ORATION

Delivered on the 4th of July 1812, at the celebration of American Independence in Howard's Park,

By Lieut. Colonel

WILLIAM H. WINDER.

When it is recollected that the task which has now devolved on me, was originally assigned to an orator whose eloquence can adorn the most exalted topicts; that but a few days have been allowed to treat a subject that might fully occupy the protracted efforts of the most vigorous and brilliant imagination; that this fragment of time has been broken by a multitude of pressing avocations, which have perpetually solicited my attention from the subject, it will readily be understood that I meet my situation with the most unaffected consciousness of incompetence to equal the great expectations which this occasion must excite.

The authors of the ceremonies of this day, moved by a pure and holy patriotism, have become the apostles of concord, of conciliation. They have engaged in the noble work of assuaging the exacerbated passions of political parrizans, and under the influence of this spirit have selected me as one of the ministers of their designs. My confidence springs from their choice—my qualifications from the unfeigned sincerity in which I co-operate with their wishes.

It is now thirty six years since the fathers of our nation, stimulated by an attempt to impose upon them the bonds of slavery, declared their country free and independent. Their tyrant wielded the resources of a great and powerful nation, then at peace with the rest of the world; and free to devote its whole power to crush the first efforts of resistance. Our country was then trammelled by the fetters of various governments, all flowing from and dependent upon the will of our oppressor. It presented a thin population scattered over a vast extent of territory—disunited by habits and local circumstances without even a name as a nation—without revenue & destitute of all warlike munitions or organized military force.

It was under these discouraging circumstances that our memorable Declaration of Independence was ushered forth to the world. Difficulties which might have deterred, and dangers which might have appalled the stoutest resolutions, encompassed their way on all sides, but animated by an invigorating zeal for liberty, they boldly resolved to surmount them, to break their chains or perish in the attempt.

A band of heroes, who would have shed new lustre on the brightest days of Roman or Grecian history, gathered round the new raised banners of their country. Under a series of gloomy and disastrous events, they evinced an inflexible fortitude united with the mort active courage. Adversity was made to yield the whole- [illegible] of victory where engrafted upon the very thorns of defeat. Our unjust and infatuated tyrant, who, counting on our imbecility, had despised our manly but just remonstrances, was vanquished—was humbled and compelled in the most solemn manner to acknowledge, as the legitimate assertion our rights, that declaration which, in the insolence of power, had been branded as rebellions. Yes, my fellow citizens, the result of that glorious struggle was, that you have the proud right of celebrating this day as the anniversary of your independence and liberty. But for the magnanimous patriotism of the sages and heroes of the revolution, you might have had to deplore it as the era of hopeless slavery.

Our wrongs first, our dangers afterwards, had supplied the want of a regular and well constituted government—our patriotism and courage, the want of resources. But the struggle over, the danger passed, the frailty of our nature had nearly proved fatal to us. Discontents, jealousies, resentment for the supposed ingratitude of their country had begun to swell the breasts of many of those gallant heroes who had in the field so nobly vindicated the liberties and avenged the wrongs of their country. In an ill-fated moment they seemed ready to surrender the rich prize of their victories into the grasp of their vanquished, exasperated foe, and to tarnish the bright mantle of glory which surrounded them.

At this awful, portentous moment, Washington, transcendant among heroes and patriots, appeared again to save them—at his approach, the genius of discord retired, abashed and confounded; renewed fortitude sustained his war worn companions, and confirmed them in the resolution to sacrifice every comfort, to suffer every distress, to complete the salvation of their country. Their private grievances, their galling discontents, their heart rending anguish from supposed ingratitude, were all sacrificed on the altar of their country.

Can we recollect this magnanimous effort, this glorious surrender of irritated feeling, of exasperated passion—and refuse to banish from our bosoms the intolerant spirit of faction, excited from no personal injuries, springing from no unrequited scenes of danger and suffering; but arising solely from a difference of opinion upon subjects, about which the wisest and best men may and have honestly differed? No, my countrymen, this assemblage, indiscriminately composed of persons of all parties, uniting together to hail the return of this auspicious day, is no slight evidence that the spirit of the fathers of our independence has descended upon us; that we are not altogether unworthy of them.

But this is not the only, perhaps not the greatest instance of magnanimity in the sacrifice of private feeling, of party animosity and rankling passion, to public weal which the short history of our country affords.

The political association which, under the sting of injustice and the pressure of danger, served to unite us together, and conduct us through the revolution, was found insufficient, when those extrinsic causes of union and concert were removed.

The history of mankind furnished no example of a government founded upon the free and deliberate choice of a nation. This glory was preserved for our happy country But when it is recollected how various, how extensive, how complicated this subject was in itself, how interwoven with the motly, heterogeneous, conflicting passions, wants and local diversities of this extended empire—how easy it was for vice and ambition, without danger of detection, to assume the garb of virtue and patriotism, the formation of a government, which might secure the happiness of their country, presented a task, in the accomplishment of which, the most persevering vigor might despair, and the most sagacious intellect have been confounded. The heroes and statesmen of the revolution, supported by some of their younger brethren who had caught the flame of patriotism from them, boldly undertook the arduous labour. All the anticipated difficulties and many not foreseen were successfully encountered, and from the united wisdom of as bright a constellation of statesmen as ever acted together, sprang our present unrivalled form of government. This government was the result, not of the profoundest wisdom only, but of the most disinterested virtue; political animosities, local interests, private grievances, state consequence, favorite systems—in fine, the most powerful and obstinate passions of the human heart, were all surrendered as the price of its purchase.

Departed heroes, witness that your generous example is not lost on us—Genius of America, Spirit of Washington, look down and behold our obedience to thy parting admonitions!

The fruit of this government has been a series of twenty years of unexampled prosperity—the ultimate measures of human happiness wes here filled up—in the condition of humanity, reason has nothing more to hope.

But all sublunary affairs are transitory and we this day stand admonished that we must not allow ourselves to subside into the idle dream of undisturbed enjoyment, or the unwarrantable hope that we are to enjoy happiness without the alotted price of its purchase.

The great rival competitors of Europe for power and dominion, viewed with corroding jealousy and distrust the rising [illegible] and power of our country; a thick and rapid succession of injuries and insults has been heaped upon us; the struggle between them seems to have been which could multiply their wrongs and enormities with most ingenuity—patience, forbearance and remonstrance on our part have been opposed to them as long as a just and proper respect for ourselves would permit: we have at length been roused under our injuries, and, no other hope remaining, have appealed to the God of Battles for redress—*Arise then*, my countrymen, *and with all your strength second the appeal which has been made by the constituted authorities of your government*—What was before a *question* has now become a *law*—let us therefore, by an *united, vigorous effort* prove, that however we may differ on particular questions of policy, we shall ever hold inviolate the obedience which we owe to every legitimate act of our government, and shall always oppose an undivided resistance against every hostile assailant.

Dandled as we have been in the lap of prosperity, and evervated by an indulgence in the gratifications which rapidly increasing wealth and luxury afford; we had, I fear, begun to fall off from the spirit of our revolutionary fathers; our high and keen sense of insult and injury was blunted by the baneful influence of luxurious peace, and our ardent sensibility, our jealous regard of national honor began to fade before the meretricious charms of inglorious ease and tranquility.

A nation to be great, must disregard privation, toil and danger, in comparison with national glory—to be happy, she must prefer safe and honorable peace to restless and warlike ambition; but to secure safe and honorable peace, she must prefer even the horrors of war to unsafe and inglorious peace; shew yourselves ready to act on these maxims, *now and at all times*, and you may soon have and preserve an honorable & lasting peace; your rights, your happiness, your glory, will find a congenial atmosphere, and will flourish with renewed and increasing security and splendour.

Let us cautiously avoid undervaluing the power, resources and character of our adversary: we wage war with a great gallant and powerful nation; the struggle requires that we bring to the contest our united will and power. Let every one devote himself zealously to discharge his duty, and we shall terminate the conflict triumphantly; but if we come to the contest with distressed wills and divided power, we shall certainly prolong and increase its evils, and may even render the issue doubtful. Dissention, discord, tumult and violence, will lead us into the horrors of a civil war, and prepare us an easy victim of foreign conquest or domestic despotism—our excellent government; our prosperity and happiness; that great pillar of our salvation; UNION may be swept away, and the remembrance of it only reserved, to embitter the sorrows of our posterity and aggravate the sigh of despair which will be heaved for the folly and infatuation of their ancestors."

"Your government, the offspring of your own choice, uninfluenced and unawed adopted upon full investigation and mature deliberation, free in its principles, in the distribution of its powers uniting security with energy, and containing within itself a provision for its own amendment, has a just claim to your confidence and your support. Respect for its authority, compliance with its laws, acquiescence in its measure, are duties enjoined by the fundamental maxims of true liberty.

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

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

When retiring from a career of public life, more uniformly great and virtuous than had ever before been exhibited, and seeking the shade of retirement and tranquility, it was thus that Washington addressed his countrymen Let the principles which he inculcated sink deep into your hearts and animate your conduct, so shall he not have lived in vain, and you reap the rich harvest of happiness and freedom which his virtues, aided by the courage and patriotism of your successors, have acquired, and which their generous example makes it your imperious duty, as I am sure it is your settled determination, to transmit unimpaired to your posterity.

NEW YORK, July 6.

LATEST FROM ENGLAND.

Arrived yesterday the ship Manchester, Ogden, from Plymouth, Eng. sailed the 24th May, and brings London papers to the 21st. Provisions in England were scarce and dear. The riots continued in several parts.

The London papers mention that further particulars of the Russian conspiracy had [illegible] French, and that the plan was to seize upon the person of the emperor Alexander, and the Royal Family, and convey them into France

The Prince Regent has issued a proclamation offering a free pardon, and a reward of 1000£ for the discovery of the person or persons who wrote several seditious letters addressed to him and Col. M'Mahon. One of the letters was in these words:—"George Prince of Wales—take care of yourself, for your life is in danger—you shall meet the same fate as Mr. Perceval if Bellingham is hung before this reach you; you blaguard, you shall be shot before three months is closed. If Bellingham is hung you shall be shot as sure as—I remain an enemy to all the d-m-d Royal Family."

The latest intelligence from this continent indicated the immediate commencement of hostilities between the emperors of France and Russia—both of these chieftains were on their way to take command of their respective armies—Intelligence of momentous events may therefore very shortly be expected from the Vistula, on which the great contest will commence.

The Courier of the 20th May, states, that the Moniteur, (French official paper) has published the late English declaration, with copious notes. With respect to the Berlin and Milan decrees, the Moniteur declares, "that those decrees were only revoked with respect to the Americans really and without restrictions, on the 28th April, 1811." The Courier then remarks, that this is "affording another proof, that had we acted upon the belief that they were repealed in November, 1810, we should have been most egregiously duped. But (he asks) are they repealed now? The Moniteur declares to us distinctly that they are not to be revoked till our Orders in Council are rescinded. It is impossible to put any other construction on the concluding sentence of these notes in the Moniteur. "Let England revoke her new legislation of blockade and her Orders in Council, and the Berlin and Milan decrees will be annulled, and all neutrals treated in France as they were previous to the present war."

The United States sloop of war Wasp was at Cowes on the 19th of May.

July 7.

AMERICAN BRAVERY.

On board the schooner Falcon, of Baltimore, George Wilson, master, from Boston for Bardeaux.

May the 1st, at noon, being about 16 miles from the Cordovan Light House, observed three sail in chase of us. At 7 P. M. four sail of men of war and cutter in sight of us, and to windward.—The cutter apparently gaining on us very fast bore away to avoid her, but as the wind died away, it was to little purpose. At half past ten she came up with, and fired into us, which we returned; the action then commenced, and we engaged for two hours and a half, during which time she endeavored to board us three times, but was repulsed and sheered off. We then cleared the decks, and were employed repairing damages, which our rigging had sustained as follows: viz 50 shot through the main sail, from the main reef down; 54 shot in our mainboom; 12 through our fore topsail; 2 through the jib; 2 main shrouds cut away; 2 fore do. do. also, main reef, pendants, jib and luff rope, with a number of shot through our bulwarks.

May 2, at 6 P. M. a cutter to windward coming down on us, but on account of the damages sustained the preceding day, could not make all sail from her; she came up with us, and without hailing gave us a gun, (although our colors were hoisted) which we returned; we then engaged warmly for an hour and a half, when our captain fell with a shot through his back; Mr. M'Derrick mate, received a ball through his left thigh, and Alexander Ross, foremost man, received a shot through his leg. In this situation the privateer boarded us with our colors flying. She proved to be a privateer of 6 guns and 40 men, belonging to Guernsey; she took all our people on board of her except the wounded and myself, leaving me to take care of them; and it is but justice to observe, that the prize master and people of the privateer, treated our wounded with the greatest care and attention.

May 3d, fell in with the aforesaid cutter, and brig Zenobia, of New York (Captain Skiddey) which had been captured the preceding night.

May 10th arrived in Guernsey, in company with the Zenobia and Dart cutter, which captured us. We here learned that the cutter which we engaged first was the Hero, from and belonging to Guernsey; she had four men wounded, and had received considerable damage in her sails and rigging, which obliged her to put into port to refit, after an unsuccessful cruize; she mounted 8 guns and had 50. One of the men died of his wounds and the captain and three others of the crew lay dangerously ill. The Falcon had only 4 guns and sixteen men including officers. Sunday 10, got the wounded on shore; captain Wilson very low, mate and men in good spirits.—Monday 11th, went on shore from the schooner, and was advised by capt. Wilson, to make application to the American Consul. In consequence of his advice I did, but he informed me he could do nothing for me, that the owner of the privateer was the proper person to apply to for boarding until I could get to England

Sunday, May 17th, sailed fr. Guernsey for Plymouth; on the 18th arrived at Plymouth, and made immediate application to Mr. Hawker, American consul, who sent me with five of my ship mates on board a hulk which he has provided, to get provisions till an opportunity presented of sending us home,

Sunday, 22d, the Consul procured me a passage on board the ship Manchester, capt. Ogden, of New York.

Saturday, 23, sailed from Plymouth with 42 passengers on board, the crews of captured American vessels.

JAMES MITCHELL.

July 8.

MOST IMPORTANT.

INTELLIGENCE FROM ENGLAND.

We congratulate the readers of the Mercantile Advertiser and our country that the whole of the British cabinet have given in their resignation. This event, so interesting to the whole civilized world, we have received in a London paper of May 23d, with which we were favoured by capt. Congar of the ship Atlas, arrived last evening in 41 days from Belfast. On the motion in the English House of Commons, which led to its happy consequence, the ministers were in a minority of 4. In our next we shall give their debates on the occasion.

Belfast, May 27.

RESIGNATION OF MINISTERS.

This very important circumstance is announced in two of the London papers of Friday.

SECOND EDITION.

Courier Office, half past six.

We have just learnt that his majesty's ministers have sent in their resignation.

SECOND EDITION OF THE GLOBE.

"Ministers resigned this day.—The whole cabinet is out.—This is certain."

PACKETS BY EXPRESS.

The London Journal of Saturday has arrived by express from Donaghadee, bringing the following additional particulars respecting arrangements, besides other articles of interesting intelligence.

London, Saturday, May 23.

We stated in a second edition last night, that the Prince Regent, in answer to the address of the House of Commons requesting that he would be pleased to form an efficient ministry, stated that he would take the same into serious and immediate consideration.—In the course of the evening Lord Castlereagh communicated to the principal members of opposition, that ministers were all, in fact, out, and they only continued to hold the seals until the formation of a new ministry. His Royal Highness, we understand, last night sent a message to marquis Wellesley, inviting his Lordships attendance at Carlton House this day to consult him upon a new arrangement. *Globe.*

The following list of a new ministry, and of some of the intended arrangements, is handed about in the higher political circles this day. *Globe.*

NEW CABINET.

Lord Holland, First Lord of the Treasury.

Lord Grenville, President of the Council.

Lord Moira, Privy Seal.

Mr. Canning, Home Secretary.

Mr. Ponsonby, War Secretary.

Lord Grey, Foreign Secretary.

Marquis Wellesley, First Lord of the Admiralty.

Mr. Tierney, Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Lord Erskine, Lord Chancellor.

Lord Lauderdale, President of the Board of Control

Duke of Norfolk, Master the Horse.

Marquis of Lansdowne, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

Mr. Homer, Secretary.

Sir A. Pigott, Chancellor of Ireland.

Sir S. Romilly, Attorney General.

Mr. Sergeant Lens, Solicitor General.

Mr Sheridan, Treasurer of the Navy.

Mr. Huskisson and Mr. Sturges Bourne, Joint Paymasters.

Mr. Creevey and Mr. Wrottesley, Joint Secretaries of the Treasury.

Lord Carysfort and Lord St. John, Postmaster Generals, &c. &c.

SECOND EDITION.

Sun Office two o'clock.

We have just heard that the members of the present cabinet have declined taking any part in any new arrangement that may be made. The new cabinet, it is said will consist of the marquis Wellesley, Mr. Canning, the marquis of Lansdowne, Lord Holland, Lord Moira, and Mr. Huskisson.

The marquis of Wellesley to be first lord of the treasury, Mr. Canning lord Holland, and the marquis of Landsdowne the three secretaries of State, Mr. Huskisson, chancellor of Exchequer, & lord Moira, lord lieutenant of Ireland.

The Flemish fishermen report a great battle between the Russians and French, which lasted two days; the place is not stated, nor the result distinctly, but it is said that the French had three particular regiments cut to pieces.

The event of itself not Improbable, though the authority is very doubtful.

Courier.

We stated yesterday, that a formal notification of the repeal of the Berlin and Milan decrees had been made to our government, and we this day lay before our readers the extraordinary document by which the French emperor has thought fit to make his determination public. It is dated on the 28th April, 1811, that is to say, two months after the Americans had enforced their non-intercourse law against us exclusively. Although there is an evident juggle in this affair, we cannot see how the British government can refuse to rescind the orders in council, to which they stand most solemnly pledged. The French will, no doubt, continue to burn, sink, & destroy American vessels, as often as they meet with them, notwithstanding the revocation of the Berlin and Milan decrees; and the Americans must seek redress in the best way they can. *Star.*

FRENCH DECREE.

St. Cloud April 28th.

"Napoleon, emperor of the French, king of Italy, protector of the confederation of the Rhine, mediator of the Swedish confederacy.

"On the report of our minister for foreign affairs.

"Being informed of the law of the 2d of March, 1811, by which the congress of the United States has decreed the exemption of the provisions of the act of non-intercourse, which interdicts the entry into American ports, of the ships and the merchandize of G. B. her colonies & dependencies:

"Considering that the said law is an act of resistance to the arbitrary pretensions advanced by the the British orders in council, and a formal refusal to sanction a system hostile to independence of neutral powers, and of their flags:

"We have decreed and do decree as follows:

"The decrees of Berlin and Milan are definitely (from the first of November last) considered as no longer in force, as far as regards American vessels.—(Signed, &c.)"

TREASON IN THE MIDST OF US.

With feelings which it is impossible to express, we have witnessed the measures now pursuing by a desperate *British faction* in *Boston*, and the language of the federal papers in that place, particularly the Repertory of *Friday last*. They amount to nothing less than OPEN UNQUALIFIED TREASON AND REBELLION! Will our readers believe us, when they are told, that several writers in the public papers have actually recommended to the *people of this State*, to *resist the constituted authorities*, *to refuse a participation in the war to force a trade with England*, *to prevent all privateering*, *arrest every effort made by the national government against the common enemy!* GOD OF OUR FATHERS! Has it come to this? Has *England* then established in the heart of our country a FACTION who *dare* to use such language? Shall this desperate, detestable foreign faction triumph over the Nation, the Government and the Laws? Shall *civil war*, raised by such miscreants, waste our land? Shall we be for ever plunged into the deadly embraces of England? NEVER—NEVER—The friends of their country will spill the last drop of blood before *this* shall take place. RELIGION WILL BE CRUSHED! Let the audacious wretch who shall first raise the arm of resistance, meet the punishment he deserves. Let us prevent *civil war* by *timely action*.

It is earnestly recommended to every friend of his country and government whether or not exempt from military duty, to furnish himself *immediately* with *arms* that he may be prepared at a moment's warning to repel the invading enemy or to crush DOMESTIC TREASON.

Nat. Ægis.