

LANCASTRIAN INSTITUTION.

The foundation stone of a Lancasterian School-House was laid in the city of Richmond on the 27th ult. with all the formality usual on such occasions.

Fellow-Citizens.—While I am deeply sensible of the honor conferred upon me, by my associates of the Lancasterian Institution, in selecting me as their Orator, I must be permitted to express regret, that some Gentleman of superior abilities to mine, was not requested to undertake the task of doing justice to your feelings and expectations, on this interesting occasion.

We are now assembled, for the purpose of proceeding, with becoming solemnity and ceremonies, to lay the Corner Stone of a building, the first of its kind that has ever been erected in our City, but second, in importance, to none but the sacred Edifices dedicated to the worship of the Creator of heaven and earth—a building to be devoted to the elementary instruction of poor and destitute children gratis, and of all others on such terms as are calculated to encourage their approach to the fountain head of science.

For the happy occasion, which has called us together, we are indebted, Fellow-Citizens, to the liberal donations of many private persons, as well as to the munificence of the Common

Council of this City. To them, the thanks of their countrymen should be paid; and our acknowledgements are also due to the highly respectable Society of Free and Accepted Masons, who have thought proper to favor us with their company and co-operation in the good work about to be commenced.

Such were the sentiments of the upright Lancaster; and the blessing of his God was upon him, for a discovery so excellent, an improvement so essential, in the most difficult of all arts, Education, could not have been accomplished without the inspiration of that being "from whom cometh every good and perfect gift."

The mode of tuition in a Lancasterian School, is such as to make it attractive to the youthful mind, by the judicious measures adopted, to stimulate emulation, without resorting to base and servile punishments; by the clearly intelligible, and, therefore, easy methods of communicating information; and by the systematic forms of conducting the business of the day, which are so contrived as to have a playful and amusing effect.

From the happy combination of all these causes, results the truly extraordinary features of the Lancasterian system; the celebrity with which the scholars are advanced in learning, and the facility of teaching a much greater number, by the same preceptor, than in any other way.

patriotic and enlightened Legislators of Virginia, have lately increased their Literary Fund, and will, probably, in a short time, establish public schools, for the Education of the children of the poor, throughout the Commonwealth.

It seems, then, providentially intended, that this recent invention should be auxiliary to the designs of the Legislature, as well as to the zealous endeavors of Bible Societies, to disseminate the word of life among the poor in our land.

But the most important trait in the Lancasterian scheme has not yet been mentioned: the moral and religious ideas which are daily imbibed by the young and susceptible minds of the pupils of this institution. In the schools conducted by Joseph Lancaster, and in those which are formed on his model, every thing is calculated to have the happy effect of inculcating Christian principles.

Permit me, therefore, fellow citizens, to congratulate you upon the glorious prospects now presented to your view, as Patriots, Philanthropists and Christians; and to express a cordial hope that the Citizens of Richmond will not again be accused of that apathy, and disregard to subjects of general interest, which have heretofore been too observable among us.

Let us now proceed to the business of the Evening; and may our Almighty and bountiful benefactor grant success to this and every other similar undertaking. May the School-House, now to be erected, be fostered and supported by wisdom and beneficence, and the excellent System of Education, there carried into practice, continue to flourish, and, if possible, with increasing lustre, to the latest generations.

SIR ROBERT WILSON.

The interrogatories put to this generous man on his trial, have drawn forth replies, which are sufficient to insure him universal respect from all the friends of liberty and humanity. The following are the only extracts for which we can find room:

Why, then, in the affair of Lavalette—an affair foreign to your government—did you exert yourself to cast odium upon persons whose duty prescribed to them the prosecution of the charges against him? Why did you treat them as persecutors who multiplied their efforts to assure their bloody triumph? Why did you add, that they had discovered the

footsteps of their prey, and that the escape of Lavalette had produced no other effect but to render these monsters more furious? Upon the first article of this interrogatory, I answer, that the affair of Lavalette (abstracted from the part I took in it) was not foreign to an Englishman.

It would appear that the honor of your country could not be, the only consideration to which you must have yielded in this conjuncture, since you, yourself advanced for its justification, the calamity of Lavalette, which you look upon as a dishonor to the cause of liberty and humanity? These two words, liberty and humanity, become the proof of my explanation.

Had Wellington acted in this manner, and asserted that validity of the capitulation of Paris, instead of coniving at the murder of Ney and others, his fame would stand on a different basis. But he has lost that opportunity, and must be classed with the basest of the crusaders against justice, honor and the rights of man.

FROM THE BOSTON RECORDER.

Our black countrymen at Sierra Leone.

Many of our readers doubtless recollect, that about thirty people of colour left Boston early last winter with a view of settling themselves in the British colony of Sierra Leone in Africa. The vessel in which they sailed was the property and under the command of captain Paul Cuffee.

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE.

WE have no authentic copy of this most important State Paper, the very basis that supports the proud columns of American Liberty, none, at least, on which the eye of taste can rest, for a moment, with satisfaction. WHY HAVE WE NOT?

merely with the state of knowledge and of art at the period in question, but with the literary attainments, also, of King John, King Henry, and their "Barons bold."

Surely the Declaration of American Independence is at least, as well entitled to the decorations of art as the Magna Charta of England; and if the fac-similes of the signatures of the patriots who signed it, were published in America, it would serve to gratify a curiosity, at least as laudable as that which calls for imitations of the correspondents of Junius, or of the aristocracy that wrested the English Charter from the reluctant monarch of the day.

We are firmly persuaded that the more the principles of our Declaration of Independence are spread before the eyes of the world, the more they will be admired, by foreign nations as well as our own; and every innocent and honest device that may serve to attract attention toward them, will serve, also, to promote the great cause of public liberty.

A Splendid Edition of the Declaration of Independence.

Which shall be, in all respects American. All the necessary materials shall be manufactured in this country, and expressly for this publication. The Designs, the Engravings shall be the work of American Artists; the publication throughout shall afford evidence of what our citizens have done in politics and can do in art.

Philadelphia, March, 1816.

Plan and terms of Subscription.

When the publisher submitted the preceding notice of his intention to undertake this national publication, although it had long occupied his reflections, he was not fully aware of its importance, for he had never suspected what the fact really is, that there is no where extant an authentic published copy of the most important State Paper in the annals of the world.

The original Declaration of Independence, as deposited in the Secretary of State's office, was happily preserved when so many valuable papers were consumed by the enemy. Without dwelling upon slight differences, inaccuracies, or omissions, the first words which present themselves in our printed copies, and even as they are of record on the Journals of the Old Congress, are as follow:—

"A Declaration by the Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled," whereas in the original the Declaration is thus headed:—

"The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen United States of America."

This is not a mere verbal distinction; it involves a difference in principle. Does it become Americans to be careless on this subject, or ought interpolation or alteration of any kind to be permitted in a public document so sacred? Ought it not to be faithfully preserved and transmitted to posterity word for word, letter for letter, and point for point?—The American public will unhesitatingly answer YES! and the Publisher stands pledged to have it so engraved, and to accompany it with the requisite proof of authenticity.

The size of the Paper will be 36 inches by 24. It will be manufactured by Mr. ARTS, in his best manner and of the very best materials.

The Design, which is from the pencil of Mr. BAINBRIDGE, will be executed in imitation of Engraving, and will encircle the Declaration as a coronal of honor, surmounted by the Arms of the United States. Immediately underneath the arms will be a large medallion portrait of General GEORGE WASHINGTON, supported by cornucopias, and embellished with Spears, Flags, and other Military trophies and emblems. On one side of this medallion portrait, will be a similar portrait of JOHN HANCOCK, President of Congress July 4, 1776, and on the other, a portrait of THOMAS JEFFERSON, author of the Declaration of Independence.

The Arms "of the Thirteen United States," in medallions, united by wreaths of Olive Leaves, will form the remainder of the coronal, which will be further enriched by some of the characteristic productions of the United States, such as the Tobacco and Indigo Plants, the Cotton Ginn, Rice, &c.

The whole of the design, (excepting the portraits,) will be engraved by Mr. MENNAY, of Philadelphia, who has for some weeks been at work on the plate.

Mr. LANS, of New-York, will engrave the portraits.

By the advice of all the Artists engaged, the publisher has abandoned the idea of printing the Declaration with verses, and has determined to have the whole fit and appropriate. The ornamental disposition and style of the engraving of the Declaration of Independence, which will occupy the interior of the coronal,