.

Anticipating an attack upon New York by the forces of

General Howe, which had evacuated Boston, Washington hastened from that place with the main body of his army towards the Hudson; and having reached New York on the 14th of April, he directed all his energy and resources to prepare for the reception of the enemy, and prevent his occupation of so important a post; to guard against which, he omitted no precaution of defence, which military genius, or the resources of the colonies, could furnish or suggest.

But here, as on all other occasions, the deficiency of the material of the troops, in respect to muskets and bayonets, presented serious impediments to his efficient operations. The want of magazines, clothing, tents, ammunition, and arms, was truly lamentable. A loyal and tory population, too, not only in the city, but about the surrounding country, added to his difficulties, increased his embarrassments, and frustrated his designs. This disaffection to the American cause had risen to so great a head, as to take the shape of a conspiracy to seize and deliver up Washington himself to the royal government. In this plot even some of the general's guards were implicated through the arts, intrigues and corruption of the royal governor, Tryon, and the mayor of the city. That it failed, was rather to be ascribed to good fortune, than any defect in the plot, or penetration in the intended victim. Some of those who were guilty were executed. A similar conspiracy having been exploded at Albany, those concerned likewise suffered the penalty of death.

The Congress of 1775 had adjourned under sanguine expectations, that the disputes existing between the Colonies and Great Britain, would speedily be adjusted to the satisfaction of both parties. But this hope was entirely dissipated by the speech of the King to Parliament; while the proceedings of the latter evinced a disposition the most remote from that which would have prevailed had a temper of justice and conciliation predominated in their councils. On the contrary, an inflexible resolution to subdue the colonies by the sword, was manifested by increased and immense preparations to prosecute with success, the ensuing campaign; evincing not only an implacable animosity in the tory administration, but a vindictive thirst of revenge in the English people. Fully appreciating the importance of these hostile movements, the colonies were not backward in making vigorous preparations to repulse the legions that

were now to be poured upon them: and it will ever redound to the glory of Washington, that, keeping his eye upon the movements of the mother country, he now pressed upon Congress, in his letters to that body, the necessity of adopting measures which would enable him, at the head of the army, to protect the country from the ravages and devastation of the expected foe. It is to be regretted that Congress, from the want of experience and judgment, did not comply with his requisitions to that extent which was essential to the consummation of the object aimed at.

It cannot be thought irrelevant to the life of Washington, to here advert to the progress which the public mind was now making towards the great work of National Independence; which had heretofore been merged in the minor object of obtaining redress of grievances. Anterior to the year 1776, an absolute horror was generally expressed, whenever the idea of a separation of the colonies from Great Britain had been hinted, accompanied by an avowal of anxious desire to re-establish the union and harmony which had always subsisted between the mother country and America. Since blood had been shed, however, between the contending parties, an opposite sentiment had gradually supplanted the desire of a renewal of political connection with Great Britain. To feel affection—to profess allegiance—to desire to cultivate amity with a monarch whose armies were desolating our country, giving our homes to the fire-brand, our families to the sword, and our all that made life valuable, to the rapacity of a band of mercenary soldiers; at the same time that we were attempting to avert the blow, or retaliate the injury, was not only impossible, but unnatural and absurd. It was in the nature of the human heart to revolt from a power, which thus sought to afflict, crush and vanquish us; and to desire never again to hold communion with the bloody and oppressive authors of our wrongs and sufferings. Still, on the other hand, powerful prejudices existed, to draw back the people to their ancient allegiance, and customary form of government. Education, habit, all the associations of the mind, and many of the affections of family ties, had implanted a deep love of the British government and nation in the hearts of the Americans, and made them averse to thinking of a final and lasting separation from the mother country. Even as late as June 1775, Congress issued a proclamation for a



fast, assigning as one of the reasons for its recommendation, to "beseech the Almighty to bless *our Rightful Sovereign, King George the Third*, and inspire him with wisdom." These prejudices in favour of remaining under the British government now rapidly wore away; and an increased love and admiration of Republican principles, coupled with the desire of Independence, began to take root in the minds of the people, especially that portion of them who had no ties of aristocratical distinction, official pomp, or family pride, to rend asunder by the separation; and whose mediocrity of fortune placed them beyond the dread which operated on the minds of the more opulent and powerful members of society. To this class of citizens, too, the public journals of the colonies, now began to open their columns in favour of independence. To these followed pamphlets and essays; among which stood in bold and prominent relief, distinguished for its eloquence, patriotism, and energy, the *COMMON SENSE* of *Thomas Paine*; which, combining great force of language and power of argument, with an irresistible array of facts and principles, too obvious to be denied, and too reasonable to be confuted, carried conviction to every mind, at the same time that they enlisted the most ardent feelings in the cause of liberty and independence; agitating the calm and temperate with a glowing love of country, and infusing irresistible enthusiasm into the bosom of the ardent champions of the Rights of Man. He boldly attacked with triumphant ridicule, and resistless argument, the whole fabric of the British Constitution, which had so long been held in idolatrous veneration as the paragon of political wisdom; and at the same time demonstrated a longer continuance of a connection with England, to be as impracticable as it was absurd, dangerous, and inconsistent. Lucid in his style, forcible in his diction, and happy in his illustrations, he threw the charms of poetry over the statue of Reason, and made converts to liberty, as if a power of fascination presided over his pen. Universally read, warmly applauded, and promptly responded to, this pamphlet daily won crowds of zealous converts to the rational doctrine of American Independence. It was now perceived and acknowledged, that a reconciliation with England was now impracticable; and the opinions of *PAINE* soon became the opinions of a large majority of the people, who coincided in his principles, adopted his views, and embraced his doctrines,

It is not the purpose of this biography to enter into a full discussion, or a minute review of the question of independence: but we may here remark, that the writings of Thomas Paine have been admitted to have had more influence in the accomplishment of the separation of the colonies from the mother country, than any other cause; and that prejudice, arising from a secret attachment to the British constitution, could alone have operated to withhold from his name and memory, that lustre and renown, which always gathers in clustering glory round the brows of those worthies, who in times of peril, espouse the rights of the people; and amidst the frowns, thunders, and tempests of despotism, denounce the tyranny of kings, and satirise into derision and contempt, the pomp of thrones and the pride of monarchs.

To the genius of Thomas Paine, as a popular writer, and to that of George Washington, as a prudent, skilful and consummate general, are the American people indebted for their rights, liberties and independence. The high opinion of Paine, entertained by Washington, and publicly expressed by the latter, sheds fresh lustre on the incomparable merits of the great leader of the army of the revolution.

It was under an impression in part produced by the powerful writings of Paine, that Congress, on the 6th of May, 1776, passed a resolution recommending to the Colonies to adopt separate and independent governments; and from that time they assumed the character and attitude of SOVEREIGN STATES, presenting the sublime and imposing spectacle of a free and enlightened people framing their own systems of government in virtue of their inalienable rights, and inherent sovereignty, and reducing to the certainty of written constitutions the boundaries of power and the popular fountains of authority.

Representative democracies were adopted by the different states, with two branches of legislative and one of executive power, limited in most of the states by declarations of rights, and declared in all to emanate from the sole spring of power, the sovereign rights of the people.

From this commencement, the step was short to the Declaration of Independence of the United States.

On the 29th of June, 1776, General Howe arrived off Sandy Hook, with the British army from Halifax, where he had wintered his troops, and had waited for reinforcements; and on the 3d and 4th of July he effected a landing

of his troops on Staten Island; previous to which, General Washington had been active in removing all the supplies that might prove of advantage to the enemy.

All the energies and resources of Washington were now put in requisition, to observe the movements and counteract the designs of the military and naval forces of England, under the command of Sir William and Lord Howe; who were also constituted commissioners to treat for peace, grant pardons, seduce traitors, and purchase renegades. These commissioners published circulars, addressed to the people, exhorting them to return to their allegiance to the crown, which were transmitted by Washington to Congress.

Not only were the people to be *bought*, but even the general in chief of the army of the United States was to be tampered with, or bribed from his duty. Lord Howe accordingly despatched a letter with a flag, addressed to ‘*George Washington, Esquire,*’ which the General declined receiving, because it did not recognise the public character with which he was invested by Congress, and in no other character could he have any intercourse with his lordship.

This prudent and dignified conduct met with the warm approbation of Congress, who immediately passed a special resolution, ‘that no letter or message be received on any occasion whatever from the enemy, by the commander in chief, or others, the commanders of the American army, but such as shall be directed to them in the characters they respectively sustain.’

To overcome this difficulty of etiquette, without committing the royal power, as well as to amuse the Americans with the pretence of pacific intentions, Colonel Patterson, Adjutant-General of the British army, was despatched on shore by General Howe, bearing a letter directed to ‘George Washington, &c. &c. &c.’ He was, of course, admitted to an interview with Washington, whom he addressed by the title of ‘Excellency;’ and after the preliminary compliments, proceeded to state his business by saying, that “General Howe much regretted the difficulties that had arisen respecting the address of the letters; that the mode adopted was deemed consistent with propriety, and was founded on precedent in cases of ambassadors and plenipotentiaries, where disputes or difficulties about rank had arisen; that General Washington might recollect he had, last summer, addressed a letter to the ‘honorable

William Howe;’ that Lord and General Howe did not mean to derogate from his rank, or the respect due to him; and that they held his person and character in the highest esteem, but that the direction, with the addition of &c. &c. &c. implied every thing which ought to follow.” Colonel Patterson then laid on the table the letter of which he was the bearer.

Washington unhesitatingly declined to receive it, alleging “that a letter directed to a person in a public character, should have some description, or indication of that character, otherwise it would be considered as a mere private letter. It was true, the *et ceteras* implied every thing, and they also implied any thing. That the letter to General Howe, alluded to, was an answer to one received from him under a like address; which having been taken by the officer on duty, he did not think proper to return; and therefore answered in the same mode of address; and that he should absolutely decline any letter relating to his public station, directed to him as a private person.”

Colonel Patterson then observed, ‘that General Howe would not urge his delicacy further, and repeated his assertions that no want of respect was intended.’

Some observations then passed upon the treatment of prisoners; after which Colonel Patterson said, that “the goodness and benevolence of the King had induced him to appoint Lord Howe and General Howe his commissioners to accommodate the unhappy dispute at present subsisting; that they had great powers, and would derive much pleasure from effecting the accommodation; and that he wished this visit to be considered as making the first advance towards so desirable an object.”

The reply of General Washington to this proposition was, ‘that he was not vested with any powers on this subject, by those from whom he derived his authority; but he would observe that, so far as he could judge from what had as yet transpired, Lord Howe and General Howe were only empowered to grant pardons; that those who had committed no fault wanted no pardon; and that the Americans were only defending what they deemed their indubitable rights.’ ‘This, (Colonel Patterson replied,) would open a very wide field for argument:’ and after expressing his fears that an adherence to forms might obstruct business of the greatest moment and concern, he took his leave.

The substance of this conversation was subsequently published by order of Congress.

The Hessians now began to arrive from Europe, to reinforce General Howe; which did not fail to exasperate the animosity of the patriot Americans, against what they justly conceived to be a wanton and barbarous aggravation of the contest; for the tomahawk of the Indian was to be added to the brutal and mercenary musket of the Hessian; and *slaves and savages* were to be recklessly arrayed in an implacable war against a free, civilized, and enlightened portion of their own family, their descendants, their children, bound by ties of consanguinity to observe the rules of civilized warfare, and bow to the dictates of feeling and humanity, which are never incompatible with patriotism and duty.

The British army now amounted to twenty-four thousand effective men; whilst that of the Americans did not exceed ten thousand, who were badly equipped, insufficiently furnished with arms, and in a very unhealthy condition, owing to the want of tents, and exposure to the weather. The force under Washington was, indeed, any thing but efficient; but the obstacles to making it greater, were radical, and not to be overcome—these were, the want of commerce, the want of money, the decay of credit, and a lingering hope, which blasted the energy of preparation for victory; that a *reconciliation* would yet render hostilities useless, and by sheathing the sword, bring back peace, and all its attendant blessings. Under all these disadvantages, however, Washington conceived the design of attacking the English at Staten Island; but a tempest rising frustrated this intention, and he remained inactive waiting for reinforcements, and in daily expectation of receiving an attack from the enemy; which he awaited with the more anxiety, as his own troops were scattered over an extent of fifteen miles, in the occupation of posts, difficult of access, and therefore impossible to be concentrated for sudden emergencies. Under these difficulties and embarrassments, he thus wrote to Congress :—

“ These things are melancholy, but they are nevertheless true. I hope for better. Under every disadvantage, my utmost exertions shall be employed to bring about the great end we have in view; and so far as I can judge from the professions and apparent dispositions of my troops, I shall

have their support. The superiority of the enemy, and the expected attack, do not seem to have depressed their spirits. These considerations lead me to think, that though the appeal may not terminate so happily as I could wish, yet the enemy will not succeed in their views without considerable loss. Any advantage they may gain, I trust, may cost them dear."

The tenor of this letter *anticipating defeat*, might be open to severe criticism, but for the lamentable, indeed almost fatal disadvantages and embarrassments, under which the Americans laboured; and which justify us in averring, that no parallel can be found in history of a general maintaining the appearance of a belligerent attitude, and sustaining himself against all the deficiencies that beset him, with a force so broken, so incompetent, and so transitory. Under other circumstances, to have anticipated defeat, might have been viewed as highly culpable; but in his actual situation, it was a conclusion irresistibly forced upon him by circumstances beyond his power to avert, and which he possessed no resources to remedy.

Being now reinforced by several regiments from Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York, and Massachusetts, his force was increased to twenty-seven thousand men, of whom one-fourth were on the sick list.

As Washington now momentarily expected an attack, and aware that the influence of the first battle might decide that of the second, if not involve the ultimate fate of the country, he bent all his energies to enforcing subordination, and exciting that glow of enthusiasm, which always attends the ardent love of liberty; and which in a peculiar manner had kindled the indignation of the Americans against the mercenary invaders of their native land. Upon this spirit, Washington now in a great measure relied, as a substitute for discipline, skill, and experience. His orders to his troops, issued soon after the arrival of general Howe, show that he knew how to call into action this generous passion of self-devotion to the love of liberty; and the tone of eloquence of this address, renders it a striking illustration of his character, and a beautiful trait in the mind of the patriot general.

"The time" (he says) "is now near at hand, which must probably determine whether Americans are to be free-men or slaves; whether they are to have any property they

can call their own; whether their houses and farms are to be pillaged and destroyed, and themselves consigned to a state of wretchedness from which no human efforts will deliver them. The fate of unborn millions will now depend, under God, on the courage and conduct of this army. Our cruel and unrelenting enemy leaves us only the choice of a brave resistance, or the most abject submission. We have, therefore, to resolve to conquer, or to die. Our own, our country's honour, call upon us for a vigorous and manly exertion; and if we now shamefully fail we shall become infamous to the whole world. Let us then rely on the goodness of our cause, and the aid of the Supreme Being, in whose hands victory is, to animate and encourage us to great and noble actions. The eyes of all our countrymen are now upon us, and we shall have their blessings and praises, if happily we are the instruments of saving them from the tyranny meditated against them. Let us, therefore, animate and encourage each other, and show the whole world, that a freeman contending for liberty on his own ground, is superior to any slavish mercenary on earth."

The anticipations of defeat expressed by Washington in his letters to congress, were but too fully realised by the victory of BROOKLYN, achieved by the British over the American army—one of the most signal and disastrous defeats that our arms sustained during the whole war; and to justify which, on the part of general Washington, has, I believe, never been seriously attempted; for, after making every allowance for want of equipment, discipline, and subordination, there still appears some deficiency of military skill in the movements, positions, and general arrangement of the army, which leaves Washington open to much criticism on the score of military talent. Even *Marshall*, who is disposed never to blame, and always to eulogise the patriot general, admits a want of skill in 'not having guarded the road which leads over the hills from Jamaica to Bedford.' The truth, however, is, that Washington's great trait of character and genius was a passive fortitude; a patience under adversity, and a skill in extricating himself from difficulties, and bearing up against disasters. But he wanted some of the genius for active, energetic and successful warfare; for brilliancy of attack, fertility of resources, and promptitude of action, as well as a perfect arrangement of his plan of operations. Some idea of this

deficiency in his military character, may be formed from the following extract from Marshall's account of the battle of Brooklyn, which occurred on the 27th August, 1776.

“About half past eight o'clock, the British right having then reached Bedford, in the rear of Sullivan's left, general De Heister ordered colonel Donop's corps to advance to the attack of the hill, following himself with the centre of the army. The approach of Clinton was now discovered by the American left, which immediately endeavoured to regain the camp at Brooklyn. They were retiring from the woods by regiments, with their cannon, *when they encountered the front of the British*, consisting of the light infantry and light dragoons, who were soon supported by the guards. About the same time the Hessians advanced from Flatbush, against that part of the detachment which occupied the direct road to Brooklyn. Here general Sullivan commanded in person; but he found it difficult to keep his troops together long enough to sustain the first attack. The firing heard towards Bedford had disclosed to them the alarming fact, *that the British had turned their left flank, and were getting completely into their rear*. Perceiving at once the full danger of their situation, they sought to escape it by regaining the camp with the utmost possible celerity. The sudden route of this party enabled De Heister to detach a part of his force against those who were engaged near Bedford. In that quarter, too, the Americans were broken and driven back into the woods, and the front of the column led by general Clinton, continuing to move forward, *intercepted and engaged those who were retreating along the direct road from Flatbush*. Thus attacked both *in front and rear, and alternately driven by the British on the Hessians, and by the Hessians back again on the British*, a succession of skirmishes took place in the woods, in the course of which, some parts of corps forced their way through the enemy, and regained the lines of Brooklyn, and several individuals saved themselves under cover of the woods; but a great proportion of the detachment was killed or taken.”

Though unequal to the achievement of a great victory with his present troops, Washington was eminently successful in conducting the retreat of his army from Long Island; and on the night of the 28th of August, he conducted his troops across the East river, unperceived and unmolest-



ed by the enemy, having secured all his stores, baggage and ammunition.

Marshall, commenting upon this retreat, says, "without loss, to withdraw a defeated, dispirited and undisciplined army from the view of an experienced and able officer, and to transport them in safety across a large river, while watched by a numerous and vigilant fleet, require talents of no ordinary kind; and the retreat from Long Island may justly be ranked among those skilful manœuvres which distinguish a master in the art of war."

According to this sentiment, *retreat*, not *victory*, is the test of great generalship! But this is fallacious; and Washington is in every military aspect of his character, too great to require a fallacy to sustain him—he was a *prudent* general, perhaps too prudent for his own glory, but not too prudent for the salvation of his country; for which we stand entirely indebted to that saving quality of his great mind. For had he indulged in the ambition of victory only, independent of the fatal consequences of the risk attendant upon an impetuous system of perilous warfare, a doubt cannot be entertained, that under the defective organization of the continental army which subsisted throughout the whole of the war, the result must have proved fatal to the cause of liberty and independence.

It must, however, strike the reader with peculiar force, that this prudence and discretion was the *characteristic* of the *military* genius of *Washington*; and that his judgment cannot be praised for the exercise of a quality, which being purely constitutional, was independent of all volition on his part. It was, perhaps, only after much experience, that Washington himself discovered, that he was not fully qualified for those bold and daring achievements of war, which are peculiar to men of other and less tender structure of the constitution and sympathies.

The battle of Brooklyn, no doubt, opened a wide field for reflection to the great commander who had lost the battle, and who, with the paternal affection of a father, had wept over the slaughter of his best troops, the flower of his army, and the hope of the nation. It could not have escaped the penetration and sagacity of the commander in chief, that the design of meeting in the open field, and in pitched battles, the disciplined and compact army of the British empire, in the energy of its colossal structure, and the pride

of its well paid battalions, would be little short of the chimerical project of Don Quixote; and experience, as well as observation and foresight, had now convinced him that the only method of carrying on the war which promised ultimate success, was a *defensive policy*; an attitude of prudent reserve, and a position of alternate attack and defence, as circumstances might warrant, or opportunity induce; to hang on their skirts, pouring upon them like a torrent in their moments of supineness, when lulled into langour by contempt, security and triumph; and at less auspicious times, retreating before their greater numbers and superior discipline. To have a full perception of the wisdom and utility of such a policy, is to rise higher in the scale of greatness than to be a mere consummate general; for it implies a concentration of great qualities, which no exclusive military commander ever united in his own person.

Marshall extenuates the conduct of Washington on that occasion, by alleging the total destitution of cavalry, to act as *Videts*, in conveying information of the approach of the enemy, apparently not recollecting that the cause of this deficiency must have been in the commander in chief; for, it can hardly be supposed that Congress were to attend so minutely to the *details* of the army as to provide by a specific law for *Videts*. It was competent to Washington, to mount his own *Videts*; or, not having the means to do so, he would naturally avoid such a disposition of his army as required their indispensable assistance and co-operation to avoid defeat, or to secure a victory. It must be admitted that he attempted too much for his limited means to accomplish, or his peculiar genius to control and direct.

The effect upon the army was dismaying: whole regiments marched home; and it was a common occurrence for companies of militia to take their departure, without shame and without leave. The prevailing sentiment was that of despair. A dark and awful cloud hung over the destiny of the country.

Lord Howe availed himself of the despondency of the Americans, produced by this defeat, to proffer terms of harmony and peace; but the negotiations were transitory and ineffectual, and both parties returned to their belligerent operations.

After some inconsiderable skirmishing, in which the American troops entirely failed to preserve their character

for cool and collected courage, an incident almost unavoidable when raw soldiers are opposed to regulars, Washington entirely evacuated New York, of which General Howe took possession on the 15th September, 1776.

Washington now moved his troops towards the White Plains, and conceived the plan of habituating his men to stand fire, by accustoming them to skirmishing. The British forces having followed him, occasion soon offered to test the value of the experiment; a detachment of three hundred Hessians and British were attacked, repulsed and beaten; the spirits of the American soldiers revived; the *tone* of feeling throughout the army rose higher; and Washington personally exerted himself to improve the impression, and deepen the consciousness of their own valour and good conduct, so as to convince them that they possessed equal courage to their enemies, if they were only resolved to exert it.

Devoting his days to the discipline and improvement of his soldiers, and his nights to the composition of letters to Congress, exhorting them to improve the organisation, and add to the efficiency of the army, this good man and virtuous patriot exhibited a rare example of love of country, seldom equalled and never surpassed.

In one of his letters to Congress at this period, I have noted a very extraordinary sentiment, which Washington alleges as one of the causes of the inefficiency of the army. He says '*I see such a DISTRUST AND JEALOUSY OF MILITARY POWER, that the commander in chief has not an opportunity, even by recommendation, to give the least assurances of reward for the most essential services.*' In many other of his letters, this effect of the *principles of liberty* upon the minds and conduct of the soldiers, as loosening the bands of discipline, and unfitting them for the control of their officers, is mentioned with feelings of eloquent lamentation; and no doubt the evils he endured from this source were great! But it was by *contrast* only with the *slaves* of the royal army that it appeared an evil; and great as that evil no doubt was, still it was to be preferred to that servile and mercenary spirit which bound the Hessians in fetters of iron to the commands of their masters. Had the Americans been *capable* of this *servile spirit*, they never would have rallied under the banners of liberty, from the love of independence, to defend the country against *foreign tyrants*.

The battle of the White Plains, on the 26th of October, 1776, was of inconsiderable moment, but left rather a favourite impression on the American troops, although the loss on both sides was about equal.

The capture of *Fort Washington*, by the British and Hessians, on the 16th November, was a more serious affair, in which, however, Washington did not personally command. It was carried by storm, owing to some deficiency of skill and address in Colonel Cadwalader, who, as he retreated towards the fort, suffered his detachment to be intercepted and made prisoners. The garrison of two thousand men were made prisoners of war. This severe loss was ascribed to the want of firmness and gallantry in that part of the forces under the command of Cadwalader.

General Washington now commenced his memorable retreat through New Jersey; his army daily melting away, from the expiration of their terms of enlistment, as well as the despair which began to pervade the minds of all, as to the final success of the cause of Independence. Gloom and despondency hung over the American army, as well as the sacred cause of American Liberty: all seemed to despair but Washington, who, erect and undismayed, still reposed on the goodness of his cause for final success; and, amidst all the difficulties and darkness that environed him, cast his hopes high above human agency, still confident that heaven would *prosper the just*. He was not disappointed: that feeling sustained him—it gave him fortitude under adversity—it stimulated his energies to fresh exertion—it infused hope into his bosom, gave tone to his mind, vigor to his actions, sharpened his invention, multiplied his resources, and added a sublime heroism to the moral and intellectual power of the man. To this sentiment and this trait of his mind, are we indebted for the final triumph of the cause of Independence; for the crisis was awful and decisive. Had Washington quailed, or faltered then, universal despair and submission to the royal power would have followed: but when the little band of ragged and half-starved patriots, who still clustered about him, sought in his countenance, with an anxious and scrutinising glance, for the index of their fate, and beheld him serene, unmoved, and undismayed, not only void of fear, and above the weakness of complaint, but apt to encourage the drooping, and inspire with hope and confidence the desponding hearts of others,

their spirits revived, as they read in the inspired serenity of his noble countenance, the assurance of future victory, and the presage of final glory.

Upon reaching the Delaware river, Washington found himself at the head of less than three thousand men, destitute of blankets, tents, clothing, shoes, and utensils for cooking, almost naked, some of them literally barefooted, exposed to the piercing blasts of a November and December sky: they presented a spectacle well calculated to chill the heart of the most sanguine with despair. Such was now the army of Washington, in full retreat before the well appointed and proud battalions of the king, pampered mercenaries, overfed Hessians, and luxurious myrmidons; compelled to fly before whom was doubly mortifying, and doubly disastrous, as the whole country was now beginning to desert the American cause, and eager to propitiate the royal favour by prompt submission, instead of avenging their wrongs by courageous resistance, or vindicating their rights in manly combat.

It was in such a trying crisis, that General and Lord Howe plied the people with the promises of royal grace and favour, if they would return to their allegiance, throw down their arms, and return to their homes. But this crafty and insidious proclamation did not produce an impression upon the honesty of one true patriot, however it might succeed with the corrupt, or purchase the affections of traitors.

Washington removed his baggage and stores to the south side of the Delaware, and sent his sick to Philadelphia; whilst he remained with the efficient part of his army on the *Trenton side*, in the vicinity of that town.

The British forces under Cornwallis continued at Brunswick; but the evident design of the enemy was to take possession of Philadelphia; to prevent which, Washington made the best disposition which his scanty means allowed.

Being reinforced by two thousand troops from Philadelphia, Washington advanced towards Princeton, for the purpose of attacking the English; but Cornwallis having also been reinforced, made rapid advances from Brunswick, by a different route, in order to get into the rear of the Americans. Washington again retreated, and found it necessary to pass the Delaware on the 8th of December; having previously secured the boats, and broken down the bridges.

As the rear guard of Washington crossed the river, the

van of the British appeared in sight, their main body taking post at Trenton; whilst detachments were marched above and below the town, in order to perplex the Americans as to the point at which they designed to attempt a passage.

Lines of defence were now drawn by General Putnam from the Schuylkill to the Delaware; while General Mifflin was despatched to Philadelphia to superintend the safety of the numerous stores in that city.

Washington displayed unusual vigilance and skill in the means he now adopted to prevent the British from effecting a passage of the river.

Vigorous efforts were made to rouse the militia of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Delaware; and *General Mifflin* was deputed to make an excursion through the different counties of Pennsylvania, in order to rouse the citizens to an immediate defence of the city and country. *General Armstrong* was also despatched on this important errand.

General Gates was now ordered to join Washington from the northern army, and General Heath was likewise ordered from Peckskill. General Lee was also ordered to concentrate; but he was taken prisoner at a farm house three miles distant from his army; but his forces were promptly marched to the main army, by General Sullivan, on whom their command now devolved: so that, with these and other reinforcements, the American army was now increased to seven thousand effective men.

The British now retired into winter quarters. Four thousand were cantoned on the Delaware, at Trenton, Bordentown, the White Horse, and Mount Holly, to the Hackensack; while strong corps were posted at *Elizabethtown*, *Brunswick* and *Princeton*.

Washington, however, still distrusted their intention of remaining inactive, apprehending that the British general was only waiting for the freezing of the river to make his way to the city that winter.

During the respite afforded by the inactivity of the British forces, to Washington, he employed his attention by representing fully to Congress the causes of his defeats and weakness, and invoking them to place the army on a permanent foundation, more competent to a successful and creditable prosecution of the war. In the course of these letters, his aversion to a dependence on militia is strongly expressed; and it will elucidate his great character, as well

as explain the nature of the *material* that, in a great measure, wrought American Independence, to quote a few passages.

“Could any thing,” he asked, “be more destructive of the recruiting business, than giving ten dollars bounty for six weeks service in the militia, who come in, you cannot tell how—go, you cannot tell when—and act, you cannot tell where; who consume your provisions, exhaust your stores, and leave you at last at a critical moment.”

“These, Sir, are the men I am to depend on ten days hence. This is the basis upon which your cause will rest, and must forever depend, until you get a *large standing army*, sufficient of itself to oppose the enemy.”

In order to complete his view of what he considered an efficient military system, he suggested the expediency of having his powers enlarged, which would enable him to act more freely and decisively, without that tediousness and delay which a constant application to Congress to sanction his measures and enterprises, necessarily caused, and which often frustrated the best conceived designs. Aware of the delicacy of this suggestion, and of the objections to which it would probably give rise, he added, “This might be termed an application for powers too dangerous to be entrusted; but he could only answer, that *desperate diseases* required *desperate remedies*. He could with truth declare that he felt no lust for power, but wished with as much fervency as any man upon this wide extended continent, for an opportunity of turning the sword into a ploughshare; but his feelings as an officer and as a man had been such as to force him to say that no person ever had a greater choice of difficulties to contend with than himself.”

Having already adopted measures not within the scope of the powers conferred on him by Congress, and having urged many others, he thus excuses and justifies the infraction of his authority:—he said, “It may be thought I am going a good deal out of the line of my duty to adopt these measures, or advise thus freely: a character to lose, an estate to forfeit, the inestimable blessings of liberty at stake, and a life devoted, must be my excuse.”

Perhaps no human being ever embraced the cause of his country from motives less sordid, interested, and impure, than did George Washington: and whatever may have been his ambition to serve his country, or to acquire military

glory, every thought of his mind was honest, every pulsation of his heart was the pulsation of patriotism. But his habits of thinking, his modes of action, and his settled principles, were not of that relaxed character which assimilated to the idea of loose government, democratic principles, or popular sovereignty. Educated under the royal government, accustomed to the aristocratical forms of society, and prejudiced in favour of the rigid discipline of the standing armies of England, he naturally inclined to give a preference to those modes of action, which combined the greatest vigour and decision in their results, without being in the slightest degree less friendly to the cause of liberty and independence. It was the habit of thinking and acting, peculiar to a lofty and decisive mind; a habit which had been strengthened by his experience and observation of the fatal and pernicious consequences of that loose and relaxed system of action, attendant upon the ideas of equality, generated by revolutionary principles, and the unbounded tenets of liberty. The time has long since passed, if it ever existed, when the purity, the patriotism, or the public virtue of Washington could be suspected or impeached; but the discrepancy of his ideas and modes of action, from the relaxed character of the democratic principles so prevalent among the people in 1776, as well as at the present period, have been too frequently observed, and too severely criticised, to be passed over, in exhibiting a trait of his character, which he was himself conscious required explanation, if not apology, under the jealous restrictions of republican authority, and the sovereign rights of a free and equal people. That this discrepancy was the result of *education, habit, and the disastrous military experience* of an inefficient army, organized on the loose system of a democratic militia, is now matter of historical fact; which never can be permitted to impugn the purity of his patriotism, or detract from the resplendent glory of his public services and stupendous fame. How far that discrepancy operated at a subsequent period to produce party collisions, and lead to inauspicious ideas of power, will appear in the course of this work.

As the lapse of every day reduced the strength of the American army, it increased the gloomy prospect of the capture of Philadelphia by the British forces, should the ice of the Delaware become strong enough for the passage of



the troops. To this disastrous event Washington looked with a foreboding of evil, greater than had yet occurred to harass and depress him; for it was justly apprehended, that should the city fall into the hands of the enemy, the impression of the American cause having become desperate, would prevail on the public mind so far as to deter the people from enlisting, or even the militia from taking any part in so hopeless a struggle.

The impending crisis roused all the energies, and called forth all the resources of the mind of Washington; and he resolved to achieve some signal enterprise, that should win back public opinion in his favour, and wipe off the discredit of his past reverses and defeats; and for this purpose, he now conceived the bold plan of attacking all the British posts on the Delaware at the same instant. The result of this enterprise, was the battle and victory of TRENTON, on the morning of the 26th of December, 1776, achieved by Washington in person, at the head of 2400 continentals; on which occasion 1000 prisoners were taken, six field pieces, and a thousand stand of arms. Owing to the obstructions caused by the ice in the river, that part of the plan intrusted to Generals Irvine and Cadwalader, proved abortive; but the whole plan of attack was admirably conceived; and nothing but the inclemency of the elements saved all the British posts from destruction. Washington recrossed the Delaware with his prisoners and spoils. It appeared that the British troops generally were in a profound sleep, the effect of intoxication and debauch indulged in on the *Christmas festival*.

The British general was struck with astonishment. Congress received the intelligence with exultation; and the spirits of the whigs throughout the country revived. From the depth of despair a sun-burst of liberty and triumph broke upon their gloom and despondency; and from being plunged in utter despair, the lovers of freedom were suddenly elevated to the summit of hope, victory, enterprise and valor. Public opinion, always capricious and seldom just, now became as loud in sounding the praises of Washington, as it had before been sullen and morose, if not unjust, in covering him with censure and rebuke.

Being reinforced by fifteen hundred men from Pennsylvania, and having concentrated his small army, Washington resolved to resume active operations; for which purpose

he recrossed the Delaware, and again took post at Trenton, with the intention of proceeding to Princeton and Brunswick, where the military chest was deposited belonging to the enemy; but Lord Cornwallis having advanced upon him from New York, again placed him in one of those critical situations to which he was so liable to expose himself, and from which he was so celebrated for the power of extrication. He now found himself in front of the whole British army, hemmed in on all sides; so that Cornwallis calculated, with certainty, on '*making sure work* of him in the morning.' Bu Washington, having held a council, determined to change his post, and '*march silently in the night by a circuitous route, along the left flank of the British army into their rear at Princeton.*' This movement was skillfully accomplished. The American army decamped, and when morning broke, Cornwallis found that his expected prey had eluded his grasp. Washington accomplished his object; he surprised and captured a regiment at Princeton; while Cornwallis hastened his march back to Brunswick, to secure the stores from the meditated attempt of the American general.

On this occasion, the admiration and applause bestowed by the British officers on this masterly movement of Washington, was equal to their surprise and mortification, at his having escaped the toils of the veteran troops of the King: so, that if he exhibited any want of skill in falling into the predicament, he more than made up for it by the splendid display of generalship manifested in his retreat towards Princeton; and which the merest accident prevented from resulting in a brilliant achievement, which must have covered the British general forever with irretrievable disgrace.

It was at this period, that Robert Morris, a talented and opulent merchant of Philadelphia, remitted to Washington five hundred pounds in specie; which proved of the most essential service to the American cause.

Washington now retired to Morristown, where he placed his troops under cover, and gave them that repose of which they stood in absolute need; but his army was enfeebled almost to dissolution by sickness, and the expiration of the terms for which his men had been enlisted.

It is evident from these successes, that whatever reason Washington might have for his preference of regular troops to militia, yet that his most creditable victories were achiev-

ed by patriot husbandmen taken from the plough, whose courage and love of liberty proved a substitute for discipline and experience.

Still 'shadows, clouds and darkness,' rested on the issue of the war; and though the spirits of the whigs were revived, their confidence of success was not fully restored.

To meet the magnitude of the crisis, Congress, who had adjourned to Baltimore, authorised Washington to raise sixteen additional regiments; and clothed him with almost absolute power for the conduct of the war.

Towards the close of 1776, Congress began to turn their attention towards *France* for aid to prosecute the war; and, with a view to enlist foreign powers in the cause of America, adopted and published resolutions of their unalterable determination never to accept of any terms of accommodation from England, which did not fully recognise and acknowledge their independence. These resolutions fell into the hands of the English, and were published in the London papers.

Perhaps no man ever lived, who had been accustomed to the scenes of blood and hardship inseparable from warfare, more humane and merciful than General Washington; and it was, therefore, with the utmost reluctance and pain, that he at last adopted the policy of *retaliation* in respect to English prisoners, which Congress had urged him to adopt; and which the conduct of the British officers, prior to the arrival of General Howe, had rendered so indispensably necessary to check the barbarity, and curb the insolence of the royal army. The preposterous idea, that the American soldiers ought to be treated as traitors and rebels to a government which they had solemnly renounced, in a great general convention of the people, was, however, too glaring to be long persisted in, notwithstanding the leaven of toryism and royalty, which aided to give it the colour of justice, and thus lessen the turpitude of their own conduct, by casting the blackest stigma of infamy on the friends of liberty and independence. Yet the same humanity which caused Washington to be averse to inflict the measure of retaliation upon his British prisoners, induced him eventually to resort to it, when apprised of the cruel sufferings of the Americans on board of the British *prison ships*—sufferings which will forever tarnish the escutcheon of British heroism, with the trait of politic cruelty, and assimilate the

character of the commanders of the English armies of that time, and the English ministry, to the barbarous cruelty of the inquisition of Spain, who tortured their victims to bring them to the true faith, as the British tortured the American prisoners, to compel them to embrace the royal cause, and enlist under the banners of the King.

No sooner, however, had Washington resolved to act on the principle of *retaliation*, and to treat every British prisoner as the English treated the American prisoners, than General Howe became sensible of the *impolicy* of their conduct, and agreed to fix on a cartel for an exchange of prisoners; thus happily terminating an important question not less interesting to humanity, than important to the principles involved in the law of nature and of nations; and to infringe which, under any temptations, on the part of the English, will ever continue to excite astonishment and abhorrence.

Having experienced the most serious evils and embarrassments in his operations, by the dread which his troops entertained of the small pox, General Washington was induced to have his whole army inoculated with that disease, whilst in winter quarters in 1777. His prejudice against, and his distrust of the militia continued to increase, so much so, as to induce him to countermand a projected attack against Rhode Island, when he made this emphatic observation: 'It is right not to risk a miscarriage: until we get our new army properly established, it is our business to play a certain game, and not depend upon *militia* for any thing capital.'

Washington now confined his operations to small skirmishing parties, which, while they harassed the enemy, emboldened the Americans. But his force was constantly fluctuating, from the great numbers of militia who almost daily left him, and often left him before any others had arrived to supply their places; exposing him to the constant danger of having his positions forced by the British. It was a great source of mortification to Washington, that when the militia left his camp, they carried off blankets and arms, which ought to have been reserved for the regular troops, thus inflicting a real injury, as well as producing a negative disadvantage.

Although unimportant in themselves singly, the losses in the aggregate sustained by the British army during the

winter, were greater than those they had suffered at *Trenton* and *Princeton*, yet far beneath the hopes which had been cherished by the American general, whose energetic mind submitted, with great reluctance, to this necessary restraint on his movements.

Having made arrangements that he should be reinforced towards the close of the winter of 1777, by fresh troops from New Jersey and Pennsylvania, it was resolved by Congress, 'to be their earnest desire to make the army under him sufficiently strong, not only to curb and confine the enemy within their present quarters, and prevent them from drawing support of any kind from the country, but by the divine blessing, totally to subdue them before they can be reinforced.'

But this desire was not gratified. The quotas expected from the States did not arrive; and Washington was under constant apprehensions that his positions would be attacked and carried by the enemy; or, that availing himself of his superiority, he would advance to Philadelphia and capture the city.

March arrived, and still found him unprovided with adequate means to attempt offensive operations against the enemy.

In answer to the letter of Congress enclosing the resolution above alluded to. Washington observed, "Could I accomplish the important objects so eagerly wished by Congress, confining the enemy within their present quarters, preventing their getting supplies from the country, and totally subduing them, before they are reinforced, I should be happy indeed. But what prospect or hope can there be of my affecting so desirable a work at this time? the enclosed return, to which I solicit the most serious attention of Congress, comprehends the whole force I have in Jersey. It is but a handful, and bears no proportion on the scale of numbers, to that of the enemy. Added to this, the major part is made up of militia. The most sanguine in speculation cannot deem it more than adequate to the least valuable purposes of war."

As a precautionary measure, the boats on the Delaware were secured, and the public stores deposited in remote places, least exposed to the designs of the enemy.

All hopes of being able to strengthen the army so as to enable the commander to destroy the British forces during

the winter being now abandoned, Washington extended his views to measures exclusively connected with the prosecution of the next campaign.

One of the most formidable obstacles to the efficient prosecution of hostilities was the depreciation of the continental paper money.

It was at this period that the resort to the States, as sovereign and efficient governments, for an increase of the army, was adopted; and to the States Washington now appealed, to increase and hasten their quotas of troops for the common defence. These appeals were conceived in the spirit of the patriot, and executed with the eloquence of genius, warmed by the love of liberty, imbued with the ardour of enthusiasm, and enforced with that zeal which a laudable military ambition, combined with love of country, were so well calculated to inspire.

At this period, he suggested to Governor Henry of Virginia, that *coercive measures* might be resorted to, to fill the ranks of the army; and emphatically disapproved of the *volunteer system*, who were to serve for six months. The coercive system was, of course, never resorted to.

The States now conceived the plan of retaining continental regiments for local defence, on the ground that the enemy having complete possession of the sea, might annoy and harass each part, while the force raised for its defence would be removed to the main army, at a point too remote to come to the assistance of the State invaded. To oppose and put down so pernicious a scheme, demanded all the power of remonstrance, so peculiar to the genius of Washington, who triumphantly exploded the selfish, short-sighted and injurious scheme.

To an analogous project, that each State should organise a body of regular troops, as a substitute for their *militia*, he was likewise opposed, on the ground that such regular troops would come in competition with the *army of the United States*, weaken its force, retard its completion, and eventually diminish, instead of augmenting the common strength and general ability to assail the enemy, or to repel his aggressions. But his opposition against this measure was not equally successful, although it for a time suspended the execution of the scheme; for, at a period not long after, the States did resolve to raise regular troops for their individual defence.

We may here note, that, even at this early period, arose the germ of that cause of dissention between the States and the general government, which have produced, at several subsequent eras, controversies, questions and parties, that have inflamed the minds of the people, and endangered the peace and permanency of the Union. In Washington, his advocacy of consolidated power in the union was a prejudice of the purest patriotism, combined with a military love of energetic power, which had its origin not less in his desire to vanquish, by a single blow, the enemies of his country, than the thirst of acquiring glory by brilliant feats of arms, or decisive victories, or trophies of valour, skill and patriotism. Still, however, it had so much influence, as indeed all his opinions had, whether founded in reason or engendered by prejudice and habit, as to prove the foundation of a party, which embraced nearly all the wealth, talent and intelligence, arrayed on the side of the whig population: for, such was the confidence reposed in him—such the idolatrous affection cherished for his virtues, his talents and his patriotism, that reason itself shrunk from the task of testing the soundness of his opinions; while justice always took it for granted, that what Washington decreed could not be wrong, and that what he uttered was alike sanctioned by truth, and confirmed by honesty. With such a moral weight of popular power attached to his name, it was natural that all who partook of the same military ardour, the same love of energetic authority, and the same desire to behold the American army a colossal engine of stupendous power, should coincide in views which aimed to concentrate all the energies of the States in the grand focus of the general government, presenting the magnificent spectacle of a consolidated empire, compensating by its vigour and effect for the absence of that freedom, which, while it relapses, enfeebles; and while it protects, often leads to momentary distraction, or casual licentiousness.

It was natural, however, that the principal advocates for this consolidated power in the union, should be found among the officers of the army, or those invested with authority under the confederacy; for the States, and the people of the States generally, do not appear to have implicitly adopted the sentiments of Washington upon this question. Marshall, who had embraced the views of Washington in their widest extent, has the following passage, which shows

that even in that crisis of unexampled danger to the liberty and independence of the country, the *States* were decidedly opposed to the plan of consolidation. He says, 'the solicitude of the State governments to retain within their respective limits, and for partial objects, a part of the force raised for the general defence, was not the only *interference* with the plan formed by the commander in chief for the conduct of the ensuing campaign.' The *other interference* to which Marshall alludes, was a resolution of Congress of the 10th of April, 1777, 'that a camp be immediately formed on the western side of the Delaware, to which the continental troops in Philadelphia, and on their march from the southward and westward, should be ordered to repair with all expedition.'

The plan of the campaign formed by Washington, was to take possession of Middlebrook, on the high grounds to the north of Brunswick, as a point from which he might with facility move to the highlands on the Hudson; anticipating that the enemy would move in that direction, which induced him to request Congress that the camp on the west of the Delaware might be composed of militia.

In May, he broke up his winter camp at Morristown; and on the 28th of that month took post on the heights of Brunswick, with an army amounting to 8000 men, 2000 of whom were on the sick list, and a large proportion raw recruits, foreigners, and servants, in whom the General does not seem to have reposed confidence. General Arnold, who was at that time in Philadelphia, was invested with the command of the camp on the west bank of the Delaware.

The object of the campaign, on the part of the British commander, was the acquisition of Philadelphia, having first subdued New Jersey, then crossing the Delaware on a portable bridge, and proceeding on to the city; hoping that, by this measure, the American army could be brought to a general action on equal ground, when, by its signal defeat, the war would be brought to a close.

Washington now occupied his strongly fortified camp at Middlebrook, to attack which was full of danger; and yet to pass on to the Delaware, and leave the American army in his rear, was not in accordance with the prudent temper of General Howe; he, therefore, determined to try the effect of manœuvre, in enticing Washington out of his



encampment; but Washington penetrating the object of the enemy, remained immovable in his camp; and Howe, not inclined to give his adversary any advantage, retired suddenly to Amboy; whence, after several manœuvres and some skirmishing, Howe crossed his army to Staten Island on the 30th of June, preparatory to embarking his forces for the Delaware, or Chesapeake. Uncertain, however, as to the final destination of the British army, Washington made his dispositions for any contingency that might occur; and advised Congress to make every preparation to ward off the expected blow from Philadelphia.

Whilst Washington moved towards the Delaware to meet Howe, who had embarked his army for that destination, he despatched Major Generals Arnold and Lincoln, to the east, to hold Burgoyne at bay; for which purpose he weakened his own army, in the hope of defeating the plans of Burgoyne.

On the 30th of July, the British fleet was discovered off the Capes of Delaware; when Washington immediately commenced his march in person for the neighbourhood of Philadelphia.

Howe, deterred from entering the Delaware by the supposed difficulties of its navigation, again put to sea and steered for the Chesapeake, which he did not reach till the 16th of August.

In the mean time, Washington inspected the defensible points of Philadelphia, and recommended Red Bank and Mud Island, as positions from which to defend the river, should the British menace that quarter. In the interval of Howe's passage to the Chesapeake, a variety of rumours and conjectures distracted the American army, as to his final destination; but Washington, with his usual perspicacity, remained firm in the conviction, that the acquisition of Philadelphia was the real object of the enemy.

On the 24th of August, Washington marched through Philadelphia, on his way to meet the enemy, who the next day landed eighteen thousand men at Elk river ferry, consisting of the flower of the British army, in excellent spirits, sound health, and among the best disciplined troops in Europe.

The American army, including the militia, which had been carefully summoned, did not exceed eleven thousand men, and took a position in the rear of Red-Clay Creek,

having its left at Newport, on the Christiana, and on the main road to Philadelphia, from the camp of General Howe. At this post, Washington resolved to dispute the possession of Philadelphia with the British General; but, upon a closer insight into his plans, he thought it prudent to change his position, and take up his post behind the Brandywine, on the height extending from Chadd's ford.

On the 11th of September, Howe, at the head of the British, attacked and defeated the forces under Washington, on the Brandywine, compelling the Americans to retreat to Chester, and on the next day to Philadelphia. Many of the troops of Washington displayed the coolness and courage of veterans; whilst others fled ignominiously upon the first approach of the enemy. The Americans suffered a loss of three hundred killed and six hundred wounded; whilst that of the British was not more than one-third.

From Chester he retired to a camp near Germantown, where, having reposed his troops, he recrossed the Schuylkill, and advanced on the Lancaster road, in the expectation of meeting the enemy, with whom he was desirous of trying the fate of another battle.

On the 15th of September, Washington reached the Warren tavern, and on the 16th Sir William Howe advanced to meet him, when an action commenced; but a heavy rain coming on, separated the combatants, and the Americans were forced to retreat, their ammunition having been rendered totally unfit for use. Washington now retreated to Warwick Furnace, on French Creek, there to renew his munitions, and replace the arms that had been injured by the rains, the severity of which had prevented the enemy from making any immediate pursuit; but the weather having mended, Howe continued to advance upon the American general, who, prudently declining an action, although public opinion would have urged him to the peril, Howe crossed the Schuylkill, and advanced towards the city; but Washington, after the most mature deliberation, came to the conclusion not to risk a general engagement; a decision which, no doubt, led to the ultimate salvation and triumph of the cause of American Independence. A council of war confirmed him in the wisdom, policy, and patriotism of this course; for his troops were badly clothed, worse armed, harassed, fatigued, and weakened by absent detachments and recent losses.

On the 26th of September, Lord Cornwallis took possession of Philadelphia without opposition.

Criticism and censure, on the part of British writers, have been lavishly heaped upon Washington, and extravagant praise bestowed upon General Howe, on the occasion of the victorious approaches of the latter to the capital of the United States. But, on the part of Washington, his army is known to have been so inferior in force, as well as equipment, to the English general, as to furnish ample excuse for his failure to arrest the progress of the enemy towards Philadelphia. If he was 'out-generalled' at the battle of Brandywine, it was not so much owing to superior military genius in Sir William Howe, as to his having command of superior numbers, superior facilities, troops who were disciplined, and well provided, and officers who were experienced, well trained, and exuberantly supplied with every appliance and means to secure victory by force, or effect it by stratagem. On the part of Washington, the patriot drops the tear of mortification over the lamentable deficiencies, wants, and inconveniences, that obstructed his motions, baffled his manœuvres, defeated his plans, and circumvented his genius; but there was one thing which all his wants and disadvantages could not subtract from, or impair—a mind endowed with invincible courage, sublime fortitude, exhaustless resources, and indomitable patriotism.

The next event of importance which marked the life of this illustrious man, was the *Battle of GERMANTOWN*, in the arrangement of which that consummate skill of generalship was displayed, of which his English detractors had attempted to strip him at the battle of Brandywine, and which will ever remain as a memorable instance of that happy faculty of *surprising an enemy*, which formed in Washington so prominent a feature of his military character. That it miscarried, as it respected the splendid results anticipated, is solely to be ascribed to that want of experience, discipline, and training, that constituted so vital a defect of the continental army, assisted by those natural disadvantages which arose from the heavy fog of the atmosphere, and the difficulties of the ground, upon which the troops were destined to operate. Yet the 4th October will ever remain a memorable day in the life of the father of his country.

In this battle, the British lost five hundred in killed and wounded; the Americans sustained a loss of two hundred killed, and six hundred wounded.

Congress voted their approbation to the General, commending the plan of attack, and extolling the courage displayed in its execution, for which their thanks were awarded to Washington, and the continental army.

In its moral consequences, however, the battle of Germantown was of essential service to the American cause. It checked the growing defection of the people, arrested the despondency of the public mind, and cheered the drooping spirits of the friends of freedom.

No reverse could depress the indormitable energy of Washington, or throw the chill of torpor on his enterprising and active genius. He still continued to harass the British from his camp at Skippack creek, and to devise and execute means to cut off their supplies; at the same time that he meditated an attack upon their forces stationed at Wilmington. Congress co-operated with Washington in cutting off the supplies from the enemy, by passing a resolution which subjected to the punishment of death, by martial law, all who should furnish them with provisions.

He now directed his attention to the defence of the forts on the Delaware, and the fortifications of Red Bank; the latter of which was so gallantly defended by Colonel Greene, against an attack made by the Hessians, under Colonel Donop, who suffered a signal repulse with the loss of 400 men. This affair, though comparatively small, had a benign effect upon the American cause, and extorted the approbation of Congress.

The British army having evacuated Germantown, and retired to Philadelphia, Washington advanced to White Marsh, where he pitched his camp, intent upon a system of harassment, skirmishing, and surprises, waiting for favourable occasions to attack, cut off, and distress the enemy, or, if practicable, bring them to a general action. For this purpose, he despatched Colonel Hamilton, his aid, to General Gates, to hasten his reinforcements from the north.

Fort Mifflin, in the command of Colonel Samuel Smith, was now besieged and assaulted by General Howe, whose cannonade was irresistible: the works were beaten down, Colonel Smith was wounded, and, after being defended to the last extremity, it was evacuated by the American troops on the 16th of November, at eleven at night.

General Howe, having completed a line of defence from the Delaware and the Schuylkill, and received a reinforce-

ment from New York, was emboldened to plan an attack upon Fort Mercer, under Cornwallis, at the head of two thousand men.

Washington made exertions to preserve this post, but they proved unavailing, and the fort was accordingly evacuated. Thus the British army at length succeeded in opening a free communication with their fleet, by the Delaware.

As the limits assigned to this work do not admit of a detail of the events of the revolution in which General Washington was not personally concerned, we can only observe, that, as far as his agency extended as commander in chief, in planning the northern campaign of this memorable year, he evinced the most consummate skill, combined with a comprehensiveness of conception, and a soundness of judgment, which won general admiration, and extorted the applause of his enemies, notwithstanding the disastrous issue of it, by the evacuation of Ticonderoga and Fort Independence, which, however, were richly compensated by the victory of Bennington, by the gallant action of Stillwater, and finally, after repeated defeats, by the total surrender of the army of Burgoyne to the American forces under General Gates—events which, owing much of their success to the genius and foresight of Washington, did not fail to reflect on his character a lustre which, added to his other merits, kindled a blaze of glory round his brow.

The effect of the surrender of Burgoyne, both in the United States and Europe, was highly favourable to the American cause. Earl Chatham, in the House of Lords, moved to amend the Address to the King, by introducing a recommendation to his majesty to ‘procure an immediate cessation of hostilities with America, and commence a treaty of conciliation, to restore peace and liberty to America, strength and happiness to England, security and permanent prosperity to both countries.’ In support of this motion, he said, ‘But, my Lords, who is the man that, in addition to the disgraces and mischiefs of war, has dared to authorise and associate to our arms the tomahawk and scalping knife of the savage?—to call into civilised alliance the wild and inhuman inhabitants of the woods?—to delegate to the merciless Indian the defence of disputed rights, and to wage the horrors of his barbarous war against our brethren? My

Lords, these enormities cry aloud for redress and punishment. Unless thoroughly done away, it will be a stain on the national character. It is not the least of our national misfortunes that the strength and character of our army are thus impaired. Familiarised to the horrid scenes of savage cruelty, it can no longer boast of the noble and generous principles which dignify a soldier. No longer you sympathise with the dignity of the royal banner, nor feel the pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war, which makes ambition virtue. What makes ambition virtue?—the sense of honor. But is this sense of honor consistent with the spirit of plunder, or the practice of murder?—can it flow from mercenary motives, or can it prompt to cruel deeds?”

Chatham had struck the true chords of the motives of those who warred upon this country; and the whole British empire vibrated with one intense sensation of horror. The contest on the part of England was *mercenary and cruel*. On the part of the Americans, love of liberty and love of country led to deeds of heroism that astonished mankind, and to sacrifices, sufferings, and losses, which could alone flow from the purest devotion to freedom and independence.

Washington was now pressed by all sides to make an attack upon Howe's army in Philadelphia, as well by his own officers as by the strong current of public opinion; and the plan was drawn, canvassed, and demonstrated by a few ardent spirits to be infallible. But the prudence, sagacity, firmness and patriotism of Washington resisted the public clamour, and detected flaws and dangers in the scheme, which his own friends, who were importunate for the measure, wholly overlooked. Despising the appeals made to his own glory, he preferred the safety of his country to the brilliancy of his own fame; for though he might succeed in adding lustre to the one, he might, at the same time, fail in securing the independence and safety of the other. He therefore declined the perilous attempt, and thus exhibited one of the most sublime spectacles of moral grandeur to be found in the history of military chiefs. That he now panted with uncommon ardour to signalise himself in a decisive action, was proved by the unceasing efforts he made, after the defeat of Burgoyne, to procure a reinforcement from the northern army, under Gates, to whom he had despatched a large portion of his best troops; but he was too much devoted to his country to gratify it at the possible expense of its

final subjugation by a cruel and oppressive enemy. The wisdom of his determination was soon demonstrated by the preparations of Lord Howe to attack the American army.

On the 4th of December, at night, Howe marched out of Philadelphia at the head of his entire force, and the next day encamped on Chesnut Hill, in front of Washington's right wing. But nothing beyond an inconsiderable skirmish resulted from the complicated demonstrations of the English general, who was deterred from the attack by the admirable position of the American commander; and, on the 8th December, Howe retreated to Philadelphia. The two armies were nearly equal in numbers, of 12,000 men each: and the circumstance of Howe declining an action with raw troops, after marching out for that purpose, evinced a respect for the talents of Washington and the bravery of his troops, which did not fail to produce an impression favourable to the American cause, and still more honourable to the commander of the American grand army.

Washington now went into winter quarters, at *Valley Forge*; the weather having set in with a severity of cold which caused great sufferings to his exposed troops, who were destitute of tents, blankets, and comfortable clothing; and, to add to these privations, the danger of famine now stared them in the face, in a land abounding with plenty. This was caused by the great depreciation of the continental money, now so sunk in value as to be almost utterly worthless. This want of provisions, and the radical defects in the commissary department, now pressed with great force upon the army, and often destroyed its faculty for action. This subject now brought into light a trait of greatness, justice and benevolence in the character of Washington, which, in my opinion, has never been enough extolled. Congress had empowered him to *seize* all provisions he might want within seventy miles of head quarters, giving a certificate for the value of the same. *Necessity* forced him, in some measure, to exert this authority, or behold his troops famish around him. But he failed to exert it to the extent intended by Congress; his feelings revolting from a measure which might produce distress to families, and was on its very face oppressive to the people. For this humanity he incurred the disapprobation of Congress, who renewed their orders to him to enforce the seizure; but such was his innate sense of justice and humanity, as well as his percep-

tion of sound policy, that he never would fully comply with the resolutions of Congress.

The Legislature of Pennsylvania had remonstrated to Congress against Washington's moving into winter quarters, and expressed great dissatisfaction with his measures; although they had been criminally negligent in furnishing him with means to keep the field, or to prosecute active hostilities: so prone are men to complain of others, when they even fail to discharge their own duties.

Envy, faction and ambition, panting to rise upon his ruin, took advantage of these partial and unjust discontents, to impeach his character and assail his capacity. The splendid achievement of General Gates at Saratoga, had awakened the ambition of that officer, and stimulated his friends to attempt that he might supplant Washington in the chief command of the American forces; and these feelings operating upon one portion of Congress and the public, who are always impatient under inaction, and whose feelings hurry them to an excessive admiration of whatever is bold, brilliant and daring, produced a considerable array of opposition to Washington; at the head of which stood General Conway, a friend of Gates, for the avowed purpose of investing the latter with the command in chief.

This powerful intrigue was so extensively diffused, that attempts had been made to alienate the confidence of the States from Washington; and an anonymous letter addressed to Patrick Henry, of Virginia, then governor of that State, was transmitted by him to Washington. The immediate intrigue that developed the plot, was a passage in a letter written by Colonel Conway to General Gates, which ran thus: 'heaven has been determined to save your country, or a *weak general* and bad counsellors would have ruined it.' This passage of the letter was communicated by a member of Congress to Washington.

Strong in the affections of the people, and almost idolized by the great majority of the army, it was only necessary to expose a combination and intrigue so unprincipled and selfish, in order to cover its authors with merited ignominy, and exalt still higher in public esteem, the intended victim of its malignancy. Looked upon by all as the saviour of his country, it was not difficult to withstand and triumph over an intrigue, which the moment it was touched by the spear of truth, for such in fact was the cha-



racter of Washington, melted into the hideous features of unhallowed ambition, private envy, and grovelling selfishness.

How he felt and acted under the operation of these derogatory machinations, we feel naturally curious to enquire; and, indeed, his conduct and temper on this occasion must go far in deciding our estimate of his extraordinary character. Endowed with a mind not only of colossal magnitude, but of singular firmness, these aspersions caused neither agitation nor excitement; though not to feel in some degree indignant, would have been to possess attributes superior to those of humanity. In his answer to General Gates, calling for the name of the informer, there is but one expression which implied any degree of undue excitement, where he says: "Pardon me then, for adding, that, so far from conceiving the safety of the States can be affected, or in the smallest degree injured, by a discovery of this kind, or that I should be called upon in such solemn terms to point out the author, that I considered the information as coming from yourself, and given with a friendly view to forewarn, and consequently forearm me against a secret enemy, or in other words, a *dangerous incendiary*, in which character, sooner or later, this country will know General Conway."

At this time his army was barefooted, naked, and without provisions, the fault of which was exclusively in Congress and the depreciated currency of the country: but imagination, in its wildest creations, cannot conceive sufferings more intense than were this winter endured by the American army.

How acutely Washington felt, and sympathised for these sufferings, might be shown by multiplied evidences of his humane heart; but I shall confine myself to part of one letter of his to Governor Livingston: "I sincerely feel for the unhappy condition of our poor fellows in the hospitals, and wish my powers to relieve them were equal to my inclination. It is but too melancholy a truth, that our hospital stores of every kind, are lamentably scanty and deficient. I fear there is no prospect of their being soon in a better condition. Our difficulties and distresses are certainly great, and such as wound the feelings of humanity:—our sick, naked!—our well, naked!—our unfortunate men in captivity, naked!"

The army was now melting away, owing to the depre-

ciation of continental money, which reduced the officers to beggary, and the soldiers to nakedness. Washington recommended increased pay, half pay, and a pension system, and submitted to Congress an elaborate, able, and comprehensive system for the organisation of the army, as well as for the commissary department in particular; to which Congress conformed in their new regulations.

Still the famine of man and horse in the army prevailed, and every hour threatened to dissolve it, notwithstanding the Herculean labours of Washington, to exhort the States to action, and stimulate the Congress to energy. Mutiny was often manifested by the starving troops, and as often suppressed; but nothing could have suppressed it, but the deep affection which most of the men cherished for their great commander, who possessed that indescribable something, which attaches both officers and soldiers to his person, and inspires all with veneration and respect. To this quality alone in the General, is to be ascribed the preservation of the army at this crisis.

Perhaps no man ever received so signal and complete atonement from the party guilty of the wrong, as did General Washington, when the following letter from General Conway, who had been seriously wounded in a duel, met his eye.

*“Philadelphia, July 23, 1778.*

“SIR,—I find myself just able to hold the pen during a few minutes, and take this opportunity of expressing my sincere grief for having done, written, or said any thing disagreeable to your excellency. My career will soon be over; therefore, justice and truth prompt me to declare my last sentiments. You are, in my eyes, the great and good man. May you long enjoy the love, veneration and esteem of these States, whose liberties you have asserted by your virtues.

“I am, with the greatest respect, Sir, &c.

“PH. CONWAY.”

In February, 1778, Lord North agreed to submit to Parliament a plan of conciliation with America. About the same time, a treaty of commerce and alliance was concluded with France, by Mr. Deane, the minister of the United States at that court. These bills of pacification were first transmitted to General Washington, and by him submitted to Congress, accompanied by his views of their

probable operation and influence on the public mind. His letter to Congress was accompanied by a certificate of the very singular manner in which the bills came to his hands; with the 'extraordinary and impertinent request, that the contents should be, through him, communicated to the army.' These propositions of peace were instantly and indignantly rejected, as insulting, unjust, and derogatory; inasmuch as they did not acknowledge the *Independence* of the United States.

An event now occurred, in May, 1778, which it is matter of surprise the British ministry had not anticipated—the recognition of the independence of the United States by France; a consequent war between that country and England; and an efficient co-operation by France, to achieve and consummate our liberties.

Washington now engaged in an arduous negotiation with the English General, to obtain a mitigation of the sufferings of the American prisoners, who had been captured by the enemy; and to arrange some permanent system for their speedy exchange and comfortable subsistence. In this humane and laudable effort, he at length succeeded.

The conduct of the revolutionary war, could certainly have devolved on no one who combined in so great a degree the qualities of a humane heart, a firm purpose, a vigilant eye, and a comprehensive scope of intellectual vision, and military foresight.

Sir William Howe having resigned his command of the English army, was succeeded by Sir Henry Clinton, who evacuated Philadelphia on the 18th of June, 1778, directing his march through the Jerseys. On the same day Washington moved his army from Valley Forge, and crossed the Delaware at Corryell's ferry, keeping possession of the high grounds, and being careful to avoid a general engagement with the enemy, yet strongly inclined to hazard an attack. In this uncertainty, caused by conflicting enterprise and prudence, he called a council of war, which decided against risking an engagement. Still, his desire to achieve something against a retreating foe, overcame the advice of his council, and he resolved to attack the rear of the British on his own responsibility; and on the 28th of June, he advanced upon the retiring columns of the enemy in the vicinity of *Monmouth Court House*, until the battle becoming general, a sharp conflict ensued, when the

approach of night caused a cessation of hostilities; both parties keeping their positions, and laying on their arms. Washington, who had been very active throughout the day, exposed his person at every point, regardless of all danger, and passed the night in the midst of his soldiers in his military cloak.

During the night, the British silently retreated, wholly unperceived by the Americans. In this sharp conflict, the British suffered the greatest loss; and the result was a victory confessed to the American arms, by the retreat of the beaten foe.

On this occasion, General Lee was suspended from command for one year by a court martial; among other charges, for disobedience of orders, and disrespect to Washington, which the whole army strongly resented.

Congress voted their thanks for his conduct on this occasion, as well as to his officers and men.

Washington now moved his army towards the North River, and Sir Henry Clinton effected his retreat to New York.

In July, the arrival of the French fleet under Count D'Estaing, having on board a French army, to co-operate with the Americans against the English, threw a different complexion over the whole contest; and inspired a reasonable hope of a speedy termination of the struggle of the States against the absurd pretensions of the crown of England.

The fleet of Howe had left the Delaware, at the same time that the British army had evacuated Philadelphia.

Without following the operations of the French and English forces, which would be foreign to the object of this work, I shall merely remark, that as far as Washington participated in deciding their movements, he displayed all his wonted wisdom, sagacity, prudence, magnanimity, valour and patriotism. His address and influence were successfully interposed to heal a dissention which had arisen on points of co-operation and etiquette, between the commander of the French fleet and General Sullivan.

Nothing important, in which Washington was immediately concerned, occurred afterwards, during the campaign of 1778; and in December the American army went into winter quarters in the neighbourhood of West Point and Middlebrook; the troops being sheltered in huts, and well

provided with clothing, from the supplies furnished by France.

Let us here pause for a moment, to contemplate the expanding genius, and towering character of this wonderful man, as he rose under the pressure of new exigencies, and improved in wisdom by the admonitions of adversity, and the lessons of experience.

It is a singular fact, that in the writings of Washington, we discover no historical allusions, or traces of having studied the laws of nations, or the science of jurisprudence; and yet no deficiency of sound principles, or useful knowledge, is ever to be detected in him; so much did the richness of his genius supply him with stores of wisdom. And though it is apparent, that he had never made the science of government a peculiar object of study, yet *experience*, as he advanced through the difficulties of the war, had suggested to him much useful knowledge on important points of civil government. Yet, on this latter subject, his ideas evidently received a tinge of prejudice, from his military education; and that when he thought of government, he conceived of a power too energetic to be perfectly compatible with the broad doctrines of liberty, however it might secure the efficiency of prompt and energetic authority. Accustomed as he was to the rapid movements and absolute commands of an army, this habit would naturally generate in his mind a desire to introduce the same prompt principle of action into government, and to view the deliberate motions, and tedious debates of free assemblies with a feeling of dislike proportioned to their laxity of movement, and tardiness of conclusion. Having insensibly acquired this mode of thinking, he would unconsciously espouse the concentration of power, without feeling any hostility to the principles, or repugnance to the spirit of liberty; and thus gradually engraft upon his principles of military government civil doctrines of congenial and analogous energy.

The dependence of his army upon the movements and proceedings of government, obviously first attracted his attention to the study of our political fabric, at the same time that it caused him to scrutinise it, more in reference to the army, than to the people; and this without making him less a lover of liberty, or less a friend to the rights and happiness of the human race; for his heart was always too benevolent to permit him to embrace the cause of despotism;

and his genius was too luminous ever to allow him to harbour the delusion, that, freedom once enjoyed could ever be extinguished, or equality once proclaimed could ever be recalled.

It is, perhaps, peculiar to Washington *alone*, that every step of his military career inducted him into a knowledge of political principles; and that the character of the statesman gradually surmounted that of the general; at the same time that the ideas of the general became the basis of the principles of the politician.

Purity of purpose, strict honesty of character, exalted patriotism and elevated intellect, would naturally infer that energy of government to be most conducive to human happiness, which, embracing in its principles the *preference of talents and virtue*, could discern no evil but in crime, and detect no blemish but in weakness; not considering that the weakness was necessarily incidental to the *exercise of right*; and that the evil was a component part of the human system as inseparable from government, as it was unavoidable to man.

When Washington, therefore, unwarily became the advocate of power in the hands of a few, he did not necessarily desire, or intend to crush the rights of the many, so much as to curb their vices, remedy their weakness, and add to their happiness. If he miscalculated the means as a statesman, he was correct in their appreciation as a general: and the moral sublimity of his virtues rescued him from all suspicion of any attempt to subjugate their rights, or shackle their freedom.

Commissioners from Great Britain, to negotiate a plan of conciliation with the States, again arrived at Philadelphia, and were announced to Washington by the English general, Sir Henry Clinton, who, being joined in the embassy, undertook to open the negotiation. Washington having referred the proposition to Congress, that body rejected the terms offered, on the ground of the non-recognition of the Independence of the States, and her omission to withdraw her fleets and armies from our limits.

Apprehensions being justly entertained, that these offers of peace and re-union with the mother country, might have an injurious effect on the public mind, their insufficiency was ably combated by the popular writers of the day, who, to the asperity of sarcasm, added the keenness of wit, and

the force of reasoning. But their tendency to mislead the people, was arrested by the audacious attempts of Governor Johnson, one of the Commissioners, to bribe the most influential members of Congress; and the still more reprehensible attempt upon Mr. Read, with the offer of ten thousand pounds sterling, and the best office in the gift of the crown. The Commissioners being repulsed by Congress, addressed their seditious appeals to the people. The great influence of Washington was successfully used, to induce the rejection of terms based on the reannexation of the States to Great Britain, as well as to prevent the influence of such appeals on the people and the army.

The horrid atrocities of the Indian wars of 1778, the massacre of Wyoming, and other terrible devastations of savage vengeance, having attracted the attention of Congress, Washington was directed to adopt measures to repel these invasions of the savages on the frontiers of New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania; but having consulted a council of war, all operations during that season were declared to be impracticable.

At the commencement of the year 1779, the conquest of *Canada* again became a favorite project with Congress; and a plan of co-operation with the French forces, to accomplish that object, was drawn up by cabinet ministers, and submitted to Washington, with a request that he would make his observations on it, and then enclose it to Dr. Franklin, at Paris, by him to be laid before the French court, for its approval.

To military sagacity of the highest order, Washington united views so profound and comprehensive, as could not fail, when combined with his great experience, to qualify him, in an eminent manner, to judge of the feasibility or unsoundness of this extensive plan of operations; and penetrating at once to the serious evils involved in its execution, he remonstrated to Congress against its adoption; at the same time that he fully investigated its merits, and proved the mischiefs, difficulties and perils, with which it was fraught.

Congress, on their part, while they confessed the great ability of his exposition, yet still persevered in the plan which he had exploded in so masterly a manner, and again pressed it, with some modifications, on his attention; but not convinced of the error of his opinions, nor satisfied with

the military talent of Congress, he requested a personal conference with that body; to which Congress having acceded, he proceeded to Philadelphia, and met a committee of that body, to consult upon the general state of the army, and the condition and welfare of the country.

The power of genius in its particular and darling profession is irresistible: Congress yielded to the powerful arguments of Washington against the proposed expedition: thus, by their very reluctance, and slowly extorted conviction of their errors, giving the sanction of their entire approbation to his views, and confirming the force of his judgment, the fulness of his knowledge, and the weight of his experience.

How far he preserved his country, by thus interposing his veto against so comprehensive and perilous a project, can only be conjectured: but it is highly probable, that had he not opposed it, reckless of all consequences to himself, the effects would have been disastrous to the army, and perhaps fatal to its liberties and independence; but disregarding all consequences to his own fame, he nobly threw himself in the gap, to bear the brunt of opposition, to a measure of government, originated with much partiality, and cherished with peculiar fondness.

Washington soon experienced the disadvantage of the alliance with France, in the impression of apathy produced by the belief that it was the infallible precursor of peace and independence, which must now necessarily take place without striking another blow, or putting to risk the chances of another battle. The people, on this account, became averse to active operations; enthusiasm for liberty sunk into the conviction that it was achieved; enlistments were almost suspended, or proceeded with too tardy a pace to be efficient, while, from the same cause, it became manifestly inexpedient to proceed to coercion to fill the vacant ranks of the army. Yet, the happy delusion, that the war had found a period with the date of the *French alliance*, made no impression on the sagacious mind of Washington; and while he lamented the delay which took place in Congress on the subject of providing for the campaign of 1779, he omitted nothing on his part to stimulate the Union and the States to renewed exertion to prosecute it to a decided issue.

The dissensions that now arose in Congress, generated by the quarrels and jealousies of our ministers at foreign



courts, added to this fatal torpor, and produced no little elation in the minds of our enemies. The real character of the state of the country, at this period, will be best delineated by a letter, written by Washington himself, to one of his talented political friends, in which he says, "I am particularly desirous of a free communication of sentiments with you at this time, because I view things very differently, I fear, from what people in general do, who seem to think the contest at an end, and that to make money, and get places, are the only things now remaining to be done. I have seen, without despondency, even for a moment, the hours which America has styled her gloomy ones; but I have beheld no day since the commencement of hostilities, when I have thought her liberties in such imminent danger as at present. Friends and foes seem now to combine to pull down the goodly fabric we have hitherto been raising, at the expense of so much time, blood, and treasure; and unless the bodies politic will exert themselves to bring things back to *first principles*, correct abuses, and punish our internal foes, inevitable ruin must follow. Indeed, we seem to be verging so fast to destruction, that I am filled with sensations to which I have been a stranger until within these three months. Our enemy behold with exultation and joy how effectually we labour for their benefit—and from being in a state of absolute despair, and on the point of evacuating America, are now on tiptoe. Nothing, therefore, in my judgment, can save us but a *total reformation* in our own conduct, or some decisive turn of affairs in Europe. The former, alas! (to our shame be it spoken,) is less likely to happen than the latter, as it is now consistent with the views of the speculators, various tribes of money makers, and stock-jobbers of all denominations, to continue the war for their own private emolument, without considering that this avarice and thirst for gain must plunge every thing, including themselves, in one common ruin."

"It is a fact too notorious to be concealed, that Congress is rent by party—that much business of a trifling nature, and personal concernment, withdraws their attention from matters of great national moment at this critical period: when it is also known that idleness and dissipation take place of close attention and application, no man who wishes well to the liberties of this country, and desires to see its rights established, can avoid crying out, 'where are our

men of abilities?—why do they not come forth to save their country?’ Let this voice, my dear Sir, call upon you, JEFFERSON, and others. Do not, from a mistaken opinion that we are to sit down under our vine and our fig tree, let our hitherto noble struggle end in ignominy. Believe me when I tell you there is danger of it. I have pretty good reasons for thinking that administration, a little while ago, had resolved to give the matter up, and negociate a peace with us upon almost any terms; but I shall be much mistaken if they do not now, from the present state of our currency, dissensions, and other circumstances, push matters to the utmost extremity. Nothing, I am sure, will prevent it but the interruption of Spain, and their disappointed hope from Russia.”

Thus, with a comprehensive eye and an ever wakeful patriotism, did Washington penetrate to the causes of our weakness, lament the obstacles of our independence, and labour to soothe irritation, remove difficulties, and promote union, harmony and success. But whatever hopes the English might cherish from our dissensions were speedily dissipated by that recuperative energy and common sense of danger which recalled the minds of men from the spoils of victory to the acquisition of Independence.

Active hostilities were now transferred from the northern and middle States to South Carolina and Georgia, where a large body of tories, disaffected to the cause of liberty, inspired the enemy with sanguine hopes of making an easy victory of those States; in which attempt, they at first but too well succeeded.

Serious discontents, of a seditious character, having appeared in the Jersey brigade, Washington, with his usual address and patriotism, laboured to arrest it by the persuasion of his eloquence. The want of pay, and other evils incident to a deranged and rotten currency, were of too deep a nature to be very patiently borne, or easily healed.

Washington now directed his attention to the Indian settlements; and having despatched Colonel Van Schaick and General Sullivan against some of the towns of the Onandagoes, a complete devastation of their country and farms was effected.

The British army, composed of 9000 men, was stationed at New York, while a detachment of 2000, under General Matthews, was engaged in harassing the lower counties

of Virginia. In Rhode Island, their force amounted to 6000 men, making a total of 17,000 men, under the command of *Sir Henry Clinton*, to co-operate with whom a powerful fleet rode at anchor, ready, at any moment, to transport his forces to any point which promised a successful attack.

On the part of the Americans, the grand total of their armies did not exceed 16,000—3,000 under the command of Gates, in New England, and 13,000 on the banks of the North River, where they had been encamped during the winter; 6,000 fit for active service, were posted at Middlebrook, under the command of Washington.

Under this disparity of force, combined with the strong posts occupied by the enemy, Washington determined on a defensive campaign, contenting himself with securing the important passes on the North River, and protecting the adjacent country from the cruel ravages of an unsparing foe: even this defensive system was not unattended with its perils and difficulties.

West Point, being by nature a strong position, had, since the year 1777, been a particular object of attention to the Americans, who had constructed formidable works for its defence, with the intention of rendering it impregnable to the assaults of an enemy.

King's Ferry, a few miles below West Point, near the termination of the Highlands, was the great pass of communication between the eastern and middle States, and is commanded by the two opposite points of land, the most elevated of which, on the west side of the river, is called from its roughness STONEY POINT, while the flat neck of land on the east is denominated Verplanck's Point.

The possession of King's Ferry became, therefore, an important object to both armies. The Americans had constructed a strong post on Verplanck's Point, called Fort Fayette, which was garrisoned by a company under captain Armstrong; but the works on Stoney Point, though considerable, were yet incomplete. The British general now projected a *coup de main* upon these works. But the Americans, having abandoned Stoney Point, without waiting for an attack, the enemy immediately took possession of it, and soon compelled Fort Fayette, on the opposite shore, to capitulate, the garrison surrendering themselves prisoners of war.

To prevent an attack on West Point, Washington now

followed the enemy with the first division of his army from Middlebrook, but was compelled, from the inferiority of his force, to pursue measures strictly defensive. In the mean time the English completed the fortifications, and left strong garrisons in Stoney Point and Fort Fayette.

In July, the British army made an invasion of Connecticut, but almost immediately returned to the Hudson, without having accomplished any thing decisive in that state.

Washington now conceived the idea of surprising the posts at *King's Ferry*; a design to which he was impelled by a desire to satisfy public expectation by some distinguished exploit, which would tend to reconcile the people to his plan of defensive warfare, without incurring any great peril to the main army. With this view, he carefully reconnoitred the two posts in person, and employed all the means in his power to obtain information of their real strength. His conclusion was that they could only be carried by surprise; but he resolved to make an attempt on *Stoney Point* first, which, if successful, would easily command the surrender of Fort Fayette.

This notable achievement was made at twelve o'clock at night of the 15th July, 1779, under the command of General Wayne, who surprised and captured the fort in a manner never surpassed for its daring, its intrepidity, and its coolness. No military exploit in history excels the brilliancy of the capture of Stoney Point.

Washington having thus secured Stoney Point, made an unsuccessful attempt upon the opposite post; but Sir Henry Clinton advancing to its relief, the American general determined to evacuate *Stoney Point*, which could not be maintained without a naval force, and to retire into the highlands, when the British again took possession of it, repaired the fortifications, and manned it with a stronger garrison.

Independent of the splendour of this exploit, it is difficult to conceive the object which prompted its execution, or to approve of a design which, had no miscarriage intervened to obstruct its complete fulfilment, must still have been a useless expense of life, labour and gallantry.

Washington now removed his head quarters to WEST POINT; not deeming himself sufficiently in force to hazard a general engagement. In the same cautious spirit of prudence, he issued orders to the commanders of corps and

detachments not to risk their troops in any partisan engagements but when the occasion of certain victory presented itself.

The British general, wearied with inactivity, now retired to York Island, and engaged himself in giving increased strength to its fortifications; while, despairing of success in any attempt to draw Washington from his strong position, he began to direct his attention to a campaign against the southern States.

On the 18th of August, Major Lee surprised and made prisoners the British garrison at Pawles Hook, opposite New York, on the west bank of the Hudson; an enterprise which, having been achieved under the direction of Washington, received at the time no inconsiderable measure of applause.

Admiral Arbuthnot, a few days after this event, arrived at New York with a reinforcement for the British army; and shortly after, the Count D'Estaing arrived on the southern coast, with a powerful French fleet; upon the news of which, Sir Henry Clinton concentrated his forces in New York.

The campaign of 1779, was not, upon the whole, either very creditable to the cause of Independence, or favourable to the fame and reputation of the commander in chief, so far as it respected any accession of glory, from active operations, or brilliant triumphs; but, as it related to that wisdom and prudence, which looked to the permanent good of his country, he stood higher than at any preceding period, and commanded more veneration in the minds of the judicious and reflecting, for his virtues, talents and patriotism.

Washington closed this campaign, as he had done so many preceding ones, by addressing a remonstrance to Congress against the *militia system*, and recommending the plan of coercive draughts for one year by the States, as the only efficient method of perfecting the establishment of a permanent army. But Congress seem not only themselves to have been averse to so strong a measure, which caused them to adopt it with tardiness and reluctance, but the States appear to have resisted it, from a natural jealousy of consolidated power; so that the resolutions of Congress in favour of the system recommended by Washington, eventually failed, when they came to be canvassed by the jealous rights of thirteen independent sovereignties.

In December Washington placed his army in winter quarters; one division at West Point, and the other at Morristown, New Jersey, sheltered by huts, and so disposed as to protect the surrounding country from the depredations of the enemy, as at the same time to secure his troops from insult, surprise or defeat.

The subjugation of Georgia by the British, and the unsuccessful attempt of the combined forces of the French and Americans to recover Savannah, and the departure of the French fleet from the continent, justly excited the fears of Washington for the fate of South Carolina, which, combined with the secret intelligence he had received from his spies in New York, that the enemy meditated the South as the scene of the campaign of 1780, awakened all his fears and patriotism for the safety of that section of the union, which now became the theatre of sanguinary and triumphant operations to the British army under Sir Henry Clinton.

On the 12th of May, Charleston capitulated a surrender to the English general. Washington's opinion was adverse to the policy of defending that city, after it had been found impracticable to defend the bar and maintain the harbour. General Lincoln was severely censured for his conduct; but it does not appear that he was so much to blame, as those who, having promised him reinforcements, had inspired delusive hopes, that ended in his ruin.

Lord Cornwallis, with one division of the British army, now advanced upon North Carolina, while other detachments carried their victorious arms through fields of carnage, until the whole south was subjugated by the troops of his Britannic majesty. Emboldened by this unexpected success, Sir Henry Clinton, on the 3d of June, 1780, issued his proclamation, re-establishing, in full force, the royal government; after which, supposing the conquest of the South to be complete, he sailed for New York, leaving Lord Cornwallis with four thousand troops, to extend his victories into North Carolina.

These movements in the south did not escape the vigilant eye of Washington; and in March he sent a detachment of the Maryland and Delaware lines, under the command of the Baron de Kalb, to reinforce the southern army. As these troops entered South Carolina, they were joined by several corps of American militia, who deserted from the colours of Cornwallis, by whom they had been enlisted.

Congress then called General Gates to the command of the southern department, on the 13th of June, 1780, under the idea that the conqueror of Burgoyne would now prove, by his great military talents, the saviour of the southern states.

The defeat of the Americans at Camden, on the 16th of August, 1780, demonstrated the fallacy of reposing confidence in a general of the ardent and active genius of Gates, when commanding a raw army, composed of militia, or new recruits. Such bold and impetuous talents were more adapted to lead the disciplined and well drilled battalions of Europe, than the inexperienced and timid recruits of a free government, opposed to constraint, and stubborn in their rights. The rout of the Americans at this battle was complete and overwhelming. The Baron de Kalb was killed at the head of his troops. Congress afterwards directed a monument to his memory. The American loss in killed, wounded and prisoners, was great and fatal, but never precisely ascertained. To this rout of Gates, succeeded the defeat of Sumpter at Catawba Ford, by the bloody and impetuous legion of *Tarleton*.

The winter quarters of the army under Washington, had not been much improved beyond its condition of preceding years, in respect to rations; the depreciation of the currency having effectually operated to check the certainty of supplies to so great an extent as again to menace the total dissolution of the army; a catastrophe which was solely averted by the patriotism of the people of New Jersey.

A requisition on the States, to supply the treasury of the Union by taxation, was now resorted to; but it did not prove effectual; and the limit of two hundred millions of continental money having been completed, other sources of supply were now to be devised; which consisted in a requisition on the *States* for their respective quotas of provisions, spirits and forage, for which they were to be finally paid in Spanish milled dollars.

To this system Washington was decidedly opposed, on the ground that the war ought to be conducted on a *national*, rather than a *state* system; and, in this opinion, says *Marshall*, 'all those who were engaged in high and responsible situations,' coincided. Here, again, we perceive the *germ* of those parties which arose under the federal constitution, at a subsequent period. The objections of Washington, however, were disregarded, and the *new system* of *State*

quotas of provisions, went into operation, owing, as Marshall confesses, to “*a disposition in the members of Congress, growing inevitably out of the organisation of the government to consult the WILL of the STATES, from which they were delegated, and perhaps to prefer their accommodation to any other object however essential to the whole.*” On this subject, the language of Marshall is but the echo of Washington’s opinions, and is so remarkable as to demand special attention. He says ‘Under these circumstances, it required a degree of energy seldom found, to struggle with surrounding difficulties for the *preservation of a GENERAL SYSTEM*; and to resist the temptation of throwing the NATION, by a system of requisitions, *at the feet of the STATES*, where the vital principle of power, the right to levy taxes, was exclusively placed.’”

Agents in Europe were now employed to negotiate loans, which, to a limited extent, proved successful; while various schemes of compounding for the continental money in circulation, and forming the basis of a *new issue* of paper credits, were suggested, or devised.

About this time, the views of Washington touching the powers of the State sovereignties, were fully developed in a letter to a member of Congress, in which he thus expressed himself: “Certain I am, that unless Congress speaks in a more decisive tone—unless they are vested with powers by the several states, competent to the great purposes of the war, or *assume them as matter of right*, and they and the States respectively act with *more energy* than they hitherto have done, that our cause is lost. We can no longer drudge on in the old way. By ill-timing the adoption of measures, by delays in the execution of them, or by unwarrantable jealousies, we incur enormous expenses, and derive no benefit from them. One State will comply with a requisition from Congress, another neglects to do it, a third executes it by halves; and all differ in the manner, the matter, or so much in point of time, that we are always working up hill; and while such a system as the present one, or rather want of one, prevails, we ever shall be unable to apply our strength or resources to any advantage.

“This, my dear Sir, is plain language to a member of Congress; but it is the language of truth and friendship. It is the result of long thinking, close application, and strict observation. I see ONE HEAD gradually changing into



THIRTEEN. I see *one army* branching into THIRTEEN; and instead of looking up to Congress as the *supreme controlling power of the United States*, considering themselves as dependent on their respective states. In a word, I see the power of Congress declining too fast for the consequence and respect which are due to them as the *great representative body of America*, and am fearful of the consequences."

The depreciation of continental money was now at its lowest ebb; so that the pay of a captain would not purchase even a pair of shoes, nor that of a major general have *hired* the horse he rode on!

Congress now resolved to make good this depreciation of their pay, at a future period. But the want of pay, and the want of rations at length produced a mutiny, which, however, was soon quelled.

Lafayette, having gone back to France upon the breaking out of the war between that power and England, returned to the United States in April, in a royal frigate, and brought the cheering news of the promised aid of a land and naval armament, to co-operate in the cause of our Independence. Washington received him with the joy and affection due to an old friend, and a tried patriot, whose valour and enthusiasm in the American cause had been so conspicuously displayed at the battle of Brandywine. His arrival imparted a fresh impulse to the Congress, and a glow of hope to the whole army.

All the energies of his mind were now devoted to the great object of making an efficient co-operation with the promised aid from France, which arrived on the 10th of July at Rhode Island, under the Count de Rochambeau, with orders to place himself and forces under General Washington; who, to manifest his affection for the French, recommended to his officers, to adopt the *French white cockade*, engrafted on the black American—as a symbol of union and friendship.

He now contemplated an enterprise against New York, which, however, he was forced to relinquish.

For a time public attention was drawn to the defection of General Arnold, and the severe but just execution of Major Andre, of the British army, with whom Arnold negotiated to surrender the strong post of West Point. It must ever excite astonishment, that the Americans could have suffered the army to be disgraced by a man so profli

gate, unprincipled and sordid in his moral character, and so equivocal in his political sentiments. His vices, well known before his desertion, were only proclaimed to the world after his treason. After being tried and disgraced by a court martial, it was unquestionably a great error in judgment, to permit him to command an American post.

On the occasion of this melancholy and important event, all the sensibilities of Washington were excited to the most painful and intense degree. Besides the embarrassments and difficulties attendant on the fate of Andre, by the novel and unsettled attitude of a revolutionary army, young in rebellion, and a government still of doubtful independency, and unestablished freedom, others, of a character not less distressing, but of an individual and personal nature, rendered it one of the most afflicting eras of his life; and the more that inexorable justice pleaded for the life of the *Spy*, as an atonement for an oppressed people, and their violated liberty, as a pledge of the eventual independence of their country, and as a shield against the future stroke of disguised treason, the more did compassion and humanity plead for the life of the victim, with the trumpet tongue of his virtues, his talents, his accomplishments, and his honour.

Perhaps no man ever paid the penalty of death, so totally exempt from all the sordid attributes of crime, to take from the deed its natural horrors, or steel the blessed sympathy of the human heart by the grovelling atrocity of the victim, against the shedding of the blood of a fellow creature.

Genius and virtue threw all the fascinating hues of romance over the execution of this ill-fated son of destiny. Brave, generous, and lofty, endowed with the most exalted sense of honor, and a gallantry approaching the spirit of the old cavaliers of romance, possessing talents of the highest order, and an intellect cultivated to the most brilliant point of perfection; joined to all those refined sensibilities, which constitute the poetry of life, and rescue us from the grovelling vices and debasing passions of our kind, Andre became an object of interest and concern to all, but in a particular manner to Washington, who being so richly gifted with the same attributes, became fully qualified to appreciate all his virtues, and to sympathise acutely in his misfortune. But, however deeply he might feel, his natural firmness and heroic sense of duty to his country, to liberty,

and to independence, forbade him to disclose the agony which wrung his heart when he found himself constrained by every obligation of patriotic duty to enforce the verdict of the court martial; and if a tear fell to moisten the paper, when he appended his signature to the warrant for his execution, it was the hallowed tribute which nature, in a virtuous bosom, ever pays to the afflictions of a noble mind, and redeemed the act of *state policy* from every vestige of revenge, cruelty, or design.

The unceasing efforts of the British government to rescue Andre from his impending fate, did honor to the country in whose service his life was so fruitlessly sacrificed, and wipe away some of the dark stain which the honors and rewards they bestowed upon the traitor-knave who had enticed him into so disgraceful an end, and who, while virtue continues to be cherished, or patriotism rewarded with the applause of men, will continue to be doomed to everlasting execration, as one who combined splendour of talents with the perfection of crime, and whose *name* will be appropriated by the remotest generations of mankind, to cover with the leprosy of infamy, all vile deeds, whose atrocity may fail to be expressed in the common words of our language, which, when they fail to express the concentration of human villany, will find an ample substitute in the name of *Benedict Arnold*.

Allied to some of the first families of Great Britain, and placed by royal patronage in the highest path of preferment, the fate of Major Andre produced an impression which extended even to the heart of the throne, and drew tears from the brightest eyes of Europe. Contracted in vows of love, to one of the most beautiful and accomplished daughters of England, the fate of Andre became a touching theme for the poet, as well as an instructive moral to the historian; and while the bosom of beauty sighed over his fate, the lyre of the minstrel tuned a monody to his melancholy and ill-fated love.

To Washington only could the execution of a sentence which awakened such profound and universal sympathy, have been fulfilled without producing imputations of cruelty, and a vindictive thirst of blood. But in him the mild benevolence of his heart, the lofty justice of his mind, and the exalted purity of his feelings and intentions, interposed the bulwark of humanity against the remotest suspicion of

want of mercy. Washington never shed blood but with anguish, and on occasions of the most dire necessity. He took no delight in scenes of carnage, and never exposed the lives of his soldiers more than was absolutely necessary to the purpose in hand; being more frugal of the expenditure of life than any general who ever led a squadron to the field, in any age, or any country.

The entire safety of the American cause pleaded with irresistible eloquence in favour of the execution of Andre; and the flight and escape of Arnold added weight to every consideration of policy that operated to induce the doom of the former. The attempt of the British alone to enter the American camp with overflowing purses of gold, tempting the weak and corrupting the wicked, demanded exemplary punishment on the part of the commander in chief; and however sophistry might quibble about the justice of the sentence of the court martial, on the ground that Andre did not *enter* the American lines in disguise, the fact never was disputed that he was arrested in disguise *within* the American lines.

The whole deportment of Major Andre, however, was so frank, manly, and honourable, as to enlist among his warmest champions and admirers the most zealous friends of American independence, who only regretted that fortune should have favoured the flight of the infamous traitor Arnold, while adversity cast her toils around his brilliant but less fortunate victim: for Andre confessed, with the frankness of a soldier, and the veracity of a man of honor, the object of his visit to West Point; and instead of vexing the case by equivocations and concealment, threw himself at once on the magnanimity of his foes, by avowing his real designs. It will, however, notwithstanding the fact of his disguise, ever continue a disputed point, whether he could strictly be viewed in the light of a spy; but the necessity of his execution was placed beyond a doubt, and his claim to be set at liberty, under all the circumstances, never could be fully established. But his death did not sully his fame, or cover him with opprobrium—having died like a hero as he had lived like a man of bravery and honor. The most rigid patriot may give a tear to his fate, feel esteem for his virtues, and express admiration for his heroism, valour, and genius.

The measures of Congress were still distracted by two

opposing parties, one of which entered fully into the views of Washington, as to the necessity of *consolidated power in one head*; whilst the other, jealous of military supremacy, which they feared might prove detrimental to liberty after the restoration of peace, were opposed to every measure that aimed to give vigor to its organisation, or too much power to its friends.

To counteract this disposition, he again addressed remonstrances to Congress against the inefficient state of the army, exhorting that body to more activity, and depicting, in strong language, the necessity for renewed exertion, and more energetic preparations to take the field. A majority of Congress were, however, found to be opposed to his *strong system*; and a committee reported, reducing the numbers of the regiments, which was sustained by the whole body. To this Washington objected; and having submitted his arguments against it, and brought forward his own plan, Congress receded from their ground, and fell into his views, of 'an army *entirely* for the war, and half pay for life.'

Few military operations occurred under Washington's command during the campaign of 1780; and of those few, none were of magnitude or importance enough to claim the attention of this history besides those already related.

General Greene being appointed, at the instance of Washington, to the command of the southern division, prosecuted the war in that quarter with much vigor, and some partial success; while a court martial was ordered to inquire into the conduct of General Gates.

The battle of the Cowpens, which occurred on the 17th January, 1781, under General Morgan, over the troops of Tarleton, was the most decisive triumph of the American arms, that was achieved this year; the loss of the Americans being only eighty in killed and wounded, whilst it deprived Cornwallis of one-fifth of his numbers, besides arms, ammunition, baggage, and horses. Morgan, however, was in turn compelled to retreat into Virginia, before the superior forces of Cornwallis, who instantly marched to intercept the victorious army. But our limits do not admit of our giving a more minute account of that section of the army, not immediately under the command of Washington.

The revolt of the Pennsylvania line, in the northern army, thirteen hundred of whom left the army, and marched to-

wards Princeton, at one time, threatened serious consequences to the American cause, and engaged the special attention of Washington, but which was finally settled by a committee of Congress, who agreed to the terms of the mutineers, and nearly the whole line received their discharge. The success of this revolt now stimulated the Jersey line to attempt the same terms; but Washington, having become alarmed for the safety of the whole army, determined to yield to no complaints whilst they retained arms in their hands, and despatched General Howe to reduce them to unconditional submission, and execute the ringleaders. This decisive step checked the spirit of revolt. On both occasions, the British general attempted, without success, to buy over the mutineers, the want of pay having been the chief cause of the sedition; but the troops indignantly rejected the infamous terms.

Colonel Laurens was now despatched to France to negotiate a loan, and carried with him a full exposition of the state of our affairs, in the form of a letter from the pen of Washington, breathing the purest spirit of wisdom, and replete with just reflections and sound views, which could not fail to produce a powerful impression on the cabinet of Versailles.

To the untiring exertions of Washington must be ascribed the resolution now passed by Congress, recommending to the States to vest the power in Congress to levy for the use of the United States a duty of *five per centum ad valorem* on all goods, wares, and merchandise of foreign growth and manufacture; and on all prizes and prize goods, condemned in the American courts; which was to constitute a fund to pay the principal and interest of all debts contracted in the prosecution of the war, and to *continue till those debts should be discharged*. An attempt was made to bestow on the federal head a *full power* to regulate commerce, and *increase* this impost at pleasure; but, as *Marshall* says, '*state influence predominated, and they were over-ruled by great majorities*. Still all the States would not unite in the proposed *limited* power.

A secretary for foreign affairs, or superintendant of finance, a secretary of war, and a secretary of marine, were now added to the other departments of government, for the first time.

About the same period, the articles of confederation were

agreed to, and ratified, as a means of prosecuting the war with more vigour; the property of the *public lands* within the chartered limits of some of the States, constituting the only impediment to its adoption; the States in whose limits the vacant lands were, claiming exclusive right to them; and those States who had *none*, urging that it should constitute a joint property for the common benefit.

Washington now turned his attention to repel the incursions making by Arnold into Virginia; and ordered a detachment of twelve hundred men under Lafayette, to march to the Chesapeake, there to be transported to Virginia, under convoy of a French frigate. He also addressed letters to *Governor Jefferson*, of Virginia, and the *Baron Steuben*, to aid, assist, and advance the expedition; having given instructions to Lafayette to grant Arnold no terms, which might avert the punishment due to his crimes. But Lafayette having failed in his expedition, Arnold escaped; and Cornwallis concentrated his forces, with the object of a more active and vigorous prosecution of the campaign.

The middle and lower parts of Virginia, now became the theatre of a desolating war, in which private and public property shared an indiscriminate destruction. Among other plantations, *Mount Vernon* was threatened with conflagration by the commander of the British vessels in the Potomac; and only spared in consideration of the refreshments furnished by Mr. Lund Washington, to whom the General had confided the care of his plantation. On this occasion, Washington evinced the true feelings of the patriot; for, on being informed of the circumstance of the enemy having spared his estate, he addressed his kinsman a letter couched in the following terms: "I am sorry to hear of your loss; I am a little sorry to hear of my own: but, that which gives me most concern, is, that you should have gone on board the vessels of the enemy, and furnished them with refreshments. It would have been a less painful circumstance to me, to have heard, that in consequence of your non-compliance with their request, they had burnt my house, and laid the plantation in ruins. You ought to have considered yourself as my representative, and should have reflected on the bad example of communicating with the enemy, and making a voluntary offer of refreshment to them, with a view to prevent a conflagration."

The Governor of Virginia, Mr. Jefferson, and most of the

members of Congress, now united in urging Washington to the defence of his native state; and Lafayette expressed particular solicitude, that he would by his presence at home, rouse the people to make a spirited effort to expel the enemy. This request, he would not, however, comply with, having meditated a combined operation against New York, from which he hoped to achieve greater benefits to the whole union.

Wayne having attacked the line of Cornwallis near Jamestown, was compelled to retreat; but the English general did not follow up his advantage, from an impression, that an assault so daring, implied a greater force than it was prudent to pursue.

In conjunction with the Count De Rochambeau, Washington now digested a plan of operations against New York. The American army amounted to but four thousand five hundred, while the French troops did not exceed fifteen hundred.

Robert Morris was now appointed *Superintendent of Finance*; and upon his talents, credit, and exertions, now depended the safety of the army, and the success of the campaign. He realised all the confidence reposed in him, and was the means of ensuring a successful termination of hostilities, so far as they depended on the sinews of war. Enlightened, just, and sagacious, he restored the public credit, replenished the military chest, and gave vigour and efficiency to all those necessary departments of subsistence, which are so indispensable to the movements of an army.

With Mr. Morris originated the plan of a *National Bank*, which, like the project of consolidated power in the union, and a standing army at the nod of the federal government, has excited so much controversy and opposition. The capital was to consist of four hundred thousand dollars by private subscription; to be incorporated by government, and subject to the inspection of the Superintendent of Finances, their notes being receivable by all as specie, the states, as well as the federal government. Congress passed an act of incorporation for this Bank on the 31st of December, 1781.

At the same time, he contracted with government to farm the taxes of Pennsylvania, for which he engaged to furnish the army with flour, a contract which he punctually fulfilled, and the advantages of which were inappreciable.



Washington having found the enemy too powerful and vigilant in New York, to admit of a successful attack with inferior forces, now turned his attention towards the South, as the most eligible field for decisive operations; and Lafayette was directed so to dispose of his troops as to prevent Cornwallis from escaping, by a sudden march to Charleston.

The Count De Grasse arrived in the Chesapeake, with twenty-eight sail of the line, and several frigates late in August, where he received full intelligence of the situation of the armies, from an officer despatched by Lafayette for that purpose. In the mean while, Lord Cornwallis was fortifying himself in Yorktown. In compliance with his orders from Washington, Lafayette had occupied a position on James River, to oppose any movement of the English general to escape to South Carolina. Four French ships of the line, and several frigates, were now ordered to blockade the mouth of York River, and convey the land forces under the Marquis St. Simon, to form a junction with the troops of Lafayette.

Washington having determined to direct the active operations of the allied armies against Lord Cornwallis, immediately prepared to carry his plan into effect without delay, and with all possible vigour. To General Heath, he assigned the defence of the posts on the Hudson, and the duty of protecting the surrounding country. Washington assumed in person the lead of the southern expedition.

After many feints and manœuvres, for the purpose of inducing the enemy to believe, that his object was *Staten Island*, he put both armies in motion, and having crossed the Hudson at King's Ferry, on the 25th of August, commenced his march for the Chesapeake; and so well had he managed to divert the attention of the English general from his real destination, that he had accomplished the passage of the Delaware, before the enemy suspected the real point of his hostility, and when it became too late to molest or obstruct him on his march.

While Washington was on his way to Virginia, Sir Henry Clinton, with a view, perhaps, of recalling him to a defence of the North, planned an expedition against New London, which he entrusted to the command of General Arnold, who, having stormed and captured the town, put the Americans to the sword after their surrender, in cold blood, and

with a cowardly ferocity, every way characteristic of the heart of a traitor; after which, with the dark spirit of a midnight incendiary, the town was devoted to the torch of conflagration, by which the wanton destruction of private property was immense and afflicting.

But Washington was not to be diverted from his design against Cornwallis; and having quickened his march, he reached Williamsburg, on the 14th of September, attended by the Count De Rochambeau, and the Chevalier De Chattleux, having previously made arrangements for the safe transportation of his army from the head of Elk to Baltimore.

His troops having arrived, Washington invested Yorktown, on the 25th of September; while the French admiral completely blockaded the town on the side of the mouth of James and York rivers.

Some uneasiness was now excited among the Americans, by the information of six ships of the line, and some troops having arrived at New York, under Admiral Digby, to reinforce the English.

Stimulated to renewed exertion, lest the British general should be relieved by a large reinforcement promised from New York, Washington pressed the siege with such unexampled rapidity, that, on the 11th of October, the second parallel was opened within three hundred yards of the British lines; and on the 14th, several redoubts of the enemy were carried by storm. Victory after victory perched on the banners of the combined armies; and every day beheld the works of the English sinking beneath the incessant fire of the gallant besiegers; and on the 17th, having become altogether untenable, Lord Cornwallis beat a parley to propose a cessation of hostilities for twenty-four hours, to allow commissioners to meet to settle the terms for the surrender of Yorktown and Gloucester, which being definitively agreed to on the 19th of October, Cornwallis surrendered his posts, with the garrisons that had defended them, together with the British shipping in the harbour, including their seamen, to the land and naval officers of America and France. The prisoners amounted to 7000 men.

The allied army under the command of Washington, was estimated at 16,000 men.

The capture of Yorktown, and the army of Cornwallis, being one of the most brilliant and important achievements

of the revolutionary war, excited a commensurate degree of triumph and exultation, throughout the United States, as the precursor of peace, as well as the means of glory. Congress greeted the event with a joy more than proportioned to its magnitude; and resolutions passed that body, returning the thanks of the nation to General Washington, to the Count De Rochambeau, to the Count De Grasse, and to the officers of the allied armies in general. A marble column commemorative of the event, to be erected in Yorktown, was also voted; besides two stands of colours being presented to Washington.

In addition to these manifestations of their high sense of the achievement, Congress issued a proclamation appointing a day for a general thanksgiving, for this signal interposition of Providence.

The lustre which this victory threw around the character of Washington, cast into shade whatever previous fame his talents had won, or his virtues had extorted. The voice of public praise rose to the pitch of enthusiastic veneration. Addresses, conceived in sincere gratitude, and couched in terms bordering on affectionate idolatry, poured in upon him from every city, town and hamlet of the union: as if the nation had been delivered of a devouring monster by his signal prowess, or rid of a wasting pestilence by his healing virtues. State governments, city authorities, learned institutions, and every variety of public bodies seemed to emulate each other, in the ardent expressions of the profound sense they entertained of his important services; of their sincere attachment to his person, and of their warm admiration for his character. Still, this praise neither excited him to vanity, nor inspired him with presumption.

Washington now urged the French admiral to co-operate in the prosecution of the war, until the British should be entirely expelled from the southern states, particularly invoking his aid against Charleston; but the prior plan of operations agreed on by the French squadron, prevented a compliance with his wishes.

General Green was now reinforced by a body of troops under General St. Clair, with orders to take Wilmington in his route to Charleston, and to dispossess the enemy of the former post. The French troops remained in Virginia: the Count De Grasse sailed for the West Indies, and Washington proceeded to Philadelphia; while Lafayette had permission to return to France.

The southern campaign was now prosecuted with vigour and success; but the nearly equal division of the people into whigs and tories, imparted to their hostilities a deep dye of vindictive passion, malignant ferocity, and cruel revenge. Bloody desolation marked the footsteps of the English foe, and the tory Americans: but still, victory hovered over the banner of freedom, and General Green obtained merited applause for his southern triumphs.

Not elated by his recent victory, Washington kept his mind steadily fixed upon preparations for the ensuing campaign of 1782; and, instead of relaxing, he determined to add fresh vigour to his exertions, to bring the war to a termination. In a letter to General Green, written at Mount Vernon, he thus discloses his opinions and designs, which evince not less wisdom in the man, than modest and un-presuming merit in the general: "I shall attempt to stimulate Congress to the best improvement of our late success, by taking the most vigorous and effectual measures to be ready for an early and decisive campaign the next year. My greatest fear is, that, viewing this stroke in a point of light which may too much magnify its importance, they may think our work too nearly closed, and fall into a state of languor and relaxation. To prevent this error, I shall employ every means in my power; and if, unhappily, we sink into this fatal mistake, no part of the blame shall be mine."

On the 27th of November, 1781, Washington arrived at Philadelphia, and Congress granted him an audience on the succeeding day, in order to aid in the proper establishment of the army; the same causes, want of money, inefficient taxation, and conflicting powers in the union and the state authorities, as those we have already related, having operated to enfeeble and derange it; the same remedies, therefore, were recommended by him, and the same difficulties obstructed their application. On this occasion, he again addressed circular letters to the States.

Happily for the Independence of America, the force of public opinion in Great Britain, was fast inclining that government to overtures of a general peace, and a disposition to recognise the independence of the United States; and, notwithstanding the warlike tone of the King's speech, at the opening of Parliament in November, the current soon began to run counter to the royal pleasure, and a large mi-

nority in favor of peace daily swelled its numbers, until it eventually shook the throne in the resolutions of a majority. A change of ministry, at first led to negotiations, and finally terminated in peace, on the 19th of April, 1783.

Every event on the part of the United States, had, for some time, been conspiring to render a peace absolutely necessary to their preservation. The treasury was exhausted of its last dollar. No portion of the taxes could be realised: the army was discontented, because impoverished; and seditious, because smarting under wrongs, which it had power, as well as inclination, to redress. Washington, ever watchful over the welfare of his country, had exhausted the resources of his genius, the influence of his character, and the force of his eloquence, to remove or mitigate these evils; but in vain: even his influence was compelled to wane, beneath a combination of evils, which no human fortitude could endure, nor patience submit to. Still, Washington had the address, the singular address and good fortune, not to quell the spirit which sought for justice, but to turn the feelings that were inflamed by wrongs, into a harmless channel. On this occasion, his services to his country, were not of less importance, than his most brilliant military achievements; and being based on feelings of equity, benevolence and justice, they far eclipse in moral grandeur, the most sanguine trophies that a martial victor ever displayed to the applause of people, intoxicated by the glare of glory.

Measures were now adopted for disbanding the army; but the wants of the treasury opposed serious obstacles to this proceeding: and a part of the Pennsylvania line having revolted, they marched from Lancaster to Philadelphia, where, being joined by other licentious soldiers, they besieged Congress in the State House, and compelled that body to adjourn to Princeton. In the mean time, Washington had ordered a detachment of fifteen hundred men, to suppress the mutiny; but before their arrival, the sedition had been quelled without bloodshed.

Thus terminated the war of seven years for American Independence, of which Washington had been, in so great a measure, the chief pillar and support: which originated in a difference apparently trifling; which was prosecuted through a series of difficulties and embarrassments, unexampled in the history of mankind; and which was finally achieved by those unseen combinations, and auspicious

events, which baffle and perplex the sagacity of man, at the same time that they excite his gratitude and admiration.

Throughout this long and arduous struggle, the whole American people displayed those virtues which most enoble human nature; and their patience, toil, suffering, bravery, and forbearance, entitle them to rank with any nation on the face of the globe. But, in a peculiar manner were they indebted to those shining virtues in the character of Washington, which, combined with his high faculties of genius and intellect to conduct them triumphantly through its fiery ordeal, and place them on the eminence, whose lofty and glittering peak, attracted the attention and applause of the world. Commenced without preparation; equally destitute of money, arms and discipline, the Revolution depended almost wholly for success, upon the genius and resources of the commander in chief; whose peculiar character alone fitted him to uphold it amidst adversity, rally it under defeat, and preserve it unbroken amidst convulsions. The experience in the case of General Gates, fully evinced what would have been its melancholy catastrophe, had the impetuous ambition of a fiery and adventurous commander, led on its starved battalions; or an intriguing and unprincipled adventurer, like Conway, or Arnold, had the disbursement of its funds, or the management of that suffering and seditious mass of undisciplined men, who could only be preserved in subordination by the personal influence of George Washington—his virtues, his genius, and his patriotism.

On the 25th of November, 1783, the British evacuated New York, and the American troops took possession of the town. Washington, accompanied by Governor Clinton, now made his public entry into the city; after which, he proposed to bid adieu to his companions in arms, prior to a resignation of his military command.

The account which *Gordon* has given us of this parting scene, would suffer by any abridgement: “This affecting interview took place on the 4th of December. At noon, the principal officers of the army assembled at Francis’ tavern; soon after which, their beloved commander entered the room. His emotions were too strong to be concealed. Filling a glass, he turned to them and said, ‘With a heart full of love and gratitude, I now take leave of you; I most devoutly wish that your latter days may be as prosperous

and happy, as your former ones have been glorious and honourable.' Having drank, he added, 'I cannot come to each of you to take my leave, but shall be obliged to you, if each of you will come and take me by the hand.' General Knox being nearest, turned to him; incapable of utterance, Washington grasped his hand, and embraced him. In the same affectionate manner, he took leave of each succeeding officer. In every eye stood the tears of dignified sensibility; and not a word was articulated to interrupt the majestic silence and the tenderness of the scene. Leaving the room, he passed through the corps of light infantry, and walked to Whitehall, where a barge awaited to carry him to Pawles Hook. The whole company followed in mute and solemn procession, with dejected countenances, testifying the feelings of delicious melancholy, which no language can describe. Having entered the barge, he turned to the company, and, waving his hat, bade them a silent adieu. They paid him the same affectionate compliment, and after the barge had left them, returned in the same solemn manner to the place where they had assembled."

Congress was then in session at Annapolis, and thither Washington repaired, to resign his commission into their hands. This eventful ceremony took place on the 23d of December, 1783. Having been introduced by the Secretary, he delivered the following address:

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

"Happy in the confirmation of our independence and sovereignty, and pleased with the opportunity afforded the United States, of becoming a respectable nation, I resign with satisfaction, the appointment I accepted with diffidence; a diffidence in my abilities to accomplish so arduous a task, which, however, was superseded by a confidence in the rectitude of our cause, the support of the SUPREME POWER OF THE UNION, and the patronage of Heaven.

"The successful termination of the war has verified the most sanguine expectations; and my gratitude for the interposition of Providence, and the assistance I have received

from my countrymen, increases with every review of the momentous contest.

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

“ I consider it as an indispensable duty to close this last act of my official life, by commending the interests of our dearest country, to the protection of Almighty God, and those who have the superintendence of them to his holy keeping.

“ Having now finished the work assigned me, I retire from the great theatre of action, and bidding an affectionate address to this august body, under whose orders I have so long acted, I here offer my commission, and take my leave of all the employments of public life.”

To this address, Congress returned an appropriate reply, couched in the spirit of gratulation, praise and affection.

Finding himself thus relieved from the cares of public life, he now retired to *Mount Vernon*, followed by the esteem, admiration, gratitude and love of the whole American people.

It would, perhaps, have been more consonant to the unobtrusive and simple principles of genuine republicanism, had this virtuous and laudable feeling of veneration for their late chief, been restrained within the limits of addresses, resolutions, and declarations of gratitude and attachment, instead of manifesting its extravagance in statues, monuments, and columns, whose pomp seemed to reflect the tinsel of royal governments, and might tend to corrupt the integrity of republican truth. Great by nature, and still greater by his virtues, no outward homage could increase his glory, no splendour of magnificence inflate him with pride.

Unmoved by the torrent of adulation which flowed upon him, he devoted his hours to domestic happiness, and the pursuits and improvements of agriculture, which had al-



ways been his favourite occupation. His feelings in his new retirement will be best understood by his own expression of them. In a letter to Governor Clinton, three days after his reaching Mount Vernon, he says: ‘The scene is at length closed. I feel myself eased of a load of public care, and hope to spend the remainder of my days in cultivating the affections of good men, and in the practice of the domestic virtues.’ In another to Lafayette, he thus unfolds the sound philosophy of his mind and benevolent emotions of his heart: “At length, my dear Marquis, I have become a private citizen on the banks of the Potomac, and, under the shadow of my own vine and my own fig tree, free from the bustle of a camp, and the busy scenes of public life, I am solacing myself with those tranquil enjoyments, of which the soldier, who is ever in pursuit of fame—the statesman whose watchful days and sleepless nights are spent in devising schemes to promote the welfare of his own, perhaps the ruin of other countries, as if this globe was insufficient for us all—and the courtier, who is always watching the countenance of his prince, in the hope of catching a gracious smile, can have very little conception. I have not only retired from all public employments, but am retiring within myself, and shall be able to view the solitary walk, and tread the paths of private life, with heartfelt satisfaction. Envious of none, I am determined to be pleased with all; and this, my dear friend, being the order of my march, I will move gently down the stream of life, until I sleep with my fathers.”

It was evident, however, that this desire of private contentment, required a struggle; and that his mind, long accustomed to public command, could not immediately subside into the tranquil current of domestic ease. In a letter to General Knox, he thus depicts this difficulty of weaning his thoughts from the turmoil of public affairs: “I am just beginning to experience the ease and freedom from public cares, which, however desirable, takes some time to realise; for, strange as it may seem, it is nevertheless true, that it was not until lately, I could get the better of my usual custom of ruminating, as soon as I awoke in the morning, on the business of the ensuing day, and of my surprise at finding, after revolving many things in my mind, that I was no longer a public man, or had any thing to do with public transactions. I feel now, however, as I conceive a wearied

traveller must do, who, after treading many a painful step with a heavy burden on his shoulders, is eased of the latter, having reached the haven to which all the former were directed, and from his house-top is looking back, and tracing with an eager eye, the meanders by which he escaped the quicksands and mires which lay in his way, and into which none but the all powerful guide and dispenser of human events, could have prevented his falling.”

He now devoted himself to agriculture, and plans of internal improvement, for which purpose he explored the western parts of Virginia, Ohio, and Pennsylvania, and particularly directed his attention to improve the navigation of the Potomac and James Rivers. Extending his views to the western country, he gave a luminous exposition of the sound policy of connecting that section of the union more closely with the eastern states, by means of *internal improvements*.

How deeply the love of fame was implanted in his heart, and how pure was his ambition which thirsted for glory, will appear from an extract of his letter, in which he declined to receive a donation of one hundred and fifty shares in the Potomac and James River Navigation Company, from the States of Virginia and Maryland, who seized that occasion to testify their gratitude and respect towards him, in a substantial form.

“Not content,” (he writes,) “with the bare consciousness of my having in all this navigation business, acted upon the clearest conviction of the political importance of the measure, I would wish that every individual who may hear that it was a favorite plan of mine, may know also, that I had no other motive for promoting it, than the advantage of which I conceived it would be productive to the union at large, and to this state in particular, by cementing the eastern and western territory together, at the same time that it will give vigour and increase to our commerce, and be a convenience to our citizens.

“How would this matter be viewed then, by the eye of the world, and what opinion would be formed, when it comes to be related, that G\*\*\*\*\* W\*\*\*\*\* exerted himself to effect this work, and that G\*\*\*\*\* W\*\*\*\*\* has received *twenty thousand dollars*, and *five thousand pounds sterling* of the public money as an interest therein? Would not this, (if I am entitled to any merit for the part I have

performed, and without it there is no foundation for the act) deprive me of the principal thing which is laudable in my conduct? Would it not, in some respects, be considered in the same light as a pension? and would not the apprehension of this induce me to offer my sentiments in future, with the more reluctance? In a word, under whatever pretence, and however customary these gratuities may be in other countries, should I not thenceforward, be considered as a dependant?—one moment's thought of which would give me more pain than I should receive pleasure from the product of all the tolls, was every farthing of them vested in me."

An invidious mind might detect a spark of *pride* in this sentiment, but a liberal one would perceive nothing but the most exalted patriotism! The stock thus declined for his private emolument, being appropriated by him to the establishment of two seminaries of learning.

The pride of station, and the ostentation of rank peculiar to royal governments, are not only necessary to the safety of the King, but indispensable to the pomp and glitter of a court: hence, they are as foreign to the simplicity of a republic, and the virtuous habits of a free and equal people, as pure republican principles would be inconsistent with, as well as destructive of, royal power and regal magnificence.

Happily for the fame of Washington, the project for the establishment of the society of the Cincinnati, did not originate with him. "This idea," (says Marshall) "was suggested by General Knox, and matured in a meeting composed of the generals, and of deputies from the regiments, at which *Major General le BARON STEUBEN* presided. An agreement was then entered into, by which the officers were to constitute themselves into one society of friends, to *endure as long as they should endure, or any of THEIR ELDEST MALE POSTERITY*; and in failure thereof, any *collateral branches* who might be judged worthy of becoming its supporters and members, were to be admitted into it. To mark their veneration for that celebrated Roman, between whose situation and their own, they found some similitude, they were to be denominated the SOCIETY OF THE CINCINNATI. Individuals of the respective States, distinguished for their patriotism and abilities, might be admitted as honorary members for life, provided their numbers should at no time exceed a ratio of one to four.

“The society was to be *designated* by a MEDAL OF GOLD, representing the American eagle, bearing on its breast *the devices of the ORDER*, which was to be suspended by a *deep blue ribband, edged with white*,” &c. &c. Of this new order, Washington was unanimously chosen president.

“Without experiencing any open opposition,” (says Marshall) “this institution was carried into complete effect; and its honours, especially by the foreign officers, were sought with great avidity. But soon after it was organised, those jealousies, which in its first moments had been concealed, burst forth into open view. In October, 1783, a pamphlet was published by Mr. Burk, of South Carolina, for the purpose of rousing the apprehensions of the public, and of directing its resentments against the society. Perceiving in the Cincinnati, the foundation of an HEREDITARY ORDER, whose base, from associating with the *Military the chiefs of the POWERFUL FAMILIES* in each State, would acquire a degree of solidity and strength admitting of any superstructure, he pourtrayed, in that fervid and infectious language, which is the genuine offspring of passion, the *dangers* to result from the fabric which would be erected on it. The Ministers of the United States too, in Europe, and the political theorists who cast their eyes towards the west for support to favorite systems, having the PRIVILEGED ORDERS constantly in view, were loud in their condemnation of an institution, from which a RACE OF NOBLES WAS EXPECTED TO SPRING. Throughout every State the *alarm was spread, and a high degree of jealousy pervaded the mass of the people.*”

WASHINGTON endeavoured to procure a modification of some of the aristocratic features of the institution, but without success.

The same apprehensions of this society have continued to exist up to the present period, although much diminished by the extinction of its original members, wrought by the hand of time, and the progress of free principles.

Experience having proved the articles of confederation, under which the thirteen States were united together, to be insufficient for the prosperous, efficient, and harmonious government of the whole, especially for the preservation of the PUBLIC CREDIT, and the payment of the public debt; the design of substituting a more efficient union, began to be generally entertained.

I have already adverted to the two great parties, into which the country was divided; one in favor of the *sovereignty of the States*, and the other inclining to invest the *federal government* with powers so absolute and unlimited, as to make the UNION paramount, and reduce the States to entire subserviency to the UNION: one being in favour of THE NATION—the other giving a preference to a cluster of independent republics. Hence a wide contrariety of opinion prevailed, as to the measures to be adopted, to *ensure union*, without *endangering liberty!*

Many of the officers of the army had been elected to the Congress of 1783, and these formed the head of that party which inclined to vest SUPREME POWER *in the UNION*.

At the head of this *party*, for such it indubitably was, stood George Washington—unsurpassed in genius and talent—unrivalled in purity and patriotism.

I have already alluded to the manner in which the military attitude of Washington, and his contact to the civil power, had gradually inducted him into speculations of government peculiar to the practical statesman; and that sad experience of the evils of a relaxed system of polity, had deeply imbued his mind in favor of that *high toned* authority which assimilates to martial discipline and vigour. In accordance with these ideas, prompted by his extreme solicitude for the good of his country, he addressed on the 8th of June, 1783, a circular letter to the Governors of the several States respectively, from which I must cite the following extracts. Speaking of the option of government left to the United States, he says: “This is the time of their political probation; this is the moment when the eyes of the whole world are turned upon them; this is the moment to establish, or ruin their national character forever; this is the favourable moment to give such a tone to our federal government, as will enable it to answer the ends of its institution, or this may be the ill-fated moment for relaxing the powers of the Union, annihilating the cement of the confederation, and exposing us to become the sport of European politics, which may play one State against another, to prevent their growing importance, and to serve their own interested purposes. For, according to the system of policy the States shall adopt at this moment, they will stand or fall; and by their confirmation or lapse, it is yet to be decided, whether the revolution must ultimately

be considered as a blessing or a curse—a blessing or a curse, not to the present age alone, for, with our fate, will the destiny of unborn millions be involved.”

“There are four things which I humbly conceive, are essential to the well-being, I may even venture to say, to the existence of the United States, as an independent power.

“1st. An *indissoluble* UNION of the States under *one federal head*.

“2d. A sacred regard to public justice.

“3d. The adoption of a proper peace establishment, and

“4th. *The prevalence of that PACIFIC and FRIENDLY disposition among the people of the United States, which will induce them to forget their local prejudices and politics, to make those mutual concessions which are requisite to the general prosperity, and in some instances, to SACRIFICE THEIR INDIVIDUAL advantages TO THE INTEREST OF THE COMMUNITY.*

“These are the pillars on which the glorious fabric of our independency and national character must be supported. *LIBERTY is the basis*, and whoever would dare to sap the foundation, or overturn the structure, under whatever specious pretext he may attempt it, will merit the bitterest execration, and the severest punishment which can be inflicted by his injured country.”

Such sentiments not only ennoble and dignify, but immortalise their author; and whatever prejudices he may have cherished in favour of a vigorous authority in the Union, were more than atoned for by the purity of his patriotism, and the exalted honesty of his heart.

Again, in the same letter, breathing nothing but hallowed patriotism, he says, “It is only in our *united character* that we are known as an empire, that our independence is acknowledged, that our power can be regarded, or our credit supported among foreign nations. The treaties of the European powers with the United States of America, will have no validity on a dissolution of the Union. We shall be left nearly in a state of nature, or we may find, by our own unhappy experience, that there is a natural and necessary progression from the extreme of anarchy to the extreme of tyranny, and that arbitrary power is most easily established on the ruins of liberty abused to licentiousness.”

But, however forcible in the abstract, or desirable in the practice, may be the principle of *energy and coercion*, to fulfil the ends of government, it may still be questioned, whether in the present era of the world, it is feasible to apply the doctrine of force and compulsion towards the individual States of the confederacy, even supposing it to be sanctioned by the terms of the compact. The progress of human rights, even in Europe, has interposed PUBLIC OPINION, to arrest the most despotic powers of the most ancient regal dynasties, embedded in the tyranny and barbarism of feudal systems, and gothic absolutism. Power claimed to be derived from Heaven, or resting on the moss covered columns of Rome, or Constantinople, or emerging from the glimmer of right, under the vague sanction of a charter, has, in every clime been melted by the sun of liberty into a form in some degree plastic, under the force of PUBLIC OPINION. In a government founded on *rights*, and not on *compulsion*, justice and truth, not the edge of the sword, is both the arbiter of right, and the bloodless avenger of wrong: for a *free government* can only be preserved by *voluntary* submission; and no motive for its preservation will be found to exist, when, leaving the *moral energies of its citizens* to look to *physical coercion*, the *principle of cohesion* is rejected, for the action of momentary *impulsion*, which the instant it ceases, is followed by the *rebound* of discord and ruin. But these remarks will only apply to the case of STATES, not individual citizens; and to questions of *organic* controversy, not legal obligations and penalties.

He watched with peculiar solicitude, the conduct of the States, in relation to the revenue system of 1783, by which they were required to grant to Congress the power to *levy imposts*; but which the jealousy of the State of New York had reserved to itself, and was not willing to part with to the national government. On this subject, he seems to have *felt with passion, and to have thought with an energy and glow*, to which, on ordinary questions, he was an utter stranger. In a letter written by him in October, 1785, he said, "The war, as you have very justly observed, has terminated most advantageously for America; and a fair field is presented to our view; but I confess to you freely, my dear Sir, that I do not think we possess wisdom or justice enough to cultivate it properly. *Illiberality, jealousy* and

*local policy*, mix too much in all our public councils, for the good government of the Union. In a word, the confederation appears to me to be little more than a shadow without the substance; and Congress a nugatory body, their ordinances being little attended to. To me, it is a solecism in politics: indeed, it is one of the most extraordinary things in nature, that we should confederate as a nation, and yet be afraid to give the rulers of that nation, who are the creatures of our own making, appointed for a limited and short duration, &c. By such policy as this the wheels of government are clogged, and our brightest prospects, and that high expectation which was entertained of us by the wondering world, are turned into astonishment; and from the high ground on which we stood, we are descending into the vale of confusion and darkness.”

In answer to a letter from General Lafayette, in 1784, Washington thus expressed himself in relation to American affairs: “It is one of the evils of democratic governments, that the people, not *always seeing, and frequently misled*, must often feel before they act right. But evils of this nature seldom fail to work their own cure. It is to be lamented, nevertheless, *that the remedies are so slow*, and that those who wish to apply them seasonably, are not attended to before they suffer in person, in interest, and in reputation. I am not without hopes that matters will soon take a favourable turn in the federal constitution. The discerning part of the community have long since seen the necessity of giving adequate powers to Congress for national purposes, and those of a different description, must yield to it ere long.”

These arguments were not conceived with his usual acumen; for it was not the want of knowledge, but the democratic jealousy of power in the Union, which retarded the consummation for which he so devoutly prayed. The progress of events soon made this apparent, in the rise of *two great parties* in every State, ‘which,’ as Marshall says, ‘were *distinctly marked, and which pursued distinct objects* with systematic arrangement.’

One was rigid in justice, strict in public faith, friends to a vigorous course of taxation, and an energetic exercise of law and power, and strictly opposed to all relaxation of principles, as well as considerations of feeling, for individual distress, or national weakness. In fine, it embraced every



idea and principle, which went to constitute an aristocracy of virtue and talents; and on this ground it advocated an enlargement of the powers of the federal government, commensurate to the grand object of 'the dignity and character of the nation abroad, and its interests at home.' 'The other party,' says Marshall, 'marked out for itself a more indulgent course. Viewing with extreme tenderness the case of the debtor, their efforts were unceasingly directed to his relief. To exact a faithful compliance with contracts was a measure too harsh to be insisted on, and was one which the people would not bear. They were uniformly in favour of relaxing the administration of justice, of affording facilities for the payment of debts, or of suspending their collection, and of remitting taxes. The same course of opinion led them to resist every attempt to transfer from their own hands into those of Congress, powers which by others were deemed essential to the preservation of the Union.'

The latter party constituted a decided majority of the PEOPLE. The former comprehended men of great wealth, of political distinction, and eminent family honours, as well as the officers, in general, of the army and navy.

The contests between these parties now began to rage with great animation, whenever the period returned for the annual elections of public officers.

The project for a *convention of the States*, to revise the state of the Union, originated with VIRGINIA, in January 1786, and had its first conception at *Mount Vernon*, from the lips of Washington himself, whose paternal solicitude for his country was excited to the highest pitch, by the breach of the public faith in the matter of the national debt—the general embarrassments of the country—the confusion of political principles, and sovereign powers—and last, but not least, the virulence and rage of party conflicts, and jarring doctrines of tolerant liberty and inflexible justice.

To which of these parties Washington belonged will be seen from an extract from his Letter to the Governors of the States, already adverted to; and which will, at the same time, display the causes of their difference, as above detailed by Marshall. He says "The ability of the country to discharge the debts which have been incurred in its defence, is not to be doubted; an inclination, I flatter myself, will not be wanting. The path of our duty is plain before us. Ho-

nesty will be found, on every experiment, to be the best, and only true policy. Let us, then, as a nation, be just; let us fulfil the public contracts which Congress had undoubtedly a right to make, for the purpose of carrying on the war, with the same good faith we suppose ourselves bound to perform our private engagements. In the mean time, let an attention to the cheerful performance of their proper business as individuals, and as members of society, be earnestly inculcated on the citizens of America. Then will *they strengthen the hands of government*, and be happy under its protection. Every one will yield the fruit of his labours—every one will enjoy his own acquisitions without molestation, and without danger.” If these views were correct, still much allowance ought to be made for those who opposed them, when it is considered how recently the PEOPLE had escaped from the oppressive yoke of Britain; and that the POWER OF TAXATION, and an absolute government, had been the cause of their disruption from the crown of England. It was a pardonable error, if an error, to lean on the side of right, liberty, and ease, in preference to *taxation, energetic authority, and voluntary impoverishment*. But this will more fully appear as we proceed in the history of the great father of his country.

It having been settled that the Convention should meet in Annapolis, in the month of September, 1786, public attention was excited to an intense degree, in every section of the Union, upon the subject of its deliberations. Among others, Washington stood prominent for the boldness of his sentiments, and the magnitude of the powers to be vested in the Federal Union. In reply to a letter from Mr. Jay, he thus expresses himself:—“Your sentiments that our affairs are drawing rapidly to a crisis, accord with my own. What the event will be is also beyond the reach of my foresight. We have errors to correct; we have probably had too good an opinion of human nature in forming our confederation. Experience has taught us that men will not adopt and *carry into execution measures the best calculated for their own good, without the intervention of COERCIVE POWER*. I do not conceive we can exist long as a nation, without lodging somewhere a power which *will pervade the whole Union in as energetic a manner as the authority of the State governments extends over the several States*. To be fearful of investing Congress, constituted as that body

is, *with ample authorities* for national purposes, appears to me the very climax of popular absurdity, and madness. Could Congress exert them for the detriment of the people, without injuring themselves in an equal or greater proportion? Are not their interests inseparably connected with those of their constituents?" &c. "Many are of opinion that Congress have too frequently made use of the suppliant humble tone of requisition in applications to the States, *when they had a right to assert their IMPERIAL DIGNITY, and COMMAND OBEDIENCE.* Be that as it may, requisitions are a perfect nullity, where thirteen sovereign, independent disunited States, are in the habit of discussing, and refusing or complying with them at their option. Requisitions are actually little better than a jest and a bye-word throughout the land. If you tell the Legislatures they have violated the treaty of peace, and invaded the prerogatives of the confederacy, they will laugh in your face. What then is to be done? Things cannot go on in the same train forever. It is much to be feared, as you observe, that the better kind of people, being disgusted with these circumstances, will have their minds prepared for any revolution whatever. We are apt to run from one extreme into another. To anticipate and prevent disastrous contingencies, would be the part of wisdom and patriotism."

In the succeeding extract, we behold one of the most astonishing proofs of his ardent love of liberty, that reason could induce us to look for, or imagination realise in its wildest visions of human perfection; and which stamps him as inferior to none of the great champions of equal rights and human liberty.

"What astonishing changes a few years are capable of producing! I am told, that even respectable characters speak of a monarchical form of government without horror. From thinking proceeds speaking, thence to acting, is often but a single step. But how irrevocable and tremendous! what a triumph for our enemies to verify their predictions! what a triumph for the advocates of despotism to find that we are incapable of governing ourselves, and that systems *founded on the basis of EQUAL LIBERTY* are merely ideal and fallacious! Would to God that wise measures may be taken in time to avert the consequences we have but too much reason to apprehend.

"Retired as I am from the world, I frankly acknowledge

I cannot feel myself an unconcerned spectator. Yet, having happily assisted in bringing the ship into port, and having been fairly discharged, it is not my business to embark again on a sea of troubles.

“Nor could it be expected that my sentiments and opinions would have much weight on the minds of my countrymen. They have been neglected, though given as a last legacy in the most solemn manner, I had then, perhaps, some claims to public attention. I consider myself as having none at present.”

In this last sentiment, the father of his country underrated his own weight of character, and undervalued the sagacity and virtue of the people to appreciate his opinions, and pay deference to his judgment. Like all great minds, he was too precipitate in pronouncing judgment on his own weight of reputation, and, because the people would not immediately and implicitly adopt his views, he hastened to the unjust conclusion, that he was neglected, and that the public no longer esteemed the edicts of his genius, or the suggestion of his patriotism.

The Convention to revise the federal government being assembled at Annapolis, it was found that five States only had deputed commissioners—New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia. Mr. Dickerson being appointed president, they proceeded to the discussion of the object of their meeting, but finding their powers too limited to arrive at any profitable results, and that a minority of the States only were represented, they resolved to adjourn without any final action on the subject; having agreed to submit reports to their respective States, representing the expediency of revising and extending the federal system; for which purpose they recommended the appointment of deputies by the State Legislatures, to meet in Convention in the city of Philadelphia, on the 2d of May, 1787.

The *Legislature of Virginia*, in conformity to this recommendation, passed an act for the appointment of deputies, to assemble in convention at Philadelphia, for the purposes specified in the report of the Convention at Annapolis.

Against his wishes, and in opposition to his remonstrances, Virginia placed Washington at the head of her deputation to the federal convention, for reasons which Mr. Madison thus detailed in a letter addressed to him: “It

has been thought advisable to give this subject a very solemn dress, and all the weight which could be derived from a single State. This idea will also be pursued in the selection of characters to represent Virginia in the federal convention. You will infer our earnestness on this point, from the liberty which will be used of placing your name at the head of them. How far this liberty may correspond with the ideas by which you ought to be governed, will be best decided where it must ultimately be decided. In every event it will assist powerfully in marking the zeal of our legislature, and its opinion of the magnitude of the occasion." This appointment, so flattering to the pride of Washington, and so important to the country, he subsequently accepted, after many arguments and objections, all of which, however, were wholly detached from the merits of the question, or the principles involved in it.

It was certainly a spectacle of a novel character, to behold the eyes of all men turned towards Washington, in this civil crisis of the republic, to take a lead in the Convention, that was to revise and permanently settle the constitution of the United States. It was the more singular, from the fact, that his education was not scholastic, nor his studies in the civil or national law such as to qualify him to take a seat on equal grounds with such profound scholars and jurists, as Madison, Franklin, Adams, JEFFERSON, and others. Yet such was the fact, that the genius of Washington, combined with good sense, practical knowledge, and much experience, had qualified him for this task in a very eminent manner, and had even rendered him superior, in some respects, to those who were most pre-eminently qualified, in a mechanical sense, to discharge the duties of the important tasks assigned them.

The fact, however, cannot be concealed, that Washington had been *in reality*, the President of the United States, during the whole period of his military command—Congress having always acted by his promptings, or under his counsel and advice; so that his perpetual contact with the civil authority, and his influence over its deliberations, invested him with power, even greater than that of a Roman Dictator; while it excited his mind to a perpetual investigation of all those great principles, which enter into the formation of government, not as a *theory*, but a *practical system*, where the means proposed were to be chosen directly in

reference to the ends proposed to be attained. It is as a practical statesman, that we are to consider Washington—one who derived his knowledge from experience and observation, and who paid as little regard to abstract principles, or scientific deductions, in devising the means adapted to salutary ends, as he felt disposed to regard with indifference, the study of systems, and the forms of shadows, when the substance stood before him, ready to be grasped, and prepared for all the uses of beneficial application to the government and happiness of mankind.

Insurrections having broken out in Massachusetts, in all the forms of *ultra* democracy, inimical alike to liberty, law, property, peace, and the personal safety of the citizen, Washington experienced all the anxiety and solicitude of a fond father, for the menaced fate of his beloved country; and in a letter to his friend, Colonel Humphries, he thus poured forth his feelings, and expressed his fears. “For God’s sake, tell me,” said he, “what is the cause of all these commotions? do they proceed from licentiousness, *British influence* disseminated by the tories, or real grievances which admit of redress? If the latter, why was redress delayed until the public mind had become so much agitated? If the former, why are not the powers of government tried at once? It is as well to be without, as not to exercise them. Commotions of this sort, like snow-balls, gather strength as they roll, if there is no opposition in the way to divide and crumble them.”

In answer to this, the Colonel thus describes the causes of the tumults: “I believe there are a few real grievances; and also some wicked agents, or emissaries, who have been busy in magnifying the positive evils, and fomenting causeless jealousies and disturbances. But it rather appears to me, that there is a *licentious spirit prevailing among many of the people; a levelling principle; a desire of change; and a wish to annihilate all debts, public and private.*”

General Knox assigned the same causes to *Washington*, to explain the eastern insurrections: “The insurgents,” he said, “were chiefly of the young and active part of the community, who were more easily collected than kept together. Desperate and unprincipled, they would probably commit overt acts of treason,” &c. “It is indeed, a fact,” he observed, “that high taxes are the ostensible cause of the commotion; but that they are the real cause is as far

remote from truth, as light is from darkness. The people who are the insurgents, have never paid any, or but very little taxes. *But they see the weakness of government. They feel at once their own poverty, compared with the opulent, and their own force; and they are determined to make use of the latter, in order to REMEDY THE FORMER.* Their creed is, that the property of the United States has been protected from *confiscation by the joint exertions of all, and therefore ought to be COMMON TO ALL.* And he that attempts opposition to this creed, is an enemy to equity and justice, *and ought to be swept from the face of the earth."*

Such were the representations that were made to Washington, of the piratical character of the *American people*, by those high-toned officers of the army, who had access to his ear. Such representations, whether too highly coloured, or but faithful pictures of the real state of the popular mind in *New England*, could not fail to make a deep and painful impression on the mind of Washington, and to impregnate him with the idea, that the entire democracy of the Union was about to apply the hand of pillage to the fortunes of the opulent, and the sword of assassination to the throats of the virtuous. That his idea of the evil had been extravagantly exaggerated by these accounts, appears from some parts of his reply to the letter last quoted. "I feel, my dear General Knox," says Washington, "infinitely more than I can express to you, for the disorders which have arisen in these States. Good God! who, besides a tory, could have foreseen, or a Briton have predicted them? I do assure you, that even at this moment, when I reflect upon the present aspect of our affairs, it seems to me like the visions of a dream. My mind can scarcely realise it as a thing in actual existence—so strange, so wonderful does it appear to me. In this, as in most other matters, we are *too slow*. When this spirit first dawned, it might probably have been easily checked; but it is scarcely within the reach of human ken, at this moment, to say when, where, or how it will terminate. There are *combustibles in every State, to which a spark might set fire."*

Colonel Lee, a member of Congress, having addressed Washington a letter on the same subject, invoking him to throw the *influence* and weight of his personal character in the scale opposed to this seditious movement, the General answered him in a strain so decidedly in favour of the

*prompt application of coercive measures* on the part of the Union, that it deserves to be quoted, as well for its illustration of his energetic character, as for its analogy to recent movements in the *Southern States*; and which may excite regret in some, and exultation in others, that he could exhort to so severe, but so just an application of the remedy of *force*. Still, every opinion he utters is the opinion of a patriot, a sage, and a statesman, and are every way worthy of his genius and his fame.

“You talk, my good Sir,” he writes in his answer to Colonel Lee, “of employing influence to appease the present tumults in Massachusetts. I know not where that influence is to be found; nor, if attainable, that it would be a proper remedy for these disorders. *Influence* is not *government*. Let us have a *government*, by which our lives, liberties and properties will be secured; or let us know the worst at once. Under these impressions my humble opinion is, that there is a call for decision. Know precisely what the insurgents aim at. If they have *real* grievances, redress them if possible, or acknowledge the justice of them, and your inability to do it in the present moment. If they have not, employ the force of government against them at once. If this is inadequate, *all* will be convinced that the superstructure is bad, or wants support.”

“These are my sentiments. Precedents are dangerous things. Let the reins of government then be braced, and held with a steady hand, and *every violation of the Constitution be reprehended*. *If defective, let it be amended*, but not suffered to be trampled upon while it has an existence.”

As I consider the developement of the feelings and opinions of Washington upon this insurrection, to constitute the most important part of his life, as well as affording to the people of the United States, a solemn and instructive lesson against the evils of anarchy, and the calamities of disunion, I shall pursue the subject to its close, as I feel bound to make a solemn appeal to every American, to receive the admonitions of Washington, as a *political father*, whose sole care was the freedom and happiness of this people, and whose only aim was the untarnished glory and fame of our common country.

His friend, Colonel Humphries, now addressed him a letter, in which he thus expressed himself in relation to the delicate and critical attitude of Washington. “In case of



civil discord, I have already told you, it was seriously my opinion, that you could not remain neuter; and that you would be obliged, in self-defence, to take part on one side or the other, or withdraw from the continent. Your friends are of the same opinion; and I believe you are convinced, that it is impossible to have more disinterested or zealous friends, than those who have been about your person."

In his reply, the General said, and his sentiments deserve to be indelibly engraved upon every heart—"It is with the deepest and most heartfelt concern, I perceive by some late paragraphs extracted from the Boston papers, that the Insurgents of Massachusetts, far from being satisfied with the redress offered by their general court, are still acting in open violation of law and government, and have obliged the chief magistrate, in a decided tone, to call upon the militia of the State, to support the constitution. What, gracious God! is man, that there should be such inconsistency and perfidiousness in his conduct. It is but the other day that we were shedding our blood to obtain the constitutions under which we now live—constitutions of our own choice and making; and now, we are unsheathing the sword to overturn them. The thing is so unaccountable, that I hardly know how to realise it, or to persuade myself that I am not under the illusion of a dream."

Happily for Washington, the insurrection was quelled by a small force of the Boston militia, with little loss of lives, and in the course of a few days. But its influence on the approaching measures of the Federal Convention, was very great, as it inclined public opinion to strengthen and enlarge the powers of the Union.

The suspicion that Washington favoured a resort to FORCE, or military power, in preference to enlarging the authority of the Union, by a *Convention* of the States, having been propagated to his disadvantage, General Knox, who before had dissuaded him from attending as a delegate, now changed his opinion, and exhorted him to accept the appointment of his native State. Knox, in his letter says: "Were you not to attend the Convention, slander and malice might suggest, that FORCE *would be the most agreeable mode of reform to you.* When civil commotion rages, no purity of character, no services however exalted, can afford a secure shield from the shafts of calumny."

"On the other hand, the unbounded confidence the people

have in your tried patriotism and wisdom, would exceedingly facilitate the adoption of any important alterations that might be proposed by a Convention of which you were a member, and (as I before hinted) the *President*."

The Convention now met at Philadelphia, the representatives from twelve States, having presented themselves, *Rhode Island* only having been averse to the scheme. WASHINGTON having been unanimously chosen *President*, they immediately, with closed doors, began to prosecute the great and important subject of their congregation.

On the 17th of September, 1787, the CONVENTION was proclaimed to the people, accompanied by a resolution, that the fruit of their labours should be 'laid before the United States in Congress assembled;' and should afterwards be submitted to a convention of delegates chosen in each State by the people thereof, under the recommendation of its Legislature, for their assent and ratification—its ratification by *nine* States being required as the condition of its going into operation.

The Constitution, thus framed, was transmitted by Washington to Congress, in a letter written by him, in which it was said to be "the result of a spirit of amity, and of that mutual deference and concession, which the peculiarity of their political situation rendered indispensable." "That it will meet the full and entire approbation of every State," he continued, "is not, perhaps, to be expected; but each will doubtless consider, that had *her interests been alone consulted*, the consequences might have been, particularly disagreeable or injurious to others. That it is liable to as few exceptions as could reasonably have been expected, we hope and believe; that it may promote the lasting welfare of that country so dear to us all, and secure her freedom and happiness, is our most ardent wish."

It may safely be alleged, when we consider the vast disparity of views, discrepancy of principles, and discordancy of feeling, which prevailed in the convention, that its adoption was chiefly owing to the personal influence and political weight of character which, on the score of wisdom, purity, and patriotism, attached to the presence of *Washington*, who, soaring above all imputation of party, or undue bias, reposed on the broad doctrines of national happiness, political liberty, and united independence. This idea is fortified and confirmed by the strenuous opposition

made to it by those who constituted the democratic phalanx, and who advocated the *unimpaired sovereignty of the States*, and a constitution based on the principle of a *Union of Independent Nations*, in each of whom the sovereign power should reside without abatement or deduction. By these, the apprehension was cherished, that the cradle of the federal constitution would prove 'the grave of republican liberty.' Delusion and fallacy could extend no further.

It was mainly on this ground of '*State Sovereignty*,' that the constitution reported by the convention, was opposed on the part of some of the States; and that parties, arrayed against federal power, entered warmly into the discussion of its merits, in the interim between its promulgation by the convention, and its ratification by the States. To elucidate its merits, and enforce and illustrate its virtues, three of the most distinguished friends of Washington, noted for their political acumen, profound knowledge of jurisprudence, power of argument, and force of style, united their labours, in a series of papers, under the title of the "**FEDERALIST**;" the joint production of ALEXANDER HAMILTON, JOHN JAY, and JAMES MADISON; whilst, on the side of State sovereignty, popular rights, and limited government, were arrayed the powerful pens of the great champions of democracy: each party straining every nerve to prevent, or secure its ratification by the STATES.

Here, again, the weight and influence of *Washington's* character secured a result, which, without the authority of his name, and the magic power of his virtues, could not have been produced; for there is conclusive reason to believe, that had the *State Conventions* been left purely to the *naked merits of the Constitution*, the ratification by the number of States required to give it effect, could not have been obtained. Even Marshall is constrained to admit, that in some of the *adopting States*, a majority of the people were in opposition to it, and were only brought to acquiesce in its provisions, from a just dread of the calamitous consequences of a dismemberment of the Union, rather than from an approbation of the instrument which had been submitted for their sanction; and from a deference to the character of Washington, which no other man could have inspired.

The parties that divided on this momentous question, never afterwards reunited. The controversy was waged with warmth, and, in some cases, conducted with acrimony;

but where feelings were not embittered, convictions became only more strengthened by opposition; and the causes of difference, residing in a *radical disparity* of condition and fortune, or an equally insuperable inequality of views, intellect and reason; the minority, though vanquished, still remained unconvinced; and, holding with all the tenacity of right, to opinions which they conceived founded in justice, and sanctified by liberty, they waited in patience, to fight over the same battle on another field; resolved never to relinquish that *sovereignty of the States*, which they deemed essential to freedom, but to vindicate their opinions by concentrating the suffrages of the people upon those candidates, who would favour anti-federal doctrines, and thus effectually nullify a constitution in *practice*, which they wanted moral force to resist in *theory*. Thus became perpetuated those embittered feuds of the two parties, denominated *Federal* and *Democratic*; one clinging, under the guarantee of the constitution, to the supreme power of the Union, and the other tenaciously contending for a relaxed government and State sovereignty, by popular appeals to the people, and a rally of democracy at the polls.

Although every American must always bow with reverence before this monument of human wisdom, and rational liberty, yet, while we admire the beauty of its structure, the harmony of its parts, and the grandeur of the whole edifice, we may be permitted to lament, that its framers should have omitted to devise so essential a part of its organisation, as a TRIBUNAL explicitly as well as fully authorised and empowered to decide, in the *last resort*, on questions of doubtful powers exercised by the Union and the States; and without which final power in some tribunal, the States and the Union have been left to be the *interested* judges of the extent of their respective rights, powers, and sovereignties. This *organic defect* is the more to be deplored, as no occasion happened during the administration of Washington, to enable him to give the weight of his testimony on so fundamental a question: the western insurrection not being an analogous case, but a mere oppugnation of individuals to laws acknowledged on all hands to be *constitutionally enacted*.\* The great defect of the constitution

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\* This is admitted by Mr. Jefferson himself! See Letter to Madison, quoted in Life of Jefferson.

being, that when a power exercised by the federal government is denied to be authorised by that instrument, by a *sovereign State*, there is no tribunal to which to appeal, to settle the controversy—the functions of the *Supreme Court* only extending to *laws made* IN PURSUANCE of the constitution; thus leaving the *States* to decide in *Convention*, against laws, which may not be clearly and fully warranted by the *letter* of the federal compact. Some consolation for this omission, however, is to be found in the fact, that the number of such unauthorised laws must ever be rare, whilst the people remain virtuous, their rulers honest, and the press free and untrammelled.

Eleven states having ratified the constitution in 1788, measures were put in preparation to carry its provisions into effect. North Carolina and Rhode Island dissented, and New York *reluctantly* concurred.

It is impossible to doubt, that we are indebted to the great virtues, and unequalled popularity of Washington, for the formation, as well as the ratification of the FEDERAL CONSTITUTION.

Under a conviction of this fact, no sooner was the new political system about to be arranged into practice, than public attention became rivetted to Washington, as the first President of the United States. His valour, wisdom, prudence, and virtues, had achieved our independence, when, without him, it must, in all probability, have failed. His wisdom, perseverance, patriotism, and influence, had secured us a NATIONAL CONSTITUTION, when, without him, we should have broken into fragments, and sunk into anarchy and confusion: and it was but a just and rational deduction from these premises, that he alone, so pre-eminent for his virtues, and so distinguished for his triumphs, both civic and military, could be placed in the chair without exciting the clamour of party, or giving birth to the invidiousness of envy; for, to no party, *but to that of his country*, did he belong; and whatever differences might prevail among the people, or the leaders, it never impaired the unbounded confidence of the former in his patriotism, or provoked the malice of the latter, to question his motives: and, such a president was demanded as well by the friends as by the opponents of the new system, that its excellences might be developed with his skill and firmness, or its defects, if any, arrested and supplied by his wisdom, moderation, and virtue.

Another consideration of great and potent weight, likewise pointed to him, on this occasion, as the individual best qualified to carry into practice, the untried provisions of the new constitution: and this was, his intimacy with the designs, intentions, and meaning of the convention that formed it; and which his official situation as President of it, enabled him so fully to understand, and qualified him so admirably to administer, in his favourite branch of *practical jurisprudence*. Other considerations, too, had their weight, which were not easily defined, or specially referable to any one peculiar trait of his gigantic character, but which arose from the general grandeur of his lofty and towering virtues, which soared above all the common features of human frailty; and which pointed to him, with instinctive judgment, such as we feel towards the colossal statues of the gods, as the best qualified to control the destinies of mankind. Universal veneration, universal love, universal confidence, the feelings, the judgment, and the wisdom of men, all pointed to Washington, the untutored hero of the new world, as the first who should exercise the power of President of the United States.

Having avowed his determination no longer to endure the cares of public life, the first effort of his friends, was to wean him from his retirement, and persuade him to *complete* the splendid work which he had thus far perfected—the FOUNDATION OF THE REPUBLIC! For this purpose, those who stood highest in his esteem, and possessed the most influence over his mind, importuned him yet to sacrifice for the public good, and the glory of his country. His friend, Mr. Johnson, of Maryland, thus addressed him: “We cannot do without you, and I, and thousands more, can explain to any body but yourself, why we cannot do without you.” Gouverneur Morris wrote: “I have ever thought, and have ever said, that you must be the President; no other man can fill that office. No other man can draw forth the abilities of our country into the various departments of civil life. You, alone, can awe the insolence of opposing factions, and the greater insolence of assuming adherents. I say nothing of foreign powers, nor of their ministers; with these last you will have some plague. As to your feelings on this occasion, they are, I know, both deep and affecting; you embark property most precious, on a most tempestuous ocean: for, as you possess the highest

reputation, so you expose it to the perilous chance of popular opinion. On the other hand, you will, I firmly expect, enjoy the inexhaustible felicity of contributing to the happiness of all your countrymen. You will become the father of more than three millions of children; and while your bosom glows with parental tenderness, in theirs, or at least in a majority of them, you will excite the dutious sentiment of filial affection. This, I repeat it, is what I firmly expect; and my views are not directed by that enthusiasm which your public character has impressed on the public mind. *Enthusiasm* is generally short-sighted, and too often blind. I form my conclusions from those talents and virtues which the world *believes*, and which your friends *know* you possess."

Other and stronger letters from his friends in different sections of the Union, pressed him to the same point; and, among other reasons urged by his friend Colonel Lee, was the apprehension, that the rally of the enemies of the constitution, making in the several States, in opposition to the new system, would certainly prove but too successful, were any other less popular character placed in the Presidential chair.

In his reply to the letter of Colonel Lee, General Washington observed, "Your observations on the solemnity of the crisis, and its application to myself, bring before me subjects of the most momentous and interesting nature. In our endeavours to establish a new general government, the contest, nationally considered, seems not to have been so much for glory as existence. It was for a long time doubtful whether we were to survive as an independent republic, or decline from our federal dignity into insignificant and wretched fragments of empire. The adoption of the constitution so extensively, and with so liberal an acquiescence on the part of the minorities in general, promised the former; but lately the circular letter of New York has manifested, in my apprehension, an unfavourable, if not an insidious tendency, to a contrary policy. I still hope for the best; but before you mentioned it, I could not help fearing it would serve as a standard to which the disaffected might resort. It is now evidently the part of all honest men, who are friends to the new constitution, to endeavour to give it a chance to disclose its merits and defects, by carrying it fairly into effect, in the first instance.

“The principal topic of your letter is, to me, a point of great delicacy indeed, insomuch that I can scarcely, without some impropriety, touch upon it. In the first place, the event to which you allude, may never happen, among other reasons, because, if the partiality of my fellow citizens conceive it to be a mean by which the sinews of the new government would be strengthened, it will, of consequence, be obnoxious to those who are in opposition to it, many of whom, unquestionably, will be placed among the electors.

“This consideration alone would supersede the expediency of announcing any definitive and irrevocable resolution. You are among the small number of those who know my invincible attachment to domestic life, and that my sincerest wish is to continue in the enjoyment of it solely until my final hour. But the world would be neither so well instructed, nor so candidly disposed, as to believe me to be uninfluenced by sinister motives in case any circumstance should render a deviation from the line of conduct I had prescribed for myself indispensable. Should the contingency you suggest take place, and (for argument sake alone let me say) should my unfeigned reluctance to accept the office be overcome by a deference for the reasons and opinions of my friends, might I not, after the declarations I have made, (and heaven knows they were made in the sincerity of my heart,) in the judgment of the impartial world, and of posterity, be chargeable with levity and inconsistency, if not with rashness and ambition? Nay, farther, would there not even be some apparent foundation for the two former charges? Now, justice to myself, and tranquillity of conscience require that I should act a part, if not above imputation, at least capable of vindication. Nor will you conceive me to be too solicitous for reputation. Though I prize as I ought the good opinion of my fellow citizens, yet, if I know myself, I would not seek or retain popularity at the expense of one social duty, or moral virtue. While doing what my conscience informed me was right, as it respected my God, my country, and myself, I could despise all the party clamour and unjust censure which must be expected from some whose personal enmity might be occasioned by their hostility to the government. I am conscious that I fear alone to give any real occasion for obloquy, and that I do not dread to meet with unmerited reproach. And, certain I am, whensoever I shall be



convinced the good of my country requires my reputation to be put in risque, regard for my own fame will not come in competition with an object of so much magnitude."

"If I declined the task, it would be upon quite another principle. Notwithstanding my advanced season of life, my increasing fondness for agricultural amusements, and my growing love of retirement, augment and confirm my decided predilection for the character of a private citizen, yet, it will be no one of these motives, nor the hazard to which my former reputation might be exposed, or the terror of encountering new fatigues and troubles, that would deter me from an acceptance; but, that a belief that some other person, who had less pretence, and less inclination to be excused, could execute all the duties full as satisfactorily as myself. To say more, would be indiscreet, as a disclosure of a refusal beforehand, might incur the application of the fable, in which the fox is represented as undervaluing the grapes he could not reach. You will perceive, my dear Sir, by what is here observed (and which you will be pleased to consider in the light of a confidential communication) that my inclinations will dispose and decide me to remain as I am, unless a clear and insurmountable conviction should be impressed on my mind, that some very disagreeable consequences must, in all human probability, result from the indulgence of my wishes."

His friend, Colonel Hamilton, having joined in a similar solicitation, Washington responded in the same manner, repeating the sentiments that he had uttered to Mr. Morris.

In answer to a letter from General Lincoln, on the same subject, he thus expressed himself, in language so earnest, and feeling so intense, as to leave no room for a suspicion, that he sincerely desired to escape further honours, and repose amidst the tranquil shades of his plantation. "I would willingly pass over in silence, that part of your letter, in which you mention the persons who are candidates for the two first offices in the executive, if I did not fear the omission might seem to betray a want of confidence. Motives of delicacy have prevented me hitherto from conversing, or writing on this subject, whenever I could avoid it with decency. I may, however, with great sincerity, and, I believe, without offending against modesty, or propriety, *say to you*, that I most heartily wish the choice to which you allude, might not fall upon me, and that if it

should, I must reserve to myself the right of making up my final decision, at the last moment, when it can be brought into one view, and when the expediency or in expediency of a refusal can be more judiciously determined than at present. But, be assured, my dear Sir, if, from any inducement, I shall be persuaded ultimately to accept, it will not be (so far as I know my own heart) from any of a private or personal nature. Every personal consideration conspires to rivet me (if I may use the expression) to retirement. At my time of life,\* and under my circumstances, nothing in this world can ever draw me from it, unless it be a *conviction* that the partiality of my countrymen had made my services absolutely necessary, joined to a *fear* that my refusal might induce a belief that I preferred the conservation of my own reputation and private ease to the good of my country. After all, if I should conceive myself in a manner *constrained to accept*, I call heaven to witness, that this very act would be the greatest sacrifice of my personal feelings and wishes, that ever I have been called upon to make. It would be to forego repose and domestic enjoyment for trouble, perhaps for public obloquy: for, I should consider myself as entering upon an unexplored field enveloped on every side with clouds and darkness.

“From this embarrassing situation, I had naturally supposed, that my declarations at the close of the war would have saved me; and, that my sincere intentions, then publicly made known, would have effectually precluded me forever afterwards, from being looked upon as a candidate for any office. This hope, as a last anchor of worldly happiness in old age, I had still carefully preserved, until the public papers and private letters from my correspondents in almost every quarter, taught me to apprehend that I might soon be obliged to answer the question, whether I would go again into public life or not?”

In his answer to an epistle from Lafayette, pressing him to the same point, he repeats the same sentiments, with this addition: “Nothing short of a conviction of duty will induce me again to take an active part in public affairs. And, in that case, if I can form a plan for my own conduct, my endeavours shall be unremittingly exerted (even at the hazard of former fame or present popularity) to extricate my

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\* Only 57!!!

country from the embarrassments in which it is entangled, through want of credit; and to establish a general system of policy, which, if pursued, will ensure permanent felicity to the commonwealth. I think I see a path, as clear and as direct as a ray of light, which leads to the attainment of that object. Nothing but HARMONY, HONESTY, INDUSTRY, AND FRUGALITY, are necessary to make us a great and happy people. Happily, the present posture of affairs, and the prevailing disposition of my countrymen, promise to cooperate in establishing those four great and essential pillars of public felicity."

At length, the elections for Electors of President and Vice-President, under the new constitution, took place; and on the 6th of April, 1789, the votes were opened, and counted in the Senate, when it appeared, that George Washington was *unanimously* elected President of the United States by the people, and John Adams Vice-President, to serve for four years from the 4th of March, 1789.

When we consider the animosity of parties, the great proportion of the people who were already arrayed under the banners of the anti-federalists, and the violent efforts which were made to depress the first movement of the new constitution, it will excite some surprise, that even the great popular weight of Washington's character, should have frowned down all opposition to him; and that the people of so immense and diversified a tract of country, should have united without a dissenting voice among the electors, in conferring upon him the supreme executive power of the Union!

As affording some evidence of the reluctance with which he consented to assume this new dignity, and as illustrative of that modesty and diffidence which were natural to his great mind, I shall quote an extract from one of his letters to General Knox, upon the subject of his elevation to office. "I feel for those members of the new Congress, who, hitherto, have given an unavailing attendance at the theatre of action. For myself, the delay may be compared to a reprieve; for, in confidence, I tell *you* (with the *world* it would obtain *little credit*) that my movements to the chair of government will be accompanied by feelings not unlike those of a culprit who is going to the place of his execution; so unwilling am I in the evening of life, nearly consumed in public cares, to quit a peaceful abode for an ocean of

difficulties, *without that competency of political skill, abilities, and inclinations*, which are necessary to manage the helm. I am sensible that I am embarking the voice of the people, and a good name of my own on this voyage; but what returns will be made for them. Heaven alone can foretell. Integrity and firmness are all I can promise; these, be the voyage long or short, shall never forsake me, although I may be deserted by all men; for, of the consolations which are to be derived from these, under any circumstances, the world cannot deprive me."

His election was announced to him at Mount Vernon, on the 14th of April, 1789, by Charles Thompson, Secretary of the late Congress; and two days after, he set out to assume the duties of government, accompanied by Mr. Thompson and Colonel Humphreys. In his diary, he has thus described his feelings upon this eventful occasion: "About ten o'clock, I bade adieu to Mount Vernon, to private life, and to domestic felicity, and, *with a mind oppressed with more anxious and painful sensations than I have words to express, set out for New York, in company with Mr. Thompson, and Colonel Humphreys, with the best dispositions to render service to my country, in obedience to its call, but with less hope of answering its expectations.*"

With every disposition to appreciate the merit of the sacrifice which Washington, on this occasion, made of his private ease to his public duty, I must confess that the encomiums which have been so profusely lavished upon this act of his life, do not seem fully warranted by the real nature of the case. Whatever may have been his motives, and we acknowledge them to have been both lofty and pure, still, as it must be considered as the crowning act of his glory, which was to consummate his fame, and hand him down to posterity, equal, if not superior, to Solon, Lycurgus, Alfred, and Constantine, as the founder, of an empire, and the father of his country, the sacrifice was not so great, on a final, as an immediate view of it. A laudable and virtuous ambition was to be gratified, by the greatest acquisition of vast and unbounded renown. Heretofore, the fame of a soldier had glittered on his brow, and wreathed his helmet with imperishable laurels; but the reputation of the *Statesman* had not been his; and although the labour and peril of carrying out into practice the new features of an untried government were great, yet the credit and glory of success,

were proportionably enhanced, and promised the greatest reward, in the applause and affection of unborn millions, to which human virtue ever could attain. At the same time, we are bound to believe, that his reluctance to undertake the arduous task was sincere; and that his diffidence in his ability to perform it, was the unaffected effusion of a modest and upright heart, and a mind too great not to be humble.

On his way to New York, various public marks of respect and affection, strewed his path with flowers, and solaced him for his sacrifice of privacy to the public weal. A volunteer escort conducted him into Alexandria, where a public dinner was prepared to greet him, and where an address, replete with just encomium and sincere attachment, was presented, to which he responded with his characteristic modesty. At Georgetown, the same testimonial of public confidence awaited him; and at *Philadelphia*, the splendour of his reception partook of the pomp of a *Roman triumph*, and the magnificence of a modern coronation. The city was illuminated, and its streets thronged with a dense mass of people, who had been attracted from all the surrounding country. At *Trenton*, the same demonstration of a nation's joy and pride, surrounded him with honours that he blushed to receive, and would fain have dispensed with: but the sex best beloved by man, stood in his path to do homage to the patriot, strewing his way with flowers, and twining his brows with laurel. On the bridge over which he passed, a triumphant arch was erected, embellished with laurels, and adorned with festoons of flowers, supported by THIRTEEN PILLARS, each entwined with wreaths of undying verdure; while on the front of the arch was emblazoned, in golden letters, this inscription:

“ THE DEFENDER OF THE MOTHERS  
WILL BE THE  
PROTECTOR OF THE DAUGHTERS, ”

besides various devices and dates, illustrative of his virtues, or commemorative of his victories. Here he was met by a procession of matrons, leading their daughters dressed in white garments, who, as he approached, greeted him by chanting the following ode:

## 1.

“Welcome mighty Chief once more  
 Welcome to this grateful shore;  
 Now no mercenary foe  
 Aims again the fatal blow,  
 Aims at THEE, the fatal blow.

## 2.

Virgins fair, and matrons grave,  
 Those thy conquering arms did save,  
 Build for THEE triumphal bowers;  
 Strew, ye fair, his way with flowers,  
 Strew your Hero's way with flowers.”

When he arrived at Brunswick, he was joined by the Governor of New York, who escorted him to Elizabethtown Point. On the road, he was met by the committee of Congress, who conducted him, with great military pomp, to the Point, where he embarked for New York, in a beautiful barge of *thirteen* oars, manned by *thirteen* branch pilots.

In his private journal, Washington thus describes his reception, and the sensations it inspired: “The display of boats which attended and joined on this occasion, some with vocal and others with instrumental music on board, the decorations of the ships, the roar of cannon, and the loud acclamations of the people, which rent the sky as I passed along the wharves, filled my mind with sensations as painful (contemplating the reverse of this scene, which may be the case, after all my labours to do good,) as they were pleasing.”

Having been landed at Murray's wharf, on the 23d of April, he proceeded to the apartments that had been provided for him, where his reception by foreign ministers, public bodies, and political characters, exceeded in splendour the pomp of courts, and eclipsed in sincerity the professions of sycophants. At night, the city was brilliantly illuminated.

All this display of attachment, blended with adulation, did not, however, affect with arrogance the well-poised mind of Washington, who beheld in the public enthusiasm only a fresh stimulus to serve his country, and who heard in the music of flattery, no sound but that which inflamed him with the ambition of true glory.

The eulogy bestowed on him by Mr. Adams, on the day that he took his seat in the Senate, as Vice President of the

United States, is too happily conceived, eloquently expressed, and justly merited, not to be quoted in this place.

Mr. Adams said, "It is with satisfaction that I congratulate the people of America on the formation of a national constitution, and the fair prospect of a consistent administration of a government of laws; on the acquisition of a House of Representatives, chosen by themselves; of a Senate thus composed by their own State Legislatures; and on the prospect of an *Executive authority*, in the hands of one, whose portrait I shall not presume to draw. Were I blessed with powers to do justice to his character, it would be impossible to increase the confidence or affection of his country, or make the smallest addition to his glory. This can only be effected by a discharge of the present exalted trust on the same principles, with the same abilities and virtues, which have uniformly appeared in all his former conduct, public or private. May I, nevertheless, be indulged to inquire, if we look over the catalogue of the first magistrates of nations, whether they have been denominated Presidents or Consuls, Kings or Princes, where shall we find one, whose commanding talents and virtues, whose overruling good fortune, have so completely united all hearts and voices in his favour?—who enjoyed the esteem and admiration of foreign nations, and fellow-citizens, with equal unanimity? qualities so uncommon, are no common blessings to the country that possesses them. By these great qualities, and their benign effects, has Providence marked out the head of this nation, with a hand so distinctly visible, as to have been seen by all men, and mistaken by none."

As the *first* President of the United States, whose actions and policy, measures and department, were to become as *precedents* to all future generations, the conduct of Washington, in the most minute and trifling particular, became a subject of special interest, as well as curious observation, and much importance. Among his domestic regulations, was that which prescribed the forms of intercourse between the President and the people, in the institution of *Levees*, and *Levee days*, appropriated for receiving visits of friendship, curiosity, or courtesy. A letter from one of his friends, stating the public clamour which this *imitation of the customs of Kings* had given rise to, received from Washington the following explanatory reply: "While the eyes of America, perhaps of the world, are turned to this government,

and many are watching the movements of all those who are concerned in its administration, I should like to be informed, through so good a medium, of the public opinion of both men and measures, and of none more than myself; not so much of what may be thought commendable parts, if any, of my conduct, as of those which are conceived to be of a different complexion. The man who means to commit no wrong, will never be guilty of enormities, consequently can never be unwilling to learn what are ascribed to him as foibles. If they are really such, the knowledge of them in a well disposed mind, will go half way towards a reform. If they are not errors, he can explain, and justify the motives of his actions."

"At a distance from the theatre of action, truth is not always related without embellishment, and sometimes is entirely perverted, from a misconception of the causes which produced the effects that are the subjects of censure."

"This leads me to think that a system which I found it indispensably necessary to adopt upon my first coming to this city, might have undergone severe strictures, and have had motives very foreign from those that governed me, assigned as causes thereof. I mean, first, returning *no* visits: second, appointing certain days to receive them generally (not to the exclusion however of visits on any other days under particular circumstances); and third, at first entertaining no company, and afterwards (until I was unable to entertain any at all) confining it to official characters. A few days evinced the necessity of the two first in so clear a point of view, that had I not adopted it, I should have been unable to have attended to any sort of business, unless I had applied the hours allotted to rest and refreshment to this purpose; for, by the time I had done breakfast, and thence until dinner, and afterwards until bed-time, I could not get relieved from the ceremony of one visit before I had to attend to another. In a word, I had no leisure to read, or to answer the despatches that were pouring in upon me from all quarters."

"Before the custom was established, which now accommodates foreign characters, strangers, and others, who, from motives of curiosity, respect to the chief magistrate, or any other cause, are induced to call upon me, I was unable to attend to any business whatsoever; for gentlemen, consulting their own convenience rather than mine, were call-



ing from the time I rose from breakfast, often before, until I sat down to dinner. This, as I resolved not to neglect my public duties, reduced me to the choice of one of these alternatives—either to refuse them *altogether*, or to appropriate a time for the reception of them. The first would, I well knew, be disgusting to many; the latter, I expected, would undergo animadversion from those who would find fault with or without cause. To please every body was impossible. I therefore adopted that line of conduct which combined public advantage with private convenience, and which, in my judgment, was unexceptionable in itself.”

“These visits are optional. They are made without invitation. Between the hours of three and four, every Tuesday, I am prepared to receive them. Gentlemen, often in great numbers, come and go, chat with each other, and act as they please; a porter shows them into the room, and they retire from it when they choose, and without ceremony; at their first entrance, they salute me, and I them; and as many as I can talk to, I do. What pomp there is in all this, I am unable to discover. Perhaps it consists in not sitting. To this, two reasons are opposed: first, it is unusual; secondly, (which is a more substantial one) because I have no room large enough to contain a third of the chairs which would be sufficient to admit it. If it is supposed that ostentation, or the fashions of courts, (which, by the bye, I believe originate oftener in convenience, not to say necessity, than is generally imagined) gave rise to this custom, I will boldly affirm, that *no* supposition was ever more erroneous; for, were I to indulge my inclinations, every moment that I could withdraw from the fatigues of my station, should be spent in retirement. That they are not, proceeds from the sense I entertain of the propriety of giving to every one free access, as consists with that respect which is due to the chair of government; and that respect, I conceive, is neither to be acquired, or preserved, but by maintaining a just medium between much state and too great familiarity.”

“Similar to the above, but of a more familiar and sociable kind, are the visits every Friday afternoon, to Mrs. Washington, where I always am. These public meetings, and a dinner once a week, to as many as my table will hold, with the references to and from the different departments of State, and other communications with all parts of the Union, is as much, if not more, than I am able to undergo;

for I have already had within a year, two severe attacks; the last worse than the first—a third, it is more than probable, will put me to sleep with my fathers.”

I have thus given, in the words of Washington himself, his reasons for instituting those ceremonies and forms, which gave such deep offence to the republicans of the day; which reasons certainly appear conclusive, *as far as he was concerned*; but another question remains, whether, in the hands of a chief *less virtuous, and more ambitious*, they might not be made the gradual instruments of a change of government to monarchy? He seems to have overlooked the fact, that he was establishing PRECEDENTS FOR POSTERITY, and not regulating forms for his own convenience: so, that the error in his reasoning, arose from his virtue; his modesty and diffidence not permitting him to give sufficient importance to his own doings, which, as the *first President of the Republic*, were to become, in after times, the *moral laws* of an empire boundless in extent, and stupendous in power. Let it not be said, that too much importance has been attached to this matter. Manners and ceremonies are intimately connected with, and materially influence the principles of liberty, and the rights of the citizen; and it is ever a salutary symptom, to see the people jealous of the deportment of their governors, though, as in the case of Washington, their governors may be totally innocent of any design on their liberties, by the introduction of forms obnoxious to their pride, and sense of equality.

Washington was inaugurated on the 30th of April, 1789, when he addressed both houses of Congress, in a speech, which, for sound views, orthodox principles, pious sentiments, and comprehensive plans, will ever remain an admired monument. It was not, however, so pleasing to see the two houses imitate the adulation of the British Parliament, by voting an address, which was the mere echo of the speech: that the praises they contained were *fully merited*, is no apology for a custom, which had its European origin in sycophancy, and became perpetuated by corruption.

Plans for the organization of the new government were now to be devised by the Congress; and protracted debates ensued between the two parties that respectively inclined towards a *strong*, and a *relaxed* government—a limited exercise, or a plenary endowment of power. I shall notice, in this place, only those two great points, which seemed

most to affect the President, and to divide the two contending parties.—First, the TITLE OF THE PRESIDENT; and second, his POWER OF REMOVAL FROM OFFICE, WITHOUT THE CONCURRENCE OF THE SENATE.

After much debate, the following report was entered on the journals of the Senate, on the 14th of May, 1789.

“The committee appointed on the 9th inst. to determine under what title it will be proper for the Senate to address the President of the United States of America, reported, that in the opinion of the committee, it will be proper thus to address the President: “*His HIGHNESS the President of the United States of America, and PROTECTOR OF THEIR LIBERTIES.*”

From this stigma on the republican character of the country, we were rescued by the virtue and patriotism of the *House of Representatives*, who, having successfully resisted the MONARCHICAL DESIGNS OF THE SENATE, compelled that aristocratic body to postpone the above report, and agree to the following resolution, which will forever remain a monument of the *danger to be apprehended to the liberties of the country*, from this aristocratic body:—

“From a decent respect for the opinion and practice of civilised nations, whether under monarchical or republican forms of government, whose custom is to annex titles of respectability to the *office* of their *chief magistrate*, and that on intercourse with foreign nations, a due respect for the majesty of the people of the United States, may not be hazarded by an appearance of singularity, the Senate have been induced to be of opinion, that it would be proper to annex a *respectable title* to the *office of President of the United States*. But the Senate, desirous of preserving harmony with the House of Representatives, where the practice lately observed, in presenting an address to the President, was without the addition of titles, *think it proper, for the present, to act in conformity with the practice of that house.*”

In this attempt to introduce titles, no imputation of any agency on the part of Washington, was ever surmised; and it probably had its origin exclusively in the ambition of the Vice-President, Mr. Adams, who, at a future period, by heaping monstrous abuses on the federal system, caused by his lust of power, so total a prostration of the energetic policy of his great predecessor.

A question was now discussed by Congress of a nature

equally important, whether the President possessed the *power of removal from office without the consent and concurrence of the Senate*. On the bill 'to establish an executive department, to be denominated the *Department of Foreign Affairs*, in the committee of the whole House, Mr. White moved to strike out the clause which declared the Secretary to be removable by the President, on the ground that the power of removal was necessarily incident to that of appointment; and, as the Senate possessed a conjoint power of making appointments, that body must, in like manner, share in the power of removal.

In the course of debate, the following arguments were used:—"If the constitution gave the power to the President, a repetition of the grant in an act of Congress was nugatory—if the constitution did not give it, the attempt to enforce it by law was improper—if it belonged conjointly to the President and Senate, the House of Representatives should not attempt to abridge the constitutional prerogative of the other branch of the Legislature. However this might be, they were clearly of opinion that it was not placed in the President alone. In the power over *all the Executive officers*, which the bill proposed to confer upon the President, the most alarming dangers to liberty were perceived. It was in the nature of **MONARCHICAL PREROGATIVE**, and would convert them into the mere tools and creatures of his will. A dependence so servile on one individual, would deter men of high and honourable minds from engaging in the public service; and if, contrary to expectation, such men should be brought into office, they would be reduced to the necessity of *sacrificing every principle of independence to the will of the chief magistrate, or of exposing themselves to the disgrace of being removed from office, and that, too, at a time when it might be no longer in their power to engage in other pursuits.*"

"Gentlemen, it was to be feared, were too much dazzled with the splendour of the virtues which adorned the actual President, to be able to look into futurity. But the framers of the constitution had not confined their views to the person who would most probably fill the first presidential chair. The House of Representatives ought to follow their example, and to contemplate this power *in the hands of an AMBITIOUS MAN*, who might apply it to dangerous purposes—who might, *from caprice, remove the most worthy men from office.*"

By the friends of the President, it was contended, that the *power of removal was purely executive*, and was conferred by the constitution: at so early a period of its history, did it come into dispute what powers that instrument did actually confer upon the several branches of government by the parties to the compact.

But, it was agreed, "if it was a case on which the constitution was silent, the clearest principles of political expediency required that neither branch of the Legislature should participate in it."

"The danger that a President could ever be found, who would remove *good men* from office, was treated as imaginary. It was not by the splendour attached to the character of the present chief magistrate alone, that this opinion was to be defended. It was founded on the structure of the office. *The man in whose favour* a majority of the people of this continent would unite, had probability at least, in favour of *his principles*; in addition to which, the public odium that would inevitably attach to such conduct, would be an effectual security against it."

The amendment of Mr. White, DENYING the POWER OF REMOVAL, was negatived by a vote of thirty-four to twenty; but, subsequently, the *Legislative* grant of the power was withdrawn, and the bill was passed *implying* the constitutional *right of removal*, by the antecedent vote against the amendment, which went to deny the power. So that, even now, this question, of the *constitutional power of removal*, remains unsettled, excepting the sanction which this vote may be supposed to give.

Mr. Madison's twelve amendments to the constitution, were now passed by two-thirds of Congress, and ratified by two-thirds of the States; which, if they did not remove, at least mollified the opposition of the *anti-federalists*.

Congress having passed laws for the organisation of all the departments, Washington proceeded to select officers qualified by their talents, and recommended by their patriotism, to discharge these important trusts.

At head of the *Department of State*, he appointed THOMAS JEFFERSON, for whom he entertained the most exalted opinion as a patriot of sound principles; as a statesman of the most extensive attainments in the science of politics; and as a scholar of the most profound and elegant acquirements. Mr. Jefferson was then at his residence in Virgi-

nia, having returned home for a short time, by permission, from the court of Versailles, where he had succeeded Dr. Franklin, as ambassador. Mr. Jefferson gave a preference to his foreign appointment; but in deference to the wishes of Washington, he accepted the Department of State.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON was appointed to the head of the TREASURY; a man, whose genius was only equalled by his learning, and his learning equalled by his courage, firmness, and love of liberty.

GENERAL KNOX was retained as *Secretary of War*.

EDMUND RANDOLPH, of Virginia, was chosen *Attorney General*.

In the JUDICIARY branch of government, talents and integrity not inferior were selected. JOHN JAY was appointed CHIEF JUSTICE; and JOHN RUTLEDGE, JAMES WILSON, WILLIAM CUSHING, ROBERT HARRISON and JOHN BLAIR, were appointed Associate Justices. All these selections were considered as judicious and popular; made on the broad grounds of national good, and with a *single eye to the invigoration and success of the new Constitution*, which, of course, necessarily led to the choice of a majority of prominent and decided federalists.

Congress having adjourned on the 29th of September, the President determined to improve the recess by a journey to Massachusetts, and personally inquire into the causes of the recent insurrection, as well as to soothe and conciliate by his presence, the discontented portion of that population. His reception did not fall short, but far exceeded all expectation. The people greeted him with an enthusiastic welcome; and all the parade of public institutions, and military bodies, gave eclat to the splendour of his welcome; while the addresses presented to him, breathed devotion to the country, attachment to the constitution, and affection for his person.

In November 1789, North Carolina adopted the Constitution, and *entered into the Union*.

On the 8th of January, 1790, he again met Congress, and in person delivered his speech, from which I cannot omit to extract the following beautiful passage, evincive of so much wisdom, patriotism, and love of liberty. After inviting their attention to various important improvements, he added, "Nor am I less persuaded, that you will agree with me in opinion, that there is nothing which can better deserve

your patronage than the promotion of science and literature. Knowledge is in every country, the surest basis of public happiness: in one, in which the measures of government receive their impression so immediately from the sense of the community as in ours, it is proportionably essential. To the security of a free constitution it contributes in various ways, by convincing those who are entrusted with the public administration, that every valuable end of government is best answered by the enlightened confidence of the people; and by *teaching the people themselves to know and to value their own rights; to discern and to provide against invasions of them; to distinguish between oppression and the necessary exercise of lawful authority; between burdens proceeding from a disregard to their convenience, and those resulting from the inevitable exigencies of society; to discriminate the spirit of liberty from that of licentiousness, cherishing the first, avoiding the last, and uniting a speedy but temperate vigilance against encroachments, with an inviolable respect to the laws.*"

This session of Congress was remarkable for the *funding of the public debt*, which received the countenance and approbation of Washington, but in reality only benefitted a few speculators, and left the poor soldier as wretched and destitute as ever. Marshall thus describes the effects of this *funding system*. "The public paper suddenly rose, and was for a short time, above par. THE IMMENSE WEALTH WHICH INDIVIDUALS acquired by this unexpected appreciation, could not be viewed with indifference. By those who participated in its advantages, the author of a system to which they were so greatly indebted, was regarded with an enthusiasm of attachment, to which scarcely any limits could be assigned. To many others, this adventitious collection of wealth in particular hands was a subject rather of chagrin than of pleasure; and the reputation which the success of his plans gave to the Secretary of the Treasury, was not contemplated with unconcern. As if the debt had been created by the existing government, not by a war which gave liberty and independence to the United States, its being funded was ascribed by many, not to a sense of justice, and to a liberal and enlightened policy, *but to the desire of bestowing on the government an artificial strength by the creation of a MONIED INTEREST, which would be subservient to its will.*"

Having been attacked this year by a dangerous malady, from which he suffered severely, and recovered with difficulty, he employed the period of his convalescence in making a visit to *Rhode Island*, which State was not yet comprehended in the Union; but where he was received with an enthusiasm of attachment not inferior to that displayed in other parts of the Union. After his return from *Rhode Island*, he paid a visit to his favorite *Mount Vernon*, whose rural shades and tranquil beauty, still had charms for his heart, superior to those anxious joys which are to be found amidst the pomp of power, the glitter of glory, or the magnificence of state. From this recreation, however, he was soon summoned, by the meeting of Congress, in its third session, to repair to Philadelphia, where, in future, that body was to meet.

The speech of the President was consistent with his former views, and settled policy, and breathed the purest intentions of a devoted patriot, which extorted the unanimous applause of an enlightened Congress.

The projects of the Secretary of the Treasury, however, excited a different feeling, and startled the friends of *State Rights* and limited government into decided opposition. His proposition to tax *domestic distilled spirits*, was warmly resisted, and engendered able and protracted debates. Commenting on this subject, *Marshall* remarks, in the true spirit of the party, of which he was a distinguished leader: "All that powerful party in the United States, which attached itself to the *local*, rather than to the general government, would inevitably contemplate any system of internal revenue with jealous disapprobation. To them, imposts collected by Congress, on any domestic manufacture, wore the semblance of a *foreign power intruding itself into their particular concerns*, and excited serious apprehensions for *State importance*, and for *liberty*." Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina, protested against it in strong and energetic terms.

Another and still more important project of the same officer, excited even more discussion, while it awakened warmer feelings, and led to more metaphysical reasoning: I allude to the scheme of a NATIONAL BANK, which was now formally submitted by him in a special report, equally distinguished for plausible argument and luminous views, but deficient in that stability of logical foundation, without which the vigour



of ratiocination assumes the glitter of refined sophistry. But the basis of *utility* was universally admitted to be unquestionable; and when a positive benefit, combined with prospective speculation, is adduced in support of a doubtful power, the constitution can have but a poor chance of maintaining its integrity against the combined efforts of genius, metaphysics, money, utility and power. What is *useful*, we all desire to be legal; and what is profitable, we naturally infer, can never become pernicious. But a *Constitution*, whose powers lie concealed beneath an impervious mass of construction, deduction, inference, and metaphysical subtlety, would be better adapted to a college of German professors, or a monastery of monks, than for the government of a people, all of whom are equally free, and all of whom are equally entitled to participate in its administration.

The debate on this question, again arrayed parties in fierce opposition, and even divided the cabinet to a degree that menaced its total rupture. Washington took the opinion of his constitutional advisers on this important question. Mr. *Jefferson* and Mr. *Randolph* were of opinion that Congress, by the passage of the bill, had obviously transcended the powers vested in them by the constitution. On the other hand, General Hamilton maintained it to be purely constitutional. The President required from each their arguments in writing, which, being submitted, his habitual propensity to add *vigour to the Union*, inclined him to the conviction, that the Bank was fully authorised by the constitution, and he accordingly gave the sanction of his signature to the act of incorporation. It cannot be doubted, however, that his mind had been long predetermined in favour of the measure; and that, however he might hold his judgment open to a conviction of its illegality, should it be made so to appear to him; yet, that his wishes and affections towards it, as a favourite feature of his federal policy, had closed those avenues to conviction, which can only bias the understanding when the feelings are neutral, and the desires uninfluenced towards a particular conclusion.

The controversy on *Federal Power* and *State Rights*, was now started afresh on the BANK QUESTION; and federalism, and anti-federalism, were rung through all their changes by enthusiastic champions: the SOVEREIGNTY OF THE STATES being supposed by the latter to constitute the palladium of

liberty; and the supremacy and power of the Union being deemed essential by the latter, to the preservation of law, order, justice, property, subordination and peace.

The scheme of the *National Bank*, was hailed with rapture by those who had become suddenly enriched by the FUNDING OF THE PUBLIC DEBT; and in proportion as it strengthened the *monied interest*, did it provoke the hostility and censure of the middling and poorer classes, in whom are always to be found the sincere advocates of the true principles of liberty.

From this moment of the incorporation of the Bank of the United States, parties assumed their *perfect forms of organization and principles*, as they minister to the general comfort of mankind.

From this period, too, we may date an irreconcilable rupture between Mr. Jefferson and General Hamilton: the former the opponent, and the latter the advocate of the banking and funding system.

Washington now made an excursion into the Southern States, subsequently to the dissolution of the first Congress, on the 3d of March, 1791; where his reception, by *men of all parties*, attested to the fact, that he *united all hearts*; and that, however the measures or the constitution of government might be censured and disapproved, none would refuse to pour the grateful homage of free hearts, into the bosom of their veteran chief.

The second Congress assembled in Philadelphia, on the 24th of October, 1791. The apportionment bill now proved another cause of excitement, and divided parties by a broad line of separation. In this debate, Mr. GILES, who was in favour of a *full representation* of the people, used these arguments; that the corruption of the British Parliament was not owing to their *numbers*, but other causes, and "*among these were the frequent MORTGAGES OF THE FUNDS, and the immense appropriations at the disposal of the executive.*" "An inequality of circumstances," he continued, "produces revolutions in governments, from democracy to aristocracy and monarchy. Great wealth produces a desire of distinctions, rank and titles. The revolutions of property in this country have created a prodigious inequality of circumstances. Government has contributed to this inequality. THE BANK OF THE UNITED STATES is a most important machine in promoting the objects of this MONIED IN-

TEREST. THIS BANK WILL BE THE MOST POWERFUL ENGINE TO CORRUPT THIS HOUSE. Some of the members are directors of this institution; and it will only be by increasing the representation that an adequate barrier can be opposed to this monied interest. The strong executive of this government, ought to be balanced by a full representation in this house."

The defeat of General St. Clair, who had been despatched against the hostile Miami Indians, now flung a momentary gloom over the administration of Washington; and Congress proceeded to augment the army to 5,000 men; after which, on the 8th May, 1792, that body adjourned to the first Monday in November.

Every day now added virulence and asperity to the opposition of parties; and, as new measures developed more fully the discrepancy of their principles, so did they augment the inveteracy of their mutual dislike; and while we confess the truth, we may also deplore the fact, that the force of interest, rather than the love of truth, or the practice of virtue, engendered their animosity, and eventually exasperated difference of opinion, to an implacable hostility of feeling and passion.

The complaints of the opposition, however, were not destitute of substantial principles and established facts to sustain them. The creation of the *national debt*, by the FUNDING of the depreciated public responsibilities, had engendered, it was alleged, a necessity for TAXATION on the people, when there existed *no necessity* for funding, in order to make the rich more affluent, and the poor more needy: besides being the *assumption* of a debt which properly belonged to the *individual States*. Funding naturally led to EXCISE, and begot a series of oppressive taxes, which excited public clamour, and might produce a civil war; besides, that such taxes were *partial* in their operation, and must be unproductive, unless extorted by arbitrary means, and wrung from the hand of labour at the point of the sword. In fine, the ground of opposition covered the best principles of humanity, benevolence, peace and industry, against abstract equity, rigid justice, and the inflexible severity of efficient power, ready to punish with death, for the inability to comply with exorbitant taxation.

Other grounds of opposition were also broken, but were less tenable and more resolvable into the *spirit of party*,

than based on the solid principles of liberty, or the incontestable dictates of reason. A qualified exception, however, must be made to this remark, in the case of the BANK OF THE UNITED STATES, which, in order to escape any imputation of prejudice, I shall cite in the words of Judge Marshall himself, as I have previously done, on several occasions from the same motive.

The *opposition* contended, with what justice the reader must decide—that, “*The banishment of COIN would be completed by ten millions of paper money in the form of Bank Bills, which were then issuing into circulation. Nor would this be the only mischief resulting from the institution of the bank. The ten, or twelve per cent. annual profit paid to the lenders of this paper medium, would be taken out of the pockets of the people, who would have had, without interest, the coin it was banishing. That all the capital employed in paper circulation is barren and useless, producing like that on a gaming table, no accession to itself, and is withdrawn from commerce and agriculture, where it would have produced addition to the common mass. The wealth, therefore, heaped upon individuals by the funding and banking systems, would be productive of general poverty and distress. That, in addition to the encouragement these measures gave to vice and idleness, they had furnished effectual means of corrupting such a portion of the Legislature as turned the balance between the honest voters. This corrupt squadron, deciding the voice of the Legislature, had manifested their dispositions to GET RID OF THE LIMITATIONS IMPOSED BY THE CONSTITUTION; limitations ON THE FAITH OF WHICH the STATES ACCEDED TO THAT INSTRUMENT. They were proceeding rapidly in their plan of absorbing all power, INVADING THE RIGHTS OF THE STATES, and converting the federal into a CONSOLIDATED GOVERNMENT.*”

“That the ultimate object of all this was to prepare the way for a change from the present republican form of government to that of a monarchy, of which the English constitution was to be the model. So many of the friends of monarchy were in the Legislature, that, aided by the corrupt squad of *paper dealers* who were at their devotion, they had a majority in both houses. The *republican party*, even when united with the *anti-federalists*, continued a minority.” These arguments were ably replied to on the opposite side.

These arguments and imputations, however, were not so much intended to apply to *Washington* and *his measures*, as to Colonel Hamilton, the Secretary of the Treasury, and ostensible head of the *consolidated federal party*.

In respect to General Washington, the purity of his heart and character, repelled the approximation of all the elements of party. His views were national; every pulsation of his heart was for his country; and being exalted above the influence of *interest*, by every consideration of character and popularity with the *whole people*, it was utterly impossible, that any party could claim him as its leader, or that any of his measures or views could be referred or traced to party motives. If he did entertain one of sentiment, it was an honest one, and that error was perhaps a preference of a government of *law and force*, to a *government of opinion*—an error which may be traced to the fact, that he acquired his education under the strict notions of the monarchy, and contracted his habits in the employment of the royal government, as a military man:—being still, not less a *republican in principle*—not less an *American in practice*.

These conflicts of party opinions, would have passed by Washington wholly disregarded, had they not invaded the tranquillity of his cabinet; and arrayed in dire hostility the Secretary of State (*Jefferson!*) and the Secretary of the Treasury, [*Hamilton!*] These officers, from the first moment of their entrance into the cabinet, had disagreed upon principles of essential importance to the harmony of the administration. This radical contrariety in their characters and views, naturally became augmented with the lapse of time;—and every measure of government conducted more or less to widen the breach, as they more clearly demonstrated the irreconcilable hostility of their doctrines, views and opinions: Mr. Jefferson, having been from the first a warm champion of liberty, and opposed to the *federal constitution*, as implying a power of supremacy over the sovereignty of the States; and General Hamilton being the most prominent of those who favoured a federal government, whose power should supersede opinion, and extinguish the rights of the States. On the same principle, Mr. Jefferson was partial to *France*, and Mr. Hamilton partial to England, and as inimical to France, as Mr. Jefferson was inimical to England!

To trace all the forms of this hostility is not consistent with the main object of this biography. As it affected Washington, it caused him the deepest mortification and chagrin; so much so as to draw from him the following letters to the Secretary of State, and Secretary of the Treasury, conceived in the purest spirit of patriotism, and breathing the fond affection of a father towards his children. The first letter bears the date of August 23, 1792. Having entered into a review of the delicate external relations of the United States, he thus digressed to the main topic of his epistle:—"How unfortunate, and how much is it to be regretted, then, that while we are encompassed on all sides with avowed enemies, and insidious friends, internal dissensions should be harrowing and tearing our vitals. The last, to me, is the most serious, the most alarming, and the most afflicting of the two; and without more charity for the opinions of one another in governmental matters, or some more infallible criterion by which the truth of speculative opinions, before they have undergone the test of experience, are to be forejudged, than has yet fallen to the lot of fallibility, I believe it will be difficult, if not impracticable, to manage the reins of government, or to keep the parts of it together; for if, instead of laying our shoulders to the machine, after measures are decided on, one pulls this way, and another that, before the utility of the thing is fairly tried, it must inevitably be torn asunder; and, in my opinion, the fairest prospect of happiness and prosperity that ever was presented to man, will be lost, perhaps, forever."

"My earnest wish, and my fondest hope, therefore, is, that, instead of wounding suspicions, and irritating charges, there may be liberal allowances, mutual forbearances, and temporising yielding on all sides. Under the exercise of these, matters will go on smoothly, and, if possible, more prosperously. Without them, every thing must rub, the wheels of government will clog, our enemies will triumph, and, by throwing their weight into the disaffected scale, may accomplish the ruin of the goodly fabric we have been erecting."

"I do not mean to apply this advice, or these observations, to any particular person or character. I have given them in the same general terms to other officers of the government, because the disagreements which have arisen from difference of opinions, and the attacks which have been

made upon almost all the measures of government, and most of its executive officers, have for a long time past filled me with painful sensations, and cannot fail, I think, of producing unhappy consequences, at home and abroad." The letter to General Hamilton was almost a literal copy of this to Mr. Jefferson. Another was also addressed by him to Mr. Randolph, the Attorney General.

These paternal efforts to compose the internal wars of the Cabinet proved wholly unsuccessful, although urged by Washington with a pathos and eloquence truly patriotic.

The opposition to the *excise laws*, in the western counties of Pennsylvania, now disturbed the serenity of the administration by acts of open rebellion; to quell which, Washington issued his proclamation, exhorting the interference and aid of the CIVIL MAGISTRATES.

In the management of the FOREIGN REELATIONS of the *United States*, at the head of which Mr. Jefferson stood, Washington had been eminently successful. France was accommodated with a *loan*, to enable her to recover St. Domingo from her revolted negroes.

Major General Wayne was now appointed to the command of the army, in place of St. Clair, against the hostile bands of western Indians. On the 5th of November, 1792, Congress again assembled. In his speech, Washington recommended the civilization of the Indian tribes, as the best means of diverting them from the pursuits of war, as well as earnestly pressed the adoption of measures, to ensure the speedy redemption of the public debt. Nothing, however, of any importance, marked this session of Congress, but the introduction and *rejection* of resolutions, criminating the conduct of the Secretary of the Treasury, in the management of the public loans and funded debt. Congress *expired* on the 3d of March; leaving parties in a higher state of irritation, and fomenting more than ever the original feelings of hostility, which marked their opposition.

On the 22d February, 1793, the *birth day* of Washington was first celebrated; and Congress adjourned for *half an hour*, to pay him their respects; but not without some opposition from the anti-federal and republican party.

In 1793, the announcement of the French revolution, and the adoption of a republican constitution on the ruins of the monarchy, created a burst of enthusiasm throughout

the United States, which though not universal was far from being confined to the republican party; though by others, it was greeted by more tempered feelings, and qualified approbation, until ultimately parties approved or denounced it, as they stood ranged under their different banners. Those who may be emphatically denominated the PEOPLE, looked upon it with eyes of admiration and rapture. Washington himself extended towards it the hand of a ready welcome.

The expiration of his *first term* of four years now approaching, Washington contemplated declining another election; but being overruled by his friends, he yielded to the general wish of the public, and was UNANIMOUSLY re-elected. But Mr. Adams encountered serious opposition from the *State rights* party; and although re-elected, yet it was by a small majority over GEORGE CLINTON: a constitutional incompatibility having interfered with the election of Mr. Jefferson to that office—he being a citizen of the *same State as the President*, which the constitution expressly provides against.

Towards FRANCE, and her revolution, Washington deported himself on the maxim, “*That every nation possessed a right to govern itself according to its own will, to change its institutions at discretion, and to transact its business through whatever agents it might think proper:* but, at the same time, he determined to maintain the *neutrality* of the United States, and not to become involved in the dissensions of Europe.

France now declared war against Great Britain and Holland; and the American public became inflamed with animosity against England, and an enthusiastic feeling in favour of French liberty, and the general cause of France.

The President, being strengthened by the unanimous opinion of his cabinet, issued a *proclamation of neutrality*, on the 22d April, 1793.

The next question was not concurred in with the same unanimity—*whether the President should receive a minister from the republic of France?* Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Randolph maintained the affirmative, on the ground that the revolution had produced no change in the relations between the two nations. Mr. Hamilton and General Knox held contrary opinions, on the ground that France had no right to *involve other nations, absolutely and uncondition-*



ally, in the changes and consequences of her revolution; maintaining the right of a nation to absolve itself from all obligations, *even of treaties*, on a change of the *internal* situation of the other contracting party, if a continuance of connexion might be thought disadvantageous, or dangerous. But *this position* would inevitably tend to WAR, and was obviously inconsistent with *neutrality*.

The President, finding the cabinet divided, required their opinions in writing; which, being produced, displayed a discrepancy of principle on the merits of the revolution of France, which threatened to extend its influence as well through the deliberations of the cabinet, as among the sentiments of the people.

Should Congress be convened?—was another question propounded by the President, to which he received a unanimous negative opinion.

The President ultimately adopted the opinion of Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Randolph, that a minister should be received from France, and the obligations of treaties with that power maintained.

Washington was now openly and violently assaulted in the public prints, for the proclamation of neutrality. *All* governments were pronounced hostile to liberty; and the United States not the least so. Party passion began to rage in favour of France and the rights of man, and the rancour of deadly hate was poured upon Great Britain, and all who abetted the tyranny of kings, or refused to succour a free people struggling for liberty against a wicked combination of kings; evidently glancing at the attitude of neutrality assumed by Washington.

The French government now recalled the minister who had been appointed by Louis the 16th, and *citizen Genet* was deputed, not less in virtue of his talents, than his glowing enthusiasm in the sacred cause of freedom.

Mr. Genet arrived with a double set of instructions—one, directing him to operate on the GOVERNMENT, to bend her to the policy of France; failing in which, he was to resort to the PEOPLE, and labour to bring them over to espouse the principles of the revolution and the cause of France.

On the 8th of April, Mr. Genet arrived at *Charleston*, S. C., where he was received with the most glowing enthusiasm, not only by the citizens, but the public authorities, the

Governor and other public bodies. Here he remained a few days, receiving the homage of the people, enlisting men, fitting out and arming vessels, and granting commissions to cruize and commit hostilities on nations who were on friendly terms with the United States.

His journey to Philadelphia was a complete march of civic triumph; and displayed all the pomp of enthusiastic welcome—such as had never before greeted a foreign minister. He arrived at Philadelphia on the 16th May, and had an audience with the President, by whom he was cordially received; while, on the part of the people, the most extravagant transports of joy were indulged in; at Gray's ferry he was met by “*crowds* who flocked from every avenue of the city, to meet the republican ambassador of an allied nation.” To these exhibitions of popular feeling succeeded congratulatory addresses, which manifested all the ardent affection of fraternisation and alliance.

The British minister now entered complaints against his proceedings, as violations of the American neutrality.

*Actual hostilities* were now committed by the French within the waters of the United States against Great Britain:—the English ship *Grange* being captured by the French frigate *L'Ambuseade*, within the Delaware Capes, a restitution of which was demanded by the English minister.

The cabinet unanimously agreed that the proceedings complained of were usurpations of national sovereignty, and a violation of neutral rights.

On the question of restitution, the cabinet were divided—Mr Jefferson and Mr. Randolph opposing, and Generals Hamilton and Knox, being in favour of it. Washington took time to deliberate; but restitution was obviously dictated by every principle of the laws of nations, and the doctrines of equity and justice.

Genet, dissatisfied with the government, entered into laboured expositions against the decision of the Executive; in which indecorum was mixed with a boldness bordering on arrogance. He was answered, by the President, that the decision could not be rescinded; but on the contrary, that the vessels which had been equipped in the ports of the United States must make reparation for the violation of their sovereignty, by departing from their waters. To this requisition Mr. Genet refused compliance; nor would

he acquiesce in the decisions of the Executive. He contended that the Americans had infringed the treaty with France.

Two citizens of the United States were now arrested in Charleston, for having violated the *proclamation of neutrality*, by cruising out of that port under French commissions. Mr. Genet demanded the release of these persons, in the following terms: "I have this moment been informed that two officers, in the service of the republic of France, citizen G. Henfield and J. Singletary, have been arrested on board the privateer of the French republic, 'the Citizen Genet,' and conducted to prison. The crime laid to their charge—the crime which my mind cannot conceive, and which my pen almost refuses to state, is the serving of France, and defending, with her children, the common glorious cause of liberty."

"Being ignorant of any positive law or treaty which deprives Americans of this privilege, and authorizes officers of police arbitrarily to take mariners, in the service of France, from on board their vessels; I call upon your intervention, sir, and that of the President of the United States, in order to obtain the immediate *releasement* of the above mentioned officers, who have acquired, by the sentiments animating them, and by the act of their engagement, anterior to every act to the contrary, the right of French citizens, if they have lost that of American citizens."

Washington, firm, collected, upright and honest, could not but feel this gross indignity offered to the government of his country, at the same time that his attachment to France, and the cause of liberty, withheld him from indulging in those expressions of resentment which the provocation and insult would fully have justified.

In the meantime the fever of French liberty continued to rage with unabated fierceness among the people; while animosity towards England prevailed to the same excess, and received an application, in its course towards the *great and good man*, who, unmindful of the storm of party, and fortified by conscious integrity, stood prepared to do his duty to his country, regardless of all consequences. Washington, retired in the calm recess of his wisdom, anticipated the course which *posterity* would approve, and which the voice of history would consecrate to the applause of after ages. As the *head of a nation*, he was not to be-

come the brawling champion of liberty, or the reckless abettor of violated national faith and prostrated treaties. Between *two friendly nations* he was bound to observe a deportment equally pacific towards both, and to abide by the *law of nations*, not the infectious enthusiasm for liberty, which, in its headlong course, like the lava of *Ætna*, sweeps over all that opposes its passage, and buries in ruins friend and foe with indiscriminate fury. Fatal indeed, might have been the consequences, had the popular impetuosity hurried the President into a precipitate espousal of the cause of French liberty.

I cannot contemplate this, and the subsequent period of the life of Washington, without feeling that spontaneous homage of veneration for his greatness which the undaunted fortitude, and inflexible resolution he displayed, are so naturally calculated to inspire. Calm amidst the raging excitement of popular passions, he remained uninfected by the *delirium*, at the same time that he continued devoted to the *principles* of liberty. Tranquil and composed, he contemplated the storm with the *eye of wisdom*, which embraced in its wide scope all the consequences of the *system of anarchy*, which had intoxicated the people with delight. Indifferent to his own interest, he looked only to the grand object of the public good; and disregarding, rather than despising the popular clamour, that on all sides stunned the ear with its shouts—the wild and maddened shouts of liberty; he waited for the storm to spend its fury, without changing his course to avoid its rage, but satisfied, that when it should have blown over it would find him entrenched by *public opinion*, and his country secure from the quaking conflicts of the demon of blood and anarchy.

Washington left Philadelphia on the 24th of June, on a visit to *Mount Vernon*; and returned to the seat of government on the 11th of July.

In this interval occurred the important case of the equipment and departure of the French privateer *La Petit Democrat*, from the port of Philadelphia; her escape from the authorities of the country having been effected by a deliberate falsehood of the minister Genet; who now openly menaced the constituted authorities of the republic, and boldly threatened “*to appeal from the President to the People!!!*”

The Secretary of State having retired to his seat in the country, indisposed, Washington addressed him a letter, of

which the following is an extract—"What is to be done in the case of the *little Sarah* (La petit Democrat,) now at Chester? Is the minister of the French republic to set the acts of this government at defiance *with impunity*, and then threaten the executive with an appeal to the people? What must the world think of such conduct; and of the government of the United States in submitting to it?"

"These are serious questions, circumstances press for decision; and, as you have had time to consider them (upon me they come unexpectedly) I wish to know your opinion upon them even before to-morrow, for the vessel may then be gone."

The force of PUBLIC OPINION, in opposition to *laws* and to *treaties*, was now fully manifested in the acquittal of Gideon Henfield, who had been prosecuted for a violation of the *proclamation of neutrality*; an acquittal which effectually prostrated all the *power of the government*, while it exposed Washington to all that popular, but unjust censure, which attends upon an attempt to exercise *theoretical power in opposition to* PUBLIC OPINION, which may be termed the practical power of governments; but which in fact is the only power in free constitutions.

The violation of the principles of the *armed neutrality*, that free bottoms *should make free goods*, and that the flag of a neutral should protect all property under it, again brought the American President in collision with the demagogue minister of France; the latter nation having acceded to the principle, while England had rejected its recognition. In this state of things the English had made prize of *French property* in American bottoms; which exasperated the French minister to taunt and insult the government in the most degrading manner.

These aggravated degradations, heaped in quick succession upon one another, finally determined Washington to resort to vigorous measures to defend the government from such disgraceful indignities; he, therefore, on the 25th of July, addressed a note to the Secretary of State, intimating his resolution to proceed in a *formal* manner against Mr. Genet; and accordingly Mr. Morris, the American minister at Paris, was instructed to desire his recal; a measure now indispensable to the dignity, honor and independence of the United States.

The declaration of *Genet*, that he would appeal from the

*Executive to the people* of the United States, as if the people had been in opposition to the Executive, now being fully established, and perfectly understood, began to cause that *reaction* of public opinion in favour of Washington, which is ever certain to be produced where the warmth of feeling has hurried the judgment into error, in opposition to the best principles of the heart and the soundest maxims of rational liberty, the purest doctrines of social right and national independence. The people began at last to awake to the proper estimation of the pure and exalted character of the great man who directed the destinies of the nation in the true spirit of wisdom, actuated by the most patriotic motives of true glory.

It will ever redound to the honour of the federal party, that in this crisis they sustained the course pursued by Washington, in relation to France, without opposing those *free principles* which they thought might eventually conduct her to rational liberty; and it will always be admitted, as a full palliation of the conduct of the democratic party, that they lost sight for a moment, and for a moment only, of what was due to their own character, dignity and independence, in their *enthusiasm* for the cause of freedom, and the establishment of *the rights of man*. On this occasion, the two parties arrayed themselves in direct hostility, but the supporters of the *great Washington* triumphed, as they deserved to do, over the infuriated champions of the demagogue minister of the French; so that, finally, the proclamation of neutrality was fully sustained by PUBLIC OPINION.

The relations of the United States with Spain, Great Britain and France, daily became more complicated, and at one time threatened serious consequences to the tranquillity of the nation. The navigation of the Mississippi; the contemplated invasion of Florida; troops to be raised and commanded by *Genet*, the insolent minister of the French, presuming upon liberty to insult the majesty of the American people; the hostilities with the Indians; *the impressment* of American seamen by English cruizers; the violation of *neutral rights* by France and England, in their attempts to cut off the commerce and resources of each other; the insults offered to the United States by the French; and other minor points of collision, all contributed to increase the difficulties of the country, and manifest the growing importance of the concerns of the republic.

It was under the pressure of these aggravated embarrassments, that Washington addressed Congress, on the 4th of December, in his speech reviewing the causes most likely to lead to war, and suggesting the measures best calculated to avert, or repel it. The following passage from his address on that occasion, is worthy of all praise:—"I cannot recommend to your notice measures for the fulfilment of *our* duties to the rest of the world, without again pressing upon you the necessity of placing ourselves in a condition of complete defence, and of exacting from *them* the fulfilment of their duties towards us. The United States ought not to indulge a persuasion that, contrary to the order of human events, they will for ever keep at a distance those painful appeals to arms, with which the history of every other nation abounds. There is a rank due to the United States among nations which will be withheld, if not absolutely lost, by the reputation of weakness. *If we desire to avoid insult*, we must be able to repel it; if we desire to secure peace, one of the most powerful instruments of our prosperity, it must be known that we are, at all times, **READY FOR WAR.**"

Although a *democratic majority* had been elected to the *House of Representatives*, that body approved and sanctioned *all* the proceedings of Washington, in respect to Genet, and the proclamation of neutrality—thus furnishing conclusive proof that judicious, reflecting, and rational men, of all parties, concurred in the wisdom, and applauded the patriotism of his measures.

Mr. Jefferson, the Secretary of State, now submitted to Congress an able and elaborate report, on *free trade* and *unrestricted commerce*; but concluding with a strong recommendation for *retaliatory impositions* against those nations that embarrassed our navigation, and hindered our industry by prohibitory duties.

Having submitted this report, Mr. Jefferson, on the 31st of December, 1793, resigned his office; having, some time previous, intimated his intention to the President.

Judge Marshall has paid so handsome a tribute to the character of Mr. Jefferson, on the occasion of his resignation, that I cannot omit to quote it in this place, as the praise extorted by *merit*, from a liberal, enlightened, and magnanimous opponent:—"This gentleman withdrew from political station at a moment when he stood particularly

high in the esteem of his countrymen. His fixed opposition to the financial schemes which had been proposed by the Secretary of the Treasury, and approved by the legislative and executive departments of the government—his ardent and undisguised attachment to the revolutionary party in France—the dispositions which he was declared to possess in regard to Great Britain; and the popularity of his opinions respecting the Constitution of the United States, had devoted to him that immense party, whose sentiments were supposed to comport with his on most or all of these interesting subjects. To the opposite party he had, of course, become particularly unacceptable. But the publication of his correspondence with Mr. Genet, dissipated much of the prejudice which had been excited against him. He had, in that correspondence, maintained with great ability, *the opinions embraced by the federalists on those points of difference which had arisen between the two republics*, and which, having become universally the subjects of discussion, had, in some measure, displaced those topics on which the parties had previously divided. The partiality for France that was conspicuous through the whole of it, detracted nothing from its merit in the opinion of the friends of the administration, because, however decided might be their determination to support their own government in a controversy with any nation whatever, they felt all the partialities for that republic which the correspondence expressed. The hostility of his enemies therefore, was, for a time, considerably lessened without a corresponding diminution of the attachment of his friends. *In office*, it would have been impracticable long to preserve these dispositions; and it would have been difficult to preserve that ascendancy which he held over the minds of those who had supported, and probably would continue to support, every pretension of the French republic, without departing from principles and measures, which he had openly and ably defended.”

EDMUND RANDOLPH was now appointed by Washington to succeed Mr. Jefferson; and *William Bradford*, of Pennsylvania, was appointed to succeed Mr. Randolph, as *Attorney General*.

The Algerine cruizers having captured several valuable American merchantmen, and all efforts to effect a peace with that national freebooter, having failed, the President recommended to Congress the establishment of a *naval force*; and



on the 2d of January, 1794, a resolution was agreed to by the House of Representatives, "that a naval force adequate to the protection of the commerce of the United States, ought to be provided, to consist of six frigates, four of 44, and two of 36 guns."

This project was opposed with great ardour and eloquence by the democratic members, on the ground of expense; that it was part of the system of monarchy; that it augmented the public debt, which was a great burden on the people, and was highly tyrannical. The bill, however, was finally carried by a majority of ELEVEN!

British cruizers now began to commit serious depredations on American commerce, by authority of that government. A war with England was accordingly anticipated, and a project to raise an army of fifteen thousand men, was introduced by Mr. Sedgewick. An *embargo* was also proposed and passed, to extend to thirty days. Bills to organise eighty thousand militia, and procure arms and ammunition; to raise a provisional army of twenty-five thousand men, and fortify posts and harbours, were submitted and agreed to. But all these, besides other measures, were suddenly arrested by the revocation of the obnoxious British order.

An increasing affection for France, and devotion to French liberty, again broke out among the people, and pervaded the Congress; while at the same time, the clamour against England rose to a high pitch, portending war and civil commotion.

All these fluctuations of opinions and events, were observed by Washington with a vigilant eye, but a mind unmoved by the excitements and agitations of the hour. Determined to preserve a neutral attitude, unless forced from it by actual aggression, or insults incompatible with honour, if submitted to, and which thus far, had not happened, he resolved to make a last effort to negotiate terms with Great Britain, and accordingly nominated Mr. Jay, as envoy extraordinary to the court of St. James. This nomination was approved by the Senate, and while the attempt at negotiation revived the hopes of a continuance of peace in the hearts of good men, it struck dismay and confusion into those, who, reckless of all consequences, hoped to fatten on the public misery, or gratify their passions at the expense of the prosperity of the people.

No act of his life so fully demonstrated the wisdom, pa-

triotism and firmness of Washington, as this; and, as it is chiefly in respect to the illustration of his character and genius, that I follow the course of his prominent public measures; this one, of opening negociations with Great Britain, in the midst of a popular excitement, so intense and glowing, in favour of France, and in hostility to England, demands peculiar and emphatic attention, as an evidence of that lofty consciousness of rectitude, which distinguished him throughout the whole course of his existence, and which rendered him wholly indifferent to the censure and misrepresentations of the factious, the prejudiced and the unthinking.

It will scarcely be credited by future generations, that this Congress *purchased* peace with *Algiers*, at the price of a *million of dollars!*

Congress now adjourned on the 9th of June, to the first Monday in November.

Genet was on the eve of carrying hostile expeditions into the Floridas and Louisiana, by troops raised in the United States, when he was recalled by his government; and at the very time that the President contemplated the suspension of his diplomatic functions. He was succeeded by *Fauchet*.

The French now requested the recal of Gouverneur Morris, the American minister at Paris; with which Washington immediately complied; appointing in his place, *James Monroe*, an ardent champion of the cause of French liberty, and an enthusiastic admirer of the bloody scenes of the French revolution.

The free navigation of the Mississippi had now become an important object to the western country; and *Kentucky* demanded, in energetic and imperative terms, that government should *procure* the restitution of what the God of nature had originally granted to them. But, anterior to this remonstrance, Washington had prosecuted negociations for that object with a zeal and sedulity never exceeded, though not yet successful.

On the 20th of August, 1794, General Wayne obtained a signal victory over the Miami Indians.

The *insurrection of the western counties of Pennsylvania*, against the excise on distilled spirits, now claimed the most serious attention of the President; having reached a head that bid open defiance to the civil power, and even menaced the military force of the Union with a successful resistance.

On the 7th of August, 1794, therefore, Washington issued his Proclamation, commanding the insurgents to submit to the laws, and calling on the Governors of the States to furnish their quotas of militia, to the amount of twelve thousand men, to march at a moment's warning. By these prompt and vigorous measures, the President succeeded in quelling this formidable insurrection, which at one time threatened to diffuse its revolutionary flame, into a general conflagration of civil war, fatal to the peace of the country, and rife with anarchy, bloodshed, and ruin: and which, originating in the wanton spirit of licentious liberty, in the full enjoyment of freedom, property, and every civil right and political privilege, manifested a degree of depravity in the instigators, which excited not less astonishment than abhorrence.

In resorting to the extremity of military coercion on this occasion, Washington displayed all those high qualities of benevolence and moderation, tenderness for human life, and sympathy for human suffering, which always mark the man of true greatness of soul. Aware of the terrific disasters, the desolating ravages, the heart-rending woes, which ever await upon civil strife, he deferred a resort to force up to the last moment, when ingenuity had been exhausted to devise plans of conciliation, and every effort had failed to draw back the insurgents to a dutiful obedience to the laws. Even then, he determined rather to intimidate and overcome them into submission by a force whose magnitude should strike them with dismay, and prevent hostilities than chastise them into submission, or extirpate them by the sword. Always humane, but at the same time, always just; while he consulted all the dictates of feeling towards the insurgents, he had to consider his higher obligations to preserve the virtuous portion of society from slaughter, conflagration and murder, by causing the government to be respected, the laws to be enforced, and the harmony of the social order preserved from violence, rupture and anarchy.

If, in contemplating the dark gulf of civil war that now yawned before him, he was excited to impute this insurrection to causes, societies and persons, who may have been guiltless of instigating to so horrible a crime; the error, if one existed, may easily be excused on account of the terrific magnitude of the calamities impending; and the anxious solicitude which must naturally have disquieted his mind,

to avert that most shocking of all human ills, a civil commotion, which desolates a country with blood, and leaves no hope of returning tranquillity to cheer the mind amidst the triple wreck of property, happiness and life.

The sentiments of Washington upon this event, cannot fail to excite the reverence and extort the approbation of the reader. In a letter to Mr. Jay, he thus expressed himself: "That the self created societies who have spread themselves over this country, have been labouring incessantly to sow the seeds of distrust, jealousy, and of course, discontent, hoping thereby to effect some revolution in the government, is not unknown to you. That they have been the fomenters of the western disturbances, admits of no doubt in the mind of any one who will examine their conduct. But, fortunately, they have precipitated a crisis, for which they were not prepared; and thereby have unfolded views, which will, I trust, effect their annihilation sooner than it might have happened. An occasion has also been afforded for the people of this country to show their abhorrence of the result, and their attachment to the constitution and the laws; for, I believe, that five times the number of militia that were required, would have come forward in support of them, had it been necessary."

"The spirit which blazed out on this occasion, as soon as the object was fully understood, and the lenient measures of the government were made known to the people, deserves to be communicated. There are instances of general officers going at the head of a single troop, or of light companies; of field officers, when they came to the place of rendezvous, and found for them no command in that grade, turning into the ranks, and serving as private soldiers under their own captains; and of numbers possessing the first fortunes in the country, standing in the ranks as private men, and by way of example to others, marching day by day with their knapsacks at their backs, and sleeping on straw, with a single blanket, in a soldier's tent, during the frosty nights, which we have had. Nay, more, many young Quakers of the first family, character and property, not discouraged by the elders, have turned into the ranks, and are marching with the troops."

Congress assembled in November, and on the 19th of that month, the President pronounced to them his annual speech, on the state of the nation; replete with suggestions

of wisdom, sentiments of patriotism, lessons of policy, and admonitions for improvement, urging the organization of the militia, the redemption of the public debt, and other wholesome measures tending to the national weal. One passage of his address deserves to be here quoted: after commending the alacrity with which the people had rallied in defence of the *Union*, he proceeded to say: "To every description, indeed, of citizens, let praise be given: but let them persevere in their affectionate vigilance over that PRECIOUS DEPOSITORY OF AMERICAN HAPPINESS, THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES. And when, in the calm moments of reflection, they shall have retraced the origin and progress of the insurrection, let them determine whether it has not been fomented by combinations of men, who, careless of consequences, and disregarding the unerring truth, that those who rouse, cannot always appease a civil convulsion, have disseminated, from an ignorance or perversion of facts, suspicions, jealousies, and accusations of the whole government."

He now recommended to Congress, a more perfect organisation of the militia, to meet a similar crisis, should it ever again arise, and to secure the general defence of the country.

Parties in Congress now ran so high, as to demonstrate the fearful pitch, to which *political opinions* may inflame the passions of men, even when in the full enjoyment of all the blessings which real freedom can secure to a virtuous and enlightened people.

An important measure of this Congress, which had been originally and repeatedly urged by Washington, and whose beneficial effects have been felt even down to the present time, while the *credit of its suggestion* has been successively assumed by every subsequent administration, was a bill to provide for the *gradual redemption of the public debt*; and whose object has, at the time of penning this life, been fully, or to all intents and purposes, fully consummated. For the passage of this act, we are indebted to the guardian patriotism of *Washington*; and for the devisement of the scheme of the *Sinking Fund*, we are indebted to the genius and talents of *Alexander Hamilton*, the *William Pitt* of the United States, in every attribute of mind, save his love of liberty, his opposition to the arbitrary acts of the mother country, and his determined resolution to conquer, or die,

in the sacred cause of Independence. To the Congress of 1794—5, however, we owe the adoption of a system for the redemption of a debt, which, in its course of periodical liquidation, has excited the ambition of every administration, to claim the merit of its origin, in virtue of their mere necessary compliance with its legal requisitions. I state this fact, only to show the extent of public virtue, and unaffected patriotism, which must have belonged to the GREAT AND GOOD MAN, who was its *real and original author*, and to whom we stand indebted as a people, for so many and such great and endless blessings.

The scanty provision made for the recompense of the officers of government, now deprived Washington of the aid and assistance of his able and ingenious financier; and the plan for the *redemption of the public debt* was the last official act of an important character which emanated from the Secretary of the Treasury:—that gentleman, from the inadequate nature of his salary, being now compelled to relinquish his station in the government. Hamilton gave in his resignation on the 31st of January, 1795. Whatever could be said of his political principles and views by the members of an antagonist party, all conceded to this great man the possession of talents and abilities never surpassed by an American statesman. Devoted to the UNION, and opposed to the anarchical system of State sovereignty, as equal to national power, he stood side by side to Washington, through all the contentions of parties, and so fully reflected the sentiments and principles of the *father of his country*, as to forbid just censure, while his great patron received unqualified praise. Ranging himself in opposition to the sanguinary excesses of the French revolution, he had the sagacity to foresee, and the moral courage to predict, that it could not and would not end in the permanent establishment of a popular, free and happy government. Washington appointed Oliver Wolcott, of Connecticut, in his place.

In respect to the best policy, which wisdom dictated to the United States to pursue towards the *Indian tribes*, Washington always espoused a *pacific, conciliating, and humane system*. A report upon this subject by the Secretary at War, contained this excellent passage:—

“It seems that our own experience would demonstrate the propriety of endeavouring to preserve a *pacific conduct* in preference to a hostile one with the Indian tribes. The

United States can get nothing by an Indian war; but they risk men, money, and reputation. As we are more powerful and more enlightened than they are, there is a responsibility of national character that we should *treat them with kindness and even with liberality.*”

From the same cause that had deprived Washington of the genius of Alexander Hamilton in the Treasury, was he now bereaved of the services of General Knox, the Secretary at War, who, from the penurious provision made for the compensation of the heads of departments, was now compelled to tender his resignation, which he did on the 28th of December, 1794. Timothy Pickering, was appointed to succeed him.

On the 7th of March, 1795, JAY'S celebrated treaty with England, was received at the Department of State.

Prior to the arrival of this treaty in the United States, the prejudice of party had perverted its character, and popular clamour had denounced it, without even being acquainted with its merits or demerits. The prejudice of the popular mind against England, gave a tone to the sentiments of the people, which superceded all enquiry into its provisions and terms. It was sufficient that it was a treaty with England, and that Jay had been the negociator, to doom it to the irrevocable abhorrence of an inflamed people. Popular meetings were convened to denounce; parties arrayed to oppose it; and newspapers employed to stigmatise it—but, the *Senate of the United States* and *George Washington* had ratified the treaty; and yet the people proclaimed that it would destroy the interest, sully the honour, and undermine the independence of the country—because it was a British treaty! Marshall indulges in the following judicious reflections upon this course of the party, who were resolved to see no merit, and to detest every measure, having the remotest connexion with England. “In the populous cities, meetings of the people were immediately summoned, in order to take into their consideration, and to express their opinions respecting an instrument, *to comprehend the full extent of which, a statesman would need deep reflection in the quiet of his closet, aided by considerable inquiry.* It may well be supposed, that persons feeling some distrust of their capacity to form, intuitively, a correct judgment on a subject so complex, and disposed only to act knowingly, would be disinclined to attend such meetings; or, if present at

them, would be unwilling to commit themselves by so hasty a decision. Many intelligent men, therefore, stood aloof, while the most intemperate assumed, as usual, the *name of the people*; pronounced a definitive and unqualified condemnation of every article in the treaty; and with the utmost confidence assigned reasons for their opinions, which in many instances, had only an imaginary existence." In saying this, Marshall disclaims being an advocate for the treaty; but for what reason it is difficult to imagine.

The treaty was burnt by a mob of three hundred persons before the doors of the British minister and consul at Philadelphia, as well as before the mansion of Mr. *Bingham*, one of the Senators!

Washington however, with his characteristic firmness, remained immovable—determined never to yield his constitutional functions to public clamour, and to make the policy of government a mere weathercock of party. He was all that an American, proud of his country, and in love with virtue, could wish him.

During the raging of the storm kindled by the ratification of the treaty, Washington, as usual, retired for a short period to *Mount Vernon*, from whence, in a letter dated the 31st of July, he expressed himself to a friend in Philadelphia, in terms of the most acute anxiety, as to the embarrassments in which these popular movements placed the government with foreign powers, especially the two jealous belligerents, whose wars, like the gulfs of Sylla and Charibdis, every moment threatened to drag the United States into their devouring vortex.

On the 11th of August, Washington returned to Philadelphia, and having called a cabinet council, he ratified the treaty, resolved to discharge his duty in defiance of all consequences to his own popularity.

Exasperated by this decided and firm step, the popular indignation rose to the highest pitch, and ventured to prefer charges of peculation against the man, who had spent a life of toil in the service of his country, without fee or reward! A calumny so gross could not adhere to a reputation so spotless; and public indignation, upon an inquiry into the grounds of the libel, frowned its propagators into silence and contempt.

On the 19th of August, 1795, the Secretary of State tendered his resignation, and Mr. Pickering was appointed



in his room; and Mr. M<sup>c</sup>Henry was commissioned as Secretary at War. The death of Mr. Bradford having caused a vacancy in the office of Attorney General, Mr. Lee, of Virginia, was appointed.

The western counties of Pennsylvania were now restored to perfect quiet.

On the 3d of August, General Wayne concluded a treaty of peace with the Indian tribes, north-west of the Ohio, as well as those of the southern portion of the Union.

On the 5th of September, a treaty with *Algiers* was concluded.

Successful in all points in adjusting the differences of the country with *Foreign Powers*, a treaty with SPAIN was likewise concluded, in which the free navigation of the MISSISSIPPI river was guaranteed, and satisfactory boundaries settled: thus, evincing on the part of Washington, those high qualities of perseverance, prudence, justice, firmness, dignity and right, which constitute the *practical statesman*, and which in his person were combined with the exalted virtues of the approved patriot.

The new Congress now met, and again exhibited a majority in the House of Representatives, opposed to the administration. The speech of the President was, as usual, distinguished for wisdom, firmness, dignity and moderation, in which he exhorted Congress to the practice of toleration and forbearance.

Mr. *Adet*, having succeeded *Fauchet* as minister from France, the former presented to the President, on the 1st January, 1796, the colours of the French nation, on which occasion Washington delivered a highly complimentary address to the French ambassador, in which the cause of liberty was most enthusiastically extolled by the American chief, who did not fail to pay a tribute of warm praise to the virtues and gallantry of the citizens of France.

In February, 1796, the treaty with Great Britain was returned to the President, ratified by the English monarch. Accordingly, Washington, in pursuance of his constitutional functions, issued his proclamation, announcing its terms, and enjoining its observance and execution as the supreme law of the land.

At this proclamation the House of Representatives took umbrage, under an impression that the action of the House was necessary to its validity.

To manifest this dissatisfaction, the House adopted a resolution, calling on the President to lay before them all papers connected with the negotiations of Mr. Jay with the British government. As a party movement, hostile to Washington, this resolution acquired great importance, not only as it *infringed on his constitutional powers*, but as it placed him in a position of direct collision with the popular branch of the Legislature. Fortunately for the constitution and the country, his firmness was not to be moved by the dread of losing popular favour. Important *precedents* were to be established by his conduct on this occasion; and, acting with his wonted deliberation, judgment and sagacity, he transmitted a message to the House, on the 30th of March, in which he denied their right to demand papers, and declined a compliance with their resolution. This message is remarkable for a vigour of reasoning, a frankness of tone, a fearlessness of consequences and a perspicuity of exposition which will never fail to command admiration and extort applause; as a triumphant vindication of executive prerogative and constitutional provision, against attempted legislative usurpation and the confusion and chaos of mere party innovations.

At the head of the opposition to Washington, in the House of Representatives, stood *Albert Gallatin*, a talented emigrant from Switzerland, who had been conspicuous in the western insurrection, and whom popular infatuation had invested with the dignity of a representative, instead of the obscurity of the insurgent. This man, always loose in principle, and never satisfied with the regular movements of lawful government, now attempted to oppose the enlightened decision of Washington, by the clamour of faction and the sophistry of the demagogue. In vain, however, did this wily jesuit oppose what he had not virtue enough to approve. The dignified and patriotic policy of Washington triumphed; and, on the 29th of April, the resolution was carried in favour of the *necessary laws* to carry into effect the treaty with Great Britain.

Congress adjourned on the 1st of June, with party passions highly inflamed; and containing, among some of the brightest jewels of political worth and purity, more than enough of gross and grovelling material to have fomented a revolution against the united virtue of the sages of mankind.

Amidst the cares of State, and the complicated avocations

incidental to the government of a great empire, Washington did not permit the finer emotions of friendship and humanity to be effaced from his heart. Having been early and cordially attached, by the ties of the warmest friendship, to the Marquis La Fayette, he had been a grieved observer of the exile and imprisonment of that chivalrous Frenchman in the dungeon of Olmutz; and had exerted his influence, through the American ambassadors at foreign courts, to alleviate his sufferings, and procure his enlargement; but, disappointed in this object, he addressed a letter to the Emperor of Germany, which is so deeply characterised by the noblest feelings, the most refined sentiments, and the purest ebullitions of a humane and generous heart, that I cannot omit to record it for the pleasure of the reader.

“It will readily occur to your majesty that occasions may sometimes exist, on which official considerations would constrain the chief of a nation to be silent and passive in relation even to objects which affect his sensibility, and claim his interposition as a man. Finding myself precisely in this situation at present, I take the liberty of writing this private letter to your majesty, being persuaded that my motives will also be my apology for it.”

“In common with the people of this country, I retain a strong and cordial sense of the services rendered to them by the Marquis de la Fayette; and my friendship for him has been constant and sincere. It is natural, therefore, that I should sympathise with him and his family in their misfortunes, and endeavour to mitigate the calamities they experience, among which his present confinement is not the least distressing.”

“I forbear to enlarge on this delicate subject. Permit me only to submit to your majesty’s consideration, whether his long imprisonment, and the confiscation of his estate, and the indigence and dispersion of his family, and the painful anxieties incident to all these circumstances, do not form an assemblage of sufferings which recommend him to the mediation of humanity? Allow me, sir, on this occasion to be its organ; and to entreat that he may be permitted to come to this country on such conditions, and under such restrictions as your majesty may think it expedient to prescribe.”

“As it is a maxim with me not to ask what, under similar circumstances, I would not grant, your majesty will do me

the justice to believe, that this request appears to me to correspond with those great principles of magnanimity and wisdom which form the basis of sound policy and durable glory.”

Another epoch in the life and history of Washington, was now about to take place, inferior to no preceding era of his eventful existence, and illustrious character, in the importance of its influence upon the government and destinies of his native country, by the *precedent* it would establish, as a conservative principle of the liberties, rights and happiness of the people. This was the epoch of his retirement from office.

His intention to decline another election, had for some time been imparted to his intimate friends, who justly contemplated with dread an event which would open the country to the convulsions of party on the one hand, or the agitations incident to an untried system on the other. Having been *forced*, as it were, by the power of public opinion, from the sweets of private life, purely from considerations of national usefulness; and having yielded to this force with painful reluctance, he now, seeing his country safely moored from the tempests of domestic discord and foreign aggression, once more turned his eyes towards *Mount Vernon*, sighing for the repose of its shades, and longing to enjoy the tranquil solace of its domestic endearments. To establish a *wholesome limit* to the term of executive power, which the constitution had left open to an indefinite practice, to be settled by *precedent*, was not among the least of his motives which induced him to form this resolution: to depart from which, nothing short of circumstances fatal to the existence of the Union could have influenced him.

It is a singular and an exalted trait in the character of Washington, that *party* never understood him, and that *party* never could appreciate the purity of his virtue, or the grandeur of his genius. The reason of this was, that he never thought, or felt through the medium of party himself, and had no sympathy for its delusions, its blindness, its deceptions and its sinuosities. His passions were *national* not factious, his views were for his *country*, not for a party; and hence the non-existence of all sympathy, between those who looked at every measure through the focus of a party, and the great patriot who never permitted himself to look at any subject but through the medium of his *country's good!*

Whatever Mr. Jefferson may have alleged in moments of envy, or during the irritation of party excitement, to disparage the republican force of the inflexible principles of Washington, he has made ample atonement for the injustice, in his notes of '*Conversations with the President*,' from which I cannot omit to quote the following passage, "I expressed to him, says Jefferson, my excessive repugnance to public life, the particular uneasiness of my situation in this place, where the laws of society oblige me to move exactly in the circle which I know to bear me peculiar hatred; that is to say, *the wealthy aristocrats*, the merchants connected closely with England, the new created paper fortunes; that, thus surrounded, my words were caught, multiplied, misconstrued, and even fabricated and spread abroad to my injury; that he saw also, that there was such an opposition of views between myself and another part of the administration, as to render it peculiarly displeasing, and to destroy the necessary harmony. Without knowing the views of what is called the republican party here, or having any communication with them, I could undertake to assure him, from my intimacy with that party in the late Congress, that there was not a view in the republican party, as spread over the United States, which went to the *frame* of the government; that I believed the next Congress would attempt nothing material, but to render their own body independent; that that party were firm in their dispositions to support the government; that the manœuvres of Mr. Genet might produce some little embarrassment, but that he would be abandoned by the republicans the moment they knew the nature of his conduct; and, on the whole, no crisis existed which threatened any thing."

"He said, he believed the views of the republican party were perfectly pure, *but when men put a machine into motion* it is impossible for them to stop it exactly where they would choose, or to say where it will stop. *That the constitution we have is an excellent one*, if we can keep it where it is; that it was indeed, supposed there was a party disposed to change it into a MONARCHICAL FORM, but that he could conscientiously declare there was not a man in the United States who would set his face more decidedly against it than himself. Here I interrupted him, by saying, '*no rational man in the United States suspects you of any other disposition*; but there does not pass a week, in which

we cannot prove declarations dropping from the monarchical party, that our government is good for nothing, is a milk and water thing which cannot support itself, we must knock it down, and set up something of more energy.' He said, *if that was the case*, he thought it a proof of THEIR INSANITY, for that the *republican spirit of the Union was so manifest and so solid, that it was astonishing how any one could expect to move it.*"

Making allowance for the envy which evidently moved Jefferson, on all occasions, to disparage Washington, the former has been more just to him than might with reason be expected; when we consider that the latter never encouraged Jefferson to look beyond his cabinet appointment, and always gave the preference of patronage, with an eye to the succession, to the enemies of the Secretary of State, which could not fail to kindle his resentment, and even excite his venom. Yet, even thus *prejudiced* as Jefferson was against the *father of his country*, he has given us the following testimony in favour of the modesty, moderation and republican simplicity of the *first President of the nation*, and which, I presume, we are to understand as equivalent to his recantation of his insidious charges of his *monarchical disposition* and design in the institution of levees, &c.—“When the President went to New York, he resisted, for three weeks, the effort to introduce LEVEES. At length he yielded, and left it to Humphreys, and some others, to settle the forms. Accordingly, an anti-chamber and presence room were provided, and when those who were to pay their court were assembled, the President set out, preceded by Humphreys. After passing through the anti-chamber the door of the inner room was thrown open, and Humphreys entered first, calling out with a loud voice, ‘the President of the United States.’ The President was so much disconcerted with it, that he did not recover it the whole time of the levee, and when the company was gone, he said to Humphreys—‘well you have taken me in once, but you shall never take me in a second time.’”

It must ever excite the surprise, regret and mortification of all *true Americans*, that a party ever did exist in opposition to George Washington; and in the minds of the same it will ever excite mingled emotions of contempt and abhorrence, that this party should have opened the battery of their slanders, as they beheld the patriot on his retreat to

private life; and that their malicious detraction sharpened its demoniac acrimony as the object of their calumny appeared to ascend beyond their reach, in his progress to an exalted and immortal renown. Like all cowards, they began the attack when the lion had turned his back on the reptiles who in vain strove to sting him, and finding the giant impenetrable to their pigmy malice, they determined, by making a noise, to conceal their own imbecility and diminish the apparent grandeur of their foe—by the virulence of their hatred and malignity.

Foremost in this work of infamy stood FRENEAU's and BACHE's papers, the infuriate champions of licentious doctrines, and the common sewer through which concealed rancour poured its cowardly libels upon the head of the man who had achieved the independence and founded the republic of America; who had won its victories in fields of blood, and cemented its liberties by the practical illustration of the constitution which he had assisted to frame and adopt. In one of these journals appeared a confidential paper, which had been privately submitted to the advice of his cabinet; and the publicity of which brought suspicions of a perfidious betrayal of confidence on some member of his late administration. From this paper, faction drew inferences to blacken the fame and asperse the motives of Washington, in relation to his deportment towards the insolent Genet, and the bloody scenes of the French revolution.

Mr. JEFFERSON, on whom, from the fact of his retirement from the cabinet, and other circumstances, suspicion *unjustly* fell, of having violated his confidence as a cabinet minister, now thought proper to vindicate himself, in a letter to Washington, from the foul charge of having given it to the public; and that this violation of confidence and good faith, must have been the work of some other, less alive to the purity of his character, and the value of a good name. Mr. Jefferson avowed his total abstraction from all *party questions*.

To this letter of vindication and denial, Washington thus responded: "If I had entertained any suspicion before, that the queries which have been published in Bache's paper, proceeded from you, the assurances you have given of the contrary would have removed them: but the truth is, I harboured none. I am at no loss to conjecture from what

source they flowed, through what channel they were conveyed, nor for what purpose they and similar publications appear.

“As you have mentioned the subject yourself, it would not be frank, candid, or friendly, to conceal that your conduct has been represented as derogating from that opinion I conceived you had entertained of me; that to your particular friends and connexions you have described, and they have denounced me, as a person under a dangerous influence, and that, if I would listen *more* to some *other* opinions, all would be well. My answer invariably has been, that I had never discovered any thing in the conduct of Mr. Jefferson to raise suspicions in my mind of his sincerity; that if he would retrace my public conduct, while he was in the administration, abundant proofs would occur to him, that truth and right decisions were the *sole* objects of my pursuit; that there were as many instances within his *own* knowledge of my having decided *against* as in *favour* of the person evidently alluded to; and, moreover, that I was no believer in the infallibility of the politics or measures of any man living. In short, that I was no *party man* myself, and that the first wish of my heart, was, if parties did exist, to reconcile them.”

“To this I may add, and very truly, that, until the last year or two, I had no conception that parties would, or even could go the lengths I have been witness to; nor did I believe, until lately, that it was within the bounds of probability, hardly within those of possibility, that while I was using my utmost exertions, to establish a *national character of our own*, independent as far as our obligations and justice would permit, of every nation of the earth; and wished, by steering a steady course, to preserve this country from the horrors of a desolating war, I should be accused of being the enemy of one nation, and subject to the influence of another; and to prove it, that every act of my administration would be tortured, and the grossest and most insidious misrepresentations of them be made, by giving one side only of a subject, and that too in such exaggerated and indecent terms, as could scarcely be applied to a Nero—to a notorious defaulter—or even to a common pick-pocket.

But, enough of this—I have already gone further in the expression of my feelings than I intended.”

Every expedient of depravity—every project of forgery



and defamation, were now exhausted to blast his fame, or tarnish his glory. Fabricated letters, which had before been published, in 1777, detected and condemned, were now raked from the recesses of putrid slander, and republished as genuine, by the same incendiaries who had attempted to defame him through Bache's paper, and which occasioned the denial of Mr. Jefferson's agency in that dark work of moral assassination. The letters were said to have been found in a portmanteau, left in the care of his mulatto servant Billy, who was taken prisoner by the British. In the exposure of their fabrication by Washington, deposited in the department of state, it appears that Billy never was taken prisoner, and that no part of the baggage of the General ever fell into the hands of the enemy.

The charges of enmity towards France, alleged to pervade and influence the mind of Washington, had been fully refuted by his official efforts to negotiate a treaty of commerce with that republic; but the incapacity of Mr. Monroe, as a diplomatist, combined with his extravagant devotion to the French Directory, had operated to frustrate all the plans of Washington to succeed in any negotiation for that object. To remove the obstacle supposed to exist in the person of that minister, he was accordingly superceded by Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, of South Carolina.

As the election for President and Vice President drew near, Washington perceiving that he might safely withdraw from the chair, announced his intention to the American people, in what has been called his FAREWELL ADDRESS, a paper so pre-eminent for the best lessons of political wisdom, and so replete with maxims of liberty, that tend to cement the UNION, and preserve the Republic entire, for endless generations—a paper, at the same time so distinguished for its eloquence, and remarkable for its pure and lofty spirit of patriotism—that not to insert it here, emanating as it did immediately from the head and heart of its great author, would betray a want of judgment, as well as of patriotism, of which I would not willingly be supposed guilty; more especially, as it ought to be a subject of frequent perusal, and much study, to every American, of whatever age, or condition—that they may imprint on the memories of their children, the *political testament* of a man, who never thought but for his country's good—and who never felt but for his country's honour, and the rights, liberties, and happiness of the human race.

## VALEDICTORY

OF GEORGE WASHINGTON.

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*TO THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES.*

FRIENDS AND FELLOW CITIZENS,

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

I beg you, at the same time, to do me the justice to be assured, that this resolution has not been taken, without a strict regard to all the considerations appertaining to the relation which binds a dutiful citizen to his country: that, in withdrawing the tender of service which silence in my situation might imply, I am influenced by no diminution of zeal for your future interest, no deficiency of grateful respect for your past kindness; but am supported by a full conviction that the step is compatible with both.

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

I rejoice that the state of your concerns, external as well as internal, no longer renders the pursuit of inclination incompatible with the sentiment of duty or propriety: and I

am persuaded whatever partiality may be retained for my services, that in the present circumstances of our country, you will not disapprove of my determination to retire.

The impressions with which I first undertook the arduous trust, were explained on the proper occasion. In the discharge of this trust, I will only say, that I have with good intentions contributed towards the organisation and administration of the government, the best exertions of which a very fallible judgment was capable. Not unconscious, in the outset, of the inferiority of my qualifications, experience in my own eyes, perhaps still more in the eyes of others, has strengthened the motives to diffidence of myself; and every day the increasing weight of years admonishes me more and more, that the shade of retirement is as necessary to me as it will be welcome. Satisfied that if any circumstances have given peculiar value to my services, they were temporary; I have the consolation to believe, that while choice and prudence invite me to quit the political scene, patriotism does not forbid it.

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

maintained; that its administration in every department may be stamped with wisdom and virtue; that, in fine, the happiness of the people of these States, under the auspices of liberty, may be made complete, by so careful a preservation, and so prudent a use of this blessing, as will acquire to them the glory of recommending it to the applause, the affection, and adoption of every nation which is yet a stranger to it.

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

The unity of government which constitutes you one people, is also now dear to you. It is justly so; for it is a main pillar in the edifice of your real independence, the support of your tranquillity at home, your peace abroad; of your prosperity; of that very liberty which you so highly prize. But, as it is easy to foresee, that from different causes and from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many artifices employed, to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth; as this is the point in your political fortress against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be most constantly and actively directed, it is of infinite moment, that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national Union, to your collective and individual happiness; that you should cherish a cordial, habitual and immovable attachment to it; accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it as of the palladium of your political safety and prosperity, watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety; discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion, that it can in any event be abandoned;

and, indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any part of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts.

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

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

The North, in an unrestrained intercourse with the South, protected by the equal laws of a common government, finds in the productions of the latter great additional resources of maritime and commercial enterprize, and precious materials of manufacturing industry. The South, in the same intercourse, benefiting by the agency of the North, sees its agriculture and its commerce expand. Turning partly into its own channels the seamen of the north, it finds its particular navigation invigorated; and while it contributes in different ways to nourish and increase the general mass of the national navigation, it looks forward to the protection of a maritime strength, to which itself is unequally adapted. The East, in a like intercourse with the West, always finds, and in the progressive improvement of interior communications by land and water, will more and more find a valuable vent for the commodities which it brings from abroad, or manufactures at home. The West derives from the East supplies requisite to its growth and comfort, and what is perhaps of still greater consequence, it must, of necessity, owe the secure enjoyment of indispensable outlets for its own productions to the weight, influence, and the future

maritime strength of the Union, directed by an indissoluble community of interest as one nation. Any other tenure by which the West can hold this essential advantage, whether derived from its own separate strength or from an apostate and unnatural connection with any foreign power, must be intrinsically precarious.

While then every part of our country thus feels an immediate and particular interest in Union, all the parts combined cannot fail to find in the united mass of means and efforts greater strength, greater resource, proportionably greater security from internal danger, a less frequent interruption of their peace by foreign nations; and what is of inestimable value, they must derive from union an exemption from those broils and wars between themselves, which so frequently assist neighbouring countries, not tied together by the same government, which their own rivalships alone would be sufficient to produce; but which opposite foreign alliances, attachments and intrigues, would stimulate and embitter. Hence, likewise, they will avoid the necessity of those overgrown military establishments, which under any form of government are inauspicious to liberty, and which are to be regarded as particularly hostile to republican liberty; in this sense it is, that your Union ought to be considered as a main prop of your liberty, and that the love of the one ought to endear to you the preservation of the other. These considerations speak a persuasive language to every reflecting and virtuous mind, and exhibit the continuance of the Union as a primary object of patriotic desire. Is there a doubt whether a common government can embrace so large a sphere? Let experience solve it. To listen to mere speculation in such a case were criminal. We are authorized to hope that a proper organization of the whole, with the auxiliary agency of government for the respective subdivisions, will afford a happy issue to the experiment. With these powerful and obvious motives to Union, affecting all parts of our country, while experience shall not have demonstrated its impracticability, there will always be reason to distrust the patriotism of those, who in any quarter may endeavour to weaken its bonds.

In contemplating the causes which may disturb our Union, it occurs, as a matter of serious concern, that any ground should have been furnished for characterizing parties by geographical discriminations—Northern and South-

ern—Atlantic and Western; whence designing men may endeavour to excite a belief that there is a real difference of local interests and views. One of the expedients of party to acquire influence, within particular districts, is to misrepresent the opinions and aims of other districts. You cannot shield yourselves too much against the jealousies and heart burnings which spring from those misrepresentations; they tend to render alien to each other those who ought to be bound by fraternal affection. The inhabitants of our western country have lately had a useful lesson on this head; they have seen, in the negotiation by the executive, and in the unanimous ratification by the Senate, of the treaty with Spain, and in the universal satisfaction at that event throughout the United States, a decisive proof how unfounded were suspicions propagated among them of a policy in the general government, and in the Atlantic States, unfriendly to their interests in regard to the Mississippi; they have been witnesses to the formation of two treaties, that with Great Britain, and that with Spain, which secure to them every thing they could desire, in respect to our foreign relations towards continuing their prosperity. Will it not be their wisdom to rely, for the preservation of these advantages, on the Union, by which they were procured? Will they not henceforth be deaf to these advisers, if such they are, who would sever them from their brethren, and connect them with aliens?

To the efficacy and permanency of your Union, a government for the whole is indispensable. No alliances, however strict, between the parts can be an adequate substitute; they must inevitably experience the infractions and interruptions which all alliances in all times have experienced. Sensible of this momentous truth, you have improved upon your first essay, by the adoption of a constitution of government better calculated than your former for an intimate Union, and for the efficacious management of your common concerns. This government, the offspring of our own choice, uninfluenced and unawed, adopted upon full investigation and mature deliberation, completely free in its principles in the distribution of its powers, uniting security with energy, and containing within itself a provision for its own amendment, has a just claim to your confidence and your support. Respect for its authority, compliance with its laws, acquiescence in its measures, are duties en-

joined by the fundamental maxims of true liberty. The basis of our political systems is the right of the people to make, and to alter their constitutions which at any time exists, till changed by an explicit and authentic act of the whole people, is sacredly obligatory upon all.

The very idea of the power and the right of the people to establish government, presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established government. All obstructions to the execution of the laws, all combinations and associations, under whatever plausible character, with the real design to direct, control, counteract or awe the regular deliberation and action of the constituted authorities, are destructive of this fundamental principle, and of fatal tendency. They serve to organize faction, to give it an artificial and extraordinary force, to put in the place of the delegated will of the nation the will of a party, often a small but artful and enterprising minority of the community; and according to the alternate triumphs of different parties, to make the public administrations the mirror of the ill concerted and incongruous projects of faction, rather than the organ of consistent wholesome plans digested by common councils, and modified by mutual interest.

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

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



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

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

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

The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge, natural to party dissension, which in different ages and countries has perpetuated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful despotism. But this leads at length to a more formal and permanent despotism. The disorders and miseries which result, gradually inclining the minds of men to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an individual: and sooner or later the chief of some prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation, on the ruins of public liberty.

Without looking forward to an extremity of this kind, the common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of party are sufficient to make it the interest and duty of a wise people to discourage and restrain it.

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

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

It is important likewise that the habits of thinking in a free country should inspire caution in those entrusted with its administration to confine themselves within their respective constitutional spheres, avoiding in the exercise of the powers of some department to encroach upon another. The spirit of encroachment tends to consolidate the powers of all departments in one, and thus to create, whatsoever are the forms of government, a real despotism. A just estimate of that love of power, and proneness to abuse it, which predominates in human hearts, is sufficient to satisfy us of the truth of this position. The necessity of reciprocal checks in the exercise of political power, by dividing and distributing it into different depositories, and constituting each to be the guardian of the public weal against invasion by the others, has been evinced by experiments ancient and modern; some of them in our country, and under our own eyes. To preserve them must be as necessary as to institute them. If, in the opinion of the people, the distribution or modification of the constitutional powers be in any par-

ticular wrong, let it be corrected by an amendment in the way which the constitution designates: but let there be no change by usurpation; for though this, in one instance, may be the instrument of good, it is the customary weapon by which free governments are destroyed. The precedent must always greatly overbalance in permanent evil any partial or transient benefit which the use can at any time yield.

Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain should that man claim the tribute of patriotism who should labour to subvert these great pillars of human happiness—these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politician equally with the honest man ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. Let it simply be asked where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligations desert the oaths, which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.

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

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

As a very important source of strength and security, cherish public credit; one method of securing it is to use it as sparingly as possible, avoiding occasions of expense by cultivating peace, but remembering also that timely disbursements to prepare for danger frequently prevent much greater disbursements to repel it; avoiding, likewise, the accumulation of debt, not only by shunning occasions of expense, but by vigorous exertions in time of peace to dis-

charge the debts which unavoidable wars may have occasioned, not ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burthen which we ourselves ought to bear. The execution of these maxims belongs to your representatives; but it is necessary that public opinion should co-operate. To facilitate to them the performance of their duty, it is essential that you should practically bear in mind, that towards the payment of debts there must be revenue; that to have revenue there must be taxes; that no taxes can be devised which are not more or less inconvenient and unpleasant; that the intrinsic embarrassment inseparable from the selection of the proper objects ought to be a decisive motive for a candid construction of the conduct of government in making it, and for a spirit of acquiescence in the measures for obtaining revenue which the public exigencies may at any time dictate.

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

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

lisions, obstinate, envenomed and bloody contests. The nation prompted by ill-will and resentment sometimes impels to war the government contrary to the best calculations of policy. The government sometimes participates in the national propensity, and adopts through passion what reason would reject; at other times it makes the animosity of the nation subservient to projects of hostility instigated by pride, ambition, and other sinister and pernicious motives. The peace often, sometimes perhaps the liberty of nations, has been the victim. So, likewise, a passionate attachment of one nation for another, produces a variety of evils. Sympathy for the favourite nation, facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest, in cases where no real common interest exists, and infusing into one the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and wars of the latter, without adequate inducement or justification.

It leads also to concessions to the favourite nation of privileges denied to others, which is apt doubly to injure the nation making the concessions, by unnecessarily parting with what ought to have been retained; and by exciting jealousy, ill-will, and a disposition to retaliate in the parties from whom equal privileges are withheld; and it gives to ambitious, corrupted or deluded citizens facility to betray or sacrifice the interests of their own country without odium, sometimes even with popularity, gilding with the appearances of a virtuous sense of obligation, or a laudable zeal for public good, the foolish compliances of ambition, corruption, or infatuation.

As avenues to foreign influence, in innumerable ways, such attachments are particularly alarming to the truly enlightened and independent patriot. How many opportunities do they afford to tamper with domestic factions, to practise the arts of seduction, to mislead public opinion, to influence or awe the public councils! Such an attachment of a small or weak towards a great and powerful nation, dooms the former to be the satellite of the latter.

Excessive partiality for one foreign nation, and excessive dislike of another, cause those whom they actuate to see danger only on one side, and serve to veil and even to second the arts and influence of the other. Real patriots, who may resist the intrigues of the favourite, are liable to become suspected and odious, while its tools and dupes

usurp the applause and confidence of the people to surrender their interests.

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

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

Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course. If we remain one people, under an efficient government, the period is not far off when we may defy material injury from external annoyance; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality we may at any time resolve upon, to be scrupulously respected; when belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisitions upon us, will not lightly hazard the giving us provocation—when we may choose peace or war, as our interest, guided by justice, shall counsel.

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

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

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

• Harmony, liberal intercourse with all nations, are re-

commended by policy, humanity, and interest. But, even our commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand; neither seeking or granting exclusive favours or preferences; consulting the natural course of things; diffusing and diversifying by gentle means the streams of commerce, but forcing nothing; establishing, with powers so disposed, in order to give trade a stable course, to define the rights of our merchants, and to enable the government to support them; conventional rules of intercourse, the best that present circumstances and mutual opinion will permit, but temporary, and liable to be from time to time abandoned or varied, as experience or circumstances shall dictate; constantly keeping in view, that it is folly in one nation to look for disinterested favours from another; that it must pay with a portion of its independence for whatever it may accept under that character; that by such acceptance, it may place itself in the condition of having given equivalents for nominal favour, and yet of being reproached with ingratitude for not giving more. There can be no greater error than to expect, or calculate, upon real favours from nation to nation. It is an illusion which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard.

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

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

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

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

After deliberate examination with the aid of the best lights I could obtain, I was well satisfied that our country, under all the circumstances of the case, had a right to take, and was bound in duty and interest, to take a neutral position. Having taken it, I determined, as far as should depend upon me, to maintain it, with moderation, perseverance and firmness. The considerations which respect the right to hold this conduct, it is not necessary on this occasion to detail. I will only observe, that according to my understanding of the matter, that right, so far from being denied by any of the belligerent powers, has been virtually admitted by all. The duty of holding a neutral conduct may be inferred, without any thing more from the obligation which justice and humanity impose on every nation, in cases in which it is free to act, to maintain inviolate the relations of peace and amity towards other nations.

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

Though in reviewing the incidents of my administration, I am unconscious of intentional error; I am, nevertheless, too sensible of my defects not to think it probable that I may have committed many errors. Whatever they may be, I fervently beseech the Almighty to avert or mitigate the evils to which they may tend. I shall also carry with me the hope, that my country will never cease to view them with indulgence; and that, after forty-five years of my life dedicated to its service, with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion, as myself must soon be to the mansions of rest.

Relying on its kindness in this as in other things, and actuated by that fervent love towards it, which is so natural to a man who views it in the native soil of himself and his progenitors for several generations, I anticipate with pleasing expectation, that retreat, in which I promise myself to



realize, without alloy, the sweet enjoyment of partaking, in the midst of my fellow citizens, the benign influence of good laws under a free government—the ever favourite object of my heart, and the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares, labours and dangers.

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

*United States, 17th September, 1796.*

In all quarters of the Union, this Address was received with profound veneration and respect for its author, and a deep conviction of the truth and preciousness of the solemn lessons it contained. The people bowed with reverence to the precepts of patriotism, which fell from the venerated lips of the mighty man, whose genius and virtue had conducted them through such tempests and perils, to their present freedom and felicity. Several of the State Legislatures passed resolutions to have it transcribed on their journals; and nearly all adopted resolutions, declaring their respect for his person, their exalted sense of his public services, and the deep emotion with which they beheld his retirement from public life.

The period of his political cares now rapidly approached; and on the 7th of December, 1796, Washington for the last time, met the national legislature in the Senate chamber, to deliver his final speech on the affairs of the country; and here, he exceeded all his antecedent addresses, in the comprehensive reach of mind, and condensation of political wisdom which it exhibited. After enumerating and commenting on the prominent events of his administration for the past year, he digressed to the recommendation of a competent NAVAL establishment; the erection of NATIONAL WORKS for the manufacture of the necessary munitions of war; for a NATIONAL INSTITUTE of AGRICULTURE; for a MILITARY ACADEMY; for a NATIONAL UNIVERSITY; and an increase of compensation to the officers of government. As usual, his exposition of the *foreign relations* of the country was lucid and patriotic; while his view of its internal prosperity was perspicuous, animated and cheering.

The Senate adopted an answer to the speech, replete with sentiments of affection and gratitude towards the veteran chief, and expressive of their regret at his retirement from the Presidential chair.

In the House of Representatives, however, a similar spirit

of patriotism and liberality did not universally prevail. Faction had there reared its snaky front; and malice, passion and hatred had been, in a great measure, substituted for the pure spirit of American patriotism. Mr. GILES, cursed by nature with the unquiet spirit of eternal opposition, vented his gall in slander, and satiated his malignity by his aspersions on the character of Washington. With an audacity only equalled by his disregard of truth, and a malignity of heart, which found no parallel but in his perversity of understanding, that gentleman said, "he was one of those citizens who did not regret the President's retiring from office. He hoped he would retire to his country seat, and enjoy all the happiness he could wish; and he believed he would enjoy more there than in his present situation. He believed the government of the United States would go on without him. The people were competent to their own government. What calamities would attend the United States, if one man alone was essential to their government? He believed there were *a thousand men* in the United States, who were capable of filling the Presidential chair as well as it had been filled heretofore. And although a clamour had been raised in all parts of the United States, more or less from apprehensions on the departure of the President from office, yet, not feeling these apprehensions himself, he was perfectly easy on the occasion. He wished the President as much happiness as any man, &c."—"but for his part, he retained the same opinions he had always done with respect to his measures, nor should any influence under heaven prevent him from expressing that opinion—an opinion in which he was confident, ere long, *all America would concur.*"\*

The address, to which Mr. Giles made his ineffectual opposition, was carried by an overwhelming majority, and contained the following beautiful and appropriate passages

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\* Mr. Giles lived to see the folly of this prediction; for, at the time of his death, every measure of Washington had been fully adopted by those who opposed them in 1796. The federal policy became the democratic policy, even down to the navy and the bank; and Mr. Giles was left a solitary monument of consistent obstinacy, at war with all parties, and himself denounced by all America. Mr. Madison and Mr. Monroe, more wise, became converts to a policy which could not be changed without plunging the country in ruin, and subjecting it to insult and dishonour.

—“The spectacle of a free and enlightened nation offering, by its representatives, the tribute of unfeigned approbation to its first citizen, however novel and interesting it may be, derives all its lustre (a lustre which accident or enthusiasm could not bestow, and which adulation would tarnish) from the transcendant merit of which it is the voluntary testimony.”

“May you long enjoy that liberty which is so dear to you, and to which your name will ever be so dear; may your own virtue, and a nation’s prayers, obtain the happiest sunshine for the decline of your days, and the choicest of future blessings. For our country’s sake; for the sake of republican liberty, it is our earnest wish that your example may be the guide of your successors; and thus, after being the ornament and safeguard of the present, become the patrimony of our descendants.” This address was carried by nearly a *unanimous vote*, three members only voting in the negative!

Washington beheld his return to private life with those heartfelt emotions of sincere pleasure, which delight “*the wearied traveller who sees a resting place, and is bending his body to lean thereon.*”

He remained in Philadelphia, after the expiration of his term of office, only long enough to attend the *inauguration* of JOHN ADAMS, *as President*, and THOMAS JEFFERSON, *as Vice-President of the United States.*

The merchants of Philadelphia, fully qualified to appreciate the genius, and reverence the virtues and patriotism of Washington, could not consent to part with the father of his country, without some signal testimony of their gratitude and admiration; which, more or less, extended to every class of life. For this purpose, they prepared a magnificent banquet, to which Washington was invited, together with many officers of high rank in the late army, the heads of departments, foreign ministers and persons of distinction.

Upon entering the area of the Rotundo, the general was conducted to his seat; and, a signal being given, the music struck up Washington’s March, while a curtain scene, which represented simple objects in the rear of the principal seat, was drawn up and discovered an emblematical painting of his retirement from office. The principal figure was that of a female, as large as life, representing America, seated on an elevation of *sixteen* marble steps. On her left

hand reposed the federal shield, sustained by an eagle, and at her feet lay the cornucopiæ. In her right hand she held the Indian calumet of peace, supporting the cap of liberty; while in the perspective rose the TEMPLE OF FAME; and on her left stood an *altar* consecrated to PUBLIC GRATITUDE, upon which incense was burning. In her left hand she held a scroll, inscribed '*valedictory*,' and at the foot of the altar lay a *plumed helmet* and sword, from which a figure of Washington, as large as life, appeared retiring down the steps, pointing with his right hand to the emblems of power which he had resigned, and with his left to a beautiful landscape of MOUNT VERNON, in front of which appeared oxen yoked to the plough. Over the seat of Washington, a figure of *genius*, descending from the clouds, appeared placing a wreath of laurel on his head.

No sooner was his successor installed into office, than Washington hastened towards his favourite retreat of Mount Vernon; but all his efforts to render his journey private proved unavailing; and the country through which he passed was thronged with grateful citizens, eager to express their veneration and attachment to the man, who, uniting virtue with greatness, shone brighter in the declining hours of his authority, than the sun that rose to gild the chair which he had voluntarily resigned; and the splendour of whose real glory has been hourly augmenting from the day of his retirement to the present time. While in power, ambition envied his greatness, without being able to perceive that adventitious circumstances did not create it; and malignant faction aspersed his motives, without being able to discern or appreciate his patriotism.

It has been remarked, as a singular fact in the life of Washington, that though the most popular of all men who ever did, or can occupy the presidential chair, yet that scarcely any prominent measure of his administration has escaped the venom of party invective, or the unsparing denunciation of malignant criticism; the cause of which is to be found in his patriotism, which refused to compromise his country; and in his genius, which could carry into successful execution the indistinct outlines of a vast and complicated empire, the boundaries of whose powers were defined by an instrument open to every variety of construction; and, to pronounce on the violation of whose powers, no tribunal had been understandingly erected.

At Mount Vernon his time was now devoted to agricultural pursuits, and the duties of an extensive correspondence; together with that influx of social intercourse, which his past greatness, and ever enduring virtues, poured upon him; so that with the improvements of a somewhat neglected estate, the society of men and the allurements of books, added to the pleasing duties of a diffusive correspondence, every hour glided away with the calm delight of rational employment and philosophic dignity, yet with a heart not narrowed in the sphere of its action, and a mind still acutely alive to the honour, interest, freedom and prosperity of his country.

It was scarcely within the compass of human reason, however, that Washington should not entertain a lively sensibility for the progress of those political events, connected with the operations of that stupendous machine of government, which his genius had set in motion, and that policy of its administration which his wisdom and virtue had devised, as the polar star of its safety and honour. Warmly attached to the *system* he had pursued, he looked to its preservation with the fond solicitude of parental love, which all his efforts to abstract himself from political affairs, could not restrain or overcome. Still there was a struggle in his mind between the love of retirement, and his habitual propensity to watch over the welfare of his country, which is well depicted in the following extract from one of his letters—“I have confidence, however, in that providence which has shielded the United States from the evils that have hitherto threatened them; and as I believe the major part of the people of this country to be well affected to its constitution and government, I rest satisfied that, should a crisis ever arrive to call forth the sense of the community, it will be strong in support of the honour and dignity of the nation. Therefore, however much I regret the opposition, which has for its object the embarrassment of the administration, I shall view things in the calm light of mild philosophy, and endeavour to finish my course in retirement and ease.”

But the insulting and degrading conduct of France, first towards our minister, General Pinckney, then towards our three envoys, and afterwards to our flag and property—coupled with the insolent demand that “*France wants money and must have it;*” and that without money she

would declare war against us; having at last provoked hostilities with that republic—*Washington* was appointed to the command of the armies of the United States, in July, 1798, which he very reluctantly accepted, under the conviction that his duty to his country would not permit him to decline a commission, which a deep sense of the danger of the crisis had been the motive for conferring on him. He now directed all his attention to the organization of the army; though convinced himself that France would never have the madness to attempt an invasion.

On *Friday*, the 13th December, 1799, while superintending some alterations and improvements on his estate, exposed to a drizzling rain, which saturated his hair, and wet his neck, he received the malady, which in a short period terminated his existence. Disregarding his being wet, as a slight inconvenience, he passed the day in his usual manner, free from all apprehension of danger; but during the night he was seized with a violent inflammation of the windpipe, attended with ague, great pain in the upper and fore part of the throat, a cough, difficulty of breathing and considerable fever. He immediately lost fourteen ounces of blood, but would not permit any of the domestics to be disturbed, that they might be despatched for a physician, until day-break. Doctor Craik arrived at 11, and immediately requested a consultation. But the resources of art were exhausted in vain. His vital powers were fast sinking beneath the force of his malady; his speech became difficult, and his respiration obstructed more and more. In this manner the vital functions seemed to be rapidly departing; and on *Saturday* night, at half past 11 o'clock, he expired, in the full possession of his intellectual faculties, and without a struggle or a groan.

Labouring under the presentiment, from the beginning, that his disease would prove mortal, he perhaps unconsciously assisted to aid its ravages, by the great reluctance with which he submitted to the remedies prescribed for its cure. This impression, however, was too serious to be eradicated; and a few hours before he died, he with difficulty made himself understood, when he expressed a wish to die without being further troubled. As soon as he was attacked, and found it impossible to swallow, he concluded all hope of recovery vain; and, undressing himself, went to bed, to conclude his mortal career.

To Doctor Craik, who added the kindness of a friend to the skill of a physician, he said with difficulty, as his head reposed on the lap of the doctor, who sat on his bed, 'Doctor, I am dying, and have been dying for a long time, but I am not afraid to die.'

Thus, with the serenity of a saint, and the composure of a philosopher, expired, in his sixty-seventh year, the purest man, and most disinterested patriot, who had ever founded an empire, and exercised the supreme authority of a nation.

As sudden as it was afflicting, the intelligence of his death struck the public mind with a palsy of grief, which every moment spread wider, and sunk deeper into the hearts of the community. At a distance, the news of his death preceded the intelligence of his illness; so quick had been the ravages of his disease; and as the dismay was enhanced, from the minds of men not being prepared for the catastrophe, a general gloom overspread the country. The two Houses of Congress immediately adjourned on the receipt of the intelligence. On the succeeding day, a member of the House addressed to the chair the following just and beautiful eulogy, as introductory to three resolutions.\*

“The melancholy event which was yesterday announced with doubt, has been rendered but too certain. Our WASHINGTON is no more! The hero, the patriot, and the sage of America—the man on whom, in times of danger, every eye was turned, and all hopes were placed, lives now only in his own great actions, and in the hearts of an affectionate and afflicted people.

“If, Sir, it had not been usual openly to testify respect for the memory of those whom heaven has selected as its instruments for dispensing good to man, yet, such has been the uncommon worth and such the extraordinary incidents which may have marked the life of him whose loss we all deplore, that the whole American nation, impelled by the

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\* “RESOLVED, That this House will wait on the President in condolence of this mournful event.

“RESOLVED, That the Speaker's chair be shrouded with black, and that the members and officers of the House wear black during the Session.

“RESOLVED, That a Committee, in conjunction with one from the Senate, be appointed to consider on the most suitable manner of paying honour to the memory of the MAN, FIRST IN WAR, FIRST IN PEACE, and FIRST IN THE HEARTS OF HIS FELLOW CITIZENS.”

same feelings, would call, with one voice, for a public manifestation of that sorrow which is so deep and universal.

“More than any other individual, and as much as to one individual was possible, has he contributed to FOUND this our wide spreading empire, and to give to the Western World Independence and Freedom.

“Having effected the great object for which he was placed at the head of our armies, we have seen him convert the sword into the ploughshare, and sink the soldier into the citizen.

“When the debility of our federal system had become manifest, and the bonds which connected this vast continent were dissolving, we have seen him the chief of those patriots who formed for us a constitution which, by preserving the Union, will, I trust, substantiate and perpetuate those blessings which our revolution had promised to bestow.

“In obedience to the general voice of his country calling him to preside over a great people, we have seen him once more quit the retirement he loved, and in a season more stormy and tempestuous than war itself, with calm and wise determination pursue the true interests of the nation, and contribute, more than any other could contribute, to the establishment of that system of policy, which will, I trust, yet preserve our peace, our honour and our independence.

“Having been twice unanimously chosen the chief magistrate of a free people, we have seen him, at a time when his re-election, with universal suffrage, could not be doubted, afford to the world a rare instance of moderation, by withdrawing from his high station to the peaceful walks of private life.

“However the public confidence may change, and the public affections fluctuate with respect to others, with respect to him, they have, in war and in peace, in public and private life, been as steady as his own firm mind, and as constant as his own exalted virtues.”

It would fill a volume to allude to, much less detail all the public testimonials of grief, reverence and affection, which attended the funeral obsequies of this illustrious man.

The person, manners and temper of Washington, must always excite the affectionate curiosity of coming ages, to the end of time. He was above the middle size, tall, robust and vigorous—formed to endure great fatigue, and from an exuberance of vitality requiring much exercise to preserve



health; yet, though robust, his form was graceful and dignified.

In his manners, he was inclined to be reserved and dry, yet neither stern nor haughty; but this disposition he relaxed to cheerfulness and sociability, amidst the charms of conversation, or the finer pleasures of select society; still, however, preserving that dignity, which seemed to attach to his deportment rather as an attribute of mind, than a carriage of his person.

His temper was naturally quick; but vigilance and discipline had taught him to correct its impetuosity, and restrain its ebullitions. His heart was benevolent, humane and affectionate; and if he was prone to be easily offended, he was also remarkable for a forgiving and conciliating temper, which never permitted resentment to rankle into revenge, or fester into hatred; for, it passed over his heart like the glow from his cheek—a momentary flush, and all was calm again. Indeed, every lineament of his countenance shone with magnanimity, and beamed with the true lustre of heroic virtue; mirroring a heart free from every spot, which the evil passions imprint on the wicked.

In his personal economy he was prudent, yet at the same time liberal. Cautious of all visionary schemes, and guarded against prodigal experiments; when he knew the purpose to be useful, his bounty was as ample as his means. By this judicious husbandry, his private fortune was always adequate to his extensive hospitality; for never having impaired his estate, through neglect, extravagance, or pride; by costly display, or vain magnificence; he could practise the art of bountiful entertainment, without committing the error of luxurious ruin.

The cast of his mind was to deep meditation, and solid sense. Wit, he never made pretensions to: the point which sparkles, and the flash that fascinates, to dazzle the fancy while it beguiles the judgment, were alike alien to the heroic gravity of his mind; which, though abundantly gifted with genius, seems to have been too colossal and lofty for the glare and brilliancy of imagination.

He was naturally prone to be serious, and the usual habit of his mind was sober reflection. He seldom smiled, never indulged in laughter, and rarely relaxed to the familiarity of common social intercourse; habit having strengthened his constitutional propensity to abstraction, to the contempla-

tion of vast enterprises, beneficial measures or useful schemes.

In his moral habits, he was virtuous and pure, chaste and discreet: no imputation of private vice ever having dimmed the true lustre of his greatness.

Free from the revengeful passions, he was equally exalted above the false ideas of honour: he was never known to shoot an enemy in a duel, or assassinate a foe in a brawl; being equally a stranger to the gaming table, the cock-pit, and the race ground.

In his religion he was a *sincere Christian*; but neither professed great sanctity, nor put on the exterior of rigid piety, content to discharge his duty to man, and to adore God in his heart. Mr. Jefferson has attempted to make him a dissenter from the Christian creed; but this is an error; the testimony to prove his religion being too conclusive to admit a doubt. It is true, that he neither encouraged priests nor priestcraft; but it is equally true, that his sense of religion was profound, and his piety warm and unaffected.

He had a peculiar aversion to sitting for his portrait, and of course suffered much vexation from the importunity of artists: but Gilbert Stuart, having arrived from England with a letter of introduction from Mr. Jay to Washington, an acquaintance with that eminent artist ensued; and Stuart having been fortunate enough to win his confidence and esteem, he painted his first portrait of him. This was in 1794. But the artist not being satisfied with this attempt destroyed it; and Washington having consented to another sitting. Stuart contrived to excite those emotions of the great mind of his subject, which would throw the best expression into his countenance. It is said, that such was the impression of awe, produced by Washington on the artist, that he lost his self-possession at the first sitting; although Stuart had long been familiar with the society of the first noblemen of Europe: but he had not yet beheld the *nobleman of nature*—the great and good man, whose greatness of soul beamed in a visage unequalled for its grandeur and purity. This second portrait is represented as the most faithful ever painted; and was purchased of the widow of Stuart by the *Boston Atheneum*, for one thousand dollars. A portrait from this *standard picture*, by Durand, is now in process of engraving, and will soon be furnished to the

public. Stuart resided at *Germantown*, at the period that he painted the portrait of the great American; and the General rode out to sit to him; on one of which occasions, the painter made him the following jocular compliment: "General, I have always felt much indebted to you for your kindness; but my greatest obligation to you is, that you never attempted to paint portraits; for you have had such perfect success in all you have undertaken, that if you had been a painter I should have had no hopes."

Such was GEORGE WASHINGTON; a man, who, made great by nature, and still greater by virtue; self-educated, and depending more on the suggestions of genius than the lessons of science and the precepts of learning, for his pre-eminent success in life, presents us with a model of human perfection, which, combining simple grandeur with unaffected modesty, has never been equalled by the possessors of supreme authority.

In reviewing with the cool and impartial eye of criticism, the whole range of history, ancient and modern, we meet with no character that can aspire to equal, in all the points of true greatness that of George Washington. Some, it is true, are more splendid and dazzling; others more distinguished for daring enterprise; and others again, more brilliant and illustrious, on account of their profound learning, varied acquirements, glittering eloquence, or commanding and exalted ambition, reckless of consequences, and intent solely upon renown. Indeed, in isolated and detached features of character, he had innumerable superiors; but, in the *grand whole*, of what constitutes *true glory*, and makes a *hero*, without making a villain, Washington had no equal, but stands alone a monument of the beneficence of Heaven in its creation of a great man, whose greatness was combined with virtue, and whose never fading lustre was untarnished by one vice—undimmed by one crime. Fallible, it is true, he was; but it was the fallibility of great and well poised genius, which so rarely erred, that men of less exalted natures looked upon him as a standard of perfection, and not without reason; for time and experience put the great seal of wisdom on his deeds, and those most opposed eventually yielded to him their approbation and applause; as if he possessed the faculty of penetrating beyond the mist of human passions around him, to discern the truth which lay unobscured to his eye, in the brightness of the future; and of

shaking off from his mind all those living prejudices which, like devouring insects, prey upon the reason of man, defacing his intellect, obscuring his judgment, and debasing his moral to the grossness of his physical nature.

We recognise in Washington, the three great characters of a warrior, a statesman, and a legislator. As a general, he was cool, skilful, inventive, and, mixing intrepidity with prudence, he exhibited that happy concord of qualities which could dash on to achieve victory, or with cautious prudence stand aloof from battle, or effect a secure retreat. Rather passive than active in his mind, more disposed to wait for the event, and resist it, than to anticipate it, and miscarry by false calculation, the defective nature of his *military material*, confirmed him in the habit of this propensity. Gifted with foresight and penetration, he was never taken by surprise; and fertile in expedients, he never suffered himself to sink under the difficulties that surrounded him. His military genius, however, cannot fairly be appreciated by his *military practice*. His letters breathe the fiery spirit of the curbed war-horse, chafing for action, but restrained by prudence: and having wisdom enough to bend to circumstances, instead of rushing, with reckless and headlong rashness, upon measures pregnant equally with glory, with ruin and defeat. It was a great quality of his mind, to know the exact measure of his strength, and to have prudence not to risk that strength in dubious conflicts, where defeat would have amounted to extirpation, and even victory might have involved ruin. There was wisdom, therefore, blended with his valour; and prudence with his skill and address—qualities which, though not so brilliant as impetuosity and daring, yet were more useful to his country, and more beneficial to mankind.

As a statesman, Washington discarded theory for *practice*, and preferred *experience* to speculation. He was a self-formed politician, made by circumstances, observation and practice; not fashioned by books in the solitude of the closet, but created by contact with mankind, and having for his object the happiness of society, instead of the vanity or passions of one portion only of that great family, whose happiness he was destined to promote.

He was a *republican*, on the broad principles of equal rights and public virtue: advocating rational liberty under the sanction and guarantee of wholesome laws, whose effi-

cacy should equally protect *virtue, industry and order*, from lawless violence, licentious laxity, or disorganising freedom. His political principles are to be discerned in the *constitution of the United States*; where liberty, reduced into system, breathes nothing but benevolence and love, law and order; and which has extorted the admiration and applause of all mankind, who favour the equal rights of man, in the pursuit and enjoyment of happiness.

In his transactions with foreign nations, as well as in his intercourse with his fellow citizens, his maxim was that of truth, sincerity and frankness. Without making *ostentatious professions* of his honesty, he was never known to have been guilty of duplicity, deceit, or equivocation. TRUTH was the god of his idolatry; and from native dignity of soul, as well as from an enlightened selfishness, he always held and acted on the principle of *honesty being the best policy*.

I shall conclude this brief outline of the life of WASHINGTON, by quoting the portrait of his character drawn by the pen of THOMAS JEFFERSON, which, as it cannot be supposed to *flatter*, must be estimated as rigidly faithful on the side of his defects, and sparingly just to his undeniable merits. Mr. Jefferson says: "I think I knew the General intimately and thoroughly; and were I called on to delineate his character, it should be in terms like these:"

"His mind was great and powerful, without being of the very first order; his penetration strong, though not so acute as that of a Newton, Bacon, or Locke; and as far as he saw, no judgment was ever sounder. It was slow in operation, being little aided by invention, or imagination, but sure in conclusion. Hence the common remark of his officers, of the advantage he derived from councils of war, where hearing all suggestions, he selected whatever was best; and certainly no general ever planned his battles more judiciously. But if deranged during the course of the action, if any member of his plan was dislocated by sudden circumstances, he was slow in a readjustment. The consequence was, that he often failed in the field, and rarely against an enemy in station, as at Boston and York. He was incapable of fear, meeting personal dangers with the calmest unconcern. Perhaps the strongest feature in his character was prudence, never acting until every circumstance, every consideration, was maturely weighed; refraining if he saw a doubt, but, when once decided, going through with his purpose what-

ever obstacles opposed. His integrity was most pure; his justice the most inflexible I have ever known; no motive of interest, or consanguinity, of friendship, or hatred, being able to bias his decision. He was, indeed, in every sense of the words, *a wise, a good, and a great man*. His temper was naturally irritable and high toned; but reflection and resolution had obtained a firm and habitual ascendancy over it. If ever, however, it broke its bonds, he was most tremendous in his wrath. In his expenses he was honourable, but exact; liberal in contributions to whatever promised utility; but frowning and unyielding on all visionary projects and all unworthy calls on his charity. His heart was not warm in its affections; but he exactly calculated every man's value, and gave him a solid esteem proportioned to it. His person, you know, was fine, his stature exactly what one would wish, his deportment easy, erect and noble; the best horseman of his age, and the most graceful figure that could be seen on horseback. Although, in the circle of his friends, where he might be unreserved with safety, he took a free share in conversation; his colloquial talents were not above mediocrity, possessing neither copiousness of ideas, nor fluency of words. In public, when called on for a sudden opinion, he was unready, short and embarrassed; yet he wrote readily, rather diffusely, in an easy and correct style. This he had acquired by conversation with the world; for his education was merely reading, writing and common arithmetic, to which he added surveying at a later day. His time was employed in action chiefly, reading little, and that only in agriculture and English history. His correspondence became necessarily extensive, and, with journalising his agricultural proceedings, occupied most of his leisure hours within doors. On the whole, his character was, in its mass perfect, in nothing bad, in few points indifferent; and it may truly be said, that never did nature and fortune combine more perfectly to make a man great, and to place him in the same constellation with whatever worthies have merited from man our everlasting remembrance. For his was the singular destiny and merit of leading the armies of his country successfully through an arduous war, for the establishment of its independence; of conducting its counsels through the birth of a government, new in its forms and principles, until it had settled down into a quiet and orderly train; and of scrupulously obeying

the laws through the whole of his career, civil and military, of which the history of the world furnishes no other example.”

Too great to study the art, or practice the meanness of adventitious fame, he never devised any measure for *effect*, or planned means by which to captivate the popular mind by shallow devices. Intrinsically powerful, he disdained the *little arts* by which *pretenders to greatness* attempt to catch the plaudits of the credulous ignorant, who are so often deceived by the *professions* of the demagogue, and imposed on by the *slight-hand* adroitness of the mountebank.

It was this conscious integrity of soul that made him sensibly alive to the defamation of the public press, which annoyed him beyond all proportion to its importance; and which, had he been able to view his own greatness and purity in its true light, as it struck the public, he would have disregarded in silent contempt, as too feeble and malignant to excite a painful feeling; however it might have been pointed by the malignity of Callender, the hatred of Bache, the ferocity of Duane, or the licentiousness of *Freneau*.

As such, it is scarcely within the boundaries of human possibility, that the world will ever again behold his parallel; and it is almost reduced to certainty, that no American will ever arise to extort an equal degree of our veneration, gratitude and love.

END OF THE LIFE OF GEORGE WASHINGTON.





THE  
**L I F E**  
OF  
**THOMAS JEFFERSON.**



VIRGINIA, the illustrious mother of the brightest gems of our revolutionary era, gave birth to THOMAS JEFFERSON.

In the character of this extraordinary man, as well as in the events of his life, we are presented with a combination of philosophical attainments, and political talents, of benevolent feelings, and ambitious aspirations, rarely found united in the same individual, and still more rarely resulting in that brilliancy of renown, and extensive popular veneration, which covers his name with an immortality as bright as the truths of science, and as imperishable as the liberties of mankind.

There is something so peculiarly attractive in the biography of an obscure youth of the American forest, gradually rising on our view, and enlarging each day in his dimensions, until, with herculean vigour, he shook to fragments the mighty pillars of the British constitution, causing the throne to tremble, and the brightest jewel in the diadem of the British king to fall from his brow: there is something in the achievement, at once so simple in its progress and yet so sublime in its effects, as to cause an involuntary emotion of astonishment at the daring of the attempt, as well as the power required for its performance; and we feel tempted almost to doubt, as too romantic for belief, what we recognise as the truth of history, and bow to as the consecrated gift of inspired and creative genius. In proportion as our admiration is excited, by achievements so extraordinary and singular, do we feel our curiosity awakened, to enquire by what means deeds so vast were accomplished; and to be-

come more intimately acquainted with the faculties and attributes of an intellect, which, stepping forward *in advance* of all other minds of his own age, should have the sagacity to conceive, and the moral courage to propose, a national revolution of magnitude so vast, consequences so fearful, and results so grand, so stupendous and so sublime!

He was born at a place called Shadwell, in Albemarle county, on the 2d day of April, 1743, *old style*. His ancestors were among the earliest settlers of the province; and are said to have arrived at the possession of respectability and affluence, by the perseverance of their industry and the vigour of their enterprize. His father, Peter Jefferson, was a man of integrity, science and reputation; and held responsible appointments under the government of the province. The family originally emigrated to Virginia, from Wales, near the mountain of Snowdon. Of his father, Jefferson relates that his 'education had been quite neglected; but being of a strong mind, sound judgment, and eager after information, he read much and improved himself, insomuch that he was chosen, with Joshua Fry, professor of mathematics in William and Mary College, to continue the boundary line between Virginia and North Carolina.'

His father died on the 17th August, 1757, leaving a widow, with six daughters and two sons, *Thomas* being the elder. His father appears to have possessed considerable property, for he left an estate on James river, called '*Snowdon*,' to his younger brother, and to Thomas the plantation of Shadwell, on which he was born. At the age of five, his father placed him at an English school; and when he was nine, he was put to acquire Latin and Greek, with a Mr. Douglass, a Scotch clergyman, who also instructed him in French. On the death of his father, his education was transferred to another clergyman, a Mr. Maury, eminent for his classical attainments, with whom he continued two years. In the spring of 1760, being qualified for further advancement, he was translated to William and Mary College, where he continued to pursue his studies for two years more. His own account of this period of his life at college is too impressive not to be quoted in this place. "It was my great good fortune, and what probably fixed the destinies of my life, that Dr. William Small, of Scotland, was then professor of mathematics, a man profound in most of the useful branches of science, with a happy

talent of communication, correct and gentlemanly manners, and an enlarged and liberal mind. He, most happily for me, became soon attached to me, and made me his daily companion when not engaged in the school; and from his conversation I got my first views of the expansion of science, and of the system of things in which we are placed. Fortunately, the philosophical chair became vacant soon after my arrival at college, and he was appointed to fill it, *per interim*; and he was the first who ever gave, in that college, regular lectures in ethics, rhetoric and belles lettres. He returned to Europe in 1762, having previously filled up the measure of his goodness to me, by procuring for me, from his most intimate friend, George Wythe, a reception as a student at law, under his direction, and introduced me to the acquaintance and familiar table of Governor Fauquier, the ablest man who had ever filled that office. With him, and at his table, Dr. Small and Mr. Wythe, his *amici omnium horarum*, and myself, formed a *partie guarre*, and to the habitual conversations on these occasions I owed much instruction. Mr. Wythe continued to be my faithful and beloved mentor in youth, and my most affectionate friend through life. In 1767, he led me into the practice of the law at the bar of the general court, at which I continued until the revolution shut up the courts of justice."

Soon after this, in 1769, he was chosen by the people of his county to represent them in the Legislature of the State; a station that he continued to fill up to the period of the revolution. Nothing remarkable appears to have emanated from him in that capacity, except his project for the EMANCIPATION of SLAVES, a humane policy, to which he was at all times devoted, with more of the feelings of a philanthropist, than the policy of a statesman.

In the years 1768—9, he took an active part in the joint resolutions and address which were adopted against those of the Houses of Lords and Commons, together with an address to the King, in which the people of Virginia avowed their determination to make common cause with those of *Massachusetts*; upon which occasion they were dissolved by the Governor, when they proceeded to a public house, and drew up and signed articles of *non-importation* from Great Britain.

Whilst a student at *Williamsburg*, in 1765, he heard *Patrick Henry* declaim against the stamp act, and remarks, 'he appeared to me to speak as *Homer* wrote.'

In January, 1772, Mr. Jefferson was united in marriage to Martha Skelton, a young widow of twenty-three, the daughter of an opulent attorney of the name of Wayles, by whom he acquired a considerable fortune.

Possessed of a vivid imagination, ardent temperament and benevolent feelings, that held communion with the happiness of mankind, rather than the sympathies of individuals, it was scarcely possible that Mr. Jefferson, in the same State with *Patrick Henry*, and breathing daily an atmosphere imbued with the richest perfumes of eloquence, freedom and justice, could remain an indifferent spectator to the agitating questions of British outrages, provincial wrongs, and American rights. Animated with the purest love of liberty; fresh from the study of Roman patriots and Grecian sages, statesmen and warriors, to stimulate him in the love of country, and urge him to the vindication of the rights of man; he watched, with an eagle eye, every movement of despotism, and hung, with youthful rapture, on the exciting accents that fell from the eloquent lips of *Henry*, glowing with patriotism and burning with indignation. Quick to conceive, and prompt to act, to love liberty, and to perceive oppression, was sufficient to impel Jefferson, with the enthusiasm of a young mind, to embark in the vindication and defence of the injured and aggressed party. On every side he beheld men of his own age ready to greet the goddess Liberty, and throng to the rescue of their insulted country. The contagious ardour of youth quickly kindled the combustible material of southern minds into a flame of enthusiastic devotion to the common cause of liberty and independence. To *doubt* one power of the English crown over the colonies, was enough to ensure its denial and obstruct its exercise; to *doubt* allegiance, was to provoke rebellion; to *think* of rebellion was at once to fling open the door to *revolution*, and to pave the road that led to Independence.

In the spring of 1773, Mr. Jefferson was active, along with Patrick Henry and others, in forming a *committee of correspondence*, to produce unity of action among the colonies, in opposition to Great Britain, by devising and concerting measures for a general convention of the colonies at some central point. Payton Randolph, the speaker, was chosen chairman. Massachusetts, at the same time, and without any knowledge of similar proceedings having been adopted by Virginia, had taken the same course.

The *Boston port bill*, in June 1774, produced a powerful impression on Virginia; and immediately determined the leading members of the Legislature of that colony to take a decided stand by the side of Massachusetts. Mr. Jefferson relates this incident in terms too remarkable to be overlooked; he says:—"The lead in the House, on these subjects, being no longer left to the old members, Mr. Henry, R. H. Lee, Fr. L. Lee, three or four other members, whom I do not recollect, and myself, agreeing that we must boldly take an unequivocal stand in the line of Massachusetts, determined to meet and consult on the proper measures, in the council chamber, for the benefit of the library in that room. We were under conviction of the necessity of rousing our people from the lethargy into which they had fallen, as to passing events; and thought that the appointment of a day of general fasting and prayer, would be most likely to call up and alarm their attention. No example of such a solemnity had existed since the days of our distresses in the war of '55, since which a new generation had grown up. With the help, therefore, of Rushworth, whom we rummaged over for the revolutionary precedents and forms of the Puritans of that day, preserved by him, *we cooked up a resolution*, somewhat moderating their phrases, for appointing the 1st day of June, on which the port bill was to commence, for a day of *fasting, humiliation and prayer*; to implore heaven to avert from us the evils of civil war, to inspire us with firmness in the support of our rights, and to turn the hearts of the King and Parliament to moderation and justice."

It will be seen, from this account, that Mr. Jefferson was active and prominent among the first who took a stand against the encroachments of the crown; and exerted himself to the utmost to stimulate his countrymen to a firm, manly and independent resistance, in the approaching struggle of right against power.

The next important measure, adopted at the same time, was one recommending the counties to elect delegates to meet in August, to appoint DELEGATES TO A GENERAL CONGRESS, should that project be deemed eligible. This measure being acceded to, delegates were accordingly chosen to meet in convention; and Mr. Jefferson, among others, being elected, prepared a draught of instructions to be given to the delegates to be chosen to Congress.

These instructions were afterwards printed in a pamphlet, under the title of '*A Summary View of the Rights of British America;*' containing a lucid and powerful exposition of the real political relations, founded in principle, reason and nature, between the colonies and the mother country. This paper was addressed to the King, and breathed a spirit of liberty and daring, which, while it startled the timid, inspired confidence in the bold and resolution in the brave. Mr. *Burke* afterwards adapted it to the atmosphere of London, to answer the ends of the opposition there; and it passed very rapidly through several editions. It was on account of this pamphlet, that Mr. *Jefferson's* name was included in a list of proscriptions by the ministry, at the same time that he was threatened with a prosecution for *treason*, by Lord *Dunmore*, the royal governor of the province.

Mr. *Jefferson*, though he had not been appointed a delegate to the first Congress, that met at Philadelphia, yet he was not inactive in the *Legislature*, in 1775; where, at the suggestion of *Peyton Randolph*, he drew up the answer of the General Assembly of Virginia, to the conciliatory propositions of *Lord North*; which, for its independent spirit, and bold tone, struck some of the *moderate men*, if not with horror, at least with amazement; but, as *Jefferson* says, it finally passed 'the House with long and doubtful scruples from Mr. *Nicholas* and *James Mercer*, and a dash of cold water on it here and there, enfeebling it somewhat, but finally with unanimity, or a vote approaching to it.' 'This being passed, continues Mr. *Jefferson*, I repaired immediately to Philadelphia, and conveyed to Congress the first notice they had of it. It was entirely approved there. I took my seat with them on the 21st of June.'

A committee being appointed by *Congress*, on the 22d of July, to consider and report on *Lord North's* conciliatory resolution, Mr. *Jefferson* was appointed, conjointly with *Doctor Franklin*, *Mr. Adams* and *R. H. Lee*. At the request of the committee, Mr. *Jefferson* undertook to prepare the report, and it could not have fallen into more able and efficient hands; for such were the *spirits* that engendered rebellion, dashed on to revolution and achieved independence. It was fortunate for the country and the cause, that we had *Jefferson* to *move* in the cabinet, and *Washington* to organize the field!

That momentous event, the Declaration of Independence, was now approaching its birth-day; the Convention of Virginia having, on the 15th of May, 1776, *instructed their delegates in Congress to declare the colonies independent of Great Britain*; for which purpose they appointed a committee to prepare a declaration of rights and plan of government.

In pursuance of these instructions, the Virginia delegates, on the 7th of June, 1776, moved, that the Congress should declare “that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, FREE and INDEPENDENT STATES, *that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown*, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, TOTALLY DISSOLVED; that measures should be immediately taken for procuring the assistance of foreign powers, and a confederation be formed to bind the colonies more closely together.”

This proposition was deferred to the succeeding day, the 8th of June, when it was taken up and referred to a committee of the whole House, who consumed that day, and the following Monday, in debate upon the resolutions. In the course of this discussion the *right* of the colonies to independence was not controverted; but the *policy* of issuing a declaration of the kind, at that period, was considered by some rather dubious; among other reasons, because the middle States, more cautious and circumspect than those of the North and South, had not instructed their delegates to vote for such an extremity; which induced the Congress to postpone their final vote on the question to the 1st of July, in order to give time for the colonies of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland and South Carolina, to mature their disposition to come heartily into the measure, on the *expediency* of which they were not yet fully satisfied. In the *interim*, however, a committee was appointed to prepare this solemn and important state paper, consisting of Mr. Jefferson, John Adams, Dr. Franklin, Roger Sherman and Robert R. Livingston. At the request of the committee, Mr. *Jefferson* consented to draught this momentous and interesting document. Having completed the Declaration of American Independence, he submitted it to the committee, by whom it was approved, and not less applauded than approved; and he accordingly reported it to the House on the 28th of June, when it was read, and ordered to lie on the table.

It cannot be doubted, that on this occasion, Mr. Jefferson felt all the solicitude which the solemn import of the instrument was reasonably calculated to inspire; as a step which was to usher into being a doubtful civil war—a bloody and uncertain revolution, and finally give birth to an empire, which was to change the face of the civilized world; convulse the monarchies of Europe; invert the obligations between kings and people; dissolve the ancient foundations of government, and create a NEW EMPIRE out of the chaos produced by tyranny against the rights of man. Property and life were to be perilled, peace and abundance to be sacrificed, toil and danger to be endured; and it was all cheerfully done; the sacrifice was placed upon the altar of liberty, the fire was kindled, the smoke gathered in dark and lurid clouds, the flames ascended even to the heavens, but the offering was an acceptable one, the God of nations smiled upon the sacrifice, and America became free, happy and independent.

On the 4th of July, the debates upon this important question having closed, the Declaration of Independence was adopted and signed by every member present, EXCEPT Mr. DICKINSON. In reference to the debates on this occasion, Mr. Jefferson observes—“The *pusillanimous* idea that we had friends in England worth keeping terms with, still haunted the minds of many. For this reason, those passages which conveyed censures on the people of England were struck out, lest they should give them offence. The clause too, reprobating the enslaving the inhabitants of Africa, was struck out in complaisance to South Carolina and Georgia, who had never attempted to restrain the importation of slaves, and who, on the contrary, still wished to continue it. Our *northern brethren also*, I believe, felt a little tender under the censures; for though their people had very few slaves themselves, yet they had been pretty considerable carriers of them to others. The debates having taken up the greater parts of the second, third and fourth days of July, were, on the evening of the last period, closed.”

Congress, on the 12th of July, entered into the discussion of a great question, second in importance only to the Declaration of Independence; this was the adoption of articles of confederation between the thirteen United States. The debate on these *articles* extended to a period of two years; and were only ratified in 1778, by ten States. On the 26th of November eleven States concurred in them;



and on the 23d February, 1779, Delaware also received them; but it was not until March 1, 1781, that Maryland gave in her adhesion to the confederacy.

What part Jefferson took in this measure I have not been able to discover; and suspect it to have been both less prominent and less ardent than that on the Declaration of Independence; not because he considered it of inferior moment, but because the mind naturally relaxes and flags after great exertion, or unusual labour and excitement; or that others jealous of his prominence, were now ambitious of taking their part in the great work of self-government.

The new government of Virginia being now organised, Mr. Jefferson determined to resign his seat in Congress, having been elected by his county to the new Legislature of his native State, to be held in October. On this subject he remarks, "I knew that our legislation, under the regal government, had many very vicious points which urgently required reformation, and I thought I could be of more use in forwarding that work. I therefore retired from my seat in Congress on the 2d of September, resigned it, and took my place in the Legislature of my state on the 7th of October."

JEFFERSON now commenced his labours in the Legislature of Virginia, as the champion of reform and the apostle of liberty. He there drew a *bill for the organization of the courts of justice*, of great importance, which was approved by the committee, and finally passed into a law.

But the most eventful, memorable and republican act of his whole life, was now to be performed; and not to do injustice to which, I must detail in his own language. "On the 12th, I obtained leave to bring in a bill declaring tenants in tail to hold their lands in fee simple. In the earlier times of the colony, when lands were to be obtained for little or nothing, some provident individuals procured large grants; and desirous of *founding great families for themselves*, settled them on their descendants in fee tail. The transmission of this property from generation to generation, in the same name, raised up a DISTINCT SET OF FAMILIES, who being privileged *by law in the perpetuation of their wealth*, were thus formed into a *patrician order*, distinguished by the splendour and luxury of their establishments. From this order, too, the King habitually selected his counsellors of state; the hope of which distinction de-

voted the whole corps to the interests and will of the crown. To annul this privilege, and instead of an *aristocracy of wealth*, of more harm and danger than benefit to society, to make an opening for the *aristocracy of virtue and talent*, which nature has wisely provided for the direction of the interests of society, and scattered with equal hand through all its conditions, was deemed essential to a well ordered republic. To effect it, no violence was necessary, no deprivation of natural right, but rather an enlargement of it, by a repeal of the law. For this would authorise the present holder to divide the property among his children equally, as his affections were divided; and would place them, by natural generation, on the level of their fellow citizens."

This noble law, for the abolishment of entails, Mr. Jefferson had the satisfaction to see pass; and the still greater consolation of reflecting that he was the author of it.

He proposed a trial by *jury* in the court of Chancery, which he carried; but an opponent proposing an amendment, making it *optional* with the parties, it became almost a nullity.

He next extended his benevolence to the cessation of the *importation of slaves*; and succeeded in carrying a bill, in '78, prohibiting their further importation.

Impelled by a controversy that now arose in Virginia between the ministers of the English Episcopal church and the Dissenters, he next attempted to procure, and succeeded in a repeal of the "laws which rendered *criminal the maintenance of any religious* opinions, the forbearance of repairing to church, or the exercise of any mode of worship; and to exempt dissenters from contributions to support the established church."

The removal of the seat of government from Williamsburg, to a more secure and central part, was the next object of his attention; but it occupied him three years to accomplish this laudable object.

In May, 1789, he introduced a bill defining the qualifications of citizenship, asserting the *natural right of expatriation*, and prescribing the manner of exercising it; which became a law.

The account of these laws we have derived from Mr. Jefferson's own pen; and in making the statement he observes, with his characteristic modesty: "In giving this

account of the laws, of which I was myself the mover and draughtsman, I by no means, mean to claim to myself the merit of obtaining their passage. I had many occasional and strenuous coadjutors in debate, and one, most stedfast, able, and zealous, who was himself a host. This was George Mason, a man of the first order of wisdom among those who acted on the theatre of the revolution; of expansive mind, profound judgment, cogent in argument, learned in the lore of our former constitution, and earnest for the republican change on *democratic principles*. His elocution was neither flowing, nor smooth; but his language was strong, his manner most impressive, and strengthened by a dash of biting cynicism, when provocation made it seasonable." To Mr. Wythe and Mr. Madison, he also ascribes efficient co-operation.

These acknowledgements of politeness, and marks of diffidence, must not, however, be allowed to detract from the merit of Mr. Jefferson, for the splendid reforms he thus introduced; and for which the world stands exclusively indebted to his peculiar genius, singular sagacity, pure republican principles, and intrepid moral courage—great qualities, which uniting with his ardent and expansive benevolence, could not have been found in another individual, combined in those happy proportions, capable of penetrating to the evils of a great system, and endowed with vigour of intellect competent to their extirpation.

Indeed, it is difficult to appreciate justly, the civil and juridical services rendered to his country by Jefferson at this period: so apt are we to overlook the quiet revolutions in civil life and judicial systems, wrought by the tranquil operations of genius, science and intellect; and so prone are we to devote our exclusive attention to that glare of military glory, which filling the world with noise, bustle, and confusion, forces itself upon the attention of all, and by its very horrors extorts the tribute of universal homage and dread: so true it is, that the authors and promoters of human happiness, improvement and wisdom, who deserve the undivided gratitude and admiration of the world; achieving their labours of love without noise, are on that account neglected; whilst the cruel ravager of nations, the blood stained victor of war, and the destroyer of thousands, and the happiness of millions, is hailed with applause from the nursery to the stable, while millions incapable of thought,

clamour forth his renown, and sympathise in deeds, that all can appreciate, because ferocious, sanguinary, or afflicting. For ourselves, we contemplate the benevolent *Sage of Virginia*, with emotions of the most exalted pleasure, while thus devoting himself at the shrine of justice, to preserve the rights of the people, at the fountain head of the Judiciary—securing at once, life, property, liberty and happiness.

Enlarging the sphere of his usefulness in this branch of patriotic duty, he presented a bill to the Legislature, in the session of 1776, for a *Revision of the Laws of Virginia*, which being adopted, he, in company with four other members, was chosen to that important and arduous task: the principal feature in the revised code, being the abolishment of the *law of primogeniture*: which one of his colleagues being desirous to retain, Jefferson answered him, “that if the elder son could eat twice as much, or do double work, it might be a natural evidence of his right to a double portion; but being on a par in his powers and wants, with his brothers and sisters, he should be on a par also in the partition of the patrimony. This simple argument decided the question in favour of its annulment. Another prominent feature of the revised code, was “the bill for establishing religious freedom, the principles of which had, to a certain degree, been enacted before I had drawn it, says Jefferson, in all the latitude of reason and right. It still met with opposition; but with some mutilations in the preamble, it was finally passed; and a singular proposition proved that its *protection of opinion was meant to be universal*. Where the preamble declares, that *coercion is a departure from the plan of the holy author of our religion*, an amendment was proposed, by inserting the words ‘Jesus Christ,’ so that it should read, ‘a departure from the plan of Jesus Christ, the holy author of our religion; the insertion was rejected by a great majority, in proof that they meant to comprehend within the mantle of its protection, the Jew and the Gentile, the Christian and Mahometan, the Hindoo and Infidel of every denomination.” In this, he superadded the mitigation of the penal code, on the system of Beccaria, abolishing the penalty of death for all crimes, except murder and treason. Let me not forget to record in this place, that the plan of *solitary confinement at hard labour*, originated with this distinguished philanthropist, and illustrious statesman.

Inexhaustible in his schemes for the improvement of the human family, he now undertook to devise “*a systematical plan of GENERAL EDUCATION, reaching to all classes*, in pursuance of an act of Assembly of Virginia: but, though the bill passed, the system was never carried into practice.

He also framed a bill in relation to the gradual removal of the *curse of SLAVERY*: his observations on which I feel myself bound to transcribe. “The principles of the amendment, however, were agreed on, that is to say, the freedom of all born after a certain day, and deportation at a proper age. But it was found, that the public mind would not yet bear the proposition, nor will it bear it even at this day. Yet the day is not distant when it must bear and adopt it, or worse will follow. Nothing is more certainly written in the book of fate, than that these people are to be free; nor is it less certain, that the two races, equally free, cannot live in the same government. Nature, habit and opinion, have drawn indelible lines of distinction between them. It is still in our power to direct the process of emancipation and deportation, peaceably, and in such slow degree, as that the evil will wear off insensibly, and their place be *pari passu*, filled up by free white labourers. If, on the contrary, it is left to force itself on, human nature must shudder at the prospect held up. We should in vain look for an example in the Spanish deportation or deletion of the Moors. This precedent would fall far short of our case.”

Mr. Jefferson was not insensible of the highly important part he had been acting in the civil government of his native State, towards bringing the entire and actual fabric of its polity, to assimilate to the abstract model of its republican principles. Remarking upon these events of his life in his *Memoirs*, he says, “I considered four of these bills, passed or reported, as forming a system by which every fibre would be eradicated of ancient or future aristocracy, and a foundation laid for a government truly republican. *The repeal of the LAWS OF ENTAIL*, would prevent the accumulation and perpetuation of wealth, in select families, and preserve the soil of the country from being daily more and more absorbed in mortmain. *The abolition of PRIMOGENITURE*, and equal partition of inheritances,\* removed the feudal

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\* This phrase is not grammatical—it ought to read “and the establishment of equal partition of inheritances.”

and unnatural distinctions which made one member of every family rich, and all the rest poor, substituting equal partition, the best of all Agrarian laws. The *restoration of the rights of CONSCIENCE*, relieved the people from taxation for the support of a religion not theirs; for the establishment was truly of the religion of the rich, the dissenting sects being entirely composed of the less wealthy people; and those, by the bill for a general education, would be qualified to understand their rights, to maintain them, and to exercise with intelligence their parts in self-government: and all this would be effected, without the violation of a single natural right of any one individual citizen. To these too, might be added, as a further security, the introduction of the trial by jury, into the chancery courts, which have already ingulphed, and continue to ingulph, so great a proportion of the jurisdiction over our property."

It was scarcely within the range of probability, that a man so highly gifted with talents, so judicious in the beneficial application of them, and so popular in his ideas and principles, should long remain unhonoured by the greatest office in the gift of his native state; and we accordingly perceive him appointed Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, on the 1st of June, 1779, at the expiration of the term for which *Patrick Henry* had served, as the first Governor of that State, after its separation from colonial vassalage to England: a station which had become doubly arduous from the cruel exasperation of the enemy, which had driven them to aggravate the natural horrors of war, by the most savage and revolting practices towards American prisoners. Jefferson had, on a previous occasion, extended the hand of humanity to alleviate the sufferings of the British prisoners in Virginia, in a manner and under circumstances which stamped his benevolence as the spontaneous and sterling coin of the heart. Now, however, he was compelled by duty, to the painful resolution, of visiting with retaliation on the British prisoners in his power, the cruelties inflicted on ours by the enemy. In a letter to General Washington, he thus expresses himself. "I shall give immediate orders for having in readiness every engine, which the enemy have contrived for the destruction of our unhappy citizens, captivated by them. The presentiment of these operations is shocking beyond expression. I pray Heaven to avert them; but nothing in this world will do with such an enemy but

proper firmness and decision." For a time, this conduct only stimulated the British to increased severity against our unfortunate countrymen who fell into their hands; but a perseverance in the system adopted by Jefferson, eventually succeeded, and corrected a procedure at variance with every principle, feeling and practice of civilised nations. In a letter which he addressed to one of the American prisoners, he thus exhorts them to fortitude and philosophy. "There is nothing, you may be assured, consistent with the honour of your country, which we shall not, at all times, be ready to do for the relief of yourself and companions in captivity. We know that ardent spirit and hatred for tyranny, which brought you into your present situation, will enable you to bear against it with the firmness which has distinguished you as a soldier, and to look forward with pleasure to the day when events shall take place, against which the wounded pride of your enemies will find no comfort, even from reflections on the most refined of the cruelties with which they have glutted themselves."

The administration of Mr. Jefferson was now rendered memorable, by the sudden invasion of Virginia by the British, headed by the daring Tarleton, tracking his way with barbarity and blood, as the van of Cornwallis's army, and shaking Virginia to the centre, by the sudden and terrible shock of war.

This was a new era in the life of Jefferson. The philosopher, the sage and the statesman, was called to buckle on his armour, and array the militia of his State against the formidable invasion of a fierce and disciplined foe. Virginia with her wonted chivalry roused herself to action; and Jefferson bent all the energies of his powerful intellect to the efficient discharge of his military functions; and put in requisition every means of defence and precaution, which his foresight and resources enabled him to apply. On the 11th of June, he wrote to Washington in the following style of energy, decision, and activity." Our intelligence from the southward is most lamentably defective. Though Charleston has now been in the hands of the enemy a month, we hear nothing of their movements which can be relied upon. Rumours say that they are penetrating northward. To remedy this defect, I shall immediately establish a line of expresses from hence to the neighbourhood of their army, and send thither a sensible, judicious person, to give us

information of their movements. This intelligence will, I hope, be conveyed at the rate of one hundred and twenty miles in the twenty-four hours. They set out to their stations to-morrow. I wish it were possible that a like speedy line of communication could be formed from hence to your excellency's head quarters. Perfect and speedy information of what is passing in the south, might put it in your power perhaps to frame your measures by theirs. There is really nothing to oppose the enemy northward, but the cautious principle of the military art. North Carolina is without arms. They do not abound with us. Those we have are freely imparted to them; but such is the state of their resources that they have not been able to move a single musket from this State to theirs. All the wagons we can collect here, have been furnished to the Baron De Kalb, and are assembled for the march of 2500 men under General Stevens, of Culpepper, who will move on the 19th inst. I have written to Congress to hasten supplies of arms and military stores for the southern States, and particularly to aid us with cartridge paper and boxes, the want of which articles, small as they are, renders our stores useless. The want of money cramps every effort. This will be supplied by the most unpalatable of all substitutes, force. Your *excellency*\* will readily conceive that, after the loss of one army, our eyes are turned towards the other, and that we comfort ourselves with the hope that, if any aids can be furnished by you, without defeating the operations more beneficial to the Union, they will be furnished. At the same time, I am happy to find that the wishes of the people go no further, as far as I have an opportunity of hearing their sentiments. Could arms be furnished, I think this State and North Carolina, would embody from ten to fifteen thousand militia immediately, and more if necessary. I hope ere long to be able to give you a more certain statement of the enemy's as well as our own situation."

The Legislature of Virginia acted with a vigour and promptitude commensurate to the occasion, and clothed the Governor with extraordinary powers, not exactly consistent with republican ideas; but Jefferson rose to the critical nature of the emergency, and did not disappoint public expectation in this solemn crisis.

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\* I italicise this title to show that even Jefferson could not preserve, in practice, his STRICT REPUBLICAN SIMPLICITY!



An attack, however, now burst upon them from another and unexpected quarter. General Arnold, the traitor of West Point, always daring, and now become reckless and ferocious, suddenly landed below Richmond, at the head of 1500 men. This was a complete surprise, for which the Governor was unprepared; the available militia having been placed under the command of General Nelson, and stationed at Williamsburg. In this juncture, Jefferson, having hastily summoned two hundred militia, under the command of Baron Steuben, with which force he superintended in person the records and military stores that were deposited in the capital, across the river, until he saw them safe from the gripe of the enemy. On this occasion Jefferson manifested that coolness and displayed that undaunted courage which might have been justly expected from his character; and continued to issue his orders until the very appearance of the light horse of the enemy made it prudent to withdraw his person from the scene of embarkation. Arnold having laid waste and plundered the surrounding country, Mr. Jefferson, to rid the State of his further annoyance, conceived a laudable plan for his capture, which he thought might be attended with success; and which he thus explained in a letter to General Muhlenberg, dated 31st January, 1780, "Sir, Acquainted as you are with the treasons of Arnold, I need say nothing for your information, or to give you a proper sentiment of them. You will readily suppose that it is above all things desirable to drag him from those under whose wing he is now sheltered. On his march to and from this place, I am certain it might have been done with facility, by men of enterprise and firmness. I think it may still be done. though perhaps not quite so easily. Having peculiar confidence in the men from the western side of the mountains, I meant, as soon as they should come down, to get the enterprize proposed to a chosen number of them, such whose courage and whose fidelity would be above all doubt. Your perfect knowledge of those men personally, and my confidence in your discretion, induce me to ask you to seek from among them proper characters, in such numbers as you think best; to reveal to them our desire; and engage them to undertake to seize and bring off this greatest of all traitors. Whether this may be best effected by their going in as friends, and awaiting their opportunity, or otherwise, is left to themselves. The smaller the num-

ber the better, so that they may be sufficient to manage him. Every necessary caution must be used on their part, to prevent a discovery of their design by the enemy. I will undertake, if they are successful in bringing him off alive, that they shall receive five thousand guineas reward among them; and to men formed for such an enterprise, it must be a great incitement to know that their names will be recorded with glory in history, with those of Vanwert, Paulding and Williams."

The plan thus suggested by Jefferson was carried into effect; but it proved abortive, Arnold being not less cautious and circumspect, than he was daring and unprincipled.

Failing in this scheme, he now projected another, in which he was to receive the co-operation of General Washington, and the French fleet. In a letter of the 8th of March, he thus addressed the former personage, upon the subject: "We have made, on our part, every preparation which we were able to make. The militia, proposed to operate, will be upwards of 4000 from this State, and 1000 or 1200 from Carolina, said to be under General Gregory. The enemy are at this time, in a great measure, blockaded by land, there being a force on the east side of Elizabeth river. They suffer for provisions, as they are afraid to venture far, lest the French squadron should be in the neighbourhood, and come upon them. Were it possible to block up the river, a little time would suffice to reduce them by want and desertions; and would be more sure in its events than any attempt by storm." But Arnold again escaped; the arrival of a British squadron of superior force having driven the French fleet from the Chesapeake.

Arnold having effected a retreat from Virginia, Cornwallis now penetrated the State from the south. Exhausted of most of her slender resources for the common defence, and the succour of her southern sisters, Jefferson saw, and deplored, that his native state had been left naked to the sword of the enemy. But his was not a spirit to despair, or shrink in times of danger. Again he rose with the pressure of the emergency; and having rallied every remaining resource of the commonwealth, he placed her in the best attitude of defence which his limited means permitted.

The Legislature convened at Charlotteville on the 28th of May; and thus took from the Governor some of the weight of the heavy responsibility which had been thrown

upon him by a concurrence of adverse events and disastrous circumstances. His letter to General Washington, of that date, will supercede any description of ours, relating to the embarrassments and difficulties that pressed upon him.

“I have just been advised, he says, that the British have evacuated Petersburg, been joined by a considerable reinforcement from New York, and crossed James river at Westover. They were, on the 26th instant, three miles advanced towards Richmond, at which place, Major General, the Marquis Fayette, lay with three thousand men, regulars and militia, that being the whole number we could arm, until the arrival of the 1100 stand of arms from Rhode Island, which are about this time at the place where our public stores are deposited. The whole force of the enemy within this State, from the best intelligence I have been able to get, is, I think, about 7000 men, including the garrison left at Portsmouth. A number of privateers, which are constantly ravaging the shores of our rivers, prevent us from receiving any aid from the counties lying on navigable waters; and powerful operations meditated against our western frontier, by a joint force of British and Indian savages, have, as your excellency before knew, obliged us to embody between two and three thousand men in that quarter. Your excellency will judge from this state of things, and from what you know of your own country, what it may probably suffer during the present campaign. Should the enemy be able to obtain no opportunity of annihilating the Marquis's army, a small proportion of their force may yet restrain his movements effectually, while the greater part is employed in detachments to waste an unarmed country, and lead the minds of the people to acquiesce under those events, which they see no human power prepared to ward off. We are too far removed from the other scenes of war, to say whether the main force of the enemy be within this state; but I suppose they cannot any where spare so great an army for the operations of the field. Were it possible for this circumstance to justify, in your excellency, a determination to lend us your personal aid, it is evident from the *universal voice, that the presence* of their beloved countryman, whose talents have so long been successfully employed in establishing the freedom of *kindred States*,\* to whose

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\* I cannot avoid calling the attention of the reader, in an emphatic manner, to the terms here used 'KINDRED STATES,' addressed

person they have still flattered themselves they retained some right, and have ever looked upon as their *dernier resort* in distress; that your appearance, among them, I say, *would restore full* confidence of salvation, and would *render them equal* to whatever is not impossible. I cannot undertake to foresee and obviate the difficulties which lie in the way of such a resolution. The whole subject is before you, of which I see only detached parts. Should the danger of the State, and its consequences to the Union, be such as to render it best for the whole that you should repair to its assistance, the difficulty would then *be how to keep men out of the field*. I have undertaken to hint this matter to your excellency, not only on my own sense of its importance to us, but at the solicitation of many members of weight in our Legislature, which has not yet assembled to speak its own desires. A few days will bring to me that relief, which the constitution has prepared for those oppressed with the labours of my office; and a long declared resolution of relinquishing it to abler hands, has prepared my way for retirement to a private station; still, as an individual, I should feel the comfortable effects of your presence, and have (what I thought could not have been) an additional motive for that gratitude, *esteem* and *respect*, which I have long felt for your excellency."

Certainly, more delicate, and at the same time, more abundant adulation, was never before comprised in so narrow a compass, in a letter of state, addressed from one public character to another, on a question of great national concernment; and, if Washington did not feel it, he must have been more than human. The flattery, however, was too refined to offend; and reflects equal honour on him who offered, and him who received it; being, beyond all doubt, the sincere ebullition of the heart on the part of Jefferson.

His term of office having expired on the 2d of June, Mr. Jefferson retired from the cares of public, to the enjoyment of private life, under the pleasing reflection that he had

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to the commander in chief of the armies of the United States; and who must have looked upon this expression of Jefferson as a rank political heresy, at war with the common defence and general welfare of the whole; a doctrine to which Washington was so religiously attached, as constituting the palladium of civil liberty, as well as military success and national safety.

faithfully discharged his duty to the utmost of his ability, in a period of trying difficulty, and through scenes of imminent peril and perplexing embarrassment; which, in all after times, must secure him an honorable immortality.

He now retired to his retreat at Monticello; but had scarcely reached that place, when intelligence was received that Tarleton, at the head of 250 horse, had been detached from the main army, to surprise and capture the members of the Legislature, then in session at Charlottesville. The House was on the point of proceeding to business, when the alarm was communicated, and had hardly time to adjourn, when the enemy burst into the village, assured of their prey; but no one was taken, though all had a narrow escape. But the ex-Governor was not forgotten; and Captain M'Leod, with a troop of horse was despatched to Monticello, to secure Jefferson. Fortunately, the intelligence of their approach was conveyed in advance, and Jefferson was enabled to escape, having sent off his family in a carriage, and mounting a horse himself, made his way through the woods to the house of a friend, where he was joined by his family. This is the famous incident in his life, which has been so opprobriously stigmatised by faction, by '*the flight to Carter's mountain*;' which venal bards have sung in satiric strains, and which the mercenary scribblers of a sordid party, have attempted to brand with infamy in scurrilous prose. Let the simple question be asked, was an unarmed individual to stand still, and suffer himself to be captured by a body of 250 horse? Or was he, like Captain Bobadil, to challenge and kill them *by tens*, in succession? But the pencil of history has too vividly consecrated to veneration the firmness of the statesman, and the talents of the man, as well as his zeal and intrepidity, to require his vindication from so frivolous, though at the same time so malicious a charge.

Like all men distinguished for prominent talents and great decision of character, Jefferson did not escape the aspersions and suspicions of an opposition party during his gubernatorial labours; and after his retirement, a Mr. Nicholas moved, in the Legislature, for an enquiry into his administration, on the ground of remissness and neglect in securing the public defence from the inroads of the enemy. Jefferson, and his friends, manifested the utmost readiness to meet this investigation; but, after a short time,

Mr. Nicholas having become convinced of the futility of the charge, declined its farther prosecution, and it fell, still-born, into the tomb of oblivious calumny. Jefferson, however, expecting to meet it, procured one of the representatives of his county to resign his seat in the Legislature, and in his place he was unanimously chosen; but when the House met, and no one appeared to prosecute the inquiry, Jefferson rose in his seat, and after reciting the charges brought against them, entered briefly into his own defence; which, having concluded, his justification was deemed so full and complete that the House *unanimously* passed this resolution—‘Resolved, That the sincere thanks of the General Assembly be given to our former Governor, Thomas Jefferson, for his impartial, upright and attentive administration, whilst in office. The Assembly wish, in the strongest manner, to declare the high opinion they entertain of Mr. Jefferson’s ability, rectitude and integrity, as chief magistrate of this commonwealth, and mean, by thus publicly avowing their opinion, to obviate and remove all unmerited censure.’

Mr. Nicholas now made the *amende honorable*, by a publication of his error, and an acknowledgment of the injustice of which he had been guilty towards Mr. Jefferson: an example of frank and honorable atonement, which it is to be lamented is not more generally imitated, after the transient heat of party animosity has cooled off, and reason left to meditate on the injustice, can vanquish the impulse of passion at the shrine of truth.

The next remarkable event in the life of Jefferson, was of a literary character, and relates to the composition of his “NOTES ON VIRGINIA,” written in 1781, amidst the din of arms, the clamour of politics, and the confusion of war. The Secretary of the French Legation, M. De Marbois, having proposed to Mr. Jefferson a series of inquiries relative to the State of Virginia; its natural productions, government, geography, history and laws; he answered them in this work, so replete with science, learning, research and philosophy. Pleased even to delight with this performance, the gentleman to whom it was addressed, procured it to be translated and printed in the French, and circulated among his friends, in whom it excited a lively interest. From this copy, a translation having been made without his knowledge, he was induced, in the year 1787, to publish the work

under his own direction in its *original English* dress. As no inconsiderable portion of his fame rests upon this production, we shall enter into some examination of its merits in another place.

In September 1782, Mr. Jefferson suffered a severe stroke of domestic affliction, in the demise of his wife—"in whose affections, he says, unabated on both sides, I had lived the last ten years in unchequered happiness." Desirous of a change of scene from the spot of his bereavement, he now accepted the appointment of Minister Plenipotentiary, to negotiate peace, through the mediation of the Empress of Russia, in conjunction with Mr. Adams, Mr. Jay, Dr. Franklin, and Mr. Laurens: an appointment which he had the year before declined, under a conviction that he could be more useful at home. This mission, however, failed; and, after having reached Philadelphia, he was excused by Congress from proceeding in its execution, owing to the arrival of intelligence of the signing of the provisional treaty of peace. He therefore, returned to Monticello on the 15th of May, 1783.

On the 6th of June, he was again appointed a delegate to Congress, and took his seat in that body on the 4th of November, at Trenton; from whence Congress adjourned to Annapolis, to meet on the 26th of the same month, whither Jefferson attended them. But it was not until the 13th of December, that a quorum could be formed.

His first work of utility in this session, was the scheme for regulating the current money of the United States, by adopting the *Dollar*, as our unit of account and payment, and its divisions and subdivisions in the decimal ratio—thus rendering it into *dollars, dimes, cents and mills*. He suggested the same principle in the regulation of *distances*, and *weights and measures*; but, strange to say, it has never yet been adopted, though so eligible and advantageous.

The definitive treaty of peace now arrived, and was to be ratified by Congress; but the want of a full representation of *nine States*, protracted its final adoption. Much and unavailing debate now ensued, speaking of which Mr. Jefferson makes the following apt and judicious strictures upon parliamentary debates, which are too excellent not to be quoted. "Our body was little numerous, but very contentious. Day after date, was wasted on the most unimportant questions. A member, one of those afflicted with the

morbid rage of debate, of an ardent mind, prompt imagination, and copious flow of words, who heard with impatience any logic which was not his own, sitting near me, on some occasion of a trifling but wordy debate, asked me how I could sit in silence, hearing so much false reasoning, which a word should refute? I observed to him, that to refute, indeed, was easy, but to silence impossible; that in measures brought forward by myself, I took the labouring oar, as was incumbent on me; but that in general, I was willing to listen; that if every sound argument or objection was used by some one or other of the numerous debaters, it was enough; if not, I thought it sufficient to suggest the omission, without going into a repetition of what had been already said by others: that this was a waste and abuse of the time and patience of the House, which could not be justified. And I believe, that if the members of deliberate bodies were to observe this course generally, they would do in a day, what takes them a week; and it is really more questionable than may at first be thought, whether Bonaparte's *dumb* Legislature, which said nothing and did much, may not be preferable to one which talks much and does nothing. *I served with General Washington in the Legislature of Virginia, before the Revolution, and during it, with Dr. Franklin, in Congress; I never heard either of them speak ten minutes at a time, nor to any but the MAIN POINT, which was to decide the question. They laid their shoulders to the great points, knowing that the little ones would follow of themselves.* If the present Congress errs in too much talking, how can it be otherwise, in a body to which the people send *one hundred and fifty Lawyers, whose trade it is to question every thing, yield nothing, and talk by the hour?* That one hundred and fifty Lawyers should do business together, ought not to be expected."

At length, on the 14th of January, the delegates from nine States having arrived, the *treaty* was ratified, without a dissenting voice.

Congress having resolved to join another Minister in Europe, (to negotiate treaties of commerce) to Mr. Adams and Dr. Franklin. Mr. Jefferson was appointed. He gives the following brief account of his voyage to France. "I accordingly left Annapolis on the 11th, took with me my eldest daughter, then at Philadelphia, (the two others being too young for the voyage) and proceeded to Boston in quest



of a passage. While passing through the different States, I made a point of informing myself of the state of the commerce of each; went on to New Hampshire with the same view, and returned to Boston. Thence I sailed on the 5th of July, in the *Ceres*, a merchant ship of Mr. Nathaniel Tracey, bound to Cowes. He was himself a passenger, and after a pleasant voyage of nineteen days, we arrived at Cowes on the 26th. I was detained there a few days by the indisposition of my daughter. On the 30th, we embarked for Havre, arrived there on the 31st, left it on the 3d of August, and arrived at Paris on the 6th. I called immediately on Dr. Franklin, at Passy, communicated to him our charge, and we wrote to Mr. Adams, then at the Hague, to join us at Paris."

In Europe, the services of Mr. Jefferson were highly beneficial to his country; for, independent of his diplomatic talent, the moral force of his character as a statesman, a man of science, a philosopher, and a sage, elevated the reputation of his country, and extorted that respect which civilised mankind always pay as the tribute of reason to the power of intellect. Having negotiated several treaties of commerce, Dr. Franklin returned home; and Mr. Adams, having been appointed ambassador at St. James, Mr. Jefferson was left as minister at the court of Versailles.

A treaty with Prussia and Morocco, was the only fruit of the labours of the three ambassadors.

At the request of Mr. Adams, Jefferson now went over to London, to attempt a treaty with that power; but returned to Paris covered with disappointment, mortification and chagrin, at the cold reception the overture had met with.

From Paris, Mr. Jefferson found leisure to travel into Italy, and explore Holland; and his powers of observation fully enabled him to amass a fund of information as useful to his country, as it proved beneficial to himself.

In France, a long residence and a perfect mastery of the language, could not fail to imbue him deeply with European politics. His prepossessions in favour of France were warm and evident; he did not conceal his attachment to the French character, and to French modes of thinking, acting, and feeling; and he, therefore, naturally became a favorite with their philosophers and men of letters; nor was it a slight honor to call *D'Alembert* his friend, embrace *Condorcet* as a companion, and acknowledge the *Abbe Morrellet*

as his literary god-father, who, from love to the author, translated his *Notes on Virginia*.

Although at a foreign court, the thoughts of Jefferson were too much directed *to home*, to allow him to overlook what was going on, in the formation of the *new Constitution*, to which he looked with an anxiety and solicitude proportioned to the magnitude and importance of the object. As it will forever remain an interesting subject of rational curiosity, as well as of political importance to know in what light he viewed the Constitution *at the time* of its adoption, I shall quote from his memoirs and correspondence, all that appears to bear directly upon this great point. He says, page 63, "Our first essay in America, to establish a federative government, had fallen, on trial, very short of its object. During the war of Independence, while the pressure of an external enemy hooped us together, and their enterprises kept us necessarily on the alert, the *spirit* of the people, excited by danger, was a *supplement to the Confederation*, and urged them to zealous exertions, whether claimed by that instrument or not; but when peace and safety were restored, and every man became engaged in useful and profitable occupation, less attention was paid to the calls of Congress. The fundamental defect of the confederation was, that Congress was not authorised to act immediately on the people, and by its own officers. Their power was only requisitory, and those requisitions were addressed to the several Legislatures, to be by them carried into execution, without other coercion than the moral principle of duty. This allowed, in fact, a *negative to every Legislature, on every measure proposed by Congress*; a negative so frequently exercised in practice, as to benumb the action of the federal government, and to render it inefficient in its general objects, and more especially in pecuniary and foreign concerns. The want, too, of a separation of the legislative, executive and judiciary functions worked disadvantageously in practice. Yet this state of things afforded a happy augury of the future march of our confederacy, when it was seen that the good sense and good dispositions of the people, as soon as they perceived the incompetence of their first compact, instead of leaving its correction to insurrection and civil war, agreed, with one voice, to elect deputies to a general Convention, who should peaceably meet and agree on such a Constitution, as would

ensure *peace, justice, liberty, the common defence and general welfare.*

“This Convention met at Philadelphia, on the 25th of May, 1787. It sat with closed doors, and kept all its proceedings secret until its dissolution on the 17th of September, when the result of its labours were published all together. I received a copy early in November, and *read and contemplated its provisions with great satisfaction.* As not a member of the Convention, however, nor probably a single citizen of the Union had approved it in all its parts, so I too found articles which I thought objectionable. The absence of express declarations insuring freedom of religion, freedom of the press, freedom of the person, under the uninterrupted protection of the *Habeas Corpus*, and trial by jury in civil as well as in criminal cases, excited my jealousy; and the re-eligibility of the President for life I quite disapproved. I expressed freely, in letters to my friends, and more particularly to Mr. Madison and General Washington, my approbations and objections. How the good should be secured, and the ill brought to rights, was the difficulty. To refer it back to a new convention might endanger the loss of the whole. My first idea was, that the nine states first acting, should accept it unconditionally, and thus secure what in it was good, and that the four last should accept on the previous condition, that certain amendments should be agreed to; but a better course was devised of accepting the whole, and trusting that the good sense and honest intentions of our citizens would make the alterations which should be deemed necessary. Accordingly, all accepted, six without objection, and seven with recommendations of specified amendments. Those respecting the press, religion, and juries, with several others of great value, were accordingly made; but the habeas corpus was left to the discretion of Congress, and the amendment against the re-eligibility of the President was not proposed. My fears of that feature were founded on the importance of the office. on the fierce contentions it might excite among ourselves, if continuable for life, and the dangers of interference, either with money or arms, by foreign nations, to whom the choice of an American President might become interesting. Examples of this abounded in history; in the case of the Roman emperors, for instance—of the popes, while of any significance—of the German emperors, the kings of Poland,

and the Deys of Barbary. I had observed, too, in the feudal history, and in the recent instance, particularly, of the Stadtholder of Holland, how easily offices or tenures for life, *slide into* INHERITANCES. My wish, therefore, was that the President should be elected for *seven years*, and be ineligible afterwards. This term I thought sufficient to enable him, with the concurrence of the Legislature, to carry through and establish any system of improvement he should propose for the general good. But the practice adopted, I think, is better—allowing his continuance for eight years, with a liability to be dropped at half-way of the term, making that a period of probation.\* That his continuance should be restrained to seven years was the opinion of the Convention at an earlier stage of its session, when it voted that term, by a majority of eight against two, and by a simple majority that he should be ineligible a *second time*. This opinion was confirmed by the House so late as July 26, referred to the committee of detail, reported favourably by them, and changed to the present form by final vote, on the last day but one only of their session. Of this change, three States expressed their disapprobation—New York, by recommending an amendment that the President should not be eligible a third time, and Virginia and North Carolina that he should not be capable of serving more than eight in any term of sixteen years; and although this amendment has not been made in form, yet practice seems to have established it. The example of four Presidents voluntarily

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\* Mr. Jefferson was evidently too much of a politician to give the true definition of the first term of four years; and instead of 'probation' I should propose to substitute the word *popularity*, 'making that a term of popularity,' during which the President *courts the PEOPLE FOR A RE-ELECTION*, and does nothing for the good of the nation; and having secured a re-election, he then acts with an eye to history, and does all the good he can to secure himself the universal applause of all parties. This shows *four* years to be sufficient for the *PUBLIC GOOD*, but not enough for private ambition; and we may justly indulge a regret, that one so celebrated for his profession of republican doctrines as Mr. Jefferson, should in the same breath deprecate long tenures of office, and yet oppose short ones; after experience, too, had so fully demonstrated, that the first four years was the rule of the demagogue, and the last four the administration of the patriot! The first four to organise a party for re-election, and the last four to perform what he was originally elected to do, but neglected, to attend to partisan arrangements. Not so, however, with WASHINGTON!!!

retiring at the end of their eighth year, and the progress of public opinion, that the principle is salutary, have given it in practice the force of precedent and usage; insomuch, that should a President consent to be a candidate for a *third* election, I trust he would be rejected, on this demonstration of ambitious views.\*

“But there was another amendment, of which none of us thought at the time, and in the omission of which lurks the germ that is to destroy this happy combination of national powers, in the general government, for matters of *National concern*, and independent powers in the States, for what concerns the States severally. In England, it was a great point, gained at the Revolution, that the commissions of the Judges, which had hitherto been during pleasure, should thenceforth be made during good behaviour. A Judiciary dependent on the will of the King, had proved itself the most oppressive of all tools in the hands of that magistrate. Nothing then could be more salutary, than a change there, to the tenure of good behaviour; and the question of good behaviour left to the vote of a simple majority in the two houses of Parliament. Before the Revolution, we were all good English whigs, cordial in their free principles, and in their jealousies of their executive magistrate. These jealousies are very apparent in all our State constitutions; and in the general government, in this instance, we have gone even beyond the English caution, by requiring a vote of two-thirds, in one of the Houses, for removing a Judge; a vote so impossible, where any defence is made, before men of ordinary prejudices and passions, that our Judges are effectually independent of the nation. *But this ought not to be.* I would not, indeed, make them dependent on the Executive authority, as they formerly were in England; but I deem it indispensable to the continuance of this government, that they should be submitted to some practical and impartial control; and that this to be impartial, must be

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\* This precedent was entirely accidental, Washington having determined to retire at the end of four years; but being restrained from that course by the peculiar pressure of the public exigencies, which he thought rendered it a point of honour to continue, until the difficulties of the country could be adjusted. To settle those difficulties, he reluctantly stood a second term: but his opinion was decidedly in favour of ONE TERM!

compounded of a mixture of State and Federal authorities.\* It is not enough that honest men are appointed Judges. All know the influence of interest on the mind of man, and how unconsciously his judgment is warped by that influence. To this bias add that of the *esprit de corps*, of their peculiar maxim and creed that 'it is the office of a good Judge to enlarge his jurisdiction;' and the absence of responsibility; and how can we expect impartial decision between the General Government, of which they are themselves so eminent a part, and an individual State, from which they have nothing to hope or fear? We have seen, too, that contrary to all correct example, they are in the habit of going out of the question before them, to throw an anchor ahead, and grapple further hold for future advances of power. They are then, in fact, the corps of *sappers* and *miners*, steadily working to *undermine the independent rights of the States*, and to consolidate all power in the hands of that government, in which they have so important a freehold estate."

Although I have ever been prejudiced against the Supreme Court, and in favour of *State rights*, yet I cannot conceive how that tribunal can ever decide *against* the consolidation features of the constitution. That court was not constituted as a *conservative tribunal of the rights of the States*,. but as a *conservative tribunal of the POWER of the United States*. Without the *Supreme Court*, as now organised, the *constitution is nothing*. The States have the remedy of an ap-

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\* Mr. Jefferson does not reason here with his wonted logical precision. He admits that Judges being men, must have some bias of interest or feeling; and cannot therefore be impartial; yet he contends for an impartial power to which they shall be held responsible! The mixture of State and Federal authorities, must, however, be composed of men; and why should they be more impartial than the Judges? This is reasoning in a circle. and contending for an Utopia. If the independence of the Judiciary is sound doctrine in England, why not in the United States? Because of the liability of human nature to be partial to itself? At this rate, we might abolish all government, because its officers are men. I must confess, I cannot discern the force of Mr. Jefferson's argument. He desired to arrest consolidation, by making the Judges of the Supreme Court dependent on those in favour of State rights; a bias quite as partial, and as destructive to the Republic as consolidation! The independence of the Court, strikes us as unexceptionable—but it is the CONSTITUTION that LEANS to consolidation; and how can the Court escape the same propensity?

peal to *public opinion*, if agressed; and such a panoply is more desirable than the *sword of coercion*, or the tomahawk of civil strife. If *public opinion* will not redress their wrongs, they cannot be greatly injured. So thought Mr. Jefferson himself, when he indited the following letter, teeming with sound doctrines, conceived by the clear head of a republican, and approved by the sound heart of a philanthropist.

In a letter to F. Hopkinson, dated Paris, March 13, 1789, he avows himself an advocate of a CONSOLIDATED government, and disclaims the suspicion of being an anti-federalist. "You say that I have been dished up to you as an anti-federalist, and ask me if it be just. My opinion was never worthy enough of notice, to merit citing; but since you ask it, I will tell it to you. I am not a federalist, because I never submitted the whole system of my opinions to the creed of any party of men whatever, in religion, in philosophy, in politics, or in any thing else, where I was capable of thinking for myself. Such an addiction, is the last degradation of a free and moral agent.\* If I could not go to heaven, but with a party, I would not go there at all. Therefore, I protest to you, I am not of the party of federalists. But I am *much farther from that of the anti-federalists*. I approved, from the first, of the great mass of what is in the new constitution; THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE GOVERNMENT; the organisation into executive, legislative and judiciary; the subdivision of the legislative; the happy compromise of interests between the great and little States, by the different manner of voting in the different houses; the voting by persons instead of States; the qualified negative on laws given to the Executive, which, however, I should have liked better, if associated with the Judiciary also, as in New York; and the power of taxation. I thought, at first, that the latter might have been limited. A little reflection soon convinced me it ought not to be. What I disapproved from the first moment, also, was the want of a bill of rights, to guard liberty against the legisla-

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\* It will be observed, that this sentiment from Mr. Jefferson aims a blow of ignominy against all parties; and, as neither its truth, nor philosophy can be controverted, it only remains, that to escape it men must not lose the faculty of free and moral agents, when they attach themselves to a party.

tive as well as executive branches of the government; that is to say, to secure freedom in religion, freedom of the press, FREEDOM FROM MONOPOLIES, freedom from unlawful imprisonment, freedom from a permanent military, and a trial by jury, in all cases determinable by the laws of the land. I disapproved also, the *perpetual re-eligibility of the President*. To these points of disapprobation I adhere. My first wish was, that the nine first conventions might accept the constitution, as the means of securing to us the great mass of good it contained, and that the four last might reject it, as the means of obtaining amendments. But I was corrected in this wish, the moment I saw the much better plan of Massachusetts, and which had never occurred to me. With respect to the declaration of rights, I suppose the majority of the United States are of my opinion: for I apprehend, all the anti-federalists, and a very respectable portion of the federalists, think that such a declaration should now be annexed. The enlightened part of Europe have given us the greatest credit for inventing this *instrument of security for the RIGHTS of the PEOPLE*, and have been not a little surprised, to see us so soon give it up. With respect to the re-eligibility of the President, I find myself differing from the majority of my countrymen; for I think there are but three States of the eleven, which have desired an alteration of this. And, indeed, since the thing is established, *I would wish it not to be altered during the life of our GREAT LEADER,\* whose executive talents are superior to those, I believe, of any man in the world, and who alone, by the authority of his name and the confidence reposed in his perfect integrity, is fully qualified to put the new GOVERNMENT so under way, as to secure it against the EFFORTS OF OPPOSITION*. But having derived from our error all the good there was in it, I hope we shall correct it the moment we can no longer have the *same name* at the helm.

“These, my dear friend, are my sentiments, by which you will see I was right in saying, I am neither federalist, nor anti-federalist; that I am of neither party, nor yet a trimmer between parties. These, my opinions, I wrote within a few hours after I had read the constitution, to one or two friends in America. I had not then read one single

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\* WASHINGTON!



word printed on the subject. I never had an opinion in politics or religion, which I was afraid to own. A costive reserve on these subjects, might have procured me more esteem from some people, but less from myself."

Thus he wrote to Mr. Hopkinson in March, 1789; but, in another to Mr. *Madison*, in 1787, he expressed an opinion essentially varied as to the consolidated power of government.

"I own I am *not a friend* to a very energetic government; it is always oppressive; it places the governors indeed more at their ease, but at the expense of the people. The late rebellion in Massachusetts, has given more alarm than I think it should have done. Calculate that one rebellion in thirteen States, in the course of eleven years, is but *one for each State* in a century and a half. NO COUNTRY SHOULD BE SO LONG WITHOUT ONE, nor will any degree of power in the hands of government prevent insurrections. In England, where the hand of power is heavier than with us, there are seldom half a dozen years without an insurrection. In France, where it is still heavier, but less despotic, as Montesquieu supposes, than in some other countries, and where there are always two or three hundred thousand men ready to crush insurrections, there have been three in the course of the three years I have been here, in every one of which, greater numbers were engaged than in Massachusetts, and a great deal more blood was spilt. In Turkey, where the sole nod of the despot is death, insurrections are the events of every day. Compare again the ferocious depredations of their insurgents with the order, the moderation, and the almost self-extinguishment of ours, and say, finally, whether peace is best preserved by giving energy to the government, or *information* to the people. This last is the *most certain and the most legitimate* engine of government. *Educate and inform the whole mass of the people*, enable them to see that it is their interest to preserve peace and order, and they will preserve it; and it requires no very high degree of education to convince them of this; they are the only sure reliance for the preservation of our liberty. After all, it is my principle, that the *will of the majority should prevail*. If they approve the proposed constitution in all its parts, I shall concur in it cheerfully, in hopes they will mend it, whenever they shall find it works wrong. This reliance

cannot deceive us as long as we remain virtuous; and I think we shall be so, as long as agriculture is our principal object, which will be the case while there remain vacant lands in any part of America."

Mr. Jefferson's sentiments on the *French Revolution*, are given with a fulness and frankness in his Memoirs, which renders them not less important than interesting; and a just appreciation of his character and conduct in relation to that splendid, yet melancholy era, demands that I should here transcribe those opinions which he deliberately recorded with his own hand. After speaking of the escort of the King, by a *garde Bourgeoise* to his palace at Versailles, amidst the cry of "*Vive le Roy et la Nation*," he thus remarks: "And here, again, was lost another precious occasion of sparing to France the crimes and cruelties through which she has since passed, and to Europe, and finally America, the evils which flowed on them also from this mortal source. The King was now become a passive machine in the hands of the National Assembly, and had he been left to himself, he would have willingly acquiesced in whatever they should devise as best for the nation. A wise constitution would have been formed, hereditary in his line, himself placed at its head, with powers so large, as to enable him to do all the good of his station, and so limited, as to restrain him from its abuse. This he would have faithfully administered, and more than this I do not believe he ever wished. But he had a Queen of absolute sway over his weak mind and timid virtue, and of a character the reverse of his in all points. This angel, as gaudily painted in the rhapsodies of Burke, with some smartness of fancy, but no sound sense, was proud, disdainful of restraint, indignant at all obstacles to her will, eager in the pursuit of pleasure, and firm enough to hold to her desires, or perish in their wreck. Her inordinate gambling and dissipations, with those of the Count D'Artois, and others of her *clique*, had been a sensible item in the exhaustion of the treasury, which called into action the reforming hand of the nation; and her opposition to it, her inflexible perverseness, and dauntless spirit led herself to the Guillotine, drew the King on with her, and plunged the world into crimes and calamities, which will forever stain the pages of modern history. I ever have believed, that had there been no queen, there would have been no

revolution.\* No force would have been provoked nor exercised. The king would have gone hand in hand with the wisdom of his sounder counsellors; who, guided by the increased lights of the age, wished only, with the same pace, to advance the principles of their social constitution. The deed, which closed the mortal course of these sovereigns, I shall neither approve nor condemn. I am not prepared to say that the first magistrate of a nation cannot commit treason against his country, or is unamenable to its punishment; nor yet, that where there is no written law, no regulated tribunal, there is not a law in our hearts, and a power in our hands, given for righteous employment in maintaining right and redressing wrong. Of those, who judged the King, many thought him wilfully criminal; many, that his existence would keep the nation in perpetual conflict with the horde of kings, who would war against a regeneration which might come home to themselves, and that it were better that *one* should die than *all*. I should not have voted with this portion of the Legislature. I should have shut up the queen in a convent, putting harm out of her power, and placed the king in his station, investing him with limited powers, which, I verily believe, he would have honestly exercised, according to the measure of his understanding. In this way, no void would have been created, courting the usurpation of a military adventurer,† nor occasion given for those enormities which demoralized the nations of the world, and destroyed, and is yet to destroy, millions and millions of its inhabitants. There are three epochs in history, signalled by the total extinction of national morality. The first was of the successors of Alexander, not omitting himself; the next, the successors of the first Cæsar; the third, our own age. This was begun by the partition of Poland, followed by that of the treaty of Pilnitz; next the conflagration of Copenhagen; then the enormities of Bonaparte, partitioning the earth at his will, and devastating it with fire and sword; now the conspiracy of Kings, the successors of Bonaparte, blasphemously calling themselves the Holy Alliance, and treading

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\* This is but a poor compliment to the French people, even under the theory expounded by Mr. Jefferson.

† A coarse title for the FIRST MAN of his age—the wonder of the whole world!!!

in the footsteps of their incarcerated leader; not yet, indeed usurping the government of other nations, avowedly and, in detail, but controlling, by their armies, the forms in which they will permit them to be governed; and reserving, *in petto*, the order and extent of the usurpations further meditated. But I will return from a digression, anticipated too, in time, into which I have been led by reflection on the criminal passions which refused to the world a favourable occasion of saving it from the afflictions it has since suffered."

Having obtained leave of absence to return to Virginia, upon some domestic engagements, Mr. Jefferson landed at *Norfolk*, on the 23d of November, and proceeded on to *Eppington*, the residence of his connection, Mr. Eppes, where he was greeted by an express from President Washington, covering his appointment as Secretary of State. Upon this subject Mr. Jefferson thus expresses his feelings, which it is due to truth to say, do not correspond with his usual warmth of heart, or his well known aspiration after political celebrity: "I received it with real regret. My wish had been to return to Paris, where I had left my household establishment, as if there myself, and *to see the end of the revolution*; which, I then thought, would be certainly and happily closed in less than a year. I then meant to return home, to withdraw from political life, into which I had been impressed by the circumstances of the times, to sink into the bosom of my family and friends, and devote myself to studies *more congenial* to my mind.\* In my answer of December 15, I expressed these dispositions candidly to the President, and my preference of a return to Paris; but assured him, that if it was believed I could be more useful in the administration of the government, I would sacrifice my own inclinations without hesitation, and repair to that destination; this I left to his decision. I arrived at *Monticello* on the 23d of December, where I received a second letter from the President, expressing his continued wish that I should take my station there, *but*

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\* Here we behold one of those traits of intellectual dissimulation, peculiar to men, who, combining literary talents with political address, so often leads those possessed of them to deceive the world, when they cannot even succeed in deceiving themselves into the belief of their own sincerity.

*leaving me still at liberty to continue in my former office, if I could not reconcile myself to that now proposed.* This silenced my reluctance, and I accepted the new appointment."

I must here pause for a moment, to indulge in those reflections which naturally arise from this elevation of the statesman of Monticello, to the most lofty station in the cabinet of our greatest and best President; and which constitutes one of those emphatic eras in the life of a politician, which decide and involve his future destiny. This may be considered the *first period* of the life of this singular and extraordinary man; singular for his genius, and extraordinary for his profound and diversified acquirements. Few men had made such rapid progress from the obscure condition of a county court lawyer, to the brilliant eminence of *Secretary of State* under George Washington; from being a member of the General Assembly of Virginia, to become the first statesman of the United States; and to maintain a rank in philosophy and learning, second only to the most distinguished literati of Europe. Genius and volition of the highest order could alone have subjugated that immense space to the empire of greatness, which had divided the youthful attorney from the post he was now called upon to fill; and from which, as on an eminence, he could look *down* upon the past covered with its shadows; and *up* to the future, glittering with the most resplendent prospect of honour and renown. He was now called to a station, which genius, fired with ambition, occupies as a starting point for *higher* exaltation; and which unleavened mediocrity only, takes possession of as the *final* seat of its distinction, and the satisfying object of its ambition. Mr. Jefferson belonged to the first class of soaring and kindling minds, that never enjoy rest until they have attained glory, and which never pauses at a point of advancement short of the apex of worldly honour or political power. The motives, therefore, which induced his acceptance of this appointment, were derived from thoughts and feelings of a higher reach, and loftier tone, than any of those commonplace considerations which look to the emolument of the office before him, or to the accommodation of the personage who tenders it.

During his stay at home, his eldest daughter was now married to Mr. Randolph, 'a young gentleman of genius,

science and honourable mind;’ who afterwards became Governor of Virginia.

Mr. Jefferson left Monticello, for New York, on the 1st of March, 1790, to enter on the duties of his new office. At Philadelphia, he called on Dr. Franklin, who was then on his death-bed, and who conversed with him with the resignation of a philosopher, and the animation of an enthusiast for liberty. The doctor confided to him a MS. memoir of his life, which Mr. Jefferson, under a mistaken idea of the trust reposed in him, afterwards delivered into the hands of his grandson, William Temple Franklin. This memoir Mr. Jefferson represents as containing important details: among others he thus relates a very important one, “I remember, he says, speaking of secret negociations of Franklin, to accommodate matters between the Colonies and Great Britain, that Lord North’s answers were dry, unyielding, in the spirit of unconditional submission, and betrayed an absolute indifference to the occurrence of a rupture; and he said to the mediators distinctly, at last, that ‘*a rebellion was not to be deprecated on the part of Great Britain; that the confiscations it would produce would provide for many of their friends.*’ This expression was reported by the mediators to Dr. Franklin.” Here the negociation stopped.

Mr. Jefferson reached New York on the 21st March, while Congress was in session; and commenced his duties as *Secretary of State*, under GEORGE WASHINGTON!

In a letter to General Washington, dated April 16, 1784, Mr. Jefferson gives, at full length, his objections to the institution of the CINCINNATI; from which I must take an extract of a brief passage: “The objections of those who are opposed to the institution shall be briefly sketched. You will readily fill them up. They urge that it is against the *confederation*, against the letter of some of our constitutions, against the spirit of all of them; that the foundation, on which all these are built, is the *natural equality*\* of

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\* Mr. Jefferson here reasons with less closeness than is common to him; there is no natural equality in man, but that all possess, in an equal degree, a natural right to happiness is another, and a more rational proposition. Metaphysical equality of right is a much sounder doctrine than the physical, or metaphysical equality of mankind; for no two men are equal in body, or mind. The pernicious doctrines fashionable in the era of the French revolution, are now exploded

man, the denial of every pre-eminence but that annexed to legal office,† and particularly the denial of a pre-eminence by birth; that, however, in their present dispositions, citizens might decline accepting honorary instalments into the order, but a time may come when a well directed distribution of them might draw into the order all the men of talents, of office and wealth; and, in this case, would probably procure an engraftment into the government; that in this they will be supported by their *foreign* members, and the wishes and influence of foreign courts; that experience has shown that the hereditary branches of modern governments are the patrons of privilege and prerogative, and not of the natural rights of the people, whose oppressors they generally are; that, beside these evils, which are remote, others may take place more immediately; that a distinction is kept up between the civil and military, which it is for the happiness of both to obliterate; that when the members assemble they will be proposing to do something, and what that something may be, will depend on actual circumstances; that being an organized body, under habits of subordination, the first obstruction to enterprize will be already surmounted; *that the moderation and VIRTUE of a single character have probably prevented this revolution from being closed, as most others have been, by a subversion of that liberty it was intended to establish; that he is not immortal, and his successor, or some of his successors, may be led by false calculations into a less certain road to glory.*"

It has always been known that Mr. Jefferson was opposed to the institution of the Cincinnatti, as containing the germ of an *hereditary nobility*; but to what precise extent he carried his objections, I was never able to discover, until I met with the foregoing letter, published by his grandson, in the volume that contains his memoir of his own life. It appears, from the foregoing extract, that he opposed it on the broadest grounds of *democracy, equality, and popular sovereignty and rule.*

His letters from Paris, in 1785 and '86, to Washington

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for others, of more enlarged benevolence, yet equally favourable to liberty.

† Mr. Jefferson could not mean to deny the natural pre-eminence of genius, and the acquired superiority of learning, skill and experience!

himself, as well as to others, breathe the purest attachment and the highest veneration for that great patriot; from whom he does not seem to have been alienated till subsequent events, and pregnant ambition, begot feelings of an opposite nature; all generated by the new situation which he was called on to occupy in the new government. It is remarkable, too, that at the dates here referred to, he took peculiar pleasure in discoursing of matters connected with pomp, splendour and ceremony; so that the *Court of Versailles*, instead of disgusting his republican taste, seems, on the contrary, to have been highly pleasing to him. Being intrusted, at this time, with a commission to procure an artist to execute an *equestrian statue of Washington*, he appears to have taken great pleasure, and spent much pains in that undertaking; which led him to a protracted correspondence, in which his overflowing affection for Washington was constantly manifested, and which could not fail to awaken in the breast of the first President a corresponding sentiment of attachment, esteem and confidence. But this friendship was now to undergo the severest trials, by being subjected to the test of ambition, and exposed to the temptations of envy, and the jealous pangs of beholding the favour of the chief magistrate extended to others, who stood in his pathway to the highest point of honour. Let no man say, when he climbs ambition's ladder, that he will stop half way, and that he desires not to ascend to the top; let no man delude his judgment, by hoping to reconcile the claims of friendship and gratitude with the lusts of ambition; or think to remain free from the fever while he gives his heart up to the flush of power, and riots in visions of future greatness! Fatal delusion! The moment he plants his foot on the political ladder, the delirium of his head overbalances the pulsations of his heart, he swims on clouds, and he ceases to walk the earth until he can walk over men!

Mr. Jefferson now took his station as the *second officer* of the federal government; second only in political importance, official dignity, and arduous responsibility of duty, to that occupied by the illustrious Washington, who had called him to the discharge of its functions. At all times demanding, in the incumbent, a happy combination of profound learning, vigorous talents, and extensive, as well as varied acquirements, the office of Secretary of State, at the commencement of the new government, required those



qualities in an eminent degree to be united in the man who should be called to fulfil its duties, for the first time, under an untried constitution. Happily all these requisites were combined, in a most extraordinary and singular manner, in the person and intellect of Mr. Jefferson, who, fortunately for his country, combined the most elevated ardour of patriotism with the sterling splendour of genius and learning.

To attend Mr. Jefferson through all the detail of his official duties, as Secretary of State, would be to compile a history of that department, instead of sketching a biography of this eminent man. I shall, therefore, confine myself to the delineation of those traits of character which become displayed in strong contrast of opposition to the views and principles of those with whom he was associated; his mere ability, so far as it related to the performance of his official functions, being too universally applauded, and too justly appreciated, to be open to higher encomium, or more rigid criticism, than that through which his merits have been established.

The first question which elicited that contrariety of views and principles, which existed between Jefferson and the President, was the *incorporation of the BANK OF THE UNITED STATES*. That measure having produced a deep excitement in both Houses of Congress, as involving fundamental principles of constitutional power, naturally awakened the well-approved patriotism of Washington, which induced him to pause and deliberate with his usual coolness and ability, before he decided upon its final adoption. For this purpose, he requested a written investigation of the merits of the question from Mr. Jefferson, in common with the other members of his cabinet; in complying with which, this illustrious statesman exhibited a power of reasoning not inferior in brilliancy to that solidity of principle upon which he rested as the foundation of his arguments. Simple, broad, and comprehensive in his premises, he went upon the self-evident axiom that a *limited* constitution, restricted by *special* grants of power, could not authorise a sovereign exercise of authority, which no part of that instrument allowed, or granted in *express terms*—that the power to create a national bank was in its very nature *too vast* and *influential* over the whole rights and interests of the people, to be either a necessary or an incidental power, to others expressly granted—and that it were better for the harmony and suc-

cess of the whole Union, to forego the exercise of a *doubtful* power than to breed endless dissensions and heart-burnings, by assuming an authority which could not be sustained by the *letter of the Constitution*, to observe which the government was bound in the exercise of *substantive* powers. In this powerful and masterly elucidation of one of the most controverted features of the federal government, he was decidedly opposed, by the eloquent and brilliant exposition of Alexander Hamilton, who, reasoning on opposite principles, and leaning to a government of more energetic and comprehensive genius, naturally carried with him the already prepossessed judgment of the President. But neither the force of Hamilton's reasoning, nor the hourly augmenting weight of the influence of Washington himself, have been able to settle this perturbed question; while the masterly, but simple edifice of free principles, erected by the republican logic of Jefferson, will forever remain a monument of that stern, inflexible and uncompromising *democracy* which made him so emphatically *the man of the people*; and which have consecrated his labours upon this subject as a perpetual rallying point for the *advocates* of free principles, State rights, and equality of privileges.

As some curiosity will naturally be excited to see this report of Mr. Jefferson upon the Bank of the United States, and as it is to be found in but few works, accessible to the general class of readers, I shall here extract it.

MR. JEFFERSON'S OFFICIAL OPINION ON THE POWER OF CONGRESS TO ESTABLISH A NATIONAL BANK.

The Bill for establishing a National Bank, undertakes, among other things,

1st. To form the subscribers into a corporation.

2d. To enable them, in their corporate capacities, to receive grants of land, and so far, is against the laws of *mortmain*.\*

3d. To make alien subscribers capable of holding lands; and so far is against the laws of alienage.

4th. To transmit these lands, on the death of a proprie-

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\* Though the Constitution controls the laws of mortmain, so far as to permit Congress itself to hold lands for certain purposes, yet not so far as to permit them to communicate a similar right to other corporate bodies.

tor, to a certain line of successors; and so far, changes the course of descents.

5th. To put the lands out of the reach of forfeiture or escheat; and so far, is against the laws of forfeiture and escheat.

6th. To transmit personal chattels to successors in a certain line; and so far is against the laws of distribution.

7th. To give them the sole and exclusive right of banking under the national authority; and so far, is against the laws of monopoly.

8. To communicate to them a power to make laws paramount to the laws of the States; for so they must be construed to protect the institution from the control of the State Legislatures; and so, probably, they will be construed.

I consider the foundation of the Constitution as laid on the ground that 'all powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it, to the States, are reserved to the States, or to the people.' (Twelfth Amendment.) To take a single step beyond the boundaries thus specially drawn around the powers of Congress, is to take possession of a boundless field of power, no longer susceptible of any definition.

The incorporation of a bank, and the powers assumed by this Bill, have not, in my opinion, been delegated to the United States by the Constitution.

I. They are not among the powers specially enumerated. For these are,

1. A power to lay taxes for the purpose of paying the debts of the United States; but no debt is paid by this bill, nor any tax laid. Were it a bill to raise money, its origination in the Senate would condemn it by the Constitution.

2. To 'borrow money.' But this bill neither borrows money, nor insures the borrowing of it. The proprietors of the Bank will be just as free as any other money holders, to lend or not to lend their money to the public. The operation proposed in the Bill, first to lend them two millions, and then borrow them back again, cannot change the nature of the latter act, which will still be a payment, and not a loan, call it by what name you please.

3. 'To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the States, and with the Indian tribes.' To erect a bank, and to regulate commerce, are very different acts. He who erects a bank, creates a subject of commerce in its bills: so

does he who makes a bushel of wheat, or digs a dollar out of the mines. Yet neither of these persons regulate commerce thereby. To make a thing which may be bought and sold, is not to prescribe regulations for buying and selling. Besides, if this were an exercise of the power of regulating commerce, it would be void, as extending as much to the internal commerce of every State, as to its external. For the power given to Congress by the Constitution, does not extend to the internal regulation of the commerce of a State, (that is to say, of the commerce between citizen and citizen,) which remains exclusively with its own Legislature, but to its external commerce only; that is to say, its commerce with another State, or with foreign nations, or with the Indian tribes. Accordingly, the Bill does not propose the measure as a 'regulation of trade,' but as 'productive of considerable advantage to trade.'

Still less are these powers covered by any other of the special enumerations.

II. Nor are they within either of the general phrases, which are the two following:

1. To lay taxes, to provide for the general welfare of the United States; that is to say, 'to lay taxes *for the purpose* of providing for the general welfare.' For the laying of taxes is the *power*, and the general welfare the *purpose*, for which the power is to be exercised. Congress are not to lay taxes *ad libitum*, for any purpose they please; but only to *pay the debts*, or *provide for the welfare of the Union*. In like manner, they are not to *do any thing they please*, to provide for the general welfare, but only to lay taxes for that purpose. To consider the latter phrase, not as describing the purpose of the first, but as giving a distinct and independent power to do any act they please, which might be for the good of the Union, would render all the preceding and subsequent enumerations of power completely useless. It would reduce the whole instrument to a single phrase, that of instituting a Congress with power to do whatever would be for the good of the United States; and as they would be the sole judges of the good or evil, it would be also a power to do whatever evil they pleased. It is an established rule of construction, where a phrase will bear either of two meanings, to give it that which will allow some meaning to the other parts of the instrument, and not that which will render all the others useless. Cer-

tainly, no such universal power was meant to be given them. It was intended to lace them up straightly within the enumerated powers, and those without which, as means, these powers could not be carried into effect. It is known that the very power now proposed *as a means* was rejected *as an end* by the Convention which formed the Constitution. A proposition was made to them to authorise Congress to open canals, and an amendatory one to empower them to incorporate; but the whole was rejected; and one of the reasons of rejection urged in debate was, that they then would have a power to erect a bank, which would render the great cities, where there were prejudices and jealousies on that subject, adverse to the reception of the Constitution.

2. The second general phrase is, 'to make all laws *necessary* and proper for carrying into execution the enumerated powers.' But they can all be carried into execution without a bank. A bank, therefore, is not *necessary*, and consequently, not authorised by this phrase.

It has been much urged, that a bank will give great facility or convenience in the collection of taxes. Suppose this were true; yet the constitution allows only the means which are 'necessary,' not those which are merely convenient, for effecting the enumerated powers. If such a latitude of construction be allowed to this phrase, as to give any non-enumerated power, it will go to every one; for there is no one which ingenuity may not torture into a *convenience in some way or other to some one* of so long a list of enumerated powers. It would swallow up all the delegated powers, and reduce the whole to one phrase, as before observed. Therefore it was, that the constitution restrained them to the *necessary* means, that is to say, to those means without which the grant of the power would be nugatory.

'But let us examine this 'convenience,' and see what it is. The report on this subject, (page 2,) states the only general convenience to be, the preventing the transportation and retransportation of money between the States and the treasury. (For I pass over the increase of the circulating medium ascribed to it as a merit, and which, according to my ideas of paper money, is clearly a demerit.) Every State will have to pay a sum of tax money into the treasury; and the treasury will have to pay, in every State, a part of the interest on the public debt, and salaries to the officers of government resident in that State. In most of the

States there will still be a surplus of tax money to come up to the seat of government for the officers residing there. The payments of interest and salary in each State, may be made by treasury orders on the State collector. This will take up the greater part of the money he has collected in his State, and consequently prevent the great mass of it from being drawn out of the State. If there be a balance of commerce in favour of that State, against the one in which the government resides, the surplus of taxes will be remitted by the bills of exchange drawn for that commercial balance. And so it must be if there were a bank. But if there be no balance of commerce, either direct or circuitous, all the banks in the world could not bring the surplus of taxes but in the form of money. Treasury orders, then, and bills of exchange, may prevent the displacement of the main mass of the money collected, without the aid of any bank; and where these fail, it cannot be prevented, even with that aid.

Perhaps, indeed, bank bills may be a more convenient vehicle than treasury orders. But a little *difference* in the degree of convenience, cannot constitute the necessity which the constitution makes the ground for assuming any non-enumerated power.

Besides, the existing banks will, without doubt, enter into arrangements for lending their agency, and the more favourable, as there will be a competition among them for it. Whereas, this bill delivers us up bound to the national bank, who are free to refuse all arrangements but on their own terms, and the public not free, on such refusal, to employ any other bank. That of Philadelphia, I believe, now does this business by their post notes, which, by an arrangement with the treasury, are paid by any State collector, to whom they are presented. This expedient, alone, suffices to prevent the existence of that *necessity* which may justify the assumption of a non-enumerated power as a means for carrying into effect an enumerated one. The thing may be done, and has been done, and well done, without this assumption; therefore, it does not stand on that degree of *necessity* which can honestly justify it.

It may be said, that a bank whose bills would have a currency all over the States, would be more convenient than one whose currency is limited to a single State. So it would be still more convenient, that there should be a bank whose

bills should have a currency all over the world. But it does not follow from this superior conveniency, that there exists any where a power to establish such a bank, or that the world may not go on very well without it.

Can it be thought, that the Constitution intended, that for a shade or two of *convenience*, more or less, Congress should be authorised to break down the most ancient and fundamental laws of the several States, such as those against mortmain, the laws of alienage, the rules of descent, the acts of distribution, the laws of escheat and forfeiture, and the laws of monopoly. Nothing but a necessity invincible by any other means, can justify such a prostration of laws which constitute the pillars of our whole system of jurisprudence. Will Congress be too straight-laced to carry the Constitution into honest effect, unless they may pass over the foundation laws of the State governments, for the slightest convenience to theirs?

The negative of the President is the shield provided by the Constitution, to protest against the invasions of the Legislature; *first*, the rights of the Executive; *second*, of the Judiciary; *third*, of the States and State Legislatures. The present is the case of a right remaining exclusively with the States, and is, consequently, one of those intended by the Constitution to be placed under his protection.

It must be added, however, that unless the President's mind, on a view of every thing which is urged for and against this bill, is tolerably clear that it is unauthorised by the constitution, if the *pro* and the *con* hang so even as to balance his judgment, a just respect for the wisdom of the Legislature, would naturally decide the balance in favour of their opinion. It is chiefly for cases where they are clearly misled by error, ambition or interest, that the Constitution has placed a check in the negative of the President.

February 15, 1791.

TH. JEFFERSON.

Congress, aware of the great importance of the cod and whale fisheries, had directed the attention of the Secretary of State to those subjects; and Mr. Jefferson, in compliance with a resolution of that body, made a report to Congress on the 1st of February, 1791, embracing a comprehensive enquiry into the nature and tendency of that trade, and taking a wide survey of its benefits, advantages, and bearings, as well in a national point of view, as in its effects and

operations upon the prosperity and happiness of the people in general. Among other points that he elucidated with the hand of a master in this report, was the influence of that trade in bettering the condition of the labouring classes, by reducing the cost of the first necessary of life—food; and the means it provided for rearing a hardy and skilful race of brave seamen; its extension of the commerce of the country; its efficacy as the means of defence in war; and its inestimable value as a *nursery for seamen*, out of which to fill up the complement of our public ships of war. In fine, this able and profound report displayed all that variety of information and fullness of talent, for which its author was so celebrated, and which so happily qualified him to digest plans of national improvements; explore new sources of public wealth, and analyse the complicated relations of the most intricate and unknown branch of trade or enterprise. From this report, Mr. Jefferson has justly been considered as having a fair claim to the character of *Father of the American Fisheries*.

In his various negotiations with England and Spain, at this eventful period of the commencement of the new federal government, Mr. Jefferson manifested that patriotism and benevolence for which he was always distinguished; and displayed that skill, learning, eloquence, and address, which always characterised his elegant pen. In the discussion of the violated treaties with the British minister, and the free navigation of the Mississippi, he illustrated these pre-eminent qualities of his accomplished mind in a striking and peculiar manner.

I have already, in the *Life of Washington*, alluded to that trait of our national policy established by the father of his country, which preserved us from being entangled in the wars and alliances of Europe, by settling the principle of neutrality as the *wisest policy* of the republic. On this occasion, Mr. Jefferson, as Secretary of State, became signally distinguished, by his correspondence with the insolent *Genet*, who, uniting impudence to vulgarity, unwisely supposed that qualities so offensive, must necessarily constitute the essence of republican liberty. Mr. Jefferson had advised and fully concurred in the proclamation of *neutrality* between England, Holland and France; but he dissented from that position of the cabinet, which urged the suspension of our treaties with the latter country, during



the anarchy of her wild revolution, when all government seemed to be dissolved in oceans of blood, but which Washington himself did not approve; so that Genet was received without any stipulation of suspended treaties, as the minister of the French people. Whatever may have been Mr. Jefferson's partiality for the French people, and his sympathy for the cause of liberty, in which they were so furiously engaged, (and that he felt on these subjects with extreme warmth, we have his own testimony to prove,) still he was too well instructed in his duty as a member of the government, to permit the influence of his feelings to bias, or change the current of his official duties. It is, therefore, more to his honour, than if he had not cherished this partiality, that he vindicated the dignity of the President, and defended the rights and policy of his country, in a tone of pure and lofty patriotism which reflected the highest credit on his integrity; and with a force of argument and power of illustration, which attested to the singular felicity of his genius, and the enviable stores of his knowledge. //

On the 16th of December, 1793, Mr. Jefferson presented to Congress the last official paper, of which he was the author, under the administration of George Washington: this was a report on the commerce and navigation of the United States, in its relation to foreign governments, with suggestions as to what measures it may be expedient to adopt, to improve and extend the same.

This report has derived additional importance from its recognition of principles which assimilate closely with the doctrines of FREE TRADE, and yet embrace the contingency of a PROTECTIVE TARIFF. He begins by considering the *value* of the articles of our export to the different countries with whom we exchange commodities; and then proceeds to investigate the *restrictions* which other nations have imposed upon our trade; whence he branches out into an appeal to Congress, to devise and adopt the most eligible modes for their modification, counteraction, or removal. He then suggests as two of the most eligible methods: *first*, Negotiations for commercial treaties on the basis of reciprocity; and *second*, Legislative enactments imposing counteracting restrictions upon the trade of those nations that will not treat on the first named condition. Commercial regulations he deemed preferable, because he contended that an unshackled and free trade was the most pro-

fitable, reasonable and just; and that the United States ought to hold in special favour any nation who would, by commencing the system, set a good example for others to follow; and in the same spirit, to resist with rigorous counteracting duties, the commerce and navigation of those countries that pertinaciously adhered to the system of prohibitions, high duties, or vexatious exactions. An obvious train of powerful argument is adduced to sustain this just position, and recommend to national patronage the *navigation interest* of the country; urging with a fervour commensurate to the great importance of the question, the adoption of the system of NATIONAL RECIPROCITY—opposing *tariff* to *tariff*—duty against duty; but at all times giving a decided preference to free and unrestrained trade, universally guaranteed from all shackles by commercial treaties and arrangements.

In accordance with this enlightened and masterly exposition of sound national policy, Mr. Madison introduced a series of resolutions, which were designed to give the report of Mr. Jefferson the sanction of legislative authority. An animated and prolonged debate ensued; in the course of which every collateral topic of a political character was freely and vividly discussed; the policy of the nation in times of war, and of peace; the hostilities of Europe; the progress of commerce, and the necessity of retaliation; in fine, every question having a main bearing on the point was fully analysed and expounded. It was supposed that a majority could have been rallied upon the passage of the resolutions; but they were not put to the vote, and now only remain a monument of that political foresight in Mr. Jefferson, and that legislative wisdom on the part of Mr. Madison, which formed such prominent characteristics of these eminent individuals. Yet it must ever be considered as singular, that through all the revolutions of public opinion, the *opposite* policy of *Hamilton* has prevailed, under every administration. According to an intention long before expressed, Mr. Jefferson resigned his office, as Secretary of State, on the 31st of December, 1793.

I have now arrived at a new era in the life of Mr. Jefferson; when he shed the peaceful robes of the *statesman*, to assume the sword, shield and armour of the politician—an era, at which admiration for his genius is overclouded by mortification for his loss of dignity, his sacrifice of opinion

to *expediency*, and his occasional *dereliction from principle* in compliance with the fallacious suggestions of *interest*. We must now cease for a time to contemplate him as the philanthropist, whose eye is fixed on the public good, or as the patriot, whose heart is engrossed by schemes that will benefit his country; and be content to observe him as ONE who is to build up his fortune with all 'sorts of people,' and manage politics as an art of *individual greatness*, not of *national good*. It is, perhaps, to be lamented that men of great minds should ever be condemned to compromise their honest candour in order to conciliate popular favour, for great stations; but still it is so ordained in the scale of human frailty, that vast powers of intellect shall be chequered by some obliquities of character, that detract from that unmixed veneration which they would otherwise inspire. If, however, as a *politician*. Mr. Jefferson was not so lofty and unblemished as he was considered, as a *statesman* we must refer much of the discrepancy to those inevitable and adventitious circumstances, which, while they placed him in open contrast with the *greatest man of his age*, surrounded him with powerful rivals of equal talents, superior energy, more moral courage, and greater intellectual prowess. With WASHINGTON to overshadow him—with HAMILTON to rival him—with ADAMS to carry off the palm of political triumph, and JAY to excel him in diplomacy, it required no little management, skill, and address, to preserve himself floating on the waters, and to reach that final harbour of glory to which he at last safely navigated his barque, through fogs, and shoals, and tempests that environed him at every turn, and menaced him so often with annihilation. But the clouds of the *politician* once passed, we shall again behold his glory shine out undimmed, as brilliant and resplendent as ever, leaving us nothing to regret, but that equivocation, duplicity, and inconsistency, which must always, more or less, attach to every man who ventures from the virtue and independence of private life, or dignified station, to canvass for the popular favour, and, like St. Paul, attempt to be '*all things to all men.*' But, in the case of Mr. Jefferson, we have in his character a feature of consistency that is not always found in minor politicians—a strict adherence to his *own party fanaticism* up to the day of his death, varying only in the objects of his crimination, and changing from John Adams to Timothy Pickering, from Alexander

Hamilton to Oliver Wolcott. In this delirium of another 'Polish plot,' by which we were again to be brought under the dominion of a KING, he always was sure to repeat the *dream*, though he changed the characters and actors in the tragedy; and this, too, without seeming to be aware that the whole invention was the weak contrivance of emigrants from foreign countries, who possessed no other means of rising to importance, but on the waves of faction, and who kept themselves busy in fanning the embers of faction, in the hope of sharing the '*spoils*' which might attend any confusion in society, or revolution in the government; for that confusion and revolution were their objects, was demonstrated by facts,\* which it is wonderful should have escaped the penetration of Mr. Jefferson.

His motives for retirement were obviously to be discovered from the violence of party dissentions that now began to rage, which had even penetrated the cabinet, to place him in opposition to Hamilton; and which naturally brought his official duties in opposition to his individual feelings, who not only had the ear, but the *heart* and the judgment of Washington. Devoted with enthusiasm to the cause of the French Revolution; in principle a *democrat*, radically wedded to the very ultra doctrines of liberty; it was scarcely possible, that he should longer continue in a cabinet, whose love of rational freedom was tempered by reverence for law and subordination, and restrained by considerations of public virtue, human happiness, and national safety, under the auspices of Washington, entrenched behind the towering genius of Alexander Hamilton. The revolution in popular sentiment, which now daily threatened to leave Washington's administration in a *minority*, admonished Mr. Jefferson to make a timely escape from the cabinet, unless he desired to share the fate of its shipwreck; and as no congeniality of views bound him in fidelity to adhere to its ruined fortunes, policy, as well as feeling, suggested retirement as the only means of preserving his own honour and avoiding the supposed impending downfall of the administration. These motives for his retirement were perfectly consistent, judicious, and justifiable; and

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\* The insurrections that appeared in various sections of the Union, were instigated by foreigners, who appeared as their leaders and chiefs.

if they failed, as it respected the *calculation*, of the voice of popular opinion being in opposition to the illustrious patriot at the head of the nation, the error of the theory was rather to be ascribed to the pre-eminent virtue of the President, than to the misconception of public opinion in Mr. Jefferson; for it cannot admit of a doubt that the country and the government must have been shattered into a thousand fragments, by the violent collisions of party, but for the wisdom, the purity, the moderation, and the patriotism of George Washington; the excellence of whose character, while it arrested the current of democratic feeling for the time, and even caused it to ebb entirely, from its influence on the government, so as to admit his successor's election from the same school of modulated freedom; yet, when withdrawn, proved that the *virtue of the man*, rather than the force of public opinion, had been the means of averting that catastrophe, upon which Mr. Jefferson had grounded his resignation; and that the political sagacity of the latter only failed in point of time, and evinced no deficiency either in relation to principles or facts. Results finally attested to the unerring political foresight of Mr. Jefferson, as to the tendency of popular sentiment to the single point of democratic supremacy, by a tremendous and overwhelming majority. How far Mr. Jefferson co-operated to produce that result, after his retirement from the Washington cabinet, does not so clearly appear; but that he was not altogether inactive, and that he still continued to cherish a dislike of Washington, a mortal hatred of *Alexander Hamilton*, and the federalists generally, with, perhaps, some exception as to Washington, whom no man could really *hate*, will appear from the following letters, which can alone do justice to their great author, without abridgment or mutilation.

“TO JAMES MADISON.

“*Monticello, April 3, 1794.*

“DEAR SIR,—Our post having ceased to ride ever since the inoculation began in Richmond, till now, I received three days ago, and all together, your friendly favours of March 2, 9, 12, 14, and Colonel Monroe's of March 3 and 16. I have been particularly gratified by the receipt of the papers containing yours, and Smith's discussion of your regulating propositions. These debates had not been seen here but in a very short and mutilated form. I am at no

loss to ascribe Smith's speech to its true father. Every tittle of it is Hamilton's except the introduction. There is scarcely any thing there which I have not heard from him in our various private, though official discussions. The very turn of the arguments is the same, and others will see, as well as myself, that the style is Hamilton's. The sophistry is too fine, too ingenious, even to have been comprehended by Smith, much less devised by him. His reply shows that he did not understand his first speech; as its general inferiority proves its legitimacy, as evidently as it does the bastardy of the original. You know we had understood that Hamilton had prepared a counter report,\* and that some of his humble servants in the Senate were to move a reference to him in order to produce it. But, I suppose they thought it would have a better effect if fired off in the House of Representatives. I find the report, however, so fully justified, that the anxieties with which I left it are perfectly quieted. In this quarter, all espouse your propositions with ardour, and without a dissenting voice.

“The rumour of a declaration of war has given an opportunity of seeing, that the people here, though attentive to the loss of value of their produce in such an event, yet find in it a gratification of some other passions, and particularly of their *ancient*† hatred to Great Britain. Still, I hope it will not come to that; but that the proposition will be carried, and justice be done ourselves in a peaceable way. As to the guarantee of the French Islands, whatever doubts may be entertained of the moment at which we ought to interpose, yet I have no doubt but that we ought to interpose at a proper time, and declare both to England and France, that these islands are to rest with France, and that we will make a common cause with the latter for that object. As to the naval armament, the land armament, and the marine fortifications, which are in question with you; I have no doubt they will all be carried. Not that the *monocrats* and *papermen* in Congress want war; but they want armies and debts; and though we may hope that the sound part of Con-

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\* This letter alludes to the debate on Madison's resolutions of Free Trade, based on Jefferson's Report.

† We ought to read, and perhaps Mr. Jefferson meant, ANCIENT LOVE and recent hatred.

gress is now so augmented as to insure a majority in cases of general interest merely, yet I have always observed, that in questions of expense, *where members may hope either for offices or jobs for themselves or their friends*, some few will be debauched, and that is sufficient to turn the decision where a majority is, at most, but small. I have never seen a Philadelphia paper since I left it, till those you enclosed me; and I feel myself so thoroughly weaned from the interest I took in the proceedings there, while there, that I have never had a wish to see one, and believe that I never shall take another newspaper of any sort. I find my mind totally absorbed in my rural occupations.

“Accept sincere assurances of affection.

TH. JEFFERSON.”

In a letter of May 1, 1794, to Tench Coxe, he thus vents his indignation and hatred against KINGS and PRIESTS. “Your letters give a comfortable view of French affairs, and later events seem to confirm it. Over the foreign powers, I am convinced, they will triumph completely; and I cannot but hope that that triumph, and the consequent disgrace of the invading tyrants, is destined, in the order of events, to kindle the wrath of the people of Europe against those who have dared to embroil them in such wickedness, and to bring at length, kings, nobles and priests to the scaffolds which they have been so long deluging with human blood. I am still *warm whenever I think of these scoundrels*, though I do it as seldom as I can, preferring *infinitely to contemplate the tranquil growth of my lucerne and potatoes.*”

Having ‘contemplated the growth of his lucerne and potatoes,’ until he had gathered in his crop, Mr. Jefferson, in the *December* of the same year, again turned his attention to politics, and addressed to his friend, Mr. Madison, the following inflammatory and glowing epistle, causing him to forget the veneration due to the character of the great Washington, in the temporary heat kindled by the party passions of the day.

TO JAMES MADISON.

*Monticello, Dec. 28, 1794.*

Dear Sir, I have kept Mr. Jay’s letter a post or two, with an intention of considering attentively the observations

it contains; but I have really so little stomach for any thing of that kind, that I have not resolution enough even to endeavour to understand the observations. I therefore return the letter, not to delay your answer to it, and beg you, in answering for yourself, to assure him of my respects and thankful acceptance of Chalmers' Treatise, which I do not possess, and if you possess yourself of the scope of his reasoning, make any answer to it you please for me. If it had been on the rotation of my crops,\* I would have answered myself, lengthily perhaps, but certainly *con gusto*.

“The denunciation of the democratic societies is one of the extraordinary acts of boldness of which we have seen so many from the faction of monocrats. It is wonderful, indeed, that the *President*† should have permitted himself to be the organ of such an attack on the freedom of discussion, the freedom of writing, printing and publishing. It must be a matter of rare curiosity to get at the modifications of these rights proposed by them, and to see what line their ingenuity would draw between democratical societies, whose avowed object is the nourishment of the republican principles of our constitution, and the Society of the Cincinnatti, a *self-created one*, carving out for itself hereditary distinctions, lowering over our constitution eternally, meeting together in all parts of the Union periodically, with closed doors, accumulating a capital in their separate treasury, *corresponding secretly and regularly*, and of which society the very persons denouncing the democrats are themselves the fathers, founders, and high officers. Their sight must be perfectly dazzled by the glittering of crowns and coronets, not to see the extravagance of the proposition to suppress the friends of general freedom; while those who wish to confine that freedom to the few, are permitted to go on in their principles and prac-

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\* There seems to have been some little affectation in this air of extreme devotedness to *LUCERNE* and *POTATOES*, in the sage of Monticello!

† It is a subject for lamentation, as well as surprisè, that Jefferson should have permitted the slanders against the illustrious Washington to make any impression on his mind. But overheated ambition, and some gangrene of pride, must have engendered this letter; the whole of which is unworthy of the head and derogatory to the heart of the author of the Declaration of Independence.



tices. I here put out of sight the persons whose misbehaviour has been taken advantage of to slander the friends of popular rights; and I am happy to observe, that as far as the circle of my observation and information extends, every body has lost sight of them, and views the abstract attempt on their natural and constitutional rights in all its nakedness. I have never heard of a single expression or opinion which did not condemn it as an inexcusable aggression. And with respect to the *transactions*\* against the excise law, it appears to me that you are all swept away in the torrent of governmental opinions, or that we do not know what these transactions have been. We know of none which, according to the definitions of the law, have been any thing more than riotous. There was, indeed, a meeting to consult about a separation. But to consult on a question does not amount to a determination of that question in the affirmative, still less to the acting on such a determination; but we shall see, I suppose, what the *court* lawyers, and *courtly* judges, and would-be ambassadors will make of it. *The excise law is an infernal one.* The first error was to admit it by the Constitution; the second to act on that admission; the third and last will be to make it the instrument of dismembering the Union, and setting us all afloat to choose what part of it we will adhere to. The information of our militia, returned from the westward, is uniform, that though the people there let them pass quietly, they were objects of their laughter, not of their fear; that one thousand men could have cut off their whole force in a thousand places of the Allegany; that their detestation of the excise law is universal, and has now associated to it a detestation of the government; and that separation, which perhaps was a very distant and problematical event, is *now near, and certain, and determined in the mind of every man.* I expected to have seen some justification of arming one part of the society against another; of declaring a civil war the moment before the meeting of

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\* The term 'TRANSACTIONS,' here given by Mr. J. to the atrocious *INSURRECTIONS* that prevailed in the western counties of Pennsylvania, is not calculated to add to the lustre of his reputation, or increase our esteem for his character; and we cannot but sincerely wish that this letter had never seen the light; still it was due to truth to represent him as he truly was, 'nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice.'

that body, which has the sole right of declaring war; of being so patient of the kicks and scoffs of our enemies, and rising at a feather against our friends; of adding a million to the public debt, and deriding us with recommendations to pay it if we can, &c. &c. But the part of the speech which was to be taken as a justification of the armament, reminded me of Parson Saunder's demonstration why *minus* into *minus* makes *plus*. After a parcel of shreds of stuff from Æsops' Fables and Tom Thumb, he jumps all at once into his *ergo, minus* multiplied into minus makes *plus*. Just so the fifteen thousand men enter after the fables in the speech."

"However, the time is coming when we shall fetch up the leeway of our vessel.\* The changes in your house, I see, are going on for the better, and even the Augean herd over your head† are slowly purging off their impurities. Hold on, then, my dear friend, that we may not shipwreck in the meanwhile. I do not see, in the minds of those with whom I converse, a greater affliction than the fear of your retirement; but this must not be, unless to a more splendid and more efficacious post. There I should rejoice to see you; I hope I may say, I shall rejoice to see you. I have long had much in my mind to say to you on that subject; but double delicacies have kept me silent. I ought perhaps, to say, while I would not give up my own retirement for the empire of the universe, how I can justify wishing one, whose happiness I have so much at heart as yours, to take the front of the battle *which is fighting for MY SECURITY*. This would be easy enough to be done, but not at the heel of a lengthy epistle." Adieu.

TH: JEFFERSON.

This is what Mr. Jefferson called a state of retirement from political affairs; and which his biographers have called a devotion to the tranquil pursuits of agriculture!

At Monticello, Mr. Jefferson, like all southern gentlemen, displayed a hospitality commensurate to his former public station, and his elegant private fortune. Among others, whom curiosity attracted to his mansion, was the

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\* This is rather a curious commentary upon 'the contemplation of lucerne and potatoes!!!'

† The SENATE.

celebrated French traveller, the Duke de Liancourt, who thus describes the sage and politician of Monticello: "His conversation is of the most agreeable kind, and he possesses a stock of information not inferior to that of any other man. In Europe he would hold a distinguished rank among men of letters, and as such he has already appeared there. At present he is employed with activity and perseverance in the management of his farms and buildings, and he orders, directs and pursues, in the minutest detail, every branch of business relating to them. The author of this sketch found him in the midst of harvest, from which the scorching heat of the sun does not prevent his attendance. His negroes are nourished, clothed, and treated as well as his white servants could be. As he cannot expect any assistance from the two small neighbouring towns, every article is made on his farm; his negroes are cabinet makers, carpenters, masons, bricklayers, &c. The children he employs in a nail manufactory, which yields already a considerable profit. The young and old negresses spin for the clothing of the rest. He animates them by rewards and distinctions; in fine, his superior mind directs the management of his domestic concerns with the same abilities, activity and regularity, which he evinced in the conduct of public affairs, and which he is calculated to display in every situation in life."

During the year 1795, Mr. Jefferson became more anxious, and of course more active, on the political arena, by correspondence with the leading republicans, who had assumed the attitude of opposition to the Washington administration; from what motives, and for what objects, history has no longer left open to doubt or conjecture. The father of his country had now progressed in his *second term* of office, accepted with painful reluctance, with an unalterable determination never to permit his name again to be used for that high station. *To secure the succession*, therefore, became an object of the highest importance to the two conflicting parties; the one headed by John Adams, then Vice President, and sustained by Alexander Hamilton, who, wielding the intellectual club of a giant, presented a shield of patriotism invulnerable to the shafts of calumny, and opposed a breast-plate of polished integrity, from which the weapons of malice, envy and opposition recoiled with a force fatal to his assailants. To this party stood opposed

a phalanx of republican patriots, equally devoted to their country, equally inflamed with ambition, but more enthusiastic and wild in their notions of liberty; and scarcely less distinguished by talents, genius and learning. At the head of this party stood, proudly pre-eminent, the subject of this biography, assisted by *James Madison, Aaron Burr, James Monroe, William B. Giles*, and others of inferior note, and less creditable reputation. The former party represented the monied influence, and comprehended the higher orders of society; law, divinity, medicine, commerce and agriculture, or the great landed interest; and from its inherent rigour, both physical and mental, assumed a moral force, which, in the usual course of human events, must have proved invincible to all extraneous assaults. On the adverse side, stood the less intelligent and more penurious people; those whose passions were easily inflamed by the cry of liberty, and whose indignation was promptly provoked by the suspicion of oppression, tyranny, or the unjust exercise of power. To this party, the *excise law*, and the *French revolution*, were objects easily understood, as composing the essence of tyranny on the one hand, and liberty on the other; and their leaders did not fail to apply the fire-brand, where they discovered the combustibles. But the vast moral influence of the character of Washington, arrested, for a time, the explosion of these inflammatory elements, and decided the victory in favour of that party which represented the wealth, intelligence, virtue and talent of the country, in a greater degree than did its clamorous and honest adversaries, who fancied they beheld equality of riches and pleasures in the promised gifts of *equal rights*, universal suffrage and democratical government; not reflecting, that, however ardently *candidates* for office may *profess* lenity, *officers* are compelled to observe *justice*; and that the *professions* of partisans to gain popular support, are never intended as a *rule of action*, for the incumbent, when invested with power.

It was upon this subject, of a *successor* to Washington, that Mr. Jefferson addressed the following letter to Mr. Madison; in which his *aversion* to public life is depicted in colours so strong and glowing, as to stagger belief how he could ever be persuaded to overcome *so invincible* a repugnance to its cares! This letter discloses more of the character of its great author, than could be furnished in a

volume of dissertation; and I, therefore, make no apology for its quotation, which, as it flows from his own lips, cannot be open to dispute.

TO JAMES MADISON.

*Monticello, April 27, 1795.*

“Dear Sir, Your letter of March the 23d, came to hand the 7th of April, and notwithstanding the urgent reasons for answering a part of it immediately, yet, as it mentioned that you would leave Philadelphia within a few days, I feared that the answer might pass you on the road. A letter from Philadelphia, by the last post, having announced to me your leaving that place the day preceding its date, I am in hopes this will find you in Orange. In mine, to which yours of March the 23d was an answer, I expressed my hope of the only change of position I ever wished to see you make, and I expressed it with entire sincerity, because there is not another person in the United States, who, being placed at the helm of our affairs, my mind would be so completely at rest for the fortune of our political bark, The wish, too, was pure and unmixed with any thing respecting myself personally.

“For as to myself, the subject had been thoroughly weighed and decided on, and my retirement from office had been meant from all office, high or low, without exception. I can say too, with truth, that the subject had not been presented to my mind by any vanity of my own. I knew myself and my fellow citizens, too well to have ever thought of it. But the idea was forced upon me by continual insinuations in the public papers, while I was in office. As all these came from a hostile quarter, I knew that their object was to poison the public mind as to my motives, when they were not able to charge me with facts. But the idea being once presented to me, my own quiet required that I should face it and examine it. I did so, thoroughly, and had no difficulty to see that every reason which had determined me to retire from the office I then held, operated more strongly against that which was insinuated to be my object. I decided then on those general grounds which could alone be present to my mind at that time, that is to say, reputation, tranquillity, labour; for as to public duty, it could not be a topic of consideration in my case. If these general considerations were sufficient to ground a firm resolution never

to permit myself to think of the office, or be thought of for it, the special ones which have supervened on my retirement, still more insuperably bar the door to it. My health is entirely broken down within the last eight months; my age requires that I should place my affairs in a clear state;\* these are sound, if taken care of, but capable of considerable dangers if longer neglected; and above all things, the delights I feel in the society of my family, and in the agricultural pursuits in which I am so eagerly engaged. The little spice of ambition which I had in my younger days,† has long since evaporated, and I set still less store by a posthumous than present name. In stating to you the heads of reasons which have produced my determination, I do not mean an opening for future discussion, *or that I may be reasoned out of it.* THE QUESTION IS FOREVER CLOSED WITH ME; *my sole object is to avail myself of the first opening ever given me from a friendly quarter,* (and I could not with decency do it before,) of preventing any division or loss of votes, which might be fatal to the republican interest. If that has any chance of prevailing, it must be by preventing the loss of a single vote, and by concentrating all its strength upon one object. Who this should be, is a question I can more freely discuss with any body than yourself. In this I painfully feel the loss of Monroe. Had he been here, I should have been at no loss for a channel through which to make myself understood, if I have been misunderstood by any body through the instrumentality of Mr. Fenno and his abettors.‡ I long to see you.

TH. JEFFERSON."

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\* Mr. Jefferson was then but 52 years old!!!

† AMBITION is the passion peculiar to age—VANITY to youth!

‡ Judge Marshall, in his life of Washington alludes to the establishment of a paper, by Mr. Jefferson, then Secretary of State, called the National Gazette, the leading articles of which, attacking Washington, Hamilton, and their measures, were alleged to flow from the pen of Jefferson himself! The journal in question was certainly devoted to Mr. Jefferson; but how far his pen, or opinions, entered into its columns, it is perhaps, at this period, impossible to ascertain. The imputation, at the present day, would convey little reproach, having become a common practice. If it were true of Mr. Jefferson, we can only remark, that less eminent for greatness, and less powerful in public veneration, than Washington; he might find it necessary, in coping with Hamilton and Adams, to employ the PRESS in their depreciation, and make use of its influence to sustain himself, even

There is much in this letter to excite enquiry and reflection. Is it possible, that Jefferson should have been so averse to the Presidency? Is it possible, that he would not quit his farm for the empire of the universe; and yet, a few years after, accept of the *Vice Presidency* of the United States. That Jefferson was a great man, cannot be doubted; but that he was also liable to the frailties of human nature, is here made too manifest to be doubted.

It is difficult to suppose, that Mr. Jefferson had no che-

at the expense of Washington. How far the practice is calculated to sap the foundations of liberty, is another question. Adams and Hamilton, 'the abettors of Fenno,' on their part, resorted to the same means of aggression and defence, and employed the press against Mr. Jefferson.

His employment of CALLENDER, an impoverished Scotch adventurer, of some talents, but no character and principle, to traduce the reputation of Washington, has been denied by some and extenuated by others; but enough is known to dispel all doubt of the agency of Mr. Jefferson in this unfortunate transaction; an agency which we cannot but deplore, as it exposes one of those frailties of a great mind, which so often interposes between the reach of perfection, to which genius so naturally aspires, to arrest admiration from turning to IDOLATRY; and to chequer humanity with some traits of its native imperfection. It must be allowed, as some atonement for his transgression, that Mr. Jefferson lived to lavish unbounded encomiums on the father of his country; and to confess that his great virtues extorted the homage of the world, and excited the admiration and applause of all parties. In the same manner, his employment of FRENEAU for the same purpose, he has fully admitted in his 'ANAS,' where he says, speaking of an interview with Washington, "He adverted to a piece in Freneau's paper of yesterday; he said he despised all their attacks on him personally, but that there never had been an act of the government, not meaning in the executive line only, but in any line, which that paper had not abused. He had also marked the word republic thus (V) where it was applied to the French republic. He was evidently sore and warm, and I took his intention to be that I should interpose in some way with Freneau, perhaps withdraw his appointment of translating clerk to my office. But I will not do it. HIS PAPER HAS SAVED OUR CONSTITUTION, which was galloping fast into monarchy, and has been checked by no one means so powerfully as by THAT PAPER. It is well and universally known, that it has been that paper which has checked the career of the monocrats; and the President, not sensible of the designs of the party, has not, with his usual good sense and sang froid, looked on the efforts and effects of this free press, and seen, that though some bad things have passed through it to the public, yet the good have preponderated immensely."

rished views of supreme power at this time, when the whole course of his retirement was marked by epistolary effusions of political rancour and bitterness, unequalled in the history of a politician of the 'higher order,' and which even tempted him to assail the character of the great and pure Washington, as an advocate of English monarchy; because he stood aloof from the intrigues of all parties, and disdained to tarnish his integrity by a collision with any faction—looking to his country, and his country only, as the idol of his adoration. In the following extract of a letter to 'Mazzei,' we have a lamentable instance of the wide difference that obtains between a *patriot statesman*, whose labours had contributed to *found* the institutions of his country, and the *partisan politician*, rankling under the triumph of rivals, and panting and fretting to get his foot on his enemies, as the stepping-stone to supreme power.

TO P. MAZZEI.

"MY DEAR FRIEND, *Monticello, April 24, 1796.*

"The aspect of our politics has wonderfully changed since you left us. In place of that noble love of liberty and republican government, which carried us triumphantly through the war, an Anglican monarchical and aristocratical party has sprung up, whose avowed object is to draw over us the substance, as they have already done the forms of the British government. The main body of our citizens, however, remain true to their republican principles; the whole landed interest is republican, and so is a great mass of talents. Against us are the *executive*, the judiciary, two out of three branches of the legislature, all the officers of the government, all who want to be officers, all timid men who prefer the calm of despotism to the boisterous sea of liberty, British merchants, and Americans trading on British capitals, speculators and holders in the banks and public funds, a contrivance invented for the purposes of corruption, and for assimilating us in all things to the rotten as well as the sound parts of the British model. It would give you a fever were I to name to you the apostates who have gone over to these heresies—men who were Samsons in the field, and Solomons in the council, but who have had their heads shorn by the harlot—England. In short, we are likely to preserve the liberty we have obtained only by unremitting labours and perils. But we shall preserve it; and our mass of



weight and wealth on the good side is so great, as to leave no danger that force will ever be attempted against us. We have only to awake and snap the Lilliputian cords with which they have been entangling us during the first sleep which succeeded our labours. I begin to feel the effects of age. My health has suddenly broken down, with symptoms which give me to believe, I shall not have much to encounter of the *tedium vitæ*. While it remains, however, my heart will be warm in its friendships, and among these, will always foster the affections, with which I am, dear Sir, your friend and servant,

TH. JEFFERSON."

What motive could induce Mr. Jefferson to brand George Washington, the *Executive*, as a *Monarchist*, it is difficult to conceive. Washington! the father of his country!—The soldier who had achieved our independence through a seven years war!—the patriot, who had ever stood aloof from power—the statesman, who had assisted to frame, and who carried into practice, the free Constitution of the United States!—the *REPUBLICAN*, who had established the *precedent*, which corrected the *unlimited* duration of the eligibility of the President to office—who had rejected all recompense for his public services, and who had now spent a life in the field and in the cabinet, devoted to the welfare and liberties of his country!! It was utterly impossible that Mr. Jefferson should *believe*, what he here alleged—then why allege it? Washington did not stand in his way—and if he did, he could not remove him. Did he envy him his *future glory*? He could not tarnish, much less diminish its lustre, by an unfounded imputation!—Then, why prefer a charge, which few would tolerate, and none would believe? To gratify feeling—to create a fancied superiority for his own principles—and *to be highest*, not as a *patriot*—not as a *statesman*—not as an *American*—but to be highest, as the enthusiastic champion of universal liberty, who would tolerate nothing short of the emancipation of every people; and that the United States should, like *Don Quixotte*, buckle on her armour, mount her Rosinante, and set out to liberate all mankind, and slay all kings, or perish in the attempt! But the best apology for this letter is, that the writer *never* designed it to be published; and that, however frail may have been *the feelings of his heart*, his head was too strong to

permit him to divulge their unrighteous wanderings, except to the bosom of undivulgable friendship!

While I note these spots on the sun of Mr. Jefferson's greatness, I feel bound to observe, that the line of distinction is a broad and distinct one, which separates the true glory of the beneficial actions of one of the founders of the Republic, from the partisan blemishes, occasioned by the heats, animosities, and rivalry of the *politician*, who appeals to the current prejudices of the people, to wean their affections from a competitor, or court them to himself: nor does this last trait of character, demand that severity of censure, or warrant that acerbity of denunciation, which we are too much disposed to fall into, when we pass judgment upon the deeds of men made illustrious by their talents, and immortal by their virtues. In proof of this course being dictated by reason and propriety, we have only to reflect, that the *very measures* which Mr. Jefferson had made the pretext for the denunciation of Washington, he had himself sanctioned and approved: he admitted the *Excise law* to be *Constitutional*—he had concurred in and sanctioned the *Proclamation of Neutrality*—he had, with his own pen, eloquently resented the insults and indignities offered to the American Republic by the audacious Genet: nor is there reason to believe, that he opposed the treaty of Mr. Jay, until he thought he discovered in the mass of the people, a dislike to it, which presented him with a prospect of an available fund of popularity, at a season auspicious to his *ambition*; for that he was ambitious, every syllable of *humility* that falls from his lips, gives incontestible assurance. Of little avail would have been his character, and his talents to his country, had he not been so. It was this ambition, which, in moments of depression, caused him to look with a jaundiced eye upon the peerless lustre of the true glory of Washington; and to exclaim in despite of his better reason—"Oh! Sun! I hate thy beams!" This, however, was but the evil spirit of the moment—it quickly passed away, and left his mind to the calm control of more benevolent feelings, and juster thoughts!

There was one feature of the policy of *Washington*, however, in which *Jefferson* never could agree, and that was the NATIONAL BANK; which he took every occasion to assail, and which there is reason to believe, constituted the chief cause of his growing dislike of Washington, as it was known to be

the sole one of his hatred of Alexander Hamilton. The following letter will tend to elucidate these points.

TO COLONEL MONROE.

“DEAR SIR,

*Monticello, June 12, 1796.*

“Congress have risen. You will have seen by their proceedings the truth of what I always observed to you; *that one man outweighs them all in influence over the people*, who have supported his judgment against their own and that of their representatives. Republicanism must lie on its oars; resign the vessel to its pilot, and themselves to the course he thinks best for them. I had always conjectured, from such facts as I could get hold of, that our public debt was increasing about a million of dollars a year. You will see by Gallatin’s speeches, that the thing is proved.\* You will see farther, that we are completely saddled and bridled, and that the BANK is so firmly mounted on us, that we must go where they will guide. They openly publish a resolution, that the national property being increased in value, they must by an increase of circulating medium furnish an adequate representation of it, and by further additions of active capital promote the enterprises of our merchants. It is supposed that the paper in circulation in and around Philadelphia, amounts to *twenty millions of dollars*, and that in the whole Union to one hundred millions. I think the last too high.”

Both these amounts were exaggerated far beyond their possible limits. This letter to Colonel Monroe, is dated June 12. On the 19th of the same month, and same year, he addressed a letter to *General Washington*, denying the publication of the *Interrogatories* put to the Cabinet on the

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\* Mr. J. here again declaims as a partisan, instead of reasoning as a statesman. The anti-federalists opposed taxes and imposts, to discharge the expenses of government; and yet complained that the public debt was augmented! How could it be otherwise, when the public revenue was deficient. Who caused that deficiency? The anti-federalists! Yet, in a letter to Washington, dated Paris, Dec. 4, 1788, he says: “Calculation has convinced me, that circumstances may arise, and probably will arise, wherein all the resources of taxation will be necessary for the safety of the State. For, although I am decidedly of opinion, we should take no part in European quarrels, but cultivate peace and commerce with all, yet who can avoid seeing the source of war in the tyranny of those nations, who deprive us of the natural right of trading with our neighbour.”

occasion of *Genet's reception*, and which had appeared in *Bache's Aurora*, then the assailing journal on the WASHINGTON CABINET. In this letter, Mr. Jefferson says, "I learn that this last person [General H. Lee!] has thought it worth his while to try to sow tares between you and me, by representing me as still engaged in the bustle of politics, and in turbulence and intrigue against the government. I never believed for a moment that this could make any impression on you, or that your knowledge of me would not outweigh the slander of an intriguer, dirtily employed in sifting the conversations of my table, where alone he could hear of me; and seeking to atone for his sins against you, by sins against another, who had never done him any other injury than that of declining his confidence. *Political conversations I really dislike*, and therefore avoid where I can without *affectation*."

We have seen, however, that Mr. Jefferson had not an equal dislike to *political correspondence*; and that his free denunciation of Washington, and his cabinet, *under his pen*, were not intended to be embraced in his denial of attacking the government in his conversations. He appeared, therefore, to the face of Washington as a friend, and behind his back as an enemy. Some organic frailty of his constitution, in the moral courage of his mind, must have led to this trait of inconsistency. Thus, only *three weeks* after his friendly letter to General Washington, we find him writing to Monroe in the following terms:—

"Monticello, July 10, 1796.

"DEAR SIR,—The campaign of Congress has closed. Though the Anglomen have, in the end, got their treaty through, and so far have triumphed over the cause of republicanism, yet it has been to them a dear bought victory: it has given the most radical shock to their party which it has ever received: and there is no doubt, they would be glad to be replaced on the ground they possessed the instant before Jay's nomination extraordinary. They see that nothing can support them but the *colossus of the President's merits with the PEOPLE*; and the moment he retires, that his successor, if a monarch,\* will be overborne by the republican sense of his constituents; if a republican, he will of course give fair play to that sense, and lead things into the channel of

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\* The party attached to the National Bank, and the Funded System!

harmony, between the governors and governed. *In the mean time, patience.*”

“Most assiduous court is paid to Patrick Henry. He has been offered every thing which they knew he would not accept. Some impression is thought to be made, but we do not believe it is radical. If they thought they could count upon him, they would run him for their Vice-President; their first object being to produce a schism in this State. As it is, they will run Mr. Pinckney; in which they regard his Southern position rather than his principles. Mr. Jay, and his advocate Camillus, are completely treaty-foundered.”

Enough has now been cited, from Mr. Jefferson's letters, to show, that however religiously he might be devoted to the culture of ‘lucerne and potatoes,’ that he found ample leisure, amidst all his avocations of building, planting, reading, science, philosophy and rustic pleasures, to not only attend to the passing events of the political world, but to interpose his voice and his pen in deciding their tendency, and controlling their movements. There is contained in the letter just quoted enough to prove him not only a close observer, but a *consummate actor in the finesse and secret management of the day*; and it is apparent that his mind now began to assume that texture of refined equivocation, which the habit of political intrigue and management so naturally engrafts upon it; leading step by step to that system of mental reservation, which reconciles the conscience to the loss of integrity, without shocking the sensibilities by the flagrant violation of veracity. If, up to the period of his retirement from the office of Secretary of State, he retained the bold and single front of undissembled honesty, ‘wearing his heart upon his sleeve.’ which may reasonably be doubted, from the current stories of the day, he soon found it necessary to his purpose, of rising to the supreme station in the government, to profess to one set of men an attachment, which he either did not feel, or could not, consistently with his interest, avow to another; and which naturally begat that duplicity which he afterwards carried to such extreme refinement. The first attempt of the intrigue to prostrate Hamilton and Adams, no doubt comprehended the person and character of WASHINGTON, who was also to be immolated on the bloody altar of French liberty; but being foiled in this attempt, the

*father of his country* being found too deeply enshrined in the hearts of a virtuous people, the circle of proscription was narrowed down; and while *Washington* was left to the grandeur of his towering virtues, unapproachable to malice, envy, ambition or crime, Adams and Hamilton were specially selected as the victims to popular vengeance, under the *sapping and mining system of intrigue, insinuation and newspaper detraction*, of the charge of BRITISH INFLUENCE, MONARCHICAL PRINCIPLES and TREASONABLE PROJECTS, charges as baseless as the winds, and which never would have found breath to utter them, but for the ambition of those who, under the plea of agricultural pursuits in unbroken retirement, panted to gain the high places, which were never to be reached but by the most profound system of intrigue, deception and management, or the most adroit appeals to the popular passions, to objects of visionary oppression, or fanciful equality of rights, possessions and privileges.

It was manifest to the most superficial observation, that the grounds of opposition assumed by the party headed by Jefferson, were generally untenable and fallacious; and the simple interrogation of 'what has *French liberty* to do with *American policy*?' at once exploded the illusion of *exclusive republicanism* in the opponents of Washington. American liberty was settled forever by the CONSTITUTION and the DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE; and Mr. Jefferson himself had been a party to the *establishment* of that *national policy*, which the first President had devised and executed, under the masterly co-operation of General Hamilton; which policy was based on the *natural interests of the whole Union*, resolvable into commerce, agriculture and manufactures; peace with all nations, and entangling alliances with none: which policy every year's experience confirmed and settled deeper and deeper into the vitals of the country, as the natural and never to be exploded system which was essential to the prosperity, growth, independence and power of the nation; and, even up to the present time, has continued entire and unbroken, a monument of the united wisdom and patriotism of Washington; and a test of the fallacy of all those grounds of party opposition, which, when triumphant, never ventured to remove one stone of that glorious edifice of our prosperity; which, through all the revolutions of factions, all the storms of

party, all the fierce contentions of rival candidates, has REMAINED THE SAME; a standing rebuke to parties, and a historical lesson to the people, warning them against those dissensions, which render the *multitude mad*, in order that a *few* may make their fortunes out of their fevers and their folly; and which, like Cromwell, only shouts liberty to gain *power*, and cants of *reform*, that it may more successfully practice corruption.

One *apparent* exception only is to be found in this practice of *federal policy* by Mr. Jefferson, and his democratic successors; and that is the BANK OF THE UNITED STATES. This is only an *apparent* exception, for Mr. Madison raised the reputed monster from its ashes, with limbs enlarged to gigantic measurement, and we have lived to see *democratic majorities* in both Houses of Congress, give it their sanction as a part of the settled policy of the country. The same observation will extend to the FUNDING SYSTEM, and EXCISE, which, under the democratic administration of the *immediate successor* of Mr. Jefferson, rose to a colossal size, unknown in the times of the federal '*monocrat*,' and which could not have failed to awaken the terrors of Hamilton himself, for the permanency and purity of free institutions!

Even on the question of the bank, Mr. Jefferson had, from want of moral courage, manifested a doubtfulness and indecision in the concluding sentence, where he recommends that the President should acquiesce in the opinion of Congress, which was far from making this institution an essential object of *exclusion* to the republican creed; especially, when contrasted with his favourite position, that every branch of government was equally a judge of the unconstitutionality of a law; and bound to *veto*, or *enforce* it accordingly! Placed at the head of the nation to *preserve the Constitution*, as well as execute the laws, it was certainly the duty of the President to act on his own exclusive responsibility; and it was the duty of the *Secretary of State* to abide by his own opinion, and to recommend the Executive to the same course, without reference to any *balancing* between *two opinions*, or any sacrifice of duty to Congress; which, after all, reduced his famous report almost to a mere *petitio principii*.

Mr. Jefferson, however, was destined to rise to the Presidency; and he had a pre-sentiment that the immediate

successor of Washington, presuming too far on *public opinion*, would cause a reaction in the people, and open the path to his ambition, and, properly regulated, it was certainly a laudable ambition. Hence his advice to Monroe, ‘*in the meantime patience,*’ let Washington, too colossal with the people to be touched, pass away; and then we will struggle with his successors for the victory!

Washington, having declined a re-election, and published his incomparable *valedictory* to the people of the United States, the two contending parties rallied with great zeal and warmth upon their separate candidates, the federalists uniting upon *John Adams*, and the anti-federalists upon Mr. JEFFERSON! It is well known, that under the Constitution, at that period, the highest on the return was chosen President, and the lowest became Vice President; Mr. Adams was returned for the first, and Mr. Jefferson for the second, or *Vice Presidency*.

It will be a matter of curiosity to know what Mr. Jefferson *said* upon this occasion; for we can hardly expect to ascertain what he *thought*, though we may conjecture without much deviation from the truth; and it will also be matter of instructive curiosity, to ascertain how he *conducted* himself on this occasion. His first letter was addressed to his *successful competitor*, rejoicing in his victory!

TO JOHN ADAMS.

“DEAR SIR,

*Monticello, Dec. 28, 1796.*

The public, and the public papers, have been much occupied lately in placing us in a point of opposition to each other.\* I confidently trust we have felt less of it ourselves! In the retired canton where I live, we know little of what is passing. Our last information from Philadelphia is of the 16th inst. At that date the issue of the late election seems not to have been known as a matter of fact. With me, however, its issue was never doubted. I knew the impossibility of your losing a single vote north of the Delaware; and even if you should lose that of Pennsylvania in the mass, you would get enough south of it to make your election sure. I never, for a single moment, expected any other issue, and though I shall not be believed, yet it is not the less true,

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\* Mr. Jefferson prided himself in this opposition to the “Monarchists and Monocrats.”



that I never wished any other.\* My neighbours, as my compurgators, could aver this fact, as seeing my occupations and my attachment to them. It is possible, indeed, that even you may be *cheated of your succession by a trick worthy the subtlety of your arch friend of New York*, who has been able to make of your real friends, tools for defeating their and your just wishes. Probably, however, he will be disappointed as to you; and my inclinations put me out of his reach. I leave to others the sublime delights of riding in the storm, better pleased with sound sleep and a warmer birth below it, encircled with the society of my neighbours, friends, and fellow labourers of the earth, rather than with spies and sycophants. Still, I shall value highly the share I may have had in the late vote, as a measure of the share I hold in the esteem of my fellow citizens. In this point of view, a few votes less are but little sensible, while a few more would have been in their effect very sensible and oppressive to me. I have no ambition to govern men. It is a painful and thankless office. And never since the day you signed the treaty of Paris, has our horizon been so overcast. I devoutly wish you may be able to shun for us this war, which will destroy our agriculture, commerce and credit. If you do, the glory will be all your own. And that your administration may be filled with glory and happiness to yourself, and advantage to us, is the sincere prayer of one, who, though in the course of our voyage, various little incidents have happened, or been contrived, to separate us, yet retains for you the solid esteem of the times when we were working for our independence, and sentiments of sincere respect and attachment.

TH. JEFFERSON.

The reader will ask for no comment on this letter. It is altogether unworthy of a great mind; and yet such was the *weakness* of the man who had a head to contrive a government for an empire, but wanted the moral courage to be *true even to his own party*, when addressing the *victorious chief* of that, to him, detested faction, the *monarchical Anglomen!*

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\* Here Mr. J. for want of a little moral courage, in which he was much deficient, makes a positive declaration of treachery to his own party! He then favoured the success of "Monarchists and Monocrats."

I now turn to a letter written by him to James Madison, which throws a new light over the variable complexion of this extraordinary politician, and singular philosopher; and which so materially contributes to make up one of the most accomplished disciples of the great Florentine politician, that perhaps will ever flourish in this country.

“TO JAMES MADISON.

DEAR SIR,—Yours of December 19, is safely received. I never entertained a doubt of the event of the election. I knew that the eastern troops were trained in the schools of their town meetings, to sacrifice little differences of opinion to the solid advantages of operating in phalanx; and that the more free and moral agency of the other States would fully supply their deficiency. I had no expectation, indeed, that the vote would have approached so near an equality. It is difficult to obtain full credit to declarations of disinclination to honors, and most so with those who still remain in the world. But never was there a more solid unwillingness, founded on rigorous calculation, formed in the mind of any man short of peremptory refusal. No arguments, therefore, were necessary to reconcile me to a relinquishment of the first office, or acceptance of the second.\* *No motive could have induced me to undertake the first*, but that of putting our vessel upon her republican tack, and preventing her being driven too far to leeward of her true principles. And the second is the only office in the world about which I cannot decide in my own mind whether I would rather have it or not have it. Pride does not enter into the estimate. For I think with the Romans of old, that the general of to-day should be a common soldier to-morrow, if necessary. But as to Mr. Adams particularly, I could have no feelings which would revolt at being placed in a secondary station to him. I am his junior in life, I was his junior in Congress, his junior in the diplomatic line, and lately his junior in our civil government. I had written him the enclosed letter before the receipt of yours. I had intended it

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\* When Mr. Jefferson had ascertained that he had missed the Presidency, he seems to have set himself religiously at work, to convince every body that he not only did not expect it, but he was sure he could not obtain it—that he rejoiced in his miscarriage, and thought it misfortune enough to be *oppressed* with the VICE-PRESIDENCY!!!

for some time, but had put it off from time to time, *from the discouragement of despair to make him believe me sincere*. As the information by the last post does not make it necessary to change any thing in the letter, I enclose it, open for your perusal, as well that you may be possessed of the true state of dispositions between us, as that if there be any circumstance which might render its delivery ineligible, you may return it to me. If Mr. Adams could be induced to administer the government on its principles, quitting his bias for an English constitution, it would be worthy consideration whether it would not be for the *public good to come to a good understanding with him as to his future elections. He is the only sure barrier against Hamilton's getting in.*

“The Political Progress is a work of value, and of a singular complexion. The author's eye seems to be a natural achromatic, divesting every object of the glare of colour. The former work of the same title possessed the same kind of merit. They disgust one, indeed, by opening to his view the *ulcerated state of the human mind!!* But to cure an ulcer, you must go to the bottom of it, which no author does more radically than this. *The reflections into which it leads us are not very flattering to the human species.* In the whole animal kingdom, I recollect no family but man, *steadily and systematically* employed in the *destruction of itself*. Nor does what is called civilisation produce any other effect than to teach him to pursue the principle of the *bellum omnium in omnia*, on a greater scale, and, instead of the little contests between tribe and tribe, to comprehend all the quarters of the earth in the same work of destruction. If to this we add, that as to other animals, the lions and tygers are mere lambs compared with man as a destroyer, we must conclude that Nature has been able to find in man alone a sufficient barrier against the too great multiplication of other animals and of man himself, an equilibrating power against the fecundity of generation. While in making these observations, my situation points my attention to the welfare of man in the physical world, yours may perhaps present him as equally warring in the moral one. Adieu. Yours affectionately. TH. JEFFERSON.”

Mr. Jefferson being chosen Vice President, proceeded in February to Philadelphia, where he was sworn into office

on the 4th of March, 1797, when he took the chair as presiding officer of the Senate, to which body he delivered a brief but pertinent address, expressive of his attachment to the Constitution and laws of his country.

This event, however, was without any importance to the country, and had no influence on its policy; for, having taken the oath of office, and made his respects to the new President, he returned in July to Monticello, there to superintend the management of his plantation, indulge in the speculations of philosophy, or manage and stimulate the movements of political partisans, to the great final result of his elevation to the Presidential chair.

Mr. Jefferson abstained from any co-operation with Mr. Adams, as Vice President, because he considered his office as constitutionally confined to legislative functions, and was therefore debarred from executive consultations. But had he been disposed to a cordial concurrence with the Executive, the opinions of Mr. Adams were too diametrically opposite to those of Mr. Jefferson to have permitted of any co-operation. Mr. Jefferson seems, however, to have been disappointed that no overtures of this kind were made to him.\*

The agitation of war with France, caused by the aggravated spoliations of that power, during the session of Congress of 1797, caused Mr. Jefferson great excitement. Always opposited to war, his hatred of England caused him to regard a war with France as the last of national calamities. It will, however, always redound to his fame, that he advocated a *decided neutrality* with all the powers of Europe, although he appeared unable to divest his mind of the phantom of *English influence* over the American government, and to believe that that power possessed over us a ruinous *monopoly* of commerce, trade and feeling, as well as a monopoly of '*our banks and public funds.*' His extreme abhorrence of England caused him to look with a favoured eye upon the most outrageous spoliations, and degrading indignities from France; estimating those evils as preferable to what he imagined would be the more intolerable ones of a closer connection with Great Britain. There was something in his bitter dislike of England, indeed, which could

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\* See Letters to James Sullivan, Eldridge Gerry, General Gates, James Madison, and Colonel Burr, dated 1797.

not altogether be reconciled to the feelings of a magnanimous mind, which loses all sense of resentment, and buries in oblivion all remembrance of wrongs, when the battle is ended, and the hand of amity is extended in a mutual embrace with the generous pledge of 'forget and forgive.'

It was not made a point of concealment on the part of Mr. Jefferson, that from the moment he left the Cabinet of Washington, he had become a severe censurer of *all the measures* of government, sometimes exonerating but generally including the chief in his condemnation. Nothing pleased him; and he seemed resolved to be pleased with nothing. Secretly employed in fomenting discontent, and instigating to opposition, he yet professed to weep over the effects of party spirit, and to lament with grief of heart *that such things should be!* In a letter to Mr. Rutledge, of June 24, 1797, he thus bewails this heart-burning between former friends now changed into political enemies:—  
 "This is, indeed, (he says) a most humiliating state of things; but it commenced in 1793. Causes have been adding to causes, and effects accumulating on effects, from that time to this. We had in 1793 the most respectable character in the universe. What the neutral nations think of us now, I know not; but we are low indeed with the belligerents. Their kicks and cuffs prove their contempt. If we weather the present storm, I hope we shall avail ourselves of the calm of peace to place our foreign connections under a new and different arrangement. We must make the interest of every nation stand surety for their justice; and their own loss to follow injury to us, as effect follows its cause. As to every thing except commerce, we ought to divorce ourselves from them all. But this system would require time, temper, wisdom, and occasional sacrifice of interest; and how far all these will be ours, our children may see, but we shall not. *The passions are too high at present to be cooled in our day.*\* You and I have formerly

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\* It must be recollected that this moralising comes from the prime mover and instigator of those passions! It was Jefferson who originally fomented the feud and fever of the French revolutionary party; which has no more affinity to this country than those of Poland, Switzerland, or Ireland. The principle of liberty involved was never objected to by an American; but to make common cause with any country of Europe, struggling in the convulsions of a revolution, is

seen warm debates and high political passions. But gentlemen of different politics would then speak to each other, and separate the business of the Senate from that of society. It is not so now. Men who have been intimate all their lives, cross the streets to avoid meeting, and turn their heads another way, lest they should be obliged to touch their hats. This may do for young men, with whom passion is enjoyment. *But it is afflicting to peaceable minds. Tranquillity is the old man's milk.* I go to enjoy it in a few days, and to exchange the roar and tumult of bulls and bears, for the prattle of my grandchildren, and senile rest. Be these yours, my dear friend, through long years, with every other blessing, and the attachment of friends as warm." &c.

The newspapers, in the summer of 1797, having obtained a copy of his letter to 'MAZZEI,' in which he questioned the patriotism of Washington, and accused him of the design of *introducing a monarchy*, Mr. Jefferson became much agitated under the severity of the public indignation, which it naturally excited, and addressed a long letter, dated the 3d of August, to Mr. Madison, asking his advice, whether he should avow the letter, and incur the hostility of 'nine-tenths of the people,' with whom Washington was popular, or remain quiet, and stand a chance of escaping the odium and detestation of its calumnious sentiments. Speaking of this subject, he observes "Now it would be impossible for me to explain this publicly, without bringing on a *personal difference between General Washington and myself, which nothing before the publication of this letter has ever done. It would embroil me also with all those with whom his character is still popular;*\* that is to say, nine-

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what no sound patriot or genuine statesman can advocate. Yet was this the ground of dissention, which fomented parties to the excess so pathetically deplored by Mr. Jefferson!

\* Mr. Jefferson here speaks of the character of Washington, as if it had been impaired, and his popularity diminished by some act of a vicious or censurable nature:—"with whom his character is still popular." It would be difficult to find any of the people with whom he was not at all times popular. Demagogues and candidates for office are the sole exceptions. It was certainly a daring scheme to attempt to obtain the Presidency by the destruction of the character of GEORGE WASHINGTON, by a SECRET system of insinuation and slander, imputing the most detestable treasons to the purest and noblest of mortals!

tenths of the people of the United States, and *what good would be obtained by avowing the letter*, with the necessary explanations? Very little, indeed, in my opinion, to counterbalance a *good deal of harm.*"

At a date subsequent to this, September 1, 1797, in a letter to *Colonel Arthur Campbell*, he repeats *all* the substance of his letter to *Mazzei!!* He here terms the party of Washington 'old tories,' who aim to bring back the government to *Monarchy*, and whom he stigmatises as '*treacherous emissaries.*'

It is very extraordinary that Mr. Jefferson could never divest himself of a rankling envy of the fame of Washington. In a letter to Mr. Madison, dated Philadelphia, February 15, 1798, he says, 'A great ball is to be given here on the 22d, and in other great towns of the Union. This is, at least, very indelicate, and probably excites uneasy sensations in some. I see in it, however, this useful deduction, that the *birth days* which have been kept, have been, not those of the President, but of the General.' No, not of the general, but of the FATHER OF HIS COUNTRY. He now drew the cords of his correspondence closer with *General Gates*, in whose disappointed bosom rankled a congenial hatred of *George Washington!* In a letter to Mr. Madison, of March 2, 1798, he thus continues to vent his spleen against the saviour of our country. "The late BIRTH-NIGHT has certainly sown tares among the exclusive federalists. It has winnowed the grain from the chaff. The *sincerely* Adamites did not go. The *Washingtonians* went religiously, and took the secession of the others in high dudgeon. The one sect threatens to desert the levees, the other the parties. The Whigs went in number, to encourage the idea that the birth-nights, hitherto kept, had been for the *General*, and not the *President*; and of course that time would bring an end to them. Goodhue, Sedgwick, &c. did not attend; but the three Secretaries and Attorney General did."

It must forever excite astonishment, that Mr. Jefferson's envious feelings towards Washington, should have been so powerful as to blind his sagacity to the *intrinsic* greatness of that incomparable man, as to lead him to believe that his celebrity was owing to *birth-night balls*; and that an unworthy trick of the whigs, in attending those balls, could break down the colossal genius of a man who had

raised an empire from the dust and blood of a revolution of ragged soldiers, and an empty treasury! Yet such is the madness of party. Mr. Jefferson used the term '*whigs*' in contradistinction to the *Washingtonians*, whom he styled Tories; yet the *Washington whigs* were the men who urged the Declaration of Independence, fought knee deep in blood to gain it, and carried into *successful practice* a republican constitution to secure it. *Among these too*, ALEXANDER HAMILTON stood first, in proud pre-eminence, justly glorious.

The patriot will never cease to lament that Mr. Jefferson ever descended to the *arts of the politician* to secure a station which could not enhance his fame, and which has only served to embody, in historical evidence, the fallacy of all the charges which he ever adduced against his great rival; for the history of every democratic administration has been, eventually, a *mere imitation* of the federal policy of the father of his country!

Mr. Jefferson's letters to Mr. Madison now began to teem with exhortations to make a free and bold use of his pen in the public papers, in order to produce a favourable impression previous to the approaching elections; and to point out to him what subjects to touch with most advantage to the cause. How far Mr. Madison complied with these requests, it is not our business now to enquire.

The crisis of Mr. Adams's crimes and follies, and the fate of his administration, were now rapidly approaching; and as some idea may be formed of the progress of events at that time from the following letter, I quote it entire.

TO JAMES MADISON.

*Philadelphia, April 26, 1798.*

"Dear Sir—The bill for the *naval armament*, (twelve vessels) passed by a majority of about four to three in the House of Representatives; all restrictions on the objects for which the vessels should be used were struck out. The bill for establishing a department of Secretary of the Navy, was tried yesterday, on its passage to the third reading, and prevailed by forty-seven against forty-one. It will be read the third time to-day. The *provisional army* of 20,000 men will meet some difficulty. It would surely be rejected, if our members were all here. Giles, Clopton, Cabell and Nicholas, have gone, and Clay goes to-morrow. He received here news of the death of his wife. Parker



has completely gone over to the war party. In this state of things they will carry what they please. One of the war party, in a fit of unguarded passion, declared some time ago they would pass a citizen bill, an *ALIEN bill*, and a *SEDITION BILL*: accordingly, some days ago, Coit laid a motion on the table of the House of Representatives, for modifying the citizen law. Their threats pointed at Gallatin,\* and it is believed they will endeavour to reach him by this bill. Yesterday Mr. Hillhouse laid on the table of the Senate, a motion for giving power to send away suspected aliens. This is understood to be meant for Volney and Collet. But it will not stop there, when it gets into a course of execution. There is now only wanting to accomplish the whole declaration before mentioned, a *SEDITION BILL*, which we shall certainly soon see proposed. The object of that is the suppression of the whig presses. *Bache's* has been particularly named.† That paper and also Carey's, totter for want of subscriptions. We should really exert ourselves to procure them; for, if these papers fall, republicanism will be entirely brow beaten. Carey's paper comes out three times a week, at five dollars. The meeting of the people which was called at New York, did nothing. It was found that the majority would be against the address. They therefore chose to circulate it individually. The committee of ways and means, have voted a land tax. An additional tax on salt, will certainly be proposed in the House, and probably prevail to some degree. The stoppage of interest on the public debt, will also, perhaps, be proposed, but not with effect. In the mean time, that paper cannot be sold. Hamilton is coming on as Senator from New York. There have been so much contrivance and combination, as to show there is some great object in hand. Troup, the District Judge of New York, resigns towards the close of the session of their Assembly. The appointment of Mr. Hobart, their Senator, to succeed

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\*In one of Mr. Jefferson's letters, he ascribes the origin of the tory party, to foreigners; whereas the anti-federalists were made up of foreigners; for instance, Gallatin, a Swiss—Callender, a Scot—Dallas, an Englishman—Duane, an Irishman—Tench Coxe, an Englishman—Blair M'Clenegan, an Irishman—with others, too numberless to mention.

† This paper was under the special patronage of Mr. Jefferson; and was notorious for its coarse calumnies against Washington and its ultra democracy of doctrine.

Troup, is not made by the President till after the Assembly had risen; otherwise, they would have chosen the Senator in place of Hobart. Jay then names Hamilton Senator, but not till a day or two before his own election as Governor was to come on, lest the unpopularity of the nomination should be in time to effect his own election. We shall see in what all this is to end; but surely in something. The popular movement in the eastern States is checked, as we expected, and war addresses are showering in from New Jersey, and the great trading towns. However, we still trust, that a nearer view of war and a land tax will oblige the great mass of the people to attend. At present, the war-hawks talk of Septemberising, deportation, and the examples for quelling sedition set by the French Executive. All the firmness of the human mind is now in a state of requisition."

It will, no doubt, startle the reader with some surprise to discover, that as far back as 1798, the democratic party contemplated a SECESSION of some of the *Southern States* from the UNION—that the proposition was made to Mr. *Jefferson*, and that he instantly frowned it into oblivion, and revolted with the just honour of patriotism from the suicidal thought. As the recent agitation of the same scheme has given it great importance, the opinions of Mr. *Jefferson* upon this question must excite an interest and curiosity, beyond those of any other man—more especially as *his authority* has been quoted with such entire confidence in favour of the doctrine of *Nullification*. And here, I cannot avoid expressing the delight with which I can again behold Mr. *Jefferson*, in the attitude of the patriot and the statesman, divested of the contaminating poison of party, his great mind self-poised on legitimate principles of constitutional liberty; and in all the substantial attributes of a federalist, approximating to the purity and grandeur of *Washington* himself. The following is the letter on the subject of *State secession*, which, with the *exception* of the commencement, relating to *Generals Washington* and *Hamilton*, does equal honour to the head and the heart of the author of the *Declaration of Independence*.

TO JOHN TAYLOR.

“*Philadelphia, June 1, 1798.*

“Mr. New showed me your letter on the subject of the patent, which gave me an opportunity of observing what you said as to the effect, with you of public proceedings,

and that it was not unwise now to estimate that *separate mass of Virginia and North Carolina*, WITH A VIEW TO THEIR SEPARATE EXISTENCE. It is true, that we are completely under the saddle of Massachusetts and Connecticut, and that they ride us very hard, cruelly insulting our feelings, as well as exhausting our strength and subsistence. Their natural friends, the three other eastern States, join them from a sort of family pride, and they have the art to divide certain other parts of the Union, so as to make use of them to govern the whole. This is not new: it is the old practice of despots, to use a part of the people to keep the rest in order. And those who have once got an ascendancy and possessed themselves of all the resources of the nation, their revenues and offices, have immense means for retaining their advantage. But our present situation is not a natural one.\* The republicans through every part of the Union say, that it was the irresistible influence and popularity of General Washington, played off by the cunning of Hamilton, which turned the government over to anti-republican hands, or *turned the republicans* chosen by the people into anti-republicans. He delivered it over to his successor in this state; and very untoward events since, improved with great artifice, have produced on the public mind the impressions we see. But still I repeat it, this is not the natural state. Time alone would bring round an order of things more correspondent to the sentiments of our constituents. But are there no events impending, which will do it within a few months? The crisis with England, the public and authentic avowal of sentiments hostile to the leading principles of our Constitution, the prospect of a war, in which we shall stand alone, land tax, stamp tax, increase of public debt, &c. Be this as it may, in every free and deliberating society, there must, from the nature of man, be opposite parties, and violent dissensions and discords; and one of these, for the most part, must prevail over the other for a longer or shorter time. Perhaps this party division is necessary, to induce each to watch and dilate to the people the proceedings of the other. *But if,*

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\*In respect to party-measures, such as the mad acts of John Adams, certainly not—but in respect to the NATIONAL POLICY, it certainly was, for Mr. Jefferson, Mr. Madison, Mr. Monroe, and J. Q. Adams, ALL continued to practise the SAME NATIONAL POLICY!

on a temporary superiority of the one party, the other is to resort to a SCISSION of the UNION, no federal government can ever exist. If to rid ourselves of the present rule of Massachusetts and Connecticut, WE BREAK THE UNION, will the evil end there? Suppose the New England States alone cut off, will our natures be changed? Are we not men still to the South of that, and with all the passions of men? Immediately we shall see a Pennsylvania and a Virginia party arise in the residuary confederacy, and the public mind will be distracted with the same party spirit. What a game too will the one party have in their hands, by eternally threatening the other, that unless they do so and so, they will join their northern neighbours. If we reduce our Union to Virginia and North Carolina, immediately the conflict will be established between the representatives of these two States, and they will end by breaking into their simple units. Seeing, therefore, that an association of men who will not quarrel with one another, is a thing which never yet existed, from the greatest confederacy of nations, down to a town meeting, or a vestry; seeing that we must have some body to quarrel with, I had rather keep our New England associates for that purpose, than to see our bickerings transferred to others. They are circumscribed within such narrow limits, and their population so full, that their numbers will ever be the minority; and they are marked like the Jews, with such a perversity of character, as to constitute, from that circumstance, the natural division of our parties. A little patience, and we shall see the reign of witches pass over, their spells dissolved, and the people recovering their true sight, restoring their government to its true principles. It is true, that in the mean time, we are suffering deeply in spirit, and incurring the horrors of a war, and long oppressions of enormous public debt. *But who can say WHAT WOULD BE THE EVILS OF A SCISSION, AND WHEN AND WHERE THEY WOULD END? BETTER KEEP TOGETHER AS WE ARE,* haul off from Europe as soon as we can, and from all attachments to any part of it; and if they show their power just sufficiently to hoop us together, it will be the happiest situation in which we can exist. If the game runs sometimes against us at home, we must have patience till luck turns, and then we shall have an opportunity of winning back the *principles* we have lost. For this is a game, where principles are the stake. Better luck, therefore, to us all," &c.

This letter is fraught with copious matter for reflection; and while it presents us with a vague and undefined picture of what Mr. Jefferson esteemed as the *opposites* of republican principles, it likewise manifests so much coincidence of opinion with what we may call the leading features of the *Washington policy*, as to leave a *doubt* on the mind, to which party the writer adhered, and which doubt is only solved by his inveterate and bitter prejudice against the New England States, and his unjust *sarcasm* against Washington's popularity, and Hamilton's cunning. It is conclusive, from this letter, as well as much other testimony to be found under the signature of Mr. Jefferson, that he *created a party* distinguished by no essential contrariety of principle from that of Washington, and marked by no vital diversity of practice, in order to gratify his envy of that towering man, and his vengeance of his powerful and brilliant rival, General Hamilton—so that when he was pushed to the extreme point, he found it hard to tell for what he was contending, but that he *was not President, and another was!* I do not now speak of that monstrous fungus of tyranny, which John Adams heaped upon the temple of the Washington policy, to break it down with the weight of the ALIEN and SEDITION LAWS, and which so justly hurled that infatuated man, from the pinnacle of power, into the gulf of public perdition and political infamy; but I speak of that *original and perpetuated policy* of Washington, which Mr. Jefferson, when elected to the Presidency was compelled finally to adopt—which, under his successor, Mr. Madison, became more emphatically confirmed, so that the difference between him and Alexander Hamilton totally vanished into 'thin air,' as no longer to be discernable; and which, under *James Monroe*, became the humble imitation of the GREAT FEDERAL SYSTEM, in theory, in practice, and in form.

In a letter of November 26, 1798, to John Taylor, Mr. Jefferson wishes it were possible to procure an amendment of the constitution, 'taking from the federal government the POWER OF BORROWING.' It is really wonderful that a statesman of his sagacity, should have suggested an alteration in the *organic law*, which would reduce the Union to a *non-combatant* in war, and a non-producer in peace! It was nothing short of a proposition to *dissolve the confederacy*.

To counterbalance the weakness of this suggestion, he

gives us a free and ample definition of his political creed, in a letter to Mr. Gerry, dated January 26, 1799, from which I make the following extract, with that pride which a republican admirer of Mr. Jefferson must always feel at the annunciation of principles that he reveres, and with that pleasure which is always enjoyed at the exaltation of the object of our regard.

“ In confutation of these, and all future calumnies, says Mr. J. by way of anticipation, I shall make to you a profession of my political faith; in confidence that you will consider every future imputation on me of a contrary complexion, as bearing on its front the mark of falsehood and calumny.

“ I do then, with a sincere zeal, wish an inviolable preservation of our present federal constitution, according to the true sense in which it was adopted by the States, that in which it was advocated by its friends, and not that which its enemies apprehended, who therefore became its enemies; and I am opposed to monarchising its features by the forms of its administration, with a view to conciliate a first transition to a President and Senate for life, and from that to an *hereditary tenure of these offices*, and thus to worm out the elective principle. I am for preserving to the States the powers not yielded by them to the Union, and to the Legislature of the Union its constitutional share in the division of powers; and I am not for transferring all the powers of the States to the general government, and all those of that government to the Executive branch. I am for a government rigorously frugal and simple, applying all the possible savings of the public revenue to the discharge of the national debt; and not for a multiplication of officers and salaries, merely to make partisans, and for increasing, by every device, the public debt, on the principle of its being a public blessing. I am for relying for internal defence, on our militia solely, till actual invasion, and for such a naval force only as may protect our coasts and harbours\* from such depredations as we have experienced;

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\* Mr. Jefferson, when elected President, attempted to carry this feature of his policy into practice; and the gun-boat system will forever remain on the page of history, as one of those inevitable abortions of capricious philosophy, and perverse politics, which results from the chimerical spirit of puritanical reform.

and not for a standing army in time of peace, which may overawe the public sentiment; nor for a navy, which by its own expenses and the eternal wars in which it will implicate us, will grind us with public burdens, and sink us under them. I am for free commerce with all nations; political connection with none; and little or no diplomatic establishment. And I am not for linking ourselves by new treaties with the quarrels of Europe; entering that field of slaughter to preserve their balance, or joining in the confederacy of Kings to war against the principles of liberty. I AM FOR FREEDOM OF RELIGION, *and against all manœuvres to bring about the legal ascendancy of one sect over another;* FOR FREEDOM OF THE PRESS, and against all violations of the constitution to silence by force, and not by reason, the complaints or criticisms, just or unjust, of our citizens, against the conduct of their agents. And I am for encouraging the progress of science in all its branches; and not for raising a hue and cry against the sacred name of philosophy, for awing the human mind by stories of raw-head and bloody bones, to a distrust of its own vision; and to repose implicitly on that of others; to go backwards instead of forwards to look for improvement; to believe that government, religion, morality, and every other science were in the highest perfection in ages of the darkest ignorance, and that nothing can ever be devised more perfect than what was established by our forefathers. To these, I will add, that I was a sincere well-wisher to the success of the French revolution, and still wish it may end in the establishment of a free and well ordered republic, but I have not been insensible under the atrocious depredations they have committed on our commerce. The first object of my heart is my own country. In that is embarked my family, my fortune and my own existence. I have not one farthing of interest, nor one fibre of attachment out of it, nor a single motive of preference of any one nation to another, but in proportion as they are more or less friendly to us. But, though deeply feeling the injuries of France, I did not think war the surest means of redressing them. I did believe that a mission, sincerely disposed to preserve peace, would obtain for us a peaceable and honourable settlement and retribution; and I appeal to you to say, whether this might not have been obtained, if either of your colleagues had been of the same sentiment with yourself."

He concludes, by assuring Mr. Gerry that he differs in no opinion from him, having even come to give his approbation and sanction to the *funding system!*

In a letter to Dr. Rush, of September 23, 1800, he thus speaks: 'they believe that any portion of power confided to me will be exerted in opposition to their schemes to found a CHURCH ESTABLISHMENT! and they believe rightly, *for I have sworn, upon the altar of God, ETERNAL HOSTILITY AGAINST EVERY FORM OF TYRANNY OVER THE MIND OF MAN.*'

We have now arrived at an important era in the life of Mr. Jefferson. The gross abuses and usurpations of Mr. Adams having caused a revulsion of public sentiment, Mr. Jefferson, as the candidate of the republican party for the Presidency, received seventy-three votes, and Mr. Adams, the federal candidate sixty-five. Mr. Burr, on the same ticket with Jefferson, received also seventy-three votes, *understandingly*, for the Vice Presidency; but this *equality*, according to the *then* clause of the constitution, brought the election into the House of Representatives; where, on the thirty-sixth ballot, and amidst unprecedented excitement, Mr. Jefferson was chosen President, and Colonel Burr became Vice President of the United States.

Mr. Jefferson was accordingly inducted into office on the 4th of March, 1801; and delivered his inaugural address to both Houses of Congress. In this celebrated paper, he repeats his political creed, as already recited in his letter to Mr. Gerry, accompanied by strong exhortations to the contending parties, to unite in harmonious efforts for the general good, *being all brethren of the same principle*; and exclaiming, 'WE ARE ALL REPUBLICANS, WE ARE ALL FEDERALISTS;' he appeared to view the discords of party as visionary in their objects, and as pernicious in their influence!! Whether his want of moral courage led him to thus conciliate the federal party; or whether he now acted from the honest consciousness of his heart, that when power was obtained, party hostility was no longer necessary, or useful, I shall leave to the reader to decide. The expression gave offence to all parties; the democrats thought it destroyed their merit; and the federalists deemed themselves insulted by the sophistry of a 'jesuit;' nor is it easy to perceive how a politician like Mr. Jefferson, who had been contending for the preservation of the republic from the jaws of a regal



party, Tories in principle and traitors in design, could so suddenly claim to belong to the *same school*; fraternise with monarchists and monocrats, and denounce the invidious distinctions of party, as inimical to the national safety, and derogatory to the national honour.

Whatever may have been the insincerity of Mr. Jefferson's party principles anterior to the election, it certainly manifested a magnanimous disposition, as well as a patriotic spirit, thus to proclaim the truth of a uniformity of free principles among the American people; and to deprecate those feuds and dissensions which arose from the unjust imputation of monarchical views, on the one hand, and jacobinical licentiousness on the other. To a philosophic mind, such as his undoubtedly was, it would appear as the climax of absurdity, to continue to wage a war of preposterous imputations, after the attainment of victory had resulted in the calm enjoyment of power, on his part, and the weaponless subjugation of his opponents, on the other. All motive for crimination was now removed; the *outs* had got in, and the dejected party were too sensibly prostrated to maintain resistance beyond the point of defeat. To clamour the old cant, in this state of serene enjoyment of authority, was not only impolitic but impracticable. The criminal career of Mr. Adams had cured itself; and as his measures had no foundation in the principles or constitution of the country, but violated both, it was but declaring what facts had proved, that the *American people*, who had rejected Mr. Adams, were *brethren of the same principle*; that they were all republicans and all federalists; all equally devoted to liberty, and all firmly attached to the UNION, the CONSTITUTION, and the INDEPENDENCE of the United States.

In a letter to Moses Robinson, of March 23, 1801, he thus expresses his opinions of the *two parties*, republicans and federalists: "When our fellow citizens examine the *real principles* of both parties, I think they will find *little to differ about*. I know, indeed, that there are some of their leaders who have so committed themselves, that pride, if no other passion, will prevent their coalescing. *We must be easy with them*. The eastern states will be the last to come over, on account of the dominion of the clergy, who had got a smell of *union between church and state*, and began to indulge reveries which can never be realised in the

present state of science. If, indeed, they could have prevailed on us to view all advances in science as dangerous innovations, and to look back to the opinions and practices of our forefathers, instead of looking forward for improvement, a promising ground-work would have been laid. But I am in hopes their good sense will dictate to them, that, since the mountain will not come to them, they had better go to the mountain; that they will find *their interest* in acquiescing in the liberty and science of their country; and that the Christian religion, when divested of the rags in which they have enveloped it, and brought to the original purity and simplicity of its benevolent institution, is a religion of all others most friendly to liberty, science, and the freest expansion of the human mind."

*Mr. Jefferson* having now become President, it is a natural enquiry to make, how far he corrected the abuses of his predecessor, and in what special objects his administration differed from that of George Washington. These particulars, *Mr. J.* himself, has detailed in a letter to *Nathaniel Macon*.

'Levees are done away:'—*but Mr. Madison revived them!*—'Communications are made by the President to Congress by MESSAGE, instead of being delivered in person; and no response is made to the messages.'—'The diplomatic establishment in Europe will be reduced to three ministers.'—'The compensations to collectors limited by act of Congress.'—'The ARMY is' undergoing a chaste reformation.'—'The navy will be reduced to the legal establishment.'—'Agencies in every department will be revised.'—ECONOMY to be the order of the day.'

Important questions of policy in relation to *removals* and *appointments* were now to be settled by the new President. He was anxious on the one hand to *heal* party wounds, and harmonize all differences; and on the other, he was still more anxious to appoint friends in the place of enemies. In this state of mind, he addressed the following letter

TO ELDRIDGE GERRY.

*Washington, March 29, 1801.*

"My Dear Sir—Your two letters of January the 15th, and February the 29th, came safely to hand, and I thank you for the history of a transaction which will ever be interesting in our affairs. It has been very precisely as I

had imagined. I thought, on your return, that if you had come forward boldly, and appealed to the public by a full statement, it would have had a great effect in your favour personally, and that of the republican cause then oppressed almost unto death. But I judged from a tact of the southern pulse. I suspect that of the north was different, and decided your conduct, and perhaps it has been as well. If the revolution of sentiment has been later, it has perhaps been not less sure. At length it has arrived. What with the natural current of opinion, which has been setting over to us for eighteen months, and the immense impetus which was given it from the 11th to the 17th of February, we may now say that the United States, from New York southwardly, are as unanimous in the principles of '76, as they were in '76. The only difference is, that the leaders who remain behind are more numerous and bolder than the apostles of toryism in '76. The reason is, that we are now justly more tolerant than we could safely have been then, circumstanced as we were. Your part of the Union, though as absolutely republican as ours, had drunk deeper of the delusion, and is therefore slower in recovering from it. The ægis of government, and the temples of religion and of justice, have all been prostituted there, to toll us back to the times when we burnt witches. But your people will rise again.\* They will awake like Samson from his sleep, and carry away the gates and posts of the city. You, my friend, are destined to rally them again under their former banners, and when called to the post, exercise it with firmness and with inflexible adherence to your own principles. The people will support you, notwithstanding the howlings of the ravenous crew from whose jaws they are escaping. *It will be a great blessing to our country, if we can once more restore harmony and social love among its citizens.* I confess, as to myself, it is almost the first object of my heart, and one to which I would sacrifice every thing but principle. WITH THE PEOPLE I have hopes of effecting it. But their CORYPHÆI are incurables. I expect little from them."

"I was not deluded by the eulogiums of the public pa-

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\* Let the reader contrast this picture of the people of New England, with that in a preceding letter, to John Jay, where they are painted as the JEWS of America, and the natural opponents of the people of the south.

pers in the first moments of change. If they could have continued to get all the *loaves and fishes*, that is, if I would have gone over to them, they would continue to eulogise. But I well knew that the moment that such removals should take place, as the justice of the preceding administration ought to have executed, their hue and cry would be set up, and they would take their old stand. I shall disregard that also. Mr. Adams's last appointments, when he knew he was naming counsellors and aids for me, and not for himself, I set aside as far as depends on me. Officers who have been guilty of gross *abuses of office*, such as marshalls packing juries, &c. I shall now remove, as my predecessor ought in justice to have done. The instances will be few, and governed *by strict rule*, not party passion. *The right of opinion shall suffer no invasion from me.* Those who have acted well have nothing to fear, however they may have differed from me in opinion; those who have done ill, however, have nothing to hope; nor shall I fail to do justice, lest it should be ascribed to that difference of opinion. A coalition of sentiments is not for the interest of the printers. They, like the clergy, live by the zeal they can kindle, and the schisms they can create. *It is contest of opinion in politics, as well as religion, which makes us take great interest in them, and bestow our money liberally on those who furnish aliment to our appetite.* The mild and simple principles of the Christian philosophy would produce too much calm, too much regularity of good, to extract from its disciples a support for a numerous priesthood, were they not to sophisticate it, ramify it, split it into hairs, and twist its texts till they cover the divine morality of its author with mysteries, and require a priesthood to explain them.\* The quakers seem to have discovered this. They have no priests, therefore no schisms. They judge of the text by the dictates of common sense and common morality. So the printers can never have us in a state of perfect rest and union of opinion. They would be no longer useful,

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\* If I can understand Mr. Jefferson, he accuses the priesthood of a crafty fraud, to extort a living from the over-heated zeal of infatuated bigots. Is this just, or liberal? He then compares **PRINTERS TO PRIESTS**, and charges them with the same crafty fraud!! Yet Mr. J. professed to espouse the liberty of the press, and to vindicate the freedom of religious opinions!!—both of which he here violates and denounces! Alas for poor human nature.

and would have to go to the plough.\* In the first moments of quietude which have succeeded the election, they seem to have aroused their *lying faculties* beyond their ordinary state, to *re-agitate* the public mind."

Three months after this, his appetite for harmony suddenly changed into a thirst for war, and he thus wrote to Gideon Granger, on the 3d of May, 1801—"I never dreamed that all opposition was to cease. *The clergy, who have missed their union with the State, the Anglomen who have missed their union with England, and the political adventurers who have lost the chance of swindling and plunder in the waste of public money, will never cease to bawl, on the breaking up of their sanctuary.*"

An important event in the political life of Mr. Jefferson now occurred. This was the acquisition of LOUISIANA, by purchase, *from France*; to accomplish which object, Mr. Monroe was commissioned, as minister extraordinary, with Chancellor Livingston, to proceed to *Paris*, and negotiate for the cession. The following letter to *General Gates*, who, being the enemy of Washington naturally became the friend of Jefferson, will display the feelings and views of the latter upon this occasion,

TO GENERAL GATES.

WASHINGTON, July 11, 1803.

"Dear General—I accept with pleasure, and with pleasure reciprocate your congratulations on the *acquisition of Louisiana*; for it is a subject of mutual congratulation, as it interests every man of the nation. The territory acquired, as it includes all the waters of the Missouri and Mississippi, has more than doubled the area of the United States, and the new part is not inferior to the old in soil, climate, productions, and important communications. If our legislature dispose of it with the wisdom we have a right to expect, they may make it the means of tempting all our Indians, on the east side of the Mississippi, to remove

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\* Would Mr. J. have ventured on this proscription of the freedom of the press prior to his election? We think not. He only hated the means by which he rose to power, when he felt himself no longer in need of its assistance:—a littleness of soul which we would hardly expect to find in one of his enlarged powers of intellect. But perhaps his hatred against the press was excited by its prostitution to ignorant mechanics, and its utter destitution of science, genius and literature!

to the *west*, and of condensing, instead of scattering, our population. I find our opposition is very willing to pluck feathers from Monroe, although not fond of sticking them into Livingston's coat. The truth is, both have a just portion of merit; and were it necessary, or proper, it would be shown that each has rendered peculiar services."

In another letter, to *Judge Breckenridge*, he thus follows up his ideas of exultation at this bright achievement of his administration:—"Objections are raising to the eastward against the vast extent of our boundaries, and propositions are made to exchange Louisiana, or a part of it, for the Floridas. But, as I have said, we shall get the Floridas without, and I would not give one inch of the waters of the Mississippi to any nation; because I see, in a light very important to our peace, the exclusive right to its navigation, and the admission of no nation into it, but as into the Potomac or Delaware, with our consent, and under our police. These federalists see in this acquisition the formation of a new confederacy, embracing all the waters of the Mississippi, on both sides of it, and a separation of its eastern waters from us."

One of the most efficient virtues, as well as chief beauties of the character of Mr. Jefferson, consisted in the simplicity of his mind, that influenced him to avoid ostentation, pomp, ceremony, and vain parade, and inclined him to give a preference to every *mode* of performing an action, which combined the greatest convenience, and avoided the least display. An application having been made to him by some of the citizens of Boston, in August, 1803; to ascertain the date of his birth, in order to *celebrate his birth-day*, he declined to communicate the information in a letter to *Levi Lincoln*, couched in the following words: "With respect to the day on which they wish to fix their anniversary, they may be told, that disapproving myself of transferring the honours and veneration for the great birth-day of our republic to any individual, or of dividing them with individuals, *I have declined letting my own birth-day be known, and have engaged my family not to communicate it. This has been the uniform answer to every application of the kind.*"

Here we behold a sacrifice of *personal vanity* TO PRINCIPLE, which is worthy of unqualified praise and admiration; which has few examples in history, and which is apt to be too little appreciated by the people.

His *Constitutional* integrity was equally striking. In a letter to Wilson C. Nicholas, he resisted all arguments to induce him to acquiesce in the *construction of the Constitution*, in order to bring Louisiana into the Union, contrary to his idea of procuring a special grant of power from the States, for that purpose. He says, "When an instrument admits two constructions, the one safe, the other dangerous, the one precise, the other indefinite, I prefer that which is safe and precise. I had rather ask an *enlargement of power from the nation*, where it is found necessary, than to *assume it by a construction which would make our powers boundless*. Our peculiar security is in the possession of a written Constitution. *Let us not make it a blank paper by construction*. I say the same as to the opinions of those who consider the grant of the treaty making power as boundless. If it is, then we have no Constitution. If it has bounds, they can be no others than the definitions of the powers which that instrument gives. It specifies and delineates the operations permitted to the federal government," &c. "I confess, then, I think it important, in the present case, to set an example against *broad construction*, by appealing for new power to the people."

In a note to Mr. Gallatin, directing a non-interference in the choice of directors for the *Branches of the Bank of the United States*, Mr. Jefferson expresses himself in the following manner: "From a passage in the letter of the President [of the Bank.] I observe an idea of establishing a branch bank of the United States in New Orleans. *This institution is one of the most deadly hostility existing against the principles and form of our Constitution. The nation is, at this time, so strong and united in its sentiments, that it cannot be shaken at this moment.* But suppose a series of untoward events should occur, sufficient to bring into doubt the competency of a republican government to meet a crisis of great danger, or to unhinge the confidence of the people in the public functionaries; an institution like this, penetrating by its branches every part of the Union, acting by command and in phalanx, may, in a critical moment, upset the government. I deem no government safe which is under the vassalage of any self-constituted authorities, or any other authority than that of the nation, or its regular functionaries. What an obstruction could not this bank of the United States, with all its branch banks, be in

time of war? It might dictate to us the peace we should accept, or withdraw its aids? Ought we, then, to give further growth to an institution so powerful, so hostile? That it is so hostile we know, *first*, from a knowledge of the principle of the persons composing the body of directors in every bank, principal, or branch, and those of most of the stockholders: *second*, from their opposition to the measures and principles of the government, and to the election of those friendly to them; and *third*, from the sentiments of the newspapers they support. Now, while we are strong, it is the greatest duty we owe to the safety of our Constitution, to bring this powerful enemy to a perfect subordination under its authorities. The first measure would be to reduce them to an equal footing only with other banks, as to the favours of the government. But, in order to be able to meet a general combination of the banks against us, in a critical emergency, could we not make a beginning towards an independent use of our own money towards holding our own bank in all the deposits where it is received, and letting the treasurer give his draft or note, for payment at any particular place, which, in a well conducted government, ought to have as much credit as any private draft, or bank note, or bill, and would give us the same facilities which we derive from the banks?"

His first term having nearly expired, Mr. Jefferson was again placed in nomination for a second period, and re-elected by an increased majority. In a letter to Mr. Gerry upon this subject, he expresses his feelings in the following terms: "I sincerely regret that the unbounded calumnies of the federal party have *obliged me* to throw myself on the *verdict of my country* for trial, my great desire having been to retire at the end of the present term, to a life of tranquillity; and it was my decided purpose when I entered into office. They force my continuance. If we can keep the vessel of State as steadily in her course for another four years, my earthly purposes will be accomplished, and I shall be free to enjoy, as you are doing, my family, my farm, and my books." When it is considered that Mr. Jefferson was a zealous and primitive dissenter from the unlimited re-eligibility of the executive; and that he espoused with ardour short terms of office, and had originally intended to hold the office but *four years*, it must be deeply lamented, that he suffered the clamour of enemies to



divert him from establishing a *precedent* of so much vital consequence to the purity and duration of our free institutions. The reasons he adduces for this dereliction are such as might with equal force be alleged for a continuance in the office for life. How much of real glory he lost, by missing this opportunity of putting the seal of sincerity, and the test of consistency on his original professions, can only be estimated by a full and just consideration of the difficulty attending the sacrifice of ambition to principle; of resisting the temptation of personal vanity, for the enduring future applause of mankind. Had he now retired, how perfect would have been his fame? How transcendent his patriotism! how pure his democracy! how dazzling the lustre of his renown!

In the spring of 1804, he suffered a heavy bereavement in the death of one of his daughters, Mrs. Eppes, which caused him much affliction. On this melancholy occasion, Mrs. John Adams, the wife of the Ex-President of that name, addressed him a letter of condolence, to which he responded in a spirit of cordiality and reconciliation with her husband: and which correspondence was afterwards continued, until it ended in a renewal of friendly communications with Mr. Adams himself. In his letters to Mrs. Adams, he entered fully into an explanation of all his conduct and measures, disclaiming all unfriendly feelings towards the Ex-President; making a full acknowledgment of *his integrity* of purpose, and resolving their long estrangement to mere *difference of opinion!* Upon this subject, it is worth while to quote a passage from one of September 11, 1804. "Both of our political parties, at least the honest part of them, *agree conscientiously in the same object, the PUBLIC GOOD:* but they differ essentially in what they deem the means of promoting that good." Thus conceding to Mr. Adams, what he had so often denied, *integrity and patriotism!*

Devoted to science, and at all times intent on improvements in literature and knowledge, as well as politics and government, Mr. Jefferson now projected the *expedition of Lewis and Clarke* to the Columbia river, for the purpose of exploring and ascertaining the geography, natural history, climate, riches, resources, and peculiarities of the *new purchase* of the Territory of Louisiana.

A schism among the more rigid republicans having oc-

curred in the party, Mr. Jefferson addressed a letter of vindication to Mr. Duane, dated March 22, 1806. John Randolph had raised the banner of opposition, under the plea of dereliction from the true faith. In his letter to Duane, Mr. Jefferson says: "In the first place, then, I have had less communication, directly, or indirectly, with the republicans of the *East* this session, than I ever had before. This has proceeded from accidental circumstances, not from design. And if there be any coolness between those of the *South* and myself, it has not been from me towards them. That Mr. R. has openly attacked the administration is sufficiently known. We were not disposed to join the league with Britain, under any belief that she is fighting for the liberties of mankind, and to enter into war with Spain, and consequently France. The House of Representatives were in the same sentiment, when they rejected Mr. R's resolutions for raising a body of regular troops for the western service. We are for a peaceable accommodation with all those nations, if it can be effected honourably. This, perhaps, is not the only ground of his alienation; but which side retains its orthodoxy, the vote of eighty-seven to eleven republicans, may satisfy you.

Another charge was discord in the cabinet. Mr. J. affirms that there existed *perfect harmony*.

Another was—'that there was an ostensible cabinet and a concealed one;' which Mr. J. denied!!

Another, that he had *denounced republicans as jacobins!* And that he would appoint none but MODERATES to office, of both parties! This he pronounced false and unfounded.

Another, that he patronised the expedition of MIRANDA! which he also pronounced false; yet adds—'To know as much of it as we could was our duty, but not to encourage it.\*'

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\* The practice of men elected in virtue of party violence, of throwing themselves into the arms of moderate men of both parties, as an atonement for their aggressions, and to conciliate their former opponents, is one of those traits of depraved policy, which the unprincipled and profligate politicians of all ages and countries, have acted on with impunity to themselves, and apparently without instructing the people in the wisdom of moderation, when espousing the cause of the hypocritical demagogues in whose behalf they are always so eager to enlist themselves. It was an indignant repudiation of such baseness which prompted Mr. Jefferson to reply to the letter of Duane; for, however he might have possessed those politic views which modulate the tone of the skilful statesman, on critical occasions, Mr.

On the 4th of May, 1806, he addressed a long letter to Mr. Monroe on the subject, in which he severely denounces JOHN RARDOLPH for having abandoned the party; that gentleman being a friend of Mr. Monroe, whom Mr. Jefferson conjures to cast him off.

The next important event of Jefferson's administration was the explosion of the conspiracy of AARON BUDR. In a letter to Mr. Bowdoin, of April 2, 1807, he thus speaks of this extraordinary event—"No better proof of the good faith of the United States could have been given, than the vigour with which we have acted, and the expense incurred, in suppressing the enterprize meditated lately by Burr, against Mexico. Although, at first, he proposed a separation of the western country, and on that ground received encouragement and aid from Yrujo, according to the usual spirit of his government towards us, yet he very early saw that the fidelity of the western country was not to be shaken, and turned himself wholly towards Mexico. And so popular is an enterprise on that country, in this, that we had only to lie still, and he would have had followers enough to have been in the city of Mexico in six weeks.

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Jefferson was never known to prove treacherous to his friends, or faithless to his adherents: and if he sometimes held out the hand of fellowship to the moderate men, of the federal party, it was rather with a view to conciliate them into his support, than to reward them with favours, or to advance them over the heads of his ancient and tried friends. In party fidelity, he never stopped half-way, or left his open and avowed friends, to sneak into corners, and hold intrigue with the moderators, who content themselves with whispering censure, and nodding and shaking the head, as a means of secret assassination, against those bold and fearless spirits, whose virtues they are too depraved to envy, and whose talents they are too stupid to appreciate. Party fidelity was a laudable trait in the character of Mr. Jefferson; and although he lived at a critical time, when the popular delusion of party receded before the daily demonstration of facts, that Presidents must be Presidents, no matter from what party they are elected; yet he maintained his republican integrity more than any other of his successors, who made party distinctions the cause of exclusive merit in their candidateship. He lived to see and to hear the federal party loud in his praise, and warm in his support; and yet never returned the compliment by patronage or encomiums. They were sincere and consistent, because they admired him for having finally embraced all the measures of federal policy; and he was honest, because he remained true to those who had originally sustained him through the storm and tempest of the conflict.

You have doubtless seen my several messages to Congress, which give a faithful narrative of that conspiracy. Burr, himself, after being disarmed, by our endeavours, of all his followers, escaped from the custody of the court of Mississippi, but was taken near Fort Stoddart, making his way to Mobile, by some country people, who brought him on as a prisoner to Richmond, where he is now under a course for trial."

Mr. Jefferson's eagerness to procure the infliction of punishment on Burr, for *treason*, is not exactly consistent with his own belief, that the *object* of Burr was Mexico, and not the dismemberment of the western States from the Union. In the progress of this trial, Mr. Jefferson suffered himself to become highly excited against *Chief Justice Marshall*, and the Supreme Court, and the federalists, whom he accused of an intention to shelter and protect Burr; but without any shadow of proof, or even probability. Mr. Jefferson, while he disclaimed all hatred of Burr, acknowledged that he had always cherished a prejudice against him; but there is no reason to believe that private enmity stimulated him to any additional zeal to prosecute this guilty man, when his *public duty* furnished such abundant motive to urge him to an assiduous prosecution of this mysterious and daring conspiracy, its actors, agents and instruments. In one of his letters to George Hay, he calls Burr an '*impudent federal bull-dog.*'

Having been invited by some officious and flattering friends, to undertake a *pilgrimage of popularity* through the Eastern States, Mr. Jefferson with that genuine and unaffected simplicity that at all times distinguished him from inferior men, and that true sense of personal dignity which revolts from being made a '*public spectacle*' for the curious to gaze at, positively declined the offer. He says, "I confess that I am not reconciled to the idea of a chief magistrate *parading himself* through the several States, as an object of public gaze, and in quest of an applause which, to be valuable, should be purely voluntary. *I had rather acquire silent good will* by a faithful discharge of my duties, than any expressions of it to my putting myself in the way of receiving them. As I have never yet seen the time when the public business would have permitted me to be so long in a situation in which I could not carry it on, so I have no reason to expect that such a time will come while I remain in office."

This is a severe satire on the practice of his successors, who found more time to *travel*, the more the public business increased upon their hands! A sure proof that the era of our public virtue has nearly passed away; and that the virtues of the men of the revolution, are not to be found in the breasts of their descendants.

A similar display of republican heroism he also made, on the subject of an application made to him, to appoint a day of *fasting and prayer*. In answer to this request, he observed: "I consider the government of the United States as interdicted by the Constitution from intermeddling with *religious institutions, their doctrines, discipline or exercises*. This results not only from the provision that no law shall be made respecting the establishment or free exercise of religion, but from that also which reserves to the States the powers not delegated to the United States. Certainly no power to prescribe any religious exercise, or to assume authority in religious discipline, has been delegated to the general government. It must then rest with the States, as far as it can be in any human authority. But it is only proposed that I should *recommend*, not prescribe, a day of fasting and prayer; that is, that I should *indirectly* assume to the United States an authority over religious exercises, which the Constitution has directly precluded them from. It must be meant, too, to be sanctioned by some penalty on those who disregard it; not indeed of fine and imprisonment, but of some degree of proscription, perhaps in public opinion. And does the change in the nature of the penalty make the recommendation the less a *law* of conduct for those to whom it is directed? I do not believe it is for the interest of religion to invite the civil magistrate to direct its exercises, its discipline, or its doctrines; nor of the religious societies, that the general government should be invested with the power of effecting any uniformity of time or matter among them. Fasting and prayer are religious exercises; the enjoining them an act of discipline. Every religious society has a right to determine for itself the times for these exercises, and the objects proper for them according to their own particular tenets; and this right can never be safer than in their own hands, where the Constitution has deposited it."

The operation of the *Berlin and Milan Decrees* on the part of France, and of the *Orders of Council* on the part of Great

*Britain*, now began to be felt as serious aggressions on the commerce and revenue of the United States. The licentious and preposterous doctrines of blockade, proclaimed by France, and the retaliation of so monstrous a violation of the laws of nations, by England, soon inflicted the most fatal wounds upon neutral commerce, insulting and degrading the national character, at the same time that it cut up its resources, plundered its wealth, and mutilated its marine: for impressment was added to robbery and confiscation, our flag being unable to protect the persons of our citizens from the power of insolent England, or secure their property from the rapacity of libertine France. Unhappily for this country and its national character, the feuds engendered by the collisions between those two countries among our citizens, during the French revolution, had enlisted the democratic and federal parties under the banners of the two European belligerents. It was known that Mr. Jefferson was partial to France and hated England; and as he always preferred peace to war, a disposition to negotiate for a redress of wrongs of this heinous character, was construed by some into a pusillanimous submission to the despotism of France; and by the adverse party, into a degrading acquiescence in the wrongs of England. The democrats called for a war with Great Britain; the federalists, and those who opposed French tyranny, called for a war against France. Mr. Jefferson desired peace, and disregarding the clamours of both, proceeded to negotiation. In a letter to Lafayette in 1807, he thus pictures our distressful and embarrassing situation:—"I enclose you a proclamation, which will show you the critical footing on which we stand at present with England. Never since the battle of Lexington, have I seen this country in such a state of exasperation as at present. And even that did not produce such unanimity. The federalists themselves coalesce with us as to the object, although they will return to their old trade of condemning every step we take towards obtaining it. 'Reparation for the past, and security for the future,' is our motto. Whether these will be yielded freely, or will require resort to non-intercourse, or to war, is yet to be seen. We have actually near two thousand men in the field, covering the exposed parts of the coast. and cutting off supplies from the British vessels."

The attack, at once wanton, cowardly, and insulting,

made on the frigate Chesapeake, by the British admiral; the Non-Importation Act; and finally, the *Embargo*—all premonished of a state of approaching hostilities: for, without displaying strength, they manifested weakness, as well as timidity, and exhibited a temper more disposed to endure insult, than redress wrong. At the same time, the violation of the laws of nations committed by France against *neutral commerce*, not being resented by the United States, England issued a retaliatory order of Council, prohibiting all commerce between America and the ports of her enemies in Europe, unless the merchandise was first landed in England, and the duties paid for re-exportation. The effect was total ruin to American commerce, which must thus become the certain prey, to one or the other of the belligerent powers. To save us from this gulf of ruin, Mr. Jefferson recommended, and Congress passed on the 22d December, 1807, an EMBARGO LAW.

This was the last important act of Mr. Jefferson's political life. His administration was now drawing to a close, after forty years of public service, and twenty of party turmoil. He had now attained the age of *sixty-five*, and if the enjoyment of power had not produced satiety, the charms of retirement must at least have promised the delight of novelty. His annual message to Congress this year, 1808, spoke of this event in a strain of unaffected modesty, dignified feeling, and patriotic eloquence every way creditable to his head and his heart. "Availing myself of this, the last occasion which will occur of addressing the two houses of the Legislature at their meeting, I cannot omit the expression of my sincere gratitude for the repeated proofs of confidence manifested to me by themselves and their predecessors, since my call to the administration, and the many indulgences experienced at their hands." The same grateful acknowledgments are due to my fellow citizens generally, whose support has been my great encouragement under all embarrassments. In the transaction of their business I cannot have escaped error—it is incident to our imperfect nature. But I may say with truth my errors have been of the understanding, not of intention, and that the advancement of their rights and interests has been the constant motive for every measure. On these considerations I solicit their indulgence. Looking forward with anxiety to their future destinies, I trust, that in their steady character, un-

shaken by difficulties, in their love of liberty, obedience to law, and support of public authorities, I see a sure guarantee of the permanence of our republic; and retiring from the charge of their affairs, I carry with me the consolation of a firm persuasion, that Heaven has in store for our beloved country, long ages to come of prosperity and happiness."

No administration of any President of the United States, has been so frequently, and so severely criticised as that of Mr. Jefferson; and it has received from his friends encomiums as extravagant, as it has from his opponents, censures unmeasured, bitter and unqualified. The truth, no doubt, lies between the reprobation of the one, and the flattery of the other. He tried to the fullest extent, the *experiment* of his *own policy*, and failed—signally and ingloriously failed. His *anti-naval* system exploded itself in the puerility of the gun-boat system; and his *Chinese policy*, or as it was sarcastically termed the '*terrapin policy*,' of withdrawing from all FOREIGN COMMERCE—of becoming *producers* without being *exporters*—fell, not less emphatically, and exploded in its own delusions. On other points, however, he established salutary precedents; especially in the articles of ECONOMY; a LIMITED DIPLOMATIC LIST; and an accelerated extinguishment of the public debt. At the same time, the Republic suffered indignities and disgrace, without atonement, that it had never before endured; among which was the *attack on the CHESAPEAKE*; and the insults and pillage of Napoleon, on our COMMERCE; to avoid which partial evil, Mr. Jefferson unwisely resorted to its *prostration by ourselves*, in preference to its plunder by the French. His natural want of courage, moral as well as physical, necessarily led to this suicidal policy. Still his administration, on the whole, was creditable and prosperous—and, though we were neither respected abroad, nor contented at home, yet we were prosperous and happy—the UNION was secure and firm—the States, with the exception of those of *New England*, were quiet; and the TREASURY was full. In what light his administration was viewed by his native State, under the influence of enthusiastic admiration, will appear from the following '*FAREWELL ADDRESS*' to him, which was agreed to by both houses of the VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE, February 7, 1809.

"SIR,—The General Assembly of your native State cannot close their session, without acknowledging your services



in the office which you are just about to lay down, and bidding you a respectful and affectionate farewell.

“ We have to thank you for the model of an administration conducted on the purest principles of republicanism; for pomp and state laid aside; patronage discarded; internal taxes abolished; a host of superfluous officers disbanded; the monarchic maxim, ‘ that a national debt is a national blessing,’ renounced, and more than THIRTY-THREE MILLIONS of our debt discharged; the native right to nearly one hundred millions of acres of our national domain extinguished; and without the guilt, or calamities of conquest, a vast and fertile region added to our country, *far more extensive than her ORIGINAL possessions*, bringing along with it the Mississippi and the port of Orleans, the trade of the west to the Pacific ocean, and in the intrinsic value of the land itself, a source of permanent and almost inexhaustible revenue. These are points in your administration which the historian will not fail to seize, to expand, and teach posterity to dwell upon with delight. Nor will he forget our peace with the civilised world, preserved through a season of uncommon difficulty and trial; the good-will cultivated with the unfortunate aborigines of our country, and the civilisation humanely extended among them; the lesson taught the inhabitants of the coast of Barbary, that we have the means of chastising their piratical encroachments, and awing them into justice; and that theme, on which above all, the historic genius will hang with rapture, the liberty of speech and of the press preserved inviolate, without which genius and science are given to man in vain.

In the principles on which you have administered the government, we see only the continuation and maturity of the same virtues and abilities, which drew upon you in your youth the resentment of Dunmore. From the first brilliant and happy moment of your resistance to foreign tyranny, until the present day, we mark with pleasure and with gratitude the same uniform, consistent character, the same warm and devoted attachment to liberty and the republic, the same Roman love of your country, her rights, her peace, her honour, her prosperity. How blessed will be the retirement into which you are about to go! How deservedly blessed will it be! For you carry with you the richest of all rewards, the recollection of a life well spent in the ser-

vice of your country, and proofs the most decisive of the love, the gratitude, the veneration of your countrymen.”

In a letter to a friend, he thus pictures his return to private life :—“ Within a few days I retire to my family, my books and farms; and having gained the harbour myself, I shall look on my friends still buffeting the storm, with anxiety, indeed, but not with envy. Never did a prisoner, released from his chains, feel such relief as I shall on shaking off the shackles of power. Nature intended me for the tranquil pursuits of science, by rendering them my supreme delight. But the enormities of the times in which I have lived, have forced me to take a part in resisting them,\* and to commit myself on the boisterous ocean of political passions. I thank God for the opportunity of retiring from them without censure, and carrying with me the most consoling proofs of public approbation.”

He retired to Monticello, about the middle of March, 1809; and gives the following account of his journey:—“ I had a very fatiguing journey, having found the roads excessively bad, although I have seen them worse. The last three days I found it better to be on horseback, and travelled eight hours through as disagreeable a snow-storm as I was ever in. Feeling no inconvenience from the expedition but fatigue, I have more confidence in my *vis vitæ* than I had before entertained. The spring is remarkably backward.” Having been welcomed home by the citizens of his county, he addressed them in the following strain of pious affection:—

“ Returning to the scenes of my birth and early life, to the society of those with whom I was raised, and who have been ever dear to me. I receive, fellow citizens and neighbours, with inexpressible pleasure, the cordial welcome you are so good as to give me. Long absent on duties which the history of a wonderful era made incumbent on those called to them, the pomp, the turmoil, the bustle and splendour of office, have drawn but deeper sighs for the tranquil and irresponsible occupations of private life, for the enjoyment of an affectionate intercourse with you, my neigh-

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\* There is an obvious error here. Mr. Jefferson having commenced his political career before the revolution, and continued it through the administration of George Washington, which presented no enormities. The enormities began in 1792-3, with the French Revolution,

bours and friends, and the endearments of family love, which nature has given us all, as the sweetener of every hour. For these I gladly lay down the distressing burdèn of power, and seek, with my fellow citizens, repose and safety under the watchful cares, the labours and perplexities of younger and abler minds. The anxieties you express to administer to my happiness, do, of themselves, confer that happiness; and the measure will be complete, if my endeavours to fulfil my duties in the several public stations to which I have been called, have obtained for me the approbation of my country. The part which I have acted on the theatre of public life, has been before them; and to their sentence I submit it: but the testimony of my native county, of the individuals who have known me in private life, to my conduct in its various duties and relations, is the more grateful, as proceeding from eye witnesses and observers—from triers of the vicinage. Of you, then, my neighbours, I may ask in the face of the world, ‘whose ox have I taken, or whom have I defrauded? Whom have I oppressed, or of whose hand have I received a bribe to blind mine eyes therewith?’ On your verdict I rest with conscious security. Your wishes for my happiness are received with just sensibility, and I offer sincere prayers for your own welfare and prosperity.”

In this letter to his neighbours, we behold what may be considered as an official induction into the pursuits and enjoyments of private life; and certainly few men who have occupied the lofty stations of supreme power, have ever been better qualified to adorn with usefulness, or enjoy with reason, the calm avocations of a planter, a citizen, and a gentleman. Being a practical, as well as a theoretical farmer, his knowledge and skill admirably qualified him for the profitable cultivation of his estate. Deeply embued with a fine literary taste, profoundly versed in the sciences, and a complete master of mathematics, as well as an erudite Greek scholar, besides being conversant with most of the ancient and modern languages, he combined resources for an elegant literary retirement, seldom equalled, and never surpassed. His correspondence, too, of a literary, scientific, political, and friendly character, was diffused throughout every civilised country of Europe, as well as America. An object of rational curiosity to all strangers of distinction, and a fountain of literary refreshment to all travelling lite-

rati, his mansion of course, soon attracted successive crowds of Americans, and foreigners, to enliven his retirement, and tax his hospitality: so that the Ex-President of the United States, in his residence at Monticello, appeared rather to have acquired splendour, eclat, and followers, by his *retirement*, than to have sunk from a state of public magnificence to a condition of private obscurity. Such is the force of *intrinsic merit* over the adventitious and transient glare of external greatness. The Presidency could add nothing to the inherent greatness of Jefferson, but the genius of Jefferson ennobled with lustre the chair that had been consecrated to renown, by the virtues and greatness of Washington.

Mr. Jefferson now occupied his leisure in the pursuits to which I have just alluded:—the management of his farms—the comfort of his guests—the demands of his correspondents—the novelties of science—the beauties of literature—and the free dispensation of advice and patronage to all useful enterprises, or learned experiments; never forgetting his *darling passion* of politics, to which he always recurred with delight, and in which he excelled to such perfection.

In a letter to a friend, he thus describes the employment of his time:—“My mornings are devoted to correspondence. From breakfast to dinner I am in my shops,\* my garden, or on horseback among my farms; from dinner to dark I give to society and recreation with my neighbours and friends; and from candle-light to early bed-time, I read. My health is perfect, and my strength considerably reinforced by the activity of the course I pursue; perhaps it is as great as usually falls to the lot of men *sixty-seven years of age*. I talk of ploughs and harrows, seeding and harvesting, with my neighbours, and of politics too, if they choose, with as little reserve as the rest of my fellow citizens, and feel, at length, the blessing of being free to say and do what I please, without being responsible for it to any mortal. A part of my occupation, and by no means the least pleasing, is the direction of the studies of such

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\* He was always devotedly fond of mechanics, and worked like a journeyman in what he called his shops; constructing various articles of utility, or decoration, for his farm, his house, or his chamber; besides those philosophical instruments and nick-nacks which men of curious minds are attached to.

young men as ask it. They place themselves in the neighbouring village, and have the use of my library and counsel, and make a part of my society." This was in February, 1810.

Curious to know his opinions on all subjects, we feel more peculiarly so to hear them on the great leading questions and events of the day. In 1810, some apprehension was entertained that *Napoleon* would, at no distant day, meditate the invasion and conquest of the United States. One of his correspondents having expressed this fear to him, Mr. Jefferson not only ridiculed it as a chimera, but demonstrated its impossibility, in the following singular strain of party delusion, and political sagacity:—"For five-and-thirty years we have walked together through a land of tribulations; yet these have passed away, and so, I trust, will those of the present day. The toryism with which we struggled in '77, differed but in name from the federalism of '99, with which we struggled also; and the Anglicism of 1808, against which we are now struggling, is but the same thing still, in another form. It is a longing for a king, and an *English king* rather than any other. This is the true source of their sorrows and wailings."

"The fear that Buonaparte will come over to us, and conquer us also, is too chimerical to be genuine. Supposing him to have finished Spain and Portugal, he has yet England and Russia to subdue. The maxim of war was never sounder than in this case, not to leave an enemy in the rear, and especially where an insurrectionary flame is known to be under the embers, merely smothered, and ready to burst at every point. These two subdued, (and surely the Anglomens will not think the conquest of England alone a short work) ancient Greece and Macedonia, the cradle of Alexander, his prototype, and Constantinople, the seat of empire for the world, would glitter more in his eye than our bleak mountains and rugged forests. Egypt, too, and the golden apples of Mauritania, have for more than half a century, fixed the longing eyes of France; and with Syria, you know, he has an old affront to wipe out. Then come Pontus and Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, the five countries on the Euphrates and Tigris, the Oxus and Indus, and all beyond the Hyphasis, which bounded the glories of his Macedonian rival; with the invitations of his new British subjects on the banks of the Ganges, whom, after receiving

under his protection the mother country, he cannot refuse to visit. When all this is done and settled, and nothing of the old world remains unsubdued, he may turn to the new one; but will he attack us first, from whom he will get but hard knocks and no mōney? Or will he first lay hold of the gold and silver of Mexico and Peru, and the diamonds of Brazil? A *republican* emperor, from his affection to republics, independent of motives of expediency, must grant to ours the Cyclop's boon of being the last devoured. While all this is doing, we are to suppose the chapter of accidents read out, and that nothing can happen to cut short or to disturb his enterprises." From this view of the affairs of *Napoleon*, he turns to a dissertation on the *fatuity of kings*, which will interest the reader. "When I observed that the king of England was a cypher, I did not mean to confine the observation to the mere individual now on that throne. The practice of kings marrying only into the families of kings has been that of Europe for some centuries. Now, take any race of animals, confine them in idleness and inaction, whether in a sty, a stable, or a state room, pamper them with high diet, gratify all their sexual appetites, immerse them in sensualities, nourish their passions, let every thing bend before them, and banish whatever might lead them to think, and in a few generations they become all body and no mind; and this, too, by a law of nature, by that very law by which we are in the constant practice of changing the characters and propensities of the animals we raise for our own purposes. Such is the regimen in raising kings; and in this way they have gone on for centuries. While in Europe, I often amused myself with contemplating the characters of the then reigning sovereigns of Europe. Louis the XVI. was a fool, of my own knowledge, and in despite of the answers made for him at his trial. The king of Spain was a fool, and of Naples the same. They passed their lives in hunting, and despatched two couriers a week one thousand miles to let each other know what game they had killed the preceding days. The king of Sardinia was a fool. All these were Bourbons. The queen of Portugal, a Braganza, was an idiot by nature. And so was the king of Denmark. Their sons, as regents, exercised the powers of government. The king of Prussia, successor to the great Frederick, was a mere hog in body, as well as in mind. Gustavus, of Sweden, and Joseph of

Austria, were really crazy; and George of England, you know, was in a straight waistcoat. There remained, then, none but old Catharine, who had been too lately picked up to have lost her common sense. In this state Buonaparte found Europe; and it was this state of its rulers which lost it with scarce a struggle. These animals had become without mind and powerless; and so will every hereditary monarch be after a few generations. Alexander, the grandson of Catharine, is as yet an exception. He is able to hold his own. But he is only of the third generation. His race is not yet worn out. And so endeth the Book of Kings, from all of whom the Lord deliver us, and have you, my friend, and all such good men and true, in his holy keeping."

Although he admired the *religion* of the QUAKERS, yet he most heartily detested their politics: for in writing to Lafayette in 1817, he thus severely portrays them:—"That (Delaware) is essentially a Quaker State, the fragment of a religious sect, which there, as in the other States in England, are a homogeneous mass, acting with one mind, and that directed by the mother society in England. Dispersed, as the Jews, they still form, as those do, one nation, foreign to the land they live in. They are *Protestant Jesuits*, implicitly devoted to the will of their superior, and forgetting all duties to their country, in the execution of the policy of their order. When war is proposed with England, they have religious scruples; but when with France, these are laid by, and they become clamorous for it. They are, however, silent, passive, and give no other trouble than of whipping them along."

I have enumerated, among Mr. Jefferson's frailties his want of moral courage, which kept him from that candid avowal of his political opinions in the presence of his opponents, which appeared almost in the light of an act of treachery towards his friends, his party and his principles. The following account from his own pen of his alienation from Mr. Adams, will not only illustrate this feature of his character, but will also show the feeble texture of that discrepancy of opinion, which separated him even from the father of the *alien* and sedition laws, when those opinions were pressed home to their *testing point*—"You remember the machinery, says Mr. Jefferson, which the federalists played off, about that time, to beat down the friends to the *real principles of our Constitution*, to silence by terror

every expression in their favour, to bring us into war with France, and alliance with England, and finally to *homologise* our constitution with that of England. Mr. Adams, you know, was overwhelmed with feverish addresses, dictated by the fear, and often by the pen of the *bloody buoy*; and was seduced by them into some open indications of his new principles of government, and in fact was so elated as to mix with his kindness a little superciliousness towards me. Even Mrs. Adams, with all her good sense and prudence, was sensibly flushed. And you recollect the short suspension of our intercourse, and the circumstance which gave rise to it, which you were so good as to bring to an early explanation, and have set to rights, to the cordial satisfaction of us all. The nation at length passed condemnation on the political principles of the federalists,\* by refusing to continue Mr. Adams in the Presidency. On the day on which we learned in Philadelphia, the vote of the city of New York, which it was well known would decide the vote of the State, and that, again, the vote of the Union, I called on Mr. Adams on some official business. He was very sensibly affected, and accosted me with these words—‘Well, I understand you are to beat me in this contest, and I will only say that I will be as faithful a subject as any you will have.’ Mr. Adams, said I, this is no personal contest between you and me. Two systems of principles, on the subject of government, divide our fellow citizens into two parties. With one of these you concur, and I with the other.’ As we have been longer on the public stage than most of those now living, our names happen to be more generally known. One of these parties, there-

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\* There is a great fallacy in this idea, which Jefferson himself has exploded in another letter, where he acknowledges that the mad measures of Adams gave the republicans the victory. It was on those mad measures that the nation passed sentence of exclusion against Mr. Adams. If we are to understand by federal principles, federal policy, such as it was established by Washington, it never suffered any change, and of course, never incurred condemnation. What Jefferson calls ‘the real principles of the Constitution,’ did not extend to the frame of government, but related merely to moulding its administration to an accordance with PUBLIC OPINION; as contradistinguished from the policy of John Adams, who was for FORCING public opinion to an implicit approbation and support of every measure of government, right or wrong, expedient or pernicious.



fore, has put your name at its head, the other mine. Were we both to die to-day, to-morrow two other names would be in the place of ours, without any change in the motion of the machine.\* Its motion is from its principle, not from you or myself.' 'I believe you are right, said he that we are but *passive instruments*, [what wretched delusion, or odious hypocrisy! Mr. Adams a passive instrument!] and should not suffer this matter to affect our personal dispositions.' But he did not long retain this just view of the subject. I have always believed that the thousand calumnies which the federalists, in bitterness of heart and mortification of their ejection, daily invented against me, were carried to him by their busy intriguers, and made some impression. When the election between Burr and myself was kept in suspense by the federalists, and they were meditating to place the president of the Senate at the head of the government, I called on Mr. Adams, with a view to have this desperate measure prevented by his negative. He grew warm in an instant, and said with a vehemence he had not used towards me before, 'Sir, the event of the election is within your own power. You have only to say you will *do justice to the public creditors, maintain the navy*, and NOT DISTURB THOSE HOLDING OFFICES, and the government will instantly be put into your hands. We know it is the wish of the people it should be so.' 'Mr. Adams, said I, I know not what part of my conduct, in either public or private life, can have authorised a doubt of my fidelity to the public engagements. I say, however, I will not come into the government by capitulation. I will not enter on it, but in perfect freedom to follow the dictates of my own judgment.' I had before given the same answer to the same intimation from Gouverneur Morris. 'Then, said he, things must take their course.' I turned the conversation to something else, and soon took my leave. It was the first time in our lives we had ever parted with

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\* In this opinion few will be found to concur. I think the two conflicting parties would never have existed, but for Mr. Adams and Mr. Jefferson. The federal party died with the contests of these embittered rivals; and will never be revived. This is historical truth. The ascendant party, since the era of Madison's rule, has comprehended more of federalism, federal doctrine, federal policy and federal men, than any of the ingredients of the opposite party; while Madison himself revived the NATIONAL BANK!

any thing like dissatisfaction. And then followed those scenes of midnight appointment, which have been condemned by all men. The last day of his political power, the last hours, and even beyond the midnight, were employed in filling all offices, and especially permanent ones, with the bitterest federalists, and providing for me the alternative, either to execute the government by my enemies, whose study it would be to thwart and defeat all my measures, or to incur the odium of such numerous removals from office, as might bear me down. A little time and reflection effaced in my mind this temporary dissatisfaction with Mr. Adams, and restored me to that just estimate of his virtues and passions, which a long acquaintance had enabled me to fix. And my first wish became that of making his retirement easy, by any means in my power; for it was understood he was not rich. I suggested to some republican members of the delegation from his State, the giving him, either directly or indirectly, an office, the most lucrative in that State, and then offered to be resigned, if they thought he would not deem it *affrontive*. They were of opinion he would take great offence at the offer; and moreover, that the body of republicans would consider such a step in the outset as auguring very ill of the course I meant to pursue.\* I dropped the idea, therefore, but did not cease to wish for some opportunity of renewing our friendly understanding."

"Two or three years after, having had the misfortune to lose a daughter, between whom and Mrs. Adams, there had been a considerable attachment, she made it the occasion of writing me a letter, in which with the tenderest expressions of concern at this event, she carefully avoided a single one of friendship towards myself, and even concluded it with the wishes of 'her who *once* took pleasure in subscribing herself your friend, Abigail Adams.' Unpromising as was the complexion of this letter; I determined to make an effort towards removing the clouds from between

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\* What an admirable commentary on the chicanery of party in the higher order of politicians, would it have been to have seen Mr. Jefferson appoint John Adams to be Attorney General of the United States, for Massachusetts; and at the same time removing the collector of Boston, because he was a DISCIPLE of John Adams!!! Yet such things have been done by others, as well as projected by Mr. Jefferson!!!

us. This brought on a correspondence which I now enclose for your perusal, after which be so good as to return it to me, as I have never communicated it to any mortal breathing before. I send it to you to convince you I have not been wanting either in the desire, or the endeavour to remove this misunderstanding. Indeed, I thought it highly disgraceful to us both, as indicating minds not sufficiently elevated to prevent a public competition from affecting our personal friendship. I soon found, from the correspondence, that conciliation was desperate, and yielding to an intimation in her last letter, I ceased from further explanation. *I have the same good opinion of Mr. Adams which I ever had. I know him to be an honest man, an able one with his pen, and he was a powerful advocate on the floor of Congress.\** He has been alienated from me by belief in the lying suggestions contrived for electioneering purposes, that I perhaps mixed in the activity and intrigues of the occasion. My most intimate friends can testify that I was perfectly passive.† They would sometimes, indeed, tell me what was going on; but no man ever heard me take part in such conversations; and none ever misrepresented Mr. Adams in my presence, without my asserting his just character. With very confidential persons I have doubtless *disapproved of the principles and practices* of his administration. This was unavoidable. *But never with*

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\* If thus honest, good and able, why should he have been proscribed, particularly by Mr. J? The truth is, Mr. Jefferson here sacrifices truth to benevolence, and sincerity to a supposed magnanimity, incumbent on the higher order of politicians towards one another. To suppose Adams honest in the ALIEN and SEDITION laws, was to suppose him a fool; but he was not a fool, therefore he was not honest! Can DESPOTISM be honest? Can a TYRANT be good? Can a violator of his country's constitution be equal to a patriot, who devotes a life to its observance? This is the logic of Mr. Jefferson, which we are to refer to that lamentable weakness of his nature, which so utterly destroyed his moral courage.

† Admitting personal passiveness, it does not necessarily include moral or intellectual passiveness. It is well known that Mr. J. spared no labour of mind to stimulate the people against Mr. Adams; as we have seen in his letters already quoted; besides, it is the very quibbling of ethetical sophistry to say that he was not instrumental in the contest, because he was not personally active! A man may be a principal in a murder, and yet a thousand miles from the scene of blood!

*those with whom it could do him any injury.* Decency would have required this conduct from me, if disposition had not; and I am satisfied Mr. Adams' conduct was equally honourable towards me. But I think it part of his character to suspect foul play in those of whom he is jealous, and not easily to relinquish his suspicions."

This letter is so pregnant with important reflections, that we must now submit it to the reader without further comment. It is of the highest order of those epistles, which reveal the mysteries of the *higher order of politicians*, showing that the people are legitimate objects of speculation to the polished leaders, who remain behind the curtain, or in the green room, while the *farce of party* is enacting for *their benefit*.

In 1812, he renewed his correspondence with *John Adams*, and became a convert from the *free trade* to the restrictive system, and advocated with zeal the *protection of American manufactures*. Perfect friendship and esteem, was now restored between these two great ex-belligerents! The purpose of both had been answered by their schism, and they now returned to the enjoyment of benevolence and love!

Having now become reconciled to Mr. Adams, he shifted all the crime of intended monarchy upon a dead opponent; and made Alexander Hamilton the grand conspirator against the system of our federal republican government. Hamilton had been many years at rest in his bloody grave—a grave dug by the ferocity of party and blood shed by the malignity of Aaron Burr; and he had suffered his ashes to rest in peace, up to the moment of his reconciliation with John Adams! Believing Adams to be *honest*, whom should he now stigmatise as the traitor from republicanism to monarchy? Who but HAMILTON—that HAMILTON, whose fame is made up of the CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES, and the POLICY which it framed to the hands of its first and immortal Executive officer! Mr. Jefferson's letter to 'Mellish' in 1813, would open space for a volume of comment upon the weakness of human nature; but he was then *seventy*, and age, he himself confesses, had impaired his faculties, prostrated his memory, and benumbed his intellect.

Among other singular and fallacious ideas adopted by Mr. Jefferson, was that respecting Napoleon Buonaparte—

that he was a *great scoundrel* only—was no statesman, but an ignorant pretender, destitute equally of genius, talents, and learning! Such are the unaccountable delusions and prejudices of great minds.

During the progress of the war with England, although in retirement, he was sensibly alive to our defeats and our victories; our disgraces and our glories; and lived to hail with pride and exultation the brilliant victories of that *navy*, which he had once so zealously opposed, and furiously denounced.

On the subject of the *Hartford Convention*, his opinions were as decisive as his feelings were ardent in its reprobation. On this subject, he said, “The cement of this Union is in the heart blood of every American. I do not believe there is on earth a government established on so immovable a basis. Let them, in any State, even in Massachusetts itself, *raise the standard of separation, and its citizens will rise in mass, and do justice themselves on their own incendiaries.*”

Having become embarrassed by his extended hospitalities to an endless crowd of curious visitors or ancient friends, Congress in 1815, agreed to purchase his extensive and valuable library, for the sum of fifty thousand dollars, which afforded him some temporary relief from the exigencies that pressed upon him.

He appears to have enjoyed the long life to which he attained with unalloyed zest; for, in a letter to Mr. Adams, he thus observes:—“You ask me if I would agree to live my seventy, or rather seventy-three years over again? To which I say, yea. I think with you, that it is a good world on the whole; that it has been framed on a principle of benevolence, and more pleasure than pain dealt out to us. There are, indeed, (who might say nay,) gloomy and hypochondriac minds, inhabitants of diseased bodies, disgusted with the present, and despairing of the future; always counting that the worst will happen, because it may happen. To these I say, how much pain have the evils cost us which have never happened? My temperament is sanguine. I steer my bark with hope in the head, leaving fear astern. My hopes, indeed, sometimes fail, but not oftener than the forebodings of the gloomy. There are, I acknowledge, even in the happiest life, some terrible convulsions, heavy set-offs against the opposite page of the account. I have often won-

dered for what good end the sensations of grief could be intended.”\*

In 1819, he gave the following account of the encroachments of age upon his constitution, and the manner of his living, which shows the powerful animal frame with which he had been blessed by nature. “I live so much like other people, that I might refer to ordinary life as the history of my own. Like my friend, the Doctor, I have lived temperately, eating little animal food, and that not as an aliment, so much as a condiment for the vegetables, which constitute my principal diet. I double, however, the Doctor’s glass and a half of wine,† and even treble it with a friend, but halve its effect by drinking the weak wines only. The ardent wines I cannot drink, nor do I use ardent spirits in any form. Malt liquors and cider are my table drinks; and my breakfast, like that also of my friend, is of tea and coffee. I have been blest with organs of digestion which accept and concoct, without ever murmuring, whatever the palate chooses to consign to them, and I have not yet lost a tooth by age. I was a hard student until I entered on the business of life, the duties of which leave no idle time to those disposed to fulfil them; and now, tired, and at the age of *seventy-six*, I am again a hard student. Indeed, my fondness for reading and study revolts me from the drudgery of letter writing; and a stiff wrist, the consequence of an early dislocation, makes writing both slow and painful. I am not so regular in my sleep, as the Doctor says he was, devoting to it from five to eight hours, according as my company or the book I am reading, interests me; and I never go to bed without an hour, or half an hour’s previous reading of something moral, whereon to ruminate in the intervals of sleep. But, whether I retire to bed, early or late, I rise with the Sun. I use spectacles at night, but not necessarily in the day, unless in reading small print. My hearing is distinct in particular conversation, but confused when several voices cross each other, which unfits me for the society of the table. I have been more fortunate than my friend in the article of health. So free from catarrhs that I have

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\* Mr. Jefferson here forgot his philosophy—without grief, how should we experience joy? without pain, how should we feel pleasure?

† Dr. Rush,

not had one, (in the breast I mean) on an average of eight, or ten years through life. I ascribe this exemption partly to the habit of bathing my feet in cold water for sixty years past. A fever of more than twenty-four hours I have not had above two or three times in my life. A periodical head-ache has afflicted me occasionally, once perhaps in six or eight years, for two or three weeks at a time, which seems now to have left me; and, except on a late occasion of indisposition, I enjoy good health; too feeble, indeed, to walk much, but riding without fatigue six or eight miles a day, and sometimes thirty or forty. I may end these egotisms, therefore, as I began, by saying, that my life has been so much like that of other people, that I might say with Horace, to every one, '*nomine mutato, narratur fabula de te.*' I must not end, however, without due thanks," &c.

Mr. Jefferson has been much censured for his ideas on religion, as if he possessed the power to believe whatever he might *will* to believe, without reference to the verdict of his understanding. Fortunately, his sentiments have not been left to surmise and suspicion, for he has himself told us what he believed, which completely refutes the commonly received opinion that he was an *Atheist*. In order that we may not run the risk of misrepresenting him on this momentous topic, I shall quote his own words: "I have to thank you for your pamphlets on the subjects of UNITARIANISM, and to express my gratification with your efforts for the revival of *primitive Christianity* in your quarter. No historical fact is better established, than that the doctrine of *one God*, pure and uncompounded, was that of the early ages of Christianity; and was among the efficacious doctrines which gave it triumph over the *Polytheism* of the ancients, sickened with the absurdities of their own theology. Nor was the unity of the Supreme Being ousted from the Christian creed by the force of reason, but by the sword of civil government, wielded at the will of the fanatic Athanasius. The hocus-pocus phantasm of a God like another Cerberus, with one body and three heads, had its birth and growth in the blood of thousands and thousands of martyrs. And a strong proof of the solidity of the primitive faith, is its restoration, as soon as a nation arises which vindicates to itself the freedom of religious opinion, and its external divorce from the civil authority. The pure and simple unity of the Creator of the universe, is now all but ascendant in

the Eastern States; it is dawning in the west, and advancing towards the South; and I confidently expect that the present generation will see Unitarianism become the general religion of the United States. The eastern presses are giving us many excellent pieces on the subject, and Priestley's learned writings on it are, or should be, in every hand. In fact, the Athanasian paradox that one is three, and three but one, is so incomprehensible to the human mind, that no candid man can say he has any idea of it, and how can he believe what presents no idea? He who thinks he does, only deceives himself. He proves, also, that man, once surrendering his reason, has no remaining guard against absurdities the most monstrous, and, like a ship without a rudder, is the sport of every wind. With such persons, gullability which they call faith, takes the helm from the hand of reason, and the mind becomes a wreck." In another place he says:—"The doctrines of Jesus are simple, and tend all to the happiness of man.

"1. That there is one only God, and he all perfect.

"2. That there is a future state of rewards and punishments.

"3. That to love God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself, is the sum of religion. These are the great points on which he endeavoured to reform the religion of the Jews." He then compares these with the doctrines of *Calvin*, and adds, "Now, which of these is the true and charitable Christian? He who believes and acts on the simple doctrines of Jesus, or the impious dogmatists, as Athanasius and Calvin? Verily, I say these are the false shepherds foretold us to enter not by the door into the sheepfold, but to climb up some other way. They are mere usurpers of the Christian name, teaching a counter religion made up of the *deleria* of crazy imaginations, as foreign from Christianity as is that of Mahomet. Their blasphemies have driven thinking man into infidelity, who have too hastily rejected the supposed author himself, with the horrors so falsely imputed to him. *Had the doctrines of Jesus been preached always as pure as they came from his lips, the whole civilised world would now have been Christians.* I rejoice that in this blessed country of free inquiry and belief, which has surrendered its creed and conscience to neither kings nor priests, the genuine doctrine of one only God is reviving, and I trust that there is not a *young man*



now living in the United States who will not die an UNITARIAN."

That he believed in a *future state* is evident from the following passage of a letter addressed to John Adams:—  
 "It is of some comfort to us both, that the term is not very distant, at which we are to deposit in the same cerement, our sorrows and suffering bodies, and *to ascend in ESSENCE to an ecstatic meeting with the friends we have loved and lost, and whom we shall still love and NEVER LOSE AGAIN.*"  
 He also believed in a superintending Providence.

Mr. Jefferson had at all times shown more or less of a hostile feeling, if not an exterminating spirit, against the SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES, which he particularly manifested during BURR'S TRIAL. This feeling he still cherished as late as 1822, when he lamented that the judges were appointed for life, and advocated their dependence on the President and Senate, for the renewal of their commissions every four or six years. But why did he not commence this reform in the States? Even democratic Pennsylvania has her judges for a *life-term!* On this subject he says "That there should be *public functionaries* independent of the nation [people!] whatever may be their *demerit*, is a solecism in a republic of the first order of absurdity and inconsistency."

In 1823, at the age of *eighty*, he still retained all his fervor of feeling and animation of passion; and, in a letter to Mr. Madison, he uttered one of his most violent and bitter phillipics against Timothy Pickering, the government of England, and the party of *Anglomen*. His vigour of constitution, and force of mind, were indeed wonderful.

Mr. Jefferson had now for some years been active as the patron of a new College, or university, at *Charlotteville*, to which he devoted much of his time, intellect, taste, learning, and toleration.

In 1820, he states that he received 1267 letters, 'many of them requiring answers of elaborate research, and *all* to be answered with due attention and consideration.' At his advanced age this was certainly a laborious and oppressive performance.

The extensive scale of magnificent hospitality which Mr. Jefferson conceived himself bound to practise, towards the crowd of visitors who at all times clustered round him, from the different countries of Europe as well as the States,

and whom he entertained in a style which would have required a regal income to defray without embarrassment, again reduced him to those streights and difficulties which had, on a prior occasion, compelled him to dispose of his valuable library to Congress. To relieve him from this pressure, consistently with the puritanical austerity of his own republican principles, was extremely difficult, if not impossible. The introduction of a *pension list* would have been worse than a *funded debt* or the *national bank*; to bestow *gratuities* was equally exceptionable; to create *sinecures* was worse than all. His estates were valuable, provided an equitable price could be obtained for them; and to enable him to procure their full value, the Legislature of Virginia passed a law in the year 1826, authorising him to dispose of them by LOTTERY. This remedy was certainly a severe one. It might afford him relief from debt, but it would also leave him destitute of property; and its preamble might, without exaggeration, have been couched in the following words—‘An Act to enable Thomas Jefferson to pay his debts by the sale of his estate, and retire to the county poor-house to end his old age.’ Virginia, lofty and chivalrous Virginia, always proud, like Cornelia, to boast of her sons as the *jewels of Rome*, ought not to have sunk the generosity of her character in the cold austerity of the rigid republican, when she beheld the honourable poverty of her public benefactor invoking succour in his helpless age; especially when that poverty was caused by his desire to preserve the dignity of his former station, and the eclat of his native State for southern hospitality. When we look back to that period of Mr. Jefferson’s life, we are struck with astonishment at the *caprice* that distinguished the course of the United States, which could refuse a munificent grant of *land* to one of *her own* most eminent citizens, and yet grant the same to a foreigner, who, whatever may have been his military merits, never possessed the same genius, or had rendered to the country any services that would bear a comparison with those of the sage of Monticello.

Struck with surprise and sympathy for this extraordinary penury of a man whom all had supposed to be opulent, because none had reflected on the liberal scale of his hospitality, the people in many States spontaneously rushed to his relief, and calling public meetings, made voluntary contri-

butions, to enable him to extricate himself from his embarrassments. The laudable and noble character of this sympathy, however, was more precious, as it respected the *virtue of the people*, and the veneration in which the illustrious object of its concern was held, than for the efficacious nature of the succour it afforded. It could hardly be expected that any plan of this kind could be devised which would result in an adequate product—if the subscriptions were large, they would be confined to a class of society whose dislike of Mr. Jefferson would restrain them from contributing; and if small, the aggregate could not become an object worth the acceptance. From these causes the *popular mode* of succour entirely failed; and the more eligible one of compounding with his creditors was adopted; a proposition which, having originated with them, was the more honourable to both parties.

His own account of this state of his affairs, will, however, be most satisfactory. In a letter to Mr. Madison, he says—“ You will have seen in the newspapers some proceedings in the Legislature, which have cost me much mortification. My own debts had become considerable, but not beyond the effect of some lopping of property, which would have been little felt, when our friend \* \* \* \* gave me the *coup de grace*. Ever since that I have been paying twelve hundred dollars a year interest on his debt, which, with my own, was absorbing so much of my annual income as that the maintenance of my family was making deep and rapid inroads on my capital, and had already done it. Still, sales at a fair price would leave me completely provided. Had crops and prices for several years been such as to maintain a steady competition of substantial bidders at market, all would have been safe. But the long succession of years of stunted crops, of reduced prices, the general prostration of the farming business, *under levies for the support of manufactures, &c.\** with the calamitous fluctuations of value in our paper medium, have kept agriculture in a state of abject depression, which has peopled the western states by silently breaking up those on the Atlantic, and glutted the land market, while it drew off its bidders. In such a state of things property has lost its

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\* I consider all this as a fallacious account of the true causes of his ruin, which was obviously produced by his princely hospitality!

character of being a resource for debts. Highland, in Bedford, which, in the days of our plethory, sold readily for from fifty to one hundred dollars the acre, (and such sales were many then,) would not now sell for more than from ten to twenty dollars, or one quarter, or one-fifth of its former price. Reflecting on these things, the practice occurred to me, of selling, on fair valuation, and by way of lottery, often resorted to before the revolution to effect large sales, and still in constant usage in every State for individual as well as corporation purposes. If it is permitted in my case, my lands here alone, with the mills, &c. will pay every thing, and leave me Monticello and a farm free. If refused, I must sell every thing here, perhaps considerably in Bedford, move thither with my family, *where I have not even a LOG HUT to PUT MY HEAD INTO*, and whether the ground for burial will depend on the depredations which, under the form of sales, shall have been committed on my property. The question then with me was *ultrum horum?* But why afflict you with these details? Indeed I cannot tell, unless pains are lessened by communication with a friend. The friendship which has subsisted between us, now half a century, and the harmony of our political principles and pursuits, have been sources of constant happiness to me through that long period."

It was amidst all the deep afflictions caused by these embarrassments, that Mr. Jefferson still found inclination and intellect enough at his command, even at that great age to which he had advanced, to write the following beautiful effusion of patriotism to Mr. Giles; which, while it exhibits a firm attachment to the UNION, also indicates that invincible spirit of republican liberty, which would resist to the death every encroachment upon the Constitution, every infringement of the rights of the people, and every usurpation upon the sovereignty of the States. I shall make no apology for quoting it *entire*.

TO WILLIAM B. GILES.

MONTICELLO, Dec. 26, 1825.

"Dear Sir—I wrote you a letter yesterday, of which you will be free to make what use you please. This will contain matters not intended for the public eye. I see, as you do, and with the deepest affliction, the rapid strides with which the federal branch of our government is advanc-

ing towards the usurpation of all the rights reserved to the States, and *the consolidation in itself of all powers foreign and domestic*; and that too by CONSTRUCTIONS, which, if legitimate, leave no limits to their power. Take together the *decisions of the FEDERAL COURT, the doctrines of the President,\** and the misconstructions of the constitutional compact, acted on by the Legislature of the Federal branch; and it is but too evident that the three ruling branches of that department, are in combination to strip *their colleagues*, the STATE AUTHORITIES, of the powers reserved by them, and to exercise themselves all functions, foreign and domestic. Under the power to regulate commerce, they assume indefinitely that also over agriculture and manufactures, and call it '*regulation*' to take the earnings of one of these branches of industry, and that too the most depressed, and put them into the pockets of the other, the most flourishing of all. Under the authority to establish post roads, they claim that of cutting down mountains for the construction of roads, of digging canals, and aided by a little sophistry of the words '*general welfare*;' a right to do not only the acts to effect that, which are specifically enumerated and permitted, but whatsoever they shall think, or pretend will be for the general welfare. And *what is our resource for the preservation of the constitution?* REASON and ARGUMENT? You might as well reason and argue with the marble columns encircling them. The representatives chosen by ourselves? They are joined in the combination, some from incorrect views of government, some from corrupt ones, sufficient voting together to outnumber the sound parts; and with majorities only of one, two, or three, bold enough to go forward in defiance. Are we *then to stand* with the hot-headed Georgian? No. *That must be the last resource, not to be thought of until MUCH LONGER and GREATER SUFFERINGS.* If EVERY INFRACTION OF A COMPACT of *so many parties is to be resisted at once, as a dissolution of it, NONE CAN EVER BE FORMED WHICH WOULD LAST ONE YEAR.* We must have patience and longer endurance, then, with our brethren while under delusion; give

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\* A democratic President, an admirer of the French revolution! a minister recalled by Washington, and a Secretary of State recommended by Jefferson himself! A legitimate heir to the dynasty of the democrats!!

them time for reflection and experience of consequences; keep ourselves in a situation to profit by the chapter of accidents; and separate from our companions only when the sole alternatives left, are the *dissolution of the Union with them, or submission to a government without limitation of powers.* Between these two evils, when we must make a choice, there can be no hesitation. But in the meanwhile, the States should be watchful to note every material usurpation on their rights, to denounce them as they occur in the most peremptory terms; to protest against them as wrongs to which our present submission shall be considered, not as acknowledgments or precedents of right, but as a temporary yielding to the lesser evil, until their accumulation shall overweigh that of separation. I would go still further, and give to the federal member, *by a regular amendment of the Constitution,* a RIGHT TO MAKE ROADS AND CANALS OF INTERCOMMUNICATION between the States, providing sufficiently against corrupt practices in Congress, (log-rolling, &c.) by declaring that the *federal* proportion of each State, of the monies so employed, shall be in works within the State, or elsewhere with its consent, and with a due *salvo* of jurisdiction. This is the course which I think safest and best as yet."

Here was due reverence for the UNION, mixed with a proper regard for the rights of the States.

Mr. Jefferson had now been anxiously devoting the last fifteen, or eighteen years of his life, to reconcile ancient quarrels, heal lacerated friendships, and conciliate political animosity; but it does not appear that he was always successful in this benevolent inclination of his amiable feelings. With John Adams, he appears to have concluded something like a dubious reconciliation; sincere no doubt on the part of Jefferson; but deceitful and hollow, on that of his ancient rival. In this particular, Mr. Jefferson betrayed a lust of popular esteem, which his fame could have dispensed with, and which his character and station ought to have restrained him from; but the motive was sound; his feelings were decidedly benevolent, and he no doubt experienced pain, as long as he thought occasion of enmity existed between him and others.

It was on such an occasion, that in 1824, he addressed a letter to a man conspicuous in the annals of intrigue, celebrated for the arts of party management and renowned for

the expertness and address of the managing politician.\* This man had, it seems, taken occasion to transmit to Mr. Jefferson, the phillipic of Timothy Pickering against John Adams; in which he had given a faithful portrait of the *father of the ALIEN and SEDITION LAWS*; but which he had mixed up along with some strictures against Mr. Jefferson. In the answer of the latter to Van Buren, many admissions are made by the writer, which go to recal former charges made by him against Washington, among which I shall quote the following:—"My last parting with General Washington, was at the Inauguration of Mr. Adams, in March 1797, and was warmly affectionate; and I never had any reason to believe any change on his part, as there certainly was none on mine. But one session of Congress intervened between that and his death, the year following, in my passage to and from which, as it happened to be not convenient to call on him, I never had another opportunity; and as to the cessation of correspondence observed during that short interval, no particular circumstance occurred for epistolary communication, and both of us were too much oppressed with letter writing, to trouble either the other, with a letter about nothing."

"The truth is, that the federalists, pretending to be the exclusive friends of General Washington, have ever done what they could to sink his character, *by hanging theirs on it*, and by representing as the enemy of republicans him, who, of all men, is best entitled to the appellation of the *Father of that Republic*, which they were endeavouring to subvert, and the republicans to maintain."

Here is an evident contradiction, which it is impossible to understand. Although Washington belonged to *no party*, yet it is certain that the *party of the federalists was formed*

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\* It must certainly be esteemed a very singular circumstance that a modern politician should have had the temerity to place himself in an attitude that would serve to give a sanction to the libels heaped upon the head of the great and pure Washington, by enticing from Mr. Jefferson a history of political errors, of which he had before made ample atonement, by the strong avowal of his regret for their commission, as well as his full confession of their fallacy! It is, however, still more astonishing, that Mr. Jefferson should ever have become involved in a common censure on John Adams, from a disposition inherent in both those ancient enemies, and octogenerian friends, to pull down the father of his country to a level with their own passions and envy!

on his principles, his policy, and his views of the Constitution: and that the *adverse party* arose from causes entirely opposite, headed by Mr. Jefferson! Washington belonged to the nation; but he was *emphatically supported by the federal party*, whose fundamental policy was afterwards adopted in toto by the republicans. This view of the question is acknowledged by Jefferson himself, in another part of this letter. "General Washington, after the retirement of his first cabinet, and the composition of his second, *entirely federal*, and at the head of which was Mr. Pickering himself, had no opportunity of hearing both sides of any question. His measures, consequently, took more the hue of the party in whose hands he was." Mr. Jefferson hence proceeds to argue, that General Washington was more of a republican than a federalist!! although he had before *accused him* not only of federalism but *monarchy!* "April 9, 1792. The President asked me, if the treaty stipulating a sum, and ratified by him, with the advice of the Senate, would not be good under the Constitution and obligatory on the representatives to furnish the money? I answered it certainly would, and that it would be the duty of the representatives to raise the money; but, that they might decline to do what was their duty, and I thought it might be incautious to commit himself by a ratification with a foreign nation, where he might be left in the lurch in the execution: it was possible too, to conceive a treaty, which it would not be their duty to provide for. He said that he did not like throwing too much into *democratic hands*, that if they would not do what the Constitution called on them to do, THE GOVERNMENT WOULD BE AT AN END, and must then ASSUME ANOTHER FORM. He stopped here; and I kept silence to see whether he would say any thing more in the same line, or add any qualifying expression to *soften* what he had said: *but he did neither.*"

So early as 1823, Mr. Jefferson defined the principles, and predicted the importance of the NULLIFICATION, or State Rights party, in a letter to Lafayette, from which I select a pertinent passage. "We are all in agitation even in our peaceful country. For in peace as well as in war, the mind must be kept in motion. Who is to be the next President, is the topic here of every conversation. My opinion on that subject is what I expressed to you in my last letter: the question will be ultimately reduced to the



northernmost and southernmost candidates. The former will get every federal vote in the Union, and many republicans; the latter all those denominated of the *old school*; for you are not to believe that these two parties are amalgamated; that the lion and the lamb are lying down together. The Hartford Convention, the victory of Orleans, the peace of Ghent, prostrated the name of federalism. Its votaries abandoned it through shame and mortification, and now call themselves republicans. But the name alone is changed, the principles are the same. For in truth, the parties of whig and tory, are those of nature. They exist in all countries, whether called by these names, or by those of aristocrats and democrats, Côté Droite and Côté Gauché, Ultras and Radicals, Serviles and Liberals. The sickly, weakly, timid man, fears the people, and is a tory by nature. The healthy, strong and bold, cherishes them, and is formed a whig by nature. On the eclipse of federalism with us, although not its extinction, its leaders got up the Missouri question, under the false front of lessening the measures of slavery, but with the real view of producing a geographical division of parties, which might ensure them the next President. The people of the north went blindfold into the snare, followed their leaders for a while with a zeal truly noble and laudable, until they became sensible that they were injuring instead of aiding the real interests of the slaves, that they had been used merely as tools for electioneering purposes; and that trick of hypocrisy then fell as quickly as it had been got up. To that is now succeeding a distinction, which, like that of republican and federal, or whig and tory, being equally intermixed through every State, threatens none of those geographical schisms which go immediately to a separation. The line of division now, IS THE PRESERVATION OF STATE RIGHTS *as reserved in the Constitution*, or by strained constructions of that instrument, to *merge all into a CONSOLIDATED GOVERNMENT*. The TORIES *are for strengthening the EXECUTIVE and GENERAL GOVERNMENT*; the whigs cherish the representative branch, and the rights reserved by the States,\* as the bul-

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\* Had Jefferson lived to the year 1832, what would he have said of the two parties whom he has here designated as Whigs and Tories; seeing that they could change their principles and position, and yet still retain their names!!! What would he have said of his native

wark against consolidation, which must immediately *generate* MONARCHY. And although this division excites, as yet, no warmth, yet it exists, is well understood, and will be a principle of voting at the ensuing election, with the reflecting men of both parties."

Thus Mr. Jefferson lived to acknowledge under his own name, that the *only point of division* between the two great parties of the country, was the advocacy of STATE RIGHTS by one, and FEDERAL CONSOLIDATION BY THE OTHER: and although a deep seated and early prejudice still determined him to insinuate a charge of establishing monarchy against the federalists, in which it was impossible he could have been logically sincere, yet when free from the visitation of this Constitutional *fanaticism*, he could clearly discern, and candidly acknowledge, that there existed no difference between democracy and federalism, but that radical and original point of contention, which had existed even under the *old confederacy*, which led to the *adoption* of the *present constitution*, and which had been so triumphant in the rejection of the *ultra* doctrines of John Adams. True, this was a prolific *parental* question, involving numberless others of great moment, touching the Supreme Court, the Bank of the United States, the Tariff, and Internal Improvements; comprehending, too, a system of policy vital in its principles, and extensive in its effects; but it is worthy of remark, that, after the lapse of HALF A CENTURY, the variations of party controversies revolving through the entire circle of new interests, should return round to the point from which they originally started, more distinctly marked, and emphatically important, than when first made the battle ground of liberty, by the advocates of restricted authority and limited power.

The infirmities of age, and the maladies incident to the gradual breaking up of a vigorous constitution, now began to make a sensible impression upon the health of this great man. For several years he had been gradually sinking under the weight of age; like some towering and ancient oak, once the monarch of the woods in bloom, bulk and vigour; but now withering in its topmost branches; worm-eaten in

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State, sustaining a federal executive on the principles of consolidation; and proving recreant to State rights? "Tempora mutantur, et nos mutantur in illis."

its trunk; and limb after limb stripped of its accustomed verdure, till every blast threatened its prostration, as it bent and groaned beneath the surges of time. These infirmities, which for the last two years had been heavily pressing on him, reached their crisis on the 26th of June, 1826, when the severity of his pains compelled him to confine himself to bed. Still, his constitution being powerful, impressed the idea among his friends that his illness was not serious, and would not prove fatal; but his own conviction was different; he felt that his last moments were near, and prepared his mind with the calm resignation of a philosopher, to meet the awful event as became a man, who had lived beyond the usual term allotted to his kind; and whom nature, by the decay of his faculties, had been gradually weaning, like a kind and merciful mother, from the joys of life. For some time preceding his illness, his conversation had instinctively turned in the channel of the approaching end of his mortal career, as if warned by an inward monitor of the doom to which he was shortly destined. But, amidst all his observations upon the coming event, he indulged in no fears, and vented no repinings. 'I do not wish to die,' said he, addressing those around him, 'but I do not fear to die—acquiescence is a duty under circumstances not placed among those we are permitted to control.' The only source of anxiety which appeared to exist arose from his desire to behold his favourite UNIVERSITY at Charlottesville, firmly established on a prosperous and reputable basis. Having called in a physician, his malady yielded to the skill of art; but the Doctor expressed his apprehensions that the extreme debility to which it had reduced him, might prevent his recovery. Mr. Jefferson himself had no doubt on the subject—in the full consciousness of approaching dissolution, although entirely free from bodily pain. Serene and composed in his mind, he issued his directions with the greatest calmness respecting his burial, requesting his coffin to be plain, and his body to be interred at Monticello, without pomp or parade; thus evincing in his last hours, that love of simplicity, and republican frugality which had distinguished him so conspicuously through a long life. Having completed his orders for his funeral, he called the members of his family around his couch, conversing separately with each one, and presenting to his favourite daughter, Mrs. Randolph, a small morocco case, with a request that

she would not open it until after his demise, and which contained a poetic effusion in praise of her virtues and affection, from his own elegant and tasteful pen. This was on Sunday; and continuing to linger over to the succeeding day, he then enquired, with some anxiety, what was the day of the month, and being answered the 3d of July, he expressed a strong desire that he might be permitted to survive another day, to breathe the *Fiftieth* Anniversary of American Independence. The strength of the desire perhaps led to the fruition of his wishes; for nature continued to sustain him up to the longed for hour, when expiring with a gentle sigh, his spirit was gathered to the abode of his fathers. Thus died THOMAS JEFFERSON, the author of the DECLARATION OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE, *ruling* whose *passion* through a long life never left him, even at the moment when exhausted nature eclipsed the flame of his spirit in the night of the grave, on the day which his pen had made memorable in the annals of nations.

This extraordinary death of an illustrious man produced a deep sensation on the public mind; and all parties united in paying the tribute of praise and honour to his splendid talents, his patriotic achievements, and his public services; and if *popular superstition* gave some addition to the force of the catastrophe, by its occurring on the *fiftieth anniversary of independence*, the virtue of the feeling may justly excuse the extravagance of the idea, which so extraordinary an association of pride, patriotism and love of liberty conspired to produce.

Mr. Jefferson, at the period of his death, had attained to the age of eighty-three years, two months and twenty-one days!

His personal endowments, like his political attributes, were beyond the ordinary dimensions, being six feet two inches high, thin, but well formed in his person, erect in his carriage, and imposing in his appearance. His complexion was fair, his hair red and luxuriant, with light eyes that sparkled with intelligence, and beamed with philanthropy, which gave to his countenance an expression at once peculiar and remarkable, corresponding to his square face, his expansive forehead and large nose, whose dilated nostril denoted the high spirit of the generous steed, and which, in man, indicates deep passion, lively sensibility and profound thought. His visage was of that class,

which, to behold, instinctively produces the feeling, while it prompts to the exclamation, '*that is the head of a great man.*'

An unaffected simplicity of manners was mixed with a native dignity which was inseparable from his personal advantages of stature and form; but which was always restrained to unobtrusive bounds by his republican habits; so that all who approached him were perfectly at ease. His disposition being cheerful, his conversation was lively and enthusiastic, remarkable for the chastity of his colloquial diction, and the correctness of his phraseology.

Benevolence and liberality were prominent traits of his excellent disposition. To his slaves he was an indulgent master, always sacrificing his own interests to their comforts. As a neighbour, his liberality and friendly offices extorted universal esteem. As a friend he was ardent and unchangeable; and as a host, the munificence of his hospitality was carried to the culpable excess of self-improvement!

In forming his opinions, he is represented to have been deliberate, cautious and circumspect; and to have been as tenacious of their retention, as he was slow to adopt them. His temper was even; and he possessed so much command over it, that his most intimate friends have declared they never beheld him give way to passion, petulance, or anger; in proof of which his servants always regarded him with the ardour of filial affection.

We have already seen, from his own account, that his domestic habits were simple and unostentatious; that he was a hard student; a persevering labourer; a vigilant overseer; a faithful correspondent; and a successful farmer.

As a man of letters, and a votary of science, few Americans have risen to higher distinction, or displayed more liberal patronage. As a profound Greek scholar he had few equals; and in the mathematics, he attained a proficiency not common to American students. But he did not confine his powerful intellect to any particular branch of science and literature, but roamed over all, without impairing its vigour by the diffusiveness of his attention, or the variety of his knowledge. He is said to have bestowed much attention upon the northern languages of Europe, as being powerful auxiliaries to the study of our own. Like all philosophers, however, a great portion of his knowledge

was rather curious than useful, and acquired more with a view to the fame of erudition, than the natural and wholesome appetite for learning, rendered eager by rational curiosity.

In forming a just appreciation of the character of THOMAS JEFFERSON, the American patriot will cast aside the narrow prejudices of party, which embittered the times in which he flourished; and soaring to the higher grounds of national feeling, contemplate him as he appeared to the eye of the republic, in the character of the patriot, the philosopher and the statesman. In the first named capacity, we have beheld him occupy a prominent station in the Legislature of Virginia, until elected a delegate to Congress; he became illustrious for the production of the *Declaration of Independence*, as well as distinguished for the prominent and efficient manner in which he urged the adoption of that measure upon those who were more reluctant to cut off the last hope of reconciliation with the mother country. In this earlier period of his history, up to the unhappy era of the French revolution, Mr. Jefferson stands in bold relief, as an active, zealous, talented and disinterested patriot; who sacrificed his days and nights to the emancipation of his country from the fetters of monarchical dependence, to redeem her from the feudal thralldom of the laws of entail and primogeniture, and to advance to a state of practical utility the equal rights of man, to secure the diffusion of the greatest sum of human happiness. It was in this period of his career, that he made a bold and decided stand for those FUNDAMENTAL POINTS OF FREEDOM, which have immortalised his fame among republicans, and embalmed his name in the hearts of the people. It was then that he so ably contended for—

First—*The reserved rights of the States*, and the non-construction of the *Constitution*—by implication, derivation and analogy.

Second—That he opposed the power to incorporate a bank, because not authorised by the constitution.

Third—That he advocated *economy in expenditures, rotation in office*, the extinguishment of the *funded debt*, and the abolishment of all pomp, parade and ceremony in government.

Fourth—That he contended for the NEUTRAL POLICY of the nation, under the motto of ‘friendship with all nations, alliances with none.’

Fifth—The repeal of *internal taxes, and all excise laws.*

We are to consider him as a philosopher during the period of his retirement, from 1793 to the epoch of his election as President; for, although much of his time was spent in political correspondence, yet as he professed retirement, and took no prominent part in the contests of the day, we must regard him as exclusively occupied in the pursuits of literature, the study of science, the practice of husbandry, and the knowledge of government. It is to be lamented, that during this period of his retirement, he could not find leisure to compose some elaborate work, that might have been worthy of the fame of the author of the Notes on Virginia.

As a *statesman*, Mr. Jefferson's character beams in full effulgence upon us, from the time of his election as President, to the period of his death; and here he exhibits an excellence of character, not indeed without blemish, but so pure, so vast, so exalted, as to extort our hearty and unqualified admiration. To detail the peculiar merits of his Presidentship, in this place, would be to indulge in a repetition of what we have already related. But a synopsis of his political creed, such as he illustrated it by his course of administration, will be necessary to make up a just estimation of his political merits, in contradistinction to the administration of JOHN ADAMS:—

1. An administration conducted on the pure principles of constitutional republicanism—pomp, state and ceremony laid aside.
2. Patronage discarded, or reduced.
3. Internal taxes abolished, and superfluous officers disbanded.
4. Thirty-three millions of the national debt liquidated.
5. The liberty of SPEECH and of the PRESS maintained.
6. Peace with all nations; alliances with none.

But Mr. Jefferson has, himself, given so particular and lucid an account of his public services, that I cannot do better than conclude this sketch of his character by a quotation from his own article. He says, “I may, however, more readily than others, suggest the offices in which I have served. I came of age in 1764, and was soon put into the nomination of justices of the county in which I live, and at the first election following, I became one of its representatives in the Legislature.”

“I was thence sent to the old Congress.

“Then employed two years with Mr. Pendleton and Mr. Wythe, on the revisal and reduction to a single code of the whole body of the British statutes, the acts of our Assembly, and certain parts of the common law.

“Then elected Governor.

“Next to the Legislature, and to Congress again.

“Sent to Europe as Minister Plenipotentiary.

“Appointed Secretary of State to the new government.

“Elected Vice President, and PRESIDENT. And, lastly, a Visitor and Rector of the UNIVERSITY. In these different offices, with scarcely any interval between them, I have been in the public service now sixty-one years; and during the far greater part of the time, in foreign countries, or in other States.”

“If it were thought worth while to specify any particular services rendered, I would refer to the specification of them made by the Legislature itself in their farewell address, on my retiring from the Presidency, February, 1809. There is one, however, not therein specified, the most important in its consequences, of any transaction in any portion of my life; to wit, the head I personally made against the federal principles and proceedings, during the administration of Mr. Adams. Their usurpations and violations of the Constitution at that period, and their majority in both Houses of Congress, were so great, so decided, and so daring, that after combating their aggressions, inch by inch, without being able in the least to check their career, the republican leaders thought it would be best for them to give up their useless efforts there, go home, get into their respective legislatures, embody whatever of resistance they could be formed into, and, if ineffectual, to perish there as in the last ditch. All, therefore, retired, leaving Mr. Gallatin alone in the House of Representatives, and myself in the Senate, where I then presided as Vice President. Remaining at our posts, and bidding defiance to the browbeatings and insults by which they endeavoured to drive us off also, we kept the mass of Republicans in phalanx together, until the Legislatures could be brought up to the charge; and nothing on earth is more certain, than if myself particularly, placed by my office of Vice President at the head of the Republicans, had given way, and withdrawn from my post, the Republicans throughout the Union would have given up in despair, and the cause would have been



lost forever. By holding on, we obtained time for the Legislatures to come up with their weight; and those of VIRGINIA and KENTUCKY particularly, but more especially the former, by their celebrated resolutions, saved the Constitution at its last gasp. No person who was not a witness of the scenes of that gloomy period, can form any idea of the afflicting persecutions and personal indignities we had to brook. They saved our country however. The spirits of the people were so much subdued, that they would have sunk into apathy and MONARCHY as the only form of government which could maintain itself.

“If legislative services are worth mentioning, and the stamp of liberality and equality, which was necessary to be impressed on our laws, in the first crisis of our birth as a nation, was of any value, they will find that the leading and most important laws of that day were prepared by myself, and carried chiefly by my efforts, supported, indeed, by able and faithful coadjutors from the ranks of the House, very effective as seconds, but who would not have taken the field as leaders.

“The prohibition of the further importation of SLAVES was the first of these measures in time.

“This was followed by the ABOLITION OF ENTAILS, which broke up the HEREDITARY and HIGH-HANDED ARISTOCRACY which, by accumulating *immense masses of property* in SINGLE LINES OF FAMILIES, had divided our country into two *distinct orders* of NOBLES and PLEBEIANS.\*

“But, further, to complete the *equality* among our citizens so essential to the maintainance of republican government, it was necessary to abolish the principle of *primogeniture*. I drew the law of descents, giving *equal* inheritance to sons and daughters, which made a part of the revised code.

“The attack on the establishment of a DOMINANT RELIGION was first made by myself. It could be carried at first only by a suspension of salaries for one year, by battling it again at the next session for another year, and so from

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The distribution of FEDERAL PATRONAGE in single lines of FAMILIES, by the national executive, has produced the same effect. Sons inherit the offices of their FATHERS with as much regularity and certainty as they did their estates, under the law of PRIMOGENITURE !! and this, too, under the reformed dynasty of the immaculate Republicans, of whom Mr. Jefferson was the model and the father!!!

year to year until the public mind was ripened for the bill for establishing **RELIGIOUS FREEDOM**, which I had prepared for the revised code also. This was at length established permanently, and by the efforts chiefly of Mr. Madison, being myself in Europe at the time that work was brought forward.

“To these particular services, I think I might add the establishment of our university, as principally my work, acknowledging at the same time, as I do, the great assistance received from my able colleagues of the visitation. But my residence in the vicinity, threw, of course, on me the chief burthen of the enterprise, as well of the buildings, as of the general organisation and care of the whole. The effect of this institution on the future fame, fortune, and prosperity of our country, can as yet be seen but at a distance. But an hundred well educated youths, which it will turn out annually, and ere long, will fill all its offices with men of superior qualifications, and raise it from its humble state to an eminence among its associates which it has never yet known; no, not in its brightest days. That institution is now qualified to raise its youth to an order of science unequalled in any other State; and this superiority will be the greater from the *free range of mind encouraged there, and the restraint imposed at other Seminaries by the shackles of a DOMINEERING HIERARCHY, and a BIGOTED ADHESION TO ANCIENT HABITS.* Those now on the theatre of affairs, will enjoy the ineffable happiness of seeing themselves succeeded by sons of a grade of science beyond their own ken. Our sister States will also be repairing to the same fountains of instruction, will bring hither their genius to be kindled at our fire, and will carry back the fraternal affections, which, nourished by the same *alma mater*, will knit us to them by the indissoluble bands of early personal friendships. The good old dominion, the blessed mother of us all, will then raise her head with pride among the nations, will present to them that splendour of genius which she has ever possessed, but has too long suffered to rest uncultivated and unknown, and will become a centre of ralliance to the States whose youth she has instructed, and as it were adopted. I claim some share in the merits of this great work of regeneration.”

We may consider as among Mr. Jefferson's last acts, the publication of his '*Memoirs*,' '*Anas*,' and '*Correspondence*,'

which we have understood, that he marked for publication, previous to his demise, with his own hand.\* That his mind was sound and sane at that period, will not admit of a doubt. The works, therefore, which he thus ordered to be placed before the people, must be estimated as performances published by the author during his life-time; and not as posthumous productions, for the publicity of which he was not responsible. The fact that he arranged and directed their publication, is sufficient to stamp them with the character of his living works, as much so, as if he had corrected the proof-sheets, as they fell from the press. Why he did so direct their publication, will admit of various constructions. My hypothesis is this—that he designed the volumes published by his grandson as materials for a biography, or history, from the time he ceased his *Memoirs* up to the period immediately preceding his death; and certainly the character of the papers thus published, are every way calculated to carry out the idea of their publicity, as here suggested; being every way competent to furnish ample materials for a history of his life. How far they influence the moral hues of his character, is another question, which perhaps, in the enthusiasm of literary vanity, and the fulness of political fame, he entirely omitted to consider. Censure, heavy and inconsiderate, has already been his portion for this redeeming act of political justice; for which, in our opinion, he deserves more encomium, than for any other act of his retirement. By giving the public these documents, he has placed them in possession of the truth, reckless of the consequences to his own glory, and in defiance of the vulgar prejudices of a narrow minded policy. But why should the disclosure of the *truth*, depreciate the fame of Mr. Jefferson? Such a position is neither consistent with sound ethics, nor compatible with political justice. Whatever Mr. Jefferson has avouched for under his own hand, touching himself, *must* be received as historical truth: and if such averments be not favourable to his fame, who shall say, he had not a right to delineate himself as he really was, without being controlled, or restricted by any artificial

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\* I have this fact from Roberts Vaux, Esq. who derived his information from the grandson of Mr. Jefferson; and which is important, as it dispels a general error of opinion, that his grandson acted with **INDISCRETION** in making the publication, when, in fact, he had no **MORAL** agency whatever in the act.

standard of his character which may have been adopted by the public under the delusion of appearances, or the fanaticism of faction. His character was certainly best known to himself—his motives were truly known to no other; and his sentiments respecting his cotemporaries, could only flow in the limpid streams of truth from his own lips; and besides, his fame was his own property; if it had been overrated by those who knew him not, it was competent for him to present the people with a faithful likeness of himself, by which they might correct the error. I do not know, that Mr. Jefferson has disclosed any thing but what might not have been reasonably inferred from his conduct, or deduced from his principles—so that his testimony has only placed beyond doubt, what might have been otherwise open to dispute, controversy and doubt.

The first motive which actuated Mr. Jefferson to order this posthumous publication, was, without doubt, *literary vanity*—the ruling passion strong in its approach to the grave: the second motive was to solve political problems, which, if not untied, might blur his fame; and to blacken by the worst imputations, the glory of men, whose renown, unless destroyed might equal his own, or perhaps eclipse him. These three motives are evident on the face of these volumes. His ‘Anas,’ blacken Washington, Adams, and Hamilton, as MONARCHISTS, with slight shades of difference in their opinions, on trivial subjects. His *letters* solve many curious problems, among which, and not the least, is his own conduct towards the great federal triumvirate just named. His ‘*Memoirs*,’ gratify his literary vanity, and indicate the extent of fame to which he was destined. I can readily imagine, that Mr. Jefferson might suppose all these publications would redound to his glory and fame—that his *Memoir* would be venerated by the people, with an enthusiastic devotion in virtue of his services—that his ‘*Anas*,’ would manifest a patriotism and love of liberty which would make up for calumny, mendacity and fiction; and that the *benevolence* and *American spirit*, which breathes through his ‘*Epistles*,’ would more than compensate for their insincerity, want of coherence, consistence and harmony, as well as candour, rectitude and truth. And as will always be the case in such works, *the good will predominate*, and thus snatch them as a *whole*, from that perdition, to which, if totally evil, they must inevitably be doomed. Thus, it is

after all, but a sprinkling of evil that we can detect in the post mortem publications of his grandson, as it respects his own character as a politician and a statesman. How far these documents may affect his party is another question; and I must here candidly acknowledge, that Mr. Jefferson has said enough in these volumes, to overthrow the entire foundation and superstructure of the democratic party; not leaving one stone upon another, or cement enough to bind together a fragment of principle to a pebble of policy! They have wrought a total subversion of the great landmarks, which were supposed to divide the two parties. As the grand magician of his party, who conjured it out of the vices of the French effervescence of *Ninety-Three*; he has, by a single wave of his wand, dispelled the whole illusion; and the cheating scene vanishes from our view, with the same apparition-like celerity that it first made its appearance; and we stand paralysed with amazement, at the extraordinary fact, of so large a portion of mankind having given way to a delusion, which eludes the grasp of reason, defies the definition of logic, and baffles the mightiest efforts of the great genius of its author, to reduce it to the palpable form and tangible proportions of reality. Who, in the contemplation of such a picture, can abstain from venting a sigh over the frailty of genius, and indulging in a smile, when he reflects on the easy credulity of the world, that not only swallows with avidity, but invites by eager solicitation, the fiction that enslaves, and the illusion that degrades it!

From a careful investigation of the writings of Mr. Jefferson, published since his demise, we deduce the following three causes of party distinction, between federalists and republicans; most of which, as characterising the former, have been fully adopted and confirmed by the latter.

*First.*—ENGLISH MONARCHISTS, who adopted the British Constitution as the model of perfection, and desired to introduce it in the United States: the proof being in the desire of the *Eastern States* to dissolve the Union. This was a fiction of fanaticism, and of course, not to be adopted by any party.

*Second.*—The MONIED ARISTOCRACY, revolving round the *Bank of the United States*, and the FUNDED DEBT.

*Third.*—The friends of the UNION OF THE STATES, as contending for the SUPREMACY of the *United States* over the

States, in opposition to those who espouse STATE RIGHTS, on the ground that the Sovereignty of the latter is paramount to the authority and power of the former!

These may be termed the *substantive* grounds of party distinction, as avowed by Mr. Jefferson, omitting personal and minor considerations, incidental to, or growing out of them.

Now, the first has been fully exploded as a vision of fanaticism, unworthy the serious attention of any rational being; in itself ridiculous, and completely refuted by the change of the scene of *Sedition* from the *North* to the *South*; the federalists having become republicans—and the republicans of the South being transformed into *English monarchists*; yet at the same time being FRIENDS of STATE RIGHTS, as well as champions of the BANK OF THE UNITED STATES—comprehending the singular contradiction of being the *largest stockholders in that institution*—the essence of the *monied aristocracy*, and according to Mr. Jefferson's theory, not omitting even VIRGINIA! the admirers of the British Constitution, who desire the restoration of the *English Monarchy*!

In the *second* point, we have an ample refutation in the historical fact, that the present *Bank of the United States*, was incorporated by a Congress *unanimously* DEMOCRATIC—and that it was APPROVED and SUGGESTED by Mr. JEFFERSON'S FAVORITE democratic DISCIPLE, *James Madison*, as well as its stock being owned, and its management controlled by democrats—enemies of England, and champions of STATE RIGHTS! At a time too, when the FUNDED DEBT had nearly all got into the hands of the republican party.

His *third* point of distinction is not much sounder; and carries more of specious pretence to liberty, than true devotion to constitutional law. As the *author* of the *Kentucky and Virginia resolutions*, nullifying the ALIEN and SEDITION LAWS, Mr. Jefferson is justly considered as the father of this false doctrine, of oppugnation to federal laws, in virtue of reserved rights, not because there do not exist *reserved rights*, but because, to exercise them in the mode here meditated, would be to destroy the end of government, and prostrate the *whole system of rights* belonging to the majority; for a few reserved rights, supposed to be infringed by an excited minority. Mr. Jefferson has himself confuted this doctrine of *forcible resistance* of the laws of the Union in his letter to *Judge Johnson*, where, in criticising *Marshall's* decision

in the case of *Cohen*, he remarks—“ But the chief justice says, ‘ there must be an *ultimate arbiter* somewhere.’ True, there must, but does that prove it is either party? *The ultimate arbiter is the PEOPLE OF THE UNION, ASSEMBLED BY THEIR DEPUTIES IN CONVENTION, at the call of Congress, or of two-thirds of the States.* Let them decide to which they mean to give an authority claimed by *two* of their organs. And it has been the peculiar wisdom and felicity of our Constitution, *to have provided this peaceable appeal, where that of other nations is at once to force.*” Thus emphatically did Mr. Jefferson confute *all* the differences, which remained for the ingenuity of party to draw a line of hostile separation between nominal federalists and professing republicans. So much for those *substantive* grounds of difference, which can only be relied on to justify pretensions to superior political virtue in either party.

In the same letter to Judge Johnson, he justifies his publication of his ‘ Letters’ and ‘ Anas’ by the following observations—‘ *History may distort truth, and will distort it for a time, by the superior efforts at justification of those who are conscious of needing it most. Nor will the opening scenes of our present government be seen in their true aspect, until the LETTERS OF THE DAY, now held in private hoards, shall be broken up, and laid open to public view.*’ It was, no doubt, to facilitate this object of *historical truth, which impelled him to order those publications which have so astonished and electrified some, and so enlightened and undeceived all!*

It was doubtless with a view to *clear up the opening scenes* of the government, that Mr. Jefferson gave his private letters to the gaze of the public eye; and to this laudable motive, blended with that literary vanity, which is so common to all, and so harmless in itself, are we indebted to him for that rich repast which his writings furnish to the curious politician, and the patriotic American.

Whether *all* has been published from his pen, however, that would throw light on the opening schemes of the political drama of his day, is a question which yet remains to be answered; and which *time* only can disclose. It seems to be probable that little more remains behind, with the single exception of that *full correspondence* which took place between him and *John Adams*, during his retirement; and which naturally excites a desire that those, to whom

the papers of the latter statesman have been confided, will co-operate in clearing up the mystery of the melo-drama of party which has been acted for the *amusement of the people*, and the *profit of the managers*, by giving to the public a full and exact edition of his letters, papers and memoirs.

Mr. Jefferson's style of composition will compare with the best authors of the English language, being at once energetic, harmonious, flowing and elegant. His diction was highly expressive, his choice of words copious, and his command of language wonderful; but he sometimes degenerated into the *French structure* of phrase; and sometimes became feeble and obscure from too much diffuseness. On the whole, however, his composition is equally remarkable for strength, purity and elegance; and he is one of the few of our public men who may take rank by the side of *Washington, Hamilton, Marshall, and Jay*, for the eloquence of their style, and the force and energy of their diction.

On the whole, viewing his character in every light in which it presents itself, and contemplating him in the aggregate of his greatness, history presents us with few men endowed with greater abilities, or better calculated to promote the happiness of mankind. Fulfilling this destination of his genius and his learning, he carried out into practice the plans suggested by his *benevolence* for the EQUALIZATION of human rights and human enjoyments; and became, not only *one of the FOUNDERS* of this great republic, but the special apostle of LIBERTY, in opposition to those systems of ARISTOCRACY which seek to grind the people to the lowest point of human imperfection and enjoyment, in order to make them the more passive and unresisting victims to the fetters of power, and the schemes of ambition. With a heart always alive to the inherent claim of the great family of his fellow beings to life, liberty and property, on the principles of equity and equal rights, he possessed a head endowed with sagacity to penetrate to the causes of human oppression, and resolution sufficient to undertake their removal; nor did he pause in this glorious work of political reformation, until, by patient perseverance, and unremitting labour, he succeeded in the consummation of a system of principles which have secured to the people of the United States the greatest sum of political happiness, which seems compatible with the exercise of universal liberty.



## WASHINGTON AND JEFFERSON

### COMPARED.



AMONG the people of antiquity, it was esteemed almost miraculous for men to rise to supreme power in virtue of their genius and merit, independent of those adventitious aids at that period so much resorted to; such as force, fraud, fortune, or some other accident, distinct from native vigor of mind, and felicity of genius, on the one hand, and the beauty and harmony of the elective franchise on the other; by which a free people spontaneously confer sovereign authority as a reward to merit, or a token of gratitude for public services.

In modern ages, but especially in this happy country, we have become so accustomed to this imposing spectacle, as no longer to behold it with surprise; and it therefore excites little emotion, although worthy of the highest admiration, as a circumstance ennobling to human nature, to behold Washington and Jefferson springing up from the obscure condition of plebeian rusticity, to occupy the chair of supreme power, arrayed in all the attributes of kings, and armed with the mighty energies of empire. Yet this fact illustrates with so much force, the most beautiful feature of our free and equal government, where all native Americans are eligible to the highest post of honour, that we may reasonably pause for a moment to moralise on this resemblance in their humble origin, and splendid fortunes—to contemplate in the young *Surveyor* of Lord Fairfax, the renowned FATHER OF HIS COUNTRY; and to trace in the *Village Lawyer*, of a small town in Virginia, the future author of the Declaration of American Independence, and the third President of the United States—one of whom, by his achievements in arms shook the British empire to its centre; while the other, by his masterly exposition of human rights, scattered the seeds of revolution over every soil cursed by the hand of oppression, or blighted by the shade of tyranny.

It was for the poets of antiquity to sing of the creative powers of genius, and to invent monstrous fables to illustrate its transcendent career; but it was left for *American history* to exhibit in the common occurrences of real life, the force of superior intellect to mould for itself that high destiny for which nature had qualified it at its birth, by endowing it with faculties to overturn the mighty fabric of feudal ages, consolidated by tyranny, and cemented by time. It was left for WASHINGTON in the field, and JEFFERSON in the cabinet, to accomplish a revolution without a parallel in history for its grandeur, and which may challenge the wisdom and judgment of mankind to surpass it in the wholesome principles it has established for the government, or the mass of happiness it has secured for the enjoyment of the human family.

An excess of glory is highly injurious to a just appreciation of character; for, while greatness intoxicates the mind, virtue is sure to captivate the judgment: and the lustre of both combined, are naturally calculated to lead to adulation on the one hand, or give birth to envious detraction on the other.

The unanimous award of mankind in favour of the genius and honesty, purity and patriotism of the character of GEORGE WASHINGTON, while it furnishes ample reason to abstain from an indiscriminate indulgence in panegyric, which his greatness can well dispense with, presents us, on that account, with sufficient inducements to analyse the peculiar traits of his great mind, with an impartial freedom, which, being equally removed from servile flattery, and rigid justice, may preserve that happy medium, in which truth, softened by benevolence, may draw a faithful picture, without deepening the shadows by malice, or flinging the lustre of fiction over the bright and smiling features of its virtues.

Genius, like Nature, combines such opposite qualities, as either to kindle enthusiasm, or excite incredulity and dislike. Hence men, too great, are equally liable to become objects of adoration to some, and of abhorrence to others. In this manner, it is always more difficult to dissect than to appreciate the concentrated merits of one who is alike distinguished in opposite professions, than another who is merely noted for excellence, however transcendent, in a single pursuit.

Thus, where the glory of the statesman and the warrior unite, the glare and effulgence of his entire fame, will scarcely permit us to survey with cool and impartial reason the qualities and deeds of the one, separate and apart from the talents and achievements of the other, so as to arrive at an exact knowledge of the principles and views of the *politician*, distinct from the honesty and zeal of the *patriot*; or the courage, skill, and prudence of the military commander. We all know that *Jove* has his *thunders*; but it is permitted to few only to trace the mysterious course of his wisdom, or admire the infinite beneficence of his decrees, that govern and control the harmony of nature.

In the same manner, the verdict of the public has attested, in a voice too emphatic to admit of a doubt, to the genius, learning, statesmanship, and patriotism of THOMAS JEFFERSON, so as to dispense with that spirit of adulation, which we are so prone to fall into when engaged in an investigation of the merits, or a comparison of the characters of individuals, prominent on the page of history, for their virtues, talents, and public services: for, *true greatness*, like Nature in her majesty, is ‘when unadorned adorned the most.’ The statue of Jupiter does not require to have its brows entwined with roses, in order to add to its sublime proportions, or deepen the veneration felt for the god.

But here again a fresh difficulty arises; for genius in one branch of greatness only, however resplendent, must suffer disparagement when brought into *contrast* with concentrated greatness, that glows with equal lustre in every path of duty. Apollo may captivate the hosts of heaven with his lyre; but it is for Jove only equally to excite affection, admiration and awe.

This contrast of their characters and career, however, is not only natural, but unavoidable. Both were the founders of the republic—both flourished in the same administration—both co-operated to produce the same revolution, and establish the same government—both acted as Presidents of the republic—both headed antagonist parties—both conferred unbounded benefits on the same age, and on posterity—both interwove their minds in the government, and infused their principles into the people. To bring two such characters into comparison appears inevitable; if that comparison results in contrast, it is still more extraordinary, but equally unavoidable.

It will scarcely be denied, that a man may be honest in his views of State policy, and firm in his political principles of constitutional liberty; that he may love his country with an unalloyed and holy love, seeking to promote its welfare and happiness, with a single eye to its glory and freedom; and yet, that his principles may be invalidated or impaired by a constitutional moral weakness that gives the hue of truth to his fallacious impressions, or arrests his best judgment by the irresistible force of a predominant passion. The history of man proves him a creature of delusions, by showing his convictions to be the offspring of his passions rather than the effects of his reason. This, indeed, is more or less the fallible tenure of all greatness; even the highest intellect and genius, to which every man, however he may rise in the scale of superiority or perfection is liable; but which is too frequently confounded with a total exemption from error, in the general glare of renown which encircles a great and a good name.

As time rolls on, and the experience of new generations reveals discrepancies of opinion, or starts doubts of principles and powers, in relation to the organic structure of our government:—or conflicting interests give birth to fresh questions of *right*, or novel propositions of liberty; the authority of great names, as well as the force of illustrious examples, as additional inducements arise to recur to them, become of the most essential importance, and not only excite an intense interest and curiosity, but prompt us, from a regard to our own rights, to ascertain the principles and opinions of those eminent men who were instrumental in forming the government, or achieving the independence of the nation; and thus beget an additional curiosity, of a character peculiar to itself, to pry into the motives of their conduct, and compare the merits of their deeds, as well as the soundness of their principles, the sincerity of their opinions, and the honesty of their professions.

Among the events within the compass of the present age, which have thrown a new and exciting interest over the lives, deeds and opinions of these two extraordinary men, the animated and still protracted discussion of the rights of the individual States, and the controlling power of the Union—stand prominent for their formidable consequences, and maintain a fearful attitude, both in respect to the permanence of the Union, and the popular fame of its two

most distinguished founders. The reference that has so frequently been made to the opinions of Mr. Jefferson, to sustain the doctrines of the party in favour of State supremacy; and the implied sanction of Washington to principles of an opposite tendency, seem to have invested those eminent patriots with a responsibility for modern opinions, which an investigation of facts will scarcely warrant. Yet, how far these presumptions are justified by historical events and political testimony, presents a subject for curious investigation, at the same time that it gives rise to another, still more deeply interesting, because involving considerations of the highest moment to the rights, liberties and happiness of the human family, not only in respect to their popular appreciation, and the true value which we ought to place on their respective characters, but whether their principles, attributes and achievements, as statesmen, politicians and Presidents, were truly modelled on the frame of the Constitution, or the Constitution modelled on the frame of their opinions and principles? And it will appear strange, if, in the progress of this investigation, we should arrive at the extraordinary fact, that the *mind of Washington* was the fountain whence flowed the wisdom and beauty of the federal Constitution—and that *Constitution* became the fountain of Mr. Jefferson's political principles: so that instead of bringing them into conflict, upon this vexed and litigated question, we reduce them to harmony by showing that while both were republicans, both were at the same time federalists: the only difference between them consisting in this—that Washington, as *the Father of the Constitution*, viewed it with the eye of knowledge—and that Jefferson, as its *disciple*, surveyed it with the prying glance of criticism, content to acquiesce in its doctrines, yet as captious, to question its wisdom, as he felt disposed to acquire celebrity by pointing out its defects, or suggesting improvements, which might fortify liberty in impregnable strength or diffuse its blessings to the more universal enjoyment and happiness of mankind.

It is a striking circumstance, in the history of these distinguished men, that the most ardent friendship should have subsisted between them from the year '76 to '93; and that on the part of Jefferson it never abated up to the day of his death, as far as *professions* serve to indicate affection and esteem; while as it respects Washington, he seems suddenly

to have dropped all intercourse with the former from the period of that popular commotion which followed the ratification of Jay's treaty, when Mr. Jefferson took so decided a part against the father of his country. True, Jefferson always contended that no coolness existed between them; but as it respected Washington, this was an error. On the part of Jefferson, it must ever be regretted that political management should have brought him into collision with Washington; for no man was better calculated for ardent and lasting friendship than Jefferson—whose heart on all occasions seems to flow into his pen, and spread over his paper, in the most captivating language of affection. His letter to Washington, accepting the State Department, is the purest effusion of devoted friendship, that, perhaps, ever was penned by one statesman to another! Who was to blame for the rupture of this amity? He who changed his opinions and his department, or he who remained steadfast and unwavering in his ancient creed and patriotic demeanor? Unquestionably, he who changed with the times, and preferred ambition to fixed principles, was more open to censure for ruptured friendship, than the man, who clinging to the Constitution of his country, resisted the allurements of foreign factions, in order the more securely to establish the independence of his country. The moment that Jefferson left the *Washington Cabinet*, even overlooking his assaults on its chief and its measures, whilst a member of it—that moment, he ceased to be a friend to the great man at the head of the nation. It did not necessarily follow, however, that he should become his enemy; yet he did become his enemy, by secret imputations of monarchical propensities, and avowed impeachment of the vigor of his understanding, by representing him as the *dupe* of those around him: playing on his character, the insidious artillery of *insinuation*—vouching for his honesty, but lamenting his delusion—confessing to his patriotism, yet weeping over the infatuations that were pushing the country to ruin! The crime of Washington was his abstinence from the French Revolution; and that he gave the preference to *Hamilton* as a counsellor, than to *Jefferson*! Hence the self-love of the latter was wounded; and under the mortification of this apparent neglect, he felt resentment against one, whose greatness he envied; at the same time that he resolved to detract from his virtue, in order to lessen his influence, which

must otherwise place *Adams*, or *Hamilton*, as his *successor* in the Presidential chair.

But before I enter fully into a review of their deeds, it may here be proper to meet, and obviate an objection to bringing them into comparison, or juxtaposition, which has so often been alleged, as to merit a special remark. In forming a comparison between the characters of these eminent men, we naturally entertain an apprehension of bringing them into conflict, by a supposed hostility of principles and of genius, of party attachments and national policy, which is calculated to throw them into such decided contrast, as necessarily to create a mutual disparagement; as if the merit of one was the demerit of the other; and that there existed some malign spirit, which flaring the torch of demoniac rage over their ashes, would render the excellence of both entirely incompatible with truth, and offensively repugnant to justice.

Happily for the cause of history and public virtue, these apprehensions are found to be as fallacious, as they appear at first sight to be illiberal; for the mist of party passion having been blown off by the winds of time, we can now analyse their virtues and talents, without having our perceptions distorted by the lens of faction, or our feelings embittered by that rage of collision which is so apt to excite resentment, and so often festers into malignity. Besides this reason, which in itself is amply sufficient, the virtues of WASHINGTON have left nothing in the power of history to disparage—while the PUBLIC SERVICES of JEFFERSON, are more than adequate to counteract any possible frailty of character, which the most fastidious virtue, or sharp-sighted malignity could detect, amidst the varied mass of opinions and principles, that constitute his political, literary, scientific, and philosophical character.

In the different bent of their genius, and their opposite pursuits in life, we may discover ample and adequate cause to account for all those features of contrariety, which distinguished and marked their respective characters: and which, throwing one into a splendid eminence, which the civic talents of the other caused him to despair of attaining, naturally infused a feeling of envy, which in time induced those collisions, that terminated in an attitude of unfriendly disparagement. The instinctive propensity of Washington to the occupation, and his powerful ability to

achieve the conquests of war, forms a beautiful contrast to the equally decided bias of the mind of Jefferson to civil and pacific pursuits; and not only explains the disparity in their characters, but accounts, in some measure, for the discrepancy of their views, principles and policy. But it was certainly a misfortune in Jefferson, that he possessed but *one* of the attributes of greatness, and that one the least obtrusive, and the least glaring, which naturally seeks the shade of the grotto, or the quiet repose of the study, achieving its intellectual conquests in tranquil labour, and denied all that eclat and renown, which attends upon 'the pride, pomp and circumstance of glorious war.' This deprivation of military talent, was itself a cause of inferiority, which no acquirements of science, or vigour of genius could compensate; and which must necessarily depress him below Washington, unless the latter had been, in like manner, as destitute of civil greatness as Jefferson was of military talents.

On the other hand, it was the good fortune of Washington, to combine all the great, and to be disfigured by none of the little, or mean qualities of the statesman and the soldier; but to rise to the highest degree of perfection in both, as his genius qualified him to shine with equal lustre in both—an endowment so rare as to furnish us with but two or three similar examples throughout the whole range of history. This combination of civil and military talent, called into action at a peculiar period of the revolution of the government from dependence to liberty—exalted him to the head of the nation, by those natural and imposing circumstances, which invests a father with authority over his children, by inspiring that unbounded confidence, which flows from gratitude for that safety and protection, which a general only can give to a people in time of war, when pillage, devastation, ravage and flames, aggravate the horrors of the sword. It was equally fortunate, that his military station was so intimately connected with, and dependent on his civil duties, so that he could not fail to become proficient in both at the same time, in a path peculiar to himself—clear and unobstructed by the labours of others, without precedents to embarrass him, or counteracting power to perplex his enterprises, or check and defeat his plans. By this means, the force of his genius had full play, and increased the natural weight of his character to a gigantic magnitude,



opening a wide field for the exhibition of virtues, and the display of talents, which showing him to be superior to the abuse of power, and competent to all the duties of both civil and military government, gave him a complete command of public opinion, by having possessed himself of the hearts and confidence of the people. Thus, he rose to the supreme magistracy, by the natural force of his virtues, the vigour of his genius, the vastness of his services, and the extent and solidity of his patriotism, without resorting to intrigue or management. He did not require, and he did not possess, the art, finesse and stratagems of the professional politician; and was, therefore, untarnished by those vices, which, politically, passions generate, to soil the character by sores, as fevers deface the complexion by unsightly eruptions. He had no rival—no competitor, because no man of his age united in himself the same qualities, or had performed the same services to his country: hence, no man thought of attempting to rival one, to whom all bowed with deference, as to a being of acknowledged superiority—and to whom all were equally contented and proud to owe allegiance, as the virtuous and incomparable chief of their free and unbiassed choice.

Less commanding in the scope of his public services, less exalted in his political attitude, and less brilliant in his celebrity, Mr. Jefferson was still equally transcendent in the grasp of his mind, and equally distinguished for the value of his public performances; *intrinsically* equal as a statesman, though externally inferior to Washington in the attributes of heroic splendour. To THOMAS JEFFERSON we are indebted for that great and magnificent creed of CIVIL LIBERTY which now defines, secures, and protects our rights, as men born equally free, equally entitled to the pursuit and enjoyment of happiness, and equally qualified for the exalted task of self-government. THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, which drew its existence from the lucid force of his eloquent pen, inspired by the genuine spirit of liberty, as well as sustained by the soundest doctrines of philosophical truth, must ever be estimated as a production sufficient to entitle him to the admiration and gratitude of all people in all ages; and yet great as it intrinsically is, as the special testament of American liberty, it is only to be adequately appreciated by viewing it as the fountain of human rights in every clime—as the grand foundation upon

which every nation might erect the superstructure of Freedom—as the great root of human rights, from which grew the branches of universal liberty, under whose shade every man could enjoy his own vine, and his own fig-tree. Such, rationally appreciated, is the inherent merit of that memorable paper.

But its preciousness did not terminate in its production; nor was its great author to be satisfied with the mere promulgation of abstract principles, without feeling an ambition to give them a practical illustration which should demonstrate that they were adapted to the increase and diffusion of human happiness. It was reserved for Jefferson to direct the administration of the federal government according to the *Declaration of Independence*, and to have established in its principles the great landmarks of the CONSTITUTION that was subsequently adopted; and which, although not present *in person*, to influence, he was *present in spirit*, speaking through the truths of that document all that liberty and wisdom could have enunciated from the glowing language of his tongue, had he been on the floor of the Convention. In this there is a striking similitude between him and Washington; the two greatest documents of the republic, the FAREWELL ADDRESS, and the DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, having been produced by them; both invaluable, as containing the imperishable creed of American Liberty, but produced under circumstances the very opposite of each other, and for purposes wholly dissimilar; the *Declaration of Independence* leading the way to a separate government in a republican form, and the *Farewell Address* being designed to perpetuate the Union, and preserve liberty, by lessons derived from the experience of its great author. And fortune, as if to compensate to Jefferson, for the superior glory of Washington, had decreed that his name should not be appended to the Declaration of Independence; so she equally favoured Washington, in turn, by denying Jefferson the fame of sitting in the Federal Convention. Here again, however, Washington soars superior to the sage of Monticello; for Fortune, having given him an opportunity to compose his VALEDICTORY, as a set-off to the eclat of the Declaration; while, on the part of Jefferson, he had not the power to overcome the disadvantage of being excluded from the Convention of States that framed the Constitution!

As it respects the comparative merits of the *Declaration* and the *Valedictory*, it is difficult to determine which can boast the superiority. It was the peculiar fortune of Jefferson, and the peculiar felicity of his genius, incident to the active benevolence of his heart, to establish in the *Declaration* a radical principle of civil liberty, which, having extorted the universal assent of mankind, has caused it to be viewed as a standard of free government, which equally defies tyranny to extinguish, and reason to controvert. That standard consists in the defined and acknowledged SOVEREIGNTY OF THE PEOPLE, and their *inalienable* EQUALITY OF RIGHTS; which, at that period, made a bold and daring inroad on established opinions, and inflicted on antiquated prejudices a startling and mortal shock, which ran with the quickness of electricity through the nerves of mankind, waking nations from the death-slumber of despotism, and causing thrones to totter, and empires to quake to their centre. It was universal in its sweep—it was local in its efficacy. In the radical principle it defines, we possess an invaluable test of political justice, by which we may adjust all controversies in collateral questions of government, or abuses of power; for it establishes points of policy as certain and as irrefragible as the axioms of mathematical truth, or the unvarying principles of logic. Starting on the principle of *inherent* sovereignty and *inalienable* rights in the people, Jefferson furnished us with materials for that beautiful theory and practice of government, whose power extends only to the limit of expressly *delegated* authority, which never can encroach upon the rights *reserved by the people*, or pass beyond the reach of their control and final recal; for it settled the responsibility of all public officers to their principals, THE PEOPLE, at the same time that it secured a recurrence to first principles to correct abuses; which principles were rendered so obvious and just, as to defy tyrants to obscure, suffocate, pollute or destroy them. There is a merit in such an achievement which few statesmen can boast of; and yet this was not all, for to Jefferson belongs the peculiar and undivided glory of not only the origin, and the daring enterprize of the primary announcement of the truths of the *Declaration* to the world, but the higher merit of acting on them as the primary elements of liberty, of deeper authority than the constitution itself. The original suggestion, or authorship of this paper, there-

fore, was not the eclipsing point of merit, belonging to his genius and patriotism. When invested with the supreme functions of government, it was his fortune to carry out, into practice, those radical doctrines of liberty which he had so skilfully incorporated in the Declaration, thus giving birth to a school rather than a party, who were wedded to a consistent adherence to the practice of doctrines of republican liberty, which that document had maintained in theory with such captivating eloquence and resistless effect. This was a high merit in Jefferson and *his school*, because of the existence of an adverse party, which, while it tacitly granted the eternal truths of the Declaration, yet felt disposed to recede in practice from those grounds of right which made *power responsible to the people*, reduced it to the minimum of energy necessary to order, and lopped off all excrescences of pomp, expense and perpetuity, which might seduce it into extravagance, or inflate it with despotism. Such were some of the peculiar beauties and merits of the *Declaration of Independence*, which, in the thunders of Washington's cannon, unrolled the scroll of human rights to the delighted gaze of an astonished world, surprised at their own freedom, and bewildered with the consciousness of their own power.

The *Valedictory of Washington*, with less of universal interest, comprises infinitely more of domestic utility and merit. It is the solemn record of wisdom, drawing its important truths from the infallible texts of history and experience; and announcing its precepts of public virtue, in the hallowed tones of pure and disinterested patriotism. It is the *chart* of that eternal ocean of time through which the ship of our liberty is to be steered, on which is painted the safe passage of the broad sea, the whirling pools and eddies that engulf and drift the vessel into dangerous currents, and the rocks above, and the shoals beneath the waves, which, when once touched, wreck her forever; at one spot marking the cape of storms, and at another denoting the treacherous silver of the surface, which tempts only to destroy. It is the work of the greatest political pilot that ever explored unknown regions for the happiness of man; of the most able commander, that ever recorded the experience and observation of genius, for the benefit of his successors, and the safety of the republic, through all the tempests of time, the changes of men, the vicissitudes of fortune.

To the statesman, as well as to the people, it is more permanently valuable than the Declaration; for whilst the VALEDICTORY is read and revered, the public virtue will remain uncorrupted, the public liberty secure from encroachment, the constitution safe from violation, faction will be rebuked into something like decency even in its prostitutions, and demagogues will tremble at the shadow of their own vices, lest the voice of Washington, rising as it were from the sepulchre, to swell the blast of the trump of liberty, should rouse the just indignation of the people, to hurl them to merited destruction.

The merit of these two papers are invaluable and peculiar; and scarcely admit of that preference which would decree superiority to either. One teaches all people to attain freedom; the other teaches all free people how to preserve their liberties, rights and prosperity, by virtue, moderation and firmness.

The style of composition which marks the two papers is admirably adapted to each, but that of the *Valedictory* is more impressive, pleasing and opulent—being more rich, full and flowing; whilst that of the Declaration is more concise and formal, agreeably to its character; one was the Corinthian, the other the Ionic temple. The style of Washington was easy yet dignified, lofty yet familiar; that of Jefferson was more elaborate, learned and artificial, and excites more admiration than pleasure. In their epistolary composition, Washington is superior, because less stiff and more elegant. The letters of Jefferson smell of the lamp, those of Washington are the graceful effusions of an accomplished mind, pouring out its spontaneous riches in a stream of native eloquence, not solicitous of parade and display, but intent on the single purpose before him; yet so polished and refined as always to escape either error, or negligence; being chaste without labour and beautiful without art. In this respect Washington may be compared to Cæsar, and Jefferson to Cicero; except that the former had less art than his Roman prototype; and the latter less eloquence, though equally figurative and rhetorical. And here I will observe that the style of Mr. Jefferson partakes largely of the exuberance and fertility of his noble imagination, while that of Washington seems more imbued with good sense and fine feeling, than vivid fancy or glowing sentiment; yet the power of composition, which distinguish-

ed the latter, was truly surprising for a military man, whose education had been so limited, and whose active pursuits in life had been so far removed from the studies of the closet, and the taste of the belles lettres; a circumstance, however, which denotes the extraordinary genius of the man, and which can alone account for that wonderful career of distinguished success which attended all his undertakings.

It is to be lamented that Jefferson ever questioned the *authorship* of the Valedictory by Washington, by ascribing it to Hamilton and Madison; because it betrays a feeling to which Jefferson ought to have been superior, without the ability to substantiate the fact alleged, which is reduced to a pure fiction. Jefferson had enough of literary fame to satisfy him, without wishing to deprive his great predecessor of this wreath of his civic glory. Neither *Madison* nor *Hamilton* ever made pretensions to any share in the merit of this transcendent production; which affords internal evidence that it came from the same mind, the same pen throughout; every part bearing testimony to the peculiar train of thinking and style for which Washington was so distinguished; and which bears not the most remote affinity to any thing that ever flowed from the nervous and concise pens of Alexander Hamilton and James Madison.

It may safely be alleged, that every hour that adds age and vigour to the federal government, will add glory and applause to this precious valedictory document; and that as the people daily become more enlightened and virtuous, more weaned from factions fomented by the passions of other countries, and having no connection with our own, they will also become daily converts to its sterling doctrines of republican virtue, and holding it not less sacred than the CONSTITUTION which it so beautifully expounds and efficiently fortifies, they will cling to it as the ark of political inspiration, from the true prophet of liberty. It is utterly impossible to appreciate this state paper beyond its real merits. Penetrating to the future with that extraordinary prescience that distinguished this extraordinary man, he has anticipated and portrayed every variety of political crime—every feature of depraved demagogism—every distortion of factious lubricity, and feverish ambition, that could arise to debauch our liberties, or, under the specious professions of hollow patriotism, destroy our constitution.

No events of our history—no eras of our parties—no extended measures—no novel policies of our country—no fresh complexion newly laid on by upstart demagogues, or frog-mire candidates—but will here be found depicted in their true colours, by the admonishing voice of the paternal Washington; whose purity of precept is only equalled by his soundness of principle; and whose jealous solicitude for the rights of the people has no parallel, but in the exalted wisdom of his care that government should act without impediment or obstruction, from the combinations of parties, or false principles of resistance, disguised under colour of right and freedom.

Free governments not only being established on the virtue of the people, but depending for their permanency on the culture and preservation of their moral purity, it has ever been esteemed a source of great calamity, to have their ideas of political morality depraved by bad examples; and on the other hand, it has ever been thought a proportionate blessing when the chiefs and leaders in a popular government have departed themselves with a strict regard to truth, candour, sincerity and justice. By observing an elevated course of political morality; by never professing what there is no intention to fulfil; by never feigning impracticable reforms; and never fabricating fictitious and unfounded charges against antagonist parties; but always acting on the principle of truth, justice, and sincerity—a statesman may do more to cement the liberties of his country, than by a hundred battles, or the extermination of a thousand foes, or myriads of hostile invaders. This was the peculiar merit of George Washington; he was an HONEST and VIRTUOUS STATESMAN; who has left in his example, as well as his precepts, a model of public virtue, more precious to our liberties, and more calculated to ensure the permanency of our free institutions, than the capture of *Yorktown*, or the victory of *Saratoga*. Contrasted with Washington in this feature of his character, Mr. Jefferson presents us with a display of European finesse and insincerity in his political course, which, as his admirer on the sound points of his mind, we would fain behold buried in oblivion; but which his own testimony has recorded on the page of history in features too prominent to be either overlooked, or approved. This is the more to be regretted, as he had so much in his power of a contrary nature; being so pre-eminently qualified both

by genius and education, to exhibit to the people in the beautiful language of eloquence, the advantages of public virtue, and the true glory which attends upon a strict adherence to truth, and a rigid practice of sincerity, honesty, and candour, which in all ages have extorted the applause and veneration of mankind. By pursuing such a course, he would have saved his country from that deluge of foreign passions which infuriate factions let loose upon us; and he would have abstained from that fabrication of monarchical plots and designs, in which no sane mind could believe without supposing a weakness of reason, and a force of passion, wholly repugnant to his philosophical habits of enquiry and reflection. But, by depraving the political morality of the people by fiction and intrigue, he laid the foundation of those violent struggles of party which have gone so near breaking up this happy confederacy into discordant fragments, and tearing society in pieces by civil commotion, and factious brawls. In this respect, therefore, Washington was the very opposite of his successor: for the former was truly the SOUL OF HONOUR, CANDOUR, and TRUTH; who never feigned what he did not feel—and never felt but at the impulse of honesty and justice.

There was no one point of perfect equality between the *external advantages* of these two transcendant men; in every position of fortune, Jefferson being the inferior; nor was it possible to alter this relation of their destiny. When the commander in chief of the armies of a nation combines in himself virtue, public spirit, and splendid genius, together with the high functions of the supreme head of the government, his superiority becomes too manifest to be disputed, if the people are universally satisfied with his rule; and this was in an eminent manner the case with Washington, who was thus compelled to *shun*, instead of coveting, the burden of public honors. The situation of Jefferson was precisely the reverse; and hence much of that diversity which marked their respective characters.

Both were equally ardent, and honorably distinguished in their espousal of the principles of Liberty, and the Declaration of Independence:—both were equally devoted to human rights and to human happiness, as the only just and rational end of all good government. At the commencement of the revolution, and up to the era of the adoption of the Constitution, both agreed harmoniously upon the



means necessary to ensure that object; and Mr. Jefferson went so far as to proclaim himself a disciple of *consolidation*, from which he afterwards dissented, on the power to incorporate a bank, and some minor points of the organic laws. It was the French revolution that came with an awful thunder-clap upon their harmony, when the *banner of blood* terrified Washington from democratic anarchy, and nerved the ambition of Jefferson to ride on the whirlwind and direct the storm.

From the earliest date of American politics, there is no reason to believe that any essential difference of opinion existed between Washington and Jefferson, until the ferment produced by the French revolution acted so violently on public opinion in the United States, as to attempt to *force* an ALLIANCE with France, in the cause of Liberty, and induce a war with England, as a test of the sincerity of our republicanism. At this time, when we can calmly take a retrospection of the fallacious feelings of that era, we can smile with philosophical coolness at the mistaken ideas that then fomented illusions so gross, and led to prejudices so totally unfounded. It was destined, however, that the cool penetration and unperturbed sagacity of Washington should detect the true character of the sanguinary assassins of France, and resist all allurements, arguments, and intimidations, to become a party to the battles of European corruption, and maintain the integrity of American policy, on the pure and independent basis of American principles. In this abstraction from the quarrels and intrigues of Europe, Mr. Jefferson not only then concurred, but continued to enforce it up to the latest day of his existence; whilst, during his administration, he successfully parried the cross-thrusts of the belligerents, without resorting to war: and, making due allowance for his partiality to France, and his antipathy to England, he certainly managed to avoid hostilities with signal address, admirable management, and much diplomatic skill. But this is rather digressing from the point immediately before us.

There was some exception, however, to this unison of opinion between them on minor points of national policy—such as the *Bank of the United States*, the *Funded Debt* and the *Protective System*; but this variation of views did not beget that discordant hostility which results from collisions generated by popular passions, and the inflammatory

feelings of party. On these questions of constitutional right, or State expediency, no passion was agitated, no pride wounded, no vanity ruffled, no interest blasted, no ambition baffled, no feeling chafed. It was a mere difference of abstract opinion, and ended with the expression of dissent. Far otherwise was that generated by the question of the *French Revolution*, which caused every heart to leap, and every vein to swell with passion, which seized on the minds of the people like a raging fire, warming them with enthusiastic devotion towards souls of congenial liberty, and kindling implacable hate against all who would not mingle in the madness of the hour. Political friendship might live and flourish in the first named atmosphere of *honest difference of opinion*, but was wholly incompatible with the scorching heat of that era, whose volcanic eruptions of blood and anarchy threatened to sweep to destruction every opposing sentiment, and to immolate on the altar of popular vengeance, all who should dare to pause ere they yielded their plaudits to the blood smeared actors in the *Tragedy of Mankind*. HUMANITY would instinctively hesitate to contemplate the *consequences*. INTEREST would boldly dash into the current, and secure the effect of popularity, by sharing in the common infatuation of the hour.

Whether it was owing to superior felicity of fortune or genius, or greater power of penetrating to the final result of principles and events, may be doubtful; but it is certain that Washington was guilty of little, or no inconsistency, while Mr. Jefferson's course is marked by a constant succession of fluctuating opinions and opposite views. Thus, we are presented in the old age of Jefferson with the singular spectacle of his denunciation of the French revolution, and his exulting joy produced by the *restoration of the Bourbons!* The period of this change of opinion was February 14, 1815, which will be found fully expressed in his letter to *Lafayette* of that date; and which manifests a contradiction of views, in regard to *foreign* politics, not less remarkable, than he displayed in relation to our domestic policy, during the course of his administration. It may be asked, if he is to be denied the privilege of correcting his opinions by the lights of history, and gaining increase of wisdom from the voice of time? Assuredly not. But our position is this, that it was the peculiar fortune of Washington never to miscalculate events, or to embrace

novelties as blessings, which the course of experience demonstrated as calamitous and afflicting; while on the contrary, it was the misfortune of Mr. Jefferson to be a perpetual victim to change, deluded by the glare of every novelty. It was doubly a misfortune in this instance, however, that Jefferson should have made so great a transition from the extreme of *French liberty* to the opposite extreme of *Bourbon despotism*.

All men are honest, frank, sincere, and free from dissimulation, when their ambition and interest, maintaining an even pace, leaves them under the just influence of their passions, on the commonly received opinions of right and wrong. It is only when some great and extraordinary object of interest, or ambition interposes, to tempt integrity from its high-road, that the mind begins to entangle its thoughts and principles into a shape the best calculated to attain a desired end; and insensibly loses its candour and sincerity in the windings of finesse and the meshes of intrigue. It was unfortunate for the fame of Mr. Jefferson that the French revolution ever existed; and on the contrary, it was fortunate for Washington that it arose to test his firmness, and illustrate his total independence and purity of character. It was unfortunate for Jefferson, because it tempted him to change the character of the statesman for the politician, and to stir those waters which are always fraught with bitterness, and too often impregnated with poison to him who slakes the thirst of ambition at their fountains.

Washington having no motive to court the people, by whom he was idolised before there existed any office to confer upon him, save his military command, of no profit, of vast peril and doubtful honour! was frank, plain and honest in all his opinions and dealings with the public, and could afford to even sacrifice his popularity to his duty. Nor was he only frank; he was courageously just, obstinately right, sternly honest by nature; and as it respected the weight of his popular influence, this rather required to be tamed, than stimulated or increased by artificial means. Jefferson, on the contrary, who at the bloody dawn of the French revolution got a glimpse of power, had to work his way to supreme authority, through a host of rivals, who were the declared friends, *par excellence*, of Washington; and who, while they equalled, or surpassed him in civil

qualifications, overtopped him at that period in popular esteem: besides, he had but one branch of talent to move in, and was to depend solely on his genius, which was certainly great; on his science, which was profound and various; and on his tact and management as a politician, in which he was excelled by none, to make his way to popular favour, so as to enable him to gain the *Presidential Chair*. I say, he had but one field of talent to operate in to gain popularity, because his philosophical attainments could not be appreciated by the great mass of the population; and however they might fix him in the esteem of the learned, they could not promote his popularity with the people. He was accordingly thrown on his diplomatic resources; and if he lost some of his sincerity in being compelled to *finesse* for the game, he had the consolation of success to reconcile him to the censure of honest men. Compelled, therefore, to resort to some *ad captandum* method of winning the favor and applause of the million, he seized on the first popular effervescence to launch his bark upon the current; and when the French revolution broke out with such a burst of flame, such clouds of smoke, and such torrents of blood, and he perceived that Washington was too sternly honest, as well as literally sincere, even to colour his *Neutral Policy* with one affected tinge of the gore of France, lest he should be swayed from his duty by the impulses of feeling—that he would not even pretend to feel a sympathy for *our ancient ally in arms*, when she flung herself to bathe in the ocean blood of liberty—‘when she got drunk with blood to vomit crime;’ but that he remained strictly and honestly consistent, with what both Jefferson and himself believed to be the true policy of the nation; when Jefferson saw this, he discovered at a glance, that the pathway to power had at last opened to him, in a burst of popularity never before equalled; for the people, more prone to feel than to think, and more apt to think erroneously than right, unless they *do feel*, had embraced the cause of France, because it was the cause of liberty, without knowing how it might tarnish the faith, or injure the interest of the nation. On this occasion it was, that Jefferson began to aberrate from that high principle of sincerity, which reduced him to an inferiority to Washington, by practising on the distinction between the character of the *politician* and that of the *statesman*; and to act a part in the former capacity, which was inconsistent

with his principles and opinions, in the latter: for he fully agreed with Washington, that it was the true policy of the United States, not to involve her interests in the quarrels of Europe. But the flood of liberty, as it bore public opinion whirling on its bosom, was too tempting to be resisted either by a laudable or a prurient ambition. It opened on him a light somewhat analogous to the glare of military renown, in its bloody and ferocious beams; that shed on his philosophical garments some of the reflected blaze of the heroes of the *Guillotine* and the *Martyrs of Monarchy!* To stand aloof on such a tempting crisis, would have shown a degree of prudery that his public character did not require; and which would have been as much out of place, as it would have been for Washington to assume the attitude of a demagogue, by plunging the nation into an alliance with France, and a wanton war against England. Their positions and their characters, their objects and their interests, were diametrically opposite. One was President, the other but a candidate in imagination; whose hopes of power at some future day, were but just expanding into blossom, and shooting forth those green buds of glory that carry so sweet a perfume to the heart. Yet Washington, in the same circumstances, would not so have acted; for he disliked the glare of public life; and always retreated from, instead of wooing honors; while Jefferson, though averse to public ceremony, exact forms, and ostentatious displays, was yet fond of the possession of power, and took great pleasure in its exercise, though opposed to its parade and display. In this latter quality, there was a close resemblance between them; for Jefferson himself informs us that all of the ceremonies which distinguished the administration of Washington, were *forced upon him* by Colonel Humphreys and General Knox, much to his own mortification, as he always had an invincible repugnance to public parade.

Here again, however, we are presented with a perfect parallel between the conduct of Washington towards France, in resisting an alliance and preserving neutrality, and that of Jefferson, when President, in steering clear of any alliance with her or England, during the times of the paper blockades, and the Berlin and Milan decrees; which proves how strictly Jefferson imitated Washington, when placed in power, though he affected to censure him with such severity, when that great and pure Chief, saved us

from the stain of a concurrence in the bloody forms, and wild excesses of the French revolution: and which abstinence the people sanctioned, as was shown by the election of John Adams, on whom had fallen the mantle of Washington; but who so little knew how to preserve its purity unblemished, or to appreciate its real intrinsic virtues, in the spirit of the first wearer.

But it is remarkable, that *two great revolutions*, the two greatest of modern times, and ancient history presents us with none similar, were the occasions of exalting Washington and Jefferson to the Presidential chair; for it was indubitably the French revolution that opened to Jefferson the door of the palace, and prepared the way for his future entrance. It is the more extraordinary, because Jefferson thus derived all the advantage of military achievements, without drawing a sword; his mere approbation of the civil commotion of France, having procured him the support of all its votaries, admirers and disciples in this country, as the victories of Washington had done in respect to all the lovers of American independence. Thus, the moment that John Adams had *abused* the strong government of Washington, by drawing the cords too tight, which caused so powerful a reaction of public opinion, Jefferson stood ready, fully attired in the robes of liberty, to enter the Presidential chair, merely in virtue of his sympathy for France, bloody and reckless and tyrannical as she was, and without having changed essentially any of those principles and opinions which had qualified him to act in concert with Washington, in his cabinet, on all great national questions, with the exception of the **BANK OF THE UNITED STATES** and the **FUNDED DEBT**: two measures, which, although deemed monarchical by Jefferson, have received the deliberate sanction of his ultra democratic successors, Madison and Monroe.\*

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\* As late as 1813, Mr. Jefferson declared, that he held no difference of political principle with Washington; that it was a mere difference of sentiment or idea. He says—'The only point in which he and I ever differed in opinion, was, that I had more confidence than he had in the natural integrity and discretion of the people, and in the safety and extent to which they might trust themselves with a control over their government. He has asseverated to me a thousand times his determination that the existing government should have a fair trial, and that in support of it he would spend the

After all motive for finesse and management was removed by the induction of Jefferson into power, the course of his administration fully demonstrated this *identity* of principle and policy with that of Washington, exhibiting that remarkable fact, which establishes a radical difference of perceptions and principles between the *higher order of politicians*, and those who move with the *multitude*, under a fallacious and delusive faith in the infallibility and honesty of those they worship; the remarkable fact to which I make allusion is this: that his administration differed in no *essential* point of PRINCIPLE from that of Washington; thus showing, that liberty as understood by the multitude, never can enter into the elements of government, notwithstanding the words, 'DEMOCRACY,' 'FREEDOM,' 'EQUALITY,' may be rung through all their changes by leaders or demagogues, in order to deceive the people into a happy submission to the yoke which they must bear, no matter who administers the laws which compel them to obedience, as the laws must be administered by all in the same way; and the Constitution is not so flexible as to admit of gross usurpations, without exposing the outrage to popular correction. But Jefferson was every way favoured by fortune, as a President—first, in having Washington to precede him in power, with whose main policy he co-operated and coincided in; and secondly, in having Adams to violate the Constitution by the ALIEN and SEDITION LAWS, which brought into *splendid contrast*, the republican professions of Jefferson,

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last drop of his blood.' 'It is a mere calumny, therefore, in the monarchists to associate General Washington with their principles. But that may have happened in this case, which has been often seen in ordinary cases, that, by often repeating an untruth, men come to believe it themselves. It is a mere artifice in this party to bolster themselves up on the revered name of that first of our worthies.' Yet Mr. Jefferson certainly originated 'the calumny,' and repeated 'the untruth!' But all this he had forgotten, when he denounced its author as a monarchist!

In a letter to Mr. Madison, written in 1788, he furnishes ample proof, by the high encomiums he passed on the 'Federalist,' as 'the best commentary on the principles of government which ever was written,' that he differed in no fundamental maxims from Washington. In the same letter, too, he shows that he distrusted the people quite as much as Washington, for he joins Mr. Madison in deprecating a convention to revise the Constitution, which he then so cordially approved; and indeed at no period ever condemned.

which then covered him with one dazzling and effulgent glow of liberty.

Jefferson possessed another advantage over Washington, which gave him an eclat with the people, out of all proportion to the real measure of their respective merits on the score of liberty, for no republican ever breathed more ardent devotion to true liberty than Washington, every fibre of whose heart vibrated to the wind of freedom, and beat responsive throbs of sympathy to the RIGHTS OF MAN. This advantage in Jefferson, was his having the *worst President as his immediate predecessor*. It was in fact, the *vice* of John Adams' administration, which proved so fortunate for Mr. Jefferson; which enabled him to relieve an oppressed people from the persecution of *Alien and Sedition Laws*, and the burden of *Excise and Stamp Acts*, with all the train of evils consequent upon the total perversion of the government, to say nothing of the projected Union of *Church and State*, as alleged by Jefferson to be meditated by his predecessor, John Adams. In these particulars, Jefferson possessed many brilliant advantages over Washington, who had no wicked administration to bring in contrast to his pure, virtuous and patriotic government: and it must be observed, that the greatest impressions are always made on the mass of the community, by *contrasts*, and not by the intrinsic merit of positive virtue and talent.

An essential difference marked their various genius, in its *active* power; Washington's inclining more to repose, tranquillity, and acquiescence, and that of Jefferson being *active*, belligerent, revolutionary, seditious, agitating, and enterprising, and of course, capable of greater benefits to mankind. But, unfortunately, this superiority of volition in Jefferson was rendered in a great degree nugatory, by that visionary temper of his mind, which, always rioting in *hypothesis*, too often left him a victim to chimeras, when he ought to have been projecting *practical* benefits for society; in which Washington, though less active in intellect, was more fortunate and successful.

It is not one of the least interesting traits common to these two illustrious men, that they should both be engaged at the same time in the attainment of the revolution, by opposite, but not less important, or less efficacious means—one by military movements, and the other by civil reformation; for, while Washington was giving all the energies of



his mind to vanquish or extirpate the mercenary troops of Britain, Jefferson was devoting his days and nights to pulling down the gothic strong holds of English judicial tyranny, and demolishing those feudal citadels of oppression, injustice, and superstition, which were entrenched by a system of laws, founded in the individual caprice of the tyrants of a barbarous age. By revising the civil and criminal code of Virginia, and substituting ordinances emanating from the principles of liberty, and based on the rock of equity and right, for laws founded in regal caprice, or military despotism, Mr. Jefferson rose to an elevation not inferior to the fame of Solon, or Lycurgus; for his success in abolishing the law of ENTAILS and PRIMOGENITURE, alone, will forever immortalise him as a patriot, and cause him to be held in veneration as a philanthropist and statesman of the highest grade. Perhaps no country has ever before been so signally blessed, by having two such great minds occupied at the same time in the discharge of military and civil functions, so indispensable to the completion and confirmation of its liberties.

Through every vicissitude of the revolution, destiny still assigned to both the most responsible stations of usefulness to their country; and it was a remarkable circumstance in their history, that while the signature of Washington is wanting to the Declaration of Independence, owing to his being at the head of the army prior to that event, that Jefferson should have been absent from the Convention which adopted the Constitution, under the Presidentship of the former. At this latter period, however, Jefferson was as usefully employed in his peculiar element, negotiating loans and treaties of commerce with the powers of Europe, and winning for his country that moral and political weight of character which always attends a nation from the genius, learning, tact, and philosophy of its ambassadors; so that, in respect to the moral elevation of the United States in the eyes of Europe, Jefferson contributed by his talents of diplomacy, and his literary acquirements, as Washington did at home by his military deeds and civil services. Three such men as Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and John Adams, representing us in Europe, would cause the country to be as much respected as the capture of a British army of ten thousand men. When John Jay returned from Europe, he declared that the man who stood highest

on the roll of fame, among the Americans, after Washington, was *Alexander Hamilton*; so, we may add, that the *third* was Thomas Jefferson.

It is on many accounts to be lamented, that Jefferson was absent from the country during the session of the Federal Convention, and that he had not a seat in it when the Constitution was adopted; for it is highly probable, that his being away may have kindled that jealousy of its provisions, and that envy of the fame of its authors, which were a part of his nature, and which caused him to feel more dissatisfied with their work than he otherwise would have been, from a pure intellectual review of its merits and defects. This is manifested by his letters, approving of *all* its provisions at the time, and suggesting the amendments which were subsequently appended to it. Had he been one of its authors, the croakings of his criticisms would have been silenced; for in that case, the discrepancy of his views touching the *national bank*, the *funding system*, and the *rights of the States*, would have been compromised, or settled and adjusted to a distinct understanding; besides, the force of his genius, the extent of his learning, and the perspicacity of his intellect, brought directly to bear upon the subject, would no doubt have suggested improvements, which, when *not excited* by the imposing dignity and importance of the occasion, would not be so likely to occur to him. So that, considered in any light, his presence in the Convention would probably have prevented all those party feuds which were afterwards engendered under the pressure, or the pretence of those discrepancies.

A disposition prone to jealousy, and envious of others, seems, in some measure, natural to genius when combined with literature; which, as it gives birth to criticism, is sure to engender captiousness. Washington, exempt from these frailties, because not possessing the propensity that gave them birth, appears in a more amiable, if not a more exalted light than Jefferson, the controversial action of whose mind constantly exposed him to the influence of passions embittered by the infusion of jealous ideas, or disturbed by the irritation of envious feelings. Yet this jealous propensity had nothing abasingly little about it; for a great mind is only jealous of great objects; and what excited the envy of Jefferson would have exacted the veneration of inferior beings.

In another respect, this literary passion of Jefferson proved of serious disadvantage to his fame, by realising the exclamation of the ancient prophet, 'Oh! that mine enemy had written a book!' But who can resist the impulse of genius?—who can escape the decree of destiny! It was sufficient that his mind was imbued with '*the divine fire*'—that it was filled with the love of antiquity, garnished with modern science, and fermented by the true spirit of philosophical improvement. Such being the facts, it followed almost as a necessary consequence, that Jefferson should leave behind him a voluminous production of 'Memoirs,' 'State Papers,' 'Anas,' 'Correspondence,' and other works, in which the secret thoughts of his heart were recorded, his motives revealed, his springs of action confessed, and the whole *moral economy* of the man and the statesman laid bare to our view by the skilful operation of his own dissecting knife; and which, while it casts a glare of light upon the track of his political pilgrimage, for which history must ever stand indebted to his candour, at the same time enters a powerful plea of extenuation for much of the frailty that it unconsciously exposes. In this, Jefferson differed essentially from Washington, who, besides that he had no literary passion, or ambition to gratify, had no *secret history* to endite. It is our peculiar genius that creates the necessity for its exercise, or makes the meat it feeds on. Jefferson was scientific, inventive, literary; hence he was led into theories; these seduced him to simulation; hypotheses gave birth to plots and schemes, which all required literary talent and tact to conceal, shadow, expand, manage, direct, digest, and eventually explain, reconcile, harmonise, excuse, palliate or justify. Washington, if he was destitute of the charms and flowers and graces of *mere literature*, or *philosophy*, was of course without the schemes it engenders, and free from the intrigues that mark the career of the profound theorist and speculator. Above the entanglements of party—exempt from the meshes of personal politics, and exalted above the schemes and plots of rivals, he had *no history of his heart to reveal*, distinct from the *history of his country*—he had used no management to explain away, and devised no plots to be cleared up—he had inflicted no wounds on the reputations of others, whose smartings called for balm to be poured into them before they would close and heal. Thus, if he

left no volumes to record his own glory of private genius by his own pen, he left no deeds that might obscure that glory, by the efforts used to palliate, excuse, or defend them. If, therefore, as a philosopher and an author, Washington left no works behind him, the disadvantage is more than made up by his single hearted sincerity, and honourable confidence, which never *suspected* depravity of another, never designed evil to those around him, and never recorded the poisonous whisperings of any against the fame and integrity of his friends.

It must not be understood, however, that I mean to disparage those beautiful productions of the pen of Washington, which, in the form of his 'VALEDICTORY,' of his LETTERS, of his MESSAGES, and other public documents, carry about them all those native charms of style, and unaffected elegance of composition, which, without being laboured, always please, and without foppishness, always shine: congenial to the character of their author, combining majesty with grace, and uniting elegance to manly vigour.

The minds of both were constructed on the heroic model; soaring to great ideas, and rejecting all that was grovelling or derogatory, while the circle of their perceptions was as unlimited as the range of their thoughts, and as universal as the bounds of science. The mind of Jefferson, however, was made up more artificially from the stores of learning; while that of Washington was replete with the spontaneous riches of an exuberant and creating genius, sprouting into verdure, buds, and blossoms, whenever touched by the dews of reflection, or warmed by the vivid glow of duty, excitement, patriotism, or glory.

The nice shades of difference, and beautiful diversity existing between two illustrious minds, constitutes the most pleasing theme of history; and while it prompts us to bow to the majesty of virtue, which shines forth in the character of Washington, it extorts no less reverence and admiration for the colossal frame of the intellect of Jefferson; which was evidently organised on a *system* of more exact science, and purer ratiocination, than that of the first President. The propensity of Jefferson was to the *closet*, to deep research, pure science, profound metaphysics, elaborate philosophy, strict analysis, undaunted reason, mixed with a chastened but vivid imagination, rife with creations, but never rioting in profuse fertility. Jefferson was all per-

spicacity, acuteness, system, principle, resting on the regular gradation of abstract truth, branching out into beautiful, and often fanciful theories, such as we behold in his *Notes on Virginia*, connected with the improvement and happiness of mankind, and directed to the perfectability of free government and the human mind. Yet his literary *integrity* was not encircled, like that of Washington, by the splendour of unvaried truth; and his propensity to *mystification*, too often obscured his meaning, enveloped his sentiments in doubt, and curtained, amidst clouds of sophistry, the real features of his opinions. This defect probably arose from the perversion of the moral faculty caused originally by his study and practice of law, and afterwards confirmed by the habits of equivocation, subterfuge and finesse, incident to the science and art of diplomacy; for a negociator is but a lawyer pleading with nations, reserving points for equivocation, and retreating behind verbal distinctions, to escape the award of truth, or the mortification of confessing to injustice. On the contrary, the intellect of Washington resembled the pure azure of the heavens, which sparkled with truth, and was undimmed by a cloud; and yet in force, in art, in finesse, in imagination, in science, was inferior, on the whole, to that of the sage of Monticello. Though not irregular, or eccentric, it was more desultory and less classical than that of Jefferson; it was *self-formed*, had not been so strictly disciplined by a rigid education, and was more made up from observation, experience, living wisdom and actual knowledge of the world. Although capable of great volition and pregnant with vast ideas, the leading trait of his mind was the un-mixed gravity of wisdom, the dignified conception of truth, the lofty contemplation of principles self-evidently true, or established by facts, on the system of Bacon's philosophy of *induction*; so that he was inferior to Jefferson in that vivacity of imagination which caused that philosopher to sport so often on the wings of speculation, theory, and abstract systems. In this consisted the great difference between them. Had Jefferson been educated to war, he would have made a very enterprising, but not a safe general; and had Washington devoted his mind to *philosophy*, he would have rejected all error, however specious or brilliant, and established on a foundation not to be shaken, the inductive philosophy of Bacon, where the apex of theory

should tower, like the pyramids of Egypt, gradually from the expansive base of facts, in all the beauty and grandeur of indestructible truth.

Washington was magnanimous and unsuspecting, because intrepid, honest and fearless. Jefferson rather inclined to the opposite qualities, for he was deficient in that high degree of physical as well as moral courage that we look for in great men, as well as suspicious, for he seems to have been really of the belief that his opponents desired to overturn the republic, and erect on its ruins the splendours of monarchy; a belief so monstrous as to class itself among the most gross infatuations of the bewildered fanatics of any age. And here I must remark a contradiction in Jefferson's philosophy, which did not tend to elevate him above his illustrious model; for with all his vigour of reason, he fell into the weakness of *political fanaticism*, if he was sincere in his *suspensions* of monarchical designs on the part of Hamilton and Adams; and if he only *affected* that belief for *party purposes*, he became equally culpable on another score. Yet in politics, he was, at all periods of his life, inclined to *political fanaticism*, consulting passion instead of reason, and looking to monstrous crimes in his opponents with a full belief, without reference to motive, object, or consequences. *Credulity* ought not to have led him to *keep a journal* of slanderous imputations against the first patriots of the republic, nor ought *passion* to have stamped such atrocious aspersions with the hue of probability. This *political fanaticism* could not be ascribed to his ambition, for he retained its weakness to the day of his death, and when he was induced to acquit JOHN ADAMS of all designs of monarchy, he was still ready to lay the same treason at the door of PICKERING. Now Washington was too truly philosophical to fall into this *fanaticism*; he never believed the plot of monarchy, and Jefferson did not *criminate* him for his scepticism! Why? Because Jefferson did not believe it to the conviction of his reason, and never adduced the charge, but in moments of political excitement, when *passion*, not judgment, stood at the helm; and when at a loss for a reason to justify his political dislikes and antipathies, he could, in an ad-captandum way, allege the plot of *monarchy*, which, like the old cabalistic terms of faction in Great Britain, silenced all opposition, and superceded all argument, by the cry of 'POPERY! POPERY! POPERY!'

I repeat, that when compared to Jefferson, on this score, Washington rises to a decided superiority; for he was even more exposed than the former, to all those temptations which shake reason from her centre, to the weakness of political fanaticism! He was more exposed in 1793, during the French revolution, and might, with equal reason, have charged the democrats with jacobinical designs, but he did not; he knew their motives to be pure, and though his well-poised mind would not permit him to fall into the popular enthusiasm for French liberty, still he favoured her revolution, up to the time when it became dangerous to the peace of the country to give it positive encouragement; and if he warned the people against the perils of self-created societies, his candour proved his conviction of their honesty, as it showed the obligation of duty, under which he thought he was acting in making the admonishment.

As the *father of the protective system to American manufactures*, to Washington belongs the exclusive merit of *founding* that system, which has so exuberantly contributed to the wealth, vigour and resources of the country; while to Jefferson belongs whatever merit may attach to the doctrines of *free-trade*, connected with the principles of *State rights*, as an agent by which to resist the protective policy. Yet, in some measure, Mr. Jefferson's *domestic* system of non-intercourse with foreign nations, involves the principle of *encouragement* of home industry, without a resort to protective revenue. This system of *protection*, as one of the collateral branches of *national independence*, received the decided approbation of Washington, as a prominent feature of the federal policy, naturally growing out of the Constitution, and formed a prominent object of contention between the two chiefs, *Hamilton* reporting in favour of protection, and sustained by Congress; and Jefferson, sustained by Madison, reporting for *general free trade*, and partial protection, as a measure of *retaliation* only, but never sustained by Congress. So that, when we contrast this part of their policy, that of *Washington*, as it respects the wealth of the nation, is superior; while that of *Jefferson*, as it respects the local interests and individual liberties of the States, has its peculiar merit. But here, as in every other difference between them, the policy of Washington was of *great practical utility* to his country, and that of Jefferson of *great theoretical freedom*. Washington

was exceedingly wise, or uncommonly fortunate, for whatever be patronised, or projected, contributed to swell the prosperity and affluence of the country; while the systems of Jefferson, though more refined and metaphysical, rather retarded, or were calculated to retard, or arrest, the growth and wealth of the nation.

Thus his *domestic system*—his *Chinese policy*—his *non-intercourse*—his *abstraction* of the republic from the commerce of the world, all tended to produce the opposite effects of that expansive and liberal policy of *commerce and manufactures*, which stamped the administration of George Washington with the bold, magnificent and colossal features of American genius, industry and enterprize.

On the other hand, Jefferson's genius shines forth in his favourite system of a *frugal government*—*small revenue*—*limited expenditures*—*no taxes*—*no public debt*—*no superfluity of public officers*—*no internal improvements*, so that power may be kept down to the standard of pure republican simplicity; preferring poverty with freedom, to opulence under the temptation of losing it; stinting the growth of the nation, in order to preserve it from the perils of corruption. For this system Jefferson was highly extolled by his admirers; yet it seems inconsistent with his predominant notion of the perfectability of man, and his daily march to improvement, which would rather suggest the *expansion* of the government functions in proportion to the growth of the country, than the contraction of its prosperity to the ancient measure of its original organic limitations. Thus 'economy,' 'economy,' was the cry of Jefferson; commerce, revenue, prosperity and improvement, was the motto of the Washington cabinet; the latter has *prevailed in practice*—the former is only heard in theory; the country has expanded, the *policy* of Washington has prevailed through *all administrations* under the appellation of '*democracy*,' and the special magic of the powerful name of Jefferson!

Both were ambitious; but they differed as much in their ambition, as in the other passions of their minds, that of Washington being inflexibly directed to the performance of *just actions*, indifferent of praise or censure; and that of Jefferson, being directed to *just actions*, with an immediate view to popular applause. the appetite for which formed at once the great feature, as it proved the only vice of his public



character, *if it can be said to have had a vice*. It cannot be dissembled that the ambition of Jefferson, although pure and moderate, was yet diluted, if not turned from its noblest channel, by that weak benevolence which covets universal praise, which caused him to tremble at the whisperings of censure, and inclined him too often to compromise his principles and opinions, in order to avert criticism, or escape controversy and condemnation. When he retired from the cabinet of General Washington, he alleged to that chief, as the leading cause of his resignation, the pain it gave him to be among *aristocrats*, who viewed him with a glance of hatred, or surveyed him with the leer of scorn, instead of returning hate for hate, and scorn for scorn, which the goodness of his heart would not allow. He also spoke of the public papers, in a manner that betrayed the anguish which their censure inflicted, by an acrimonious denunciation of their licentiousness; instead of being satisfied with the approbation of the President, and the voice of a self-applauding conscience. There is reason too, to believe, that his conciliatory phrase, 'we are all republicans—we are all federalists,' had its source in this deficiency of moral courage; which, however, is always more or less allied to benevolence, and the amiable weaknesses of our nature. So that, after all, this defect of character carried with it a beauty, which did not shine so conspicuously in Washington, who was too lofty to be merely amiable, and too stern to be actively benevolent; and whose ambition was so chastened down to a passive and exalted form, as to be wholly indifferent to immediate gratification, partaking of that comparative repose which always characterises gigantic natures. True, he was not insensible to the censure or praise of men, for he felt reproach acutely, but he could endure it and depise it, and sought not by *concessions* to avert or mollify it; and he did endure reproof and condemnation, for the sake of final and future encomium, renown and glory. His whole career, throughout the revolution, was a sacrifice of present praise, and an endurance of unjust obloquy and sarcasm, for the sake of his country—for the sake of final glory; and here he realised the highest fortitude and greatness of the human soul; for it was the safety of the republic which sealed his lips as to the *cause* of his abstaining from battle, and reconciled him to bear

the most cutting reproaches, equally derogatory to his honour and patriotism.

Jefferson, endowed with a more delicate sensibility, and a softer shade of character, presents us with less inflexible and courageous traits of mind, being eager to snatch the applause of the moment, and ever alive to the task of averting censure and deprecating condemnation, without looking to the grand result of his actions, when the time should come for settling the true sum of his glory—at the period of calm judgment, when the passions, laid asleep by time, would permit the verdict of reason to be heard and recorded, unmixed with prejudice, interest, or excitement. For, after all, to that period must all living fame be referred for just and final adjudication. But this seems to have been impossible to Mr. Jefferson, who was evidently endowed with a quicker sensibility than Washington; not, perhaps, a greater sum of it, but a greater susceptibility of excitement; and one reason of this difference between them is to be found in the fact, of the greatness of Washington having operated upon Jefferson as a sort of exemplar to glory, inspiring him with an emulation of greatness, and whetting his appetite for distinction; which always produces more or less of that nervous anxiety for the issue, which ever attends an intense desire of success. That this kind of emulation was deeply seated in his mind, he has himself told us, in a letter to his grandson, where he thus expresses himself: “I had the good fortune to become acquainted very early with some characters of very high standing, and to *feel the incessant wish that I could ever become what they were.*” No doubt but he had this same feeling in relation to Washington, whose superior renown operated on his mind to produce the twin passions of emulation and envy; and thus to make him as morbidly sensitive to abuse, or censure, as he was anxiously covetous of approbation and encomium. It was the repulsion between his ambition and his benevolence, that naturally reduced the tone of his moral courage, and deprived him of some portion of that tenacity of principle and opinion, which forms so bold a feature in the character of greatness, and without which it exhibits a deficiency of what is essential to firmness of purpose, consistency of principle, and fidelity to professions, as well as that true dignity of mind, which is itself a virtue, and which bears about it such an indescribable charm and beauty, that it wins universal admiration and esteem.

Nor is this quality incompatible with a due deference for the opinions of others; on the contrary, it implies the right of freedom of opinion to all, and extends no further than to insist on our own right, while we grant the same liberty to those who differ from us. No man was further elevated above all thoughts of proscribing freedom of opinion than Washington; yet he always maintained his principles with firmness, defended them with zeal, and practised them with energy.

There are many acts of his life which seem to impress the idea, that he possessed *moral courage* in its greatest extent, especially his authorship of the *Declaration of Independence*; which long perplexed me to decide on those other events of his life, which denoted a deficiency of that great quality. But it must be remembered, that the most timid men will act with apparent courage and decision when their *individuality* is lost, or obscured in the general responsibility of a public body; and that Mr. Jefferson, as *one of a committee of Congress*, would have moral courage to compose the Declaration for *that committee* and *that Congress*, which would entirely fail him when placed to the score of his own personal account. So it was with the reform of the *Civil and Criminal Code of Virginia*, when he expunged the laws of *Primogeniture and Entail*, and that which bound the mind to religious observances—he acted as one of a *Committee*, and thus avoided *individual* responsibility for the obnoxiousness of the act.

It must not, however, be understood, that I mean to deny to Mr. Jefferson *all* moral courage; for he possessed and displayed it on some occasions to a considerable extent; but did not manifest it on so great a scale as to qualify him for those striking deeds which constitute heroism of character.

In accordance with this temper of his mind, he never ventured on any measure that could excite the discord of his cabinet, or bring him in collision with the heads of departments; to whose opinions, promises and arrangements, he even sacrificed his own pledges, and, on some occasions, his own convictions. This disposition made him skilful in the practice of evasion, equivocation, and sometimes of duplicity.

When we contemplate the productions of Mr. Jefferson's pen, he does not appear so wanting in moral courage, as when we compare his actions in public life, with his theories

on paper: yet even his correspondence exhibits a perpetual desire to explain, harmonise and reconcile points of discrepancy, which are obviously too discordant ever to admit of concord. Thus, what he had condemned Mr. Adams for in 1798, and politically counteracted in 1801, he *absolves* him from in 1813, in order to consummate a reconciliation; and by a method which was as easy in 1801, or '98, as in 1813, that is, by shifting off the responsibility from Mr. Adams, *on his cabinet*, for all his *pernicious* and *obnoxious* acts, leaving to him *only* the responsibility of all his *good* measures, a species of sophistication which Mr. Jefferson must have been fully sensible of, at the very time that he committed it.

Washington was more fortunate, at least, if not more highly endowed. He had no opinions to modify, no political antipathies to explain, no party quarrels to reconcile! no responsibility to shift from one agent to another, in order to escape the pangs of controversy, or the shock of contradiction, which always carried horror and dismay to Mr. Jefferson; who, even on the topic of religion, where he was apparently most dauntless, shrunk from the publicity of his opinions, always enjoining secrecy on his correspondents, and ever indulging in lamentations, because his confidence was betrayed! He was evidently afraid of the clergy; but when he found the clergy did not attack him, he returned to the charge, and made another *confidential attack* on the clergy.

It was unfortunate for Mr. Jefferson, that his peculiar position having excited and developed a propensity to *agitate* all questions as a politician, instead of *composing* differences of opinion, that it should have led to establish a corresponding habit of his mind as a statesman, to *unsettle* all principles of government, in direct opposition to the contrary temper of Washington, whose object appears to have been to settle and establish the government, its principles, its powers, and its functions on a foundation of permanency not to be shaken by doubts, or overturned by sedition as well as to concentrate public opinion to this point. To have government established on a *solid basis*, where its principles secure equal freedom and happiness to the people, seems infinitely preferable to its perpetual oscillation and the continued agitation of its powers without bringing the discussion to a practicable issue or a more beneficial practice.

It was unfortunate for Jefferson, that he bequeathed as a legacy to the people, *doubts* never to be dispelled by controversy, and broached principles that, while they cannot add to liberty or happiness, interrupt the calm enjoyment of both, by inspiring fallacious hopes and visionary dreams of political bliss, that never can be realised under a system of civil law, and a voluntary Constitution. Viewed in his character of *agitator*, Mr. Jefferson sinks to an inferiority to Washington, which we cannot but deplore, as not only unnecessary in a country which enjoyed the *maximum* of liberty, but as derogatory to his elevated character as a statesman, and his rational dignity as a philosopher. What more can government give than an *equality* of right and happiness to every citizen? In vain would sophistry labour to disguise the fact, that by pursuing this course, Mr. Jefferson has proved the founder of a school of *agitators*, who, without having for their object any tangible measure of national good, were prodigal of professions of liberty that meant nothing, and unceasing in exciting the people against chimerical grievances and unfounded wrongs; the fallacy of which being constantly liable to detection, created a kind of moral necessity for deceit; thus creating what their founder never intended, a distinct class of political demagogues, who in a free country had the audacity to proclaim to the people that they were slaves, in order that in virtue of the deceit, they might ride into office, on their credulity and fanaticism. On this point Washington was far above his successor; for he was only solicitous to secure to the government the faithful exercise of its legitimate powers: and to conciliate and confirm public opinion in support of a system, based on the rights of man, and operating to protect the property and promote the happiness of every republican, who could boast of the title of '*citizen*.' In a *despotic* government, the merit of Mr. Jefferson's conduct would have been transcendent; but under a *free* Constitution, which dispensed even a prodigal measure of liberty to all, it was mischievous, as well as unmeaning, and led to those turbulent associations and clubs, which fermenting by the imported passions of Paris, Dublin and London, had to resort to the wretched fiction of a *plot of monarchy*, in order to give plausibility to the wild chimera, which formed the ground-work of their tessellated party.

All differences of opinion that ever existed between these

great men, appear at various periods, to have been reconciled, removed, or superceded by coincident sentiments, or waivers of the question, on the part of Mr. Jefferson; so that in the end, it would appear really difficult to tell, whether he, or Mr. Adams, had been the author of the *ALIEN* and *SEDITION* laws, or the father of the *State Rights* doctrine.

The same remark will apply to Jefferson and Washington; but here there was not the same reason for hostile views or political hatred, and of course, no difficulty of reconciliation, even under the fanatical charge of monarchical designs alleged against him; for the allegation not being sincere, the recantation cost nothing.

The moment that Jefferson commenced acting in a military capacity as Governor of Virginia, he bowed at once with reverence and affection to the acknowledged supremacy of the genius of Washington, and joined in the universal sentiment of veneration which at all times attached to the person and character of the great chief. Personally and politically intimate, as they were, at a subsequent period, when the glory of Washington was in its full blossom, it is scarcely possible that they should ever have cherished a misunderstanding of the genius and motives of one another: and once conceding the point of mutual patriotism and integrity, in which belief both were sincere, it is inconceivable that difference of opinion should have led to an alienation of friendship. Rivalry could not enter between men of such dissimilar genius, at least not on the part of Washington; and although it is possible that Jefferson may sometimes have contemplated the fame of the former with a jealous feeling, yet the object of his emulation was too highly exalted in glory and power, to permit any permanent emotions of envy to take root in his bosom. The attempt to pull him down, therefore, by Frenau, Callender, Bache, and Duane, was soon abandoned; for it was quickly found to react against themselves: it was the Lilliputians attempting to bind Gulliver, to use a favorite comparison of Mr. Jefferson, and overwhelmed them in disgrace, for having attempted to destroy a man whose virtues made him indestructible.

Although it is more a circumstance of fortune than a trait of individual merit, yet Jefferson possessed an advantage over Washington in having the sympathies of his nature fully developed by the parental affections. A man, in ge-

neral, who has no children, is but an imperfect being, defective in the noblest and most amiable feelings of the heart. Had Washington been a father, he might have been less austere, but he could not have been more virtuous; he might have been more amiable and accessible, but not more benevolent. This circumstance threw a softer and warmer colouring over the character of Jefferson, which displayed him to advantage, when contrasted with the cold and repulsive dignity of Washington; but, perhaps the want of progeny in the latter, caused no material reduction in the splendour of his character, or the perfection of his heart and mind; as he seemed to have been in so great a degree elevated above the common failings and weaknesses of our nature; yet to Jefferson, this circumstance must have been highly favourable to the bland and amiable cast of his temperament, inclining him to affection, benignity, and friendship.

As a statesman, the palm of superiority must certainly be awarded to Washington, who gave the flesh and muscle, and animation of practice, to the new theoretical *skeleton* of an untried constitution; and whose execution of it being afterwards confirmed by all his successors, attested to its wisdom; for the *few exceptions*, in which they departed from his precedents, were so immaterial, as not to constitute a difference of judgment as to the *main policy* of the nation. Mr. Adams' *misrule* is always to be considered as anomalous; and when we compare Mr. Jefferson's policy of the *anti-commercial* system, with that of his successors, his was in that respect likewise anomalous. Mr. Adams' precedent *misrule*, was unfavourable to the full display of Mr. Jefferson's statesmanship, as it gave him a propensity to ultraism, or a *radical* policy, too much in the *extreme* of his views; but this was corrected by his successors, and commerce was reinstated in her just rights.

In comparing their peculiar merits as statesmen, we ought of course to include the views and doctrines of each, in relation to the Constitution, and the extent of its powers over the States. And here Washington shines in the lustre of transcendent superiority, not so much because he manifested superior talents, as superior rectitude and consistency. As the father of the Constitution, we have seen Washington stimulate the States, and appeal to the people, for its formation, on the broad ground of giving efficiency

and vigour to the *general government*, as a fundamental desideratum. We have seen him preside and act in the CONVENTION of delegates, during their deliberations, when the only question was, *shall the United States possess the CONTROLLING POWER of a SUPREME GOVERNMENT?* and when, in answer to that question, the controlling power was distinctly invested in the general government, subject *only* to the *limitations* imposed by the Constitution! We have seen the States individually *pause* upon its adoption, on the broad ground of the expediency of parting with this *specific* portion of their sovereignty, previous to their ratification of its provisions. We have seen Washington devote his days and nights to the obtainment of a constitution that would vest in the Union powers of sufficient energy to all the purposes of *national supremacy*, independent of the mere *will* and *consent* of the States, and superceding the right of their veto, non-concurrence, or reluctant and tardy compliance. We have seen such a constitution framed and adopted; we have seen WASHINGTON chosen to carry it into execution, with a special reference to his qualifications, to give it a *practical shape corresponding to his ideas of energy*, and to the *inherent virtues of the instrument, to supply that energy*. We have seen him accomplish that object, without exciting the opposition of any one State, or producing a murmur of discontent, grounded on the suspicion of having transcended the powers lodged in the government by the Constitution. We have seen all his cotemporaries concur in and sanction this course of exalted patriotism and political virtue; thus presenting a consistent career of invariable views in relation to *Constitutional law*, which commands our reverence for his wisdom as a statesman, and extorts our applause for his integrity as a politician, demonstrating his sagacity to have been unequalled and his honesty incorruptible.

Contrasted with this attitude of unalterable advocacy of a controlling power in the Union, Mr. Jefferson is distinguished for a fickleness of opinion, which leaves him deficient in that stability of character, which we naturally expect from one of his complete education and profound legal acquirements. He had studied the Constitution in Paris, and had avowed himself a federalist; he had studied it at home, and his approbation of it continued unaltered; he came into the new government to administer it, and still



asseverated that the Constitution was perfect, and intended for absolute federal power within the limits of the authorities delegated. Nor did he change his opinion until he saw that the presidency was within his grasp, and yet that others, more specially patronised by Washington, had the best chance of plucking the golden fruit. This development of ambition being coincident to the era of the French revolution, caused Mr. Jefferson to rally a party under the flaunting banner of State rights and French liberty; even then, however, conceding a *controlling attribute* to the government of the Union; for it was not until the epoch of the ALIEN and SEDITION laws, that he reached the verge of ultra-democracy in the promulgation of *nullification* doctrines, subversive of that controlling virtue of the *Union*, which, at an anterior date, he had admitted as the legitimate line of federal power. Yet, even on this point, he was rather doubtful than heterodox, inclining more to *theoretical*, and always deprecating *practical* nullification, and evincing more of the character of a *visionary*, than an ultra. This want of stability, however, was a source of serious disparagement to him as a statesman, which gave to Washington every advantage which attends upon a consistent and lofty course of action, unvaried by times, uninfluenced by circumstances. Indeed, Jefferson's frequent change of sentiment in respect to the Constitution, has even confused his disciples, who are yet undetermined whether to range themselves as federalists, or rally as democrats. As late as 1813, in a letter to *Melish*, he declares that—'The party called republican is steadily for the support of the present constitution. They obtained, at the commencement, *all the amendments to it they desired*. *These reconciled themselves to it perfectly*, and if they have any ulterior view, it is only, perhaps, to *popularise it further*, by shortening the senatorial term, and devising a process for the responsibility of judges, more practicable than that of impeachment.' In these few lines more doubt, instability, and contradiction obtains, than is to be discovered in the entire course of Washington's life, and certainly indicate a looseness of views not altogether reconcilable to our ideas of a first rate statesman. In looking for the cause of this oscillation, we must advert to the unfortunate position he assumed of *ultra-liberty*, which almost necessarily forced him into visionary ideas of government, on the one hand, and of derogatory

imputations against the antagonist party on the other; and it was still more unfortunate that he should live to see history record the fallacy of all his promised views of *ulterior good*, as well as the falsity of all his predictions of a *monarchical evil*, made for the purpose of throwing into odious contrast the character of the adverse party. The felicity of position, on the contrary, occupied by Washington, saved him from all those tortious paths which fictitious devices compel a resort to; so that his course, as a statesman, was uniform, consistent, honest, unchangeable and enlightened, based on practicable principles, and professing to do *no more* than what was fully warranted by the obvious letter, and defined powers of the Constitution.

In the bold and striking achievements of his administration, however, Jefferson approached very near to the greatness of Washington. The acquisition of *Louisiana*, which doubled the domains of the republic, was a master-stroke of *statesmanship*, an enlargement of empire by a movement of diplomacy, a bloodless victory, attended by all the consequences of a martial triumph through fields of carnage; and the credit of it was certainly very distinguished and remarkable: in his ordinary negotiations, however, he does not appear to have been so successful.

The statesmanship of Washington commenced long prior to his filling the presidential chair; and the very day that he accepted the station of commander in chief was he compelled to devote his attention to those civil and political movements on which depended the efficient organization of the army. The loose texture of the *old confederation*, imposed upon him the arduous duties of a supreme magistrate. His elaborate correspondence with the Congress displays those high civil attributes which mark the eminent statesman, and exceed in bulk and difficulty the duties of a President under the federal union; whilst his letters to the STATES manifest that enlarged, vigilant and profound view of the national relations, that admit of no scope for rivalry or competition. Acting at once as the prompter to Congress—as the guardian of the confederacy—as the stimulator and exhorter of the States—as commander of the army, and the parent of the people, it excites unqualified admiration at the prodigious extent of his talents, the fecundity of his genius, the solidity of his judgment, the abundance of his resources; and in fine of all those qualities which

contribute to form the active, practical and consummate STATESMAN. And it was this immense stock of reputation, as a *civil magistrate*, that he brought into view of public opinion, when it concentrated with spontaneous enthusiasm upon his name as the first President under the Federal Constitution. It was not the eclat of his military deeds, which pointed all minds towards him as the man pre-eminently qualified to administer the civil functions of a new government, in a crisis of unexampled peril to the liberties of the people, and the safety of the country; but his *established fame* as a STATESMAN, his resplendent labours as a *legislator*, and an *executive*, as one who could give efficient motion to the immense machine of government, directing its energies to the proper objects, and even originating and maturing the laws necessary for the general welfare, and indispensable to the common defence. As a statesman, therefore, Washington rises to the highest point of glory and of greatness.

The superiority of Washington's statesmanship seems to be shown in the peculiar adaptation of his policy to the special object of the Federal Constitution, which was the vigor and efficiency of the government, in contradistinction to the laxity of principle and looseness of the parts in the old confederacy. Let us suppose that Mr. Jefferson had been chosen to carry into practice the first experiment of the government, instead of Washington, and that he had applied his system of *State rights* and *popular interference* to the new machine which the Federal Convention had just placed in the hands of the Executive? Is it not self-evident, that, for want of vigour and energy, the Constitution would have crumbled to pieces in his hands, and left him in possession only of the fragments of the old confederacy? For that is certainly the *true system* of the government which fulfils its great ends; and that, of course, must be the spurious doctrine which baffles and defeats the object had in view by those who framed it? The difference in the crisis, and the remote stages of the two administrations, cannot affect the principle. A government of laws must have the principle of energy and coercion; and it was the concentration of this energy in a federal government which the Convention gave, and which, to carry out into perfection, induced the *Washington policy*. It does appear, therefore, that Mr. Jefferson's was *anomalous*, and not

congenial to the Constitution, but a policy formed in accordance with the constant and living current of *popular opinion*, a policy for the PEOPLE, not for the Constitution; a policy framed to gain popularity, not to cement, fulfil or consummate the fabric and purposes of government. It appears, therefore, to be rather the policy of the politician than the policy of the *statesman*—the *legislator*—the *law-giver* or the patriot, who looks beyond the bounds of present praise, to the final consequences of civilization and liberty. Yet even this anomalous policy of Mr. Jefferson, so far from being incompatible with human happiness and permanent freedom, is admirably calculated to secure those objects, provided the people are sufficiently virtuous to be governed by *opinion* instead of law! It implies, in the PEOPLE, the highest perfection of virtue and intelligence; and leaving nothing to *coercion*, leaves the safety of society at the mercy of their discretion, wisdom, prudence and virtue. It implies that POWER will be so honest as to commit *no usurpation*, and that the PEOPLE will be so virtuous as to abstain from all violence, licentiousness and disorder; but this is supposing the very effect that government is instituted to *secure*. Hence the discrepancy between Mr. Jefferson's system and the highest attributes of the statesman: for he does not himself appear to have discovered the real nature and direct tendency of his own principles, having been driven into them without due consideration, by the impulse of French liberty, on the one hand, and the force of Mr. Adams' tory despotism on the other. In proof of this, we have many declarations under Mr. Jefferson's pen, which show that he had not considered the scientific principles of his system so profoundly as he had studied its impression on the minds of the people, and, seeing it well received by them, he determined to adhere to it. Washington, on the contrary, only looked to the adaptation of his policy to the Constitution, and never, for a moment, suspected that the people could desire what the legitimate ends of government would not gratify or sanction; at least he never suspected it anterior to the French revolution; and when he did behold this *new idea* of government, he instantly resisted it, as subversive of law, order and security. So that, in effect, there was this difference between Washington and Jefferson, as statesmen, that the former rescued the republic from the *chaos* of the old CONFEDER-

RACY to the *coercive government of the FEDERAL CONSTITUTION*, and the latter re-conducted us to the chaos of the confederacy through the currents of popular opinion, ideas of unbounded liberty, implicit confidence in the virtues of the people, and an unlimited faith in their intelligence and capacity for SELF-GOVERNMENT.

It is apparent that mere party differences would never have severed these eminent men. By party differences, I mean those which grew out of difference of opinion upon constitutional principles, or points of national policy. In this respect, very little essential variation of sentiment obtained between them. It was *faction*, not sound, wholesome and legitimate party, which fomented the mind of Jefferson against his great predecessor. It was the fermentation of passions wholly extraneous to our government, constitution and country, adopted by the latter in obedience to the popular impulse, or at the dictate of his own antipathies. It is, therefore, to the greater credit of Washington, that he never fell into the delusions, errors, or vices of faction; but kept his mind well poised upon great principles inherent in the Constitution, or substantial measures demonstrated by experience, to promote the prosperity and develop the resources of the nation; without heeding the voice of faction, whether it assumed the conciliatory tone of soft adulation, or the harsh sound of intimidating reproof; and his credit for this elevation of conduct is the greater, because the temptation to court popular favour was so powerful, and the consequence of losing it was so apt to terrify the judgment from its propriety. By thus resisting the lust of popularity, on the one hand, and the fear of public denunciation, on the other, he displayed the most sublime moral grandeur of which the human mind is capable, when it sacrifices to the stern dictates of duty every consideration of interest, ambition, fame, power and flattery. It was in this lofty disregard of all consequences, that Washington shone, on all occasions, with a lustre so superior to other men.

How far Mr. Jefferson was correct in drawing the line of discrimination between physical and *moral* liberty, and striking at the *emancipation* of the human mind from the fetters of prejudice, interest, selfishness and other unworthy passions, it is not my present purpose to enquire; but it is a fact, that the great point of difference between him and

Washington, lay in this trait of his character, which carried him into theories and experiments, positions and principles, that involved him in a perpetual warfare of politics, religion, morals, and metaphysics.

It cannot be doubted but that Jefferson *lived into* an era very different in its predominant characteristics from the *political* age in which Washington flourished as President. The epoch of Jefferson was the *second stage* in our national existence, a stage of more refinement and luxury than that of Washington's time, a *middle* epoch between honesty and corruption which favoured duplicity and finesse, without plunging into open political debaucheries. Jefferson too, having been so long at the *French court*, assisted to produce this lamentable laxity of the political moral sentiment of the people; and it is to this trait of his character that we are, perhaps, to refer his change of opinion as to the honesty of John Adams, when, with a *credulity* not common to old age, he believed all the palavering of that '*Anglo-man*,' in vindication of his character from the authorship of the *alien and sedition laws*; as if, *as President*, he could divest himself of his constitutional responsibility for the measures of his administration. It must ever excite astonishment, that Jefferson could for a moment tolerate the idea of the *irresponsibility of the Executive*, by giving John Adams credit for his interested expurgation from the turpitude of the obnoxious laws of his Presidentship; receiving his *ipse dixit* in a matter where the strongest testimony would naturally become liable to cross examination, and reasonable distrust; but thus to admit Mr. Adams' pleading in his own favour, and in crimination of others unjustly, betrayed in Jefferson a credulity, or a lust of conciliating the good opinion of his rivals, which it is difficult to reconcile either to his philosophical acumen, or to his sense of justice. True, he tells us his motive, that he would not have the world think that political competition could beget personal hostility between him and a rival! Yet if it *did* produce personal feelings, it mattered not what the world should think of it, even supposing it possible to deceive the world by such an artifice. But still there must always remain left a number of individuals in the opposite party, with whom reconciliation is hopeless. Thus, though Jefferson became *nominally* reconciled to John Adams, yet he died full of indignation and hatred against *Timothy Pickering*, and opened the grave

of *Hamilton* to give a last blow to the dead lion. It was impossible to make the world believe what he did not believe himself, that he cherished no personal animosity against his greatest political enemy and rival. The ferocity of party hatred between rivals has no limits but the grave; it assassinated *Alexander Hamilton*, it persecuted *De Witt Clinton* to death, it ostracised *John C. Calhoun* and *Henry Clay*, it did attempt to destroy WASHINGTON himself; and never will become less bitter while men are actuated by the passions that destroy their greatness.

Both understood human nature well, and had studied man with success; but Washington had a peculiar intuition for penetrating to the true characters of men, and ascertaining at a glance what objects they were best adapted to accomplish. His first cabinet has never been equalled in talent by any subsequent one; and his selection of JEFFERSON, as *Secretary of State*, evinces his extraordinary sagacity in immediately penetrating to the strong bias of men, and finding out for what station their talents best qualified them. In this faculty Washington was superior to Jefferson, although the latter was largely gifted with the same *instinct* of genius,

A command over the passions of men—an intimate knowledge with the springs of human actions—a power to stimulate or restrain, direct, or control, the judgments and conduct of others, has always been thought to imply the highest scope of genius. This constituted a peculiar charm in the character of Washington, while Mr. Jefferson could boast of very little of it. It was this gift of genius which enabled Washington to keep his troops together, when without pay, provision, clothing or shelter, and thus save his country! Jefferson, in a certain measure possessed some of the same genius, but not of that exalted quality which distinguished the first President, who could reconcile men to the extreme of suffering from affection to his person, and reverence for his virtues. Mr. Jefferson's control and influence was of rather an opposite character, as they followed him from motives of interest; and yet, in both cases, the object to be obtained was much the same, though the feeling of *personal* veneration may have been different. But this power over others in Washington, extended to all occasions, and all men, under every variety of situation, which was not the case with Mr. Jefferson.

To counterbalance this disadvantage, Mr. Jefferson was more social, more companionable, more colloquial than his great predecessor: and hence he entertained a greater variety of guests, and practised a more extended hospitality: being not only the Magnus Apollo of all politicians of every grade, but the oracle of authors, schoolmasters, book-makers, inventors, dreamers, schemers, and the whole tribe of those who claim affinity to Apollo, Minerva, Mercury, or Mammon. But this disposition had its attendant evils; it seduced him into expenditures not justified by the income of his estate, and left him in his old age poor and embarrassed; when his political doctrines had, in a great measure, grown out of fashion, and his services to his country had to be *recalled* to the recollection of the age by the vigour and pathos of his own pen, in order to procure a law to dispose of his estate by lottery; a favour granted to all others, almost without solicitation, and for objects of the most frivolous nature.

In respect to their personal economy, therefore, Washington had more wisdom and prudence, and perhaps less hospitality and warmth of friendship; but he manifested his wisdom, in not leaving himself naked, to the cold ingratitude of a selfish world, and compelled to make appeals to his country, when that country had become deaf to his claims: and in this sense, the verdict of history seems to have ratified the distrust of Washington in the virtue of the people. There was this difference too, between them on this point, that WASHINGTON *never* received a *cent* of the people's money for his public services; while Mr. Jefferson obtained hundreds of thousands of dollars from the national treasury for his services to government; and which rendered his want of economy a perfect contrast to the *wise* liberality of expenditure practised by the father of his country.

Without supposing Jefferson to have been actuated by sordid motives, which would be to suppose him divested of all laudable ambition, in his pursuit of the highest honours of the nation, it may be esteemed a reasonable cause of regret, that, like Washington, he did not decline all compensation: and yet a doubt may be started whether that country will not be less liable to corruption, that allows a liberal compensation to its public officers, instead of tempting the rich to serve the people for nothing, and eventually subjecting the public honours to be *purchased* by the opulent.



It was worthy of remark, even to the generations in which these great men flourished, that they differed as much in their exteriors as in their minds; the apparel of Washington being adapted to his station and rank in life, equally free from ostentatious display and inappropriate meanness; while that of Jefferson was far inferior to his rank, as if he even courted the applause of the people by seeming to approach to the condition of the labouring classes, by his coarse and plain clothes, often in direct contradiction to his rank, and obviously in *designed* contrast to the dresses of those whom he stigmatised as *monarchists*. In this fashion of extreme humility, he was imitated by other prominent men of the party, who were rallying their strength in *opposition to Washington*, especially by *Albert Gallatin*, and all those demagogues who hoped to make up for the hollowness of their hearts, by the popular cut and colour of their garments; as if political orthodoxy resided in the texture of the cloth, and the folds of their mantles, instead of the texture of their minds, and the honesty of their principles. Whatever virtue, however, resided in these plain republican coats, no affectation of it was attempted by Washington and his friends, who seemed perfectly willing to be judged by the virtues of the *inward man*; leaving their garments to the taste of the mercer and the skill of the taylor, with such criticisms as little minds might feel disposed to make on so small a subject.

That Mr. Jefferson was deficient in that energy of character, which characterised his great predecessor, was shown by his forbearance to resent in a proper manner, the insulting aggressions of France and England, during the period of the Berlin and Milan decrees, and the attack on the Chesapeake; when the character of the republic sunk in his hands to the lowest point of pusillanimous dejection; and when a proper degree of vigour would have restored it to its wonted honour and fame. Washington, though careful at all times to shun war, never failed to extort the respect of foreign powers.

Mr. Jefferson was more fortunate than Washington, in having his life protracted to an old age, which introduced him, as it were into the company of *posterity*, to behold the effects of the two systems of government which he had opposed as *monarchical*, and which he had practised as republican; but which were, in fact, only two modes of the

same federal government! It was also his fortune to live to behold the victories on sea and land of the war of 1812; but he seems to have been insensible to his own agency in the production of many of the disasters which that war brought upon the country, and which were clearly to be traced to his system of depending on the MILITIA in time of war, and his favourite theory of non-taxation, and a total independence of the monied influence. As democrats were pledged by Jefferson, never to tax the people, the first consequence of the war was the prostration of public credit, and the result of that was universal defeat on every quarter; while, at the same time, his State right doctrine found a practical illustration in the Hartford Convention, that struck off one-half of the fiscal resources and moral weight of the empire, from co-operating in the war. But, although Mr. Jefferson lived through all these bitter fruits of his erroneous policy, yet he does not appear to have been sensible that he was instrumental, as he indubitably was, in producing them: for they were the inevitable effects of the great democratic system which he so proudly displayed to the world, in his eloquent pen. But his correspondence furnishes no gleam of suspicion, that the force of such lamentable experience ever shook the scales of political fanaticism from his eyes; for though he exults much in the splendour of our naval victories that wreathed gems of glory round the brows of our Bainbridge, our Decatur, and our Hull, yet he never seemed conscious of his own error of policy, in respect to our naval system, which would have reduced its actions to our harbours, and its seventy-fours to the cockle-shell dimensions of a gun-boat.

How superior in this respect was Washington!—who founded public credit on a just system of taxation, as a source of revenue to pay the interest, and redeem the principal—who, from experience, pronounced militia to be incapable of waging protracted war—and who consolidated into a system that fiscal power without which war wants its sinews, and government its wheels.

Thus the reaction caused by the Jefferson system only confirmed the wisdom of the Washington policy: and in the last extremity of disgrace and poverty, Madison was compelled to plan a national bank of FIFTY MILLIONS capital, to raise an army of 50,000 men, and to increase the navy to royal power and splendour; besides resorting to

STAMP ACTS, EXCISE LAWS, the FUNDING SYSTEM, *national depreciated paper, immense bands of government officers*, and, in fine, with the exception of the alien and sedition laws, every feature of the federal policy. Thus, Jefferson lived to see *Madison* practise all that he had denounced as monarchy, corruption, and tyranny, in his federal predecessors.

The great traits of Mr. Jefferson's character were decidedly *modern*; and he had nothing of the gothic left in his mind, after the era of 1793. Washington, on the contrary, evinced a disposition to cling to what was established; while Jefferson was at all times on the alert for revolution, invention, improvement, looking to the intellectual perfectability of man; while the eyes of Washington were alone fixed upon the virtue and happiness of the human family. The mind of Jefferson was more active, more inquisitive, more exploring, more philosophic, and aimed to abolish every abuse, civil and religious, which obstructed the march of the intellect to unshackled perfection. Learning more profound, and speculation more excursive, distinguished Jefferson, and opened to his view avenues for doubt, knowledge, abuse, and mental bondage than Washington ever dreamed of; for, as a *philosopher*, or a *mere* literary man, the great chief of the republic cannot compare with the sage of Monticello. Nor does the hero of Mount Vernon require any of the eclat of philosophy, or the schools, or universities, or philosophical societies, to add to the unfading lustre of his imperishable name, or swell the limits of his boundless glory.

The animosity of Jefferson towards every thing in any manner connected with kingcraft, or priestcraft, was one of the ruling passions of his mind, that never suffered change, or underwent mitigation. Had he lived in the time of *Luther*, he would have *instigated* to a schism in the church, or a total renunciation of Christianity; and had he been a subject of English King John, he would have stimulated the people to extort the *Magna Charta* from the king, or excited them to abolish the throne and forfeit the head of the monarch. There was that in him which, in any country, and any age, would never have remained quiet while power abused right, or oppression laughed at justice; and there was, too, within him that which prompted him to aspire to rule men, in virtue of having been gifted by nature with the requisite talents for their government. In all

these traits of his mind, he differed essentially from Washington, who was disposed to acquiesce in systems already established; and who was wholly indifferent to the prevalence of priestcraft, or the abuses of religion to the sinister purposes of human passion. The *active* spirit of the REFORMER had no place in the nature of the hero of *Mount Vernon*, who being firmly attached to the *democratical* principles of the Constitution—which he had himself mainly assisted to establish, which recognised the exercise of the *equal rights* of the people, and which brought the government into the very focus of the POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY—he seems to have been satisfied to promote the general happiness of mankind, through the *regular medium* which the people had devised and adopted for that purpose, in the plenary and unlimited exercise of their power.

Aspiring to do something more for the people than the Constitution warranted, and imputing to the democratic federalists designs inimical to liberty, Mr. Jefferson professed to give the people a degree of freedom incompatible with government, and to assume the exclusive merit to himself of being a friend to the exercise of equal rights, and the enjoyment of human happiness. In the calm moments of sober enquiry, and impartial reflection, he recalled the stigma, and disclaimed the arrogation, conceding to *all his opponents* the merit of honest intentions, and the possession of principles favourable to human liberty, and conservative of our republican constitution.

In maintaining his judgment in the cool equipoise of reason, and his mind free from the fever of political fanaticism, Washington was far superior to Jefferson, who on his part, fell from the true glory of philosophy into all the cant, bigotry, and delusion of a vulgar enthusiast for the destruction of law and order. To have attained the standard of true philosophical dignity, which in general belonged to Washington, in virtue of his admirable mind, Jefferson ought to have felt and practised the same *political* tolerance that he espoused in matters of religious opinions, and abstained equally from the *fire and faggots* of the political as he did of the religious fanatic: for a fanatic in party passions is far less excusable than a fanatic in religion—the former resembling a horse-jockey, and the latter a poor besotted monk.

In this respect, when we contemplate the character of

Washington, we bow with instinctive reverence to the majesty of reason, as well as virtue; and venerate the heart of that man who could modulate its tumultuous throbbings at the suggestion of patriotism and philosophy, rebuking faction from his presence, spurning from him its venom, its poison, and its vengeance—its degrading passions, and its debasing instruments—its insincere doublings—its simulating tortuosities—its unmanly deception—its fawning meanness, and its sycophantic adulation. Enthroned in truth, virtue, and patriotism, he required no altar of vulgar prejudices to smoke with the sacrifice of honesty and truth, to conciliate his pleasure, or appease his resentment—too strong in virtue, and too conscious of justice, to give favour as a boon, or receive flattery in commutation of right.

It is, after all, in the *moral grandeur* of character that we are to look for that superiority, which entitles heroes and statesmen to the lasting esteem, applause and veneration of mankind, through all changes of time, and through all revolutions of empires. The system of government, or the mode of polity popular in one age may be execrated in another, as men sink to degeneracy, or soar higher in the scale of perfection; as taste varies, or fashions alter: but in VIRTUE there is a truth and a beauty that endures forever, the graces of which never fade, but charm all tastes in all ages, among all nations. Here we are constrained to confess that Washington bears away the palm from all competitors in the race of glory, being equally exempt from ambition and envy, avarice and hatred, revenge and cruelty, and free from all those personal vices which degrade our being, and detract from the intellectual excellence of man. It can be said of few men, as it may of Washington, that he never traduced another's fame, envied another's greatness, or attempted to pull down a rival, or obstruct his advancement by intrigue, fiction, insinuation, falsehood, or calumny; being not only negatively, but positively virtuous—uniting benevolence to justice, and doing in all cases to others *as he would* that others should do unto him. An empire lay at his command, but he disdained it at the price of virtue: a crown might have glittered on his brows, but he trampled the meretricious gem beneath his feet. A free people invited him to authority for life, but he rejected the offer, and retired to the quiet enjoyment of private life, presenting in every feature of his character that moderation, humility,

modesty, virtue, clemency, and firmness, which constitutes the moral grandeur of genius, and extorts the universal homage of mankind.

From as full an investigation of the respective merits of these distinguished men as our limited talents would permit us to make; and from as impartial an estimate of their principles and public services, as a total exemption from motive allows to the frailty of our nature—we are constrained to acknowledge that, in point of genius, wisdom, patriotism, and service to his country, Washington soars to a height of superiority that admits of no competitor, no rival, no equal; while Mr. Jefferson presents so many striking points of character, mingled with great genius, various erudition, expert statesmanship, and eccentric opinion, as at once to command admiration, and induce esteem; at the same time that his versatile character, and singular doctrines, will lead to the interminable animosity, and inappreciable dislike of a vast portion of mankind. In all stations, Washington was incomparably great: in the range of his civil duties, Jefferson was always able. Both achieved great blessings for mankind: but Washington achieved greater for *his country*. In intellect, both were beyond the common standard of great men—in patriotism, both were undoubted—in principle, both were sound—in opinion, Washington was sincere, and Jefferson equivocal. Leisure and education made Jefferson a philosopher: business, and the calls of his country compelled Washington to keep the field of active life, and denied him the speculations of the closet; so that his entire existence was devoted to the practical labours of beneficent government. Envy no man, and coveting no power, he never rose by the fall of others; for fortune threw authority and honours into his lap, even contrary to his desire; and he was naturally prone to add to, instead of detracting from, the merits of others. As it relates to their political doctrines, I have been unable to discover that Jefferson was more of a democrat than Washington, or that Washington was more of a federalist than Jefferson, according to the Constitution, as it was administered under their respective administrations.

I now speak of them as *statesmen*—Washington was not a politician; and Jefferson was an *ultra* politician, who made a clamour about liberty when, Washington being in power, no want of it was experienced, and in a country where it was

enjoyed to the utmost extent of popular sovereignty. This was a mere *personal*, not a political difference between them. It was *personal in Jefferson*, in order to court the people to his support; but it meant nothing, and it could give them nothing but what they possessed; for how could he add to the FULLNESS OF LIBERTY? How could he fill a measure already overflowing? The difference between them was in the *motive*, not in the principle. It was necessary to impeach the patriotism of Washington in order to give himself merit; but the contrast produced was opposite to that which was desired; and but for, to him, the *saving* folly of John Adams, the reaction would have been fatal to the fame of Jefferson.

Adams more than *realised* the fiction which Jefferson had created against his predecessor; and what was *illusion* in 1793, became fact—palpable and tangible fact in 1798! Adams, too, was an *ultra politician*, and he was the natural foil of another *ultra politician* of the *radical school*, who had only to restore the Constitution to its *Washingtonian integrity*, and his fallacies of liberty were supposed to have produced a revolution, which was solely accomplished by the simple operation of the national charter, in its legitimate rectitude. The *non-abuse* of the Constitution produced universal exuberance of freedom; and *fidelity to the principles of the revolution*, constituted equally the merit of Washington and Jefferson.

It was this fidelity which caused them both to administer the government to the satisfaction of the people, and the prosperity of the country; so that, in the lapse of time, and on mature reflection, it became difficult to detect those minute points of difference which had been engendered by the interference of *foreign politics*, having no relation to our Constitution and government; but which merely served as *machines* of detraction, by which parties could depreciate and criminate one another, without having any foundation beyond the inflamed passions of the moment. It was incident to the great mind of Washington, that he rejected the use, and repelled the intrusion of these foreign topics of incendiary faction, his sagacity having penetrated to their fallacious character, and his rigid sense of honesty and justice, having repudiated the use of all means to accomplish an end not sanctified by morality and truth. On the other hand, every true American must lament, that it was incident to the peculiar situation and circumstances of

Mr. Jefferson, to harbour, cherish and apply to political purposes, a delusion too gross to receive the countenance of a philosopher; and to foment a foreign fanaticism, too peculiar to the country in which it originated, to permit its adoption without betraying an extravagance and inconsistency unbecoming an American statesman. But the lesson to be derived from the example, creates the clemency that extends a liberal indulgence to the error; while the effulgence of his talents and patriotism throws into obscurity those minor spots of character which are lost in the blaze of the DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

In nothing is the human judgment so wanting in discrimination, as in its proper appreciation of personal character. We are all prone to idolise those we admire, as perfect beings, or to denounce those we dislike as monsters of deformity, whose blemishes are unredeemed by one beauty, or a solitary excellence. It is needless to observe that such a course wars equally against philosophy, common sense, and the obligations of justice between man and man; but we are bound to declare, that he who aspires to the dignity of a rational being, can only evince his title to that honour by learning to place a juster estimate upon human fallibility, and to confess that a man may be *great* without being faultless, and that the splendour of his genius may justify all our admiration, without permitting us to fall into idolatry, or maintaining the preposterous idea of his infallible virtue.

It is in this spirit of philosophical truth that I have endeavoured to analyse the character of Jefferson; conscious that his *intrinsic greatness* was more than sufficient to compensate for his casual inconsistencies, or occasional derelictions; and confident that the affection of his devotees, however ardent, could not interpose the plea of perfection against the confession of frailty flowing from his own lips. History deals in *facts*, not affections; and, in all cases of controverted character, we appeal for a verdict to the *head*, even though the *heart* bleeds in announcing the sentence. While the same principle has regulated our estimate of the qualities of *Washington*, the absence of the same inconsistencies averted conclusions equally detractive, though still adverse to that superlative point of transcendent perfection which the votary claims for the idol of his devotion. Still, however, we behold, in the character of *Washington*, a man *less imperfect* than any other man, whom history has



delineated as the chief agent of sovereign power, as one who made up for the want of effulgent genius by the steady splendour of his virtues, and the undeviating rectitude of his understanding!

Admitting both to be men who had human frailties, mankind must always concede them to have been very extraordinary models of their kind, not excelled by any whom ancient superstition has deified, or modern enthusiasm extolled as the prodigy of ages; and he, who calls himself an *American*, and does not feel his heart expand, and his chest swell with the just pride of a patriot, when he hears the name of *Washington*, or recals to mind the services of *Jefferson*, must have a bosom too callous to be excited by greatness to admiration, or impressed by virtue to gratitude, love and veneration.

The American who loves his country, and feels conscious of the pride of patriotism, in the glory of its achievements, and the virtues of its fathers, will exalt his views above the mists of *party* when he contemplates the greatness of these two illustrious founders of the republic, and decree them, accordingly, that ample and unmixed measure of fame to which they are both entitled as AMERICAN STATESMEN; who, inhaling the breath of *genius* at their birth, gave more than royal dignity to the obscure cradles of the cottages in which they were born, and from which they emerged to supreme power, by the force of virtue and talents pre-eminent among men, through the spontaneous suffrages of a free and enlightened people. Upheld by principles of eternal truth, and made memorable by deeds of lasting utility, their names are consecrated to perpetual veneration in the hearts of a grateful posterity, who never can forget their virtues while they enjoy its fruits, nor cease to emulate as long as they continue to appreciate their patriotism.

THE END.

## ERRATA.

Page 96, third paragraph, 'VIRGINIA' is added erroneously to the five States that originally appointed delegates to the Convention.

The next paragraph will lead the reader to correct the error.

Page 315, in note, fourth line from bottom, for 'on John Adams,' read 'with John Adams.'

Page 320, fourteenth line, for 'ruling whose passion,' read 'whose ruling passion.'









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