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AN

ORATION,

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DELIVERED AT RAYNHAM, (MASSACHUSETTS,)

FRIDAY, MAY 11th, 1804,

ON THE LATE ACQUISITION OF

LOUISIANA,

AT THE UNANIMOUS REQUEST OF THE REPUBLICAN CITIZENS  
OF THE COUNTY OF BRISTOL.

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By DAVID A. LEONARD.



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NEWPORT, (R. I.)

PRINTED BY OLIVER FARNSWORTH.

1804.

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Rhoads

In convention of the numerous Committee appointed for  
the day,

RESOLVED, *That the thanks of the Committee be presented to Mr. LEONARD for his Pertinent Oration, this day delivered, and that a copy of the same be requested for the press.*

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Reply of the Author.

GENTLEMEN,


*Could I be persuaded that its publication would be of any service to the public, you would have my cheerful consent. However, knowing that publication is customary on such occasions, and expected on the present, I reluctantly render the copy.*



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ORATION, &c.

FELLOW-CITIZENS,

An oval-shaped library stamp from the University of California. The text inside the stamp reads "LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA". The stamp is partially obscured by a decorative flourish above it.

**W**E have come to felicitate each other on the late acquisition of Louisiana. We have come to celebrate a conquest, not of arms nor of artifice, but of principle and undistembling policy. For the solemnization of this day, we are indebted to the noblest of gratitude, the gratitude of patriotism. Yes, my friends, your devout affections have decreed to JEFFERSON a splendid triumph. While the laurels of the most celebrated conquerors, modern as well as ancient, are weeping with the blood of thousands, the wreaths that entwine the temples of our political chiefs, who have effected the conquest of this valuable territory, are interwoven with the smiling olive of peace. The Roman conquerors who returned in triumph, from their vanquished provinces, heard with horror, above the acclamations of joy, the sighs of the widow and the cries of the fatherless. But we celebrate a triumph, where all citizens whose souls are susceptible of thankfulness, cordially offer their tribute of praise and unaffected benediction. The trophies of our beneficent negociators are the inviolate hearts of a people who rejoice in such an administration and the blessings of so free a government. Their honorable spoils are the gloomy abortions of an unprincipled ambition and the demolished hypothesis of an infatuated policy. To grace their triumph, the war-inspiring principles of Ross and Morris are led in chains and exposed to the honest raillery of a gratulant people. And this day of our national jubilee shall consecrate in the temple of fame a monument more lasting than the brazen inscription or the marble statue.

In contemplating the subject of Louisiana, the mind is alternately affected with a variety of conflicting emotions.—Vary the position of the subject, and it shall reflect a varied appearance—sometimes pleasant and inspiring with gratitude—and sometimes ludicrous, marvellous and approaching the ridiculous.

It must be truly astonishing to every honest American, that an attempt should be made by any of our native citizens, to possess themselves of any territory of other nations, whatever may be the existing circumstances without first attempting, either for the sake of equity, humanity, or politeness, to adjust the differences by fair negotiation. But strange as it is, such an attempt was made, not by a downright, unambitious yeomanry, upon whose shoulders the hardships of the contest would fall, but by a class of men, who would have exempted themselves from military duty, and whose characters, unconnected with politics, are fair and reputable, and who view themselves as file leaders of a respectable section of American citizens. This must be a strange departure, not to say from *Republican*, but from *American* principles. When our country first began to talk of the oppression of Great Britain, and to embrace for herself a system of political axioms; she totally excluded from her constitutions, every sentence that remotely comprised offensive operations. The most undisguised objection against these was then deemed the most prominent feature of a republican government. Offensive wars were then deemed a discriminating characteristic of monarchical establishments, where private caprice and ambition could strangely absorb the feelings of the public and the wills of a few become the resolutions of many. These were doctrines unreservedly embraced by all, except the avowed adherents to the interests of the crown. A proposition of divesting any people of their rightful possessions, would have filled our patriots with astonishment; and the speeches of Ross and Morris would have been, to the revolution, a prophanation equally ignominious, abhorrent and unpardonable.

It was natural, at that time, when every mouth was



filled with execrations against the arrogant measures of Britain, totally to abjure her vices. Ambition, when enlisting volunteers in her cause, will ever impress to her standard the auxiliary of religion. Hostilius, when impelled by necessity, could revive the sacred rights of Numa, which he had long neglected. It would seem more natural than for ambition to discard those vices, the adoption of which would arraign her conduct and fix upon her votaries, the stigma of a flagrant disunion of principle and practice. But the peace of a nation violates her repose. It is the troubled state of society that tempts her operations. In the desultory scenes of national difficulties, it is plain to the discriminating observer, that ambition, whatever may be the scope of the Drama, will ever occupy the foreground of the perspective, and instigate for herself those acts which become most interesting to the whole: War therefore has ever been her most successful engine.

1st. Because, in drafting her subsidies and selecting her alliances, she improves an opportunity of relaxing or invigorating those local and national prejudices, as shall best suit her policy. She courts the smiles of foreign Courts whose politics and interests are in concert with her own, and avails herself of the movements of war to direct to the same end the prepossessions of the soldiery and populace. But all, under her influence, must be taught to execrate those whose governments are administered upon republican principles, as enemies not only to their happiness, but to mankind in general and every political good. When the great deep of national alliances are broken up by war, she causes, by a new adjustment of public relations, her dry land to appear in situations more flattering to her pride and more favorable to her interests.

2d. War allows the people no leisure to deliberate and enquire for themselves, when the country's danger is founded from every quarter;—when the people are habituated to distrust the friendship of all, except those who are the frank allies of their own nation, or those whose policy is avowedly opposed to that of their enemy. These observations are exemplified in the habits of Brit-

ish subjects. Those who assume their political tuition, have heretofore exercised a more diligent attention to their tyros, than the nurse or the school-master to their respective charges. In the military academies they imbibe the rudiments of national prejudices. These are nurtured by continual complaints of wrongs, impositions and violations of faith and treaties. Finally, in the field and navy they are brought to maturity, and become irradicable. As their ambitious nobility, who languish in time of peace, live like the vampyre on the blood of mankind, real or imaginary incidents are translated into solemn pretences, and the people are plunged again into "unavoidable" war.

3d. Open hostilities furnish ambition with a variety of pretexts of patriotism. She makes it easy for her votaries to believe that all her projects are for the country's good. It is natural, she thinks, for the people to infer that it is for their own defence when an enemy is opposed, as it is hard to believe that the dangers and fatigues of war should be productive of any individual good. Now she feels a dictatorial decision attached to all her projects. She approaches the people, with a tender regard for the public welfare, in the present emergency of affairs:—That the impending crisis calls for a new arrangement in all the departments of State. Her legislative proceedings (while she smiles to view them as popular intrenchments of her own wealth and grandeur) are echoed as the dispensations of an auspicious providence. All her alliances, as well nuptial as political, she would fain make us believe are the tender pledges of our national glory.

In returning to our own country, let us bear with us the application of the subject. In the old Canadian wars the humble simplicity of our infant state repress the growth of domestic ambition. As yet there were found none disposed to sally out in quest of adventurers, of fame and aggrandisement. Our regiments were officered by British chevaliers, and the soldiery, like loyal squires, were taught to fight for the sceptered Quixote. But in our revolutionary war, the state of society had so far advanced, as to



have furnished a sphere for the intrigues of ambition. In the very womb of the revolution, ambition and patriotism, like the twins of Rebekah, struggled together. Tho' the native voice of the one was scarcely distinguished from the crocodile cry of the other, still the characters of that affecting tragedy were actuated by two opposing interests. As glorious as that era was, yet we see in it, as in the BE-LOVED of the sacred pastoral, a company of two armies. No sooner was the smoke of the revolution rolled away by the favonian breeze of peace, and the actors exposed to the view of the people, but it was well determined who they were, that had been presenting vain oblations upon that altar, that was still wet with the blood of Warren and Montgomery ;—who had sung the war-song of patriotism to the harp of ambition ;—who had mourned for public grievances, to procure redress of personal embarrassments ; who had been bold to repel foreign invasion, to erect a tyranny at home. Alas ! who would have tho't the revolutionary shock, which broke the tie between us and a corrupted government, served also to break the egg-shell of the cockatrice, and give a premature growth to the viper of ambition.

As political corruption is too often the consequence of war, so it seems ever inclined to hostilities, as to a partner of its own species, by which libidinous embrace, it engenders and perpetuates corruption in the world. Thus ambition had assumed appropriate operations and became distinguished by a standard of her own. It afforded her no doubt a moment of regret to reflect, that she had been compelled to vie with a power, whose policy was so nearly allied to her own. They are in tete-a-tete however to forget old prejudices and enter upon a new alliance. To declare war therefore with Great-Britain would be an outrage upon themselves. Tho' the unwarrantable insults of that nation had furnished many of the American people with ample pretences for open hostilities, yet as it would debilitate or dissolve their young alliance, they became more assiduous than British subjects themselves, to extenuate those repeated impositions : They evaded the



force of popular resentment and satiated the predatory cupidity of England by ratifying the treaty of Mr. Jay.

A war then with that nation, upon so just an occasion, would have been too patriotic for that policy. But no sooner had France, disaffected with the stipulated provisions of the treaty aforesaid, begun to act the Harlequinade of British depredation, but all their Gazettes vociferated for war, and the fates embargoed were forbidden to interpose.

Now France is menaced with all the vengeance of patriotism. Expectation is now sanguine that the alliance with England will be consummated, and the two countries embrace in eternal friendship. Now is about to open a new scene for Aristocratic speculation. Already is presented a happy opportunity, not only for war, but war with the enemies of Britain. A war of extermination is projected. Every man, woman, and child is to be armed against the poor Franks, who are destined for annihilation. Our sentiments of honor, of courage and national dignity were arraigned at the tribunal of a prejudicating policy. No effort was left untried to fortify our coasts with ramparts and our minds with prejudices. Thus ambition vainly imagined that all our revolutionary prepossessions in favor of that nation would be instantly dissolved; that an alarm of foreign invasion would unscrupulously effect a unanimity at home; that our faces being stedfastly fronted towards public calamity, our backs must be turned upon all domestic oppression.

There is something, my friends, to be thrown up by these troubled waters. What do we see? The organization of a standing army. Troops are stationed in the interior of a country of patriots, to oppose the descent of a transatlantic enemy. A large armament is formed to enable us to join with honor the embattled line of a favorite ally. Executive authority is extended that the presidential power might ascend to a dictatorial sovereignty, like that of the Romans which was absolute and irresistible in the dangerous extremities of war. An alien-bill is passed to prevent the introduction of republican principles, and reg-

ulate the enlistments of political recruits. The revenue and the monied interests must be arranged anew, under pretext of defraying expences of defensive preparations, to controul the jealousies of patriotism and facilitate the management of an unpopular system.

But this project, however nicely calculated and assiduously executed, did not realize its ultimate view. That patriotism equally ready, to arm against the menaces of an enemy, and to guard against plunging into a precipitate war, could not be persuaded to embrace the delusion. That ambition, which was ever seeking for a war of speculation, soon found occasion to call up her former resolutions. A right of deposit at New-Orleans, to which we had no claim by any decisive authority, was, from some adventitious causes, withheld by the Spanish Intendant. This event, to those who were acquainted with circumstances, presented nothing hostile. The whole affair resulted naturally from those relations, which existed between the American and Spanish governments. Indeed, a catholic politician might admire, that something of the kind had not occurred before. This however amounted, by the colouring of FEDERALISM, to insult and impending hostilities. It is easier, from groundless pretences, to persuade a people that they are injured, than that they are benefited. This incidental suspension, therefore, was represented as a barbarous rape upon American liberties; and they endeavored by all the buffoonery of argument, to rouse the United States to a declaration of war, and instead of recovering the right of deposit, to possess themselves of the whole island of New-Orleans.

A few historical observations are briefly these. When by the treaty of Paris, in 1763, France ceded to Britain, Canada, Cape Breton and a part of its possessions on the east of the Mississippi, she reserved to herself the island of New-Orleans, which, together with the province of Louisiana on the west of the river, she soon after ceded to the king of Spain. By the same treaty, Spain ceded to Great-Britain, Florida, St. Augustine, the bay of Pensacola, with all her possessions on the east of the Mississippi. Great-Britain, by the treaty of 1783, conveyed to the United States, all



her former possessions east of a line drawn along the middle of the Mississippi, to the 31st degree of north latitude. Thence on the northernmost part of said degree and other intermediate lines, till it falls with St. Mary's river into the atlantic ocean. In the treaty of Versailles, in the same year, between England and Spain, the former ceded and guaranteed to his Catholic Majesty, East and West Florida. Not long after the peace of '83, when the western wilderness became settled and population and agriculture advanced, dissensions arose between the United States and the Spanish Government, concerning the right of navigating the waters of the Mississippi, and the boundary line between West Florida and our southern territory. These differences, which occasioned at that time serious agitations, were at length amicably adjusted by the treaty of San Lorenzo del Real, in 1795, and the boundary between the Spanish colonies and the United States was confirmed agreeably to the definitive treaty of 1783. At the same time, the free navigation of the river in its whole breadth, from its source to the ocean, was secured to our citizens. Spain also granted us a right to deposit and export our produce and merchandize, in the port of New-Orleans, for the space of three years from the date of the treaty. She also engaged to continue the grant, in case no injury accrued to her own interests, or assign a similar establishment on some other part of the Mississippi. The late Intendant of the Spanish colonies, observing that the said term of three years had expired, and of course no defined right of deposit remaining at New-Orleans, took occasion by the authority of his office, to suspend that right, without ceremony or enquiry on the subject. This act, perhaps, the Intendant viewed no more than fidelity to his sovereign, being bound by his allegiance, to act up to the laws and faith only of existing treaties. Fortunately for the U. States, he called up the subject, & reminded the parties of a negligence not commonly indulged between two governments. Affairs were immediately put in train to secure to our nation a most ample right of navigating the Mississippi; and the result is, the cession of the island of New-Orleans, together with the almost boundless province of Louisiana.

But previous to the acquisition, it was urged by some

to make a ruffian-pull and acquire it by force. As war is the most successful game that ambition can play at, a motion was made to raise 50,000 men and 5 millions of money to defray expences. We would not mention the names of gentlemen to hold them up to public contempt, though such propositions, made by public agents, will appear unpleasant to a virtuous people. But we mention them for the same purpose they did themselves, in order that they might be heard and examined by an enlightened public. While sounding the war-hoop, they could ken with the eye of a prophet, what great advantages would result to the nation by possessing New-Orleans and the right of neighboring territory: And as they fortunately had truth on their side, we are bound to believe them sincere. It is requisite on this occasion, my friends, to mention and record some extracts from those encomiums to which we allude.

Mr. Ross declared that the mere right of deposit involved "the best interests of the country." "As the right of the river, the trade, &c. was not at all secured by the treaty, of course a new one or war must be resorted to." He declared that, "the country on the east bank of the Mississippi would give compactness and irresistible strength to the United States, for which we should be courted and respected in future European wars; that if France got it, she would either annihilate our trade with her Isles, or impose duties of 15 or 20 per cent." The commercial interests, then, of the northern States must be favored with incalculable advantages from the cession of Louisiana.

Mr. White, of Delaware, frankly expressed his convictions, that we could "never have permanent peace on our western waters, till we possess ourselves of New-Orleans, and such other territory as may be necessary to give us the complete and absolute command of the Mississippi." All these and far more we have honorably acquired. These objects appeared to him so inestimable that he dared not to hope for them but by a war. Though he deprecated such a measure, yet he viewed it as an unavoidable alternative. He considered it as the "duty and interest of the nation, to make the sacrifice for the object, because he deemed the country around New-Orleans, to be the only key to immense regions wa-



tered by the Mississippi, which he stated to be larger than all Europe, surpassed by no country in fertility and climate, and most of it a paradise."

Mr. Morris.—“With the Mississippi country in our possession, we have means of defence, more ample, more important, more easy, than any nation on earth. In a short time, all the West-India islands, fed from our granaries, must depend upon our will, and in consequence all the powers of Europe, who have colonies there, must court our friendship. Those rich sources of commercial importance (the foreign colonies in the West-Indies) will be, as it were, in our hands. They will be pledges for the amity of others, in seas and dominions far remote. It is a defence, which, though it costs us nothing, is superior to fleets and armies. But let the resources of America be divided (which must happen when the French are masters of New-Orleans) and all this power and influence are gone.” This, my friends, is the senatorial affidavit of Mr. Morris: And can we suppose that were he now in the senate, he could so perjure himself as to unite with his party in their aspersions against this glorious event.

I should too far transcend the limits which I have prescribed for myself on this occasion, to recite the many encomiums made, not only with apparent candor, but with faith and enthusiasm by the chieftains of federalism on the subject before us. They appear transported beyond themselves, and the powers of rhetoric are too feeble to describe the felicities of that enviable country; to obtain which, the expences, the time, the effusion of blood, so unavoidable in war, would have been but an inferior sacrifice. But a war with France and Spain, in co-operation with England, was their ultimate view. For the most prominent feature of their opposition to the pacific policy of the President, was an alliance with Britain, in preference to negotiation. It was not a forlorn hope, that hostilities, with the dreaded and inveterate enemy of that nation, would naturally increase a reciprocal attachment.

Thus I have attempted a fair representation of that importance and utility which gentlemen of the opposition attached to the possession of New-Orleans and the



navigation of the Mississippi, which could not fail to inspire a zeal like theirs for precipitate war. But opinions uttered with such apparent deliberation and candor, serve only as a foil, to set the inconsistency of their subsequent conduct in more expressive point of view. Though the acquisition realized, exceeds the utmost extent of their predicted importance, yet the malignancy of their opposition to the policy of Mr. Jefferson, is not assuaged. The moment in which was felt the impossibility of inducing a war, the acquisition of that country was treated as a visionary project. No sooner was the success of Mr. Monroe's mission confirmed, from a paradise, Louisiana degenerated into a desert. The same territory, which it was declared unworthy America to spare any pains in obtaining, has strangely become a nuisance and an evil. As the glory departed from antient Eden, when *warring lusts* were introduced, so when war was banished from the mind of Federalism, the value, the beauty, the luxuriance, the glory of that "garden of the world" fled like a vision. Those beautiful "prairies," those fertile vales, in which the annual sun beholds a "double harvest," have suddenly put on the dejected appearance of the "wilds of Lybia." Alas! those delightful regions, unstained with human blood, had no charms for ambition. Such distracted inconsistencies, must arrest the admiration of every candid mind, and fully demonstrate the desperation of that policy, while fast retreating from the advances of truth. These disconcerted manoeuvres are but the lengthened and distorted shadows, thrown upon our prosperous country, by the setting sun of *federalism*.

When intelligence of this auspicious event was first received, it was hard for a dispassionate mind to discover at what point of attack, this important measure could be assailed. It was to be expected that it would meet with the cordial approbation of every party. It required more than ordinary ingenuity to "conjure up an hypothesis" against the negociation. It was hoped that it was possible from this unexpected "coincidence of fortunate circumstances" to reconcile the jarring spirit of opposition. "But all calculations are fallacious, when combatting the perverse passions of the heart."

Mysterious it is, that the subject of war, in this country, should be treated with such deliberate indifference—war! that has ever been deemed a curse upon the people, in the most unenlightened ages of antiquity. The antient Hebrews, with the denunciations of famine and pestilence, were threatened with wars and captivities. “Wars and fightings” are expressly declared to be the result of that criminal cupidity which operates against the felicity of man. The blindest ages of barbarism presented nothing to diminish its horrors, but the boast of valour, the renown of patriotism, and the promise of glory in a world to come. But in this illumined century and literary nation, it is to be contemplated with those awful reflections, which the subject so naturally inspires.

Besides the loss of our citizens which no consideration could expiate or repay, the expences, with the strictest economy, would exceed the result of the most accurate calculations. To obtain a view of the direct effects of war in impoverishing a people, let us turn our attention to the present unhappy state of Old England.\* In a debate in the House

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\* The late war between Great Britain and France is said to have added, by the general reduction of national resources and strength, to the public debt of the former 11 thousand 451 millions 987 thousand dollars. To their annual taxes then it added 666 millions 390 thousand dollars. The population of Great Britain is estimated at 11 millions. Thus by the late war, suppose each person to pay equally, every man, woman and child, has contracted a debt of 1052 dollars; for which in taxes alone each has to pay an annual interest of 63 dollars and 12 cents.

Let this schedule furnish us with a scale by which we may calculate the great amount which probably must have been expended, in the projected conquest of Louisiana. We will now cast a figure upon the result of that pacific negotiation which we have so gladly celebrated. The population of the United States, by the late census, is upwards of 5 millions. The price of the purchase of Louisiana, of New-Orleans, and consequently of the great river Mississippi, is 15  $\frac{1}{4}$  millions of dollars. Let the surplus of 5 millions of population pay the surplus quarter of a million in the purchase money, and we find, that for 3 dollars each, we have acquired a right to a territory of prodigious extent, and have added to our population half a million of people. It will not, I hope, be deemed an illiberal reflection, if I state it as my deliberate belief, that the aggregate of the expences incurred under the last administration, are more than sufficient to pay the contract for that extensive country. It cannot then, amount to investive to suggest, that the fruitless attempt to enslave 5 millions of people, exceeded, in the expences, the sum that is to be paid to make half a million of slaves free and accepted citizens.



of Commons, Mr. Nichols, speaking on the conduct of Mr. Pitt, in his late administration, declared that "by the injury of paper money, by the rise of provisions, by reducing the tradesmen to poverty, and by filling the poor houses with the wretched, the inhabitants were doomed to perish, he would not say by hundreds, but by thousands." "To any gentleman," says he, "who doubts my accuracy, *I pledge myself to produce such damning proofs as shall make his hair stand on end.*" The melancholy perspective of embarrassment, poverty and wretchedness, which the state of that nation this moment presents, is distressing to the feelings of humanity. I need not invite your attention to our own country, to behold your happier enjoyments, for ere I express myself, your glowing sensations would anticipate the affecting contrast.

But notwithstanding the efforts of ambition to involve us in this exterminating evil, we have not only been saved from a war, but we have greatly extended our empire. It is true 15 millions must be paid for it. But the additional revenue itself will assuredly accomplish it. For that revenue, by the rapid increase of population and settlement, will be astonishingly enlarged by the time payment is to be made. You, good people, will find the remittances made and your bonds discharged, without any burthen or cause of complaint. But should an extended expence be brought to public view, by unfriendly calculators, it would exceed the powers of arithmetic, to prove it a poor bargain. Federalism itself had predicted that Bonaparte would not part with it but for an exorbitant consideration. It has also since been suggested, that it was by some over-reaching policy, that our negociators obtained it: And yet abrupt attempts are made to prove that the resulting inconveniences will transcend the amount of profit. But, my friends, I will unreservedly pledge myself, my honor and possessions (whatever they may be,) as did Mr. Livingston, when he first contracted with France, that a company shall be produced, of the same description of politics with our mistaken friends, who shall bind themselves, their heirs and assigns forever, to make good the payment of thirty millions, for what we have purchased.

The affectation of some has lightly esteemed the pur-

chafe, on account of visionary difficulties, and the time that may elapse, before any considerable settlement shall be effected. But a mere stoic might ask, is this hard to be accomplished by the same or similar causes which have raised America to her present state of improvement? Survey the regions of North and South America, contemplate the millions that inhabit her champaigns, and reflect that three centuries only have passed, since the first discovery of this new world. The period is much shorter, since these United States, whose harvests are sufficient to supply the granaries of the world, these flourishing plantations, around you, were but uncultivated wilds. We will therefore hazard the assertion, that, had it not been for this recent acquisition, our agricultural and enterprising citizens would shortly have found themselves limited in their speculative interests. But now they are presented with boundless resources of speculation, wealth and prosperity.

What are the disadvantages of the acquisition? To this question, whatever may have been the envious and bustling objections made by an abortive policy, the answers, you observe, have ever been vague, problematical and evasive. Those who attempt a Replication, always fumble over the subject, and meeting with their own antecedent encomiums, which recriminate and confound them, they scramble for objections, and fighting, with a retreating fire, abandon the ground under the feint of subterfuge.

What are the advantages of the acquisition? Much in every point of view. It gives us the enjoyment of that variety of climate so propitious to our national commerce. It throws into our possession a country, not only within the tropical latitudes, but adjoining our former jurisdictions. From this country then, we may bring, free of duty and war-insurance, all those articles, which we are taught to denominate, necessaries of life. Of this privilege we have hitherto been destitute. But where we view other nations of like habits and luxuries of living, we find but few, who cannot boast of their factories, colonies and possessions, either in the Indies of the east or of the west. Those insular gardens of the West-Indies are distributed, as it were by the lot of fate, between the English, French, Spanish, Dutch, Swedish



and Portuguese. And who among the citizens of America, will impiously deny, that it is the hand that rules the destinies of the universe, which has allotted to us the fertile province of Louisiana. For so hath the great event been greeted by several eulogists of Europe.

This extensive country exceeds in quantity, the whole of the West-India Islands, and is stated to produce sugar, coffee, cocoa, ginger, pimento, cotton, gums, turmeric, rhubarb, and probably teas. These no doubt will be soon shipped in abundance, free of duty, &c. to the eastern, northern and other Atlantic States. From this circumstance, therefore, no small advantage will arise to our coasting business, which being secured from foreign restrictions, is deemed the most valuable branch of our carrying trade. For these articles, our produce, but principally our manufactures, must be returned;—and chiefly in our own vessels. Those rich planters, possessed of such easy means of affluence, will never leave their plantations, to be concerned in the fisheries, ship-building and manufactures, which are prosecuted with such industry in the northern States.

The acquisition affords us another advantage. It removes every apprehension of danger from a foreign colony in that country. This was a favorite argument to effect by force the seizure of New-Orleans. This consideration, tho' nothing to the purpose for which it was adduced, is greatly flattering to the peace and security of the United States. For had any preponderating power of Europe have gotten possession in that quarter, they would have held a commanding authority over all the business, that was connected with the navigation of the Mississippi, and, if disposed, would have injured the trade, in all our western waters.

Had Great Britain succeeded in that notorious conspiracy of the governor of Canada, the British minister and Mr. Blount, to secure to herself the Floridas, our public affairs would have ever been contaminated and harrassed with British intrigue. Had she also succeeded in a purchase of Louisiana, or acquired it by the success of that expedition, which she meditated last year, when she renewed her hostilities against France, would she not have challenged the exclusive right of that important river, as she now does that



of St. Lawrence? Would she not as insolently retain the right of deposit at New-Orléans, as she once withheld the posts at Detroit and Niagara? Would it afford a pleasant reflection to any one, to have the French or any other nation to obtain a strong foot-hold there, and carry on a vigorous state of colonization? The recognizance of our own wishes, and the recollection of the anti-pacific arguments, banish at once the idea.

It has been observed by some, whose candour we regard, that the expences and impediments in maintaining a government in that extensive country, will rise to the amount of all the benefits received. But I recollect no statement or analysis of the subject, which authorises me to pay any respect to the hypothesis. There is no shadow of reason, why a government, completely respondent to all its purposes, may not be maintained, with equal facility, as in any State of the Union. But the impracticability of supporting a temperate and effective jurisdiction there, as advanced to the public, by the anonymous strictures of Fabricius, is to be rejected as barely plausible in theory, and diametrically anti-federal.

This votary of Aristocracy is at open hostilities with the very existence of a confederacy of the States. We are not to revert to the Hanseatic league, to the Grecian and Swiss republics, and then exult in inferences as feeble as our premises are absurd. Disdaining the hypocrisy of such anti-republican theories, our recourses should ever be to facts which are inflexible—to experience which is orthodox. That system of government now in “successful operation” may be safely extended to embrace the wide province of Louisiana, with all the population which it may hereafter support. The cession has furnished the enemies of the constitution, with a preamble to their declaration, that *the enlargement of our empire must necessarily affect the genius as well as forms of our federal government.* “To impel the current of power (say they) from the centre to the circumference of so wide a circle, it is manifest that the momentum or moving force of the power must be proportionably augmented.” This language clearly mistakes the unnatural mechanism of a despotic government, for the physical

principles of a federal republic. The fortunate operation of a good government depends not upon the geographical extent of dominion, but upon its own technical constitution. I am fond of comparing such an one to a moral being, having a sympathy in all its parts, and discharging its functions by its own vital and inherent energies. The blood is propelled from the fountain, by the elastic motion of the lungs, through all the arteries to its assigned limits, and returns by its own cohesive attraction to render a supply for its own discharge. So, by the combined and reciprocal energies of law and patriotism, our federal republic will ever preserve a natural motion, harmony and equipoise, in all its physical and geographical departments. But where the love of country exists not, this political equilibrium is destroyed, and must be restored by revolutionary percussions, as necessary, though as dreadful, as the discharges of the electric fluid, and the explosions of a volcano.

Despotic institutions have but the existence of a summer's day, because they never possess the quickening forces of patriotism. A system of mechanism, however ingeniously contrived and finished, hath nothing of the lively operations of a vital organization. The primary movements of such a government are solely the effect of some dead weight—some inert and arbitrary power, which being counteracted by the very laws of nature, must soon be exhausted, and a dissolution ensues. It is as vain, therefore, to look for a permanent aristocracy, as to attempt to develope the principle of perpetual motion. What though these establishments may, for a length of time, put on the appearance of Eden, and seem to flourish from their own intrinsic virtue—rising, like the rocket, to great ascent and splendor, yet their artificial powers are soon exhausted, the final explosions are produced, and they descend like the stick. Ambition, therefore, in order to create these unnatural systems of policy, will seek first to marshal the interests of society against each other, and the moral elements are thereby put into such commotion, that here a vortex may absorb the floating liberties of the people, and there a water spout of despotism be forced up from the powers, that may be abstracted from the rights of mankind. But, the more politi-



cal establishments are indebted to violence for their properties, the more temporary they are.

Political bodies, therefore, whether hale or sickly, owe nothing of these circumstances to their bulk of population or magnitude of territory, but to their original constitution and general management. It is farcical to pretend that the Government of Louisiana cannot be erected in separate establishments, and all with the rest be associated under one federal compact, whose leading features shall be purely republican. This confederation may as well be maintained between *twenty* as *seventeen* independent States. But there are considerations which induce a belief that the annexing of Louisiana to our empire, will beget a more natural, more intimate and more permanent Union. The interchange of commercial contributions will not fail to convince both the North and the South of the special advantages of each, and endear and bind them to each other in a conjugal tie.

If this relation has heretofore been sensibly felt between the northern and southern States, much more will it be acknowledged, since we can receive all our tropical necessities from a sister State. To talk then of a partition of our empire, is to urge an unnatural and ruinous divorce. But why should politicians of New-England, except it be from a niggardly and ambitious policy, commence the duty of separation? In a house of merchandize, it is common for the partner, who is conscious of laboring under a disadvantage from the firm, to propose a dissolution of partnership. Positive I am, that were a division to be executed, the Southern States, holding a greater variety of commercial materials, would still exist a far more integral and independent government: While the Northern States, regretting too late the wantonness of their policy, would behold themselves existing a fractional and feeble jurisdiction. I haste to an end, by a more appropriate address.

*Citizens of the County of Bristol,*

Once more I have accepted the invitation of your committee, to address you upon subjects assigned me of a political nature, and intimately connected with the current times. Though grateful for the honors and respect you have shown me, yet I accepted indeed this last assignment with backward deference. Reluctant, from a view of

its novelty and relation to the politics of the day, I felt at first resolved not to expose myself before the camp of those who were decidedly opposed to me in political opinion. I had truly tho't that a private enjoyment of public sentiments would be far more felicitating, than a feeble attempt to discuss a subject that might irritate the feelings, though of a retreating, yet of a respectable opposition. A sense of duty however prevailing, I embrace it perhaps for the last time.—I was determined at first to pursue the subject upon my own ground, without employing those allusions, which however serious, might occasion a blush upon any, who had consigned those unpopular transactions to the general oblivion of past events. But soon I discovered that the way I must pursue, led through the disputed ground of party politics, which supports my claim to the most liberal candour. The subject, in my leisure, I have attempted to elucidate, and now freely resign it to your censure or your applause.

The time, in which I have lived in this county, embraces the two distinguishing æras of our federal administration. But a few years ago the times were perilous indeed. The very heavens were hung with omens of mischievous destinies. The aged patriot, who looked back upon the cause of America, saw the young empire, tho' a still splendid luminary, yet retrograde in her orbit. Awed into silence from the painful retrospect, he could only heave the solitary sigh, while the youthful politicians around him, wistfully enquired the occasion of his grief. Those were days of triumph to delusion—of glory to ambition. While reposing in our lethargic loyalty, she entwined us with her webs of oppression, till in the joy of her heart she viewed her conquest complete, and the shout of her victory awaked us from our slumber. As Sampson in his withs from the lap of Deliah, so rose the people at that time from their political repose. With sacred resentment they demanded redress, and the omnipotent voice of their suffrages introduced a new world of prosperity—pardon the metaphor, a new heaven and a new earth, wherein we hope dwells political righteousness. The happy event, which has dedicated in America an eternal monument of experimental republicanism, we have this day, my friends, convened to celebrate.



Notwithstanding exertions to traduce the characters of our rulers and hurry our government into contempt, it is an incontestable fact, that the United States have never been more respected by the powers of Europe, than at the present moment. Our nation appears great in the view of old establishments, which ought to be possessed of all that improvement that experience can bestow. At foreign courts our ministers are received with the most cordial attention. By their political observations, they announce their conviction to the world, that the resources of our national wealth, honor and greatness are daily increasing. They behold our revenues unembarrassed and copious; our public faith dignified and supported; our militia disciplined and formidable, and our administration clement and energetic. The alacrity of the British cabinet in settling our claims on that country; the eagerness of the Spanish government in removing every cause of complaint arising from the affair at New-Orleans; but above all, the cession of Louisiana and the convention for the payment of the claims of our citizens by the government of France, are circumstances of honorable and convincing proof, that our alliance is respected and our friendship esteemed.

Let the candid, of every description of party, reciprocate the question, To whom do we owe this national dignity and happiness? Is it to the wisdom and patriotism of that set of men, who have been proclaiming to the world that our administration has been committed to an election of men, without principle or policy, and to whom they have attempted to impute the most indecent and scandalous vices? What would have been the state of our nation, had the efforts of that mistaken policy prevailed? Instead of a restoration of the right of deposit at New-Orleans, with tendered assurances of continued friendship, we should have seen our country, before this time, embroiled in a war with Spain—“bleeding at every pore,” to recover by force what had never been officially denied. Instead of obtaining, by honorable contract, that “garden of the world,” we should have seen our military armament mouldering into dust on the banks of the Mississippi, and our sea-port towns block-



aded with hostile fleets. Our ships would have been "dismantled in every port, or striking to the cruisers of France and Spain." Had the advocates of war succeeded, our government would have soon witnessed "that disgrace and downfall," by which its enemies expected to reascend to power and public esteem. "But how glorious the reverse, and how grateful to all who delight in the prosperity of our country."

But still, my friends, there exists in this State the same infuriate spirit of opposition, tho' condensed into an undreaded cohort, called the "*Essex Junto*." From this rendezvous of Federalism, every measure, that assumes to itself a political form, whether it be as clearly rational as a mathematical axiom, or subordinate to the diversified judgments of men, is sure to be assailed with all the malignancy of calumny and condemnation. Among the many that have been marked out as victims, is the late proposed amendment to the Constitution. The plain English of all their objections to this amendment is, *The Constitution of the U. States is, in every section and article, divinely perfect*. Compare this language with the avowed opinions and practice of the same denomination of men, in the year '98. Acts were then passed, totally repugnant to the spirit and meaning of that sacred compact, without an attempt of reformation in the letter. While proud in domination, they could talk of its "contemptible imbecility" & "want of energy." But an honest essay being made to correct that instrument, in a mode provided by itself, a sorrowful exclamation is raised against the measure, as establishing a contagious precedent for wanton innovation.

Another measure, which has afforded a delicious occasion of Federal reprehension, is the late impeachment of Judge Pickering and Judge Chace. Some dear friends of law and order, have by every distortion and false colouring they could apply to these cases, endeavored to practise upon all the excess of private tenderness, that any mind may possess over a veneration for justice and the honor of government, to excite an alarm and call a deluded fraternity to *behold the downfall of the Judiciary!* It is insinuated that the administration has not so much in view the repu-

tation of justice, in chastising the malconduct of these Judges, as to impair the independence of the Judiciary. A nation, indeed, must be found in a distressing dilemma, who had neither power to repeal a useless and embarrassing limb of the Judiciary, nor privilege to punish its officers for notorious abuses of trust, because it is said these officers were to hold their seats *during good behaviour*. But the arguments against the one and the other are equally invalid; and unwittingly decide, that our administration have taken a position beyond the imputation of blame. The British government, which the opponents profess to venerate, would have duly noticed the stretch of power in the one, and the breach of trust in the other, and made the offenders signal examples of condign punishment. But, my friends, the pensive politician, who has kept tally of all the shifts and evasions to which a disappointed ambition has resorted, to calumniate our rulers and immolate our national honor, would not admire that these occasions also are impressed into her service.

Let the good people of this State remember, that while the enemies of our administration are professing such tender regards for our Constitution, they are still cherishing a delusive hope, that they shall soon ascend the rotary wheel of fortune, and bask in as great parade and power as that from which they have fallen. At that time (should it ever arrive) you will see them so far abandoning these affectionate attachments, as to exert every nerve, to introduce a monarchical form of government. Though this *beloved* instrument pointedly interdicts any title of nobility, yet you would see them gradually establishing an aristocracy, whose various branches, like the cancerous humor, would soon rankle in every part of the community. Then would society be thrown into unnumbered grades of authority and greatness; —the houses of your “Austins,” your “Hewes,” your “Gores,” &c. would be erected into patrician orders, and you, poor people, descend to a state of plebeian submission.

But that propitious providence, which has hitherto defended our nation from foreign oppression and domestic corruption, will still direct the destinies of our growing empire, and cause the American republic to become the glory



of the world. It is a grateful truth, that since our fathers first colonized this western wilderness, a peculiar fortune has attended us. Heroes and Statesmen have always been raised up with energies of mind adequate to the instant emergency of our cause. We have yet living among us hoary patriots, whose souls, tho' whelmed in years, are yet filled with the chaste spirit of the revolution and parental yearnings for the American people.—Venerable Statesmen, who, having consecrated their meridian suns to that sacred cause, have known the intrigues of ambition, can detect the fallacy of aristocratic collusion, and minutely describe what government will best secure the felicities of the nation.

But tho' we are now blest with these political prophets, yet the days, in which we shall be indulged with their company and counsel, will soon be past. "Our fathers, where are they, and the prophets, do they live forever?" Washington, whose presence once to our nation was patriotism, and whose counsel was wisdom, is no longer numbered with the survivors of the revolution. Long since, the last obsequies have been paid to the immortal Hancock. The weeds of mourning for the venerable Samuel Adams are just laid aside. In the funeral procession of the two latter, we, as fellow-citizens of the same State, were the first of the mourners. And now, my friends, our bosoms are still heaving with a solitary sigh for Hancock dead, and the tear of patriotism, twice distilled and copious for departed Adams, is yet undry upon our cheeks. We have dutiously committed their dear remains to the bosom of that soil, which they saved from the forcible entry of an encroaching foe. And it is a consolation that that soil, which intreatures their dust, can never support a race enslaved to the lust of ambition. These were the twin-patriots proscribed by parliament, so offensive to the eye of corruption, that even British-amnesty could not embrace them. These were the Harmodius and Aristogiton of America, whose joint efforts roused and supported the soul of patriotism and thus, thro' the deepest gloom of hope, opened a way for the deliverance of their country. Hence these names have be-



come odious and terrible to our modern Pisistratidæ. But as odious as they appear in their view, these indeed are names covered with glory. They will ever beam in the effulgence of the sun, while the most splendid of their opponents shall be seen only in the parhelion of fame, and must at last, like a falling meteor, descend to oblivion.

From the earliest hours of my remembrance these names were dear to the inhabitants of Massachusetts. In those dubious times, when the American cause stood trembling on the margin of uncertain fate, the very mention of them, gave consolation and firmness to the interests of the revolution. And I will presume to declare, that the names of Hancock and Adams shall be venerated by posterity, as long as virtue, moderation, philanthropy and republicanism shall appear lovely to our citizens, and rational freedom find an abode in the States of America.

While our revolutionary worthies are annually departing from the stage, it must be grateful to the pensive veteran to see young men come forward, wearing their mantles and emulating their virtues. And indeed, my friends, our hearts must be consoled in the prospect, that our country will ever be blest with political prophets, who will faithfully announce the veteran doctrine, that *Republican righteousness exalteth a nation, but the sin of ambition is a reproach unto any people*. This moment there are among you many a young patriot, of genius, principle and integrity, who ardently aspire to the merit and fame of their grand-fires; who are ready to espouse the cause of liberty; who are prepared to meet the vanguard of despotism, and eager, at their country's call, to consecrate in the temple of honor, some early pledge of future usefulness and glory. To these, my friends, tho' I blush that I have done no more for my country, I cheerfully commit all the joy, all the duty, all the anxiety of addressing you on such public occasions. Tho' for a subject, a defence of the liberties of my country has been given me, tho' the theme has been congenial with my very soul, and has often quickened within me the ennobling fire of patriotism; yet such is my predilection for quietude, and without that, even solitary obscurity, that my feelings

have enjoined upon me, no more to stand forth as a mark & victim of democracy, toward which, the finger of a latrant and expiring opposition may be directed. I have so far availed myself of these useful occasions of enquiry, as to be deeply convinced of the designs of an indefatigable party, who have for their ultimate view the overthrow of our republican government. I have gained a plenary satisfaction that all this audacious invective poured upon the administration; this pusillanimous imputation of private vices in our President, when they could not get public;—this pretended alarm of the downfall of the judiciary in the late repeal and impeachments; this confounded tortuosity of conduct in the affair of Louisiana, &c. all demonstrate the impotency of their cause, and ought to be viewed by a candid public, as signals of distress and approaching dissolution.

Let us rejoice then for the abounding prosperity of our country. All things we believe are in felicitous procession. Happy Republicans! heaven has predestined a triumph to your principles. To the omnific energies of truth and reason, ascribe all the glory. Let temperance, moderation and firmness characterize all your proceedings; and remember, from domestic virtue results the greatest boast of national honor. Let us generously cultivate the education of the succeeding generation, and leave examples worthy their imitation. Let us make the rising world believe, that in order to ameliorate the condition of society, we must correct the dispositions of the human heart. Be no more anxious for your cause than to convince mankind, that republican principles are capable of embracing every purpose of law and government. That system of politics, which we have adopted, must be genuine, for it has not only been assailed, in all ages, by a virulent opposition, but it has been tried and approved by the test of experience.

Rejoice, that the time is on a rapid wing, when the governments of the States will act in concert with Congress, and move like the celestial spheres, in harmonious orbits, around the centre of the system. New-England, though obstinate the stand she has taken against the present administration, must soon acknowledge their policy, and unfurl



in Hartford and Boston the Republican banners. Rhode-Island and New-Hampshire have gloriously emerged from political delusion, and are now, in the concert of thanksgiving, rejoicing with their sister States. Massachusetts and Connecticut are suffered a moment longer to resist the potency of truth, that they may grace the rear of her victory, and make her triumph more complete. Thus will principle and candour finally obtain a happy ascendancy in the public mind. But many hard things will yet be said against the cause, but not more than the world hath said against our divine religion. Our worthy President will still be buffeted, but more, if possible, hath been done before to the holy son of Mary.\*

To justify our own feelings, and do honor to the exercises of the day, we turn our address to the American fair.

*Amiable Friends,*

With grateful sensations, we welcome you to participate with us, this joyful festival. As Adam without his

\* We understand that since this Oration was delivered, a gentleman, who sustains no mean grade in the scale of Federalism, expressed much *pious grief* that any should be so "strangely democratic, as to compare Thomas Jefferson to Jesus Christ."—To which we reply.

1st. Had the gentleman any fractional portion of that boasted acumen, good sense, or faculty of criticism, which his party has affected to engross, he would have discovered that there is not here intended the least comparison between our SAVIOUR and our President. The comparison is perspicuously between federalism and that daring spirit of the devil, which has attempted to exterminate christianity by the scorpion-whip of obloquy and persecution. Does history compare Galileo to the FOUNTAIN OF TRUTH by declaring that he was persecuted for the sake of truth? I trow not.

2d. It has been too frequently the misfortune of TRUTH to be persecuted in the world by those who have assumed an opposition to its hypothesis, without regarding whether its effects have been injurious or beneficial to civil society. We assert that the malignancy of those, who persecuted our SAVIOUR, without making his divinity a question, was excited greatly on account of the republican sentiments which his gospel contained. The candid will a moment revolve this idea before they proceed to decision.

3d. If we may judge from a synoptical view of federal conduct, we are obliged to consider the "pious grief" of the gentleman alluded to, occasioned not so much for fear dishonor might be reflected upon our SAVIOUR, as honor should be ascribed to our President. We shall therefore enroll the matter as a fresh instance of that "whining hypocrisy" with which the "opposition" approach the people upon the subject of politics, whenever religion can be impressed to serve their occasion.



Eve, could not, so gladly, have celebrated in Eden his marriage in song of praise, so (should we be indulged the comparison) without your attendance, this public testimony of our gratitude for the acquisition of this modern "paradise" would be too solitary and imperfect. What event of national concern more affects our domestic sensations and interests, than that we this day celebrate? Not a continent discovered, but an immense region acquired: Not by waste of blood and usurpation, but by negotiation & honorable purchase. The important event surely furnishes a subject of entertainment and discourse, in which female delicacy will not blush to take a part. Yes; in your fire-side amusements, in circles sequestered from men and soldiers, you may realize in this a rich theme for interesting observation. Your bosoms are not, as in the triumphs of ambition, torn with the poignant reflection, that though the national weal has been augmented, it is by the unhallowed sacrifice of many a lovely youth to whom your tender hearts were fondly attached. Though an incidental chasm may have taken place in affairs between the United States and Spain, yet our more propitious destinies have not called for young Curtius, the flower and pride of America, to yield himself a victim of patriotism to restore the capricious breach. Instead of mourning the death of a kind husband, the affectionate wife may meet his evening return with proposals of future settlement for her rising, numerous family. The tender mother, instead of deploring the loss of a favorite son, may now be felicitated with the tidings that the young adventurer has enjoyed in that fertile and salubrious country, all the prosperity which his elated hopes had promised.

In the celebration, therefore, of our NATIONAL JUBILEE, you have, with propriety, taken a distinguishing and interesting part. We do not wonder that you also have rendered a rich tribute of gratitude, and enlivened this festival with so general attendance. Hearts like yours, softened with benevolence, sentiment & philanthropy, cannot but glow with a feeling acknowledgment for our national prosperity. All that is lovely must bear a part in the eulogy, that is bestowed upon our present administration. Tho' you

may have been complimented as "the only real sovereigns in America," yet such are the relations of your sex to society, that you cheerfully venerate, with our benevolent politicians, republican establishments. Those heavenly virtues, which you hold so dear, will not countenance in men, those unprincipled despotic aristocracies, which too often open the sluices of baseness and immorality; which too often level the entrenchments that sacred honor has thrown around the dignity of your sex, & which ever enlarge the sphere of lawless passions, to practice on unsuspecting innocence, the shameless seduction of which, the blood of a Lucretia could scarcely expiate, and against the violation of which, the life alone of chaste Virginia must be a deprecating sacrifice. Under a free government, your beauties and charms, like other brilliant attributes of our national character, must flourish in greater loveliness and perfection. Those illusive honors, which ambition proffers you in the gilded titles of queen, princess, dutchess, marchioness, &c. lose all their fascination, when you look around your friends, and see no where existing those partial distinctions, which, though they may favor an individual, yet degrade and despoil the many; when you do not, as in other countries, see them compelled to incur the displeasure of some proud dignitary of the family, and turn their backs on hereditary greatness, by ratifying, at the altar of Hymen, the elections of their hearts: When you look into the perspective of futurity and behold a numerous posterity, increasing in the world from the blood of your own families, enjoying each other as fellow-citizens and associates, undivided by that exotic policy, which commits to a few a barbarous authority over the rest; when ye see them all entitled to the favors of honor, according to their respective merit. Surely, my friends, a view like this, tenders to your hearts a more purified enjoyment, than could ever result from the visionary pomp and glory of a Cleopatra or an Elizabeth.























































































































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