ORATION.

FELLOW-CITIZENS :—

The feeling which animates the mass of our people proclaims that this day is consecrated to the celebration of signal events. Forty-seven years since it witnessed the retirement of the British troops from this city—among the last acts which announced that our title had been acknowledged to take rank among the nations of the Earth. A population of less than thirty thousand souls, were spectators of this imposing scene. The smoke which marked the dwellings of our fathers, ascended from a narrow circle of their social homes. Few were the houses dedicated to the service of Heaven. The spot from which I address you, far distant from the scene of city noise and strife, furnished a smiling subject for the skill of the husbandman, and a lonely range for his lowing herds.

We are assembled this day under the broad canopy of Heaven, surrounded on all sides by a vigorous population rising 200,000 souls, devoted to the diffusion of intelligence, and the great principles of rational liberty. The hundred spires which attract our notice, mark the altars sacred to the pure purposes of Religion, and the various forms in which we enjoy the privilege to worship the God of our choice. The dense column of smoke, which hovers around our countless buildings, announces that our people are in the full enjoyment of all the comforts of life—and all the endearing relations of "wife, children, and friends." Happy are we to behold this day. The scenes it presents are not the fictions of fancy. They are the blessings of reality. It is the birth-right of our liberties—it is the unquestioned title to our homes. We have reason to rejoice.

MdHS 1974 [1351-1087]