AN

EULOGY

ON THE

CHARACTER AND PUBLIC SERVICES

OF

JAMES MONROE,

LATE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES:

DELIVERED IN CINCINNATI,
AUGUST 27, 1831,
IN COMPLIANCE WITH AN INVITATION FROM THE CITIZENS.

BY THE HON. JOHN M'LEAN.

PUBLISHED
BY ORDER OF THE CITY COUNCIL,
From a Copy submitted by
THE COMMITTEE OF ARRANGEMENTS.

LOOKER AND REYNOLDS, PRINTERS.

1831.

EULOGY ON JAMES MONROE.

THERE can be no spectacle more imposing, or better calculated to produce a deep moral effect, than the sorrows of a whole nation, at the loss of a distinguished citizen. In this scene, all the best feelings of the heart are engaged. The demonstrations of respect witnessed, in all the official branches of the government, in the military service, by sea and land, and in the voluntary assemblages of the people, cannot fail to make an impression, as lasting as our existence.

We see, it is true, but little of the pomp and pageantry which are displayed, on such occasions, in regal governments, where the chief object, would seem to be, to strike with admiration and awe, the assembled multitudes. But, ours is the voluntary homage of a free people, paid to virtue and eminent public services. An homage, not excited by the glare of military glory, but by the civil virtues of one of the fathers of his country. The occasion calls for no demonstrations, in actions or words, which are not in strict accordance with our grief; and which do not, by opening the avenues of the heart, lessen the weight which oppresses it.

It would seem, as if this visitation of Providence, which we deplore, but to which we bow, in humble submission, was designed to make a deep impression upon the nation. It was not enough, that Adams and Jefferson, should be called from earth, on the day which gave birth to our independence.

Who did not feel, when intelligence was received of the death of one of those distinguished individuals, on the 4th of July, 1826, that it was a most extraordinary occurrence! And when the account of the death of the other, on the same day, reached us, what language could describe our emotions! We were overwhelmed with sorrow, at the loss of these fathers of the republic; and yet there was a joy springing up in the soul, at the wonderful coincidence. It was viewed as evidence, that Providence, who in the infancy of our republic, had influenced our councils, and led our armies to victory, was still propitious. That he designed, by that stroke, to increase our attachment to rational liberty, in signalizing still more, its birth day.

But, on this birth day of the nation, Monroe is also called from earth. Hath not the Almighty again spoken, and does not silence become the creatures he has made! Miracles may have ceased, but can this language be mistaken. We may not be able to fathom the design, but we know from whence the voice came.

It may be, that to prepare us for an impending storm, these coincidences are necessary. We should lay them up in our hearts, and profit by them in our lives.

To ascribe to a special Providence, coincidences so striking, will scarcely excite the sneer of scepticism, however gross may be its ignorance and presumption.

What a sublime moral effect, must result, from this national exhibition of sorrow. How much will it strengthen the cause of virtue and patriotism. The individual who can survey the whole scene with indifference, who is neither affected by the stroke we lament, nor the public loss we have sustained, may not profit by the occasion. But there is no such individual, who claims the proud appellation of American citizen.

On the dissolution of the most distinguished men of antiquity, their statues were placed among the Gods, by their countrymen, and divine honors were decreed to them. To

these honors many aspired; and some, like Alexander, being unwilling to wait the span of mortality, sought them while living.

Christianity had not then shone upon the earth, in its effulgence. The moral world was enveloped in clouds and darkness. But now, the light is come, and our vision penetrates the veil of futurity.

We know that man has his origin in the dust, and that after acting his part, his body must mingle with its kindred earth, and his spirit return to God who gave it. When we feel the stroke then, we do not sorrow as those who have no hope. Instead of worshipping our departed national benefactors, we cherish their memories, and endeavor to inculcate their virtues. In this way, though dead, they continue to live.

What legacy can a distinguished man leave to his country, of equal value to the fruits of a life devoted to the public service, throughout a series of great emergencies. By such examples, the lessons of patriotism are taught and enforced. His privations and sufferings, his unwearied efforts, his patient devotion in the public service, his elevated principles, and his enduring fame, mark the way and influence the course, of laudable ambition.

No citizen can be found, who does not esteem, above all price, the legacy which Washington left us. If it were blotted from the annals of our country, who would not feel and deeply deplore the loss. We look upon his moral virtues, his elevated patriotism, and his unequalled public services, and each individual feels enriched by such an inheritance. His name sheds a lustre over our beloved country, and we are proud that we were born in the land, which gave him birth. No individual, of any age or nation, has performed services of equal importance, to those of the Father of his Country. In coming to this conclusion, a broad view is taken of the consequences which must flow from those services.

In military triumphs, and in all the pomp and circumstance of war, he has been greatly excelled. But he did not direct the weapons of destruction, to sustain an unjust cause; or gratify an unholy ambition. He fought the battles of liberty, and the whole human race was deeply interested in his triumph.

But, Washington, though most conspicuous, did not stand alone; Adams, and Jefferson, and Madison, and Monroe, were with him; and many others, whose names are inscribed, in living letters, upon the folds of our escutcheon. If they did not all brave the dangers of the field with him, they in council, by their moral firmness and high intelligence, directed the springs of action. They defied the wrath of a powerful and incensed enemy, in a different, though scarcely less dangerous form.

Character, in a great degree, is formed by circumstances. When the throes and convulsions of society, move the foundation on which it rests, and the boundaries of social order seem to be broken up, master spirits will arise, to control the storm and lead men to their destinies. If such times do not create capacity, they call it into action, and rouse all its latent energies. On such occasions, men often become really great, who under ordinary circumstances, would have risen but little, above the common mass.

The great men of Rome, are found in the midst of her greatest excitations. And so in France, in the days of her Revolution. Cæsar and Bonaparte might have lived and died, far less known to fame, had they lived in a period when the passions of men were undisturbed. There must be some powerful impulse, to produce the highest intellectual efforts. This impulse may operate on a community or nation, or it may be limited to an individual. Such was the case of Byron, who by a series of adverse circumstances, produced by his own conduct, was driven almost to madness; and under his bad destiny, his mind shot forth its strength wildly, but powerfully.

Had our Revolution never occurred, many of the names now so dear to all, might have been unknown to history. But, our Washingtons, Adamses, Jeffersons, Madisons, and Monroes, would have been distinguished, more or less, in any age or country. They were great men by nature, and they were fortunate, in being placed under circumstances, the most favorable for the development of their highest intellectual energies. No period has ever existed, better calculated to awaken the latent powers of the human mind, and fully develop character, than the American revolution. In every point of view, the struggle was most unequal. On the one side, was a powerful nation, inured to war, with unlimited resources in men and money: On the other, was an infant people, widely scattered, over a great extent of country; inexperienced in war, without a standing force, or the means of raising, sustaining or arming one. Under such circumstances, great moral energies were requisite, and the most dauntless spirit, to meet the storms of war. But our fathers, breasted its force, and defied its fury. They relied on the justice of their cause, and in the protection of Providence. This iwas no assumed reliance, or hypocritical profession. It proceeded from the depths of the heart, and pervaded every breast.

Such a contest was well calculated to develop, to the utmost, the physical and mental powers of man. For strong arms were as necessary as wise heads. Whilst the tug of war was met, shoulder to shoulder, the creative energies of mind were essential to produce the sinews of war.

This is the school in which the great men of our Revolution were formed. They were familiar with danger, and all the vicissitudes of war. But such a war was never before waged. It was the most sublime scene that had ever been enacted, by man, on the human theatre.

A nation had often been seen, struggling against a foreign enemy or domestic oppressor. But, it was, for the most part,

a struggle between slaves, for the benefit of their masters. Never, before the American revolution, was a whole people, inspired by the spirit of liberty, seen to burst the shackles of slavery, and proclaim their Independence. Not an independence alone, from foreign domination, but from all tyrannical exercise of power. An independence, based upon the immutable rights of man. How insignificant are the causes of wars, which have desolated the plains of Europe, in comparison with this; and how limited, their beneficial consequences!

In this important struggle, the battles of liberty were fought. Not the liberty of this nation, nor of this continent, but the liberty of the human race. The thrones of despotism were made to topple, and those who sat thereon grew pale. They saw, that the grand problem, whether man was capable of self-government, was about to be solved; and they well understood the effect of a favorable solution.

In this mighty conflict, the venerable patriot, whose loss we deplore, was not an unimportant actor. He carried to his grave honorable testimonials of his noble daring. On the plains of Trenton, he was severely wounded, while fighting by the side of Washington.

If, as was classically remarked by a distinguished man, our revolutionary patriots, like the books of the Sybil, become more valuable, as their numbers diminish, how deeply should we feel the loss of James Monroe. He has, it is true, contributed largely to fill many of the richest pages in our history; but this has only tended to encrease our attachments to him. We must be thankful to a kind Providence, who spared him to his country so long, and enabled him to render unto it, and to mankind, such important services.

The revolutionary stock will soon be exhausted. If those of them who are now living, were collected together, the number would be small; and these are falling, on the right hand and on the left. But one survives, of those who signed the

Declaration of Independence. The march of time must soon gather those that remain to the tomb of their fathers. Their compatriots, who are no more, have left us a rich inheritance. An inheritance, endeared to us, as well by the sacrifices through which it was procured, as by its inestimable value. Ripe in years and full of honors, they have fallen; but their impress is reflected by the institutions of their country; and although their sun has passed from our vision, so strong were the rays of its glory, and so brilliant was its course, that the light and heat remain. We are still warmed by its influence, and guided by its light.

James Monroe was a native of Virginia, being born in Westmoreland county, in September, 1758. He, like Jefferson, was educated at the College of William and Mary.

In the Northern Neck of Virginia, which includes the county of Westmoreland, the society, at the birth of Mr. Monroe, was considered in Virginia, as occupying the first rank. The same county was also the birth-place of Washington and Madison, and of the Lees, and many others who figured in the revolution. At this time, there existed in Virginia, a more marked distinction in the grades of society, than was to be found in any of the other colonies. Great landed estates and slave labor, with the notions which were imbibed from the mother country, contributed to produce this result. But, although there was much of aristocracy, which our more republican habits would now condemn, the elegant hospitalities which were practised, combined with an assemblage of talent of the first order, and of the highest cultivation, made the society of the Northern Neck equal, perhaps, to any that could be met with in the mother country. Their stately palaces yet remain, with their vast appendages, and show, on how large and splendid a scale, their former occupants lived.

It might be difficult, to convince those who were acquainted with the republican habits of Mr. Monroe, that he was ever

connected with such a society. He seemed to have had the stamp of republicanism from nature. No man was more unobtrusive in his deportment, or cherished a more sincere deference for those with whom he came in contact. His genuine modesty was discoverable on all occasions, and especially, when complimentary language was addressed to him. The unaffected embarrassment which this would never fail to produce, presented his character in a most amiable light. He possessed, in an eminent degree, the mien of a Virginia gentleman of his day. Dignity and simplicity were so combined, that it was difficult to determine, which most to admire; and yet, there was an awkwardness in his manner, which seemed to derive its impulse from the heart, and which, united with a peculiar frankness of expression, and benignity of countenance, produced an irresistible effect.

No man ever approached James Monroe, free from prejudice, who doubted the goodness of his heart, or the genuineness of his patriotism. His conversation was unambitious, though highly instructive. He seemed to be desirous of learning from others, instead of obtruding his own opinions. But, without effort, and almost unconsciously, he would often, in conversation, open the rich stores of practical wisdom he possessed.

Mr. Monroe's mind was distinguished more, for patient thought and profound investigation, than brilliancy of conception, or fluency of expression. It was slow in its progress, but untiring in its operations, and certain in its results. No subject was too intricate for its searching powers, no system too large, for its comprehension. All experience proves, that such a mind is best qualified to act a first part in the great drama of life. If we were about to select a poet or a declaimer, we would point to a man of great nervous sensibility, whose passions are strong, and whose enthusiasm is unbounded. But, who would select a mind thus constituted, to

govern a nation. Such qualities are fitted, only, to act a subordinate part, on a limited theatre. The mind which is governed by impulses, and does not act from the deliberate results of its own judgment, can never control, on a great scale, the springs of human action. This is the work of the highest order of talent.

The whole course of Mr. Monroe, in the public service, was characterised by uncommon sagacity, and devoted patriotism. Whether in the discharge of the duties of a foreign Minister, as Secretary of State, or in the War Department; in the Chief Executive office of his own State, or of the Union; he evinced great capacity and fitness. To have sustained himself well, in each of these stations, would show no common merit; but to have acquired reputation in each, and to have adorned in each, the character of his country, is the highest praise.

That this was done by Mr. Monroe, is shown by the history of his country. If the great acts of the government, while he was connected with it, do not exhibit him in bold relief, as the principal actor, it is found, by investigation, that he was among the master spirits of the day, and contributed his full share to the glorious results we have witnessed. He did not command the army of the Confederation; nor write the Declaration of Independence; nor take a conspicuous stand in the Congress of the revolution. These places were filled by persons, designed by heaven to fill them; but, he served in as many important stations, as any other citizen, after the war; and his services will not be lessened, by any just comparison, that can be instituted. He negociated, in conjunction with Mr. Livingston, the purchase of Louisiana; and did much, in the course of his administration, to allay the spirit of party. For this latter service, he is entitled to the thanks of every patriot; and yet on this ground was he assailed. His assailants were those, who flourish most, in the

feculence of party violence, where personal merit and enlightened patriotism, are alike disregarded.

So peaceful and prosperous was the administration of Mr. Monroe, and so rapidly did it advance our general prosperity, that it may be designated the Augustan years of the Republic. Whatever we may hope for in time to come, we can never expect to realize a period of greater national happiness.

To exhibit the minuter incidents of Mr. Monroe's life, will be the duty of his biographer; but I should fall short of mine, if I were not to refer to some of the leading events of his life, as connected with the public service.

Though young at the commencement of the revolution, Monroe caught the spirit that pervaded the ancient dominion. In the assemblies of the people he was active, for his years; and also, in all the means used to excite the indignation of an oppressed country. He was found in the ranks of the army, fighting the battles of his country, before he arrived at the years of manhood. He was first appointed Lieutenant; and in this capacity fought at the battles of Haerlem Heights, of the White Plains, and in the famous retreat of Washington, through the Jerseys. In the battle of Trenton, where he was dangerously wounded, he conducted with great gallantry.

In the campaigns of '77 and '78, he acted as aid to Lord Sterling, and was at the battles of Brandywine, Germantown and Monmouth. His conduct in these engagements was such as to present him in the most favorable light to the whole army; and to the special notice and confidence of the Commander-in-Chief. He was advanced in '79 to the rank of Colonel, and was ordered to recruit his regiment in Virginia. As the resources of that State had been greatly exhausted by the war, this levy was found impracticable. While he was engaged in endeavoring to recruit troops, and in advancing the public service, in every way within his power, he resumed the study of law, under Mr. Jefferson. At this early day, a

friendship was formed between these distinguished individuals, which continued during their lives.

Mr. Monroe prosecuted the study of law until his admission to the bar. He then commenced the practice of his profession at Charlotteville, in Albemarle county, and in several of the adjoining counties. Though he was not eloquent, yet, the knowledge of his profession which he displayed,—his high integrity, popular manners, and strict attention to his duties, soon acquired him numerous clients, and the prospect of a profitable business.

Had he steadily pursued this course, he would have secured to himself a fortune, and avoided those embarrassments, which gave him so much anxiety in the evening of life.—But, although such a course would have contributed to his own peace and quietude, and the independence of his children,—had he pursued it, he would have been almost lost to fame; and the loss to the country would have been in proportion to the great services he has rendered it. We cannot, therefore, but congratulate ourselves and our country, that the active powers of this distinguished man were not confined to the practice of a profession of limited usefulness.

I may be pardoned here, for introducing an anecdote, which occurred within my own knowledge, and which illustrates the beauty and value of our institutions.

During the second term of Mr. Monroe's presidency, an aged Virginia gentleman called to pay his respects to the President, at Washington. He was the person who had first employed Mr. Monroe, in his profession. The President received him with the greatest cordiality, and entered, with much interest, into the minutia of the suit referred to. It seems to have made a strong impression on his mind, for he spoke of the details, with as much accuracy, as if the whole had been a recent occurrence. How delightful, for an indi-

vidual who occupies the highest seat of earthly honors, to advert to the early incidents of his active life!

Mr. Monroe was elected to the Legislature of Virginia, from the county of Albemarle, the same county which was represented by Mr. Jefferson; and he was an active and useful member of that body. At the age of twenty-four, he was elected, by the Legislature, a member of the old Congress. His usefulness in Congress is shown, by the important measures he brought forward or advocated, and the committees, on which he acted, during a service of three years. He was a member of the Virginia Convention, in which the Federal Constitution was discussed and adopted. In that distinguished body, he took a leading part, and his speeches show the enlarged views he presented of the condition of the country, and its future prospects. Like Henry, he was apprehensive that the powers proposed to be vested in the Federal Government, would be dangerous to the sovereignty of the States, and was opposed to the Constitution in the form presented; but after its adoption he faithfully sustained it in all the official stations he subsequently filled.

That apprehensions should be entertained, by the republicans of that day, of a Federal Government, whose powers were in some respects, not dissimilar to the executive powers of the British Government, by whom they had been oppressed, was not extraordinary. They had just past through a dreadful, but glorious conflict, and had established their Independence; and they would naturally feel no small degree of jealousy, in the investment of executive powers, in a Government acting beyond the control of the State. The proposed Government was unlike any that had ever existed; and its effects were not clearly seen. But, the necessity of a superintending power over the general interests of the States was so apparent, that it was admitted by all. The Articles of the Confederation had been found totally inadequate to this object. It was

seen, that the voluntary acquiesence of States, in federal measures, was not to be expected in time of peace, when their interests, supposed or real, would not be advanced. In the regulation of foreign commerce, each State was influenced by its local interests; and they were often in conflict with the local interests of neighboring States. It was soon discovered, therefore, that conflicts of the most serious nature would arise between the different States, on this subject; and that all the fruits of the Revolution must perish, without a more efficient Federal Government.

This was indeed a most eventful period to the republic; but sound sense and practical wisdom, which directed it through the storms of the Revolution, prevailed, and the Constitution was adopted.

It is believed, that the discussion in this Convention, and the part which was taken in it by some of the leading and most popular members, had no small influence in producing that jealousy of Federal powers, which still exists in Virginia. The mode in which those powers were assumed and exercised, at an early period of the federal administration, had a strong tendency to fix this feeling. This remark is not made in derogation of that renowned commonwealth. A jealousy of power is consistent with the most elevated views of liberty.

The Federal Constitution is considered by some, as a mere compact between the States, similar to the Articles of Confederation, though investing the Government with more extensive powers. By others it is considered, as having emanated from the people of the Union in their sovereign capacity. The construction of this instrument, as to the powers conferred, has been more or less influenced, by the view taken of its origin. As both parties have erred in this view, it follows, that so far as it has influenced the construction of the instrument, the conclusions are erroneous.

On this occasion, it would be improper to indulge in a discussion of this important subject; but, as the construction of this instrument had an important bearing on Mr. Monroe's administration, and constituted the only objection to it by some, I may be permitted to remark, that the Federal Constitution proceeded from the people of the respective States. It emanated from a combined power: from the people of each State in Convention as an integral part of the Union. It was not a State Convention for the adoption of a Constitution for the State, which the people of the State might revoke or alter at pleasure; but a Convention, assembled within the State, and composed of its citizens, to adopt a Constitution for the Union. If it had been designed as a mere compact *between the States*, it would have been formed by the States, through the constituted organs of their sovereign will. But, there was a resort to first principles, by an appeal to the People, and they were designated in the Constitution as, "We, the people of the United States." As a Convention of the State, they had a right to modify the Constitution of the State, and limit the powers under it:—as acting for the Union, they had power to bind, and did bind, the other States, by the adoption of the Federal Constitution.

Under Gen. Washington's administration, Mr. Monroe was elected to the Senate of the United States. Although he remained only a short time in that body, he took an active part in its discussions, and in all the leading measures adopted. Such was his personal worth and high qualifications, in the estimation of Washington, that he was appointed Minister to France, at this critical and important period. This appointment was not only unsolicited by Mr. Monroe, but he did not know that it was contemplated, until the day before the nomination was sent to the Senate. As soon as his arrangements could be made, for so unexpected a departure from the United States, he sailed for France, and reached Paris without delay.

His arrival at this great metropolis was at a most important juncture. The French Revolution was in its full tide, and the spirit of the whole nation seemed to be republican. This feeling, so congenial with his own, soon recommended Mr. Monroe to the confidence of the National Directory, and to all the public functionaries at Paris. Coming as the official organ of a Government which had been recently established on the representative principle, by a people who had covered themselves with imperishable glory, he was peculiarly recommended to the confidence of the French nation, struggling for liberty.

In a short time Mr. Monroe acquired an astonishing popularity with the republicans of France. He was consulted by them in their movements, and no doubt is entertained, that his advice had a most important influence on many of their public measures. Being a great favorite in the country, and with the Government, he was found to be a most successful representative of the interests of his own country. His efforts were instrumental in removing any feelings of dissatisfaction which remained, at the refusal of his country to make common cause with France. This was insisted on by the French authorities as reasonable, from the nature of their struggle, the friendly relations which existed between the two Governments, and a treaty stipulation, on which the aid of that nation had been given to this, in its recent struggle with England.

Mr. Monroe remained at Paris about three years, with increased reputation. It is believed, that we never had a representative to that court, who was equally popular with the great mass of the French people. But, it seems not to fall to the lot of man, however pure his character may be, or however great his public services, to escape the envy and malice of cotemporaries. Influential individuals in this country, who were hostile to Mr. Monroe, combined their efforts to procure his recal. Whether this hostility was excited from a fear of his

growing popularity, or from other grounds equally selfish, it may be difficult to determine; but they were successful, and he was recalled.

It is believed that Gen. Washington was influenced to this step by the representations made to him, that Mr. Monroe entered with so much ardor into the cause of Republican France, that it might, in some way, implicate his own Government. Whatever the principal cause may have been, whether made public or not, it is certain that Washington retained for Mr. Monroe, ever afterwards, the sincerest friendship, and felt the highest confidence in his integrity.

The National Directory was greatly excited at the recal of Mr. Monroe; and it is believed, that his special interposition was necessary to prevent such an expression on the subject, as might have been displeasing to his own Government. He had a most distinguished audience of leave, at which all the principal officers of the Government were present.

On his return to this country, Mr. Monroe again resumed his profession; but he was soon afterwards elected to the Legislature, and then to the office of Governor of the State. In this office he served with distinguished reputation.

Having early taken his stand, on the democratic side of the question, in the controversy which arose about the close of Gen. Washington's administration; he was still more strongly identified with the same side, in the violent contest which took place in the presidency of Mr. Adams.

He was appointed Minister to Spain, in conjunction with Mr. Pinkney, by Mr. Jefferson, in the year 1803, with a view, it is believed, of negociating for the Floridas. On the same day he was appointed Minister to France, in conjunction with Mr. Livingston. The purchase of Louisiana had not, at that time, been thought of; and it is believed, that hints thrown out by Mr. Monroe, may have had some influence in inducing the President to change the object of his purchase. Louisiana

having been transferred to France, Mr. Monroe was authorized to proceed to Paris, to enter upon the negociation jointly with Mr. Livingston, for its purchase.

On his arrival at Paris, he found many of his old friends, who received him with the utmost cordiality. But the Government of that country had changed its character, and by this change were his hopes of republicanism in that quarter, blasted. He arrived at Paris at a most fortunate period for the success of his mission. The first Consul being engaged in fitting out an important military expedition, was greatly in want of funds; and to this circumstance and the judicious conduct of our Ministers, may the acquisition of Louisiana be attributed. It was purchased at a price bearing a very small proportion to its value. By this purchase we acquired a tract of country, larger than the continent of Europe, and which with the grandest rivers on the globe, possessed all varieties of soil, climate and production.

To the Western Country, this territory is indeed invaluable. It commanded the outlets of our commerce, and in the hands of a foreign and hostile power, would have been destructive of our prosperity.

The command of the Mississippi was indispensable to the harmony of the Union.

This act greatly distinguished the administration of Mr. Jefferson. To have been the principal means of so great and invaluable an acquisition to our country, on terms so favorable, was of itself enough to immortalize the name of any individual. Whilst we yield to Mr. Jefferson the chief agency in this purchase, we cannot, in justice, withhold due credit to the instruments through which it was obtained.

It is needless to dwell on the importance of this measure to a western audience. So long as the great Mississippi and its tributary streams shall bear upon their bosoms the surplus

produce of an exhaustless country, will the incalculable benefits of this territory be felt and acknowledged.

From Paris, Mr. Monroe was appointed Minister to England. Shortly after he reached London, he was charged with a special mission to Spain. In conjunction with our Minister resident at that court, he negociated a treaty. He then returned to London, where, jointly with Mr. Pinkney, he discussed, with great ability, the various pretensions of Great Britain, assumed by her orders in council, under the pretext of counteracting the decrees of the French Emperor. I have heard the distinguished colleague of Mr. Monroe, do justice to the talents he displayed in this important controversy.

A treaty was signed by Mr. Monroe and colleague, which, not being strictly within the letter of their instructions, in the opinion of the President, was returned to them, without having been submitted to the Senate. This circumstance was unpleasant to Mr. Monroe, and he requested leave to return to this country. Until the answer of the President was received, and so long as there was the least prospect of effecting any good by negociation, he remained at his post. On his return he published an account of his mission; in which, he treated the question of difference between the President and himself, with delicacy, but with ability. This appeal presented him in a favorable light before the American people.

The close of the second term of Mr. Jefferson's presidency being near, Mr. Monroe was spoken of as his successor. The name of Mr. Madison was also before the country for the same office. Between these two gentlemen, Mr. Jefferson acted with a refined delicacy, which it would be well for every incumbent of that eminent charge to imitate.

The current of public sentiment seemed to run in favor of Mr. Madison, from the circumstance of his having been more in the public view by his services in the Department of State;

and the name of Mr. Monroe was not brought forward by his friends.

Mr. Monroe was again elected Governor of Virginia; in which office he continued to serve, until he was called by President Madison to fill the Department of State. He discharged the important duties of this responsible office with high reputation to himself and his country.

Having seen much of the principal Governments of Europe, and being personally acquainted with almost all their public functionaries, he was enabled to judge, with the greater accuracy, as to their course of policy in regard to this country. Every one who was familiar with the acts of the administration, at this time, could not but see, that Mr. Monroe possessed the entire confidence of the President; and that of all the Ministers he was the most efficient.

Seeing the repeated injuries that had been inflicted on his country, and knowing that redress by negociation was hopeless, he was a decided advocate for the war. It was declared; and the reverses to our arms, which rapidly followed, had well nigh prostrated the administration. Perhaps it was more indebted for success, to the injudicious movements made against it by its opponents, than to any system of measures adopted during the first year of the contest.

The disasters which occurred, and which were deeply felt by the whole country, afforded an occasion for an act of the most lofty patriotism by Mr. Monroe.

One army had been disgracefully surrendered at Detroit, and with it a part of our territory. The attempts made on Canada had failed. Our ranks could not be filled; and our armies had become somewhat dispirited. Our treasury was exhausted, and public credit completely prostrated. The Capitol had been burnt,—the Secretary of War removed.

The immense armies which England had employed on the Continent, being released from that theatre, were about to be

precipitated on our almost defenceless country. At this fearful crisis, Mr. Monroe assumed the duties of the War Department. A mind of common vigor would have shrunk from so mighty a responsibility.

In the Department of State he was measurably safe. At least his popularity could not be essentially impaired, so long as the administration was sustained. Not so in the Department of War. One individual of splendid endowments, and much military experience, had fallen from that perilous station. Yet Monroe assumed it and all its perils, willingly and fearlessly. His friends trembled for his fate, and many gave him up as lost. But he never faltered. With an assiduity which has never been exceeded by any officer, he applied himself to the performance of his new duties. He found much to do; even more than he expected. In a great degree through his efforts, our armies were invigorated, and public credit was somewhat revived.

It is a duty I owe to his memory, and most willingly do I discharge it, to state, of my own knowledge, that about this time, payments to a large amount were made to public creditors, on the personal responsibility of Mr. Monroe. The Banks refused to advance money on the credit of the Government, either in exchange for Treasury notes or other assurances, and he obtained it on his private endorsement.

But it remained for this distinguished man to afford, if possible, a still more signal evidence of devoted patriotism.

It was an object of the greatest importance, to unite the energies of the whole country in the prosecution of the war. This was deemed essential to bring it to a speedy and successful conclusion; if not to maintain the integrity of the country. But this could only be hoped for by removing, as far as possible, the grounds of opposition. Mr. Monroe's name was already before the country, as the successor of Mr. Madison; and as a strong opposition had been shown, from

a certain quarter, against the success of what was called the Virginia dynasty, he came to the determination of withdrawing his name from the contest. With this view he sent for two of his distinguished friends in Congress, from Pennsylvania, and informed them of the determination he had come to, and the reasons which had led to it. To change this determination, required all the firmness and perseverance of the gentlemen referred to, and other friends of Mr. Monroe; and at last he was only deterred from his purpose, by being convinced, that the act would have less effect, in favor of an energetic prosecution of the war, than he had supposed.

Eulogy is lost on so noble an act of disinterested patriotism. It would have given immortality in the best days of Rome. We cannot wish that occasions may often occur, which would call for such a sacrifice; but the lofty spirit which was ready to make it, cannot be too much admired. How refreshing it is, to turn from the miserable intrigues of other times to an act like this.

The immense labors of the War Department, at this time, and the other cares which devolved on Mr. Monroe, were too great for his physical powers. His system gave way, and he was prostrated. Still his duties were prosecuted, lying on his couch, too feeble to raise his head from the pillow! In this situation, he dictated his despatches, and gave the orders that were indispensable.

The war being ended, successfully and gloriously, Mr. Monroe resumed his duties in the Department of State, and continued to discharge them until he was elected President.

In the organization of his Cabinet, he gave the same high evidence of his regard to the public interest that had been seen through his whole life. He surrounded himself by men of the most distinguished qualifications for the stations they were appointed to fill, and who brought with them a large share of the public confidence. This important step being well taken,

no apprehensions were entertained, for the success of his administration. It was indeed most successful. The great interests of the country, agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial, were steadily advanced; and all parties loved their Government more, on account of the exact justice it dispensed, and the tranquillity to the country which it restored.

Almost all the leading interests of the nation were reviewed and acted on, by this administration; if not with the entire approbation of all parts of the Union, at least with the acquiescence of every part.

Mr. Monroe laid before the country, a long and lucid Exposé of his views, respecting the powers of the General Government to make internal improvements. He sustained, with great ability, the power to appropriate money to these objects; and in this construction, there seemed to be a general acquiescence, except in Virginia. His administration, in its great outlines, was similar to that of Madison and Jefferson. It is not perceived, that in principle, there was any difference. Even on the controverted power of the General Government, to make internal improvements, within a State, it did not carry the principle farther than had been sanctioned, under both the preceding administrations. The appropriations for the construction of the Cumberland Road, sanctioned by Mr. Jefferson, recognised the power in its widest latitude. There was no compact, respecting this Road, which placed it upon a different footing, from any other national work. Indeed it is absurd to suppose, that any one or two of the States could enter into any agreement, with the Union, which should enlarge the Constitutional powers of Congress.

It is worthy of remark, that Mr. Jefferson's administration, which is very justly referred to, in many respects, as a standard, and especially, as to the exercise of Constitutional powers, should have first asserted the power to make improvements within a sovereign State; and that in the purchase of

Louisiana, a still more doubtful power was exercised. And this latter act, it is believed, was universally popular in that part of the Union, which has been most jealous of Federal powers. These facts show, that Constitutional points, though often raised, are frequently influenced by questions of policy; and that popular decisions thereon are often made with reference to particular interests. The powers delegated to the General Government, should be strictly construed; but not so construed, by a species of metaphysical refinement, as to destroy the practical objects of the Constitution.

In the use of patronage, that most delicate and important branch of executive power, Mr. Monroe was governed by those enlarged and elevated views, required by the interests of his country. The utmost deference, in making appointments, was paid to public sentiment; whilst at the same time, irreproachable character and high qualification were indispensable requisites. Personal motives, either as they regarded the President himself, or the person appointed, were lost in higher considerations of public duty.

From the official relation which I bore to the President, towards the close of his administration, it became my duty to consult him in making certain appointments. But in no instance did he intimate a preference for any one of the candidates whose names I laid before him. His answer was, uniformly, "The law has given to you the right to make the appointment; I shall be satisfied with your decision; do what the public interest requires."

In one case, I had every reason to believe, if personal consideration had been permitted to influence him, there were strong grounds for its exercise. One of the applicants was a particular friend, with whom, in early life, he had been long associated in the public service; and for whom he entertained a strong personal regard. A direct appeal to personal friendship was made, and this was enforced, by the necessi-

ties of the applicant. But, even in this case, this more than Roman patriot gave not the slightest intimation of a preference; and another individual was appointed, because I believed him to be better qualified to discharge the duties of the office.

The relation of this incident will be pardoned, on the ground that such cases often tend more to elucidate character than more important transactions. When those selfish feelings, to which we are all more or less liable, come directly in contact with public duty, and they are disregarded, no higher evidence can be given of elevated and patriotic principles. I deem it of some importance to record such instances, as they may not be without their use, in other days of the Republic.

In all time to come, the period of this Administration will be referred to, as the most peaceful and prosperous for the country, that can be found in our annals. It raised to the highest rank, the reputation of our country abroad; and by its action at home, elevated the moral feeling of the people.

His administration being closed, Mr. Monroe retired to his seat in Virginia, with the blessings of the nation resting on his head. He was made a Justice of the Peace, in the county where he resided, and exercised his good offices in promoting the peace and prosperity of his neighbors.

What a spectacle is here witnessed. A man, on whom a short time before rested more than imperial honors, is now seen in the exercise of those humble duties, which belong to the lowest judicial office. This was the only office he would accept; and in its acceptance, he was no doubt influenced by the example of the Father of his Country.

With Jefferson and Madison, he served as Visiter of the Virginia University; and with the latter, he was associated in the late Convention of Virginia. By the unanimous voice of that body, he was called to preside over its deliberations; but his physical powers were too feeble to enable him to con-

tinue long in the discharge of this arduous duty. He resigned before the close of the session, being unable to attend the sittings of the Convention. This, and the resignation of his place as Trustee of the University, were the last public acts of this distinguished man.

After the death of Mrs. Monroe, which occurred some twelve or fifteen months ago, he was induced to visit his son-in-law in the city of New-York, with a view of recruiting his health. At this great Emporium of our country, he received every possible demonstration of respect. But, his health continued to decline, until the close of his eventful life, on the Fourth day of July last. To an old and intimate friend, he observed, some days before his decease, that he was not alarmed at the approach of death. That he viewed the crisis as near at hand, and he was prepared to meet it. That he desired to depart on that day, is extremely probable; though I am not advised of any expressed wish on the subject, as was the case with Mr. Jefferson. When the guns and martial music roused him from his lethargy, on the morning of the fourth, and being informed of the occasion, his countenance brightened at the recollection of that glorious event. He seemed, even in death, to participate in the joys of the day: "*It is well, it is well!*" were his last words.

The cold and cheerless grave, now contains the remains of this venerable patriot. But, how few are its trophies! His deathless spirit is not there—nor the record of his deeds. His spirit, we trust, has ascended to his God—his acts belong to his country, and form a part of its history.

Such were the life, and character, and death, of James Monroe. How much do we see in them to excite our admiration; and how little that would justify our censure. He was an imperfect being, and consequently he was liable to err. But his errors were never of the heart. His soul was imbued with those noble principles, which give dignity to human nature,

and shed a charm over all the walks of life. He bore his honors meekly. No proud or ostentatious display of power or rank did he ever indulge. His nature was averse to such an exhibition. The unholy spirit of revenge, he never suffered to pollute the sanctuary of his power. In the discharge of his great duties, he considered himself as the Father of the People, and his parental care was extended over them. He rejoiced in being made the instrument of their prosperity, and was only unhappy, when he was unable to alleviate their wants.

What moral force and beauty are given to our institutions, by the civic virtues and high qualities of such a chief magistrate. The streams which have their source in him, partake of the purity of the fountain. They contain no stagnant nor poisonous waters, but flow with a pure and gentle current, to the extremities of the Union, and refresh and invigorate the land.

By the use of such means, our institutions may not be made the glory of America only, but of the whole earth. In no other way can they be maintained in their purity, and perpetuated. Confidence must be felt in our public functionaries, or the public mind will not be at ease. It is true, the throes of ambition may occasionally produce agitation; but this will be temporary, if the great concerns of the Government are managed with ability and purity, and with an enlightened reference to the interests of the whole country. But, a different course will lead to sectional jealousies, and great bitterness of feeling. These will rankle in the heart, and show themselves by out-pourings of wrath, and eventually, in the most determined hostility. Actions will follow words. The first blow may be the knell of departing liberty.

Are there no portentous signs in the political horizon? I have tried to turn away from these dark spots, which with a baleful aspect seem to enlarge, and threaten to cover the whole scene with thick darkness. But all my efforts are fruitless.

I might as well try, at noon-day, to shut out the light of the sun. I cannot turn my eyes away. The view haunts the imagination, and is indeed appalling. Like the shades of death, it approaches, in defiance of effort. It gives a shivering coldness to the blood, and almost freezes up its avenues! Ah God! are all the works of man imperfect? Are they indeed, of limited duration, and do they contain, within themselves, the seeds of destruction? Is this system of Republican Government, the most splendid effort of patriotic minds, and which has been consecrated by the blood of the Revolution, by the labors, the tears and prayers, of our fathers and mothers; is this system, destined to ruin? Shall the day come, when the charter of our liberties shall be torn in pieces, and scattered to the winds of heaven? Shall the order and beauty, now so conspicuous, be marred? Shall the monuments of our Republican simplicity and glory, be thrown down? Shall the proud columns of our Capitol, like those of other lands, point to departed liberty? Shall this great and happy people engage each other in deadly conflict, and cover with blood the fairest inheritance of man? Shall utter desolation overwhelm this terrestrial paradise? May Heaven avert so stupendous a calamity!

APPENDIX.

Proceedings of the City Council, and of the Citizens of Cincinnati, in relation to the Funeral Solemnities exhibited in honor of the memory of Ex-President Monroe.

TRIBUTE OF RESPECT.

COUNCIL CHAMBER, CINCINNATI,
July 15th, 1831.

AT a meeting of the City Council, held at their Chamber on Fourth street, the following Resolution was unanimously adopted, viz:

RESOLVED, That in common with our fellow-citizens, we deeply lament the decease of the venerable patriot JAMES MONROE, late President of the United States; and that, as a tribute of respect to his memory, we recommend that a meeting of the citizens be held at the Council Chamber, on MONDAY EVENING, the 18th instant, at 8 o'clock, for the purpose of making such arrangements as may be deemed suitable for the occasion.

By order of the City Council,
JOHN T. JONES, *City Clerk.*

A RESOLUTION of the City Council of the city of Cincinnati was passed on the 15th inst. recommending to the citizens to hold a public meeting, for the purpose of making suitable arrangements to express their feelings at the decease of that venerable patriot JAMES MONROE, late President of the United States. In accordance therewith, the citizens convened at the Council Chamber on the evening of Monday 18th July, 1831, when ELI DORSEY was appointed Chairman, and SAMUEL H. GOODIN, Secretary.

On motion, a Committee of seven gentlemen, consisting of D. K. Este, Esq. Gen. Samuel Borden, D. J. Caswell, Esq. Judge Thomas Henderson, P. S. Symmes, Esq. E. S. Haines, Esq. and Morgan Neville, Esq., was appointed, for the purpose of deliberating on the subject, and suggesting such arrangements as they may deem proper at a subsequent meeting.

On motion, the meeting adjourned until WEDNESDAY EVENING, the 20th inst. at eight o'clock, at which time the said Committee will report.

ELI DORSEY, *Chairman.*

SAMUEL H. GOODIN, *Secretary.*

THE citizens of Cincinnati convened pursuant to adjournment, on Wednesday evening, 20th July, 1831,—T. HENDERSON, Esq. in the Chair, and S. H. GOODIN, Secretary,—when the Committee

appointed at the previous meeting reported the following preamble and resolutions, which were unanimously adopted:

WHEREAS the death of the late venerable patriot and Ex-President MONROE,—although occurring at an age beyond the usual limit allowed to man, and on a day on which a patriot full of honors and full of years would wish to die,—has shed a gloom over a whole nation:—and *Whereas* the citizens of the United States are impelled by the feelings of gratitude, and the example of all Republican governments, to pay some extraordinary tribute of respect to the Memory of those who have performed distinguished services to their country, and who have left the example of great virtue as a legacy to their countrymen; therefore

RESOLVED, That the citizens of Cincinnati and its vicinity, deeply impressed with the great and long services of the late venerable JAMES MONROE, both as a Soldier and a Statesman; and fully sensible of the value of the excellent example presented in his useful life, will unite in paying a tribute of respect to his memory, by wearing crape on the left arm for thirty days.

RESOLVED, As a further token of respect, that the Hon. JOHN McLEAN be requested to deliver in Cincinnati, at such early period as may be convenient, a public EULOGIUM on the character and services of the deceased; and that the Committee appointed at the previous meeting have authority, in the event of the continued absence of Judge McLean, to appoint some other Orator for the occasion, and to make such additional arrangements as they may deem proper for carrying the objects of this meeting into effect.

RESOLVED, That the foregoing proceedings be published in the several papers of this city; and that a copy thereof be presented to the City Council, with a request that they may be recorded at large upon the journal of that body.

THOS. HENDERSON, *Chairman.*

SAMUEL H. GOODIN, *Secretary.*

EXTRACT

From the Minutes of the City Council, September 28, 1831.

A copy of Judge McLean's Eulogy on Mr. Monroe [delivered on the 27th ult.] was submitted to the Board by Mr. Symmes, from the Committe of Arrangements; whereupon the following order was adopted:—

"ORDERED, That five hundred copies of the EULOGY recently pronounced, on the character and services of the late Ex-President, JAMES MONROE, by the Hon. JOHN McLEAN, at the request of a public meeting of the citizens of Cincinnati, held pursuant to an invitation from the City Council,—be printed, in pamphlet form, at the expense of the City."