country was at ſtake. The hand of Providence lead him forward, that he might add to his experience and native fortitude. He fought under Braddock; and that ill-fated commander having paid by his death the tribute of his raſhneſs; his army diſpirited by defeat, and flying before an enemy fluſhed with victory; Waſhington in that perilous moment, gathered round him his firſt companions in arms, and reſcued out of the jaws of death the remains of the vanquiſhed battallions. He did more: he ſtood in the front of danger, and every where oppoſing himſelf to the mercileſs ſavages, ready to burſt as a dark cloud, fraught with the thunderbolts of heaven, on a terrified land, he averted the ſtorm, and reſtored to his trembling country the ſerenity of hope, and peace.

The theatre of war was tranſported afterwards to diſtant provinces of America. Then the ſame all-wiſe Providence, which had inured him to danger, prepared him for the toils of government, and the important duty of ſuperintending, in his riper years, the political adminiſtration of a great and widely extended people. His ſervices in the field had won the confidence of his fellow citizens; they committed to his vigilance and integrity their higheſt intereſts in their legiſlative aſſembly. In this ſchool he perfected himſelf in the knowledge of mankind: he obſerved the contentions of parties, the artifices and conflicts of human paſſions: he ſaw the neceſſity of curbing them by ſalutary reſtraints: he ſtudied the complicated ſcience of legiſlation: he learned to venerate the

ſanctity of laws, to eſteem them as the palladium of civil ſociety, and deeply inbibed this maxim, ſo important for the Soldier and the Stateſman, and which he ever after made the rule of his conduct, that the armed defenders of their country would break up the foundations of ſocial order and happineſs, if they availed themſelves of the turbulence of war, to violate the rights of private property, and perſonal liberty.

Thus Waſhington, during the interval of peace, ſtored his mind with the treaſures of political wiſdom. The time was approaching for him to expend thoſe treaſures on his country's welfare.

I need not recapitulate the origin of the diſcontents between G. Britain, and her American dependencies. Suffice it to ſay, that America viewed the claims of the parent country, as incompatible with her freedom and happineſs. The great ſoul of Waſhington revolted at the idea of national degradation; but tempering his ardor with deliberate wiſdom, he aſſociated with other Sages of his country, to meditate on her new and critical ſituation.

Here let us pauſe, fellow citizens, to contemplate this exalted man, revolving in his breaſt the natural and ſocial rights of human kind; comparing theſe with actual and impending grievances, and with the obligations of an allegiance due to a long eſtabliſhed government. Had lawleſs ambition reigned in his breaſt, he would have decided the public voice for immediate hoſtility. But in this point alſo, Providence deſ-

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