

THE TRUE REPUBLICAN, OR AMERICAN WHIG.

"THE TRUTH OUR GUIDE—THE PUBLIC GOOD OUR END."

[Vol. I.]

WILMINGTON, (N. C.) TUESDAY, MARCH 21, 1809.

[No. 12.]

WASHINGTON CITY, MARCH 3.

THIS day will form a bright era on the page of history. Never will it be forgotten as long as liberty is dear to man, that it was on this day that THOMAS JEFFERSON retired from the supreme magistracy amidst the blessings and regrets of millions. It ought to be forever remembered that this step was the dictate, not of necessity, but choice, and that it manifests the most illustrious homage which the mind of man can pay to principle. That man must be great whom the spontaneous will of millions calls to the supreme power: but how much greater is he, who, in the midst of active duties crowned with popularity, and with a mind unclouded or weakened, rejecting the eager suffrage that would again clothe him with the highest authority, withdraws to the retirement of private life. How many unruly passions subdued, does such an act evince! And what a damning refutation does it not manifest to the profligate calumnies that traced the actions of his administration to sinister motives!

Had THOMAS JEFFERSON desired to retain power, there was no competitor, he would have been re-elected President by a vast majority. His fabric of authority was neither impaired, or like to be so. He might still have continued to exercise the almost commanding prerogatives of his station, to confer office and dispense power, receiving applause in return. If he had personal favourites, he might have gratified them to the fullest extent of his wishes. But this charge would never have been made, but through the polluted channels of defamation. His favourites have ever been those, whose virtues and talents he called into public service because the good of the nation demanded them. And this last splendid act of his public life proves principle to have been his polar star.

The history of mankind shows that the deadliest foe to liberty has ever been the permanent deposit of power in the hands of an individual, and that it almost invariably terminates in the misery of a nation. Our constitution does not inhibit this investiture but authorizes its continuance, provided the people every four years re-elect the same individual. There are those who think, and we profess ourselves of the number, that a rotation in the office of chief magistrate would have been a safe guard to liberty. The point, however, we admit, is extremely difficult of satisfactory solution. Such is the insatiable thirst of power that the mournful history of almost every nation proves how feeble all constitutions are against the overwhelming torrent of ambition. If constitutions forcibly shut the door upon the retention of the supreme power by an individual of ascendant talent and ambition, it is to be feared that rather than submit, the whole system will be subverted by him. It was, perhaps, because the years of Buonaparte did not allow him to be a Director, that he overturned the Republic, and seized the absolute power.

Be this question, however, decided as it may, while poor human nature retains its wretched alloy, and while the constitution remains unchanged, the truly great and good man will only find, in these circumstances stronger motives for discovering a remedy for the dreadful evil which has befallen other nations, and having found it, will resolutely apply it. This has been done by Washington and Jefferson, and who, after their example will hereafter be bold enough to violate it, except for the most substantial reasons? Proud, indeed, must be the pretensions of him, who shall dare to say, my country has greater need of my services, than it had for those of a Washington or Jefferson.

It is not our purpose—we have neither time nor room—to review the administration of Mr. Jefferson. The tributary affection and unshaken confidence of the

great mass of the people, even under circumstances perilous and unprecedented, are its best defence. Nothing but sterling gold could have come pure out of such a crucible. Who is there, from north to south, from east to west, in the eight million that make up our population, that stands on ground so pre-eminent? Not one, & yet we have many, very many, great & good men. However party spirit, malevolent in some breasts, and highly excited in all, may in the collisions of the day, have detracted from his merits, the time will come, and that shortly too, when every one will allow him to have been a great and good man, and when the name of Jefferson will be universally associated with those of Washington and Franklin.

There is, fellow citizens, something inexpressibly tender and solemn in the political departure from among us of our distinguished friend and benefactor. How much has he contributed to our happiness! How various, complicated, and arduous have been the scenes through which he has passed! Forty years have been almost unceasingly spent in your service! What post of honour has he not filled, what grade of political duty has he not discharged! How many anxious moments has he had for your welfare! How great the debt, how profound the obligation to such a man! But vast as the debt is, let us rejoice that it has been paid!—that we have been and still are grateful for the services we have received. Let us feel a just pride in the reflection that the affection and esteem of an enlightened nation cancel all obligation and that this is bestowed to the full on Thomas Jefferson. Let us too remember that the day has at length arrived, when praise cannot be mistaken for flattery, or be ascribed to impure motives. The leading elements of a nation's happiness are liberty, knowledge and wealth. Possessed of these, it is impossible for any people to be miserable. During Mr. Jefferson's administration all these have been either increased or strengthened. Liberty has submitted to no fetters, the arts and sciences have advanced with unprecedented steps and wealth outrun every calculation. If it be an indisputable axiom, that a tree is known by its fruit, here is a criterion which cannot be mistaken or unfelt. It is this, that on this day lights up the gratitude, awakens the regret, and calls forth the blessings of millions.

[Not Int]

Answer of the President of the United States to Gov. Tyler's letter to him enclosing the Address of the General Assembly of Virginia, also his Answer to the Address.

WASHINGTON, FEB 16, 1809.

SIR—I have duly received your favor of the 11th, covering resolutions of the General Assembly of Virginia on our foreign relations, and an address to myself on my approaching retirement, and I ask leave, thro' the same channel, to return the enclosed answer. Nothing can give me more sincere satisfaction than this kind and honorable testimony from the General Assembly of my native State, a State in which I have drawn my first and shall draw my latest breath, & to which I retire with inexpressible pleasure. I am equally sensible of your goodness in the approving terms in which you have made this communication. The concurrence of a veteran patriot, who from the first dawn of the revolution to this day, has pursued unchangeably the same honest course, cannot but be flattering to his fellow-laborers. I pray you to accept the assurances of my sincere esteem and respect.

TH: JEFFERSON.

His excellency, Gov. Tyler.

To the General Assembly of Virginia.

I receive with peculiar sensibility the affectionate address of the General Assembly of my native State, on my approaching

retirement from the office with which I have been honored by the nation at large. Having been one of those who entered into public life at the commencement of an era the most extraordinary which the history of man has ever yet presented to his contemplation, I claim nothing more, for the part I have acted in it, than a common merit of having, with others, faithfully endeavored to do my duty in the several stations allotted me. In the measures which you are pleased particularly to approve, I have been aided by the wisdom and patriotism of the National Legislature & the talents and virtues of the able coadjutors with whom it has been my happiness to be associated, and to whose valuable and faithful services I with pleasure and gratitude bear witness.

From the moment that, to preserve our rights, a change of government became necessary, no doubt could be entertained that republican form was most consonant with reason, with right, with the freedom of man, and with the character and situation of our fellow citizens. To the sincere spirit of republicanism are naturally associated the love of country, devotion to its liberty, its rights and its honor. Our preference of that form of government has been so far justified by its success and the prosperity with which it has blessed us that no portion of the earth were life, liberty, and property ever so securely held: & it is with infinite satisfaction that, withdrawing from the active scenes of life, I see the sacred deposit of these blessings committed to those who are sensible of their value, and determined to defend them.

It would have been a great consolation to have left the nation under the assurance of a continued peace. Nothing has been spared to effect it; and at no other period of history would such efforts have failed to ensure it. For neither belligerent pretensions to have been injured by us, or can say that we have in any instance departed from the most faithful neutrality, and certainly none will charge us with a want of forbearance.

In the desire of peace, but in full confidence of safety from our unity, our position, and our resources, I shall retire into the bosom of my native State, endeared to me by every tie which can attach the human heart. The assurances of your approbation, and that my conduct has given satisfaction to my fellow citizens generally will be an important ingredient in my future happiness; and that the supreme ruler of the universe may have our country under his special care, will be among the latest of my prayers.

TH: JEFFERSON:

February 16, 1809.

ESSAY.

HELPS OF MEMORY.

AS memory is the Store-house of knowledge, it may be of use to point out a few methods of enlarging it, or accommodating its present size to a more convenient disposal of its contents. Those who labour under any defects in the nature of their faculty, should carefully attend to them and apply suitable remedies.

The state of the memory principally depends on that of the brain; and if the latter be too hot or too cold, the former will suffer loss. A proper mixture of heat and cold, is most favourable to memory. Lord Bacon in some part of his works prescribes particular medicines for restoring it to a just balance, where it is wanting. Our own experience, however, will teach us how to act in many cases. Too much sleep, by stupifying the head, and too little, by inflaming it, are extremes equally pernicious to the attainment of learning. The student must avoid nightly watchings and morning slumbers, as he would intemperance, which is not less fatal to the mind.

Having seen how the brain is disposed by nature, our care must be directed to the

application of it as it respects memory. We should be careful not to commit things to be remembered, until they are well digested, and accurately understood; the views of the mind should be clear and pointed. Every object of thought should be reviewed in succession, and canvassed with a scrupulous exactness. When there is an imperfect comprehension of ideas, the knowledge resulting is unimportant and transitory. There can be no extensive degree of retention, without understanding. The traces which ideas, passing through the brain, leave upon it, are deeper or fainter, in proportion to the vigour of conception. Men who think superficially, are seldom retentive; impressions follow one another sufficiently quick; but like circles in the water, they vanish as soon as they are made. Attention is the source of this imperfection. They are at no pains to examine their ideas, to compare them with each other, and discern their agreement or difference. Hence their ideas are retained for a short time, and the mind is always kept in a state of blank.

Besides a just understanding method, is also necessary. It not only assists us in the act of committing to memory, but will serve to retain or recall ideas which appear to be lost. Every one's experience shews the advantage of method. For example, how easily the scholar gets off any passage from an author who observes a connection of thought; while the same number of lines, composed of independent sentences, cost him infinite labour, and perhaps are at last badly committed. When there is no bond of union amongst our conceptions, but only a random relation to each other, it cannot be expected that the mind should be ready in recollection, or dexterous in passing from one thing to another.

As man is constantly busy in amassing materials of knowledge, he would be embarrassed how to adopt the whole to useful ends, if he had not the art of connecting ideas of the same species or class. When any new idea is acquired, it should be immediately annexed to that bundle of them peculiar to it. Thus knowledge is divided into parts or sections, according to its quality, and upon each addition, the mind takes a general survey of that part of it to which the newly entered idea belongs. Hence arises a double advantage, viz. of imprinting fresh ideas, and recovering the memory of old ones.

Nothing can be more prejudicial to literary acquisitions than that hurry of mind to which some busy spirits are subjected. Coolness and deliberation, on which the formation of true ideas, as well as the retention of them, is dependent, belong to souls inclined to peace and tranquillity. How can memory exercise her powers amidst tumult and distraction? There must be no intellectual commotion while a train of thought is carried on; but the utmost composure should be studied.

Whatever is read or thought, should become the subject of conversation. It is of inconceivable help to memory, by deepening impressions on the mind, and evincing how far our studies have been well digested. Conversation, like a mirror, discovers our imperfections in knowledge, and often removes the flattering opinions which we had formed of our powers.

Writing also has a very impressive tendency. Whoever is at pains to write out any thing in a fair legible hand, will facilitate the business of memory. The act of writing fixing the attention on each letter and word, the mind in recollection, easily recalls them in the order of succession, & joins sentences or paragraphs, according to their relative places. It is Plato, surely, who remarks, that writing is apt to produce carelessness and by releasing memory from the severity of her task, to weaken her capacity. But this objection holds not good in experience. Writing is generally found to strengthen weak memories, and to render strong ones accurate. Care must be taken not to overcharge the memory.