



These are the plants of fair delightful peace, Unwarped by party rage, so free like Brothers.

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ORATION

DELIVERED ON THE 4th OF JULY, 1808, AT CHARLOTTE, N. C. BY THE REV. J. WALLIS.

Fellow Citizens,

REVOLVING time has bro't found another Anniversary of American Independence. Two and thirty years have this day finished their course...

The annual celebration of American Independence we deem a laudable practice: political commemorations of this kind, when conducted with propriety and good order, are calculated to answer important and useful purposes.

By looking back on this occasion to this Revolution, and the causes that led to it; by considering the magnitude of the object for which the American Colonies engaged in a dangerous and bloody war...

To trace minutely on this occasion all these particulars, would be a task at once too great for the patience of this audience, and for the abilities of the speaker.

Suffer us then to observe, that the war that led to this Revolution, was on the part of G. B. a war of oppression and covetousness; many arbitrary measures were adopted, calculated to crush in embryo the liberties of the infant colonies...

The Ministry and government of the same King of Great-Britain who formerly attempted, without our consent, to lay duties and collect revenue upon teas, and other articles imported into this country, have been recently attempting to lay a much heavier duty upon articles of our own product and exportation.

Powerful indeed, and determined was the attack on the part of G. Britain: but the courage and resolution with which the colonies met the shock is without a parallel in the annals of nations.

More than thirty years have now elapsed since the declaration of Independence. This event has immortalised the name of Americans, and elevated them high among the nations of the earth.

has been established throughout the United States. In the American soil the fair tree of Liberty has been planted and nourished, and its fruit is the happiness of millions.

In France a false species of liberty and republicanism sprung up and flourished for a season; but ambitious power has now completely blasted the prospect, and overturned the foundation.

Under the fostering care of a free and happy government, improvement in every branch of industry and mechanism has become as extensive as the bounds of our empire.

Our commerce was spreading her sails to the breezes of every climate, and waiting our vessels into every harbour, when the late arbitrary and tyrannical decrees of Britain and France arrested their progress...

Ever since the peace of 1783, the conduct of G. Britain towards this country has at all times furnished just cause of complaint. Her various and contradictory orders of council, violating the laws of nations and the rights of neutrals...

To these injuries and insults we must in justice to our subject, add another, which, though of a different character, is not less offensive and intolerable, viz. the attack on the national frigate Chesapeake.

Surely every candid and impartial man who has any correct information on the subject; every person who has read with attention the communications so lately submitted to the inspection of the American people...

Had the embargo been properly regarded and enforced by our own citizens, there can be no doubt but it would before now have pressed heavily upon both of these belligerent nations and their West-India colonies.

foreign powers, there are to be found many American citizens who prefer their private interests to the interest and honor of the nation; who appear to be governed by principles of avarice and servility, rather than by those of patriotism and a regard for the public good.

At this threatening and eventful period, let it be deeply impressed upon the minds of American citizens, that in order to preserve the great blessing of national independence and liberty, sacred and important duties are imposed on them.

On the other hand, there is no quarter from which we have so much to fear, as from party spirit and disunion among ourselves.

Let us also remember that knowledge and religion are intimately connected with political prosperity. How important then that these should be encouraged and protected; they are indeed the grand columns which support the fair fabric of our independence and national happiness.

Under these views of our circumstances and the dangers which threaten us, let us be united in our councils, and firm in the execution of the measures adopted by government in order to enforce respect to our neutrality.

On this occasion, then, let us look back with pleasure on the past, and anticipate the future happiness of our country; and under the reception of so many national blessings as have been, and still are our lot, let us not forget the great source from whence they flow.

Relying then upon the protection of this Almighty Being who superintends the affairs of nations, and maintaining those virtues which he has inseparably connected with the existence of national and individual happiness, we may yet indulge the pleasing hope, that the liberty and happiness of our country will remain; that the American Empire will be established, and that among the nations of the earth, until the end of time, our country will be as prominent, honored and respected.

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