

186
A SERMON,

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF

Lieutenant-General GEORGE WASHINGTON,

LATE

P R E S I D E N T

OF THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ;

WHO WAS BORN, FEBRUARY 11TH, 1732, IN VIRGINIA, AND DIED,
DECEMBER 14TH, 1799, ON MOUNT VERNON, HIS FAVORITE
SEAT IN HIS NATIVE COUNTRY ; FIRST DELIVERED
IN THE BAPTIST CHURCH, SAVANNAH,
GEORGIA, JANUARY 19TH, 1800,
AND NOW PUBLISHED, AT
THE REQUEST OF THE
HONORABLE CITY COUNCIL,

By HENRY HOLCOMBE, *Minister of the Word of God in Savannah.*

*“ Mark the perfect Man, and behold
“ the upright : for the end of that Man is peace.”*

David.

TO

The Honorable Mayor and Aldermen,

of the

City of Savannah,

The following Discourse, delivered, and published by their desire,—
as a public expression of his high sense of their zealous and unremitting attention to
the interest and prosperity of this flourishing commercial city in particular, as well
as of their country in general,—is most respectfully dedicated; and, under their
patronage, submitted to the candor of the worthy friends, without number, of the
late*

General WASHINGTON,



The AUTHOR.

* In transcribing for the Press, a few small alterations, by transposition, &c. have been made; and, it is hoped not for the worse.

INTRODUCTORY HYMN.

GREAT GOD, we bow before thy throne,
Our prostrate souls adore thy name,
Thou art the source from which alone
All being and perfection came.

The greatest and the best below,
And nobler essences above,
To thee their excellencies owe,
As emanations of thy love.

Thy wisdom, power, and goodness shine
In all the wonders thou hast done
For North America, thro' thine
Illustrious servant, WASHINGTON!

In rueful war thou wast his GOD,
Gave him success and kindly spread,
Midst dying shrieks and waves of blood,
Protection o'er his sacred head.

Thine all pervading hand appears
In all his grateful country's bliss,
The splendor of his highest spheres,
And all the charms of smiling peace.

Thy grace sustain'd him in his death,
Thro' faith in CHRIST he knew no fears,
With Christian hope resign'd his breath,
In perfect peace, mature in years.

With melting eyes on thee we call,
O GOD, of every good the source,
May we who mourn our Hero's fall
Pursue with zeal his shining course!

A SERMON, &c.

2d of Samuel, 3d Chap. and part of the 38th Verse.

“KNOW YE NOT THAT THERE IS A GREAT MAN FALLEN?”

IN these words David refers to Abner, a distinguished officer of his day, who fell an unsuspecting victim to the well known traitorous scheme, and by the bloody hand of Joab, whose brother Asahel, to save his own life, Abner had reluctantly slain in a battle at Gibeon. To awaken a correspondent sense of their great loss in the afflicted Tribes, David addressed to them the pathetic inquiry adopted on this melancholy occasion, as applying with the most forcible propriety to the late Lieutenant General GEORGE WASHINGTON. Know ye not that in him a great man, a much greater than Abner, is fallen? The sufficiently visible effects of this penetrating conviction render a comparison of these great men unnecessary, would the dignity of my subject, and the solemnity which reigns over this unexampled and overflowing concourse admit it. Their coincidence in point of greatness, established by the highest authorities, whatever disparity as to the degrees of it, may exist, is all that is requisite to my purpose. In reliance therefore, on the plenitude of candor to which I am already greatly in arrears, however inadequate to the important service which has unexpectedly devolved on me, and with all the unaffected diffidence which overwhelms me, I shall make immediate advances towards the awful ground on which our greatest orators sink unnerved, and giants in literature stand and tremble! And though I am not about to deliver an oration, nor to pronounce an eulogium; but to preach a sermon, and briefly *touch* on one of the greatest *merely* human characters, I am fully apprised of the delicacy of my situation, and too sensibly feel the pressure of difficulties.

My feeble soul take courage! a *Demosthenes* or a *Cicero* might fail here without dishonor; and though the famed *Cæsars*, *Alexanders*, *Pompies* and *Marlboroughs*, must resign their inferior laurels to the more famous *American General*, he was but a man; all his greatness was derived from his and thy CREATOR, and thou wilt be assisted in the execution of thy arduous design by the prayers, candid allowances and liberal constructions of thine audience, who will deem it very pardonable on thy theme to be defective. The first doctrinal observation which our text, and the occasion of our assembling, unitedly suggest, is seriously important: Great as ABNER was, he fell; and WASHINGTON is fallen; it, therefore, undeniably follows *that great men, as well as others, must fall*. Though it would be absurd to attempt a formal proof of this doctrine,

and have the appearance of an insult on dying man, there is nothing that merits more frequent, or more serious consideration ; and a few explanatory remarks on it are so far from being amiss, that they are indispensable. The Heathens and Deists, of all descriptions, believing the immortality of the human soul, consider their bodies as falling by death into corruption and dust, never to rise ; and their notions of the state, exercises, and enjoyments of the soul after death are so vague, indistinct, and unimpressive, that they have little or no visible effect on their practice. Atheists, and such Deists as believe the soul of man to be mortal, consider all who are fallen, and our immortal WASHINGTON among the rest, as plunged into undistinguished and irretrievable ruin ! as consigned to their original nonentity !! Happily for our various interests, few, if any, of these gloomy monsters disgrace, or infest the United States : They are chiefly, if not altogether, confined to the smoke and flame in which they have involved miserable Europe. Let Americans never suffer their nature and its *author* to be insulted and degraded by the influence, or existence of such detestable sentiments ;

“ Scorned be the man who thinks himself a brute ;”

“ *Affronts his species, and his God blasphemes.*”

But gladly I turn your attention from the cold, lifeless principles, and painful uncertainty of the better sort of Heathens and the Deists, and especially from the insupportable horrors of *annihilation*, to what we are to understand by the *fall* of men in death ; and, in a word, it is their fall from this world ; from its honors, pleasures, profits ; and from the exercise of their mortal powers. By a figure of speech, which puts a part for the whole, or the contrary, and common with inspired, and other writers, in saying that a great man is fallen, David means no more than that his mortal part is dead ; but he was better informed than to suppose that even *this* was dead or fallen, to revive, to rise no more. We not only know from divine revelation, but from an important and well attested fact, gloriously demonstrated at this time by its numerous and happy consequences, that our bodies are not only capable of a resurrection, but shall actually rise ! Were the horrible reverse of these exhilarating representations true, inconsiderable *indeed* would be our cause of triumph in existence, or reason to boast of human excellence ! “ *Verily every man, at his best state,*” considered merely in his relation to this transitory scene, “ *is altogether vanity.*” And the inevitable fall of the greatest, as well as all other men, when viewed in a *true* light, and considered in its eternal consequences, must fill the enlightened considerate mind with the most serious reflections. It is said,

“ *Xerxis surveyed his mighty host with tears,*”

“ *To think they'd die within an hundred years :*”

But judging from past events, what enormous devastations among the inhabitants of the earth must be spread in less than half that time ! “ Your Fathers

where are they? and the prophets, do they live forever?" Where are all preceding generations, and the great men who illuminated and adorned them? Alas! the mighty ruins of mortality! With a few illustrious exemptions, recorded in the oracles of God, the silent, and almost imperceptibly slow, but steady and irresistibly strong current of time, has borne them into the boundless ocean of eternity! And yet Philip of Macedon was far from being alone, in needing daily to be told that he was a mortal man.

That all men must fall, is universally acknowledged; but too few apply this serious truth to their own cases; Doctor Young had reasons for his bold assertion, "All men think all men mortal but themselves." And great men, from a variety of circumstances, are more than others, addicted to this waking dream, this sometimes fatal delusion; and strange as fatal! "*Know ye not that there is a great man fallen?*" and that consequently *great men must fall!* Riches, power, titles, universal applause, to which may be added even virtue and piety, avail nothing in this warfare, "Death enters, and there's no defence." Acknowledge this all do, they must, however inconsiderate and profane, for who can deny it? *But O, that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!*" How natural, reasonable, and interesting is this? and one would think it might be added, how difficult to avoid it!

"*As man perhaps the moment of his breath,
Receives the lurking principle of death;
The young disease that must subdue at length,
Grows with his growth, and strengthens with his strength.*"

And when these latent seeds of dissolution produce their ultimate effect, our text directs us in what regards our duty to the memories of the just. By fair and obvious implication, it says, *the fall of a great man merits respectful and public attention.*

"*Know ye not that there is a great man fallen?*"

This question was not asked for information, and it not only forcibly affirms the fall of a great man; but evidently excites to mourning on account of it, and proper expressions of respect for his memory. *Know ye not*, that is, are ye not apprised, or disposed to consider, as ye should be, and to practically declare, *that in your judgment, there is a great man, a man of worth, and entitled to high and public regard, fallen?*

And accordingly we find that David said to the people to whom he addressed the words of our text, "Rent your clothes, and gird you with sackcloth, and mourn before Abner." The sacred historian adds, "And king David himself followed the bier. And they buried Abner in Hebron: And the king lifted up his voice, and wept at the grave of Abner; and all the people wept."

The solemnity concludes with an oration by the king, which produced the

highest effects of oratory, and closes with an acknowledgment, that he was rendered weak though anointed king, by the loss of that great man. Parellel passages, in great variety, might be recited in confirmation of this doctrine. Instances are numerous in the patriarchal age, of burying persons of eminent piety and worth, with every mark of respect and solemnity.

The venerable founders of the Jewish church and nation, had the tribute of high encomiums, and genuine mourning for many days, paid to their memories and their merits. A beautiful specimen of ancient eulogy, is David's lamentation over Saul and Jonathan. With an ardor and elevation peculiar to himself, he exclaims, "The beauty of Israel is slain in thy high places; how are the mighty fallen! Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon, lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph. Ye mountains of Gilboa let there be no dew, neither let there be rain upon you, nor fields of offerings; for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, the shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed with oil. From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back, and the sword of Saul returned not empty. Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their deaths they were not divided: They were swifter than Eagles, they were stronger than Lions. Ye daughters of Israel weep over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights, who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel. How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle!"

This natural and laudable, as well as ancient and universal custom of honoring the pious and eminent dead, may be further justified by quotations from the new testament. At the grave of Lazarus, "Jesus wept;" devout men buried Stephen, who had the honor to be the first martyr in the christian cause, with great lamentation; and Paul mentions a number of the illustrious characters of antiquity, with the highest respect, and warmly recommends their noble and heroic conduct to the imitation of posterity. After bestowing on many the encomiums proper to their respective merits, he adds, "And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barack, and of Sampson, and of Jephthae, of David also, and of Samuel, and of the prophets; who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of Lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valient in fight, and turned to flight the armies of the Aliens." So warm a panegyrist of these great men was the Apostle, that he avers, "*Of them the world was not worthy.*" And though many of these failed of obtaining the attention due to their merits in, and immediately after their respective generations, by having their names and worthy deeds enrolled in the volume of inspiration, God has plainly shewn us

that the fall of a great good man should excite respectful and public attention. Encouraged, therefore, and in some degree assisted by such precedents, I will proceed to what is *finally* incumbent on me ; and that is, *to evince the applicability of my text to the illustrious deceased.*

It must be acknowledged that the scriptural and consequently rational and becoming custom of praising departed persons, has been shamefully abused. The great among the Heathens have, in many instances, been exalted to celestial honors, and idolized to distant generations. And by persons of better information, funeral panegyric has been so indiscriminately bestowed, that it has blended all distinctions of character and become proverbially false. But it is not on these or any other accounts, to be refused on proper occasions, this would be falling into the opposite extreme. And perhaps a more proper occasion than the *present* for commendation and applause never occurred, or one on which higher might be bestowed, consistently with truth and moderation. Never I believe could it be said of any with more propriety than of General WASHINGTON, that what his acquaintances would condemn as below his merit, strangers would consider as the most fulsome adulation, or exaggerated applause. But to proceed : Most obviously does my text apply to this great man, considered as enriched with *merely natural endowments.* His features, actions, and whole deportment, before he was refined by learning, clothed with power, or known to fame, attracted every eye, fixed attention, and commanded respect. As the immediate effect of divine bounty he possessed the seeds whose blossoms and fruits ultimately rendered him the boast of his country, and the glory of the age. The rich furniture of his mind could receive no assistance from the common rules of art, because by innate strength it rose nobly superior to them, *comprehending* the true principles, and proper standard of criticism.* His perceptions were prompt, intuitive, clear; and were displayed from earliest youth in the facility and rapidity with which he acquired knowledge, and in the exact order, method and propriety conspicuous in the management of all his affairs. And to the fatal day which put a period to the most valuable of mortal lives, his conduct and achievements, proclaimed his genius entirely original, superlatively bright, the offspring of the FATHER OF LIGHTS. In his vast mind centered that shining aggregate of excellencies which beamed with such effulgence in his dignified and manly countenance, and were so eminently ornamental, I will not say of his country, nor of this generation, but of human nature. When we consider that all effects must have an adequate cause, we are led to trace the wonders which have appeared in WASHINGTON'S life, to, at least, an equally wonderful source : This we find in a soul calm and serene as the most delightful summer-evening, more expansive than the ocean, more resplendent than yonder sun, and steady as the

* True criticism is the application of taste and of good sense to the several fine arts. Blair.

poles! These intellectual, and consequently immortal treasures rendered him uncommonly great as the child of nature; and our text applies to him very forcibly as enlarged and enobled by mental *acquisitions*.

Divine Providence gave him opportunities and dispositions to add great *acquired*, to the greatest *natural* abilities. If his education were not classical, it was profound: If he had not the comparatively superficial knowledge of all *names*, he possessed an universal knowledge of *things*: And tho' no great proportion of his precious time was spent in the study of dead languages, it was because the beautiful objects of all kinds of useful and ornamental knowledge invited his attention and pursuit, in all the copious elegance of English attire.

His great mind was occupied with correspondent objects. He had well arranged and distinct ideas of all essentially interesting, and truly important facts, domestic and foreign, ancient and modern, temporal and spiritual. Among the subjects which WASHINGTON investigated, and the objects which he regarded with an assiduity and seriousness becoming their importance, were science, morality and religion; civil and religious liberty; agriculture commerce and navigation; tactics, and the different forms of civil government; the rise revolutions, and falls of empires, in connection with their causes and consequences; and the religions, laws, customs, characters and origin of nations.

With a singular felicity of perception, he comprehended the subjects of his knowledge in all their extensions and relations; and we well know, that in his conversation, public speeches, and admirable writings, ease and strength were united with all the beauty and simplicity of precision. But as it would require talents brilliant as his own to do justice to a subject of such extent and sublimity, I shall conclude these imperfect remarks on his great literary merit, by observing that the honor of conferring on him the degree of L.L.D. was reserved for Rhode-Island College*: From the œconomy observable in all the

* "Sept. 1st, 1790, the degree of Doctor of Laws, was conferred on GEORGE WASHINGTON, President of the United States of America." Soon *afterwards*, it appears from the Baptist annual register for 1791, of which Doctor RIPPON of London is the editor, that "In a conversation between several friendly gentlemen, which turned chiefly on the confinement of LEWIS the *little*, who, like an absolute sovereign, had said to five and twenty million of people, *I will be obeyed*; contrasted with the popularity of WASHINGTON the GREAT—it was mentioned, that the Baptist College, in Rhode-Island, had conferred the degree of Doctor of Laws, on the President of the United States; while it seemed to be the general mind that this distinguished character in the history of man, would prefer the laurels of a college to a crown of despotism, one of the company, it is said, quite impromptu, gave vent to the feelings of his heart, in the following effusion:

When Kings are *mere* sovereigns, or tyrants, or tools,
No wonder the people should treat them as fools;
But WASHINGTON therefore presides with applause,
Because he *well* merits the DOCTOR OF LAWS.
I'll ne'er be a ruler till I'm L. L. D.
Nor England, nor Scotland shall send it to me,
I'll have my diploma from PROVIDENCE HALL,
For WASHINGTON had, or I'll have none at all."

variety and profusion, if I may so express myself of Heaven's bounties, we are led to conclude that such mental strength and excellence as WASHINGTON possessed, must have been properly deposited, furnished with suitable organs, and intended for appropriate and important purposes: And our expectations are fully answered when we view him as entitled to the application of our text, *by the disposal of an all superintending Providence.*

Born and raised under a free government, he early imbibed, and always cherished, and retained the sacred principles of liberty, his *birth right*, inviolable. Though of respectable descent, ancestry need not be mentioned, where personal and intrinsic worth is so eminent and conspicuous. Nor does he derive any of his greatness from the large possessions with which his many and distinguished virtues, and services, were to as great a degree as *he would permit*, but by no means *adequately* rewarded: he conferred honor on affluence. The complicated *organ* of his vast and noble mind, a glorious specimen of divine ingenuity, was moderately large, elegantly proportioned, and amply endowed with agility and strength, gracefulness and dignity. In early youth his superior parts and abilities attracted public attention; and by traversing a trackless desert, obtaining the intelligence so interesting to his beloved country, and saving *Braddock's* army on the Monongahela, from the jaws of a cruel death by merciless savages, he proved himself capable of the most difficult, arduous and perilous services. The sagacity and prowess, promptitude and decision, which he displayed, about this time, on several trying occasions, were strongly indicative of his future elevation. And from the universal rectitude of his conduct in private and public, civil and religious life, as well as from the proofs he had furnished of his great military capacity, *President Davis*, long before there existed a thought of the late revolutionary war, said from the *Pulpit*, "I may point out to the public that heroic youth, *Col. Washington*, whom I cannot but hope, providence has hitherto preserved for some important service to his country." And this has since assumed the appearance of a divine prediction: For *we feel*, and the *world knows* what an *important service* he has rendered his country. When the unhappy controversy between Great-Britain and her thirteen American Provinces, rose so high, and produced such effects, that the dreadful appeal to the sword was no longer dispensable, WASHINGTON, whose name can receive no additional lustre from epithets, was unanimously appointed by the representatives of the American people, to head their undisciplined troops, almost without money or arms against *British*, well armed and well disciplined veterans. The bloody conflicts which ensued, the prodigies of address, valor and perseverance of the commander in chief, and the glorious result are well known and need not now be repeated. His superiority to difficulties, to all other men embarrassing and insuperable, unconquerable fortitude, well-timed, and well-planned attacks on a superior

foe, and splendid victories, are clothed in all the elegance and pomp of language by historians and poets of the first eminence. Uninfluenced by ambition, when he had conducted us *seven long years*, through fields of blood and carnage, to sovereignty, independance and peace, like another *Cincinnatus*, he returned to his agricultural employments, and sought repose in the shades of retirement. Through his influence, an army angry and distressed from painful, important, and yet *uncompensated* services, sheathed their swords, and followed the example of their illustrious chief!

But his well-tryed, and sterling merit, united to the splendor of his talents, and the unbounded confidence of his fellow-citizens, soon rendered it necessary, from the inefficacy of our Governmental arrangements, that he should again embark on the stormy sea of politics. Summoned by his country, to whom he could deny *nothing*, to assist in forming, and adopting our present energetic, yet free and happy constitution, he readily obeyed; and after the accomplishment of these important objects, he was called by the unanimous voice, of, at least, three millions of people to preside over these Sovereign and Independent States. To the presidential chair he continued a noble ornament, by the united wish of his grateful country, who delighted to honor him, *eight years*, and discharged the important duties of this high station with his usual wisdom and firmness, integrity and rectitude. And after retiring the second time, in full possession of the affections and confidence of the people, to the solitude which he was as capable of enjoying, as of adorning public life, he was prevailed on, tho' hoary with years, and covered with glory, to accept the command of our armies, when the political hemisphere wore a most menacing and wrathful aspect. Behold the greatest General in the world, tho' on the borders of three score and ten, in obedience to his much indebted country, ready, again, to take the field against her insulting foes!

And so obvious was the policy of this appointment, that it was anticipated, as well as ardently wished by every intelligent citizen. His martial and august appearance, the sound of his *name* and *voice*, the glance of his experienced eye, and the lightning of his sword at the head of our armies, rendered them gloriously enthusiastic, and absolutely invincible! But great as he was by nature, a liberal education, and the display and perfection of his superior powers, natural and acquired, in spheres of action the most conspicuous, elevated and important, he was still *greater* by the invaluable *gifts of the God of grace*. Considered as aggrandized by *these*, our text applies to him with the *utmost* propriety and force!

Know ye not that a great man, the greatest of men, is fallen?

He would have been equalled by several if he had not shone in the mild majesty of morals and religion. This lustre, when other things are equal, gives a decided superiority. *Behold*, and an essential part of his honor was

humility. He had as little of that tumid pride, which in its plenitude goes before destruction, as any man on earth. He always felt his dependance as a man; and trusting in the living God, whom he served, his boldness and magnanimity, could be equalled by nothing but his modesty and humility. By these radical advantages, he displayed an equanimity through the most trying extremes of fortune, which does the highest honor to the human character. He was the same whether struggling to keep the fragments of a naked army together in the dismal depths of winter, against a greatly superior foe, or presiding under the laurel wreath over four millions of free men!

He was too great to be depressed or elated by any thing that ceases with this life.

“ ’Tis *moral grandeur* makes the mighty man.

“ How little they who think ought great below !”

WASHINGTON’S as all true wisdom ever did, and always must, began with the fear, which was the only fear he ever knew, the *fear of the Lord of Hosts*: And this was truly filial, for its transcendently glorious object, was equally the object of his supreme affection.

These divine and immortal principles preserved his tongue from every species of profanity, and not only his actions but his heart from pollution. *Alexander* conquered the world; but far from ruling his spirit, or being in any respect his own master, he fell an early and loathsome sacrifice to intemperance. Far greater than *Alexander the great*, was WASHINGTON: He ruled his appetites and passions in scenes of the greatest trial and temptation; and will remain forever a bright example, to all men, of temperance and moderation in all things, as well as a striking contrast to all, “ *The rational foul kennels of excess.*”

His piety, though like his other shining excellencies unaustral, was genuine and exalted. Through the veil of all his modest reserve, it was discoverable in the whole tenor of his conduct, and especially in his admirable and appropriate answers to the numerous addresses of his almost adoring fellow-citizens, where he uniformly, and with glowing gratitude ascribes all the glory of his unparalleled successes to God.

How high *Christianity* stood in his estimation, and how near its interests lay to his heart, every one may see, who has read his excellent answers to the congratulatory addresses of various religious bodies, on his first election to the chief magistracy of these United States. And his opinion of religion in a *political* view, I will do myself the honor to give you in his own words; so that though alas! he is dead, he still to his weeping country thus speaketh: “ Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness,

these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. Let it simply be asked, where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principles. 'Tis substantially true, that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government. The rule indeed extends with more or less force to every species of free government. Who that is a sincere friend to it can look with indifference upon attempts to shake the foundation of the fabric! Promote then, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge; in proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened."

Ye winds, waft these sentiments on your swift pinions; and ye sun-beams record them in more than golden characters, throughout the political world!

American, English, French, and all other politicians, hear him who was as famous in the cabinet, as formidable in the tented field! In proportion as he is regarded, will be prevented the effusion of blood; hostilities will cease, and order and confidence between rulers and the ruled, individuals and nations, will ensue.

The essential advantages of religion, in a political light, were discovered clearly, and felt impressively by the American sage, whose eagle eye distinguished plainly betwixt vain *pretenders* to religion, and its *real possessors*; and whose cool deliberative sagacity, discerned the difference between genuine religion, as delineated in the holy scriptures, and the empty forms, gross adulterations, and shameful abuses of it. And it is difficult to determine, whether he were most correct and eminent in religious theory or practice. But one thing, and that of vast importance, is evident: Bright as this sun of human glory shone, with the sweetly blended rays of morality and religion, through every stage, and in every condition of life, like the cloudless star of day, gently and with increasing majesty, sinking beneath the western horizon, his mild effulgence was greatest in death!

*" His mind was tranquil and serene,
No terrors in his looks were seen;
A Saviour's smile dispell'd the gloom,
And smooth'd his passage to the tomb."*

O Death ! never hadst thou, but in one astonishing instance, such a prisoner before !

A victory, which enraged Britain's *cannon, sword and gold*, though *well tried*, could never effect, is thine ! But monster ! spare thy ghastly smile ! momentary will be thy triumph ! As the declining sun, by divine energy, soon ascends with renewed splendors, WASHINGTON shall ere long burst thy bands asunder, *all immortal* ! A while venerable shade ! we must leave thy *precious remains* enshrined by trembling hands, with solemn pomp, and thy *deathless part* under the sublime character, of the spirit of a just man made perfect, *in lively and well-founded hope of their re-union*, and of the consummation of *thy glory and felicity* ! And is a great man fallen ? Is WASHINGTON no more ? Alas is he gone ! gone forever ! The conqueror of royal armies and their mighty generals, the late President of the United States, and later Commander in chief of the American armies, is fallen ! The father, friend, benefactor and bulwark of his country, is fallen ! WASHINGTON is fallen ! A scene of action the most brilliant ; a life with virtuous and heroic deeds, the most luminous, is now the subject of eulogy ! All the respectful, affectionate, and aggrandizing epithets, contained in our language, are employed *in vain*, to set his exalted merit in an adequately conspicuous point of light : And we anticipate the elaborate productions of rival pens of the first distinction, now moving with celerity and ardor, to give an admiring world the life of WASHINGTON : But to draw his true portrait is more than mortal hands can do ; “ *It merits a divine.* ” “ When he went out to the gate, through the city, when he prepared his seat in the street, the young men saw him and hid themselves ; and the aged arose and stood up ; the princes refrained talking, and laid their hand on their mouth ; the nobles held their peace and their tongues cleaved to the roof of their mouth. When the ear heard him, then it blessed him ; and when the eye saw him, it gave witness to him ; because he delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish, came upon him ; and he caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. He put on righteousness, and it clothed him ; his judgment was a robe and a diadem. He was eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame ; he was a father to the poor, and the cause that he knew not he searched out. And he brake the jaws of the wicked, and pluckt the spoil out of his teeth. ” To this inimitable sketch by the pencil of inspiration, let us add, in silent grief for our irreparable loss, badges of deep mourning, melting eyes and bleeding hearts, which will more emphatically express his worth than the sublimest imagery, and the most glowing encomiums in the hands of Erudition and Art. 6 AP 55

And permit me to observe, that the greatest honor of all that we can do to his memory, and the best improvement that we can make of his life and death,

is to imitate his virtuous and pious examples : And this may be done by those of the tenderest capacities, and in the lowest ranks of society.

*“ Honor and fame from no condition rise,
Act well your part there all the honor lies.”*

My fair bearers, may I not hope that you will do more than weep? *This* is natural, it is becoming, it is unavoidable. Many of you could not refrain from tears when, some years ago, you saw the face of the hero who had, for you, endured so many painful years of fatigue, and hardships of all kinds, amidst dangers in all forms : Much more abundantly must your tears flow, now you hear your great friend and benefactor, is *no more*. *Mourn* with his venerable *relief*, sinking under stupendous grief, for him who has slain your enemies, saved your country, “and put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel :” But I am persuaded you will do *more*; you will, like the great and virtuous WASHINGTON, in your measure, increase the dignity and happiness of human nature; you will adorn by your solid, though private virtues, social life, of which you were intended to be the brightest ornaments.

War-worn veterans ! venerable fathers ! you must feel the most pungent grief for him who led you in battle and to victory : And having enjoyed the advantages of his glorious examples, both in the peaceful cabinet, and on the hostile plains, you need not be reminded of your special obligation to patriotic virtue, and genuine piety.

He has taught you how to live and how to die.

Painfully tender, on this solemn occasion, must be the feelings of you, my fellow citizens, who lately, at the appearance of danger stepped forward, with an honorable zeal, in your country's defence. Your great commander in chief, is fallen ! I see you feel the shock, and you need not wish to conceal it.

Masculine cheeks bedew'd with tears,
Become the august occasion ;
Nor need they blush, should heaving sighs
Escape the manly breast, to day.

We have sustained, our country, and the world have sustained *no common loss*. *Nations* should mourn. *Our Nation does mourn*. Our venerable and much beloved chief MAGISTRATE, the supreme council of the land, our bereaved armies, sailing navy, cities, towns and villages, exhibit a widely-extended, endlessly-diversified, and most melancholy scene of deep mourning ! All christian and masonic societies with an honest pride and exultation claiming WASHINGTON as their Brother, are laudably ambitious of making the most emphatical expressions of their fraternal regard and affection. The *Cincinnati*, after these, in particular, and all other societies in general ; and in fine all descriptions of the American people, have variously, and yet as with one voice, testified their high respect, and most cordial

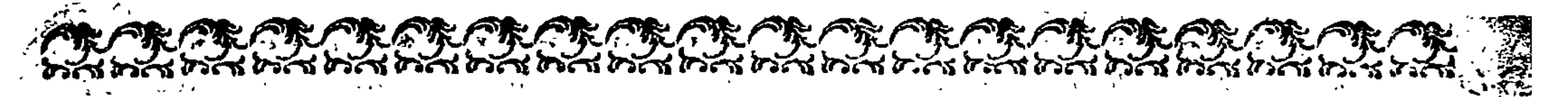
affection, for the dear and illustrious object of their common attachment. "Know ye not that there is a great man fallen?" Methinks I hear the honorable City Council, and the rest of the worthy magistrates present, the officers of all grades, the reverend clergy, the congregation who stately meet here, and the respectable residue of this vast mourning concourse, *reply*—Alas! too well we know it! the most callous heart feels it! WASHINGTON is indeed fallen! The awful report is propagated in thunder along the North American coast, and reverberates in tremendous accents from the distant hills! The thock of Mount Vernon, trembling from the summit to its affrighted centre, shakes the Continent from New-Hampshire to Georgia! O *fatal*, and *solitary* Mount! VERNON is an appellation that no longer becomes thee, and may thine appearance correspond with thy situation! No more let cheerful green array thee!*

THINE AUGUST INHABITANT IS FALLEN! But *words* are vain! Come more expressive *silence*, we resign the *unutterable* theme to thee!



* As several of the Author's friends politely hinted that when the following imprecations on Mount Vernon were delivered from the pulpit, in imitation of David's lamentation over Saul and Jonathan, some thought them liable to an unfavorable construction, he has excluded them from the sermon, but to prevent any mistake as to their matter, amongst the numbers who heard them, they are retained in this place :—

When vernal suns return, let vernal showers and dews withhold their wonted influence, and perpetuate thy melancholy hue! Let germinating sap no more ascend thy variegated shrubs and trees! Odoriferous breezes wake there no more? Bane as Gilboa, fatal to *Jonathan* and *Saul*, let blasting winds henceforward blow through the desolated mansion of that PALE MOUNT!



T H E P R A Y E R.

RIGHTFUL Sovereign of the universe! divinely awful Jehovah! we approach thine exalted Majesty with supreme veneration, and the most profound awe!

That the Lord our God is infinitely worthy of religious adoration, we acknowledge with the deepest prostration of soul. All truly enlightened creatures, from the weakest of frail men, to the most illustrious in moral strength and excellence, worship thee as the unoriginated and essential source of being, perfection, and felicity! Eternity is thy time! commensurate with immensity is thy presence! and the united powers of the whole creation are incapable of rendering thee adequate praise! Thine essence is love: wonderful thy Council; excellent thine operation, and infinite the expanse of thine ability! Supreme intelligence infinitely wise design, and boundless benevolence, are gloriously displayed in all thy works, and in all thy ways! Thine eyes pervade the essences, relations and properties of all things, and survey futurity's dark abyss!

With dread serenity thou walkest on the wings of the wind, and the clouds are the dust of thy feet! Thou hast thy way in the whirlwind, and in the storm, and thy footsteps are in the deep waters! But judgment and righteousness encompass thy throne. When we behold thee arrayed in these sublimely awful perfections, as the uncontrollable arbiter of life and death, we are constrained to acquiesce in thy righteous dispensations. Reason and experience render it probable, and thy word, which is truth, assures us, that all things, however distressing in themselves, are interesting in their issues to all who love and serve thee. This is our consolation under the bereavement and great loss suffered by our nation, in the removal of thy servant, the commander in chief of her armies, from time to eternity. It is the Lord of Hosts, and judge of the whole earth, who hath done it. Though we mourn, we do not murmur; nor is our sorrow like theirs who have no hope. By the light of divine revelation thou hast graciously enlarged our mental prospects; and enabled us to discover thy kind superintendence of our affairs.

With unfeigned gratitude we acknowledge that thou hast done great things for, and by our deceased brother: We render thee our united thanks for his creation; for the amiable and excellent dispositions, sound principles and uncommon abilities which he possessed; for his wonderful preservation thro' an awful series of dangers; for the many essential services he rendered our country; and more especially for the hope and fortitude, serenity and composure, with which he resigned his soul to thee.

We praise thee as the God of Grace for the fair examples of public and private virtue, and of eminent piety which he has left for our imitation. And permit us

is beseech thee of thine infinite goodness, to sanctify his dissolution to this weeping country. May a double portion of the admirable spirit which he possessed, rest on our Rulers! that all who are clothed with either legislative, judicial, or executive power, may be instrumental in preserving our many and distinguished blessings, and in effectually promoting all the important interests of these United States. And may that firm persuasion of the importance of Religion, which eminently distinguished the invaluable deceased, so pervade and penetrate our own, and the minds of our fellow-citizens, that the blessed Gospel may diffuse its divine influence, and exert its transforming efficacy throughout this favored land! that all vice may be suppressed, virtue and piety promoted, our excellent government perpetuated, and our civil and religious liberties and privileges, transmitted unimpaired to the latest posterity!

Grant these inestimable blessings, and speedily extend, not only thy providential, but special, goodness and mercy to all men, we humbly entreat thee, O God! for the sake of Jesus Christ, our only and divine Mediator, to whom with thee, and the spirit of all grace, be cordially ascribed all honor and dominion, by men and angels, world without end! Amen. *S. A. B.*

CONCLUDING HYMN.

“ **H**OW long shall death the tyrant reign,
And triumph o’er the just ?”

How long shall WASHINGTON remain
A prisoner in the dust ?

“ Lo, I behold the scatter’d shades,
The dawn of Heaven appears ;
The sweet immortal morning spreads
Its blasts round the spheres.

I see the LORD of glory come,
And flaming guards around ;
The skies divide to make him room,
The trumpet shakes the ground.

I hear the voice, “ Ye dead arise !”
And lo the graves obey :
And waking saints with joyful eyes
Salute the’ expected day.

They leave the dust and on the wing
Rise to the midway air,
In shining garments meet their King,
And low adore him there.”