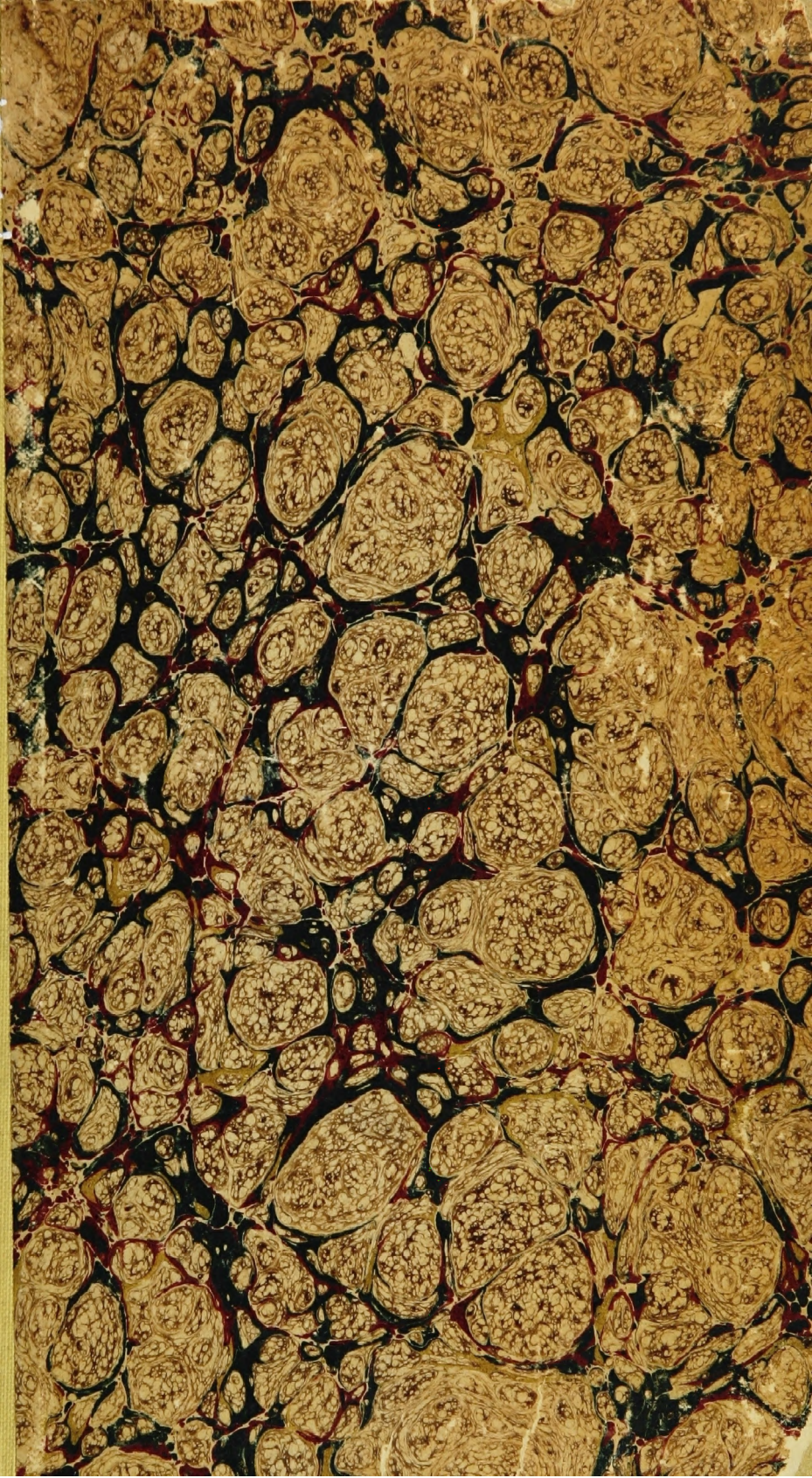


1114. EVANS. Thanksgiving Sermon Preached on Oct. 17, 1779.

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ack.  
E. A. Weaver,  
251 W. Hanover St.,  
Berks County, Pa.

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# THANKSGIVING SERMON PREACHED LONG AGO

Delivered In The Present First Re-  
formed Church, Easton, On  
Oct. 17, 1779.

## AN HISTORICAL DISCOURSE

By Rev. Israel Evans, Chaplain of the  
New Hampshire Brigade of the Con-  
tinental Army, Upon the Return of the  
Troops of Sullivan's Expedition.

Contributed to The Free Press.

During the darkest days of the American Revolution, when the success of the Colonists was far from promising, an additional menace toward success arose in the ambush warfare which was being carried on by the Indians against the patriotic settlers on the northern frontiers of Pennsylvania and extending into New York State, and the allegiance of the powerful Iroquois or Six Nations of Indians with the British. The year 1778 was marked with bloodshed all along these frontiers and the "Massacre of Wyoming" has no equal for the barbarous atrocities which were committed there. This condition of affairs was receiving attention on the part of the authorities and on February 27, 1779, Congress passed a resolution authorizing General Washington to take the most effectual measures for protecting the inhabitants of the States and chastising the Indians. The Commander-in-chief thereupon consulted with various officers familiar with the country and a campaign was contemplated that would completely destroy everything upon which the Indians depended for food and shelter.

The invading army was to consist of three divisions under Major General John Sullivan, one from the east, one from the south and one from the west, which were planned to meet at some convenient point and there begin their work of destruction. The main or

southern division rendezvoused at Easton, Pa., and consisted of the New Jersey brigade, the New Hampshire brigade, a brigade of Light Troop and Proctor's Artillery of the Continental Army, in all about 3,500 men. The troops began to arrive at Easton early in May, 1779, and two regiments acting as pioneers at once began the construction of a road suitable for the passage of the army between Easton and Wyoming, a part of this road still known as Sullivan's road, extends from the Bushkill Creek across the Lafayette College campus to the crest of Chestnut Hill, and whilst officially known as Sullivan street, should be changed to Sullivan's road.

The troops left Easton on June 18 and the accounts of their movements through the wilderness of Pennsylvania as contained in various diaries kept of the expedition are most interesting. The army reached the enemies' country early in August and the work of devastation was begun at once and carried on all of September and the first part of October and so complete was it that the power of the Iroquois was broken and that great confederation whose influence had once been so potent, crumbled under the iron heel of the invader and the nation which had made so much trouble itself quailed before the white man's steel.

Early in October, General Sullivan, with such of his command as returned with him, reached Wyoming and proceeded thence to Easton, where they arrived on the 15th, and on the 17th thanksgiving services were held in the German Church, now the First Reformed Church on Third street, where the following sermon was preached by the Rev. Israel Evans, Chaplain to General Poor's New Hampshire Brigade. Rev. Israel Evans was the chaplain in the expedition and faithfully performed his duties to the close of the war. He was from Pennsylvania, a graduate of Princeton College and ordained chaplain of the army in 1776 at Philadelphia. Upon the appointment of Colonel Poor as a brigadier in 1777, Mr. Evans became chaplain of his brigade and so continued until the close of the war. He pronounced the eulogy at the funeral of General Poor in 1780. Being a popular preacher, he settled in Concord, N. H., as successor to the Rev. Mr. Walker,

July 1, 1789. He died in Concord, March 9, 1807, in the sixtieth year of his age.

By October 27, the last of the troops had departed from Easton to join the Continental Army under Washington on the Hudson.

**Ethan Allen Weaver.**

Germantown, Pa., Oct. 17, 1914.

### THE SERMON.

Text, II Samuel XXII: 40, 50: "For thou has girded me with strength unto the battle: them that rose up against me hast thou subdued under me. Therefore I will give thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the heathen; and I will sing praises unto thy name."

To a noble and enterprising mind, that part of history is most pleasing and useful, which records the benevolent and heroic actions of good and great men. Virtuous and shining examples make the road of true glory bright before the generous and brave youth, and while they shine, like the fire of heaven, with the beams of an enlightened zeal, communicate the heat and ardor of a daring and invincible courage. Happily, for this important purpose of teaching us to do good unto mankind, the instructive and sublime writings of ancient days are handed down to us; and those men will improve them most honorably, who, in imitation of the heroes that have served God and their country, offer themselves champions, in defence of virtue, liberty and justice. In order that I may be able to introduce an example, altogether worthy of your notice and imitation, I have made application to the history of the sacred writings; and I have been induced to make choice of a passage of those writings, rather than of any other, because no other can be a rational foundation of your devotion. Many writings there are which may indeed teach you some excellent lessons of heroism and the love of freedom; but they cannot, like the sacred Scriptures, point out both the pure and divine duty we owe to God, and that generous and disinterested love and service, which we should cheerfully render to our fellow men. The best profane writings can not inform you who is the author of all the blessings of life, nor who it is that superintends the whole universe, and gov-

erns the actions of mankind. They may teach you the necessity of having some religion, but they can not inform you who is the proper object of worship. This knowledge can be derived only from the sacred fountains of divine inspiration.

From thence I draw the words of my text. They are the words of a conqueror, and the praises of a saint, equally brave, pious and successful. He never drew his sword, but when the safety and honor of his country made it necessary; and never fought a battle without asking the direction and assistance of that Almighty Being, in whose hand is the fate of nations, and who gives or withholds success, according as it is most consistent with infinite wisdom and goodness.

The character I have been drawing must be well known to you all. It is the character of David, the warrior of the Jewish nation: And I cannot but think his history as worthy the perusal of the young soldier as that of Alexander or Julius Caesar, or any of the renowned tyrants and successful murderers of mankind. Nay it is much more worthy and useful, as David was the shepherd of his people, and the guardian of their rights; and possessed power only, that he might be more extensively useful and benevolent. I need not enumerate the many nations which rose up against this divine hero: I need not mention all the battles he was called to fight, and the hundreds of thousands he was obliged to destroy, in order to preserve the liberties of the people. Let it suffice, that only within the compass of the second book of Samuel, we are informed of thirteen bloody and important battles, which were fought by the armies of David, and that success crowned his arms, and victory followed him in all his wars. After such uninterrupted glory and conquest, it is always to be feared that men will think themselves independent of the supreme Disposer of all events, and vaunt themselves against God; saying, mine own hand hath saved me. But happily this man was superior to that presumptuous pride and vanity; his heart indeed was lifted up; but not by the pomp and triumph of victory, but with praise and gratitude to the Lord of Hosts and the God of battle. So far was he from

counting the spoils and riches of great and numerous nations, his security and happiness, that he devoutly surrenders them to the sanctuary of the Most High God. Instead of confiding alone in the valour of his troops, and the experience of his generals or his own courage and sagacity in war, he ascribes all his happy success to the over-ruling hand of God. When he was skillful in war, he says, "Thou hast taught my hands to war, and my fingers to fight." When he was strong and victorious in battle, he acknowledged God as the author of his prowess and success. For, says he, in the words of the text, "Thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle: Them that rose up against me hast thou subdued under me." And then follows that rational and grateful tribute of thanks and praise, which so far from degrading the hero or lessening the esteem and good opinion of mankind, is the very way to acquire the most dignified character, and the only sure method to promise future success. "Therefore, because thou has prospered me, I will give thanks unto thee, O Lord, among the heathen; and I will sing praises unto thy name!"

In strong and metaphorical language the divine Hero describes the aid which was afforded him when in the field of war. "As the warrior," might he have said, "girds on the sword, and puts on the coat of mail, so hast thou not only infused vigour into my heart, but also covered me with strength and made me mighty unto the battle."

The words thus introduced and explained, we may turn our attention to the two following positions, which are naturally derived from the text:

In the first place, that God is the author of military skill and strength: And secondly, that he ought to be praised for victory and success in war.

In the first place, that God is the author of military skill and strength.

It is perfectly consistent with reason, to suppose that the all wise and powerful God, who gave existence to this great globe and all the surrounding worlds, will also take the care of them which is necessary to preserve good order and harmony among them. Nor can we conceive that it any way lessens the dignity and wisdom of the great Creator, to govern the universe which he has made. Obedient to His will, creation at

first rose out of nothing; and having passed the all comprehensive view of the eternal mind, was pronounced very good. With the same comprehension and particular notice in every part of the universe now viewed, that it was when it was said, Let it exist. So that from the consideration of His own omnipresence, we may easily see the absurdity of that objection, to the doctrine of his particular and constant providence, that it requires a laborious attention unworthy the notice of so great a Being. To suppose that God does not take notice of every thing, is to suppose Him absent from some place, and therefore not possessed of infinite power and universal knowledge. But to imagine that He is not possessed of infinite power and universal knowledge, is to represent Him as an imperfect Being, which would be most impious and absurd. Therefore, as God is all wise, and his knowledge is infinite, He must be everywhere present; and if everywhere present, must have all His works under his particular view and direction, and thus He governs the world. And since He governs the inanimate parts of creation, much more will He govern the animate, and especially the rational world, which is the noblest and most important part of this lower creation. Under this wise government of the Creator, mankind are treated and governed as rational creatures. The Supreme Being, who is a spirit, and has immediate and constant access to the mind of man, proposes motives and objects to influence their judgments and direct their wills; and all this perfectly consistent with the free exercise of reason. Thus, in the sacred Scripture it is said, that "The King's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water, he turneth it whithersoever he will. A man's heart deviseth his way; but the Lord directeth his steps."

From what has been offered it will appear, that the Creator of the world governs the works of His hands, not only by established laws, but also by checking, altering, or suspending those laws, according as it is most agreeable to His infinite goodness and wisdom; and all this without introducing any disorder into the system of creation. So that He who made the sun, could arrest him in his rapid career, without introducing any disorder into the planetary system.

With the greatest ease can He govern the elements and control the raging of the sea, the fury of the winds, the fiery bolts of the lightning, and hold the tempestuous rain and storm in His hands: And when we might expect to feel the effects of these elements in their season, and according to the established laws of nature, we have been constrained to acknowledge an immediate and powerful interposition of Providence in restraining them, or mitigating their violence. And were I, in support of what I have advanced, to adduce all the passages of sacred Scriptures, which speak the same language, I should transcribe a very considerable part. It being therefore proved, that God governs the world by a general and particular providence; and that mankind are more particularly the subjects of His government, and that this world and all the things in it, are made subordinate to the advantage of men, it will then plainly appear, that God influences the minds of men in the important affairs of a national defence. War, on which the fate of nations depends, is often determined by very small circumstances, which it was not in the power of man to foresee or to guard against. We observe that one man possesses that wisdom, prudence, and sagacity, which are denied to another. That ready thought and serene composure of mind in the greatest danger, and oft-times in the midst of the greatest confusion, may be considered more than human. I cannot help calling it the providential inspiration of the God of battle. It is He that inspires the warrior with that invincible courage at one time, which he does not possess at another. It is the God of battle who can wither your strength and unman your souls. It is He who bestows that patience, fortitude, and perseverance, under the most complicated toils and hardships, which is so astonishing to every person of consideration, and which is so necessary to constitute the good soldier. The importance also of this event will justify the position that God is the author of military skill and courage. On the skill and bravery of an army the rights and privileges of a people seem often times to be suspended, and if success is denied, the ruin of the nation is the next miserable consequence. Nothing therefore can be more worthy the divine direction

than the happiness of a people, whose liberty is unjustly invaded by a cruel and desolating war. And nothing is more certain than His promise and His justice to the oppressed.

Having offered thus much on a subject, which, no doubt, gains your approbation and belief, as much as it does mine; it being so nearly connected with that interposition of Providence, which has been so universally acknowledged in this army I shall drop the farther prosecution of it, except in that way which will tend to the illustration of it, and have a particular reference to the design of this day's assembly.

And here I find it much more easy to conceive of the many instances wherein this army has been girded with strength, to perform the hard duties of a campaign, than to give them a just and particular relation. However let me attempt this duty, that by recollecting the goodness and providential care of Heaven, our gratitude may be excited, and we may with the warmth and sincerity of our hearts offer that tribute of thanksgiving and praise, which is so justly due to our divine Benefactor and powerful Guardian, who has girded us with strength unto the battle, and made us superior to all the unavoidable toils, hardships, and dangers of a wilderness unknown and unexplored, unless by the wild beasts and the savages.

When the tyrant of Britain, not contented to expend his malignant wrath on our sea coasts, sent his emissaries to raise the savages of the wilderness to war, and to provoke them to break their faith with the United States of America; then our defenceless frontiers became the seat of savage fury, and hundreds of our countrymen bled, and hundreds of them suffered more than the tender ear can hear related, or the compassionate heart can endure. Then the expectations of our enemies were high and joyful, that half our country would fall by the hands of tories and savages, or be forced to flee from their habitations with scarcely a mouthful of bread to eat, or a garment to cover them. And indeed the prospect was full of horror to every compassionate friend of his country and mankind, and called, mercifully called, for the aid of an army, to save so large a part of the United States.

But this was a war, from which the boldest and bravest were ready to shrink, and they who had fought an army of regular veterans, dreaded the sudden and hidden attacks of the subtle and bloody savages. The demand then became serious, who will undertake the hazardous, the laborious, and perhaps impracticable expedition? Who has resolution enough to expose himself to the secret ambuscade, and risk the unhappy fate of a General Braddock? But is there no relief, is there no help? Must the country be pressed on both sides by the raging fury of war, until it perish? No, replied the man, who was equal to the arduous and dangerous task, and who chose this army to chastise savage rage, and to save the bleeding country, be the hazard what it would. Happy is that military genius which collects strength at the approach of dangers, and becomes invincible in proportion as the obstacles he is to encounter appear unsurmountable. Happy the hero, who can by an intuitive glance, distinguish between what is only difficult, and what is absolutely impossible. Shall I make application of this character? Delicacy forbids me: I leave you to apply it in silence to the hero who deserves it.

And now my brave fellow soldiers, shall I call upon you to relate the toils, the dangers and disappointments through which you passed, or shall I attempt to enumerate the hardships and dangers, which, if particularly recounted, would spend the most of this day? Who in this army does not know that this most important expedition was a long time held in suspense, for the want of necessary supplies of provisions, and a return from that expedition was much more probable and rational than a march of some hundreds of miles into the heart of the wilderness, and the very jaws of the savages. And when your march commenced, which, pardon the expression, was rather the effect of a happy rashness of daring courage and fortitude, than the result of cool and cautious reasoning; had you not hills and mountains to cross? Had you not pathless forests to encounter, and rapid waters to stem? Had you not rivers to ford, wide, deep and impetuous? Was your united strength more than sufficient to save you from being swept down the angry floods, and made the sport of their

fury? Shall I pass over in silence many difficulties scarcely credible to the hearer who did not behold them? Shall I forget the unspeakable trials and perplexities, which attended the transportation of the necessary stores and artillery of the army, over steep hills and lofty mountains, over deep morasses and through narrow defiles, where the feet of men had scarcely ever reached before. I will admire the patience of those men who undertook the laborious drudgery, persuaded as I am, that nothing but the welfare of the army and the honor of their country could have urged them to so painful a task; but inspired with those glorious motives, like true patriots and brave soldiers, they can cheerfully undertake any enterprise, and indefatigably support any labor. Let me remind you of the twenty-ninth of August, honorable to the troops commanded by our brave and enterprising general. Then you defeated the savage army and conquered those barbarians who had long been the dread of four frontiers: That happy victory so impressed the terror of your prowess upon their hearts, that they durst not a second time oppose your march into the very bosom of their country. Led by the consideration of our just and complete conquest, of so fertile a part of the western world, I will venture to look a few years into futurity. Methinks I see the rich lands from the Teaga river to the banks of the Seneca and Cayuga lakes, and from thence to the most fruitful lands on the Chenesses to the great lakes, Ontario, Erie, and Huron, and from these to Michigan and Superior. Methinks I see all these lands inhabited by the independent citizens of America. I congratulate posterity on this addition of immense wealth and extensive territory to the United States. I see some patriotic youth, whose father fought the savage enemy at Newton, and endured all the hardships of this campaign, and hear him say, triumphing in the honor of his father's courage and love of freedom, here my brave father defeated the savage and tory bands. From that mountain they fled with the greatest battle, and saved their lives by speed, when a part of our army had nearly surrounded them, and was prepared to cut them off. And then will he recollect the numbers of the enemy that were slain, then will he say, my brave

aged parent led me to that place where the enemy had raised their strong works, which this army, by the sagacity and military caution of the commander so happily avoided. The generous youth, as he proceeds in his relation of the exploits of this army, catches a part of their patriotic zeal and enterprising spirit, and in a noble transport of heroic joy points to the ground on which this army stood, when they shouted their assent to subsist on less than half the usual quantity of their daily provision, and this they did, that the expedition might not fail, and the country be disappointed and exposed to the reproach of the enemy. This heroic action, says the noble youth, shall be notable, while there is a patriot in America, and remembered, while there lives a man who loves his country and mankind. The future inhabitants and friends of liberty on the pleasant banks of the lakes and rivers which are now made known, at ease in their elegant seats, and in the possession of luxuriant lands, shall talk of the mountains, before deemed impassable to which you have extended your conquest, and where you hewed out your way by dint of invincible perseverance. They shall engrave the many towns you destroyed, and the necessity of destroying unknown quantities of corn and fruits of the land, and of laying the country waste for an extent of near two hundred miles. All these achievements shall be heartier related, and give immortality to the army that first conquered the five Nations of hostile Indians. I might expatiate in the praises of this army, without exceeding the bounds of justice, did not my connection with it subject me to the charge of partial attachment. I therefore check my zeal and leave it to others, to describe your patience under hardships, your fortitude, your obstinate perseverance, and your military obedience. These are the qualifications of good soldiers, and these, without flattery, you possess. May you always be upon your guard to support the distinguished character you have acquired, and may you teach those who have not had the like experience, nor obtained an equal degree of fame, what will constitute the best of soldiers. You have now a good character to support, you can easily do it, by observing the same worthy conduct by which you at first procured it. Let none go before you in reputation and military glory. I will venture to say, did the citizens of America serve their country with half the zeal and public spirit that the army has served them, we should have seen an honorable conclusion to the toils and horrors of war. Alas! the spirit of liberty is now rather struggling with the vicious manners and the selfish principles of the times, than with the tyrant of Britain. The love of wealth and the pursuit of pleasure have almost extinguished that flame of patriotism, which blazed forth with such ardor, at the beginning of this war. Virtue and patriotism, the guardians of liberty, are in many places and by many men made the subjects of scorn and contempt, and that by those who would be esteemed wise politicians and friends to their country; but I think with very little justice; for the wise politician must know, that moral and political virtue are the bulwarks of a republic, and that a republic without virtue, is an absurdity in politics, when can no more stand than a building, and the foundation is removed. The fashionable gentleman thinks it an affront to delicacy and refinement of taste to observe the day set apart, both by the laws of God and man, for religious worship. The sublime truths of Christianity, the pure and simple manners of the gospel, are despised and insulted, even where decency and policy, reason and virtue apart, ought to hold them in the most profound veneration. How then can liberty exist, when neither supported by purity of manners, the principles of honor, nor the influence of religion; from this unhappy prospect I am led in imagination, to sympathize with America drowned in tears, and overwhelmed with distress. Me-thinks I hear her pathetically addressing her sons, and venting the anguish of her heart in this mournful language. Am I not the only friend of liberty on all this peopled globe? And have I not, when she was excluded from every other region of the earth, opened the arms of my protection, and received the persecuted stranger to my friendly and virtuous domain, pursued her with hostile rage even to these very shores? Did I not rouse you, my sons, in her defence, and



make you the honorable protectors of insulted liberty? Enflamed with the love of this friend of mankind, you armed in her defense, you made a brave and successful opposition to her persecutors, and have rescued her from the vindictive malice of all her foreign enemies. Thus far have you merited the title of guardians of liberty, and deserve to be enrolled the heroes of the present age. But ah, my sons and citizens of the United States, whither fled that patriotic zeal which first warmed your disinterested breasts? Whither that public spirit, which made you willing to sacrifice not only your fortune but also your lives in defense of liberty? Whither is fled that happy union of sentiment in the great service of your country? And whither is fled that honorable love and practice of virtue, and that divine and generous religion, which cherishes the spirit of liberty and elevates it to an immortal height? She paused and wept, nor gained an answer: And then in a suppliant posture again renewed her address: I entreat you to rekindle that public and generous zeal which first blazed forth in defence of that liberty which you have now too long slighted. I beseech you to banish from your breasts that lust of gain, which is the baneful murderer of a generous and a public spirit. I entreat you to silence the demons of discord and animosity, and to banish them from the States of America, and let them find no place to set their feet, but in the assemblies of the enemies of this country. I conjure you by the spirit of heaven-born liberty, that you invite her to your bosom, and kindle your love for her to a never dying flame. By the blessing of posterity I conjure you, by the precious blood of the heroes, who have nobly shed it in the cause of their country, I conjure you, to practice and encourage that private and public virtue, which ennobles the soul and erects the temples of liberty on an everlasting foundation, not to be shaken by the threatening storms of war, nor the impotent rage of tyrants. I conjure you by the toils and dangers, by the sufferings and poverty of my brave armies now in the field, not to desert them in their defence of freedom, but to support them with that assistance which will save both you and them from internal and public ruin. Serve your country accord-

ing to your abilities, with the same zeal and perseverance, with which my preserving soldiery serve you, and then will a happy conclusion crown the war, and your independence be established immovable, as the everlasting mountains.

But whither have I been transported, from paying that particular attention to you, my friends and fellow soldiers, which you are justly entitled to, especially on this day of public gratitude and praise? I return to you, who possess the greatest share of public virtue; would to God, your private virtues were as great and as conspicuous! I have taken notice of your honorable conduct, as far as my time and a discourse of this nature would admit, without descending too minutely into particulars. The design of this was, not only to remind you, that to overcome difficulties and dangers, is an evidence of fortitude and perseverance and is victory; and that we may be encouraged to encounter any future dangers and toils: For dangers and toils being now familiar to you, they cannot terrify you, knowing that you have been superior to them, you may well expect, that with like strength and assistance you shall again be conquerors.

But I say, there is a further design in recollecting what you have been the means of performing, even praise to that God, who has girded you with strength unto the battle. And how much soever men are to be applauded for their heroic actions, yet both reason and revelation assure us, that the Supreme Being is the first cause of all success, and that as the moral Governor of the world, he demands our acknowledgements of his mercies and favors; and that without this acknowledgement, neither we nor any other people, can expect to prosper. This brings me to the second thing proposed, which was to shew that God is to be praised for success in war.

Public mercies demand public acknowledgements, and therefore our worthy general has seized this first opportunity for calling us together, to return our most grateful thanks to Almighty God, for the very signal support and success He has been pleased to grant us, during the expedition we have just finished. This indicates a noble persuasion of the superintending providence of that Being, who has remarkably girded us not only

with strength unto the battle, but also with patience and fortitude, to endure the toils of the wilderness. Methinks not to have raised the voice of praise, on this happy occasion of our return, to declare the gratitude of our hearts, would have indicated a very great insensibility of the mercies bestowed upon us, and afforded a melancholy proof of want of love and reverence to that God, who has so often interposed between us and danger, sickness and death. So rational is the duty of praise, so certainly due to the author of all good, and at the same time so pleasing, that if we were not justified by the examples of all nations, in humbly offering up our praise and thanksgivings after successful events; yet would it be laudable in us to set the example, and declare to the world, that we confide in the Lord of Hosts and the God of battle; for this is perfectly consistent with the most vigorous exertions of our own strength and abilities, while we ask superior aid and assistance. And, indeed, I do not know any employment, which is at the same time so pleasing and so profitable, as the employment of giving thanks and praising God for His goodness, in granting relief to a suffering and oppressed people. While the generous friend to the happiness of mankind and his country, with a cheerful, a firm and a humble heart, celebrates the praises of the eternally good and merciful God, he not only does that which is pleasing in the sight of his kind Benefactor, and performs that duty and pays that homage, which the Creator of the Universe has a just right to demand; but he draws down blessings for time to come. Therefore, the improvement of all success and every mercy, ought to be praise to the Author and Giver of them.

This was the improvement which the great author, of the words of my text, made of all his illustrious victories, the glory of God, and the advantage of the people. Therefore, says he: "I will give thanks unto thee, O Lord," "and I will sing praise unto thy name." Give thanks therefore to that good God, who girded you with unusual strength, and preserved your health in a manner almost miraculous.

Can you be thankful enough for the blessing of uninterrupted health, amidst

all the violence which that expedition offered to your constitutions? Can you, I say, be thankful enough, when you consider how miserable and deplorable your situation must have been, had sickness fallen upon you in the wilderness, and at such a great distance from any place of relief, and without the smallest comforts of life. Surely under these circumstances, death must have been your unalterable portion. I again say, praise the Lord for that universal health, which prevailed in this army; for sickness and health are His servants, and they come or withdraw, according to His pleasure. He can suppress the seeds of diseases, and when sickness might be apprehended, according to the laws of nature, He bestows health. Praise the Lord, for withholding those storms of rain, in the season when they might have been most reasonably expected, and when the lower parts of the country experienced an unusual abundance.

Who can paint the distresses of our army in the midst of deep morasses, filled and overflowed with tempestuous rains; morasses, which were scarcely passable, though the rains had been withheld for so unusual a length of time. Not a man, but had reason to dread the consequences of heavy rains, and not a man who had not reason to expect them in their usual season. How unpassable had been the rivers, and thus retarded or totally stopped, the loss of time and the consumption of our provisions in the enemies country, would doubtless have given them heart to attack us on our retreat, and to hang on our rear, and that perhaps with too much success.

These things, however small they may appear to men at home, and at ease in the lap of luxury, yet have been considered by many of this army, and mentioned as signs of a particular guardian Providence in our behalf. Let these considerations excite our gratitudes and engage our love and affection to that best of Beings. We ought moreover to be thankful, that so few have fallen in battle, and so few died of sickness or by accidents. The fallen in battle; few indeed in number, but brave in action. Let us not pass over in silence the brave M'Calla and the gallant Boyd, with the valiant soldiers, who have thus fallen. Let their names be held in precious re-

membrane by us, and every friend to freedom, for they fell in defence of the liberties of our country, and claim an honorable and lasting memorial.

Let me now, my dear fellow soldiers, beseech you, when you silently in your minds run over all the toils and dangers of the campaign, which you have experienced, and no doubt, they are more and greater than I may be aware of; let me beseech you to acknowledge and say, "it was the Lord who girded me with strength unto the battle," and has restored me in health to an inhabited part of my country; therefore, may you add, "I will give thanks to Thee, O "Lord, and I will sing praises unto Thy name." And if you should be called yet this year, to enter upon new toils and dangers in the defense of our country, let this be your consolation and solid support, that the same good God, who has so evidently and wonderfully preserved you hitherto, is still ready to afford you the same necessary assistance, and to "gird you with strength," as in times past. The commander-in-chief calls for your assistance in an expedition of the highest consequence.

The pleasure that we shall meet with, when we once more see the illustrious chief of the armies of the United States, and obtain his approbation, for he knows your worth, will make you forget all your past dangers and toils, and make you pant for an opportunity to distinguish yourselves in his presence. And as it is more than probable that you will have the honor of serving in two expeditions in one campaign; let me entreat you, to maintain the character of patient, obedient, persevering and brave soldiers. Think of the dignity, if it shall please God to succeed the united arms, of striking one capital blow, which shall astonish the world, and finish the American war. If I could think it necessary I should remind you, that as your reputation is higher than that of many others, you ought not to content yourselves with the same degree of merit and renown, but strive to maintain and perpetuate your present superiority and glory. May that Almighty Being, who

has hitherto so carefully preserved you, still continue his goodness unto you, and keep you as in the hollow of His hand! And may such a sense of gratitude for past mercies, be impressed upon our hearts, that we may be constrained to forsake every sin, and fear nothing so much as to offend Him, and regard nothing so much as His divine approbation!

Before I close this discourse, suffer me to remind you of other happy consequences of your success. You have opened a passage into the wilderness, where the Gospel has never yet been received. That extensive region, which was never before traversed, except by wild beasts, and men as wild as they shall yet have the Gospel preached in it. Churches shall rise there, and flourish, when perhaps the truths of the Gospel shall be neglected on these eastern shores. For it cannot be supposed that so large a part of this continent shall forever continue the haunt of savages, and the dreary abodes of superstition and idolatry. As the Gospel, or Sun of Righteousness has only glanced on the shores of this western world, and it is predicted of it, that it shall be universally propagated, it will, probably like the Sun, travel to the western extremities of this continent. And when men from other nations, prompted by liberty and a love of the pure Gospel of truth, shall cross the ocean to this extensive empire, they will here find a safe asylum from persecution and tyranny. How honorable then must your employment appear, when considered in all these points of view. How happy to have been the instruments in the hand of God, for accomplishing so great a revolution, and extending the kingdom of His Son so far. Liberty and religion shall have their wide dominion from the Atlantic through the great continent to the western ocean. May you all, not only be the honorable instruments of promoting the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, but may you more especially be the partakers of all the benefits and happiness, with which Christ will crown his faithful and dutiful subjects!

