

Carolina Sentinel

VOL. IX.

NEWBERN, N. C. SATURDAY, AUGUST 5, 1826.

NO. 427.

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

ORATION.

The following impressive and eloquent Address, on the death of the late illustrious **THOMAS JEFFERSON**, was delivered by Governor Tyler, of Virginia, on the 25th ult.:

"Why this numerous assemblage—this solemn and melancholy procession, these habiliments of woe? Do they betoken the fall of some mighty autocrat, of some Imperial Master, who hath bestrid the earth like a Colossus, and whose remains are followed to the grave by the tools and minions of his power? Are they the tokens of a ceremonious woe—a mere mockery of feeling? Or are they the spontaneous offerings of gratitude and love? What mighty man has fallen in Israel, and why has Virginia clothed herself in mourning? The tolling of yon dismal Bell—and the loud but solemn discharge of Artillery, hath announced to the nation the melancholy tidings—Thomas Jefferson no longer lives. That glorious orb which has for so many years given light to our footsteps, hath set in death. The Patriot, the Statesman, the philosopher, the Philanthropist, has sunk into the grave. Virginia mourns over his remains, and her harp is hung upon the willows.

Why need I say more? There is a language in this spectacle which speaks more eloquently than tongue can utter. This is the testimony of a well spent life—the tribute of a nation's gratitude. Look on this sight, ye rulers of the earth, and learn from it the lessons of wisdom. Ye ambitious and untamed spirits, who seek the attainment of glory by a scaffolding formed of human suffering, behold a people in tears over the funeral bier of their benefactor, and if true glory be your object, be guided by the light of this example. In pronouncing the eulogy of my countrymen, I have no blood-stained banner to present—no battles to recount—no sword or helmet to deposit on his bier. I have to entwine a civic wreath which philosophy has woven, and patriotism has hallowed. The achievements of the warrior in the field, attract the attention of mankind, and fasten on the memory; while the labours of the civilian too often pass unnoted and unknown. But not so with that man whose death we this day mourn. The results of his policy are exhibited in all around. Although his sun has sunk below the horizon of this world, yet hath it left a train of light, which shall never be extinguished.

At the commencement of his successful career, he manifested the same devotion to the Rights of Man, which he evinced in all his after life. At an early day he so distinguished himself as the firm and fearless asserter of the rights of Colonial America, as to draw upon him the frown of the Royal Governor—and had already anticipated the occurrence of the period, when the colonies should be elevated to the condition of free, sovereign and independent States. Having drawn his principles from the fountains of a pure philosophy, he was prepared to assail the slavish doctrine that man was incapable of self government, and to aid in building upon its overthrow, that happy system under which it is our destiny to live. On the coming of that tremendous storm, which for eight years desolated our country, Mr. Jefferson hesitated not—halted not. Born to a rich inheritance, destined to the attainment of high distinction under the regal government, courted by the aristocracy of the land, he adventured, with the single motive of advancing the cause of his country and of human freedom, into that perilous contest, throwing into the scale his life and fortune as of no value. The devoted friend of man, he had studied his rights in the great volume of nature, and saw with rapture the era near at hand, when those rights should be proclaimed and the world aroused from the slumber of centuries. The season was approaching for the extension of the empire of reason and philosophy, and the disciples of Locke and of Sidney rejoiced at its approach. Among his fellow laborers, those devoted champions of liberty, those brilliant lights which shall forever burn, he stood conspicuous. But how transcendently bright was that halo of glory by which he was surrounded on the 4th of July 1776. Oh! how precious in the recollection of freemen! now rendered doubly so by the recollection that it was the birth-day of a nation, and the last of him who had conferred on it its immortality.—Yes, illustrious man—it was given thee to live until the advent of a Nation's Jubilee. Thy disembodied spirit was then upborne by the blessings of ten millions of freemen, and

the day and hour of thy renown, was the day and hour of thy dissolution. How inseparable is now the connection between that glorious epoch and this distinguished citizen! Does there not seem to have been an especial Providence in his death?—The sun of that day rose upon him, and the roar of artillery and the hosannas which sounded in his ears, the assurances of his immortality; so precious a life required a death so glorious.—Who now shall set limits to his fame? On the annual recurrence of that glorious day, when with pious ardour, millions yet unborn shall breathe the sentiments contained in the celebrated Declaration of Independence; when the fires of liberty shall be kindled on every hill and shall blaze in every vale, shall not the name of Jefferson be pronounced by every lip, and written on every heart? Shall not the rejoicings of that day and the recollection of his death, cause the smile to chase away the tear, and the tear to becloud the smile? But not to the future millions of these happy states shall his fame be confined; that celebrated state paper will be found wherever it is to be found the abode of civilized man.—Sounded in the ears of tyrants, they shall tremble on their thrones; while man so long the victim of oppression, awakes from the sleep of ages and bursts his chains.—The day is rapidly approaching, a prophetic tongue has announced it, to some nations sooner, to others later, but finally to all, when it will be made manifest "that the mass of mankind have not been born with saddles on their backs; nor a favored few booted and spurred, ready to ride them legitimately, by the grace of God." Already has this great truth aroused the one half of this continent from the lethargy in which it has so long reposed. Already are the poems of liberty chanted from the Gulf of Mexico to the Rio de La Plata, and its altars are erecting on the ruins of a superstitious idolatry. A mighty spirit walks abroad upon the earth, which shall in its onward march overturn principalities and powers, and trample thrones and scepters in the dust. A sublime notion of nations, hastened on as it will be by the example of America, shall they not resort to the Declaration of our Independence as the charter of their rights, and will not its author be hailed as the benefactor of the redeemed?

But, my countrymen, this state paper is not the only lasting testimonial which he has left of his devotion to the rights of man.—Where should I stop, were I to recount the multiplied and various acts of his life, all directed to the security of those rights? The Statute Book of this State, almost all that is wise in policy, or sanctified by justice, bears the impress of his genius, and furnishes evidence of that devotion.—I choose to present him to you in the light of a Mighty Reformer. He was born to overturn systems, and to pull down establishments. He had a more difficult task to accomplish than the warrior in the embattled field. He had to conquer man and bring him to a true knowledge of his own dignity. He had to encounter prejudices become venerable by age—to assail error in its strong places, and to expel it even from its fastnesses. He advanced to the charge with a bold and reckless intrepidity, but with a calculating coolness.—The Declaration of which I have just spoken, had announced the great truth, that man was capable of self-government; but it still remained for him to achieve a conquest over an error which was sanctified by age and fortified by the prejudices of mankind. He dared to proclaim the important truths—That "Almighty God hath created the mind free; that all attempts to influence it by temporal punishments, or burthens, or by civil incapacitations tend only to beget hypocrisy and meanness, and are a departure from the plan of the holy author of our religion, who being Lord both of body and of mind, yet chose not to propagate it by coercions on either, as was in his Almighty power to do—that the impious presumption of legislators and rulers, civil as well as ecclesiastical, who being themselves but fallible and uninspired men, have assumed dominion over the faith of others, setting up their own opinions and modes of thinking as the only true and infallible, and as such endeavoring to impose them on others, hath established and maintained false religions over the greatest part of the world and through all time." That truth is great and will prevail, if left to herself; that she is the proper and sufficient antagonist to error, and has nothing to fear from the conflict, unless, by human interposition, disarmed of her natural weapons, free argument and debate, errors ceasing to be dangerous when it is permitted freely to contradict them.—This is the language of the Bill establishing Religious Freedom, and is to be found on our Statute Book. How solemn and sublime, and

how transcendently important to the truths which it announces to the world. What, but his great and powerful genius, could have contemplated the breaking asunder those bonds in which the conscience had been bound for centuries? Who, but the ardent and devoted friend of man, would have exposed himself to the thunders and denunciations of the church throughout all Christendom, by breaking into its very sanctuary and dissolving its connection with government? If he consulted the page of history, he found that the Church establishment, exercising unlimited control over the conscience, and unlocking, at its pleasure, the very gates of Heaven to the faithful devotee, had in all ages governed the world. That Kings had been made by its thunders to tremble on their thrones, and that thrones had been shivered by the lightnings of its wrath.—In casting his eyes over the face of the Globe, he beheld, it is true, the mighty spirit of Protestantism walking on the waters, but confined and limited in its empire, and even its garments dyed in the blood of the martyr. Over the rest of the world he beheld the religion of the meek and blessed Redeemer, converted into a superstitious rite and locked up in a gloomy and ferocious mystery. The sentence of the terrible inquisitor sounded in his ears, followed by the chains and the groans of the victim. If he looked in the direction from whence the sound proceeded, he saw the fires of the auto-de-fe consuming the agonized body of the offender and thus finishing the last of this terrible tragedy.—He felt the full force of this picture, and regardless of all personal danger set about the accomplishment of the noble purpose of setting free the mind. He who had so much contributed to the unbinding of the hands of his countrymen, would have left his work unfinished if he had not also unfettered their consciences. True, he had in all this great work able coadjutors who, like himself had adventured all for their country, but he was the great Captain who arrayed the forces and directed the operations. The world that man's conscience was created free—that he is no longer accountable to his fellow man for his religious opinions, being responsible therefor only to his God—that it is impious in mortal man whether clothed in purple or in lawn, to assume the judgment seat; that the connection between Church and State is an unholy alliance and the fruitful source of slavery and oppression; and let it be dissolved. What an imperishable monument has Mr. Jefferson thus reared to his memory, and how strong are his claims to our gratitude. When from every part of this extended republic, the prayers and thanksgiving of countless thousands shall ascend to the Throne of Grace, each bending at his own altar, and worshipping his Creator after his own way, shall not every lip breathe a blessing on his name, and every tongue speak forth his praise? Yes, he was born a blessing to his country, and in the fullness of time shall become a blessing to mankind. He was, indeed, a precious gift, a most beloved reformer. Shall we not then, while weeping over his loss, offer thanks to the giver of every perfect gift for having permitted him to live?

But, my countrymen, we have still further reason for the deepest gratitude. He had not yet finished his memorable efforts in the cause of human liberty. The temple had been reared, but it was yet exposed to violent assaults from without.—Those principles which in former ages had defeated the hopes of man, and had overthrown republics, remained to be hunted out, exposed and guarded against. The most powerful of these was the concentration and perpetuation of wealth in the hands of particular families, and the creation thereby of an overbearing aristocracy.—The fatal influence of this principle had been felt in all ages and in all countries. The feeling of pride and haughtiness which wealth is so well calculated to engender, and the homage which mankind are unhappily so much dishonored as to render it, causes the perpetuation of larger fortunes in the hands of families, the most fearful antagonist to human liberty. Marcus Crassus had said that the man who aspired to rule a republic, should not be content until he had mastered wealth sufficient to maintain an army, and Julius Cæsar paved the way to the overthrow of Roman liberty by the unsparring distribution, from his inexhaustible stores of largesses to the people. Mr. Jefferson saw, therefore, the great necessity for reformation in our municipal code, and the act abolishing entails and that regulating descents are in all their essential features, the offspring of his well constituted intellect. He has acted throughout on the great principle of the equality of mankind; and his very effort has been directed to the preservation of that equality among his countrymen. How powerful in its operation is

our descent law in producing this effect! Founded on the everlasting principles of justice, it distributes among all the children the fruits of the Parent's labour. The first born is no longer considered the chosen of the Lord, but nature asserts her rights and raises the last to equality with the first. Thus it is that the spirit of a proud independence, so precious to the durability of our institutions, is engendered in the bosoms of our citizens. Thus it is that we are under the influence of an Agrarian law in effect; while nature, instead of being violated is protected, and industry instead of being suppressed, is excited by new stimuli. The great lawgiver of Sparta in vain sought to perpetuate the principle of equality amongst the citizens of that renowned republic, by various measures, all of which ultimately failed—but here is a measure which cannot fail—a measure which depends not upon veneration for the character of any one man, but lays hold of the affections, and records its own perpetuity in the great volume of nature—a measure which will every day more conspicuously develop its beauties. One, without which the blood shed in the revolution would have been shed in vain—without which the glories of that struggle would fade away, or exist but as another proof of man's incapacity for self government. What more shall I say of it? May I not call it that great measure, which to our political, like the sun to our planetary system, imparts light and heat, unveils all its beauties and manifests its strength? Tell me then, ye destinies that control the future, say is not this man's name inscribed in adamant! Say, men of the present age, yet lovers of liberty, yet shining lights from amid the gloom of the world, say, does Virginia claim too much when she pronounces her Jefferson wiser than the lawgivers of antiquity?—Tell me then, men of America, have you not lost your father, your benefactor, your best friend? And you, the men of other countries, where the light of his example is now

lamps in the mighty blaze of his fame and distribute the blessings of his existence around you?

Here then I might stop. The cause of this mournful procession is explained—the picture might be considered as perfect.—His claim to the gratitude of mankind is made manifest, and his title to immortality is established. But his labours did not here cease. I have still to exhibit him to you in other lights than those in which we have regarded him—to present other claims to your veneration and gratitude. Passing over those incidents which his history has already recorded, let us regard him while in that station, which I now fill, more by the kindness of the public, than from any merit of my own. We here recognise in him the able vindicator of insulted America, against the sarcasms of European philosophy. Indulging in the visions of a fallacious theory, it was attempted to be proved that the flush which nature assumed on the other side of the Atlantic, was converted on this continent into the cadaverous aspect of disease and degeneracy. That, while she walked abroad over the face of Europe, in all her beautiful proportion, here she hobbled on crutches and degenerated into a dwarf. How successfully he threw back this slander upon our calumniators, let the world decide. His Notes on Virginia, will ever bear him faithful witness. Slanders upon nations make the deepest and most lasting impression. They fall not on one man, but on a whole people, and if not refuted, tend to sink them in the scale of existence. If under any circumstances they are to be deprecated, how much more are they to be so, when published against a nation not even in the gristle of manhood, unknown to the mass of mankind, and struggling to be free. Such was the condition of America at that day. Shut out from free intercourse with Europe, by the monopolizing spirit of the parent state, she had remained unknown to the world, and was regarded as an extensive wild, within whose bosom the fires of genius and of intellect had not as yet been kindled.—Mr. Jefferson saw then the injury which she would sustain if these slanders remained unrefuted. Vigilant at his post, and guardful of the interest of the states, he encountered the most distinguished of the philosophers of Europe, and his victory was complete. It was answer enough for him to have said, what in substance he did say, that in war we had produced a Washington, in physics a Franklin, and in astronomy a Rittenhouse—and if his triumph had not then been esteemed complete, might we not add with a certainty of success, that in philosophy and politics America had produced a Jefferson.

In all the various stations which he afterwards filled we find him laboring un-

ceasingly for the good of his Country. Having won by his virtues and talents the confidence of Washington, he was called to preside over the Department of State. In this station he vindicated the rights of America against the sophistry of the European Cabinets, and gave proof of that sum in diplomacy by which he will be distinguished through all coming ages. When the future statesman shall look for a model from which to form his style of diplomatic writing, will he not cease his search, and seize with avidity on that offspring of the Secretary's pen, in his correspondence with Hammond and Genet? Called at length, by the voice of the people, to the Presidency of these United States, he furnished the model of an administration conducted on the purest principles of republicanism. He sought not to enlarge his powers by construction, but, referring every thing to his conscience, made that the standard of the constitutional interpretation. Regarding the government in its true and beautiful light of a confederation of states, he could not be drawn from his course by any of those splendid conceptions which shine but to mislead. He extinguished \$83,000,000 of the national debt—enlarged the boundaries of our territorial jurisdiction, by the addition of regions more extensive than our original possessions—overawed the Barbary Powers, and preserved the peace of the nation amidst the tremendous convulsions which then agitated the world. I will dwell no longer on this fruitful topic, nor indulge my feelings. Party spirit is buried in his grave and I will not disinter it. The American people will as one man look with admiration on his character, and dwell with affectionate delight over those bright incidents in his life to which I have already alluded.

Thus, then, my countrymen, in the 69th year of his age, he terminated his political career and went into the shades of retirement at Monticello. But unlike the politicians of other days, who had fled from the view of their country and the world. Let that beautiful building, devoted to the sciences, the last of his labours, reared under his auspices, and cherished by his care, testify to this. How choice and how delightful this the last fruit of his bearing! How lasting a monument will it be to his memory! It will be, we may fondly hope, the perpetual nursery of those great principles which it was the business of his life to inculcate. The Youth of Virginia and the Youth of our Sister States, to use his own beautiful language, "will bring hither their genius to be kindled at our fire." "The good Old Dominion, the blessed Mother of us all, will then raise her head with pride among the nation."

When History shall, at some future day, come to draw his character, to what department shall she assign him? Shall she encircle his brow with the wreath of civic worth? Or shall Philosophy weave a garland of her own? He is equally dear to all the sciences. In mournful procession they have repaired to the Tomb where his mortal remains are interred and hallowed the spot—Yes, hallowed be the spot where he rests from his labors—wave after wave may roll by, sweeping in its resistless course countless generations from the face of the earth, yet shall the resting place of Jefferson be hallowed—like Mount Vernon, Monticello shall catch the eye of the way farer and arrest his course. There shall he draw the inspirations of liberty, and learn those great truths which nature destined him to know.

Is not then this man's life most beautifully consistent? Trace him from the period of his earliest manhood, to the hour of his final dissolution, and does not his ardour in the prosecution of the great cause of human rights, excite your admiration and enlist your gratitude? May it not be said that he has lived only for the good of others? Look upon him in the last stage of his existence. But a few days before his death he exults in the happiness of his country and the full confirmation of his labours. With the prospect of death before him, suffering under a cruel disease, he offers up an impressive prayer for the good of mankind—when speaking of the then approaching jubilee, in writing to the Mayor of Washington, he says—"may it be to the world what I believe it will be, the signal of arousing men to burst the chains under which monkish ignorance and superstition had persuaded them to bind themselves, and to assume the blessings of free government?"—and it shall be that signal; a flood of light has burst upon the world, and the Juggernauts of superstition, and the gloom of ignorance, shall melt in its brightness.—Will you look upon him, my countrymen, in the last moments of his existence? Shall I make known to you his fond concerns for you