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ODE.

TO THE SONS OF BRITAIN AND AMERICA.

Occasioned by the Commencement of Hostilities.

[BY THE REV. JOHN BLACK, WOODBRIDGE.]

Sons of Columbia, sheath the sword!

And Britain stay thy vengeful hand!

What profit can dire War afford?

Why thus with hostile banners stand?

Let Passions' swelling wave subside,

And Reason rule instead of Pride.

Ah! think, if War spread wide his flame,

What thousands in the strife must die—

How few behind them leave a name,

Yet tears for each fill some fowd eye!

Think of the widow's heavy sighs,

And the poor orphan's melting cries!

But should not these soft sorrows move,

And head-long Anger shout "To arms!"

And fierce Defiance long to prove

His might amidst the field's alarms;

And Hate and Ire inflame each host,

And cannon thunder round the coast:

Yet will not Interest's voice prevail!

Reflect, how Commerce must decline,

The loom stand still, and Want assail

The many that must starve and pine;

And burdens weigh each nation down,

And wild Despair with fury frown.

Ye brothers are—both Freedom prize;

And in one language worship Heav'n:

Why then Religion's voice despise,

By bellicose Hatred madly driv'n?

Let Reason and Religion reign,

And War's grim dogs once more enchain!

Encroach not on each other's right,

Let Justice lift aloft her scale!

Yet both are brave—both prov'd in fight—

Oppressive Wrong cannot prevail;

Then throw those gleaming arms aside,

In Peace the plough and shuttle guide!

WASHINGTON, MARCH 4, 1813.

At 12 o'clock this day, JAMES MADISON, the President of the United States elect, having attended at the Capitol for the purpose of taking the Oath of Office, delivered to the vast concourse of people assembled on the occasion, the following

SPEECH:

About to add the solemnity of an oath to the obligations imposed by a second call to the station, in which my country heretofore placed me, I find in the presence of this respectable assembly, an opportunity of publicly repeating my profound sense of so distinguished a confidence, and of the responsibility united with it. The impressions on me are strengthened by such an evidence, that my faithful endeavors to discharge my arduous duties have been favorably estimated; and by a consideration on the momentous period at which the trust has been renewed.—From the weight and magnitude now belonging to it, I should be compelled to shrink, if I had less reliance on the support of an enlightened and generous people, and feel less deeply a conviction, that the war with a powerful nation, which forms so prominent a feature in a situation, is stamped with that justice, which invites the smiles of heaven on the means of conducting it to a successful termination.

May we not cherish this sentiment, without presumption, when we reflect on the characters by which this war is distinguished?

It was not declared on the part of the United States until it had been long made on them, in reality, though not in name: until arguments and expostulations had been exhausted; until a positive declaration had been received, that the wrongs provoking it would not be discontinued; nor until this appeal could no longer be delayed, without breaking down the spirit of the nation, destroying all confidence in itself and in its political institutions; and either perpetuating a state of disgraceful suffering, or regaining, by more costly sacrifices and more severe struggles, our lost rank and respect among independent powers.

On the issue of the war are staked our national sovereignty on the high seas, and security of an important class of citizens, whose occupations give the proper value to those of every other class. Not to contend for such a stake, is to surrender our equality with other powers, on the element common to all; and to violate the sacred title, which every member of the society has to its protection. I need not call into view the unlawfulness of the practice, by which our mariners are forced, at the will of every cruising officer, from their own vessels into foreign ones, nor paint the outrages inseparable from it. The proofs are in the records of each successive administration of our government; and the cruel sufferings of that portion of the American people have found their way to every bosom not dead to the sympathies of human nature.

As the war was just in its origin, and necessary and noble in its objects, we can reflect with a proud satisfaction, that in carrying it on, no principle of justice or honor, no usage of civilized nations, no precept of courtesy or humanity have been infringed. The war has been waged on our part, with scrupulous regard to all these obligations, and in a spirit of liberality which was never surpassed.

How little has been the effect of this example on the conduct of the enemy?

They have retained as prisoners of war citizens of the United States, not liable to be so considered under the usages of war.

They have refused to consider as prisoners of war, and threatened to punish as traitors and deserters, per-

sons emigrating without restraint to the United States; incorporated by naturalization into our political family, and fighting under the authority of their adopted country, in open and honorable war, for the maintenance of its rights and safety. Such is the avowed purpose of a government, which is in the practice of naturalizing, by thousands, citizens of other countries, and not only of permitting but compelling them to fight its battles against their native country.

They have not, it is true, taken into their own hands the hatchet and the knife, devoted to indiscriminate massacre; but they have let loose the savages armed with these cruel instruments; have allured them into their service, and carried them to battle by their sides, eager to glut their savage thirst with the blood of the vanquished, and to finish the work of torture and death on maimed and defenceless captives. And what was never before seen, British commanders have extorted victory over the unconquerable valor of our troops, by presenting to the sympathy of their chief awaiting massacre from their savage associates.

And now we find them in further contempt of the modes of honorable warfare, supplying the place of a conquering force, by attempts to disorganize our political society, to dismember our confederated Republic. Happily, like others, these will recoil on the authors: but they mark the degenerate councils from which they emanate; and if they did not belong to a series of unexampled inconsistencies, might excite the greater wonder, as proceeding from a government which founded the very war in which it has been so long engaged, on a charge against the disorganizing and insurrectional policy of its adversary.

To render the justice of the war on our part the more conspicuous, the reluctance to commence it was followed by the earliest and strongest manifestations of a disposition to arrest its progress. The sword was scarcely out of the scabbard before the enemy was apprized of the reasonable terms on which it would be resheathed. Still more precise advances were repeated, and have been received in a spirit forbidding every reliance not placed in the military resources of the nation.

These resources are amply sufficient to bring the war to an honorable issue. Our nation is, in number, more than half that of the British isles. It is composed of a brave, a free, a virtuous and an intelligent people. Our country abounds in the necessities, the arts and the comforts of life. A general prosperity is visible in the public countenance. The means employed by the British cabinet to undermine it, have recoiled on themselves; have given to our national faculties a more rapid development; and, draining or diverting the precious metal from British circulation and British vaults, have poured them into those of the United States. It is a propitious consideration, that an unavoidable war should have found this seasonable facility for the contributions required to support it. When the public voice called for war, all knew and still know, that without them it could not be carried on, through the period which it might last; and the patriotism, the good sense and the manly spirit of our fellow-citizens, are pledges for the cheerfulness with which they will bear each his share of the common burden. To render the war short, and its success sure, animated and systematic exertions alone are necessary, and the success of our arms now may long preserve our country from the necessity of another resort to them. Already have the gallant exploits of our naval heroes proved to the world our inherent capacity to maintain our rights on one element. If the reputation of our arms has been thrown under clouds on the other, presaging flashes of heroic enterprise assure us, that nothing is wanting to correspondent triumphs there also, but the discipline and habits which are in daily progress.

The extraordinary speech of Mr. Madison, delivered on the 4th of March at his inauguration, will be read with much interest by both parties. To the lovers of war and blood it will be a feast. To the lovers of peace and the blessings which attend it, it affords no hope nor consolation. This speech is one of the boldest as well as most violent productions, that has ever come from the executive. Speaking of his proposals for an armistice, he says that every reliance, not placed in the military resources of the nation, is forbidden.—Every expectation of speedy peace is avowedly at an end. The American people are told in direct terms by the President that they must look to the sword alone to decide the mighty contest in which they have been involved.

The terms of this speech are as extraordinary as the matter. It reads like a Manifesto, or more like the Philippic of a hot-headed orator, with as little regard to truth and reason. "A general prosperity is visible in the public countenance."—A decent attention to decorum, and a small share of sympathy for the many misfortunes, both public and private, which now oppress the country, might have spared this unfeeling triumph. Does Mr. Madison see this general prosperity in the public countenance of our towns and cities? Does he see it on the inland frontiers? Does he see it in the miserable, unprotected inhabitants, flying from house and home to escape the fury of the savage? Does he see it in the disgraceful loss of three armies? Mr. M. says the appeal to arms could no longer be delayed without breaking down the spirit of the nation! He knew, as well as any man in the nation, that the sense of the nation was not for war, when it was declared.—But he knew, and what was of more importance to him, that the spirit of his Presidency would be broken down, unless he complied with the demands of the hot-headed partisans around him to make war. It was made known to him without ceremony that the only condition, on which he could be nominated by a Congressional Caucus, was a pledge to recommend direct war to Congress. It was a public boast after the declaration.

of war by certain war hawks, that they had driven the little man up to it. A war, a war! "My kingdom for a war," emphatically applied to the great man at the palace. This step was taken against his own wishes and convictions; as his previous conduct during the whole session furnishes ample evidence. This is a subject on which a man of common delicacy and assurance would not have touched.

Mr. M. says our national sovereignty on the seas is staked on the issue of the war. How can this be? Great-Britain explicitly acknowledged the inviolable sovereignty of our national ships on the ocean in time of peace. If he means Bonaparte's doctrine, that the flag of merchant vessels shall protect every thing that sails under them, then he may carry on the war, till the last ship of Great-Britain is sunk. On this subject he has a purposed ambiguity to perplex men's minds. But it smells strongly of the French code.

The President complains bitterly of the British government for attempting to disorganize our political society, as he is pleased to say, because they give a preference to the trade of the northern states, in a late order of council. On this subject he seems unmercifully enraged. He is not however the first man, who could not see a beam in his own eye. How did this virtuous President commence the war? We refer him and his friends to Hull's proclamation and the invasion of Canada. Did he not invite, nay, even threaten destruction to those, who did not abandon their own government and fly to the standard of the United States? Did not Hull in the name and by the authority of his government promise protection to every man, who should turn traitor to the British government and join him? Has the British government ever invited any of our citizens to quit their allegiance and join them? There is no pretence of any such thing. With what grace then does this charge come from the pure and modest Madison? Let his friends answer.

They have let loose the savages upon us. Just as if the savages belonged to the enemy, and the enemy ought to be so obliging and courteous as to keep the Indians at home bound hand and foot. What a charming enemy it would be, if they would only let me conduct as my Majesty pleases; let me take Canada, and then let me take Nova-Scotia, and then let me take Florida, and then let me take Mexico, and I would not ask at present to go into South America. Oh what "degenerate councils" these are that oppose my will! How angry I am! But these will all recoil on them. But stop, dear Sir, you forgot Congress would not adopt your recommendations, to prohibit exportations and licences to make these things recoil on the enemy.

We would ask again who has been disorganising the Floridas for two years!

Let this Speech be attentively read.

[Portsmouth Oracle.]

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 1813.

The President communicated the following

MESSAGE:—

To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States.

I lay before Congress copies of a proclamation of the British Lieutenant-Governor of the Island of Bermuda, which has appeared under circumstances leaving no doubt of its authenticity. It recites a British Order in Council of the 26th of October last, providing for the supply of the British West-Indies and other colonial possessions, by a trade under special licences, and is accompanied by circular instructions to the colonial Governors, which confine licensed importations from ports of the United States, to the ports of the eastern states exclusively.

The government of Great-Britain had already introduced into her commerce during the war, a system which at once violated the rights of other nations, and resting on a mass of forgery and perjury unknown to other times, was making an unfortunate progress in undermining those principles of morality and religion which are the best foundation of national happiness.

The policy now proclaimed to the world, introduces into her mode of warfare a system equally distinguished by the deformity of its features and the depravity of its character; having for its object to dissolve the ties of allegiance, and the sentiments of loyalty, in the adversary nation, and to seduce and separate its component parts the one from the other.

The general tendency of these demoralizing and disorganizing contrivances, will be reprobated by the civilized and christian world, and the insulting attempt on the virtue, the honor, the patriotism, and the fidelity of our brethren of the Eastern States, will not fail to call forth all their indignation and resentment, and to attach, more and more, all the States to that happy Union and Constitution, against which such insidious and malignant artifices are directed.

The better to guard, nevertheless, against the effect of individual cupidity and treachery, and to turn the corrupt projects of the enemy against herself, I recommend to the consideration of Congress the expediency of an effectual prohibition of any trade whatever, by citizens or inhabitants of the United States under special licences, whether relating to persons or ports, and in aid thereof a prohibition of all exportations from the United States in foreign bottoms, few of which are actually employed, whilst multiplying counterfeits of their flags and papers are covering and encouraging the navigation of the enemy.

Feb. 24, 1813.

JAMES MADISON.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

The strong and indignant terms in which Mr. Madison, in the Message given this day, has condemned what he chooses to call an attempt on the part of the government of Great-Britain to demoralize and corrupt