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RELIGION

AND

PATRIOTISM

The CONSTITUENTS of a Good

SOLDIER.

A

SERMON

Preached to

Captain OVERTON'S Independant  
Company of Volunteers, raised in  
*Hanover County, Virginia, Au-*  
*gust 17, 1755.*

---

By SAMUEL DAVIES, *A. M. Minister of*  
*the Gospel there.*

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Religion *and* Patriotism the Con-  
stituents of a good SOLDIER.

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2 SAM. X. 12.

*Be of good Courage, and let us play  
the Men, for our People, and for the  
Cities of our God: And the Lord  
do that which seemeth him good.*



IN Hundred Years of Peace and Liberty in such a World as this, is a very unusual Thing; and yet our Country has been the happy Spot that has been distinguished with such a long Series of Blessings, with little or no Interruption. Our Situation in the middle of the *British* Colonies, and our Separation from the *French*, those *eternal* Enemies of Liberty and Britons, on the one Side by the vast *Atlantic*, and

on the other by a long Ridge of Mountains, and a wide extended Wilderness, have for many Years been a Barrier to us ; and while other Nations have been involved in War, we have not been alarmed with the Sound of the Trumpet, nor seen *Garments rolled in Blood.*

But now the Scene is changed : Now we begin to experience in our Turn the Fate of the Nations of the Earth. Our Territories are invaded by the Power, and Perfidy of *France* ; our Frontiers ravaged by merciless Savages, and our Fellow-Subjects there murdered with all the horrid Arts of *Indian* and Popish Torture. Our General, *unfortunately brave*, is fallen, an Army of 1300 choice Men routed, our fine Train of Artillery taken, and all this (Oh mortyfying Thought!) all this by 4 or 500 dastardly, insidious Barbarians.

These Calamities have not come upon us without Warnings. We were long ago apprized of the ambitious Schemes of our Enemies, and their Motions to carry them into Execution : And had we taken timely Measures they might have been crushed, before they could have arrived at such a formidable Height. But how have we generally behaved in such a critical Time ? Alas ! our Country has been sunk in a deep Sleep : A stupid Security has unmanned the Inhabitants : They could not realize a Danger



ger at the Distance of 2 or 300 Miles : They would not be persuaded, that even *French Papists* could seriously design us an Injury : And hence little, or nothing has been done for the Defence of our Country in Time, except by the Compulsion of Authority. And now, when the Cloud thickens over our Heads, and alarms every thoughtful Mind with its near Approach, Multitudes, I am afraid, are still dissolved in careless Security, or enervated with an effeminate, cowardly Spirit. When the melancholy News first reached us concerning the Fate of our Army, then we saw how natural it is for the Presumptuous to fall into the opposite Extreme of unmanly Despondence, and Consternation ; and how little Men could do in such a Pannic for their own Defence. We have also *suffered our poor Fellow-Subjects in the Frontier Counties to fall a helpless Prey to Blood-thirsty Savages, without affording them proper Assistance*, which as Members of the same Body Politic they had a Right to expect. They might as well have continued *in a State of Nature*, as be united *in Society*, if in such an Article of extreme Danger, they are left to shift for themselves. The bloody Barbarians have exercised on some of them the most unnatural and leisurely Tortures ; and others they have butchered

4 Religion and Patriotism the

their Beds, or in some unguarded Hour. Can human Nature bear the Horror of the Sight! See yonder? the hairy Scalps clotted with Gore! the mangled Limbs! Women ript up! the Heart and Bowels, still palpitating with Life, and smoking on the Ground! See the Savages swilling their Blood, and imbibing a more outrageous Fury with the inhuman Draught! Sure these are not *Men*; they are not *Beasts of Prey*; they are something worse; they must be *infernal Furies* in human Shape. And have we tamely looked on, and suffered them to exercise these hellish Barbarities upon our Fellow-Men, our Fellow-Subjects, our Brethren? Alas! with what Horror must we look upon ourselves, as being little better than Accessaries to their Blood?

And shall these Ravages go on uncheck'd? Shall *Virginia* incur the Guilt, and the everlasting Shame of tamely exchanging her Liberty, her Religion, and her All, for arbitrary *Gallic* Power, and for Popish Slavery, Tyranny, and Massacre? Alas! are there none of her Children, that enjoyed all the Blessings of her Peace, that will espouse her Cause, and befriend her now in the Time of her Danger? Are *Britons* utterly degenerated by so short a Remove from their Mother-Country? Is the Spirit  
of

of Patriotism entirely extinguished among us? And must I give thee up for lost, O my Country! and all that is included in that important Word? Must I look upon thee as a conquered, enslaved Province of *France*, and the Range of *Indian* Savages? My Heart breaks at the Thought. And must ye, our unhappy Brethren in our Frontiers, must ye stand the single Barriers of a ravaged Country, unassisted, unbefriended, unpitied? Alas! must I draw these shocking Conclusions?

No; I am agreeably checked by the happy, encouraging Prospect now before me. Is it a pleasing Dream? Or do I really see a Number of brave Men, without the Compulsion of Authority, without the Prospect of Gain, voluntarily associated in a Company, to march over trackless Mountains, the Haunts of wild Beasts, or fiercer Savages, ~~Down and Mountains~~ into an hideous Wilderness, to succour their helpless Fellow-Subjects, and guard their Country? Yes; Gentlemen, I see you here upon this Design; and were you all united to my Heart by the most endearing Ties of Nature, or Friendship, I could not wish to see you engaged in a nobler Cause; and whatever the Fondness of Passion might carry me to, I am sure my Judgment would never suffer me to persuade you to desert it. You all generously put your Lives in your  
 Hands;

Hands; and fundry of you have nobly disengaged yourselves from the strong and tender Ties that twine about the Heart of a *Father*, or a *Husband*, to confine you at home in inglorious Ease, and sneaking Retirement from Danger, when your Country calls for your Assistance. While I have you before me, I have high Thoughts of a *Virginian*; and I entertain the pleasing Hope that my Country will yet emerge out of her Distress, and flourish with her usual Blessings. I am gratefully sensible of the umerited Honour you have done me, in making Choice of me to address you upon so singular and important an Occasion: And I am sure I bring with me a Heart ardent to serve you and my Country, though I am afraid my Inability, and the Hurry of my Preparations, may give you Reason to repent your Choice. I cannot begin my Address to you with more proper Words than those of a great General, which I have read to you: *Be of good Courage, and play the Men, for your People, and for the Cities of your God; and the Lord do what seemeth him good.*

My present Design is, to illustrate and improve the fundry Parts of my Text, as They lie in order, which you will find rich in fundry important Instructions, adapted to this Occasion.

Constituents of a good SOLDIER. 7

The Words were spoken just before a very threatening Engagement by *Joab*, who had long served under that pious Hero King *David*, as the General of his Forces, and had shewn himself an Officer of true Courage, conducted with Prudence. The *Ammonites*, a neighbouring Nation, at frequent Hostilities with the *Jews*, had ungratefully offered Indignities to some of *David's* Courtiers whom he had sent to condole their King upon the Death of his Father, and congratulate his Accession to the Crown. Our holy Religion teaches us to bear *personal* Injuries without *private* Revenge: But *national* Insults, and Indignities ought to excite the *public* Resentment. Accordingly King *David*, when he heard that the *Ammonites*, with their Allies, were preparing to invade his Territories, and carry their Injuries still farther, sent *Joab* his General, with his Army, to repel them, and avenge the Affronts they had offered his Subjects. It seems the Army of the Enemy were much more numerous than *David's*: Their Mercenaries from other Nations were no less than 31,000 Men; and no Doubt the *Ammonites* themselves were a still greater Number. These numerous Forces were disposed in the most advantageous Manner, and surrounded *Joab's* Men, that they might attack them both in Flank and

Front

Front at once, and cut them all off, leaving no Way for them to escape. Prudence is of the utmost Importance in the Conduct of an Army: And *Joab*, in this critical Situation, gives a Proof how much he was Master of it, and discovers the steady Composure of his Mind, while thus surrounded with Danger. He divides his Army, and gives one Party to his Brother *Abishai*, who commanded next to him, and the other he kept the Command of himself, and resolves to attack the *Syrian* Mercenaries, who seemed the most formidable; he gives Orders to his Brother in the mean Time to Fall upon the *Ammonites*; and he animates him with this noble Advice: *Be of good Courage, and let us play the Men, for our People and the Cities of our God, which are now at Stake: And the Lord do what seemeth him good.*

*Be of good Courage, and let us play the Men*:—Courage is an essential Character of a good Soldier:—Not a savage ferocious Violence:—Not a fool-hardy Insensibility of Danger, or headstrong Rashness to rush into it:—Not the Fury of enflamed Passions, broke loose from the Government of Reason: But calm, deliberate, rational Courage; a steady, judicious, thoughtful Fortitude; the Courage of a Man, and not of a Tyger: Such a Temper as *Addison* ascribes

cribes with so much Justice to the famous *Marlborough* and *Eugene* :

*Whose Courage dwelt not in a troubled Flood  
Of mounting Spirits, and fermenting Blood;—But  
Lodg'd in the Soul, with Virtue over-ru'd,  
Inflan'd by Reason, and by Reason cool'd\*.*

This is true Courage, and such as we ought all to cherish in the present dangerous Conjunction. This will render Men vigilant and cautious against Surprizes, prudent and deliberate in concerting their Measures, and steady and resolute in executing them. But without this they will fall into unsuspected Dangers, which will strike them with wild Consternation: They will meanly shun Dangers that are surmountable, or precipitantly rush into those that are causeless, or evidently fatal, and throw away their Lives in vain.

There are some Men who *naturally* have this heroic Turn of Mind. The wise Creator has adapted the natural Genius of Mankind, with a surprizing and beautiful Variety to the State in which they are placed in this World. To some he has given a Turn for intellectual Improvement, and the liberal Arts and Sciences; to others a Genius for Trade; to others a Dexterity in Mechanics, and the ruder Arts, necessary for

\* *The Campaign.*

the Support of human Life : The Generality of Mankind may be capable of tolerable Improvements in any of these : But it is only they whom the God of Nature has formed for them, that will shine in them, every Man in his own Province. And as God well knew what a World of degenerate, ambitious, and revengeful Creatures this is ; as he knew that Innocence could not be protected, Property and Liberty secured, nor the Lives of Mankind preserved from the lawless Hands of Ambition, Avarice and Tyranny, without the Use of the Sword ; as he knew this would be the only Method to preserve Mankind from universal Slavery ; he has formed some Men for this dreadful Work, and fired them with a martial Spirit, and a glorious Love of Danger. Such a Spirit, though most pernicious when ungoverned by the Rules of Justice, and Benevolence to Mankind, is a public Blessing, when rightly directed : Such a Spirit, under God, has often mortified the Insolence of Tyrants, checked the Inroachments of arbitrary Power, and delivered enslaved and ruined Nations : It is as necessary in its Place, for our Subsistence in such a World as this, as any of the gentler Genius's among Mankind ; and it is derived from the same divine Original. He that winged the Imagination of an *Homer* or a *Milton*,



*Milton*, he that gave Penetration to the Mind of *Newton*, he that made *Tubal-Cain* an Instructor of Artificers in Brass and Iron \*, and gave Skill to *Bezaleel* and *Aboliab* in curious Works †; nay, he that sent out *Paul* and his Brethren to conquer the Nations with the gentler Weapons of *Plain Truth*, Miracles, and the Love of a crucified Saviour; HE, even that same gracious Power, has formed and raised up an *Alexander*, a *Julius Cæsar*, a *William* ‡, and a *Marlborough*, and inspired them with this enterprizing, intrepid Spirit, the Two first to scourge a guilty World, and the Two last to save Nations on the Brink of Ruin. There is something *glorious* and *inviting* in Danger, to such noble Minds; and their Breasts beat with a generous Ardour when it appears.

Our Continent is like to become the Seat of War; and we, for the future (till the sundry *European* Nations that have planted Colonies in it, have fixed their Boundaries by the Sword) have no other Way left to defend our Rights and Privileges. And has God been pleased to diffuse some Sparks of this Martial Fire through our Country?

C 2

I hope

\* *Gen.* iv. 22. † *Exod.* xxxv. 30, 31, &c.

‡ King *William* the Third, the Deliverer of *Britain* from Popery and Slavery, and the Scourge of *France* and her haughty *Grand Monarque*.

I hope he has : And though it has been almost extinguished by so long a Peace, and a Deluge of Luxury and Pleasure, now I hope it begins to kindle : And may I not produce you my Brethren, who are engaged in this Expedition, as Instances of it \*? Well, cherish it as a sacred Heaven-born Fire ; and let the Injuries done to your Country administer Fuel to it ; and kindle it in those Breasts where it has been hitherto smothered or inactive.

Though Nature be the true Origin of military Courage, and it can never be kindled to a high Degree, where there is but a feeble Spark of it innate ; yet there are sundry Things that may improve it even in Minds full of natural Bravery, and animate those who are naturally of an effeminate Spirit to behave with a tolerable Degree of Resolution and Fortitude, in the Defence of their Country. ----- I need not tell you that it is of great Importance for this End that you should be at Peace with God, and your own Conscience, and prepared for your future State. Guilt is naturally timorous, and often struck into a  
Panic

\* As a remarkable Instance of this, I may point out to the Public that heroic Youth Col. *Washington*, whom I cannot but hope Providence has hitherto preserved in so signal a Manner, for some important Service to his Country.

Panic even with imaginary Dangers; and an infidel Courage, proceeding from Want of Thought, or a stupid Carelessness about our Welfare through an immortal Duration beyond the Grave, is very unbecoming a Man or a Christian. The most important Periods of our Existence, my Brethren, lie Beyond the Grave; and it is a Matter of much more Concern to us, what will be our Doom in the World to come, than what becomes of us in this. We are obliged to defend our Country; and that is a sneaking, sordid Soul indeed that can desert it at such a Time as this: But this is not all; we are also obliged to take Care of an immortal Soul; a Soul that must exist, and be happy or miserable, through the Revolutions of eternal Ages. This should be our first Care; and when this is secured, Death, in its most Shocking Forms, is but a Release from a World of Sin and Sorrows, and an Introduction into everlasting Life and Glory. But how can this be secured? not by a Course of impenitent Sinning; not by a Course of stupid Carelessness and Inaction: But by vigorous and resolute striving; by serious and affectionate Thoughtfulness about our Condition, and by a conscientious and earnest Attendance upon the Means that God has graciously appointed for our Recovery. But “ we  
 “ are

“ are Sinners, heinous Sinners against a  
 “ God of infinite Purity and inexorable  
 “ Justice. Yes, we are so; and does not  
 “ the Posture of Penitents then become  
 “ us? Is not Repentance, deep, broken-  
 “ hearted Repentance, a Duty suitable to  
 Persons of our Character? Undoubtedly it  
 is: And therefore, O my Countrymen,  
 and particularly you brave Men that are the  
 Occasion of this Meeting, REPENT:  
 Fall down upon your Knees before the pro-  
 voked Sovereign of Heaven and Earth,  
 against whom you have rebelled. Dissolve  
 and melt in penitential Sorrows at his Feet;  
 and he will tell you *Arise, be of good Cheer;*  
*your Sins are forgiven you.* “ But will Re-  
 pentance make Atonement for our Sins?  
 Will our Tears wash away their Guilt?  
 Will our Sorrows merit Forgiveness?”  
 No, my Brethren, after you have done all,  
 you are but unprofitable Servants: After  
 all your Sorrows, and Prayers and Tears,  
 you deserve to be punished as obnoxious  
 Criminals: That would be a sorry Govern-  
 ment indeed, where Repentance, perhaps  
 extorted by the servile Fear of Punishment,  
 would make Atonement for every Offence.  
 But *I bring you glad Tidings of great Joy, To*  
*you is born a Saviour,* a Saviour of no mean  
 Character; he is Christ the Lord. And  
 have you never heard that he has *made*  
*Recon-*

*Reconciliation for Iniquity, and brought in everlasting Righteousness ; that he suffered, the Just for the Unjust ; that God is well-pleased for his Righteousness-Sake, and declares himself willing to be reconciled to all that believe in him, and cheerfully accept him as their Saviour and Lord. Have you never heard these joyful Tidings, O guilty, self-condemned Sinners ? Sure you have. Then away to Jesus, away to Jesus ye whose Consciences are loaden with Guilt, ye whose Hearts fail within you at the Thought of Death, and the Tribunal of Divine Justice ; ye who are destitute of all personal Righteousness to procure your Pardon, and commend you to the Divine Favour : Fly to Jesus on the Wings of Faith, all of you, of every Age and Character ; for you all stand in the most absolute Need of him ; and without him you must perish every Soul of you. But alas ! we find ourselves utterly unable to repent and fly to Jesus : Our Hearts are hard and unbelieving, and if the Work depend upon us, it will for ever remain undone. True, my Brethren, so the Case is ; but do ye not know that this guilty Earth is under the Distillings of Divine Grace, that Jesus is intrusted with the Influences of the Spirit, which can work in you both to will and to do ; and that he is willing to give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him ?*

*him?* If you know this, you know where to go for Strength ; therefore cry mightily to God for it. This I earnestly recommend to all my Hearers, and especially to you Gentlemen, and others, that are now about generously to risque your Lives for your Country. Account this the best Preparative to encounter Danger and Death ; the best Incentive to true, rational Courage. What can do you a lasting Injury, while you have a reconciled God smiling upon you from on high, a peaceful Conscience animating you within, and a happy Immortality just before you ! Sure you may bid Defiance to Dangers and Death in their most shocking Forms. You have answered the End of this Life already by preparing for another ; and how can you depart off this mortal Stage more honourably, than in the Cause of Liberty, of Religion, and your Country ? But if any of you are perplexed with gloomy Fears about this important Affair, or conscious you are entirely unprepared for Eternity, what must you do ? Must you seek to prolong your Life, and your Time for Preparation, by mean or unlawful Ways, by a cowardly Desertion of the Cause of your Country, and shifting for your little Selves, as though you had no Connection with Society ? Alas ! this would but aggravate your Guilt, and render your  
Condition

Condition still more perplexed and discouraging. FOLLOW THE PATH OF DUTY wherever it leads you, for it will be always the safest in the Issue. Diligently improve the Time you have to *make your Calling and Election sure*, and you have Reason to hope for Mercy, and Grace to help in such a Time of Need.----You will forgive me, if I have enlarged upon this Point, even to a Digression; for I thought it of great Consequence to you all. I shall now proceed with more Haste.

It is also of great Importance to excite and keep up our Courage in such an Expedition; that we should be fully satisfied we engage in a *righteous Cause*,---and in a Cause of *great Moment*; for we cannot prosecute a suspected, or a wicked Scheme, which our own Minds condemn, but with Hesitation, and timorous Apprehensions; and we cannot engage with Spirit and Resolution in a trifling Scheme, from which we can expect no Consequences worth our vigorous Pursuit. This *Joab* might have in View in his heroic Advice to his Brother; *Be of good Courage*, says he, *and let us play the Men, for our People, and for the Cities of our God.* q. d. *We are engaged in a righteous Cause; we are not urged on by an unbounded Lust of Power or Riches, to encroach upon the Rights and Properties of others, and disturb*

our quiet Neighbours : We act entirely upon the defensive, repel unjust Violence, and avenge national Injuries ; we are fighting for our People, and for the Cities of our God. We are also engaged in a Cause of the utmost Importance. We fight for our People ; and what Endearments are included in that significant Word ! Our Liberty, our Estates, our Lives ! our King, our Fellow-Subjects, our venerable Fathers, our tender Children, the Wives of our Bosom, our Friends the Sharers of our Souls, our Posterity to the latest Ages ! And who would not use his Sword with an exerted Arm, when these lie at Stake ? But even these are not all : We fight for the Cities of our God. God has distinguished us with a Religion from Heaven ; and hitherto we have enjoyed the quiet and unrestrained Exercise of it : He has condescended to be a God to our Nation, and to honour our Cities with his gracious Presence, and the Institutions of his Worship, the Means to make us wise, good and happy : But now these most invaluable Blessings lie at Stake ; these are the Prize for which we contend ; and must it not excite all our active Powers to the highest Pitch of Exertion ? Shall we tamely submit to Idolatry, and religious Tyranny ? No, God forbid : Let us play the Men, since we take up Arms for our People, and the Cities of our God.



I need not tell you how applicable this Advice, thus paraphras'd, is to the Design of the present associated Company. The Equity of our Cause is most evident. The *Indian* Savages have certainly no Right to murder our Fellow-Subjects, living quiet and inoffensive in their Habitations; nor have the *French* any Power to hound them out upon us, nor to invade the Territories belonging to the *British* Crown, and secured to it by the Faith of Treaties. This is a clear Case. And it is equally clear, that you are engaged in a Cause of the utmost Importance. To protect your Brethren from the most bloody Barbarities---to defend the Territories of the best of Kings against the Oppression and Tyranny of arbitrary Power, to secure the inestimable Blessings of Liberty, *British Liberty*, from the Chains of *French* Slavery---to preserve your Estates, for which you have sweat and toiled, from falling a Prey to greedy Vultures, *Indians*, Priests, Friars, and hungry *Galic* Slaves, or not-more-devouring Flames----to guard your Religion, the pure *Religion of Jesus*, streaming uncorrupted from the sacred Fountain of the Scriptures; the most excellent, rational and divine Religion that ever was made known to the Sons of Men; to guard so dear so precious a Religion (my Heart grows warm while I mention it) against

Ignorance, Superstition, Idolatry, Tyranny over Conscience, Massacre, Fire and Sword, and all the Mischiefs beyond Expression, with which Popery is pregnant---to keep from the cruel Hands of Barbarians and Papiſts, your Wives, your Children, your Parents, your Friends----to ſecure the Liberties conveyed to you by your brave Forefathers, and bought with their Blood, that you may traſmit them uncurtailed to your Poſterity--- theſe are the Bleſſings you contend for; all theſe will be torn from your eager Graſp, if this Colony ſhould become a Province of *France*. And *Virginians! Britons! Chriſtians! Proteſtants!* if theſe Names have any Import or Energy, will you not ſtrike home in ſuch a Cauſe? Yes, this View of the Matter muſt fire you into Men; methinks the cowardly Soul muſt tremble, leſt the Imprecation of the Prophet fall upon him, *Cursed be the Man that keepeth back his Sword from Blood*. To this ſhocking, but neceſſary Work, the Lord now calls you, and *cursed is he that doth the Work of the Lord deceitfully*; that will not put his Hand to it, when it is in his Power, or that will not perform it with all his Might\*. The People of *Meroz* lay at home in Eaſe, while their Brethren were in the Field, delivering their Country from Slavery.

\* *Jer.* xlvi. 10.

Slavery. And what was their Doom? *Curse ye Meroz, said the Angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the Inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the Help of the Lord, to the Help of the Lord against the Mighty\**. I count myself happy that I see so many of you generously engaged in such a Cause; but when I view it in this Light, I cannot but be concerned that there are so few to join you. Are there but 50 or 60 Persons in this large and populous County that can be spared from home for a few Weeks upon so necessary a Design, or that are able to bear the Fatigues of it? Where are the Friends of human Nature, where the Lovers of Liberty and Religion? Now is the Time for you to come forth, and shew yourselves. Nay, where is the Miser? let him arise and defend his Mammon, or he may soon have Reason to cry out with *Micah, They have taken away my Gods, and what have I more?* Where is the tender Soul, on whom the Passions of a Husband, a Father, or a Son, have a peculiar Energy? Arise, and march away; you had better be absent from those you love for a little while, than see them butchered before your Eyes, or doomed to eternal Poverty and Slavery. The Association now forming is not yet compleat; and if it were, it would be a glorious Thing to  
form

\* Judges v. 23.

form another. Therefore, as an Advocate for your King, your Fellow-Subjects, your Country, your Relatives, your earthly All : I do invite and intreat all of you, who have not some very sufficient Reason against it, voluntarily to enlist, and go out with those brave Souls, who have set you so noble an Example. It will be more advantageous to go out in Time, and more honourable to go out as Volunteers, than to be compelled to it by Authority, when perhaps it may be too late.

The Consideration of the Justice and Importance of the Cause may also encourage You to hope, that the Lord of Hosts will espouse it, and render its Guardians successful, and return them in Safety to the Arms of their longing Friends. The Event however is in his Hands ; and it is much better there, than if it were in Yours. This Thought is suggested with beautiful Simplicity, in the remaining Part of my Text, *The Lord do that which seemeth him good.* This may be looked upon in various Views, as,

1. It may be understood as the Language of Uncertainty, and Modesty. *q. d. Let us do all we can ; but after all, the Issue is uncertain ; we know not, as yet, to what Side God will incline the Victory.* Such Language as this, my Brethren, becomes us in all our

Under-

Undertaking; it sounds *Creature-like*, and God approves of such self-diffident Humility. But to indulge sanguine and confident Expectations of Victory, to *boast* when we *put on our Armour*, as though we were *putting it off*, and to derive our high Hopes from our own Power and good Management, without any Regard to the Providence of God, this is too lordly and assuming for such feeble Mortals; such Insolence is generally mortified, and such a haughty Spirit, is the Fore-runner of a Fall. Therefore, though I do not apprehend Your Lives will be in any great Danger in Your present Expedition to range the Frontiers, and clear them of the skulking *Indians*; yet, I would not flatter You, my Brethren, with too high Hopes either of Victory or Safety. I cannot but entertain the pleasing Prospect of congratulating You with many of Your Friends, upon your successful Expedition, and safe Return: And yet it is very possible our next Interview may be in that strange untried World beyond the Grave. You are, however, in the Hands of God, and he will deal with you as it *seemeth him good*: And I am persuaded You would not wish it were otherwise; You would not now practically retract the Petition You have so often offered up, *Thy Will be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven.*

2. This Language ; *The Lord do as seemeth him good*, may be looked upon as expressive of a firm Persuasion that the Event of War entirely depends upon the Providence of God. *q. d.* Let us do our best ; but after all, let us be sensible that the Success does not depend on us ; that is entirely in the Hands of an *all-ruling God*. That God governs the World, is a fundamental Article of natural, as well as revealed Religion : It is no great Exploit of Faith, to believe this : It is but a small Advance beyond Atheism, and downright Infidelity. I know no Country upon Earth, where I should be put to the Expence of Argument to prove this. The Heathens gave striking Proofs of their Belief of it, by their Prayers, their Sacrifices, their consulting Oracles, before they engaged in War ; and by their costly Offerings and solemn Thanksgivings, after Victory. And shall such a plain Principle as this, be disputed in a Christian Land ? No ; we all speculatively believe it ; but that is not enough ; let our Spirits be deeply *impressed* with it, and our Lives *influenced* by it : Let us live in the World, as in a Territory of Jehovah's Empire. Carry this Impression upon Your Hearts into the Wilderness, whither You are going. Often let such Thoughts as these recur to your Minds, *I am the feeble Creature of God ; and blessed be*

*be his Name, I am not cast off his Hand as a disregarded Orphan to shift for myself. My Life is under his Care; the Success of this Expedition is at his Disposal. Therefore, O thou all-ruling God, I implore thy Protection; I confide in thy Care; I cheerfully resign myself, and the Event of this Undertaking, to thee. Which leads me to observe,*

3. That these Words, *The Lord do what seemeth him good*, may express a humble Submission to the Disposal of Providence, let the Event turn out as it would. *q. d. We have not the Disposal of the Event, nor do we know what will be: But Jehovah knows, and that is enough. We are sure he will do what is best, upon the whole; and it becomes us to acquiesce!* Thus, my Friends, do You resign and submit yourselves to the Ruler of the World in the present Enterprize. He will order Matters as he pleases; Oh! let him do so by Your cheerful Consent. Let Success or Disappointment, let Life or Death be the Issue, still say, *Good is the Will of the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good:* Or if Nature biasses Your Wishes and Desires to the favourable Side, as no Doubt it will, still keep them within Bounds, and restrain them in Time, saying after the Example of Christ, *Not my Will, but thine be done.* You may wish, you may pray, you may strive, you may hope for a happy Issue: But You

must submit; *Be still, and know that he is God*, and will not be prescribed to, or suffer a Rival in the Government of the World he has made. Such a Temper will be of unspeakable Service to You, and You may hope God will honour it with a remarkable Blessing: For Submission to *his Will* is the readiest Way to the Accomplishment of *our own*.

4. These Words, in their Connection, may intimate, that let the Event be what it will, it will afford us Satisfaction to think, that we have done the best we could. *q. d. We cannot command Success; but let us do all in our Power to obtain it, and we have Reason to hope that in this Way we shall not be disappointed: But if it should please God to render all our Endeavours vain, still we shall have the generous Pleasure to reflect, that we have not been necessary to the Ruin of our Country, but have done all we could for its Deliverance.* So You my Brethren have generously engaged in a disinterested Scheme for Your King, and Country: God does generally crown such noble Undertakings with Success, and You have Encouragement to hope for it: But the Cause You have espoused, is the Cause of a sinful impenitent Country; and if God, in righteous Displeasure, should on this Account blast your Attempt, still you will have the Pleasure of reflecting upon  
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Your generous Views and vigorous Endeavours, and that You have done Your Part conscientiously.

Having thus made some cursory Remarks upon the sundry Parts of the Text, I shall now conclude with an Address, first to you all in general, and then to you Gentlemen and others, who have been pleased to invite me to this Service. I hope You will forgive my Prolixity: My Heart is full, the Text is copious, and the Occasion singular and important. I cannot therefore dismiss You with a short hurrying Discourse.

It concerns you all seriously to reflect upon your own Sins, and the Sins of your Land, which have brought all these Calamities upon us. If You believe that God governs the World, if You do not abjure him from being the Ruler of Your Country, You must acknowledge that all the Calamities of War, and the threatening Appearances of Famine, are ordered by his Providence; *There is no Evil in a City or Country, but the Lord hath done it.* And if You believe that he is a just and righteous Ruler, You must also believe, that he would not thus punish a righteous or a penitent People. We and our Countrymen are Sinners, aggravated Sinners: God proclaims that we are such by his Judgments now upon us, by

withering Fields, and scanty Harvests, by the Sound of the Trumpet and the Alarm of War. Our Consciences must also bear witness to the same melancholy Truth. And if my Heart were properly affected, I would concur with these undoubted Witnesses: I would cry aloud, and not spare, I would lift up my Voice like a Trumpet, to shew you Your Transgressions and Your Sins. O my Country, is *not thy Wickedness great, and thine Iniquities infinite?* Where is there a more sinful Spot to be found upon our guilty Globe? Pass over the Land, take a Survey of the Inhabitants, inspect into their Conduct, and what do you see? what do you hear? You see gigantic Forms of Vice braving the Skies, and bidding Defiance to Heaven and Earth, while Religion and Virtue is obliged to retire, to avoid public Contempt and Insult.---- You see Herds of Drunkards swilling down their Cups, and drowning all *the Man* within them. You hear the Swearer venting his Fury against God and Man, trifling with that Name which prostrate Angels adore, and imprecating that Damnation, under which the hardiest Devil in Hell trembles, and groans. You see Avarice hoarding up her useless Treasures, dishonest Craft planning her Schemes of unlawful Gain, and Oppression unmercifully grinding the  
Face

Face of the Poor. You see Prodigality squandering her Stores, Luxury spreading her Table, and unmanning her Guests; Vanity laughing aloud, and dissolving in empty unthinking Mirth, regardless of God, and our Country, of Time and Eternity; Sensuality wallowing in brutal Pleasures, and aspiring with inverted Ambition, to sink as low as her four-footed Brethren of the Stall. You see Cards more in Use than the Bible, the Back-Gammon Table more frequented than the Table of the Lord, Plays and Romances more read than the History of the blessed Jesus. You see trifling and even criminal Diversions become a serious Business; the Issue of a Horse-race, or a Cock-fight, more anxiously attended to than the Fate of our Country. Or where these grosser Forms of Vice and Vanity do not shock your Senses, even there you often meet with the Appearances of more refined Impiety, which is equally dangerous. You hear the Conversation of reasonable Creatures, of Candidates for Eternity, engrossed by Trifles, or vainly wasted on the Affairs of Time: These are the eternal Subjects of Conversation, even at the Threshold of the House of God, and on the sacred Hours devoted to his Service. You see Swarms of Prayerless

less Families all over our Land : Ignorant, vicious Children, unrestrained and untaught by those to whom God and Nature hath entrusted their Souls. You see Thousands of poor Slaves in a Christian Country, the Property of Christian Masters, as they will be called, almost as ignorant of Christianity, as when they left the Wilds of *Africa*. You see the best Religion in all the World, abused, neglected, disobeyed and dishonoured by its Professors : And you hear Infidelity scattering her ambiguous Hints and Suspicions, or openly attacking the Christian Cause with pretended Argument, with Insult and Ridicule. You see Crowds of professed Believers, that are practical Atheists ; nominal Christians ; that are real Heathens ; many abandoned Slaves of Sin, that yet pretend to be the Servants of the Holy Jesus. You see the Ordinances of the Gospel neglected by some, profaned by others, and attended upon by the Generality with a trifling Irreverence, and stupid Unconcernedness. Alas ! who would think that those thoughtless Assemblies we often see in our Places of Worship, are met for such solemn Purposes as to implore the Pardon of their Sins from an injured God, and to prepare for an awful all-important Eternity ? Alas ! is that Religion for the Propagation of which the Son of God laboured, and bled,

bled, and died, for which his Apostles and Thousands of Martyrs have spent their Strength and shed their Blood, and on which our eternal Life depends, is that Religion become such a Trifle in our Days, that Men are hardly serious and in earnest when they attend upon its most solemn Institutions? What Multitudes lie in a dead Sleep in Sin all around us? You see them eager in the Pursuit of the Vanities of Time, but stupidly unconcerned about the important Realities of the eternal World just before them: Few solicitous what shall become of them when all their Connections with Earth and Flesh must be broken, and they must take their Flight into strange unknown Regions: Few lamenting their Sins: Few crying for Mercy and a new Heart: Few flying to Jesus, or justly sensible of the Importance of a Mediator in a Religion for Sinners. You may indeed see some Degree of Civility and Benevolence towards Men, and more than enough of cringing Complaisance of Worms to Worms, of Clay to Clay, of Guilt to Guilt: But Oh! how little sincere Homage, how little affectionate Veneration for the great Lord of Heaven and Earth? You may see something of Duty to Parents, of Gratitude to Benefactors, and Obedience to Superiors: But if God *be a Father, where is his Honour? If he be a Master,*

*ster, where is his Fear? If he be our Benefactor, where is our Gratitude to him? You may see here and there some Instances of proud, self-righteous Virtue, some Appearances of Morality: But Oh! how rare is vital, evangelical Religion, and true Christian Morality, animated with the Love of God, proceeding from a new Heart, and a Regard to the divine Authority, full of Jesus, full of a Regard to him as a Mediator, on whose Account alone our Duties can find Acceptance? O blessed Redeemer! what little Necessity, what little Use do the Sinners of our Country find for thee in their Religion? How many Discourses are deliver'd, how many Prayers offer'd, how many good Works are performed, in which there is *scarce any Thing of Christ?* And this Defect renders them all but *shining Sins*, glittering Crimes. How few pant and languish for thee, Blessed Jesus! and can never be contented with their Reformation, with their Morality, with their good Works, till they obtain an Interest in thy Righteousness, to sanctify all, to render all acceptable!—You may see Children sensible of their Dependence on their Parents for their Subsistence, you see Multitudes sensible of their Dependence on Clouds and Sun and Earth for Provision for Man and Beast: But how few sensible of their Dependence upon God, as  
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the great Original, the *Primum Mobile* of natural Causes, and the various Wheels of the Universe. You see even the dull Ox *knows his Owner*, and the stupid *Ass his Master's Crib*: You see the Workings of Gratitude even in your Dog, who welcomes you home with a Thousand fondling Motions: But how is Jehovah's Government, and Agency practically denied in his own Territories! How few receive the Blessings of Life as from his Hand, and make him proper Returns of Gratitude? You see a withering, ravaged Country around you, languishing under the Frowns of an angry God; but how few earnest Prayers, how few penitential Groans do you hear? Pass over the Land, and bring me Intelligence, is not this the *general* Character of our Country? I know there are some happy Exceptions; and I hope sundry such might be produced from among you: But is not this the prevailing Character of a great Majority? Does not one Part or other of it belong to the Generality? The most generous Charity cannot hope the Contrary, if under any scriptural or rational Limitations. May it not be said of the Men of *Virginia*, as well as those of *Sodom*, *They are wicked, and Sinners before the Lord exceedingly*? And thus, alas! it has been for a long Time: Our Country has sinned on securely for

above 150 Years, and one Age has improved upon the Vices of another. And can a Land always bear up under such a Load of accumulated Wickedness? Can God always suffer such a Race of Sinners to go on unpunished from Generation to Generation? May we not fear that our Iniquities are now just full, and that he is about to thunder out his awful Mandate to the Executioners of his Vengeance, *Put ye in the Sickle ; for the Harvest is ripe ; come get ye down, for the Press is full, the Vats overflow ; for their Wickedness is great.*

And is there no Relief for a sinking Country? Or is it too late to administer it? Is our Wound incurable, that refuseth to be healed? No, blessed be God; if you now turn every one of you from your Evil Ways, if you mourn over your Sins, and turn to the Lord with your whole Hearts, then your Country will yet recover. God will appear for us, and give a prosperous Turn to our Affairs; he has assured us of this in his own Word, *At what Instant, says he, I shall speak concerning a Nation, and concerning a Kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that Nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their Evil, I will repent of the Evil that I thought to do unto them, Jer. xviii. 7, 8.* Therefore, my Brethren, as  
we



we have all rebelled, let us all join in unanimous Repentance, and a thorough Reformation. Not only your eternal Salvation requires it, but also the Preservation of your Country, that is now bleeding with the Wounds you have given it by your Sins. The Safety of these our Friends, who are now engaged in so generous a Design, requires it: For an Army of Saints or of Heroes, cannot defend a guilty, impenitent People, ripe for the Judgments of God. If you would be everlastingly happy, and escape the Vengeance of eternal Fire, or (to mention what may perhaps have more Weight with some of you) if you would preserve yourselves, your Families, your Posterity, from Poverty, from Slavery, Ignorance, Idolatry, Torture and Death; if you would save yourselves and them from all the infernal Horrors of Popery, and the savage Tyranny of a mungrel Race of *French* and *Indian* Conquerors; in short, if you would avoid all that is terrible, and enjoy every Thing that is dear and valuable, REPENT, and turn to the Lord. This is the only Cure for our wounded Country; and if you refuse to administer it in Time, prepare to perish in its Ruins. If you go on impenitent in Sin, you may expect not only to be damned for ever, but (what is more terrible to some of you) to fall into the most

extreme outward Distress. You will have Reason to fear not only the Loss of Heaven, which some of you perhaps think little of, but the Loss of your Estates, that lie so near your Hearts. And will you not repent, when you are pressed to it from so many Quarters at once?

And now, my Brethren, in the last Place, I have a few parting Words to offer to you who are more particularly concerned in this Occasion; and I am sure I shall address you with as much affectionate Benevolence as you could wish.

My first and leading Advice to you is, Labour to conduct this Expedition in a Religious Manner. Methinks this should not seem strange Counsel to Creatures, entirely dependent upon God, and at his Disposal. As you are an Independent Company of Volunteers under Officers of your own chusing, you may manage your Affairs more according to your own Inclinations, than if you had enlisted upon the ordinary Footing: And I hope you will improve this Advantage for the Purposes of Religion, Let Prayer to the God of your Life be your daily Exercise. When Retirement is safe, pour out your Hearts to him in secret; and when it is practicable, join in Prayer together Morning and Evening in your Camp.

How

How acceptable to Heaven must such an *unusal offering* be, from that desert Wilderness! Maintain a Sense of divine Providence upon your Hearts, and resign yourselves and all your Affairs into the Hands of God. You are engaged in a good Cause, the Cause of your People, and the Cities of your God; and therefore you may the more boldly commit it to him, and pray and hope for his Blessing. I would fain hope, there is no Necessity to take Precautions against Vice among such a select Company: But lest there should, I would humbly recommend it to you to make this one of the Articles of your Association, before you set out, that every Form of Vice shall be severely discountenanced, and if you think proper, expose the Offender to some pecuniary or corporal Punishment. It would be shocking indeed, and I cannot bear the Thought, that a Company formed upon such generous Principles, should commit or tolerate open Wickedness among them; and I hope this Caution is needless to you all, as I am sure it is to sundry of you.

And now, my dear Friends, and the Friends of your neglected Country, *In the Name of the Lord lift up your Banners: Be of good Courage, and play the Men for the People and the Cities of your God; and the*  
*Lord*

*Lord do what seemeth him good.* Should I now give Vent to the Passions of my Heart, and become a Speaker for my Country, methinks I should even overwhelm you with a Torrent of good Wishes, and Prayers from the Hearts of Thousands. May the Lord of Hosts, the God of the Armies of *Israel*, go forth along with you! May he teach your Hands to War, and gird you with Strength to Battle! May he bless you with a safe Return, and long Life, or a glorious Death in the Bed of Honour, and a happy Immortality! May he guard and support your anxious Families and Friends at home, and return you victorious to their longing Arms! May all the Blessings your Hearts can wish attend you wherever you go! These are Wishes and Prayers of my Heart; and Thousands concur in them: And we cannot but cheerfully hope they will be granted, through Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

F I N I S.

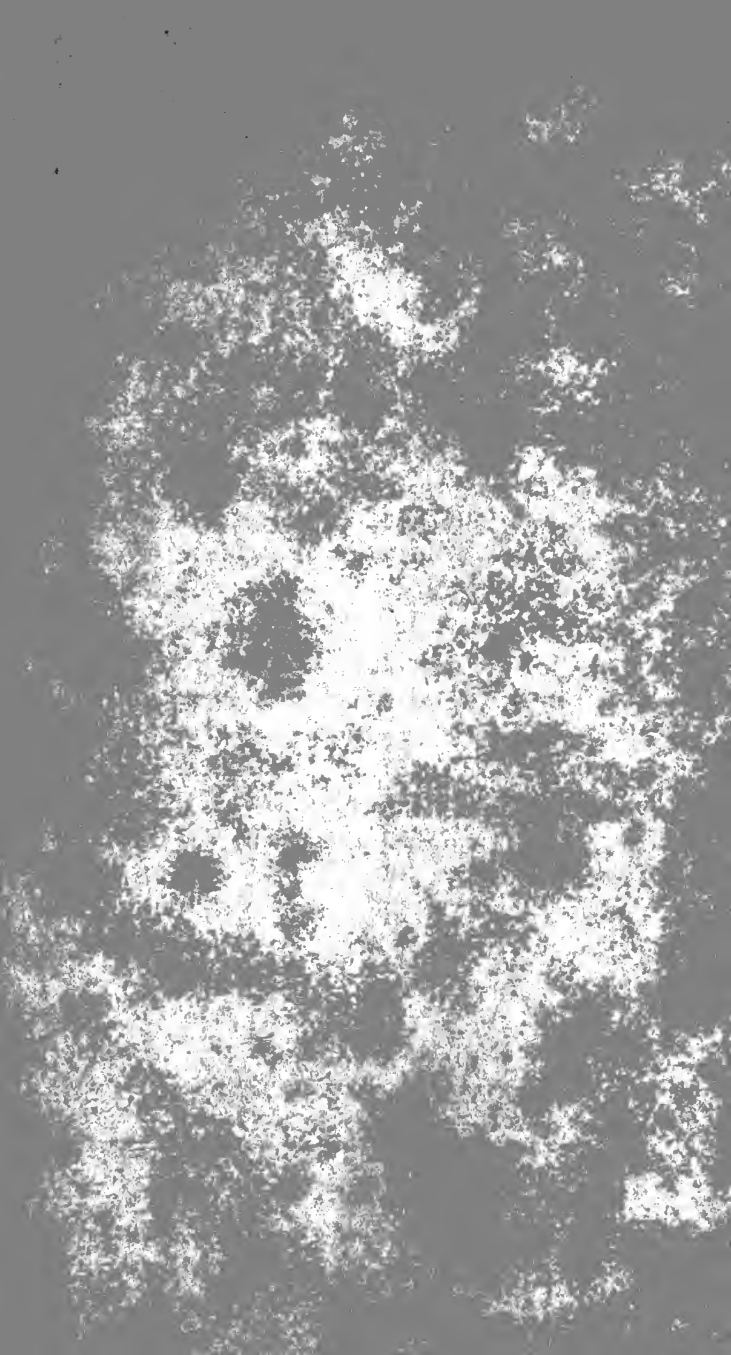
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A SERMON preached by Mr. DAVIES, at  
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