

# THE YAZOO WHIG AND POLITICAL REGISTER.

J. A. STEVENS, Editor & Proprietor.

YAZOO CITY, (MI.) FRIDAY, JULY 29, 1842.

VOL. 7, No. 3.—Whole No. 306.

## THE FOURTH, AT BENTON.

(CORRESPONDENCE.)

Benton, 4th July, 1842.

*John S. Fulton, Esq.*—  
DEAR SIR—The undersigned beg the favor of a copy of the very able and effective Oration delivered by you this day, for publication.

Very respectfully,  
J. J. MICHIE,  
F. BOSTICK,  
W. R. MILES,  
A. B. BRASHEAR,  
SAM'L L. CORWINE.

Benton, 4th July, 1842.

*J. J. Michie, Esq.*—  
RESPECTED SIR—Permit me to return to you, and through you, to the other gentlemen of the committee, my most sincere thanks for the very polite request you made for a copy of my address delivered before you this day. I shall feel myself honored, gentlemen, to comply with your request, and shall hand to you a copy of my address as soon as it can be prepared for publication.  
JOHN S. FULTON.

## AN ORATION,

DELIVERED AT BENTON, MISS.,

On the Fourth of July, 1842,

BY MR. JOHN S. FULTON.

*Fellow-Citizens.*—It is with feelings of no ordinary pleasure that I meet with you at this time. I feel that the time and occasion which has brought me before so many of my fellow-citizens, where there is such union of feeling, such a harmonious concurrence of gayety, happiness and pleasure; where the warm hand of friendship is gladly extended; where each full heart seems to expand with delight, and where but one sentiment prevails—that of general joy.—I feel that such an occasion must be one of no ordinary nature. We have assembled at this time to celebrate the anniversary of the most glorious and important crisis recorded in the annals of history. When I see and hear the enthusiasm expressed by this assembly, it gives me assurance that that day will never be forgotten when first our brave and noble, but oppressed ancestry, dared to raise their arms in defence of liberty; when first they fearlessly resisted the tyranny and oppression of that nation who claimed us as her own, who held out the delusive phantom of protection to allure us within her grasp; but who watched our fields annually wearing the yellow harvest, and panted after our substance with the keen appetite of a miser. Ay! it gives me proud assurance that, that day will never be forgotten; when the crowned heads of the monarchs of the old world first received the palsying touch that will one day dash the crowns from off their heads; which first caused the sceptres of kings to be held with a trembling grasp; which first caused despotism to kneel at the shrine of liberty and own her conqueror; when the proud lion of England cowered beneath the soaring eagle of America; when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of Liberty shouted for joy. Fellow-citizens, the inestimable privilege which we this day enjoy, the priceless boon of freedom, cost the noblest blood, it was dearly purchased, but the prize was a glorious one.—it was worth contending for. I deem it not necessary to enter into a long detail of the causes which impelled our fathers to the contest, my time and your patience would not permit me so to do, for you are all well acquainted with the causes of our Revolution. Suffice it to say, that those natural and eternal principles of justice and freedom, implanted by the hands of our Creator were violated, the chartered rights of the colonies were broken, the privileges granted by England herself in the days of our infancy were taken away, and odious and unjust taxes, which the British Parliament had no right to impose, were laid upon us, and constitutional restrictions and severe restraints were laid upon our commerce, and such impositions as even British subjects had no right to endure.—But even then, under an accumulated weight of evil, mild and peaceful measures were first adopted, argument and reason were appealed to; justice, mercy and humanity, were all held up before the ministry, in the strong, clear and manly voice of a suffering and oppressed, but determined and spirited people. But argument and entreaty were alike unavailing, the one could not touch the heart, or the other influence the mind of a nation determined on our subjugation and slavery. Then it was that the small, still voice of the mountain goddess, which had floated for years among the lofty hills and verdant valleys of America, first began mightily to arouse the latent fire of liberty, destined hereafter to glow with such brilliancy, and to awaken the slumbering but giant spirit of that resolute band who determined that the frozen icicle should be their pillow, the stormy sky their cover-

ing, and fields of clotted snow their winding sheet, rather than become hewers of wood and drawers of water to a foreign despot. When they saw that entreaty and humble supplication was all in vain, that their petitions only produced additional violence and insult, and themselves spurned away from the foot of the throne; then, indeed, like men resolved to do or die, they nobly and fearlessly armed themselves for the contest, knowing well that an appeal to arms was their last and only resort.

Trusting in the God of battles, they made that appeal, and in good faith did they sustain it. But before that last and only resort, they published to the world an instrument equalled only in dignity of thought and purity of sentiment, by the subject on which it treats. It is not for me to attempt a panegyric on the Declaration of Independence, which has been so ably and dignifiedly read this day by one of our noble hearted sons of liberty. Let the occasion which suggested it, the mighty minds which originated it, the noble souls that penned it, the purity and loftiness of thought and sublimity of style, speak its praise; the very name Declaration of Independence is a hallowed theme, whose praise can best be told by uttering in a freeman's ear—INDEPENDENCE.

They had asserted their rights and they were determined to maintain them at every hazard. This declaration which caused every American heart to beat high and warm, sent a tocsin of alarm across the Atlantic that shook the fog-wrapped Island of Great Britain to its centre. But no sooner had Massachusetts raised up a John Adams, who with the almost prophetic vision of inspiration, declared the birth-day of Liberty, and America its home, than old Virginia sent forth the sword of a Washington to make good the declaration.

The cloud of war that had so long hung over our devoted heads burst asunder, and the first blow was struck at Lexington and Concord. There Liberty dared first to unsheath her keen and glittering sword, that was to cleave asunder the Gordian knot which so long bound it to the iron car of Despotism. The struggle that there commenced was long, hard and doubtful. 'Tis true that our unaided, unclad, and undisciplined troops, often were compelled to flee before the well provided and well trained soldiers of Great Britain; but if they fled, they fled gloriously; it was only the grand and sublime retreat of the mountain storm to replume its daring visage, to collect again its wasted force, and harpy-like, to descend with a swifter and surer aim in the renewal of its attack. But our patriot fathers faltered not in the din of battle, nor trembled at the cannon's mouth. In those times that tried men's souls, not one of all that number that pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honors, ever proved recreant to the cause they espoused. The flame that first broke out at Lexington, soon spread its lurid glare over our extended territory. The hardy yeomanry of the country laid aside the sickle and the plough, the unwept harvest field was eagerly exchanged for the battle field, and the long neglected and rusted rifle hastily snatched from the wall, and with the few equipments the present moment furnished, they hesitated not to take the field against a powerful and well disciplined foe. For many a long and tedious year they sustained the shock of arms,—for many a weary and toilsome campaign, arm to arm and shoulder to shoulder, did they bravely battle for their country's rights and liberties,—all influenced by the same motives and all having the same interest at stake, their union and hearty co-operation formed a bulwark of strength that seemed to defy all mortal prowess. But at length wearied with the toils of war and disgusted with the sight of a foreign foe in the midst of our country, they determined by one bold stroke to humble the haughty tyranny of their invaders, and free the country of their insidious enemy. This master stroke of policy, sagacity and daring, was reserved for General Washington, the mention of whose name alone, is the highest eulogium that the tongue can pronounce,—a name that the wise and the good revere, a name that the hoary headed sage dwells on with enthusiasm,—who, by a well concerted and well timed arrangement, attacked the whole hostile force in their strong entrenchments and secure retreat at Yorktown, and after one of the most obstinate and hard fought battles that history records, the vaunting pride and boasting confidence of England gave way; human rights and human liberty triumphed over oppression, and the goddess of victory, as though rejoicing in her new found home, proudly and gloriously perched upon the expanded wings of our conquering standard, and hesitated not to bestow on us her most gracious and benign smiles, believing that it was committed her sacred all into the hands of a brave and virtuous republic, a patriotic and free people, that no power on earth would ever be able to wrest her from

the eternal vigils and vigorous arm of such a nation. 'Twas her virgin form and fairy name that so nerved the patriot's arm, that inspired them with such invincible courage, that although the winter's blast howled furiously over them, although the bloodstained snow marked the track of their naked feet, and unwholesome and unwholesome roots were oftentimes their richest repast, yet like men they fought—like heroes they conquered—firmly securing for us, their posterity, the golden object of their dangers and their toils. And what was the reward of all their hardships and suffering? Look around, fellow-citizens, and take a view of this wide domain.—See the vast and mighty Republic that rises in solemn grandeur on the ruins of barbarism; behold a free, powerful and independent government; once degraded and dependent colonies. The unexplored wilderness and deep forests have melted away before the hardy pioneer; splendid cities, and lofty spires gild the spot where once the smoke arose in arching wreaths from the humble wigwam of the Indian, and anthems of praise now rise to the living God from that place.

"Where once the roaming wild beast howled That place where moaned the grey-eyed owl." Again, take another view of the independence of her citizens who feel no longer the hand of galling tyranny, who bow no longer to foreign despots, her glorious institutions, her salutary laws, dictated in wisdom and virtue, and executed in justice and humanity. See the vast tide of emigration that is rolling like a mighty torrent from foreign countries upon our shores, and rapidly peopling our unsettled territory, causing the wilderness to bloom and blossom as the rose. The name of America has travelled across the broad Atlantic, it has been borne upon every breeze, the sound of liberty has penetrated every corner of the globe. The savage Goth and barbarous Mameluke chaunt the lay of American liberty, and the roving Arab talks of Washington in his tent.

Here the exile from every clime enjoys security and respect; hearing of America, the land of liberty, he leaves his home and the land of his fathers, and trusting his all to the wind and waves, he seeks quietness and ease even in the barbarous wilds of America, from oppression and cruelty.

Again, turn your enraptured vision to the broad bosom of the mighty ocean, every breeze that ruffles its troubled waves, wafts our ships to and from some commercial point of the world, and each galley that proudly floats upon the waters, bears a flag that is either feared or respected by all nations.—The wisdom and prudence of our forefathers have secured to us one of the freest forms of government, and the most wholesome legislation ever found in any empire or government upon earth. Blessed with the freedom of speech and the freedom of the press, free from all stamp duties upon paper and from an odious tax upon books, knowledge is generally disseminated; colleges, academies and schools are springing up in every town and village, and the rudiments, at least, of a common education are within the reach of every child throughout the length and breadth of the land.

Fellow-citizens, all and each ingredient for political honor and human happiness are interwoven with our country, a free government and free institutions, a noble ancestry, an untarnished honor; embracing every variety of climate and a soil exuberant and luxuriant with the most lavished bounties of Providence; a name respected at home and feared abroad, and enjoying the smiles and favors of heaven, our country increased in wealth and prosperity beyond a parallel, the deep wilderness yellowed with the ripening harvest, the lofty mountain was levelled for the proud, careering rail car, our broad and majestic rivers were rapidly covered with innumerable crafts of merchandise; while we were counting the number of the miles of our canals, new ones sprung into existence, and kept on increasing the number; while the painter eager with his skillful pencil, was vainly attempting from some lofty eminence to sketch some pleasing landscape, ere he was aware, some frowning forest had melted from before his eager gaze, ere any well defined proportions ornamented his canvass, some new city, as if by magic, sprang upon some verdant lawn, which he was skillfully arranging on his canvass; or, while the ambitious historian, with all the fervor of his soul, was anxiously filling his pages with the rising glory of America, whilst he counted the cities, new ones sprang into existence, whilst he numbered the different independent States, new ones were admitted into the Union, and whilst he registered the progress of emigrants and tells of the rapid increase of our population, myriads more are landing on our shores; while he followed the eagle of America through her careering course of victory, ere he could place her in her last, highest flight over Yorktown, with a giant effort, she perched still higher and prouder over the smoking plains of Orleans.—Thus our onward march outstrips

the pen of the historian, eludes the pencil of the most skillful artist, and laughs at its own picture as so far behind the reality. Such, fellow-citizens, is the rich legacy we have left us by our ancestors. A prize richer by far than all other prizes, a boon of heaven's own bestowing. With what unceasing vigils then should we guard this holy temple of liberty; how pure and spotless should it be preserved from all corruption and decay; for, paraphrasing upon the beautiful language of the bible, we can emphatically say, they worked out their political salvation through fear and trembling. Our statesmen boldly proclaimed it in the halls of our legislatures. Then, indeed, men stood at the helm who regarded not their lives so dear as liberty. In the midst of threatening danger the strong, clear voice of a Patrick Henry sounded the tocsin of Liberty, and though shouts of treason greeted his ear, his daring soul faltered not nor quailed in the hour of danger. Many more like he, stood with him side by side in that hour of trial, and although hunted like wild beasts of the forest, and even a price set upon their heads, and death staring them full in the face, and punishment unalloyed with one drop of mercy if they failed in their attempt; yet all this failed to move one muscle of their body with fear—fear was an emotion that never found its way to their hearts—not one hand that signed the immortal Declaration of Independence trembled while it recorded the undying name to that undying instrument—not one single strain of soul-stirring eloquence ceased to fall upon the listening ear. No! all, all were too deeply engaged in the hallowed purpose of their country's liberation. Then, who that loves his country, does not feel his soul swell with gratitude to his God and veneration for the departed spirits of our patriotic heroes who had the soul to dare, and the bravery to encounter every obstacle that rose mountain high to oppose their onward course. But their motto was onward, though they were the mock and sport of a sneering and vaunting enemy; onward! though the only music that greeted them was the martial music of the drum and fife, as they briskly played Yankee Doodle; onward! with a firm reliance on the justness of their cause; onward! under the guidance of Washington and Heaven, keeping always in view the golden prize they were sure of winning; onward! until one long, long, loud shout of victory told the astonished world that the American jubilee was come. Can it then be possible that American freemen will ever forget the price of this purchase? Shall we ever permit the spirit of party to so far subvert and overthrow our patriotism, as to cause any one to raise the parical hand against this blood bought and blood-cemented union?—Shall sectional jealousies spring up and so circumscribe and narrow our feelings, that our love of country cannot embrace the whole of this Republic?

Fellow-countrymen—Let no seeds of disunion, or dismemberment, be planted in such a vineyard as this; let no artifice, however alluring it may appear, entice away or alienate your affection from this land of your birth or adoption. View with abhorrence any attempt on the part of any individual to impair your confidence, or shake your reliance in the firmness and strength of this Union. Let every effort be to ward off any ill-timed or fatal aim that may be made against its prosperity; aim in all things to preserve unbroken the golden chain of affection that binds each part together—that unites different independent States to one general government—for, one link being broken, the mighty fabric must soon wreck on the shoals and rocks of disunion; and who shall build again its broken and disordered fragments? who shall rear again the broken edifice, and demolished grandeur of American constitutional liberty?

Fellow-citizens, for the last few years party spirit has run alarmingly and fearfully high. Each party has looked upon the other with an eye of jealousy and evil suspicion; the landmark of disunion and discord has been drawn between neighborhoods and communities—friendship, cemented from earliest infancy, has been rudely broken asunder and destroyed—and even the endearing bonds of brotherhood have not proved a sufficient safeguard from its unholy influence; but that holy tie of nature has ceased to bind their mutual souls, and brother is found enlisted against brother—and from the hospitable board, and round of gayety, the harmless stranger is thrust away for having dared to vindicate his political opinions. The thoughts and intentions of those of conflicting opinions have been scanned with eagle eyes, and even the private character of almost every man that comes into public notice, is ruthlessly assailed, and the most calumnious and lousifolous slanders are heaped upon his devoted head, simply because he has publicly avowed his principles. Even the smallest elections were the scenes of anti-republican transactions, while each man that appeared conspicuous on either side

was looked upon as a demon aspirant, determined to rise, if it should be on the ruins of his country, and throughout the length and breadth of the land, faction and party seemed to be the order of the day. Thank God, that day has died away, and that state of feeling is gone; party feuds and animosities have subsided; the dark and lowering spirit of jealousy and trampling pride is gone; and peace, with all her kindred sisters, have returned—quietness and friendship have resumed their lost seats—reason judgment and reflection are again exercising their benign and wholesome sway over the minds and hearts of the community.—Fellow-citizens, the past stands as a beacon light to warn us of approaching danger; take warning from it, and let not political aspirants ever raise again that flame of spirit and contention that now sleeps in calmness, and, in the midst of political contest, let reason and sterling virtue sit enthroned in their wonted majesty, and let the asperities of party be moderated and calmed with the reflection that the intelligence and virtue of the nation will never elect to the chief magistracy any man who has not proved to the world by his actions that he deserves it, who has not done his country good service, either in the cabinet or in the field—and, bear in mind, that others equally free with yourself should be permitted the uninterrupted enjoyment of their rights and privileges.

Taking advantage of some occasions, our enemies have unhesitatingly predicted that this republic will share the same fate with Greece and Rome; that the palladium of liberty would be stolen from her holy temple; and that America would only be remembered in some tragic tale, or in the poet's song; that the days of her glory will be as though they never had been, and her fair name destined only to live with those things which are to be forgotten. But on what do they found their hope? is it on our victorious armies, and our conquering fleets? is it on the tide of wealth that is pouring into our nation, and enriching our citizens? is it on our commerce that floats through every ocean, bay and streamlet? If not, on what do they base such a prediction? Judging of the future from the past, I know of no reason why this country should fall ill time shall end, and should not be a standing and triumphant refutation of the assertion that the people are incapable of self-government.

Should a foreign foe invade our territory, even amid the high rage of party spirit, every murmur would be hushed, and every heart united, and every energy directed to the expulsion of the common enemy. Well aware that dissension has, to some slight extent, existed between the North and the South, they have seized the occasion, and vainly tried to influence one section against another; and we are even threatened again by England with an army. Well! we are prepared for thee, thou proud boaster of universal dominion! we fear not thy mercenary hordes of pilfering plunderers; we fear not thy marauding banditti, collected from every petty German prince, or bought from every Tartan nabob; we fear not thy train-band soldiers, or thy victorious legions! We'll meet ye on the burning field—we'll meet ye with the bristling steel—and for the fall of every Warren, we'll at least claim the sword of a Cornwallis; and for every Brandywine, we'll pay you back a Yorktown.—But it is impossible for Americans ever to yield the palm of victory in their own country. Their knowledge of the country, of its mountains, its valleys, and its forests, give them security; the natural vigour and chivalry of their arms give them security; and above all, their union and co-operation gives them security against the combined powers of Europe. But Americans cannot yield or flee—oh! impossible! The prize they received was too important—and not only that freedom which we received from our fathers have we to preserve, but when we look around us even in this assembly—when we contemplate the smiling lip, the rosy cheek, and sparkling eye of the fairer portion of this audience—who, in looking upon such a scene as is now before me, would not exclaim, in the fulness of his soul, that this is a boon above even liberty itself; that these are the brightest gems that dazzle in its gilded temple.

Doomed to the lowest depth of infamy, and sunk far beneath the deepest depths of eternal woe, be the craven soul and traitor arm that would ingloriously fly, and leave to the mercy of an enemy, this last and noblest work of God. Ladies, I do not wish to be considered a flatterer; all that I say I sincerely feel. Was it not that I fear the imputation of flattery, I would at least make one strong effort to win your heavenly smiles. But, permit me to refute one slander, that is too common throughout the rest of the world, viz: that the American lady is not so delicate, so refined, or so handsome as those of Europe. 'Tis a base slander! Does not the golden king of day shine as soft here as on the verdant plains of France or of Ita-