

# Carolina Sentinel.

VOL. IX.

NEWBERN, N. C. SATURDAY, JULY 29, 1826.

NO. 436.

PUBLISHED WEEKLY, BY  
WATSON & MAHEN,  
At \$3 per annum—half payable in advance.

## Funeral Oration, ON THE DEATH OF JOHN ADAMS;

Delivered in Newbern on the 24th July, 1826,  
BY JOHN STANLY, Esq.  
My Respected Fellow-Citizens,

In every age of the world, of which we have record or tradition, it has been deemed just and wise to manifest respect for the memory of those whose lives have been beneficial to their country. To plant the seeds of patriotism and virtue by holding up their bright examples as public benefactors, for the imitation of others. Under governments where the will of one alone stands for law, the duty of passive obedience to his mandate, whether directed to the benefit or the devastation of the world, is generally the sole motive to action: the good or the evil of the design, or the consequences likely to flow from it, enter not into the consideration of the servant;—he looks to a title, a pension or a monument to reward his success.

But under a Republican Government, where no master commands and no slave obeys, the citizen decides for himself—he acts for his country—a volunteer in her sacred cause. If his motive be pure, and his service beneficial, he has a just claim to the rich reward of his country's gratitude:—The reward of honest fame, which shall brighten with years, and be extinguished but with the existence of the nation which gave it birth.—To perform this sacred duty of rendering justice, of commemorating the life, the virtues and the services, and of consecrating the fame of our venerable fellow-citizen, JOHN ADAMS, whom it has pleased the Divine Disposer of events to remove from this world, we have this day assembled.

It was not the lot of him, who addresses you, to have been born a painter or a poet—he will not, therefore, presume, by any aid of the pencil, to bestow the charms of beauty and grace to cover deformity; nor by any stretch of imagination and a name, by ascribing to Mr. ADAMS abilities or virtues he did not possess.—To say of Mr. Adams that he was one of the founders of our Independence—that he was the friend of Washington and the disciple who leaned upon his bosom—that he was the compatriot and associate of Jefferson, and one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, would be to pronounce the highest eulogium which an American can conceive. Yet justice to the task you have imposed on me, requires an examination into his history, a retrospection of the brightest eras of our Country:—it shall be performed at least with fidelity, and under the cheering hope that your recollections of the virtues and services of one of the first patriots, sages, and statesmen, may be revived, that a just feeling of reverence for his memory may be awakened, and a generous ardor, to emulate his virtues, may be enkindled. But with a deep regret that immortality of fame, however merited, is not in the power of man to bestow; the truth, however mortifying, must be admitted by all—that

When fame's loud trumpet has blown its proudest blast,  
Though long the sound the echo sleeps at last;  
And glory, like the Phoenix 'midst her fires,  
Exhales her odours, blazes and expires."

John Adams was a native of Massachusetts, and was born in the year 1735, upon the spot which had been the residence of his ancestors for several generations, and where he died on the late national Jubilee, at the advanced age of ninety-one years. The family of Mr. Adams, though not obscure, was not affluent. Having acquired a liberal education, he adopted the profession of the law, and soon ranked among the most distinguished of the bar. In 1770, he was a member of the Colonial Assembly: in 1774, he was chosen a member of Council; but his principles of liberty rendered him obnoxious to the dislike of the Royal Governor, and procured him the honor of the governor's negative: in 1774, he was also elected to the first Continental Congress, and in 1775, to the second, and in 1776, to the third, and served in them all. In 1776, he was appointed Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. The emoluments of the office of Chief Justice he declined, lest its duties might interfere with that subject which engrossed all the feelings of his heart, and demanded all the energies of his soul—his duties in the Continental Congress.

At the bar Mr. Adams was distinguished for sound learning, honorable practice, and virtuous independence.—A case which displays these qualities, and is connected with the history of the revolution, deserves to be mentioned to you: it is the case of Capt. Preston and his soldiers,

who committed the massacre in Boston in the year 1770.

"In March, of that year, a fray took place between some citizens of Boston, and a party of British soldiers. The Citizens pressed upon, and insulted the soldiers, and pelted them with snow balls covering stones: they dared them to fire: the soldiers at length did fire: three of the inhabitants were killed and five dangerously wounded. The town and country were in great commotion. The killed were buried in one vault, attended by a long procession, including the most respectable inhabitants, and with every circumstance which could inflame the passions already greatly heated. Preston who commanded, and the soldiers who fired, were committed to prison, and charged with murder. Public excitement was at its height and the execution of Preston and his men seemed to be universally demanded. On the trial, the prisoners were defended by JOHN ADAMS and Josiah Quincy—the aggravation given to the soldiers, that they were abused, pelted, and insulted, were proved, and under the circumstances the Jury acquitted Preston and six of his men: two were convicted of manslaughter. The result of the trial, says Dr. Ramsay, (1 Vol. History of the Revolution, 91,) reflected great honor on John Adams and Josiah Quincy, and also on the integrity of the Jury, who ventured to give an upright verdict in defiance of popular opinions." That Mr. Adams should undertake the defence of soldiers, whose presence in his Country he considered an outrage upon her rights; that he should demand justice for those whom he piously hated, in opposition to the rage of his friends whose favor and confidence he had for years sought to obtain, proves a degree of virtuous independence which does indeed reflect the highest honor upon his character.

At the period when the King of England, in his jealousy of the growing strength and resources of these his Colonies and Plantations, conceived the design of putting fetters upon us, and subjecting our estates and persons immediately to his will, by systems of taxation imposed by the British Parliament, where we had neither voice nor vote; the virtuous and consequences of the plan, if carried into effect, would be to rob us of our property and to reduce us to a state of political bondage. Mr. Adams was most prominent among those who early resisted the usurpation. The opposition was founded on Principle—the taxes, though imposed, had not gone into operation—no man had been actually injured by them—their evil design had not been felt. The people were therefore to be convinced of the violation of their rights by the proposed Acts of Parliament, and of the destruction which threatened their liberties: the crisis demanded the utmost exertion of the abilities of the patriots. The attention of the people, and of the Colonial legislatures, were called to the subject by public writings and addresses.—(1 Ram. 112, 113.)—their object was effected in great measure by means of the press. In all these labours no man bore a more distinguished part in favor of his country than John Adams—it is justice to add, that he was aided by nearly every member of the profession who, on every occasion in this country and in England, (particularly at the Revolution of 1689,) where the rights of the people have been invaded or threatened by the crown, have employed their talents and influence to alarm the people and to defend their rights. This is to be expected from a profession, the science of which "distinguishes the criterions of right and wrong, which employs, in its theory, the noblest faculties of the soul, and exerts, in its practice, the cardinal virtues of the heart."

The King and his Parliament were obstinate in insisting on their resolution to impose taxes without granting us representation in Parliament. British troops were brought over and stationed in Boston to overawe the Americans; riots and tumults were the consequence, and while the British were preparing to subjugate us, the Americans prepared to sustain their rights and to defend themselves. A Continental Congress, composed of delegates from each Colony, met at Philadelphia, 5th Sept. 1774. Addresses were made to the people of Great Britain—to the Irish people, and a Petition to the King. The character of this band of patriots permit me to read from history.

"One half of the deputies which formed the Congress of 1774, were lawyers. Gentlemen of that profession had acquired the confidence of the inhabitants, by their exertions in the common cause. The previous measures in their respective provinces had been planned and carried into effect, more by lawyers than by any other order of men. The novelty and importance of this assembly excited universal attention; and their transactions rendered them truly respectable. "Perhaps," says Dr. Ramsay, "there never

was a body of delegates more faithful to the interests of their constituents than the Congress of 1774. The public voice elevated none to a seat in that august assembly, but such as, in addition to considerable abilities, possessed that ascendancy over the minds of their fellow-citizens, which can neither be acquired by birth, nor purchased by wealth."

It was these addresses and petitions of which Lord Chatham spoke, when he said, in the House of Lords, "When your Lordships took at the papers transmitted us from America, when you consider their decency, firmness, and wisdom, you cannot but respect their cause, and wish to make it your own. For myself I must declare an avow, that in all my reading and observation—and it has been my favorite study (I have read Thucydides and have studied and admired the master states of the world) that for solidity of reasoning, force of sagacity, and wisdom of conclusion, under such a complication of difficult circumstances, no nation, or body of men, can stand in preference to the general Congress at Philadelphia." The King and his ministers still persisted; they were deaf to the voice of Justice and humanity—deaf too to the eloquence of Chatham, though of a kind

"To raise a mortal to the skies  
Or call an Angel down."  
So true it is, that God first deranges,  
whom he intends to destroy.

A second Congress met at Phila. 10th May 1775. Of both these illustrious bodies Mr. Adams was a leading member. The army was raised, and on the 15th June, 1775, George Washington was chosen commander-in-chief of the American forces. Mr. Jefferson took his seat in Congress, for the first time, to supply the vacancy occasioned by the death of Peyton Randolph, 21st July, 1775. (1 Journals of Congress, 116.)

On the 7th June, 1776, Richard H. Lee, a delegate from Virginia, moved a Resolution "that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States, and that all political connection between them and Great Britain was, and ought to be, dissolved." This motion was seconded by JOHN ADAMS. The motion was debated for several days, for hitherto nothing had been proposed in Congress but measures for reconciliation and of defence, and some of the delegates doubted the propriety of entire separation from the mother Country. The resolution was referred to a Committee of five, to prepare the declaration. Thomas Jefferson and John Adams, were two of this Committee, and to them the Committee referred the duty of preparing the draft. Mr. Jefferson undertook to draw the declaration, and produced that paper which has immortalized his name, and enrolled the United States of America among the nations of the earth.

I have said the question was debated—such was the attachment to the free institutions of Great Britain, free as compared with the governments then existing, such their feelings towards the English people, their kindred and friends, that neither the people nor their delegates were unanimous for separation. On this point, and of the part Mr. Adams bore, let faithful history speak.

"The motion for declaring the colonies free and independent, was first made in Congress, by Richard Henry Lee of Virginia. He was warranted in making this motion by the particular instructions of his immediate constituents, and also by the general voice of the people of all the states. When the time for taking the subject under consideration arrived, much knowledge, ingenuity and eloquence were displayed on both sides of the question. The debates were continued for some time, and with great animation. In these John Adams and John Dickinson, took leading and opposite parts. The former began one of his speeches, by an invocation of the god of eloquence, to assist him in defending the claims, and in enforcing the duty of his countrymen. He strongly urged the immediate dissolution of all political connexion of the colonies with Great Britain, from the voice of the people, from the necessity of the measure in order to obtain foreign assistance, from a regard to consistency, and from the prospects of glory and happiness which opened beyond the war, to a free and independent people. Mr. Dickinson replied to this speech: he began by observing that the member from Massachusetts (Mr. Adams) had introduced his defence of the declaration of independence by invoking a heathen god, but that he should begin his objections to it, by solemnly invoking the Governor of the Universe, so to influence the minds of the members of Congress, that if the proposed measure was for the benefit of America, nothing which he should say against it, might make the least impression. He then urged that the present time was improper for the declaration of independence, that

the war might be conducted with equal vigour without it, that it would divide the Americans, and unite the people of Great Britain against them. He then proposed that some assurance should be obtained of assistance from a foreign power, before they renounced their connection with Great Britain, and that the declaration of independence should be the condition to be offered for this assistance. He likewise stated the disputes that existed between several of the colonies, and proposed that some measures for the settlement of them should be determined upon, before they lost sight of that tribunal, which had hitherto been the umpire of all their differences.

"After a full discussion, the measure of declaring the colonies free and independent was approved, by nearly an unanimous vote. The anniversary of the day on which this great event took place, has ever since been consecrated by the Americans to religious gratitude and social pleasures. It is considered by them as the birth day of their freedom." The declaration was resolved on and passed.

And thus my fellow-citizens was your Independence secured, since for a nation to be free it is only necessary that it wills it.

The enthusiastic feelings of John Adams are recorded in a letter written the day after the declaration, to a friend, which has been some years before the public. It is as follows:

"To raise a mortal to the skies  
Or call an Angel down."  
So true it is, that God first deranges,  
whom he intends to destroy.

"Yesterday the greatest question was decided which was ever decided among men. A resolution was passed unanimously, "That these United States are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States."

The day is passed—The 4th of July 1776, will be a memorable epoch in the history of America. I am apt to believe it will be celebrated by succeeding generations, as the GREAT ANNIVERSARY FESTIVAL! It ought to be commemorated as the day of deliverance, by solemn acts of devotion to the Almighty God. It ought to be solemnized with pomp, shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires and illuminations—from one end of the continent to the other, from this ported with enthusiasm; but I am not. I am well aware of the toil, and blood, and treasure, it will cost to maintain this declaration, and support and defend these States; yet through all the gloom, I can see a ray of light and glory. I can see that the end is worth more than all the means; and that posterity will triumph, although you and I may rue—which I hope we shall not. Yours, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.  
Never was there an occasion on which a people might more ardently rejoice. They had not indeed made just sacrifice of the life of a tyrant;—they had done more; they had sacrificed all temporizing policy; they had cast off the yoke of dependence—they had banished from their counsels forever that fear which betrays like Treason.—History does not record an event, the relation of which so thrills in every vein, since the hour, in which

"Brutus rose,  
Refulgent from the stroke of Cæsars fate,  
And bad the crowd of Patriots, and his arm  
Aloft extended, like eternal day  
When guilt brings down the thunder, called  
aloud

On Tully's name, and shook the crimson steel,  
And bad the father of his Country hail,  
For lo! the tyrant prostrate in the dust  
And Rome again is free."

The Declaration of Independence must forever rank among the first productions of the spirit and of the mind of man. It states, in substance, and with brevity, the wrongs which Great Britain had done us, and our fruitless supplications for redress.—It is a composition of

Thoughts that breathe and words that burn. What bosom does not beat in its country's cause at its perusal!—The drawer of the declaration could not have appealed to higher authority for facts than to the addresses of Congress already mentioned; nor need he have sought at any parer spring for eloquent and glowing language. It is not, therefore, matter of surprise, that the declaration adheres to the charges of these addresses, and frequently uses the language of the Complaint. The Jewel was precious and worthy of the splendid setting Mr. Jefferson gave it. But the drawing the declaration was a small and subordinate part of the business: it was to be supported in Congress; opposition was to be silenced, its friends confirmed and animated in its support. In this part of the business, Mr. Jefferson was not the most prominent. Nature seldom bestows on one individual the capacity to excel in several sciences. To Mr. Jefferson she had given, with prodigal profuseness, the first faculties of the

"Ramsay's History of the Revolution, Vol. 1, pp. 340, 341.

mind, the power to grasp intuitively the most profound subjects of science; the talent to demonstrate, convince, and persuade, and a heart firm in the support of virtue and honor. But, nature denied him the talent of Oratory.—Mr. Jefferson never spoke in Congress. And therefore, as the historian informs us, in the extract already read to you, John Adams took the leading part in support of the declaration. Mr. Jefferson furnished the rich and splendid drapery—the words of the declaration; but Adams procured its adoption, Adams gave it life, and Adams bore it aloft and buffeted the bills of opposition.—It was "the voice of Jacob, but the hand of Esau." Justice awards that they divide the honor.

It will not be taken amiss, though not strictly within our present object, if I recal to your recollection a fact, connected with our Independence, and which is but little known among us at the present day—I mean the declaration of Independence made by the citizens of Mecklenburg County, in this State, in the year 1775.

On the 20th May 1775, the men of Mecklenburg County in this State, which then included the present county of Cabarrus, convened on a call from the Colonel of the County, and agreeing in sentiment "that the cause of Boston was the cause of all; that their destinies were indissolubly connected with those of their Eastern fellow-citizens—and that they must either submit to all the impositions which an unprincipled, and to them an unrepresented, Parliament might impose, or support their brethren who were doomed to sustain the first shock of that power, which, if successful there, would ultimately overwhelm all in the common calamity." The following resolutions were then unanimously adopted:

"Resolved, That whosoever directly or indirectly abetted, or in any way, form, or manner, countenanced the unchartered and dangerous invasion of our rights, as claimed by Great Britain, is an enemy to this Country—to America—and to inherent and inalienable rights of man.

"Resolved, That we the citizens of Mecklenburg County, do hereby dissolve the political bands which have connected us to the British Crown, and abjure all political connection, contract, or association, with that Nation, who have wantonly trampled on our rights and liberties—and inhumanly shed the innocent blood of American patriots at Lexington.

"Resolved, That we do hereby declare ourselves a free and independent people, are, and of right ought to be, a sovereign and self-governing Association, under the control of no power other than that of our God and the General Government of the Congress; to the maintenance of which independence, we solemnly pledge to each other, our mutual co-operation, our lives, our fortunes, and our most sacred honor."

Other resolutions and bye-laws were also adopted.—"After sitting in the Court-house all night, neither sleepy, hungry, nor fatigued, and after discussing every paragraph, they were all passed, sanctioned, and decreed unanimously, about 2 o'clock, A. M. May 20. In a few days, a deputation of said delegation convened, when Capt. James Jack, of Charlotte, was deputed as express to the Congress at Philadelphia, with a copy of said Resolves and Proceedings, together with a letter addressed to our three representatives there, viz. Richard Caswell, William Hooper, and Joseph Hughes—under express injunction, personally, and through the state representation, to use all possible means to have said proceedings sanctioned and approved by the General Congress. On the return of Capt. Jack, the delegation learned that their proceedings were individually approved by the Members of Congress, but that it was deemed premature to lay them before the House."

It is due to the memories of the patriots of Mecklenburg County, to add, that they faithfully maintained the pledge here given; they were always forward to support the principles they had adopted, and no blood flowed more freely in the cause than that of the citizens of Mecklenburg and Cabarrus Counties.

The occurrence in this declaration of 4th July '76 of the very expressions used in the Mecklenburg declaration more than one year before, is very striking;—it had become the common language of the Country.

Mr. Adams continued in Congress, devoted to the cause upon which he had staked his "life, his fortune, and his sacred honor," and serving upon most of the important Committees until December 1778 when he was elected a Commissioner with Dr. Franklin and Arthur Lee to negotiate with France.

In the summer 1779, the object of this

12 words, 310.