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A

DEFENCE

OF THE CHARACTER AND PRINCIPLES

OF

MR. JEFFERSON:

BEING AN

ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT WEYMOUTH, MASS

AT THE REQUEST OF THE

ANTI-MASONIC AND DEMOCRATIC CITIZENS

OF THAT PLACE,

On the 4th of July, 1836.

BY ALEXANDER H. EVERETT.

BOSTON:

BEALS AND GREENE.

1836.

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P R E F A C E .

It may appear superfluous to say any thing in defence of a character so well established as that of Mr. Jefferson, and would be so in most other parts of the country. Even here the prominent men of the Federal party professed some years ago to have changed their opinion about him, and joined with apparent cordiality in the general tribute of respect that was paid to his memory at the time of his death. Within two or three years, however, an attempt has been made in this and some other parts of the Union to revive the former feeling. Several literary works of some pretension, have been published for this purpose, and sustained by pamphlets and a portion of the periodical press. It is believed that the results of this crusade have not corresponded with the expectations of the movers. There can be no doubt that it has been one among the causes of the vigorous reaction in favor of old-fashioned *Democracy* that is now going on in this Commonwealth. This renewal of the attack may seem to justify, and

perhaps to require, a few words in the way of defence. The train of thought in the body of the following Address, and in some paragraphs the language, are taken with modifications from an article on the *Origin and Character of Parties* in this country, which was contributed by the author to the *North American Review* for July, 1834. To this and to a subsequent article on *the Character of Mr. Jefferson*, in the same journal for January, 1835, the reader is referred for a fuller development of the subject, than could be admitted within the usual limits of an occasional address.

Newton, July 15, 1836.

ADDRESS.

WE are assembled, fellow-citizens, to celebrate a day of happy omen,—a day, which the friend of liberty, under whatever circumstances it may find him, will never pass unregarded. It was remarked by Voltaire, that on the anniversary of the execution of Charles I. of England, every monarch in Europe rises with a sharp pain in his neck. For a similar reason, fellow-citizens, every lover of rational freedom,—every individual who desires to promote, within the sphere of his activity, however humble, the great cause of human rights,—every man who deserves the name,—rises on the morning of the day we celebrate with a glow of pleasure at his heart. The sun shines more brightly than usual upon him : the air of heaven breathes upon his cheek with unwonted freshness : nature puts on to his view, as it were, a holiday dress : a buoyant cheerfulness diffuses itself through his frame, quickens every

pulse, and seems, for the moment, to expand and enlarge his whole existence ; for he feels, in the language of the venerable patriarch of Independence on his death-bed, that it is ‘ a great and good day.’

When the children of Israel, through the long and dreary hours of their national captivity, sate upon the banks of the rivers of Babylon, they hung their harps upon the willows, and wept as they remembered Zion. The patriot citizen of our favored country, when the day we celebrate overtakes him in its annual return in distant regions,—whether on the pathless ocean,—on the desert shore of some remote, uncultivated island, or in the bosom of the brilliant capitals of the old world,—turns his eyes alike with indifference from all that surrounds him, and exclaims, as he points to the home of liberty in the west, ‘ There is my country !’ With what transport, then, should he not welcome the arrival of this auspicious day, when it finds him in the midst of his countrymen,—in the full enjoyment of the blessings which the great effort of the day was intended to secure,—with the stars of liberty beaming above his head, and her influence invigorating, renovating, cheering, sustaining, creating every thing around him !

To us, fellow-citizens, who are assembled as disciples of the political school of Mr. Jefferson,—as supporters of the supremacy of the laws,—the return of this anniversary brings with it emotions of deep

and peculiar interest. When in the year 1801, soon after his accession to the Presidentship, the Mayor and Aldermen of the city of Washington waited upon Mr. Jefferson, for the purpose of inquiring on what day of the year he was born,—‘I acknowledge no other birth-day,’ replied the great Apostle of liberty,—‘I acknowledge no other birth-day but the anniversary of the declaration of my country’s independence!’ Well, indeed, might he regard it as a second birth-day, who was himself the author of the far-famed act that has given it importance! In selecting a topic for the present address, from among the multitude that offer themselves to the mind upon the occasion, I have thought that some remarks, in defence of the character and principles of Mr. Jefferson, might not be entirely inappropriate to the day and the circumstances under which we are assembled. In most other parts of the country such remarks would be superfluous; but in this Commonwealth the character of this illustrious statesman and patriot has not been universally and at all times correctly appreciated: his principles have not been always well understood. It belongs to us to endeavor to redeem them from unmerited obloquy; and what occasion can be fitter for the purpose than the anniversary of the day on which he performed the most important act of his life? The brightest ornaments of our race have been in every age, as you are well aware, fellow-citizens, the objects of calumny. The

great Scipio, whose name was for centuries the symbol at Rome of courage, patriotism, and every other public and private virtue, was accused in his day of corruption, and put on his defence before the people. Without condescending to notice the charge, he rose in the assembly and exclaimed, ‘This day, twenty years ago, fellow-citizens, I planted your eagles on the walls of Carthage. Let us proceed at once to the temple, and offer a solemn thanksgiving to the gods for the victory.’ Mr. Jefferson, when attacked, as he often was in his life-time, with about the same degree of justice, might well have contented himself with replying, ‘On the Fourth of July, 1776, I reported in Congress the draft, written by myself, of the Declaration of Independence of the United States of America.’ But his friends, fellow-citizens, have no disposition to evade inquiry. His long life, open from first to last to the public eye, courts investigation, and gains upon the strictest scrutiny. I shall introduce the subject by a few more general remarks upon the origin and character of parties in this country. It is not my intention, fellow-citizens, to treat this subject in a manner that may tend to revive forgotten animosities, or aggravate those that now exist. Such a course would be as foreign to my own disposition, as it is to the spirit of this joyful occasion. In defending the principles we approve, the patriots we honor, from undeserved censure, I shall treat with

uniform respect the character of their opponents, and shall scrupulously render to them the justice which their professed disciples so often refuse to us.

I. The existence of parties in free governments is a matter of course, if not of absolute necessity. In a system which permits no expression of individual opinion,—where no voice is publicly heard but that of the sovereign,—parties are unknown. Any opposition to the will of the master is either suppressed at once by force or ends in revolution, and the merits of the question at issue can only be discussed in the form of actual civil war. Where a free expression of opinions is allowed, they will naturally be found to differ more or less upon every question of importance, and the people will form themselves into parties, as they happen to approve or disapprove the measures, which, for the time, most forcibly engage the public attention. It may be added, that most governments carry with them, in the very nature of their constitutions, the elements of permanent political divisions, which, though more or less active at different times, are never entirely suppressed, and constantly re-appear, perhaps with some variations of name or form, through the whole course of their history. Something of this kind, as I shall presently have occasion to remark, may be seen in the institutions of the United States.

The only party division of any consequence which existed in the United States as colonies, and up to

the close of the revolutionary war, was that of the supporters and the opponents of the royal prerogative, respectively distinguished by the familiar names of *Whigs* and *Tories*. The entire prostration of the latter by the war of independence, and the success of the new government erected by the former upon the ruins of the colonial system, extinguished this division, which left no traces in the condition and feelings of the people. The most obnoxious and prominent of the Tories retired to England: the rest acquiesced with cheerfulness in the new state of things. The Whigs remained in undisputed possession of the field, and having now no common enemy to contend with, had opportunity and leisure,—as usually happens in similar cases,—to discover the differences of opinion among themselves. Within three or four years from the conclusion of peace, they were contending with each other throughout the country upon new grounds of controversy, with nearly as much zeal as they had before felt in their warfare with the Tories, though it was fortunately displayed in a more pacific shape.

II. This new division,—the second in the order of time that has existed among us, and one of which the traces are not yet, and probably never will be, entirely effaced,—was that of the supporters and opponents of the present Federal Constitution, respectively known by the appellations of *Federalists* and *Anti-federalists*. It belongs to the class of those

already alluded to, which have their elements in the very nature of the governments of the communities in which they appear. Although our principal concern, on the present occasion, is with the parties that grew up after the adoption of the Constitution, yet as those which preceded had a good deal of influence in determining the character and personal composition of the others, it may be proper to make them the subject of a few preliminary remarks.

The parties afterwards known by the names of *Federalists* and *Anti-federalists*, made their appearance for the first time in the Convention which framed the Constitution. The object for which the meeting had been called, was to amend the existing articles of confederation ; but, when the members had assembled, it was found to be the opinion of a large number of them, constituting, as it appeared in the sequel, a majority of the whole, that it was more expedient to adopt and recommend to the people an entirely new draft, materially altering the fundamental principles of the former system. The prominent defect of the old confederation was the inefficiency and febleness of the central power, and there was a general feeling that it ought to be strengthened, but in what way and to what extent this was to be done, were questions upon which there was every variety of individual opinion. Hamilton went so far as to propose that the Senate should be chosen for life, and that the President should appoint the Governors of States :

others would have left the relations between the States and the essential powers of Congress nearly as they stood before. The division, on general principles, was between those who were disposed to strengthen the General Government at the expense of the States on the one hand, and, on the other, those who wished to maintain the complete independence of the States at all hazards, and to give no authority to the General Government which was inconsistent with it. The Constitution, as finally adopted, was a sort of compromise between the two parties. It did not quite meet the views of the highest-toned supporters of Federal principles, and was still less palatable to the friends of entire State independence. It made, in fact, a very large encroachment on the independence of the States, by introducing the principle of a direct relation between the individual citizen and the central power for all federal purposes, or, in other words, by converting the States, for all the purposes to be effected by the Union, into one body politic. The Constitution, though drafted by a convention of delegates appointed by the State governments, was submitted for ratification and adoption, not to those governments, but to the individual citizens represented in conventions, and became, when adopted, a Social Compact, the parties to which formed themselves into one body politic, under a common government, for the purposes therein specified, and maintained for all others the existing

powers of the States. Though it did not, as I have said, precisely suit the views of some of the most decided supporters of Federal principles, and was, to a certain extent, a sort of compromise, it was viewed upon the whole as a Federal measure. It was actively supported as such, even by those who would have approved a stronger infusion of Federalism, particularly Hamilton, and its adoption by the people was viewed as a triumph of the *Federalist* party.

It is worthy of remark, however, and it is creditable to the character of the *Anti-federalists*, that, after the Constitution was finally adopted, they acquiesced in it with cheerfulness. From that time to this it has been regarded by the unanimous consent of the country as a system approaching very nearly to perfection, and which could not in any way be materially improved. The previous division upon general principles continued to exist, and the party names were for some time kept up; but the controversy, so far as the Constitution was concerned, now turned not upon its merit but upon its meaning, and the manner in which it ought to be construed. As the real character of a written constitution can hardly be ascertained with exactness in any other way than by experience, the ground of controversy, though somewhat narrowed, was still sufficiently extensive. Most of those who had actively supported the Constitution before its adoption, were now disposed to give it in practice the construction most favorable to the powers

of the General Government. Most of their opponents, including, however, some prominent persons of the other party, particularly Mr. Madison, were disposed to give it a strict construction. Some even went so far as to contend that the States still retained their entire independence, and that the present federal union is only another league, like the old Confederation, under a somewhat different form.

Such, fellow-citizens, is the outline of this second political division. It is unnecessary, and would of course be uncharitable to suppose, that the individual members of either of the great parties which respectively supported and opposed the Federal Constitution at the time of its formation and adoption, were actuated by unworthy motives. The course pursued by its supporters, having been approved by the unanimous acquiescence of the country, requires no defence; and, however highly we may now value the Constitution, it can be no matter of surprise with any reflecting man that, when first submitted to the people, it should have met with great opposition. The adoption of it accomplished a most material change in the government of the country,—a change hardly less important, though effected without bloodshed, than that which gave us independence. Indeed, the Anti-federalists, far from being obnoxious on just grounds to the charges of acting from vicious motives, or of being in general ill-informed or perverse, were, on the contrary, the party which had in its favor the

presumption of right, because they defended the existing state of things against innovation. They had also the popular pretence of asserting the rights of the States against the encroachments of Government,—another golden topic. Nor did they want authority to back their reasoning. On the contrary, the weight of names, with a single great exception, which probably turned the scale against them, was, perhaps, on the whole, on their side. Take, for example, Virginia and Massachusetts, which were at that time as they have always been, among the leading states of the Union. In Massachusetts,—setting aside John Adams, who was then in Europe,—the two most distinguished revolutionary patriots,—what do I say?—the only two persons in the country, whose zeal had obtained for them the singular honor of proscription,—John Hancock and Samuel Adams,—were opposed to the Constitution. On the other hand, who were its principal supporters?—the Parsons, the Kings, the Ames, and the rest.—Men of yesterday,—young lawyers, before unknown to the country. They gave proof, no doubt, of eloquence, of talents, of book-learning,—but were these qualities, however precious in their way, to counterbalance the mature wisdom, the rich experience, the tried patriotism, of the incorruptible fathers of our liberty?

Look now at Virginia. Mr. Madison, a young barrister of thirty years of age, comes forward and proposes to his fellow-citizens to abandon a part of

their individual and state rights, and submit to a General Government, possessing large, and, because untried, of course unknown powers: to acknowledge a single ruler (*monarch*) under the name of a President, the precise extent of whose authority future experience alone could determine. The proposal was, it must be owned, not a very palatable one, and might well have alarmed a people less jealous on the subject of State Rights than that of the Ancient Dominion. Under these circumstances, the oldest and most respected of the Revolutionary patriots,—the man who was the first throughout the whole country to raise the cry of independence,—Patrick Henry himself,—then, if I mistake not, Governor of the State,—tells them, in the same familiar voice, sweeter than music, that was never known to deceive, that never lisped a sound that was not as pure and true as the word of inspiration,—that Mr. Madison, though a clever and honest young man, is wrong,—that the innovations he proposes are dangerous,—that, under the name of a President, he is imposing upon the country a tyrant in disguise, who will place one foot upon the borders of Maine, and the other upon the farthest extremity of Georgia,—and then, farewell to Liberty! Is it singular that in such a conflict of opinions and authorities the people of Massachusetts and Virginia should have been divided, and that a strong party should have been opposed to the new system? It is evident, on the

contrary, that the only wonder is how, in this state of things, which existed substantially throughout the union, the Federal Constitution could have been adopted. The force of truth,—the pressure of the immediate inconveniences resulting from the vices of the old system,—the unwearied activity of the friends of the new,—and, above all, the influence and authority of Washington must be well considered, before we can conceive the possibility of this salutary reform.

Are we, then, lightly to charge the tried friends of the country, who opposed the Constitution, with selfishness or faction? Are we even to regret their opposition, since, happily, it proved ineffectual? It may boldly be said, on the contrary, that it was natural for many of the wisest and best men of the day, in their position, and at their age, to take this course. They had devoted the freshness of their youth,—the maturity and vigor of their riper years,—all the strength and wisdom that God had given them,—to the purpose of procuring for the country the state of things that it was now proposed to change. Was it for them, when they had reached the ordinary term of human existence, to begin a new and contrary course of action, and to undo what they had been all their lives so laboriously doing? Surely not. Much as I admire the Constitution,—much as I rejoice that it was adopted,—I confess that I like these sterling old hearts the better for adhering firmly

to the text of State sovereignty and the old Confederation, in defiance of what they doubtless regarded as a wanton and headstrong spirit of innovation.

III. Thus much I have deemed it proper to remark upon the origin and characteristics of the Federal and Anti-federal parties. The new division which grew up soon after the adoption of the Constitution, though it coincided to a considerable extent, as respects the personal composition of the parties, with the preceding one, turned in general on questions essentially different. Of the new parties, the one that finally prevailed, assumed the name of Democratic or Republican; the other was designated by its opponents as the Aristocratic party, but continued to claim the title of *Federal*, although the subjects in controversy were now in a great measure foreign to the character and construction of the Constitution, and although the doctrine of the party, in regard to the latter, gradually assumed an Anti-federal tendency. There was this marked distinction between the new division and the preceding one, that while the latter turned upon points of controversy which were purely American, and was, of course, confined to this country, the former was only one branch of a general division that prevailed at the time, and still continues to prevail throughout the whole civilized world.

In the early part of the year 1789,—the same in which the Federal Constitution went into operation,—about two months after the meeting of the first Con-

gress chosen under that instrument,—another body, composed in like manner of the elected deputies of a great people, called, in the first instance, the *States General*, but which afterwards took the title of the *National Assembly* of France, met, on the summons of the King, at Versailles, then the residence of the French court. This event was the first, in the order of time, of a series of political and military movements of absorbing interest and unparalleled importance, which succeeded each other for the next five and twenty years with breathless rapidity, determined the policy of all the other governments, and created divisions of opinion throughout the Christian world, which superseded and obliterated all others. Circumstances which I need not here recapitulate, but which resolve themselves ultimately into the increased wealth and intelligence of the industrious classes of the community, had inspired those classes throughout all the most civilized countries, and especially in France, with a strong desire to reform the existing institutions of government, and to incorporate into them principles more favorable to individual rights and liberty. The most intelligent and enterprising persons, of all classes, generally shared this feeling, and took the lead in the movements that were made for giving it effect. On the other hand, the royal families, the feudal nobility, the clergy, and the long train of their dependants, alarmed at the probable effect of this tendency upon

the establishments from which they derived their consequence, and even their means of subsistence, opposed it with a zeal not inferior to that by which it was supported. The struggle commenced, and was carried on in various partial forms in the early periods of the history of modern Europe. We see the symptoms of its approach in the tumultuary insurrections of the peasantry in England and France,—in the wars of the Flemish cities with their feudal lords,—of the Guelphs and Ghibelines in Italy, and of the Commoners in Spain. The mighty movement of the Reformation, though directed immediately to other objects, derived much of its interest from its indirect effect upon the political situation of the parties to it. In England, indeed, the Reformation gradually lost its original character, and assumed that of a bloody, and, finally, a triumphant effort for political improvement. This was the first occasion on which the principle of reform, which had been so long at work, but which had previously employed itself chiefly on the abuses of the church, had displayed itself in a great country in its proper shape. Our own Revolution was the next instance; but in both these cases the operation of the principle was limited in a great measure to the particular countries which were its principal seat. It was not until the immediate scene of action was transferred to France,—the heart, as I may say, of the great Christian commonwealth of nations,—that it was first perceived

how intimately the causes of the movement were interwoven with the very foundations of the political system of Christendom, and the tranquillity of the world.

From that time to the present day, but more especially till the termination of the general war in Europe by the fall of Napoleon, the whole internal and foreign policy of all the powers of Europe and America have been directly or indirectly connected with the causes and circumstances of this great quarrel. In every nation which was important enough to be at all affected by the operation of general causes, there grew up at once two great domestic parties, which espoused respectively the two opposite sides of the question at issue, applying it in each to the particular circumstances of their respective governments. Where discussion was tolerated, the controversy blazed out at once through the press,—in deliberative assemblies,—in popular meetings.—Where public demonstrations of this description were prohibited, it silently agitated the mass of society in its dark and secret depths, until it finally burst forth with volcanic eruptions in the shape of open rebellions,—military revolutions,—the falling off of colonies from the parent country. Accordingly, as one or the other party predominated in the domestic policy of each particular nation, and was consequently represented by the government, the foreign policy of each assumed a different aspect ; and within

two or three years from the holding of the French National Assembly, the difference had grown up into an open and general war, involving all the leading powers of Europe as principals, and all the inferior ones as allies and dependents. The great military monarchies of the East, in which the advancement of wealth and intelligence that lay at the bottom of the movement, was still in a great measure unknown.—where the government was still every thing and the individual nothing.—naturally took their places at the head of the party opposed to change and in favor of existing institutions. France, with most of the nations in her neighborhood, such as the Netherlands, Spain and Portugal, Switzerland, Italy, and a great part of Germany.—composed the opposite party. What course England would take in regard to this quarrel, was, from her insular position and the nature of her government.—itself the result of a revolutionary movement, proceeding substantially upon the principles at work in France.—beforehand in some degree doubtful. The hereditary hostility to France, and the instinct of self-preservation in the government as such, (the existing form of which would probably have been endangered by any connexion with that country,) after some delay and hesitation, decided the question. The navy and the wealth of the Queen of the Ocean were thrown into the scale of the great Continental Alliance, and gave it an efficiency which ensured its triumph for the first half century of the

quarrel,—in Europe perhaps forever. Whether the British government consulted the real and permanent interest of the British nation, in thus aiding to break down the only imaginable barrier against the ultimate military ascendancy of Russia over the whole of Europe, is a point which I need not here discuss, but which,—from the present policy of the British government, in reference to substantially the same question,—is, we may presume, considered very doubtful even in England.

France declared the war, which, however, could not properly be viewed as either offensive or defensive, because the particular griefs brought forward on one side or the other at the time of the original declaration, and, afterwards, were rather the pretences, or, at most, the occasions, than the causes of the quarrel. These, as I have shewn, lay much deeper than any accidental dispute about Malta, Oldenburg, or the little principalities on the banks of the Rhine. With this declaration, however, commenced the long and extraordinary series of military and political events which filled up the history of the next thirty years, and which, in variety, magnitude and interest, throw completely into the shade all the other great movements recorded in the annals of the world. In those of modern Europe there is nothing at all to be paralleled with them, except the Reformation, which was, in fact, substantially the same action, proceeding on a smaller scale, in a much less

expanded form, and, of course, with far less brilliancy and effect,—a rehearsal, as it were, by way of prelude, to the final representation of the grand tragedy. Never before were the greatness and the weakness,—the folly and the wisdom,—the glory and the shame of our nature displayed in fuller relief, in all their various forms, than on both sides of this long and not yet ended struggle, wherever it was carried on. First came the clash of contending disciplined armies,—then the shock of whole nations, rising in a sort of fury, and precipitating themselves upon each other. A host of accomplished commanders sprang as if by enchantment from the lowest ranks of the army, until finally, towering above them in the grandeur of unapproached and unquestionable superiority, arose the ‘Man of Destiny.’ With heroes like these for her champions, and her whole infuriated population in her train, France,—like a beautiful maniac released from confinement,—roaming from country to country,—seduced by her doctrine and example,—overwhelmed by her power, and finally ground to the dust, under an iron military despotism, a great part of Europe, until the sleeping Colossus of the North was goaded into action, and compelled to acquire by experience a consciousness of power, which will probably not very soon be forgotten. Such was the course of events on the field of battle: in the mean time what exhibitions of intellectual talent in deliberative assemblies, and in print! Never before,

at least since the brilliant days of Greece and Rome, had the world seen any thing like the constellation of orators that now appeared in the Parliaments of France and England and our own Congress. Never before was the theory of government so thoroughly probed to the bottom in all its parts, and illustrated with such transcendant power of thought and various graces of style, as in the best works of the political writers of those countries. Upon the annals of this eventful period, which will form forever the manual of the student in philosophy and politics, a few names stand conspicuous above the rest as *unique* in their respective ways:—NAPOLEON in the field,—MIRABEAU at the tribune,—BURKE in the cabinet,—WASHINGTON,—if we may view him as one of the personages of this action, as the hero or perfect man,—‘the world’s great master and his own.’

This division of opinion, feeling and action, which, as I have shewn, pervaded the whole Christian world, formed the basis of the new division of parties that grew up in this country after the Constitution went into operation. In the first instance, the whole American people sympathized warmly with the leaders of the French revolution, among the foremost of whom they saw their own beloved and admired Lafayette. At this time there was no dissentient voice among us. The whole people beheld with pride and gratification the first nation on the continent of Europe, apparently moved by their impulse,

and, in imitation of their example, attempting to recover its political and personal rights. Even the well-tempered mind of Washington was wrought up into something like enthusiasm, as appears very plainly from his address to the minister Adet. But when the Revolution, in its onward and hurried progress, began to overstep the limits of justice and humanity at home, and to trample on the rights of other nations abroad,—when the French agents in this country endeavored to engage us in the war, and when there were even appearances of an intention to overturn our own hardly established government,—the ardor of many of the more judicious friends of the cause very rapidly cooled, and a large portion of the citizens began to look with something more than distrust upon the whole revolutionary movement, and with favor and sympathy upon the efforts of the party in Europe, which sustained the cause of the existing political institutions. These opposite feelings were the real causes that gave animation and interest to the long struggle of the Federal and Democratic parties. The controversy turned upon various questions of law and fact connected with the administration of our own and other governments, and on the characters of prominent men at home and abroad: but the decision, in all these cases, was very much influenced, if not absolutely determined, by the opinion of the individual in regard to the great principles upon which the parties were

divided. From the most important maxims of public law, down to the simplest rules of construction and grammar, it was uniformly found that those who agreed in their general political views, would also agree upon the particular point at issue.

The people of this country, therefore, fellow-citizens, were, like all their contemporaries, arranged into two great parties, according to their respective opinions and feelings upon the political questions then and still in agitation throughout the Christian world. On a view of this state of things, the first question that naturally presents itself is, which of these parties was in the right, and which in the wrong?—To those who have well considered this subject,—and who that, for the last half century, has extended the sphere of his observation an inch beyond his own fireside has not?—it is hardly necessary to say, that this question, taken in general, admits of no solution. The two parties rallied respectively under the banners of the two great principles of Liberty and Law. Both these principles are essential elements in the constitution of society, in whatever form it may be organized, and neither can possibly exist in practice to the entire exclusion of the other. Liberty without law would be the subversion of society: law without liberty would efface the individual, and leave him no existence as a moral and intellectual agent. Both these suppositions are not merely inconsistent with right, but impossible in fact. Society cannot exist

without individuals, nor can individuals exist without society: and as each can only exist in connexion with the other, each must have, of necessity, as well as of right, an appropriate sphere of activity. In other words, the individual must, in every event, possess a greater or less degree of liberty, and the society, as represented by the government, a greater or less degree of power, the expression of which is the law. The form of government is determined by the manner in which these two essential elements of social order are combined; and whether a particular government be good or bad, that is, well or ill adapted to the condition and character of the society, is a question which may be answered, although the solution can, in general, only be furnished by the results of a pretty long course of experience. But if the question be,—which of two persons or parties respectively favoring the principles of law and liberty is right, and which is wrong?—it is obvious, as I have said, that no answer can be given. Perhaps we may say, that both are in the right. Both profess and sustain principles in themselves correct, and essential to the public welfare. Each has been led by circumstances or character to look at the body politic from a particular point of view. The friend of liberty loves to dwell on the busy movement of the individual members, and fears to see it hampered by the wanton interference of government: the champion of law prefers to contemplate the harmonious action of the

whole, and is more apprehensive that this will be disturbed by the eccentric efforts of individuals. If they are brought in any way into collision, each is naturally prone to misunderstand and misrepresent the intentions of his opponent : an impartial observer sees without difficulty that both are substantially in the right. It is the old fable of the two knights, who were about to engage in single combat on the subject of the color of a shield, which was black on one side and white on the other, and of which each had only seen the side next to him.

But though the great questions at issue in this controversy may properly be considered as insoluble in the abstract, it is nevertheless certain that at particular times and places the general current of opinion among the active portion of the community will naturally take a direction towards one side or the other. When the want of the wholesome influence of a settled and regular government has been for some time experienced, the tendency will be strong in favor of Law. Such was the case in this country, during the period which followed the Peace of Independence, and in this way only can we account for the possibility of accomplishing by tranquil means such a change as was made by the adoption of the Federal Constitution. Such must now be the case in Spanish America, and it would, therefore, be quite natural that the next great effort which we may witness in these regions should be an attempt to give more

efficiency to their political institutions. When, on the other hand, the opposite evil, that is the abuse of power by the existing authorities, has been for a long time the one principally felt, the tendency of opinion will be towards political reform and individual liberty. Such was the state of things throughout the Christian world, including this country, with the exception of the short interval of time just alluded to, for more than two centuries before the opening of the French Revolution. From the first preaching of Luther, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, till the meeting of the States General in France, at the close of the eighteenth, the whole *mind* of Europe was entirely occupied in efforts to effect a reform of abuses, real or supposed, in the existing institutions, political and religious. All the energy, activity and spirit of society were employed in this way. All the powerful thinking, fine writing, bold and vigorous action were among the reformers. The newly discovered and tremendous artillery of the press was almost wholly in their hands. There was nothing to oppose them but the constantly diminishing *vis inertiae* of the established institutions, until the excesses of the French Revolution finally awoke a reaction. Compare, for example, the lion-port of Luther with the caution of Erasmus, the most intelligent advocate of the old system. Compare, at a later period, the Miltons, Lockes, Sydneys, Montesquieus, Voltaires, Rousseaus, with their too unequal adversaries,

whose very names must now be hunted up in the dust of libraries. A zeal,—a *rage*, I may call it,—for improvement, was the leading characteristic of the period, or, in the common language, the *Spirit of the Age*. It created a current of opinion, which drew in, with irresistible force, all the active and energetic members of society, as fast as they came upon the stage of action, and determined for life their position in reference to this great question, unless it was afterwards changed by accidental influences of an opposite character.

In this country, fellow-citizens, the case was stronger, perhaps, than in any other. The very existence of our community was a double revolt against the established institutions and consecrated principles of the old world. The original settlement of the colonies, at least in New England, was determined on in stern and desperate defiance of oppression. It was a new *Secession of the People*;—not like that of Rome, to a neighboring hill, but to another hemisphere. The Revolution that tore us from the mother-country, and first gave us a national existence, was another not less decisive exhibition of the same spirit. Our fathers and forefathers, the Puritans, led the van in Europe and America, in the active demonstration of the principles that agitated the world. What the Luthers, the Lockes, the Montesquieus, were tracing on parchment in their closets, the Hampdens and the Cromwells were

writing in blood with the points of their swords upon the tablets of history. They effected the British Revolution, and, as Hume correctly remarks, gave to England all the liberty she ever did possess, or ever will. When the country thus liberated, undertook, in requital for the service, to oppress the portion of them who had retired to America, they resisted the futile attempt, as may well be supposed, with indignant decision, and gave the world another practical illustration of the *spirit of the times*. Then rose into being the wonder of the West, our young Republic, bodying forth in sober earnest,—in actual terrestrial reality,—before the eye of Christendom, the lovely vision that had so long fired the imagination of her sons. It was to them, in the language of the Apocalypse, ‘the holy city coming down from God out of heaven, beautiful as a bride adorned for her husband.’ The most intelligent, accomplished and gallant of the chivalry of Europe came out in crowds to fight our battles, and went home exasperated, almost to insanity, by the lessons they had learned and the feelings they had imbibed among us against the abuses of their own governments. Our Declarations of Independence and the Rights of Man became at once their sacred volume. I do but repeat an admitted and familiar truth, when I say, that our example was the spark that fired the mass of revolutionary materials which had been so long accumulating in France ; that *the Fourth of July, 1776, opened,*

to use the words of an eminent German writer, *a new era in the history of the civilized world.*

Such, fellow-citizens, being the spirit of the times, and such the relation in which our country stood to its development and practical exhibition, is it wonderful that the Democratic party, which represented the friends of improvement and liberty, should have embraced with us a large portion of the people?—that the Federalists, who represented, in like manner, the counteracting movement in favor of established institutions and the laws, should have generally been in the minority, often a very small one? Setting entirely aside the abstract question of right, which I have shewn to be insoluble, and the minor questions of law and fact which successively came up, and in regard to which the two parties were alternately in the right and in the wrong, is it wonderful that the grand, overwhelming current of opinion, which swept down every thing before it, should have taken the direction it did? Is it wonderful that the generation of that day should have sympathized rapturously, and almost unanimously, with the fortunes of the patriots abroad, who had already fought our battles, and were now practising upon our lessons and example? It was sometimes said in the bitterness of controversy, that the Democratic party in this country were acting under *French influence.* Is it not evident, on the contrary, that it was the Democratic party in Europe who were thinking, writing, feeling,

fighting, dying under *American influence*? Is it absolutely necessary to suppose, that the men among us, who professed and acted on principles and feelings which they had inherited from several generations of ancestors, which had given them existence as a nation, and all their privileges as citizens of a free Republic,—which were those of the purest, most enlightened, most illustrious men in Europe for the three last centuries, from More to Mackintosh,—which had rendered our community an example, and a wonder, a burning and a shining light to all the others,—is it, we say, absolutely necessary to suppose that men who professed and acted upon such principles and feelings, were, for that reason, as individuals or as a party, either interested, corrupt, inconceivably and intolerably perverse, or, lastly, under foreign influence?—Surely not.

I go farther, gentlemen, and, admitting that the question, whether the friends of Liberty or Law be in the right is insoluble, except by reference to the circumstances of each particular case, I can have no hesitation in saying, that, taking these circumstances into view,—considering the situation of the Christian world at the time when the tendency to change began,—this tendency was, on the whole, a beneficial one, and, of course, that the Democratic party, which was acting under its influence,—though subject, like all other individuals and masses of men, to occasional error of every kind, was mainly, as to

its great objects, in the right, and the opposition party, which sustained the existing establishments with all their abuses, in the wrong. I can have no hesitation in saying, that the first great practical result of this tendency, the Religious Reformation,—notwithstanding the excesses,—the horrors, I may say,—by which it was disgraced,—not inferior to those of the French revolution,—was a public benefit. That its next great practical result, the British Revolution of the seventeenth century, to which we owe the British constitution of 1688,—the great exemplar of all the representative governments that have since been established, including our own,—was a public benefit. That its third great practical result, our own Independence, was a public benefit. And, finally, that its last great practical result, the French Revolution, with its consequences throughout the world, including, among them, the emancipation of Spanish America, and the reform now in progress in the British government,—with all its unpardonable excesses, which none can lament and abhor more sincerely than I do,—will prove in the end a public benefit.

If either of these points were regarded as questionable, it would probably be the last: but even this may now be looked upon as settled, so far, at least, as any point can be settled by the unanimous consent of the whole English community on both sides of the water. The two parties which respectively supported and opposed the French Revolution

are still in presence on the continent of Europe, and animated by as deep and deadly a hostility as ever. But, in England as well as in France, the party which opposed the Revolution has dwindled into a feeble minority, exercising no influence whatever in political affairs. The Government, once its warm champion, is now enlisted on the other side. In this country the party, corresponding with that of the supporters of legitimacy in Europe, has entirely ceased to exist. The argument which Ames illuminated with the rainbow hues of his brilliant fancy, which Lowell so long rendered plausible by his close, pointed, and ever ready logic, is now abandoned. From Maine to Missouri not a voice was raised in opposition to the Revolution of the three memorable days in France, or to 'the Bill, the whole Bill, and nothing but the Bill,' in England;—not a whisper has been heard in justification of Charles the Tenth, or in support of the theories or pretensions of the Holy Allies. This country was the first to acknowledge the independence of the Spanish colonies; England the first European power that followed our example, and, in both cases, the prudence of the governments could hardly keep pace with the general enthusiasm of the people. When the late rebellion broke out in Poland, what was done in Boston, which, twenty years ago, celebrated with so much enthusiasm the victories that placed that kingdom under the government of Russia? She now celebrated with equal enthusiasm

the patriotic effort of the Poles, and sent them out a pair of beautifully painted standards, as tokens of her sympathy. In their hour of misfortune the generous Polish exiles came to us for relief and refuge. What was the feeling among us, in regard to the attempts at political improvement during the last twenty years in Belgium, Germany and Italy? With what sentiments did the American people hail the re-appearance of Greece among the nations? With what sentiments did they receive the intelligence, that liberty is finally to triumph in the Spanish peninsula? But I need not push these inquiries farther? It must be apparent to all, that though the general question now in agitation throughout the Christian world is, as I have said, in substance precisely the same as it was twenty years ago, when it formed the principal subject upon which our domestic parties were divided, it has now ceased to be a question in this country. On this point at least we are happily all agreed.

It may, therefore, fellow-citizens, be assumed as certain,—so far, at least, as the general consent of the English and American public can make it so,—that the tendency under which the Democratic party acted after the adoption of the Constitution was not only perfectly natural, but substantially a right and beneficial one,—that it was, in short, the tendency of the age. It does not, however, follow that their opponents were always in the wrong in regard to particular measures. They were strong in the supe-

rior correctness of their views in regard to the Federal Constitution, which, though no longer the principal subject of controversy, was occasionally brought into discussion; and they were often strong in the errors of their opponents. While the Federalists possessed the power, the Republicans, as is usual with opposition parties, opposed almost every measure of the government, and in this way often placed themselves in the wrong. After 1800, the case was reversed in this respect; and the Federalists, from the usual tendency to indiscriminate opposition, were led to disapprove some of the wisest and most fortunate measures that the government has ever adopted, as, for example, the purchase of Louisiana. While the contest was carried on with activity between these two parties, and it did not subside until the close of the war of 1812, it was accompanied, of course, with the bitterness of feeling which is always generated by such a struggle. Neither party, at the time, probably did full justice to the other. The serious charges of perversity, foreign influence, and even direct bribery and corruption, were bandied about with great freedom. This merely partisan coloring has long since disappeared with the feelings of which it was only a transitory and unsubstantial reflection. It is now admitted by the whole American people, (with the exception of the few individuals remaining in active life, who were themselves engaged in the controversy,) that these parties were com-

posed, very much like others, of mixed materials ;—that of the members of both, some acted on pure principles and patriotic feelings, and some from interested motives, while the mass were interested by accidental circumstances, over which they had little control ;—that, taking the parties throughout, the proportion of the different sorts of ingredients was nearly the same in both, although each, in the section where it greatly predominated, naturally included a larger share of the intelligence, property and influence of the community.

Notwithstanding the severe reproaches that were lavished by each of these parties on the other, it will now be admitted by impartial men, that the manner in which the controversy was conducted is highly honorable to the character of both and to that of the country. No where and at no time, especially in a community of such extent, has a civil contest of this description been urged with so much moderation,—such uniform regard, on both sides, for the wholesome restraints of order and law,—such tenderness for human life. Compare the history of these divisions with that of those which distracted the ancient Republics, or the modern free states of Italy, and the Netherlands. Compare the manner in which the controversy was conducted here, with that in which substantially the same controversy,—between the great principles of Liberty and Law,—was carried on at the same time, in France, England, or any

other part of Europe. In the general respect which was here habitually felt for order and life,—in the mutual courtesy which prevailed in public and private discussions,—a few slight aberrations from decorum were magnified into mighty matters ; but the worst excesses that occurred here would hardly have been thought worth notice in the newspapers of any other country. There were hard words and hard thoughts,—more, perhaps, than charity would always justify,—but there the matter ended. When the fury of passion had reached its height, it was quieted by the effusion of ink instead of blood. A debate in Congress or in town-meeting,—a discussion in the newspapers,—were the only broils and battles that were known to our fathers. This was a great improvement upon the mode in which such controversies have been heretofore and elsewhere managed. For myself, though inclined by temperament and habit to take a favorable view of human nature, and to indulge in rather sanguine prospects of the improvement of society, I see no reason to expect that the principle of evil will ever be wholly extirpated, or will cease to influence, in some degree, the progress of affairs, whether public or private. And if any scope at all is to be allowed to the action of this principle ;—if human nature is to remain here, as elsewhere, with all its improvements, at a point somewhat below that of absolute perfection ;—if varieties of character and situation are to create, as they have always

done, differences of opinion among the members of the same communities ;—I am unable to conceive, from any examples yet recorded in the annals of the world, how such differences or the controversies that must of course grow out of them, can possibly assume a milder shape than they have hitherto done with us. Happy will it be for our posterity, if the moderation of the party controversies of the last generation be not as strongly illustrated by contrast, in the future history of that country, as it is in the past and present history of almost all others.

IV. In farther illustration of this view of the subject, let us glance, for a moment, at the personal composition of the parties, and at the characters of some of the prominent leaders. In so doing, we may, perhaps, without impropriety, exclude from the number the names of WASHINGTON and JOHN ADAMS, although they have, in general, been ranked, in the popular opinion, with the Federalists. They concurred with that party, in the first controversy about the Constitution, and were supported by it successively for the Presidentship, but were not completely identified with it after the dispute turned upon the new ground of foreign policy. Mr. Adams came to an open rupture with the leaders of the party upon this subject, which probably defeated his re-election, and with it their ascendancy in the country. Washington, in constituting his cabinet, studiously attempted to reconcile discordant opinions ; and his personal ten-

dencies were in unison with those of the time and of the Democratic party. But both these great men had been aiming too exclusively, all their lives, at American objects, to take a very strong interest in a party division which looked at all beyond the sphere of our own country. The most conspicuous persons in the new parties, as they were organized after the Constitution went into operation, belonged to a younger class, of which JEFFERSON on one side, and HAMILTON on the other, may be looked upon as the representatives and leaders.

Jefferson and Hamilton were both men of first-rate talent, and the most elevated private character. They were both devoted, heart and soul, to the cause of independence, and, by their unwearied and effectual exertions in support of it, had given to the country the strongest possible pledges of the sincerity of their patriotism. During the struggle with England, they acted entirely in concert, though in different spheres. After the conclusion of peace, their courses gradually diverged, and they at length came into open opposition ; but it is easy, without disparagement to the merits of either, to find, in the circumstances in which they were respectively placed, causes which led them to take different views of the general principles of government and the character of particular men and measures.

Immediately after the close of the war, Mr. Jefferson went to Europe, and took his station as the

representative of his country at the Court of France, where he resided until about the time when the Constitution of the United States went into operation. This was precisely the period of the opening of the French Revolution. Mr. Jefferson, by his position in France, and the part he had taken in our own Revolution, was looked up to by the friends of reform as a sort of oracle. They constantly recurred to him as an experienced and successful champion of the same cause in which they were engaged, for counsel and direction. The prominent patriots often met at his house. The Declaration of Rights, which preceded the first French constitution, was drafted, we are told, in concert by him and Lafayette. With a committee so composed, it is easy to imagine from what quarter proceeded the principal suggestions. The first constitution was proposed after a consultation among the leading patriots, which took place at Mr. Jefferson's residence. In giving his approbation, his sympathy,—his concurrence, so far as he could do it with official propriety,—to the earliest movements of the French Revolution, he found himself sustained by the unanimous consent of all the men whose opinions could with him be supposed to possess much value. Was it unnatural then, that, under these circumstances, the tendency to popular principles of government, which he carried with him to Europe, should have been confirmed and fixed forever as the ruling bias of his mind? Is it necessary to

suppose him either imbecile, corrupt or perverse, if, under these circumstances, he continued to dwell habitually upon the existing abuses of Power, rather than the possible abuses of Liberty? Is it just to represent him as feeling, thinking, or acting under French influence, when he was simply pursuing the same line of feeling, thought and action as before, and was, in fact, himself one of the principal channels through which the people of this country were at this time exercising upon France that *American influence*, which, as I have said, was one of the most efficient causes in determining the course of events in Europe?

Let us now look at the position of Hamilton. At the time when Mr. Jefferson went to Europe, he was elected a member of the Continental Congress, and continued, till the adoption of the Constitution, to take a most active concern in the political affairs of the country. He was now, for the first time, called upon to give his attention to the principles of civil polity, the sphere of his action having been, during the war, exclusively military. During this period the situation of the United States was, as I have had occasion to remark, a sort of exception to that of all the rest of the civilized world. It was a time of reaction. While the evils chiefly complained of every where else (as with us until the accomplishment of Independence) were the abuses of constitutional power, in our case the difficulty now lay in the want of an

efficient and properly organized government. While the natural tendency among the intelligent and well-meaning every where else, (as with us before the Revolution,) was in favor of reforming established institutions, correcting abuses, restraining the action of Government, and enlarging that of individuals,—in one word, of *Liberty*,—the natural tendency among the same class of persons in the United States, at that period, was in favor of strengthening established institutions, reenforcing the government, increasing and extending the influence of the *Law*. The political affairs of the Union were in a state of confusion,—the taxes could not be collected,—the treaties with foreign powers were not executed ;—commerce and manufactures were entirely at a stand, for want of proper legal regulation and protection ;—credit was unknown ; in some of the States there were already open insurrections ;—every thing, in short, indicated weakness in the main springs of the political machine. The tendency, therefore, in favor of such a reform as would give them more efficiency, was a just and natural one. It resulted, happily for the country, in the adoption of the present Constitution. In the whole movement, which terminated in this most salutary measure, Hamilton, as is well known, took a very active part. With an ardor belonging to his age and temperament, he carried his views of the extent of the reforms that were necessary considerably beyond those of most of his fellow-laborers in the work. He

proposed his own plans with frankness ; but when he found that they were not relished, he acquiesced with readiness in those which were preferred, and exercised all his talents and influence in procuring their adoption. He is understood, however, to have believed that the Constitution would not, ultimately, prove to be practicable, and that, after giving it a proper trial, it would be found necessary to recur to a stronger system. In this opinion he probably died. But, however this may be, it was the obvious effect of the whole course of thought, reasoning, writing and action in which he was engaged, during the period between the Peace and the adoption of the Constitution; to divert his attention from the abuses of Power, and fix it upon the dangers of Liberty ; to impress, in short, upon his mind, a tendency opposed to the general spirit of the times, and similar to that which was felt by the party in Europe, that sustained the existing governments against the movements of the French Revolution.

Prepared in this way, by the influence of the situations in which they were placed after the close of the war, to take distinct and even opposite views of the tendency of the age, these two eminent men, upon the first organization of the government, found themselves called upon to occupy the two first places in the administration, and to act together, as they best might, under the superior direction of Washington, in the conduct of the public affairs. Equally intelligent,

upright and patriotic as they were, they would probably have been able, notwithstanding the differences in their general views, to concur as to most matters of practice, in which that difference was not immediately involved ; but, under the particular circumstances in which the government and the country were then placed, it was brought more or less into discussion by almost every new measure that was proposed. The constant collision in which they were thus placed, of course confirmed them both in their respective views, and finally became so unpleasant that they both retired from the cabinet. In the mean time, however, the whole American people were agitated by the same controversies, and the two parties looked respectively to Jefferson and Hamilton as their representatives in the government, and their principal champions and leaders. Each of them gradually became, for one great portion of the people, a personification, as it were, of the high political principle,—*Liberty* on the one hand, and *Law* on the other,—which formed the watchword and symbol of his party. Both, though comparatively very young when they acquired this commanding influence over the opinions and feelings of their countrymen, maintained it undiminished till the close of their lives. Hamilton, though a private citizen, ruled with despotic empire in the hearts of his political friends till the day of his untimely death. Jefferson, representing the ideas to which the force of

circumstances necessarily gave the ascendancy, rose rapidly to the first places in the government, swept down all opposition at his re-election as President, and even after his retirement from the Presidentship was still regarded as the oracle of his party.

Jefferson and Hamilton, therefore, stood forth in their day and generation, before the American people, as the respective personal representatives of the great ideas of Liberty and Law ;—the two essential elements of social order, whose combination, in one form and another, is indispensable in every constituted society, but which the force of circumstances had, at that time, brought into hostile conflict. Mr. Jefferson's object was *Liberty*. He felt and personified, for a large portion of his countrymen, the tendency of the times towards a reform of the abuses of government, and an extension of the sphere of individual activity. The political and military movements which originated in this tendency, were in Europe led by France, and opposed by England. France was strenuously laboring for the accomplishment of the objects which he considered most desirable : England was strenuously opposing it. Under these circumstances, it was a matter of course that he should wish for the success of France, and the failure of England : not that he cared any thing for France or England as such, but that, desiring the end, he naturally desired the means. To Hamilton and his friends, on the other hand, whose object and

watchword was *Law*,—who felt and represented for the American people the counteracting tendency of the party in Europe that opposed the movement of the French Revolution,—England, for the same reason, appeared as an ally, and France as an obstacle. Neither party cared any thing for France or England, as such : neither was under foreign influence. Foreign influence takes place when individuals or parties, from corrupt motives, espouse the interest of a foreign nation at the expense of that of their own. To wish or to endeavor to promote the success of a nation, whose interest you suppose at the time to be identical with that of your own, is not a proof of foreign influence, but of patriotism more or less enlightened, accordingly as the view you take of the subject is more or less correct.

The object of Mr. Jefferson, through life, was, therefore, as I have said, to increase and extend the influence of the great principle of *Liberty*, to which he had attached his faith, and which formed, as it were, his religion. In his first effort, when still a mere youth, he moved, as a Representative in the General Assembly of Virginia, the immediate emancipation of all the slaves,—in his bold, vigorous and effectual exertions in the cause of Independence,—in his long, sagacious, and successful campaigns, as the acknowledged leader of the Republican party,—and, finally, in the tenor of all his writings, public and private, we see the steady operation of this one pre-

dominating principle. It would be difficult to find another political character of equal distinction, in whose course there is less appearance of any variability, or even shadow of turning: and this, independently of other considerations, which place the matter beyond a doubt, is a strong proof of his entire sincerity. The youth who could stand up in an assembly of slave-holding planters, with a proposal for immediate emancipation, the idea of which even now and in the free States curdles the blood of every judicious friend of humanity, was no selfish calculator, and, I may boldly say, could never have become one. In like manner, the man who, still in the prime of life, being scarcely over thirty years of age,—after appearing with so much distinction in the Continental Congress,—after writing the Declaration of Independence, could resign his seat, and retire to his paternal acres and state politics, was evidently not under the influence of selfish ambition. The difficulty would rather be to reconcile this and some passages of his after life with the line of conduct prescribed by patriotic feeling and an enlightened sense of duty. After his retirement from Congress, he is understood to have declined the appointment of Minister to France, the most attractive certainly that could then have been offered to a man of his age and character. He preferred a seat in the Virginia Legislature. He is elected Governor of the State, and after re-election retires from the office. He finally goes out to France

as Minister, is transferred from that post to the head of the cabinet of Washington, from which, after serving through the first Presidential term, he again retires to private life. This moderation, it has sometimes been said, was merely affected, as a means of attaining with greater certainty the ultimate objects of his ambition. But if such were the fact, how can we account for the resolute determination with which, after the close of his second term, he retires forever from the scene of action ?

‘ Lowliness is young Ambition’s ladder,
Whereto the climber upward turns his face,
But having once attained the topmost round,
He then unto the ladder turns his back,
Looks in the clouds, scorning the base degrees
By which he did ascend.’

Mr. Jefferson, after ‘attaining the topmost round,’ and when his popularity was such that he might, without difficulty, have continued to occupy it for the rest of his days, voluntarily resigned it, at an age when the mere lust of power and office is as hot as at any other, and passed twenty years in complete retirement, without, so far as we can judge from his correspondence, casting a single longing, lingering look at the elevation which he had left.

‘ Was this Ambition ? ’

Let us then be just to human nature. Let us consent to admit that there may be such things as principle, patriotism, and public virtue, when we

have before us an overwhelming mass of unquestionable facts, which cannot be accounted for in any other way. If we wish that our children should look back with tenderness, respect and gratitude to us, let us not blaspheme with wanton and groundless accusations the memory of our political fathers, the founders of our institutions,—the givers, under Providence, of all the blessings we enjoy. Why indulge in harsh suspicions of men, whose career was one long, unbroken act of public service, because they occasionally differed on particular questions, when we know that they had themselves, long before their deaths, forgotten these differences, and gone down together in kindness to their honored graves? Such were not the feelings with which, a few years ago, we laid them side by side in one sepulchre, the great twin civil fathers of our Liberty,—lovely in their lives, and in their deaths not divided,—whom Providence, as if to ratify forever the amnesty of all unfriendly feeling, upon which they had agreed themselves many years before, called to their account on the very same day, and that the anniversary of their country's independence. Such were not the feelings with which hundreds of the greatest and best men of all parties and opinions united on that occasion in unanimous acknowledgment of the equal and unparalleled services and virtues of both; with which the whole people, in the beautiful language of Homer, 'smiled through their tears' in a kind of mournful

rapture at the strange and charming coincidence in the times of their departure. Such is not,—such, I am bold to say, never will be,—the feeling of the country.

The great value of the public services of Mr. Jefferson is generally acknowledged, but the full extent and variety of them can hardly be appreciated, except by those who have studied with some attention the course of his life. The labors of one of the least conspicuous portions of his public career, when he acted as a member of the Virginia Legislature after his retirement from Congress, would be enough, of themselves, to found the reputation,—I had almost said, to fill the life,—of most other great men. During the two or three years of this period, in addition to the ordinary routine of legislative and other political business connected with the general state of the country, he digested the whole common law of England and the statutes up to the time of James I., so far as they required to be altered for application to this country, into bills ready for the action of the Legislature,—most of which have since been adopted, and now form the basis of the code of Virginia. This was a great work, considered as a mere monument of industry ; but is hardly worth notice, under this point of view, in comparison with its importance as a medium for the introduction of new principles of legislation. Among these principles were the abrogation of the laws of entails and primogeniture,—the

establishment of religious freedom,—the complete reform of the criminal code, including the abolition of capital punishment in all cases excepting treason and murder,—*the emancipation, at a certain age, of all the slaves born after the passage of the act*,—the division of the counties into wards or towns,—and the introduction of a system of popular education, providing for a school in each town, an academy in each county, and a university for the State. The three first of these improvements were carried into effect: most unfortunately for the interest of Virginia, the three last did not receive the assent of the Legislature. Had they been adopted, the situation of Virginia would have now been very different from what it is. To repair this omission in regard to education, was one of the principal employments of Mr. Jefferson after his retirement from office. Such, fellow-citizens, were the more than Herculean labors of this truly great man, during two or three of the least conspicuous years of his life. Those who, in the course of a long and active career, have been fortunate enough to render to the public a service equal in importance to the introduction of any one of these great improvements, will be most competent to understand, and least disposed to depreciate, the claims of this distinguished statesman to the respect and gratitude of his countrymen.

Let it be remembered, too, that the person by whom all these mighty works were effected,—these

responsibilities assumed,—these dangers encountered,—was a gentleman of the first social connexions, and of large hereditary fortune,—unaffected, of course, by any of the accidental motives which are generally supposed to be the only effectual spurs to extraordinary exertion. On a view of all these circumstances, I do not well see how any judicious observer can feel himself authorized to attribute the course of Mr. Jefferson's political conduct to any other motive than an ardent zeal for liberty,—excessive, possibly, at times,—but always honest, and tending, as he understood it, to the general good.

Mr. Jefferson seems to have been endowed by nature with all the higher mental qualities, and his early distinction proves the exemplary industry with which he turned his talents to account. He must have been one of the youngest members of Congress, his age being about thirty-two, at the time when he was placed at the head of the committee for preparing the Declaration of Independence. The spirit which animates this celebrated paper, and the vigorous resolution with which its author had directed his efforts towards the promotion of the great object of it, from the time of his first appearance in Congress, evince the natural energy and firmness of his character. At the same time, these qualities were probably tempered in him with a larger infusion of policy than they were in some of his distinguished contemporaries, and this circumstance contributed much to his success in

the world. He combined with his active disposition and talents a strong taste for contemplative pursuits, and was early smitten with the charms of ‘divine philosophy.’ Although he nowhere makes in his published writings an ostentatious or improper display of learning, it is easy to see that they are the productions of a disciplined and studious mind. His Notes on Virginia, which are among the earliest of them, prove that he had already explored with a curious eye the various departments of intellectual, moral and physical science, and had speculated with a free and independent spirit upon the facts that fell under his observation. It is known that he continued through life to devote his leisure hours to these delightful recreations. His range of study included not only the great subjects just mentioned, which form the theoretical basis of all knowledge, but also the subsidiary branches, that teach the application of the former to the uses of life, such as the ancient and modern languages, and mathematics pure and mixed. He descended even from his habitually elevated region of inquiry to the common walks of practical labor; was much engaged in agricultural pursuits, and proposed himself an improvement of the plough. He was curious, in short, in regard to every part of useful or elegant learning, and nothing that seemed likely to contribute to the general good escaped his attention. He also possessed a strong taste for the fine arts, and is said to have lived much, while

abroad, in the society of the eminent artists of Europe. His style of writing, though not a perfect model, is more correct and elegant than that of any contemporary statesman, and has more of the point and precision that mark the manner of a close thinker. The stores of various knowledge with which he had stocked his memory gave a rich fulness to his thoughts, even on mere matters of business; and we see through the lucid current of his language the beds of gold over which it flowed. As one star differeth from another in glory, we may admit without injustice to their fame, that the different revolutionary worthies possessed, each in a higher degree than the rest, some peculiar excellence; and it will probably be noted hereafter, as the distinctive merit of Jefferson, that, next to Franklin, he was the most philosophical statesman of this illustrious group. This quality has, in fact, been assigned him by the general consent of his enemies as well as his friends; the former having commonly reproached him with a too strong inclination to act upon abstract theories, which is only an unfavorable form of stating the same trait of character. The truth is, that a little philosophy, as Voltaire said in reference to Frederic the Great, does no harm even in business. Plato, we know, affirmed that the world would never be well governed, until kings became philosophers, or philosophers were made kings.

The most important act in the life of Mr. Jefferson, was, as I have already intimated, the part he took

in bringing about the Declaration of Independence. It was his fortune to connect his name with this event in a very particular way, by being called upon to write the document which published it to the world. It is no doubt true, that the substance of such a paper is given by the occasion, and that the mere merit of clothing it, however fitly, in words, is one of a comparatively inferior order; but it is one of those merits of inferior order which contribute materially towards bringing into public notice other and loftier ones. The patriotism, energy and substantial talent of Mr. Jefferson were much higher qualities than his skill in composition; but this latter talent (the one that probably marked him out as the chairman of the committee,) gave him, on this great occasion, a place apart, and, in some degree, more conspicuous than that of any other member of Congress, which will constitute forever a singular title of honor. The propriety with which the paper is drawn fully justified the choice of the writer. It is wholly free from the noisy flourish which a vulgar pen would have run into at once. It commences with a simple statement of a few incontestable general principles, proceeds to recapitulate in plain language the wrongs of the colonies, and ends with a firm declaration of the great fact which it was intended to announce. The form of the paper is therefore, as it was highly important that it should be, perfectly suited to the substance. But it is not in the choice of words, or

the texture of phrases, that we are to look for the real essence of this *unique* document. Its true value lies in that it is the written contemporary record of the event which it published, and which, according to a high European authority already alluded to, ‘opened a new era in the history of the world.’ As this era advances, and as the importance of it is more and more distinctly perceived, the circumstances that marked its commencement will become constantly more and more interesting. If our hopes are realized, the Declaration of Independence will be acknowledged hereafter as the GREAT CHARTER OF HUMAN LIBERTY AND HAPPINESS. To have been called to write such a paper was a piece of good fortune, which could only have happened to a truly great man, and it is one which a truly good man need not be ashamed to envy.

While the war lasted, Mr. Jefferson was constantly employed in the most important duties. He appears to have preferred such as required his presence in the country, and is understood to have refused a foreign mission; but when Dr. Franklin returned from France, after the peace, Mr. Jefferson consented to take his place. The occupations of our diplomatic agents were now less urgent and complicated than they had been, and left them more at leisure for the observation of passing events, and for miscellaneous pursuits and studies. The philosophical habits of Mr. Jefferson enabled him to employ with great

profit the time which he passed at Paris, in extending his knowledge and cultivating his taste. It has been thought by some, that his views on speculative subjects were unfavorably modified by the effect of his association with the literary men of the continent of Europe ; but I am not aware that there is any foundation for this suspicion. The liberal notions on almost all important subjects, which appear in his Notes on Virginia, a work published before he went to Europe, as they could not well be improved, do not appear to have been changed for the worse. He has been charged with irreligion ; but this wanton calumny was a mere repetition of the base and cowardly attacks that have been resorted to so often in all ages, in order to shake the reputation of the best and most religious men. It was known that Mr. Jefferson sympathized warmly in the early movements of the French Revolution, and, as some of the philosophers and statesmen who were engaged in them professed a loose doctrine on religious and moral subjects, Mr. Jefferson's enemies made no scruple, though without a shadow of evidence, of imputing to him all their errors. This artifice is too gross to deceive any person of discernment, and is not very creditable to the generosity of those who resorted to it. Mr. Jefferson's irreligion was of the same sort with that for which Socrates drank the hemlock and the Christian martyrs perished at the stake. Like them, instead of being justly obnoxious to the charge

of impiety, he was one of the most sincerely religious men in the community. Many of his published letters, and particularly one to a member of the Society of Friends, which has been often reprinted, breathe on this subject a most amiable and truly pious spirit, which cannot have been affected, for there are certain tones that can only come from the heart, and which no dissembler, however cunning, can imitate. His views of the French Revolution were considered by many as too favorable, and he has been accused of acting under *French influence*; but on this subject I have already dwelt at length. Far from acting under French influence, he was himself, as I have said, one of the principal channels through which the people of this country exercised upon France and the rest of Europe that *American influence* which is changing so rapidly the political aspect of the old world. Mr. Jefferson's views of the French Revolution were the same with those of a great majority of the people of the United States, and contributed very much to give him the immense popularity which first raised and then re-elected him to the Presidency, sustained him in so remarkable a way through the whole course of his administration, and continued to attend him up to the close of his life. The Presidency of Mr. Jefferson fell on times as easy and tranquil as those immediately preceding them had been stormy and difficult. Our foreign relations had assumed a favorable aspect, in conse-

quence of the turn of affairs in Europe. The bitterness of party feeling gradually subsided under the influence of the great and growing popularity of the government. Industry and commerce flourished beyond all former precedent, and these eight years will always be regarded as one of the most brilliant periods in the history of the country, as they also were one of the most agreeable and prosperous in the life of Mr. Jefferson. At the end of his second term he finally closed his public career, by declining to be considered as a candidate for re-election, and thus crowned his long course of service to his country by an act which gave another beautiful proof of the truly philosophical temper of his mind. Whether this act was as advantageous to the country as it was creditable to himself, may well be questioned. He was still in the vigor of his faculties, and, as the event has proved, might have served the people with constantly increasing usefulness for two or three more terms.

The life of Mr. Jefferson, after he retired from office, was not less happy, and hardly less useful to the nation, although more quiet than the preceding portion. He returned with new ardor to his favorite studies, which occupied in the most agreeable manner a considerable part of his leisure. His house was habitually frequented by guests of the highest respectability and intelligence. No foreigner of note visited the country without paying his respects at Monticello, and he became to his countrymen a sort of political

oracle, which was resorted to on all doubtful and important occasions. The prejudices that had been felt against him in times of warm party dissension gradually subsided. They were wholly unknown to the rising generation, and were nearly or quite forgotten by those who once cherished them with violence. For years before his death, he was in habitual and friendly correspondence with President Adams; and the letters they exchanged, many of which have been published, exhibit an amiable philosophy, and a generous forgetfulness on either side of their temporary differences, in the highest degree creditable to the character of both. On several occasions Mr. Jefferson, even in retirement, exercised a beneficial influence on the progress of public affairs. When the British commander-in-chief, with a wanton and insolent contempt of common humanity and public law, burned the national buildings at Washington, and with them the library, Mr. Jefferson came forward in the midst of the momentary consternation excited by this shameless proceeding, and revived the spirits of his countrymen by reminding them, that it was only a century and a half since the Dutch had burned the British fleet at Chatham. He also placed at their disposal his own collection of books, a much larger and better one than the other, and thus laid the foundation of a new public institution, which, if properly sustained, will one day be an ornament to the country. During his last years he

was much occupied, in conjunction with his friend and political associate, Mr. Madison, in establishing the University of Virginia. The service which he rendered to his native state and county, by his labor in promoting this single object, would entitle him, independently of all his other merits, to the lasting veneration and gratitude of the people. His conversation is said to have been in the highest degree rich, various and instructive, and his mode of entertaining his friends at once cordial and unceremonious. Every one was charmed with his unaffected affability, and left him with new respect for his character and talents. His manner through life was plain and easy rather than elegant, being the natural unstudied expression of good feelings and powerful thoughts. His correspondence, which often found its way into the newspapers, presented a beautiful image of a mind at peace with itself and the world, full of charity for others, and actively bent on promoting the general good, looking backward with honest satisfaction on a well-spent life, and forward with cheerful resignation to its close. I have often thought and remarked, that the history of man does not offer, in any of its proudest passages, a spectacle more honorable to our nature, than the old age of these our revolutionary fathers. This charming picture, which appeared before too complete to admit of improvement, finally received a new, and, as it were, a supernatural finish in the almost miraculous coincidence that marked the

close of their lives, and which will hardly in future be surpassed or equalled.

Compare, now, fellow-citizens, the splendid talents, the sublime and simple virtues, the ardent and unwearied devotion to the public, the noble disinterestedness, the blameless youth, the divine old age of these men, with what we know of the statesmen and warriors of modern Europe at their best estate, and say whether there be not something in the nature of democratic institutions, that seems to favor specifically the growth of public virtue. I know that great and good minds are formed, from time to time, under all governments and in every part of the world, and that the continent from which our fathers proceeded was never barren of these celestial fruits. But, in arbitrary governments, they appear like exotics,—and we look in vain through the history of absolute monarchies, even at their brilliant moments, for the traces of a principle that favors the formation of such characters. The heroes of the great Corneille were the only specimens of Greek and Roman virtue to be found at the court of Louis XIV. The ante-chambers of Napoleon were not crowded with Dewitts and Scipios. It is, in fact, established by Montesquieu, as an axiom in political science, that public virtue is the natural product and essential principle of popular government. This theory appears to be confirmed by the experience of all ages,—and no period has ever exhibited a more striking illustration of its truth,

than is given in the glorious company of our revolutionary patriots. The examples they have left us will surely not be lost on their posterity, and the institutions which they founded and bequeathed to us, based as they are on the solid rock of *Democracy*, and imbued in every part with its living spirit, will remain, a fruitful and perpetual source of virtues like their own.

But why, fellow-citizens and friends, should I detain you longer in defending a character which error and prejudice alone could have undertaken to call in question,—which the enlightened public sentiment of Europe and America classes with those of the great benefactors of the human race? Let us advert for a moment, in conclusion, to the auspicious circumstances under which we are this day assembled. This is the Sixtieth Anniversary of the great and good day which we meet to commemorate. It is marked by a circumstance of more than ordinary interest. The law provides that, on the Fourth of July next following the admission of a new State into the Confederacy, a new star shall be emblazoned, as its representative and symbol, on the national banner,—the number of the stripes remaining permanently the same as it originally was, to indicate the number of States of which the Union was at first composed. During the session of Congress which this day terminates, two new States, Michigan and Arkansas, have been admitted into the Union. To-day, fellow-citi-

zens, two new stars appear at once upon the national flag. It is the first time in our history, when two States have been admitted during the same year. The addition of these two States increases the whole number to twenty-six. The original number was thirteen. To-day, then, fellow-citizens, our national flag,—the glorious star-spangled banner of the Union,—indicates, for the first time, that the number of the States has been doubled since the ever memorable Fourth of July, 1776.

Glorious result!—Oh, could those true-hearted, noble-minded men, who on that day of trial pledged and put at imminent hazard their lives, their fortunes, and—dearer far—their sacred honor, on the issue of the quarrel upon which they were entering, have anticipated all that we now witness, with what new alacrity would they not have rushed forward upon their dangerous course! But then how much less would have been their merit!—At that time clouds and darkness veiled the prospect. Thirteen infant colonies, unprepared, unaided, were about to contend single-handed with the Mistress of the Ocean. Who could prophesy the issue? For the leading patriots confiscation, exile, perhaps an ignominious death—were to be the consequences of failure. ‘Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified,’—in the consciousness of upright intentions,—in the stern indignation of oppressed freedom,—full of faith in God and of love to their country,—they marched up resolutely, boldly, un-

shrinkingly to the mark. Behold now the fruits! Sixty years have elapsed, and to-day, fellow-citizens, twenty-six confederated states, in the full enjoyment of exuberant prosperity,—acknowledged, respected,—may I not say, feared and loved?—feared by the partisans of Despotism, beloved by the friends of Improvement and Liberty,—but acknowledged and respected by all, as one of the leading powers of the Christian world,—commemorate the great act of the day we celebrate, as the source, under Providence, of all these blessings,—of our national existence.

To-day, then, fellow-citizens,—permit me to dwell for a moment upon the grateful theme,—to-day, for the first time, the national banner indicates that two new States have been added this year to the Union, and that the number of the States has been doubled since the Fourth of July, 1776. Remark, too, my friends, that these accessions to the national family are no puny race,—no mere imaginary creation, like the groups of ephemeral kingdoms and republics, that are sometimes created at a congress of sovereigns in Europe, only to be swept away again into nothing by the next political hurricane. Our new States are as vigorous in substance as they have been rapid in progress. ‘How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob!—thy tabernacles, O Israel! Like valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the river-side,—like the trees of lign aloes which the Lord hath planted,—like the cedar trees beside the waters.’ They skirt

the shores of your chain of inland seas : they cover the banks of your mighty western rivers : they spring spontaneously into being in the depths of your vast primeval forests, on the bosoms of your boundless savannas. No puny race, did I say ?—Already many of them surpass in power and wealth, and that generous zeal for intellectual, moral and material improvement, which promises still greater things hereafter, the oldest and proudest members of the family. Who stands forth boldly in her giant youth as the champion of the whole interior, but Ohio ? Who sits like a queen at the entrance of your western waters, already rivalling in art and taste and wealth her brilliant parent in the old world, but Louisiana ? Let me have the satisfaction of repeating the names of the new States in geographical order. Methinks I see them pass before me, a charming sisterhood. Vermont, enthroned in simple beauty on her green mountains ;—Maine—a nymph of the ocean, but guarding with jealous care her rich interior domains from the grasp of her mighty neighbor : she acknowledges no highlands in the bed of the river St. John's ;—Ohio—Indiana—Illinois—flourishing, thanks to your provident care, far-sighted Dane ! in the sunshine of unclouded liberty ;—Kentucky,—generous Kentucky, —less fortunate, in this respect, than her neighbors, but rich in all the bounties of Providence, rich in men, the venerated mother of the west ;—Tennessee, ennobled as the residence of the Hero of New Or-

leans ;—Alabama—Mississippi—Louisiana—spoiled children of fortune ! who can estimate your wealth ? Missouri—ah, Missouri ! your birth was well nigh fatal to your parent, but she loves you not the less. Last in order, fellow-citizens, our young and graceful sisters, Michigan, a Northern Dryad, and Arkansas, reposing in her flowery prairies, upon the banks of the Red River. Around,—behind,—another group as fair as these, are pressing into being—

———² Future sons and daughters, yet unborn,
In crowding ranks on every side arise,
Demanding life, impatient for the skies.'

Wisconsin,—Florida,—Huron,—and a host of others that will find their places in the vast expanse of the western valley of the Mississippi,—on the crest of the Rocky Mountains,—on the shores of the Columbia River, and the Pacific Ocean ;—for there, and there only, will the far West at length find its limit.

Beautiful, brilliant group !—New England and Virginia,—the Empire and the Key-stone States, with their neighbors,—and you, gallant though sometimes mistaken Carolina ! with your southern sisters, proud and justly so as you all are of your respective treasures, your commercial and literary emporiums,—your Monticellos and Mount Vernons,—your Benningtons, Lexingtons and Bunker Hills,—you may well be prouder still of such a train of companions. Is there any one among your sons poor-spirited enough to look with jealousy upon their rising great-

ness? Shall we envy the felicity of our own offspring?—Fellow-citizens, they are of us,—they have gone out from among us. Our rocky hills and fertile valleys were the home of their fathers, the loved haunts of their childhood and youth. From the bosom of the South and West their hearts constantly return thither. Harvard and Yale are their Oxford and Cambridge: Bunker-Hill is their Marathon. They are with us in spirit on our great days of national jubilee,—the 22d of December, the 19th of April, the 17th of June, the 4th of July. Fellow-citizens, they are with us now. Methinks I feel their viewless presence. Welcome, noble spirits! sons of common sires! children of the same family! We receive with pleasure—with gratitude—your generous sympathy. Carry back to your western paradise the assurance of our warmest wishes for your welfare and greatness. Perish the tongue that would utter a word to your dishonor! Palsied be the arm that would aim a blow at your prosperity!

This creation of new States, fellow-citizens, is the crowning glory of our system. It has been said, by an eminent European writer, that the idea of a representative Republic, as exemplified in this country, is the most brilliant discovery of modern times. In this remark there is much truth. The notion of representation dawned so faintly upon the vision of the ancient lawgivers, and even comparatively those of modern Europe, that its first clear and full develop-

ment in the constitutions of the United States may well be looked upon as a discovery. But this spontaneous formation of sovereign States as co-ordinate members of a pre-existing confederacy, is something of a still more novel character. Greece scattered her colonies upon every shore, but she left them unprotected as the ostrich lays her eggs upon the sand.—Rome swallowed up successively all the other states of the ancient world in the whirlpool of her own mammoth city, but she destroyed their independence and distributed their territories as spoils to her conquering generals, whose broad lands, in the expressive language of Pliny, were the ruin of Italy. *Lati-fundia perdere Itatiam*. But this domestic manufacture of new nations is a phenomenon of which there is no anticipation in ancient or modern history. It is by far the most important and interesting feature in the progress of our national development. European travellers sometimes tell us that they cannot understand our system, and make this a reason for attacking it. Fellow-citizens, let them count the stars in our flag! let them cast their eyes upon the map!

This day, fellow-citizens, completes the sixtieth year of our national existence. No period, perhaps, of equal length, in the history of the Christian world, has been marked with a greater number of important events. Wars have become almost habitual. Revolutions in government have been the order of the

day. In the general result, the political aspect of the Christian world, as respects the relative power of states and empires, has been wholly changed. Before this period, France had been commonly the ruling Christian state. The neighboring nations, such as Austria, Prussia, Spain, sometimes contested her ascendancy, but the sceptre, in the main, departed not from Judah. Her Charlemagnes, her Philips, her Henrys, her Richelieus, her Louises gave the law successively in their times, and in their different ways, throughout Europe. Russia was still foreign to the system : England was an offset from the French stock, and had not yet become a first-rate power. America was a distant insignificant colony. This day, sixty years ago, your fathers declared independence, and a new era commenced in the history of the civilized world. To trace its progress would require a library : its results are before us. Austria, Prussia, France, Spain, have lost their comparative importance. The theatre is enlarged. Russia, Great-Britain, the United States now stand forward as the leading powers. In Russia the far-seeing eye recognizes even now the future mistress of Europe. Her right flank resting on the North Pole, and her left on the deserts of Tartary and Turkey, she advances with giant steps from her inaccessible and impregnable seats in the boundless regions of Asia and north-eastern Europe to the conquest of the West. Nothing can arrest her progress. Twice already, within the last thirty

years, have her Cossacks pitched their tents in the Elysian fields of the capital of France. Turkey and Poland, the natural bulwarks of the West against her inroads, have been left to her mercy. The western nations, distracted by internal dissensions, are incapable of offering any effectual resistance, and have ceased to meditate it. England herself, though now, as the head of an immense colonial empire, one of the leading powers of the world, as the influence of Russia advances and her own colonies successively fall off, must lose her preponderance, and sink into a secondary sphere.

With the decline of the British power and the progress of that of Russia, the principle of Despotism will obtain, temporarily, at least, the ascendancy in Europe. Upon us, fellow-citizens, will devolve, in consequence, the honor and the duty of sustaining the cause of free institutions. Hear in what a noble burst of poetry the lamented Byron describes your position, as contrasted with that of the once free states of the old world !

The name of Commonwealth is past and gone
 O'er the three fractions of the groaning globe ;
 Venice is crushed, and Holland deigns to own
 A sceptre, and endures the purple robe.
 If the free Switzer yet bestrides alone
 His chainless mountains, 'tis but for a time ;
 For tyranny, of late, is cunning grown,
 And in its own good season tramples down
 The sparkles of our ashes. One great clime,

Whose vigorous offspring, by dividing ocean,
 Are kept apart, and nursed in the devotion
 Of Freedom, which their fathers fought for and
 Bequeathed,—a heritage of heart and hand,
 And proud distinction from each other land,
 Whose sons must bow them at a monarch's motion.
 As if his senseless sceptre were a wand
 Full of the magic of exploded science,—
 Still one great clime, in full and free defiance,
 Yet rears her crest, unconquered and sublime,
 Above the far Atlantic! She has taught
 Her Esau-brethren, that the haughty flag,
 The floating fence of Albion's feebler crag,
 May strike to those, whose red right hands have bought
 Rights cheaply earned with blood. Still, still forever,
 Better, though each man's life-blood were a river,
 That it should flow and overflow, than creep
 Through thousand lazy channels in our veins,
 Dammed, like the dull canal, with locks and chains,
 And moving, as a sick man in his sleep,
 Three paces, and then faltering;—better be
 Where the extinguished Spartans still are free—
 In their proud charnel at Thermopylæ—
 Than stagnate in our marsh,—or o'er the deep
 Fly, and one current to the ocean add—
 One spirit to the souls our fathers had—
 One freeman more, America, to thee !

Glorious eulogy ! Fellow-citizens, shall America
 fail to justify it ? Shall the time ever come, when
 this anniversary shall cease to be a day of jubilee,—
 when the star-spangled banner shall no longer be the
 standard of Liberty ? No !—By the memory of
 Washington ! No !—By the blood of Warren !

And you, brilliant stars!—Michigan! Arkansas! who to-day, for the first time, beam upon us from that sacred banner, may your apparition be auspicious to the country! Long and gloriously may your beautiful orbs revolve in our well-balanced system! May no eccentric influences ever tempt you to shoot madly from your spheres! May the spirits that direct your course be ever wise, faithful and true, and may a kind Providence bless their efforts! Lovely Sisters! New-born Nations! Welcome! Thrice welcome to the Union!

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