

FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATION.

The late anniversary of our National Independence was celebrated in this place, in a very appropriate and becoming manner. The citizens met at the Methodist Church, at the hour previously appointed, where the usual ceremonies were performed. An impulsive prayer was offered up by the Rev. Dr. ROBERTS. The Declaration of Independence was read in a distinct and forcible manner, by Mr. J. L. KEMP. After which, the audience were entertained with an excellent and beautiful Oration, which reflects great credit upon its author.

Covington, July 12, 1841.

H. J. GUTHRIE, Esq.—The Committee of Arrangements take this occasion to express their approbation of the excellent and appropriate Address delivered by you in this city, on the late anniversary of our National Independence.

In compliance with the wishes of your fellow citizens, and in accordance with our own sentiments, we respectfully request that you will do the favor of furnishing a copy for publication.

Respectfully yours, &c.

D. S. LEAVITT,
M. M. BENTON,
A. H. JAMESON,
H. J. POOR,
W. M. LOWRY,
Committee.

Covington, July 13, 1841.

Mos. B. S. LEAVITT, M. M. BENTON, &c.
Gentlemen.—In compliance with the request contained in your note of the 12th inst., I most cheerfully furnish you with a copy of the Address delivered by me "on the late anniversary of our National Independence."

Yours, very respectfully,

H. J. GUTHRIE.

ADDRESS.

Time, on centuries wing, has brought around another anniversary of our National Independence. The man of the palace, the dweller in the humble cottage, the aged and the young, the beautiful and the wise, have this day turned aside from the ordinary pursuits of life, and have come up to lay their offerings on the altar of Patriotism. To-day the car of commerce is stopped, the hum of the great city hushed, and all classes and conditions have gone out to mingle their sympathies in the general festival. To-day the noble and brilliant minds of your Congress, but yesterday engaged in high and spirited discussion, and bent in intense study upon the objects of legislation, have cast aside their pens, that they might, in memory, concurse with the mighty minds of our forefathers, and acquire from them the true meaning of our institutions, and the means of their perpetuity. To-day, the spirit-stirring anthem fills the consecrated walls of a thousand temples, and resounds over many a hill and valley. Fellow citizens, a free people are this day rejoicing over the birth of their freedom.

All nations have their days of celebration. It is the pride of human nature to boast of ancestry. And surely, if the virtues of an ancestry have given birth and glory to a people, the recollection and influence of those virtues should ever be cherished. The barbarian chief, to preserve the strength and value of his race, keeps alive in their minds the spirit of their forefathers. The constant study, by their youth, of the actions and achievements of the illustrious dead, constituted a main feature in the legislation of Sparta. Indeed, national recollections are the basis of national greatness. We have a rich lesson in the importance of the celebration of this day in the memorable letters of Adams and Jefferson, the fathers of our independence. Amid the countless events which grace the annals of the world, we shall find none more deserving of celebration, or of a deeper manifestation of gratitude, than the Dality. Its remembrance is wise and salutary. It reminds the fires of patriotism, and renews our respect and obligations for our government. It arouses and gratifies the noblest emotions of the human heart. It brings before us in review the heroes and sages of the past, and testifies the respect we bear for their memories. It impresses upon us more deeply the principles upon which our government was originally founded, and upon which its glory and happiness depends. It teaches us to endure all things; to submit ourselves, rather than submit to the iron rule of oppression. It is a school of virtue to us, to our children, and to coming generations.

The cause which induced and consummated our country's independence compels the theme of the present occasion. Its field is wide and fruitful. Time will not permit me to go back to the origin, and trace, step by step, the events which led to the declaration of independence, and the happy results of the revolution. The hand of genius has already sketched them upon the living page of your literature.

The chief among the glorious results of the revolution was the origin of the doctrine, that all men are created equally free and independent. The divine right of kings, made sacred by custom, and sanctioned by superstition and ignorance, began to lose its influence on the minds of men, and to give way before the burning light of that age. The idea of social equality and equal rights, hitherto unknown to mankind, began to move and convulse the mighty mind of England. Various political and religious sects sprung into being, and with the unconquerable spirit of liberty herself, proclaimed their principles. They contended for freedom of thought and action. Not rebellious, they petitioned the throne for redress; but the proud Stuarts treated their petitions with contempt, and taught their principles to scorn. They were persecuted throughout the whole empire. But oppressed, like their descendants, they rose superior to oppression. War followed. The contest was severe and bloody. Charles I. was beheaded, and the crown of victory fell to the persecuted. They now, under the rule of the mighty and matchless Cromwell, enjoyed universal toleration. But the day of his reign was short. After his death, they were deprived of all power, and again cruelly persecuted. Unable to resist the royal power, infested with the vengeance of the king, and dreading the return of the horrors of revolution, they now left their native soil for the wilds of America.

Let us follow them on their weary voyage from the shores of their nativity. We behold them launched on the wide ocean, guiding their bark to the shores of the new world. For many long

and comfortless months they face the storms, their little barks trembling upon the mountain wave, or sinking in the almost engulfing sea; the tempest hews through their tattered rigging; and the billows dash and break against their leaky sides; but amidst the tempest and the storm, and all privations and suffering, they ride upon the waves triumphantly. At length, under the guidance of that Being whose banded they sought to plant on the rock-bound shores of America, they land in poverty, but noble and self-reliant in soul. We admire the orator who nobly espouses the cause of liberty, and by the brilliant flashes of his eloquence, stirs up his countrymen to noble action; the statesman, of comprehensive mind, who dispenses throughout society the blessings of wise legislation, and exerts his power among the nations high in grandeur and fame; the philanthropist, who in the warm gushing bosom of his heart, devotes his time and energies to that cause of his fellow men, the cause which he won for himself, glory immortal shaped on the field of battle; and our administration, pure, intense and lasting; but when we behold men, who we know to be our ancestors, whose blood, couring in our veins, imparts to us the spirit of our great men, struggling with such patient and fortitude against such trials and adversities, language itself falters, fails to depict our feelings—it is a sight worthy of the angels.

The same feelings and principles which compelled them to leave the unshallow shores of their native land, influenced them in their new home. They soon converted the wilderness into the favorite shade of freedom, and, with a broad cast, sowed the seeds of virtue and liberty. Farmers they saw not; obstacles vanished before them; their course was onward in strength and prosperity.

The mother country, exalted by a successful war, but exhausted in resources, at length turned upon her jealous eye, and again the heavy hand of tyranny was laid upon them. An ignorant ministry, a king seated by the signs of royalty, with no knowledge of political science, much less of the condition of their American subjects, endeavored to replenish their empty treasury, and provide a fund for royal extravagance, by a system of oppressive taxation. The enduring ties of kindred, which connected the parent country with the infant colonies, were dissolved in the desire to swind the pride and wealth of royalty. A stupid and insolent ministry looked upon the colonists as miserable outcasts, upon whom they might impose the heaviest burdens with impunity. Born and educated in halls of royal eminence, they imagined themselves superior in wisdom to our fathers. Taxation followed tax. The odious stamp act came, and the spirit of liberty began slowly to move the minds of men. It was repelled; and the colonists, with feelings of the liveliest gratitude, and a spirit of defiance, easily secured a cessation of oppression. But its removal was quickly succeeded by other acts equally severe. Oppression followed oppression.

Our fathers as yet submitted, unwilling to raise the standard of resistance. The idea of building up a separate nation, with a separate power and glory, did not even enter into their dreams. While that chain was forging for them, and preparations were making to rivet them on their limbs, unsuspecting, as the stranger in a distant land, they turned their eyes towards their native country, and felt the full gush of love and sympathy. They sent their dutiful petitions to the throne; they respectfully remonstrated against the acts of Parliament. With the affection of the child for the parent, they pleaded for the violated rights of freedom. Their petitions were slighted. To their remonstrances came insult; their appeals were turned into ridicule. The spirit of liberty was now impelled to action, and resistance began to show itself. A military force was sent over to hold the end of terror, and subjection over the colonists. A mercenary and rapacious soldiery was located in their midst; in the land which the pilgrim had sought for peace and liberty, where they might think and act unmoved by kings, unfeigned by power. Reciprocal hostilities commenced. The Boston massacre took place. Then came the battles of Concord and Lexington and Bunker Hill; and there was shed the first blood of the heroes and martyrs in freedom's holy cause. Noble shades of our ancestors, how shall we estimate your virtues and your glories! History affords no parallel. You poured out your rich blood, like water, far a country, the greatness and grandeur of which were unknown. You offered your lives and sacrifices on the altars of Liberty, that Liberty might live, and your children enjoy the fruits thereof. Ne'er selfish feelings, no sordid calculation stimulated you to action. Firm and undivided, conscious of the purity of your feelings, and of the rectitude of your principles, you gave the banner of freedom to the breeze, and waved defiance at the combined forces of England! Venanted fathers! how shall your posterity honor you! Let the monument be raised until it reaches the skies; and let the sons of liberty, from Illinois and climes known at least, have, and there offer up the morning and evening devotions. But the moment may decay in Time's considering count. But your deeds, ye name. Warns, the first noble martyr in the cause of freedom, still lies buried in story and song! Where liberty dwelt, or where a patriotic heart can be found, your immortal spirit will claim a home.

With the battle of Bunker Hill the war of the revolution began. The spirit of liberty, like an electric spark, pervaded the whole country. The eloquence of Patrick Henry had already spread the patriotism of his countrymen, and the death-knell of tyranny was sounded throughout Virginia. Everywhere, the high-minded man of that momentous age, had determined to sacrifice their lives, their fortunes, rather than resign their rights, and become the servile subjects of a perfidious ministry and a weak king. The parent country continued her persecutions, and the colonists, with patience and fortitude, their resistance, until the cords which bound them together were severed, never to be united again. In the meanwhile, the Congress of 1776 assembled. In this Congress, as you know, the momentous question of independence was to be discussed; a discussion fraught with slavery or death, to the colonists; and, as events have shown, with the happiness of all mankind. It was a struggle, as you know, between the two extremes of slavery and freedom. When the star of hope went down—a struggle such as which the records of history furnish no parallel. I will but refer you to the mournful

and fearful crisis manfully. The example of their forefathers was before them. The question to be solved was this, and this only, whether the hopes of freedom and man's political and religious regeneration, from the thraldom of despotism should brighten and brighten as the rising sun of the morning, until its illumination should spread over and light up the dark places of the world, or be blotted forever, and the people of America remain forever in monarchical vassalage. We are told that the debates were spirited, eloquent and powerful; but of the particulars we have no accurate knowledge; the deliberations being conducted with closed doors. Jefferson gave us that "John Adams was the Colossus of that Congress—the great pillar of support to the Declaration of Independence, and its ablest advocate and champion on the floor of the house;" that his was the eloquence which "moved his hearers from their seats." Others have awarded the palm of intellectual greatness to Richard Henry Lee. Be this as it may, both were superior lights; both earned immortal laurels; both deserve of the praise and memory of posterity. Finally, the resolution of independence was moved. The youthful Jefferson was appointed at the head of the committee to draft the Declaration. I tell you how the sublime task was accomplished! Need I dwell upon the boldness, the strength, and truth of its sentiments, the grandeur of its beauty and force of its language? Of all the subsequent efforts of genius, ancient or modern, there is none, none, its superior. To what greater honor, what greater fame, what greater glory, could mortal mind aspire, than its authorship? It was discussed and adopted. Upon its adoption were pledged the lives, the fortunes, the rare hours of its illustrious signers. All political connection with the mother-country was dissolved, and these states declared to be free and independent. The tie was cut; the fortunes of reliance upon Him who "rules and preserves the destinies of nations."

"Follow citizens, let us for a moment indulge in the pleasing contemplation of the origin, and character of the founders of our nation. It is our good fortune to know, with the minutest detail, who were our founders, and with honest exultation, to boast of their virtues and patriotism. The principles which we hold dear, and maintained with their lives and treasures, the foundations of the institutions which we now enjoy, so full of promise, they laid with their hands, amid hardships and trials. From the womb of nature sprang out the seeds, which, after years of toil, sowing, and labor, have produced the glorious fruit of freedom, and, with a broad cast, sowed the seeds of virtue and liberty. Farmers they saw not; obstacles vanished before them; their course was onward in strength and prosperity."

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