THE

REPUBLICAN COURT

OR

AMERICAN SOCIETY IN THE DAYS OF WASHINGTON.

BY RUFUS WILMOT GRISWOLD.

With Twenty-one Portraits of Distinguished Women,

ENGRAVED FROM ORIGINAL PICTURES BY WOOLASTON, COPLEY, GAINSBOROUGH, STUART, TRUMBULL, PINE, MALBONE, AND OTHER CONTEMPORARY PAINTERS.

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THE CONVENTION.

I.

And now it becomes necessary to ask, What was the political condition of the colonies when the struggle for independence at last was over? In the language of Washington, success had but afforded the United States "*the opportunity of becoming a respectable nation.*" Feeble indeed had been the chain which had bound them together as united states during the conflict; its strongest links were an innate hatred of tyranny, and the external pressure which forced them to coalesce. Not the least marvellous feature in the story of the Revolution, is its ultimate triumph under a system so weak and inadequate as that furnished by the old articles of confederation. In other hands than those of Washington as commander, and Morris as financier, it may well be doubted whether the hour of triumph would then have come. To the latter of these patriots less than justice has been done by some of his own countrymen, while the intelligent and observant foreigner who has told, in Italian, the story of the struggle, with a true appreciation of his worth, has said, "the Americans certainly owed, and still owe, as much acknowledgment to the financial operations of Robert Morris, as to the negotiations of Benjamin Franklin, or even to the arms of Washington."

When the contest began, it was at once seen that a recognized union of some kind among the colonies was essential. From New Hampshire to Georgia there was indeed the same proud spirit, which refused to brook oppression; brave hearts were every where roused to resistance, and strong arms were every where ready to strike: but concentrated and harmonious purpose and action were indispensable. The sagacious mind of Franklin saw this at once; nor was he now for the first time alive to this necessity. If he had not originated, he had at least sketched a plan of union for the colonies, in the convention of colonial delegates at Albany, in 1754; and this, as the historian has remarked, "was the first official suggestion of what grew afterwards to be our present federal Constitution." That plan was rejected by the colonies: the time for it was not yet; but at last the auspicious period had arrived once more to propose a recognition of the great principle of confederated unity.

As early, therefore, as the summer of 1775, Dr. Franklin submitted to Congress articles of confederation, and, in a certain contingency, of perpetual union among the colonies: these were not then finally acted on. Had they, however, been adopted, they would have united the colonies in a simple league only, until the terms of reconciliation proposed by the previous Congress, in a petition to the king, should be agreed to, until reparation should be made for injuries done to Boston and Charlestown, until restraints upon commerce and the fisheries should be removed, and until all British troops should be withdrawn from America. In the event of refusal by the crown in these particulars, the confederation would have been perpetual, but not otherwise. In truth the feeling of a majority of the colonists was to endure as long as possible, before a final rupture; and much the larger portion of the congress itself would have rejoiced in an honorable reconciliation. Some,

however, there were, who deemed the hope of such an event entirely delusive, and indulged in no visionary expectations of magnanimity, forbearance or equity from the mother country.

The proposition for a confederacy remained unacted on until June, 1776, when the pressure of events forced it into notice. Congress had then reached the resolution of declaring America independent, which was afterwards embodied in the memorable document of the fourth of July, 1776. This resolution imposed upon that body the necessity of such a compact, as well for mutual aid as for obtaining foreign assistance.

On the eleventh of June, therefore, the very day that followed the adoption of the resolution to declare independence, a committee was appointed to frame articles of confederation. The task allotted them was one of delicacy and difficulty. On the twelfth of July they reported a plan consisting of twenty articles. In that day, the men to whom were intrusted the destinies of the country, had no scruple, when they deemed it needful for the country's good, to keep secret their doings, until the proper time for disclosure came. They did not affect the dangerous liberalism of that mad generosity which would transact all public business, even that purely executive, with open doors; and thus communicate, without scruple, the most important matters of state to foreign powers, which, in their negotiations with this country, take good care never to reciprocate such uncalculating prodigality of communication. They knew that there was a book which taught them there was a time to be silent, as well as a time to speak. It did not shock the republicanism of these early senators of our country, to print but eighty copies of their plan of confederation, and to bind themselves, their secretary, and their printer, alike, to an inviolable silence as to the contents of the paper, and to lay all under an injunction to furnish no person with a copy.

Had they pursued any other course, in all human probability the effort at confederation would have failed entirely: for there were conflicting interests to be reconciled, so diverse from each other, and habits of thought and action so very different, among the men there assembled, from the north and from the south, that these, added to the gloomy aspect of American affairs, would have been quite sufficient, had the public been invited to partake in the discussion, effectually to close the door against the possibility of calmly and wisely reconciling differences. As it was, though the plan was submitted in July, 1776, it was not until after repeated deliberations that it was finally adopted, in November, 1777.

And what was the plan? It was a league of sovereign states, and nothing more. We can but sketch an outline. It recognized no *national existence* of the colonies, as *one* great country, united under *one permanent* form of government. True, the thirteen states took the style and title of "the United States of America," but it was only to enter "into a firm league of friendship with each other, for their defence, the security of their liberties, and their mutual and general welfare; binding themselves to assist each other against all force offered to, or attacks made upon them, or any of them, on account of religion, sovereignty, trade, or any other pretence whatever." And it was under no stronger bond than this voluntary agreement, that our fathers went through the war of the Revolution.

As to the details, or mode of operation under this agreement, a few particulars will suffice. Each state expressly retained its sovereignty, in all respects, where it had not expressly delegated it to the Congress, and had its own chief magistrate and government. Each state raised its own troops, and appointed all its regimental officers, the whole to be clothed, armed and equipped, at the expense of the United States. And when the Congress had declared

the proportions of taxes to be paid by the several states for prosecuting the war, each by its own legislature was to lay and levy these taxes, thus merely declared by Congress, which possessed no power of coercing their payment by distress or otherwise.

As to the Congress, each state might send its delegates, not less than three nor more than seven, chosen annually, with a power of recall, at any time, and the right to substitute others: each state had one vote in the Congress.

The powers of Congress were such only as were necessary for carrying on the contest. Thus, to this body belonged exclusively the right to make war or peace, to receive ambassadors, to contract foreign alliances, to make treaties, provided that no commercial treaty should abridge the power of the state legislatures to impose upon foreigners such imposts and duties as their own people were subject to, or to enforce an absolute prohibition, if they saw fit, of the import or export of any species whatever of goods and commodities. They had power also to commission all field officers above the rank of colonel, to determine what number of land forces was necessary, and to make requisitions on each state for its proportion; and they might issue letters of marque, and build and equip a navy.

There were other powers, but this enumeration will serve to show the relative general position of the Congress and the states; and it will be seen that in the two great elements for prosecuting a war, men and money, as to the first, Congress could do no more than fix the quota of a state and make a requisition on its authorities, the disregard of which it could neither punish nor remedy; and as to the last, Congress could indeed say what was the proportion of each state, but had no power to enforce its payment. The utmost that it could do for the practical accomplishment of objects the most important was to *recommend* and *entreat*.

However, with such a system, independence was achieved, but at such a cost of personal suffering, life, and individual pecuniary ruin, as, while it almost staggers credulity, should enshrine in our hearts' best affections, the memory of our patient and heroic fathers. And beside this cost of life and property to individuals, there was also a debt, due from the United States to creditors at home and abroad, which may safely be stated at not much less than fifty millions of dollars. The whole expense of the war had been about one hundred and thirty-five millions.

Impoverished, however, as was the country, the first subject that engaged the attention of the people, after emerging from the war, was the restoration of national credit, and the payment of this, to them, enormous debt. Congress did its part, in *recommending* taxes, or duties, distributed in just proportion among all the states, but it was utterly powerless to levy the taxes, or enforce the payment of the duties. The insufficiency of the articles of confederation, as a system of government, became every day more and more apparent. There was no longer the pressure of a common danger, and the oppressive hand of tyranny had been shaken off; and these were the causes which had given strength to the bonds of the federal union. The minds of the wisest and best men were filled with gloomy apprehensions and sad forebodings. The enemies of the Revolution, both at home and abroad, had predicted that the success of America would prove her ruin, for that she was incapable of governing herself; and they were now secretly rejoicing in the prospect of a speedy fulfilment of their predictions. Many true men almost despaired of the commonwealth. Washington, in 1784, wrote: "The disinclination of the individual states to yield competent powers to Congress for the federal government, their unreasonable jealousy of that body, and of one another, and the disposition which seems to pervade each of being all-

wise and all-powerful within itself, will, if there be not a change in the system, be our downfall as a nation. . . . I think we have opposed Great Britain, and have arrived at the present state of peace and independency, to very little purpose, if we cannot conquer our own prejudices." In 1786, that able and eminently pure man, John Jay, thus expressed himself: "Our affairs seem to lead to some crisis, some revolution, something that I cannot foresee or conjecture. I am uneasy and apprehensive, *more so than during the war.* Then we had a fixed object, and though the means and time of obtaining it were often problematical, yet I did firmly believe that justice was with us. The case is now altered. We are going and doing wrong, and, therefore I look forward to evils and calamities, but without being able to guess at the instrument, nature, or measure of them." Still, his trust in Providence made Mr. Jay hopeful for his country. "That we shall again recover," he says, "and things again go well, I *have no doubt.* Such a variety of circumstances would not, almost miraculously, have combined to liberate and make us a nation, for transient and unimportant purposes. I therefore believe we are yet to become a great and respectable people; but when, and how, only the spirit of prophecy can discern."

While the clouds thus thickened in the political atmosphere, a gleam of light began to break through the darkness. It came from Virginia, in the shape of a proposal, which her position and her patriotism alike entitled her to make. In 1786 she appointed a number of gentlemen to meet such commissioners as might be appointed by other states, to consider the subject of the trade and commerce of the confederacy, and adopt some uniform system which would tend to the common interest and permanent harmony of all the states. Soon after her proposal, commissioners met at Annapolis, from Virginia, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York. Delegates had also been appointed by New

Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and North Carolina, but they were not present. Nine states, however, had thus shown their sense of the necessity of a convention—the existence of a conviction in the public mind, that some steps must necessarily be taken, in concert, to avert the calamities which so obviously threatened the country. The commissioners who were present from the five states named above, were naturally unwilling to engage in the consideration of the important subject confided to them, with such a partial representation of the old confederacy, and they therefore drew up a report and address to all the states, recommending them to appoint commissioners, not merely to deliberate on the subject of commerce, but with enlarged powers, "to take into consideration the situation of the United States, to devise such further provisions as should appear to them necessary, to render the constitution of the federal government adequate to the exigencies of the Union." This led to the appointment of delegates from every member of the old confederacy, except Rhode Island. These are the historic facts connected with the meeting of that august and dignified body of men who framed THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

II.

LEAVING now, for a time, the beaten path of historic narrative, we digress to speak of the habits of the people, in that period, and of the men who composed that memorable convention.

The whole number of members in the convention which formed the constitution was fifty-five, and an assemblage more dignified never convened to transact the business of the United States. It embraced men who had distinguished themselves in the field, or in the council, and, in some instances, in both. It embraced, too, all those peculiarities of thought and manner which characterized the

different portions of the country, from which the members respectively came. The impress of local manners was plainly visible, giving a fixed distinction to individuals. The man of New England, with strong practical common sense as the basis of his character, had the gravity and conscientiousness which had been a part of his Puritan education; and these were not unmingled with the shrewd worldly wisdom which had, of necessity, been acquired in a country where the earth yielded, with reluctance, even a small return to assiduous labor. Industry, and ingenuity in overcoming natural difficulties, had been part of his training; and if he cautiously considered before he made a contract, he was apt honestly to fulfil it to the letter when it was made. Liberal studies had never been neglected in the older portions of New England, and therefore she could furnish men of high intellectual culture. New England too, at that day, like other parts of our country, recognized grades in society now unrecognized and indeed unknown. She had what might be called, in one sense, her acknowledged aristocracy, marked by a stateliness of manner, and a conformity to the rules of a prescribed courtesy in social intercourse. This aristocracy was one of the remnants of the colonial relations from which she had just emerged. Thus, taking Massachusetts as the most finished type of contemporary manners, all who held office, all who possessed wealth, all of the clerical order, and all who had family connections in England, were members of the gentry, or upper class of society, in the towns of any note; while the gentry of the interior were those who owned large landed estates, held civil and military offices, and were representatives in the General Court. Many indeed of the classes here named had been driven from the colony by the war, but many also remained and were among the tried patriots of the Revolution.

The habits of life, polish of manners, and style of dress were

the badges of eminence by which the aristocracy of New England asserted its outward superiority. If a gentleman went abroad, he appeared in his wig, white stock, white satin embroidered vest, black satin small clothes with white silk stockings, and fine broadcloth or velvet coat; if at home, a velvet cap, sometimes with a fine linen one beneath it, took the place of the wig; while a gown, frequently of colored damask, lined with silk, was substituted for the coat, and the feet were covered with leather slippers of some fancy color. Visitors were received with hospitality and graceful courtesy. One custom prevailed, which, now, would greatly shock the New England sense of propriety: in most genteel families, a tankard of punch was prepared every morning, and visitors, during the day, were invited to partake of it—the master of the house sometimes taking the vessel from the cooler in which it stood, and after drinking from it himself, handing it in person to the guests.

There was a great deal of social intercourse in the class we are describing. The interchange of dinners and suppers was frequent; at the first, the most fashionable hour for which was never later than three, the table groaned under its weight of provisions; after the last, the customary evening amusement was cards. The law expressly prohibited dramatic entertainments, but they had concerts, and at these, in Boston at least, private gentlemen sometimes were the performers, both vocal and instrumental—simply, however, for the entertainment of their friends. Dancing was not among the things which the legislature had made *mala prohibita*, and consequently there were assemblies for this recreation; but they were conducted with such severe attention to propriety, that nothing short of the *unanimous* concert of the gentlemen subscribers would authorize admission. One of these assemblies would make an amusing spectacle at this time. The stately minuet, with all its

formal and high-bred courtesy, flourished in those days, and was varied only by the contrē dance. Cotillions came in afterward, with the French refugees from the West Indies. The style of the dress, too, for gentlemen, would at this day be likely to attract notice in the saloons of fashion; but coats (of velvet or cloth) were literally of all colors, not even excluding red, and sometimes the collar, of velvet or cloth, was in studied contrast to that of the other parts.

Marriages and funerals were most ceremoniously conducted. After the former, the newly married couple made no bridal tour; and instead of the modern "*at home*," and the single call of respect and congratulation, for four successive weeks the bride was expected to receive *daily* the visits of her friends. Public notice was given of funerals; private invitations also were issued; large attendance was expected, and long processions followed the dead to their last homes. If one turned from these scenes of private and social life to look on public exhibitions, the same stately air of ceremonious dignity was still visible. If you entered the Supreme Judicial Court, in winter, there sat the judges, each in his robe of scarlet, faced with black velvet, somewhat like the costume of an Oxford doctor of laws; and if it chanced to be summer, you found him in a full black silk gown.

Leaving this hasty sketch of the fashions of that age, for which we are indebted to an eye-witness,* we pass on, if the friendly reader will take us as a guide, to speak familiarly of some of these New England men, whom we will imagine—for the Convention's sessions were not public—to be seated before us in that body. The place is not unfamiliar to some of the men thus assembled. The names of seven of them appear as signatures to a document by which they pledged their lives, fortunes and honor to the support of a declaration of independence, which was issued from

* Sullivan: See his Familiar Letters on Public Characters.

this same chamber. It was a bold declaration, made at a hazardous period, but the pledges of life, fortune, and honor, were nobly redeemed. Eleven years have passed since, and now they have once more come together in "*Independence Hall*," to deliberate on a constitution for a nation which owes its existence to their bravery and fidelity. Who can doubt that the spot awakens in them many strong emotions and stirring associations? Our space forbids us to name all who are here, and we therefore beg that our omissions may not be construed into invidious distinctions which we have no design to make.

And first, who is that individual, of such uncommonly handsome face and form, and, though seemingly but little more than thirty years of age, possessed of such remarkable dignity and grace of manner? He has the appearance of one whom nature has stamped as a gentleman. It is Rufus King, who has been sent here from Newburyport, in Massachusetts. He displays great elevation, and indeed seriousness of demeanor, the latter seeming hardly consistent with his age, which is but thirty-three years. But he has other qualities, which are in harmony with his gravity. He is a man of much and severe thought, with an uncommonly vigorous mind, highly cultivated by study. Young as he is, there is not an individual here who will speak with more dignity, or utter more solid sense. He is an orator, and his strong characteristics are conciseness and force. He presents, indeed, a rare combination of personal and intellectual endowments. He is a lawyer, but has served his country in the field as well as in the forum. In 1778 he was one of General Sullivan's aids, in the expedition to dislodge the British from Rhode Island.

And who is that near him, of middling stature, and thin person? His manner is courteous toward those who address him, and his whole appearance very gentlemanlike. That is Elbridge

Gerry: he also has been sent here by Massachusetts. In all questions of commerce and finance his wisdom and experience will be valued; he has studied them carefully. He is one of those whose names are signed to the Declaration of Independence.

But, mark that tall man, with the somewhat long visage, dark complexion, and blue eyes. His hair is loose, and combed over his forehead, and, as you may observe, has but little powder in it. The expression of his countenance indicates gentleness and kindness; and he possesses both, yet is he also a man of inflexible firmness and adherence to principle. He neither possesses nor affects the polish of city life; but not a man in all this assembly has a more unspotted private character; and few, if any, have stronger minds, or judgments more calm and dispassionate. He is a fine specimen of the old Puritan character, with its best traits. That is Caleb Strong, also from Massachusetts.

Let us look for men from other parts of New England. Yonder is Langdon, from New Hampshire. He has not had, like the Massachusetts representatives, the advantages of Harvard, nor has he mingled much, if at all, in the Boston circle of fashion; yet he is worthy of the place assigned him here. John Langdon is the son of a New Hampshire farmer, and having been bred to mercantile life, was employed in commercial transactions, until the contest commenced with the mother country. At that period, he was a merchant in Portsmouth, and it was he, who, in concert with Sullivan, and under his leadership, in 1774 entered Fort William and Mary, and carried off all the military stores of the British. It was John Langdon, too, who in 1777 furnished means to call out and sustain the New Hampshire militia under Stark, after our loss of Ticonderoga. So we may thank him for the victory at Bennington. He has also been in the field himself, at the head of his Volunteers, in Vermont and Rhode Island. He is eminently prac-

tical, with sterling good sense, is social in his habits, and in his manners easy, unaffected, and pleasing. He was the agent in New Hampshire of the Continental Congress, and contracted for building several public ships of war. Among all before us there is not one more thoroughly republican in his feelings and tendencies than John Langdon.

There is but one other portion of New England represented here, for it is understood Rhode Island has sent no delegates. There are the men from Connecticut, three in number: not far from the Massachusetts delegation. First, we will speak of that remarkable self-made statesman and jurist, Roger Sherman; he is one of those who fearlessly put their names to the Declaration of Independence, after acting as members of the committee appointed to prepare it. That tall, erect, well-proportioned gentleman is he. His complexion is very fair, and his countenance manly and agreeable, though somewhat grave. Observe too his dress, remarkable for its plainness, yet as remarkable for its neatness. He is consistently religious, and has all the piety of the best Puritan without any of the acerbity which sometimes accompanies it. He is indeed an extraordinary man, or he would not be where we now see him. He is the son of a plain Massachusetts farmer, and never had any other advantages of education, in his youth, than such as a common township school could afford. He is a striking illustration of the truth that every one must, in a great degree, educate himself. He was a shoemaker, and worked at his trade, during several years; but he was scarce ever seated at his work unless with some book lying open before him. His thirst for knowledge was intense. He never, probably, knew an idle hour. At the age of twenty-two he went to Connecticut, carrying his tools on his back. He is now forty-six years old, has been at the bar several years, is learned in his profession, and for some years has been a judge of the highest court in

Connecticut. He has done everything for himself. His reading has been extensive and varied, and few, if any, here, are better informed than he is. He is possessed in an eminent degree of two striking characteristics: he has great practical wisdom, and a knowledge of human nature that seems almost intuitive. He is no orator, and yet not a speaker in the convention is more effective; the basis of his power is found, first, in the thorough conviction of his *integrity:* his countrymen are satisfied that he is a *good man*, a real patriot, with no little or sinister or personal ends in view; next, he addresses the reason, with arguments, logically arrayed, so clear, so plain, so forcible, that, as they have convinced him, they carry conviction to others who are dispassionate. One would scarce believe, from such a description, that by nature he possesses warm and excitable feelings; yet such is the fact; he has, however, so learned to control his passions, that he is habitually calm, sedate, and self-governed, mild and agreeable in society, and evinces an enlarged benevolence towards all mankind. There is not here a more remarkable nor a better man than Roger Sherman.

And near him you see Oliver Ellsworth. He, too, belongs to the bar. His most striking qualities of mind are extraordinary quickness of perception united to the close and clear reasoning of an accomplished logician. He is ardent as a speaker and often eloquent. He possesses great purity of personal character, and in private life no one is more beloved for his virtues. He is conspicuous too for a manly independence of thought, perfect fearlessness in expressing what he thinks, and great firmness in maintaining it. Remarkable for his frankness, he neither knows nor wishes to know the arts of *cunning*, that ready weapon of little minds. No man is more accessible: easy and courteous in his manners, he exhibits in his intercourse with all who approach him that best species of good breeding, the natural courtesy of a man possessed of kindly

feelings and great good sense. He is one of the most unassuming individuals here; and in the simplicity of his dress, equipage, and mode of living, he furnishes a good example of a virtuous and consistent republican. But though an economist in personal expenditure, he is a liberal and generous contributor to all useful and benevolent plans to help his fellow men. In short, he is a Christian gentleman.

Are there any other New England men here? a few; but your attention will be called to but one of them, William Samuel Johnson, also from Connecticut, and, with the exception of Rufus King, probably the only New England Episcopalian in the house: for the prevailing form of religion in New England is Congregationalism. He is the eldest son of the Rev. Dr. Samuel Johnson who was the first president of King's College, as it was called, in New York. This gentleman, however, is not a divine, but a lawyer—an eminent one—and an orator. But his attainments are not merely professional; he is a man of science and literature. He resided in England, as the agent of the colony of Connecticut, and was there the associate and companion of the learned. Though differing in his political views from the literary colossus, Dr. Samuel Johnson, (for he is thoroughly an American,) yet he was intimate with his celebrated namesake, and mingled in the literary circle of which he was the acknowledged chief. He is a highly accomplished, intelligent, and honorable man, and well worthy of a place in such an assembly as this.

New England, you see, has sent here some of the best of her sons. She has, no doubt, as worthy ones at home, but, it may be questioned whether she has any worthier. The business which has brought them here is so very important, that the selection has been made with reference to the work to be done, and New England need not be ashamed to point to her representatives. They

have proved themselves to be men, at home, before this, or the practical strong common sense of their countrymen would never have placed them here; the arts of the demagogue, the tricks of unscrupulous political profligacy, and the senseless shouts of an ignorant and corrupt favoritism, had nothing to do with their election. They are in this convention, simply because they were well known by their every-day associates, to be "good men and true." God grant it may ever be so with the servants of the Republic!

Now let us look to some of the delegates from the Middle States. First, there stands, from New York, Alexander Hamilton. That is he, with such a remarkably expressive face. His age is about thirty. You observe that he is one of the smallest men here: indeed under the middle size, and thin in person, but remarkably erect and dignified. His hair is turned back from his forehead, powdered, and collected in a club behind. Mark the fairness of his complexion and his rosy cheeks. Watch the play of his singularly expressive countenance: in repose, it seems grave and thoughtful; but see him when spoken to, and instantly all is lighted up with intelligent vivacity, and around his lips plays a smile of extraordinary sweetness. It is impossible to look at his features and not see that they are ineffaceably stamped by the divine hand with the impress of genius. His is indeed a mind of immense grasp, and unlimited original resources. Whether he speaks or writes he is equally great. He can probably endure more unremitted and intense mental labor than any man in this body. So rapid are his perceptions, and at the same time so clear, that he seems sometimes to reach his conclusions by a species of intuition. He possesses in a wonderful degree that most unfailing mark of the highest order of intellect, the comprehensiveness of view which leads to accurate generalization. He catches the *principle* involved in a discussion, as if by instinct, and adheres rigidly to that, quite sure that there-

by, the details are certain to be right. Another mark of eminent genius is continually exhibiting itself in the striking originality of his views. There is nothing commonplace about his mind. Among great men, any where, Alexander Hamilton would be *felt* to be great. As an individual, he is a frank, amiable, and high-minded gentleman, who inspires his friends with the warmest personal attachment, while he rarely, if ever, fails to make his enemies both hate and fear him. Perhaps, however, instead of this sketch, it had been enough, in the beginning, simply to say that he once lived with General Washington, and secured *his* affection and confidence. He is married to a daughter of General Schuyler, and his wife is one of the most agreeable women in the city.

New Jersey has a very able representative: it is that gentleman, so plain and simple in his dress and manners—William Livingston. Not a man here abhors monarchical government more than he. He is one of the most forcible and elegant writers in this assembly, and his pen has been often used in vindicating the rights of his countrymen; indeed, it is said that the influence of his writings did much to arouse the militia of New Jersey to the feeling which caused them to rally, with such promptitude, when any alarm called the people to array themselves against the enemy. The British hated him most cordially,* and would have been de-

* On one occasion—the twenty-eighth of February, 1779—an attempt was made to capture him at his house. A party of British troops from New York landed at Elizabethtown Point, proceeded to Liberty Hall (as his residence was named), and breaking in its doors, at midnight, cried out for the "damned Governor!" Livingston had, however, left home several hours before, and was at this time sleeping at a friend's house, several miles away. After ascertaining his absence, the officer in command of the party demanded his papers. All his recent correspondence with Washington, Congress, and the state officers, was in a small box, in the parlor. One of his daughters, however, with great presence of mind appealed to the officer, as a gentleman and a soldier, representing that the box contained her private property, and promising that if it were protected she would show him what he wished. A guard being placed over it, the men were led into the library, where they filled their foraging bags with old law papers, of no value. After many menaces of violence, and of setting fire to the house, they finally departed, without securing the only plunder which would have rewarded their efforts.

lighted to get him in their clutches. He handled them so mercilessly in his essays, and cut them so sharply with his invective and wit, that they would gladly have put him out of the way. He has great powers of satire, and is very fearless. He is probably one of the best classical scholars in this body, and a very good lawyer. His mind is strong and comprehensive, and, (an unusual combination,) he adds to its strength a brilliant imagination. He is a poet of no mean abilities, and his literary taste, generally, is highly cultivated and refined. He is thoroughly republican in politics.

As the place of meeting is her own metropolis, Pennsylvania has more representatives here than any other of the states. She has no less than eight: Virginia, next to her in numbers, has seven. We can only speak of a few of the Pennsylvania delegation. There is the old philosopher, whom every body in Philadelphia knows, Benjamin Franklin. He is now eighty-one years of age, and, like Mr. Sherman, of Connecticut, is a self-made man. Like Sherman, too, he has a most accurate knowledge of human nature. His worldly wisdom is probably not surpassed by that of any man in America. He is no speaker; indeed, very seldom attempts to speak, and when he does, disposes of the question before him with wonderful brevity; sometimes, in fact, by a single sentence. He never wastes words. He has a most happy talent of illustrating, by an allegory, or reasoning, by means of a story, the application of which he leaves to his hearers. He is always cool and self-possessed. The character of his mind, addicted to philosophical research, and the incidents of his earlier life, have combined to make him eminently an utilitarian. He considers all questions, whether of philosophy or politics, with reference to their practical bearing and effect. Hence his natural tendency is thought, by some, to lean too much to considerations of mere *expediency*, in his acts as a states-

man. But he is by no means indifferent to great principles involved, and has shown, too, the firmness with which he can assert them, regardless of all consequences. As a philosopher, he commands, and justly, the admiration and respect of the whole world. What a crowd of thoughts must this occasion bring to the old man's mind! He first visited this city, a friendless printer's boy, without an acquaintance or a dollar; and now he is one of the great and trusted sons of the commonwealth. His first visit to London, where Sir William Keith let him go, at the age of eighteen, without the promised letters of recommendation, and where, by the exercise of his craft, he sustained himself, a poor and unknown American youth; his subsequent visit as the agent of Pennsylvania; his scientific renown, to which he had fairly, and unaided, fought his way, attested by the doctorate conferred upon him both in Edinburgh and Oxford; his examination at the bar of the House of Commons, on the repeal of the Stamp Act; and, above all, that memorable period in 1783, when, as one of the representatives of the United States, he signed the definitive treaty of peace which placed his country among the independent nations! And, in this hall, he must experience strange and mingled emotions. It was here that, on the fourth of July, 1776, when all looked dark enough, and his country had no ally but our Father in heaven, he put his name to a document which, renouncing allegiance to the British crown, perilled all he had, even life itself, upon the unknown issue; and now, in this same place, he has come to assist in the foundation of a government which, eleven years ago, he solemnly declared had a right to be free and independent. He is one of the oldest, if not the oldest, of the members of this body; he has passed through more strange vicissitudes than any of his present associates, and as he nears the grave, this must be, for him, a proud and deeply interesting moment.

There also are Robert and Gouverneur Morris, both from Pennsylvania, though of different families. Robert Morris was born in England, and came to America at the age of thirteen. He was bred to mercantile pursuits, and his financial ability contributed very largely to the successful issue of the revolution. Indeed, it may be doubted whether, but for him, we should have been able to continue the struggle. He often pledged his personal credit, which was great, to an almost incredible amount, for the purpose of raising means to carry on the war. One instance—and that an important one, for it put an end to the war—may suffice to illustrate this. General Washington, who had contemplated the capture of New York, was compelled by circumstances, suddenly and unexpectedly, to change his plans entirely, and, secretly, to determine rapidly to turn his arms against Cornwallis, at the South. He sent for Robert Morris, who candidly informed him that he had no public money, but would be obliged to resort solely to his personal credit. Nearly every thing was supplied by Morris; he furnished from seventy to eighty pieces of battering cannon, and one hundred of field artillery, with the necessary ammunition and other appurtenances, and, by the end of three or four weeks from the time of his interview with Washington, all had reached the general. And this, with the expense of provision and the means of paying the troops, was accomplished solely on the personal credit of Robert Morris, who issued his own promissory notes for the enormous amount of one million four hundred thousand dollars, every cent of which was duly paid; and thus was Washington enabled to force Cornwallis to a surrender at Yorktown. Morris's financial abilities are of the very first order, and these, added to his character for integrity, enabled him to render services, which, if less conspicuous than those of the brave men who were actually in arms, were not less indispensable to the achievement of indepen-

dence. He, too, was one of those who, in this hall, eleven years ago, put his name to the declaration of independence, so that, you see, he is well entitled to be here.

Gouverneur Morris is the youngest son of Lewis Morris, and was born near New York. He was an assistant to Robert Morris in the superintendence of the finances, and, after the war, was associated with him in commercial business. His knowledge is various, his conversation copious and eloquent, and he will, doubtless, make a useful member.

Yonder you may see a gentleman, of the middle size, erect in his person, and of fair complexion. His features are strongly marked with intelligence and benevolence, but there may also be seen in them resolution and firmness. That is George Clymer, who, on behalf of Pennsylvania, was one of the immortal company of the "signers." He is a man of warm feelings, very ardent in his affections, and the delight of the social circle. He writes with great care and accuracy, but seldom addresses a public assembly; he is too modest and diffident; but on the occasions when a sense of duty leads him to speak, he is listened to with great respect and attention. His speeches are always short and to the purpose. His friends know and appreciate, far better than he does himself, the superiority of his talents. He never has sought popularity, or courted preferment. There is a beautiful simplicity and frank honesty in his character. He has some traits, which, it were to be wished, were more general. George Clymer was never heard to speak ill of the absent, nor will he endeavor to traduce men's characters; and he is most punctilious and exact in fulfilling any promise he makes, whether in a great matter or a small one. He is an earnest promoter of every scheme for the improvement of his country, in science, agriculture, polite learning, the fine arts, or objects of mere utility. He is a student and thinker, has a very pure heart, and no

man present is more ready to sacrifice himself and all he has, for the sake of the country.

There is one other Pennsylvanian whom I must point out to you. I mean Thomas Mifflin. He is of Quaker parentage, and his ardor of feeling and patriotism, prompting him to engage personally in the revolutionary struggle, led that peaceful society to "read him out of meeting." On the organization of the continental army in 1775, he took the office of quarter-master general, and thus shut himself out of the society of "Friends." They but adhered consistently enough to their avowed principles, and he adhered with equal constancy to his. His temperament is warm, his disposition sanguine and his habits active. Hence it may be that he has not always duly appreciated the coolness and caution of a calmer temperament. Some have supposed that he once thought Washington did not move quite fast enough; if he did, it probably resulted from his own ardent temperament, and not from personal ill-will to the Commander-in-Chief. He was the President of Congress, at Annapolis, when Washington resigned his office, and the address he made in response to that of the General, did honor both to his head and heart, and bore ample testimony to his sense of the surpassing merits of the great man whom he was addressing. Like most persons of impetuous feeling, he was probably taught by age, in each successive year of its progress, more and more to appreciate the sober calmness of deliberation before action. But no one doubts the patriotism or courage of Major General Mifflin.

From Delaware, there is John Dickinson, a lawyer, a part of whose professional training was in the Temple, in London. He is an admirable writer, and his pen was employed in behalf of the colonies as far back as 1765. He is the author of the celebrated "Farmer's Letters," written in 1767 and 1768; and he wrote also some of the most important state papers issued by the Congress of

1774 and those immediately succeeding: the address to the inhabitants of Quebec, the first petition to the king, the address to the armies, the second petition to the king, and the address to the several states, are all from his pen. It may seem strange that, having afforded such undoubted evidences of patriotism, he should have opposed, in the Congress of 1776, the Declaration of Independence. It was simply however on the ground of its impolicy, at that particular time. He wished the terms of the confederation to be settled, and foreign assistance to be certainly secured, before the decisive step of a declaration should be made. But within a few days after it was made, notwithstanding his private opinion of its impolicy, he was found marching with the army to sustain it in the field; and it is curious that he, who had openly in the Congress of 1776 opposed the measure, was the only member of that body who immediately marched to face the enemy. His constituents, nevertheless, were dissatisfied with his congressional vote, and another was elected in his place. This, however, could not destroy his patriotism, for in 1777 he was serving, as a private, under Captain Lewis, with his musket on his shoulder, in the movements against the British who had then landed at the head of the Elk River. In 1779 he was unanimously sent back to Congress. You perceive that his person is commanding, and his countenance a fine one. Of his abilities no one doubts: he has a highly cultivated mind, refined taste, a very large fund of general knowledge, and an habitual eloquence, with polished elegance of manners. He is a man who has ever been ready to make any sacrifice for his country.

His colleague is that tall and carefully dressed gentleman, George Read, who, like Dickinson, thought the Declaration of Independence premature, yet did not decline, when the Congress had adopted it, to put his name to it. He too is a lawyer, and a true

patriot, of most estimable private character. No one more steadily resisted than he did the encroachments of tyranny.

III.

Before we call attention to individual southern members it may be well, as with reference to New England, rapidly to advert to some of the leading features which mark the state of society in the southern states. The eastern, middle, and southern colonies, though all for the most part settled by Englishmen, had still distinctive features, by which each section, from the beginning, was characterized. For the South, let Virginia and South Carolina serve as illustrations; with slight modifications the picture of the first is that of Maryland, while that of the last is applicable to the eastern part of North Carolina and to Georgia.

Virginia had long possessed an aristocracy. From an early period of her settlement, circumstances had contributed to its creation, and they were such as made its growth unavoidable. The early emigrants who came to the colony, unlike those who settled in New England, were prompted by no spirit of disaffection towards the mother country. They not only brought with them all the feelings and habits of England, but they clung to them, from a deliberate preference. The monarchy and the church of England were never objects of their dislike. The fertility and vast extent of the lands lying upon the numerous streams of Virginia, necessarily drew attention to agriculture, which, in the absence of roads, could find no means of transport save by the watercourses. Hence the original settlements were almost entirely agricultural; clearings were made and plantations settled on the rivers, and no towns of any importance were built. Nor was it difficult for the more shrewd, who possessed even small means, to become large landed proprietors. Every planter who, at his own charge, transported one immigrant, could claim therefor fifty acres of land; so that

from an early period in her colonial history, Virginia possessed a body of proprietors, owning very large tracts of land. This naturally scattered the population over an extensive surface, and retarded the growth of towns.

In the second or third generation, under the English law of descent, these cultivated lands, passing from sire to eldest son, had created a class of "first families," and the education of the country was confined to this class. There were no schools for the masses of the people; indeed many of them were no better than serfs, for at one period Virginia was made a penal colony: convicts were sent over and sold, for a time, to the proprietors, and a regular system of kidnapping prevailed in some of the ports of England, which consigned to temporary servitude in America men who had never been convicts at home. A broad line of distinction was therefore early drawn between the large proprietors and the common people. The planter had his tenants and serfs, over whom he presided with a species of modern feudal sovereignty. The emigration of the cavaliers, from England, in the days of Cromwell, did not tend to diminish this landed aristocracy; and though, sometimes, men of strong natural abilities emerged from their position in the inferior classes, and became perhaps proprietors themselves, yet was the picture, for the most part, such as we have sketched, of a community divided into two great classes at the extremes of the civilized social state, with few or no intermediate or middle men, to form a class between them. The offices of the country were, of course, in the hands of the aristocracy, which took very good care to retain them there, and the "peasantry," as they would have been called in England, or working men, could do little else but attach themselves, somewhat as retainers, to the fortunes of their respective patrons. This indirect *recognition* of the aristocracy, gave to it its chief element of strength; for as the existence

of an aristocratic class in society is purely conventional, having no natural foundation, it is obvious that if the people do not choose to recognize it, it cannot long exist at all. Perhaps in the then state of the Virginia population, it was best that it should be so. The proprietors possessed the intelligence necessary to manage affairs, and treated their humbler dependants, (even when sold to them as convicts,) with great kindness, and regard to their personal comfort. They by no means considered them as slaves, but as long as the people left them in the undisputed possession of an acknowledged superiority and right to direct affairs, they in turn left them to entertain, unchecked, such ideas of freedom and independence as were likely to develope themselves in strong men, who at times luxuriated in the wild liberty of nature in the wilderness, untrammelled by the artificial restraints imposed by necessity in an older state of society, and in the narrow limits of a densely crowded population. There was, hence, both among the rich and poor, a deeply seated love of freedom and a spirit of independence.

The spirit of hospitality, too, from the very beginning, has been boundless in Virginia, and, indeed, throughout all the old southern states. Necessity may be said to have contributed somewhat to make it so: the settlements frequently were quite remote from each other, and the traveller often could find no shelter at night, unless he obtained it under the roof of the friendly planter, who would have been pained at the suspicion that he either expected or desired pecuniary remuneration.

It is quite easy to see how, under a system such as this, even with all its unavoidable imperfections, some of the noblest traits of human character would develope themselves. On the part of the wealthy, generosity, kindness, guidance, and support, were constantly called forth for the benefit of those below them in condition. Accustomed, too, to direct, and often to command, (for the legitimate

power of the country was in their hands,) they grew up, generation after generation, with a proud spirit of personal independence, on which was naturally engrafted a high sense of honor. A Virginian or Maryland gentleman of the olden time, seated on domains that spread over hundreds of acres, and living in what was very like a baronial state, and educated, perhaps, in Europe, polished in manners, hospitable, generous, cordial, manly, "with high thoughts seated in a heart of courtesy," was a noble specimen of men. When the revolution commenced, they to whom this description would apply, soon showed themselves.

If we turn further south, the picture, in many of its aspects, is still the same. In the old towns at the east, and on the shores of North Carolina, were men who in some instances were large proprietors, many of them educated and trained to the learned professions abroad, filling all the important offices of the colony, as high-toned and independent as any men on the continent. To these the common people had long been used to look with deference and respect; and these swayed public opinion in the East. In a broad belt, at the West, between the Catawba and Yadkin rivers, were a sturdy and brave race of yeomen, known as the "Scotch Irish" Presbyterians, lovers of liberty, from their very cradles, who looked up to their spiritual teachers and the leading laymen of the country for direction. These leaders were men of cultivated minds. Frankness and fearlessness were the characteristics of these brave yeomen. When the revolution commenced, no men answered more promptly at the first call of their leaders than the common people of North Carolina; no leaders sounded the alarm and uttered the call sooner; and nowhere, throughout the colonies, did the leaders more completely possess the confidence of the people, or more perfectly control and sway their actions.

In South Carolina, it was very much the custom to educate the

sons of the wealthy at the English universities; and those who filled the liberal professions had, in many instances, studied abroad. The aristocracy was in some parts of South Carolina as clearly defined as in Virginia. The same hospitality, generosity, and high sense of honor were also found among the affluent and the educated. In casting his eyes over the names belonging to this colony, one is struck with the large number evidently French. These belong to those who descended from the Huguenots, driven out of France by the superlative folly of Louis XIV. in revoking the edict of Nantes. Never was an act of greater madness committed by a bigoted ruler, and never was there one which more effectually wrought its own temporal punishment. The infuriated monarch enriched almost every civilized state in Europe at his own expense, and impoverished France by the loss of millions in trade, and thousands of her best population. Some came to America, and the largest body of them found a home in South Carolina. Here, as in every other land where they found an asylum, they more than repaid the benevolence which sheltered them, by their piety, their skill, and their industry. The revolution shows many South Carolinian Huguenot names. They were all patriots in that desperate struggle.

It will readily be seen from this sketch that, while the North and South alike were ready to peril all for freedom, and while from both regions there were many specimens of "nature's noblemen," who instinctively understood each other on a very brief acquaintance, and whose sympathies were the same in thought and action; yet were there several particulars in which some differences of national or rather provincial character were perceptible in the respective inhabitants of these two regions. The northern man was cool and cautious, the southern ardent and impulsive; both were brave, but if, at any time, either was rash, it was more likely to be the son of the South. The northern man parted freely with his

money for his country's good, but first required that he should be specifically informed for what precise purpose it was needed, and calculated exactly how much would suffice; the southron, more prodigal, gave to his country the sum that was named, and unless his suspicions were aroused, asked no questions either as to its appropriation or its amount. If the fate of war had reduced the colonies to submission, it would have been but temporarily, either in the North or South: but the latter would have been probably involved in frequent rebellions, while the former would have discreetly kept quiet, until it had made all things ready and saw the favorable time arrive, and then would have rebelled in the hope and expectation that it would be once for all.

The New England man thought but little of the gauds and vanities of the world: he was a sober Puritan; the southron valued the refinements of polished life, had no particular objection to a certain amount of personal display, prided himself somewhat on the graceful courtesy of his outward bearing, and, in his worship, preferred the more imposing ceremonial of the English ritual. His countrymen, in Maryland, Virginia, and both the Carolinas, had known the Church of England as the established and prevailing religion; for the most part, they had been trained in it; and divesting it of its *established* character, they preferred to worship according to its formularies.

But these hints must suffice to indicate the differences in character among the inhabitants of the different colonies. It was wisely ordered that they should exist; and in the general fusion of interests, feelings, and manners, they all perhaps proved beneficial.

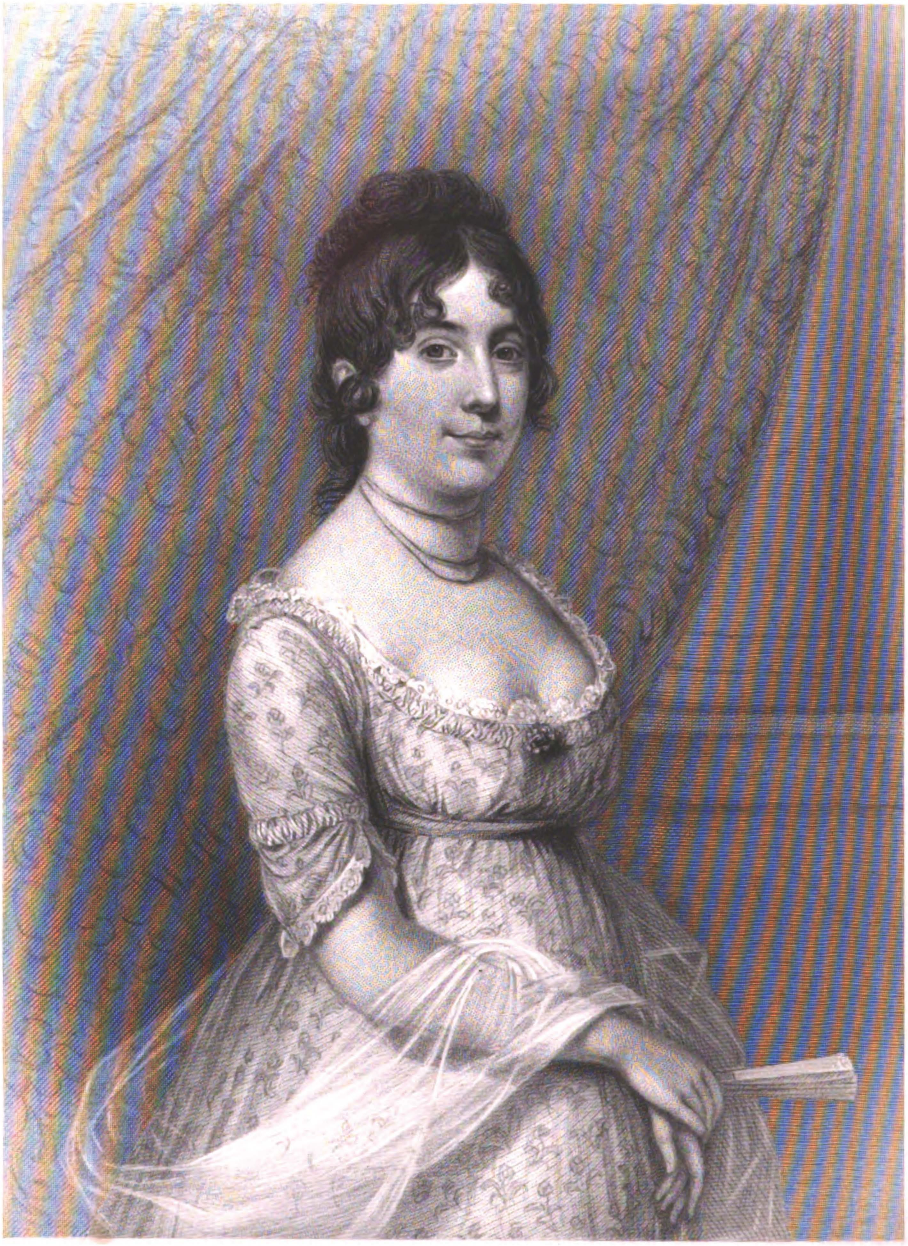
Let us go back to the Convention.

We have from Maryland, Luther Martin, a lawyer of great and commanding powers. And here too is John Mercer, a soldier of the revolution, deservedly respected by his countrymen; and McHenry

is also here. But without meaning to detract from the merits of these, we will pass on, to look at one to whom they are quite willing, we may be sure, to yield precedence. There is George Washington, of Virginia. He is the central attractive figure, and wields a mighty moral influence over these statesmen, not unlike in its effects that which he exercised over the officers of his army. He binds them into union. But to suppose that you require any sketch of either his person or his deeds, is to imply a doubt of your being an American. George Washington's countrymen, from the children upward, all know who he is, and what he has done. His is a name in history, which good and brave men, throughout the world, will not let die. A common humanity will be too proud of it ever to let it perish. He is one of the few whom God has made to be men for all time. We love and honor him now; he will be more honored, more venerated by future generations. We are too near him to mark the admirable and exquisitely adjusted features of his character; posterity, standing at a greater distance, will see the harmonious and massive grandeur of his magnificent and finely developed proportions. We can only belittle him by praising him as we would another man. It becomes an American to point merely to his deeds, and be silent. The world will do the rest.

That middle-sized, venerable looking person, whom you see, is George Wythe. He is now sixty-one years old, and in many respects a remarkable man. His father was a farmer. His mother was a woman of great strength of mind, and of attainments very unusual in her sex; she was an excellent Latin scholar, and is said even to have spoken that language fluently; she taught it to her son; but in several other respects his education was somewhat neglected. He lost his parents before he was a man, and with the thoughtlessness of youth, uncontrolled by authority, rushed madly

onward in a career of folly and dissipation. The force of his character, however, may be appreciated from the fact that he did, at last, what very few under similar circumstances would or could have done. After nine years of dissipation, he reformed, and became a man of exemplary sobriety and steadiness. Lamenting most deeply the time irrecoverably lost by his folly and sin, and deploring, at that late period, the want of that learning which he might have acquired during those misspent years, he resolved to redeem the future, and from that hour devoted himself with untiring industry to study. He taught himself Greek, and choosing the profession of jurisprudence, became profoundly versed in both the common and civil law, and thoroughly learned in the statute law of both Great Britain and Virginia. No longer a thoughtless, dissipated youth, he was respected, as a wise, sedate, and upright man, of marked ability, and eminently worthy of the confidence of his countrymen; nor was it long before he stood at the very head of the Virginia bar. When the troubles with the mother country first began, he stood forth boldly, and encouraged, if indeed he did not originate, the first movements of opposition in Virginia. He was the fearless champion of liberty, and was among the earliest to enrol himself in the ranks of her volunteers. His influence and example undoubtedly did very much to inspire the people. Before the war actually commenced he was a member of the Virginia legislature, and speaker of that body. He was sent in 1775 to the Congress at Philadelphia, and was one of those who, in 1776, put their names to the Declaration of Independence. He is now Chancellor of Virginia, and it may be doubted whether, in this house, there is a purer or a wiser man. His now long continued habits of strict temperance and regularity of life have given him, as you see, a healthy old age, and one cannot look without lingering on his manly and expressive features.



MRS. JAMES MADISON.

(DOLLY PAYNE.)

From an original picture by Gilbert Stuart in possession of Richard Cutts Esq. of Washington.

He is perfectly unaffected and simple in his manners, as modest as he is learned, and singularly disinterested. If you should hear him speak, you would be struck by his logical arrangement, his chaste language, and his easy elocution. He is also exceedingly courteous in debate. He is not, however, what would be termed a brilliant man. His mind indeed is of very high order, but not the most rapid in seizing upon the prominent points of a subject. Labor has made him what he is. Allow him time for consideration, and then will appear his profound penetration, his well-linked logic, and his demonstrated conclusion.

And here is another delegate from Virginia. I cannot speak of all, but may not pass unnoticed James Madison. He is now thirty-seven years old, and has been trained as a lawyer by Chancellor Wythe. He possesses fine talents, and is remarkable for his close reasoning. Though younger than many here, he is, notwithstanding, a worthy companion to them, for his views and attainments are much in advance of his years. He was always a thinker, and is a bold and forcible speaker. If there be any one here of whom I would say, "he never was a *boy*," I think it would be Mr. Madison. Virginia considers him one of her ornaments, and is justly proud of him.

Let us see whom we have here from North Carolina. There are two of that delegation of whom we will speak. First, there is William Richardson Davie. Tall in person and well formed, he is possessed, as you perceive, of features remarkably handsome, and strikingly expressive of his manly nature. His voice is melodious, his manner dignified, and he is a very accomplished orator. He has been a hard student, and his influence is great in North Carolina. He deserves all that he possesses, for he is one of the tried patriots of that state, though not a native. He was born in England, and brought to this country by his father at a very early age.

He had a maternal uncle, the Rev. William Richardson, who was one of the Presbyterian clergy in that "Scotch Irish" settlement of which we have spoken as existing in North Carolina. This uncle had no children, and adopted his nephew, who afterward inherited his estate. He was prepared for college in North Carolina, and afterwards finished his studies at Princeton. Here his patriotism first broke into action. He was one of that party of students who left college, with the consent of its head, Dr. Witherspoon, and served as a volunteer, near New York, in the summer of 1776. In the autumn of that year he took his bachelor's degree, and returned home to study law. But the times were too stirring to allow repose to such a temperament as his. In 1777 he joined the army, and was ere long a major in Pulaski's legion of cavalry. From this time onward he was in service until the close of the war, and shared in most of the battles in the western part of the Carolinas. When, after the defeat of Gates, Cornwallis attempted to overrun North Carolina, it was Davie, with his troops, who interposed between the British and our retreating forces, and kept the former at bay, compelling them at last to retreat to South Carolina. Three times, at the village of Charlotte, in Mecklenburg County, with an inferior force of mere militia, did he withstand the charge of Tarleton's celebrated cavalry legion, and as often compel it to retire in disorder. When Greene took the command, he besought Davie to become commissary general; he yielded to his entreaties and did so; and it is not saying too much to state that his personal influence, and the pledge of his own credit, in this department, contributed largely to save the South. After the war was over, he entered on the practice of his profession, and is now one of the most distinguished lawyers in the state.

The other representative to be named from North Carolina is Dr. Hugh Williamson. He is now a little more than fifty years

old. He was originally designed for the ministry, and indeed has preached, as a licentiate of the presbytery of Philadelphia. He never, however, had charge of a congregation, for in early life his health was delicate, and he had not strength for the duties of the pulpit. He became, therefore, professor of mathematics in the University of Pennsylvania, and in a few years went abroad to pursue medical studies. He availed himself of the schools of Edinburgh, London, and Utrecht, in which last he received his degree, and after making the tour of Europe, returned home, in improved health, and practised as a physician, in Philadelphia, for several years with success. His health, however, again failed him, and he was obliged to relinquish his business. He employed himself in scientific studies, and, together with Rittenhouse, Ewing, and Smith, acted on a committee of the American Philosophical Society to observe the transit of Venus, in June, and that of Mercury, in November, of the year 1769. He was with Dr. Ewing in Europe, in 1774, 1775, and 1776, when the troubles with the mother country began, and, in Holland, first heard the news of the Declaration of Independence, when he hastened to return home. The medical staff in the army was filled up before his arrival, but circumstances ere long called him to Newbern, in North Carolina, and, while there, he took occasion to inform the governor that he might command his services, if at any time, in the course of the war, he could be useful. In 1780 the state raised several thousand men to join the army for the relief of South Carolina, and placed them under the command of the late governor, Caswell, who then held the rank of major general. This gentleman immediately claimed the fulfilment of the promise Dr. Williamson had made to him, and he was placed at the head of the medical department of the troops of North Carolina. Thus did he (though by birth a Pennsylvanian,) become connected with that state. The climate

better suited his constitution, and he probably considered North Carolina his home. He was sent as a member from one of the borough towns to the House of Commons, and was elected by the legislature to the Continental Congress, where he served three years, as long a time as the law allowed. You now see him here. He is a very worthy and excellent man, of much observation and extensive attainments, and an undoubted patriot.

But let me call your attention to John Rutledge, of South Carolina, an able and most accomplished gentleman. He is of Irish descent on his father's side, though a native of the state which he here represents. He studied law in the Temple, London, and returning to Charleston, commenced practice, so far back as 1761. He is very eloquent, and at once rose to the first rank in his profession. When Massachusetts, in 1764, proposed to the other provinces to appoint committees to meet in a Congress, as one step toward cementing an union, it was John Rutledge who induced the assembly of South Carolina to agree to the proposal, and he, with Christopher Gadsden and Thomas Lynch, were appointed the representatives. He was the youngest of the three, and probably the youngest member of the Congress which met in New York in 1765. He was but some twenty-seven years old. The North, at that time, knew but little of the South; its inhabitants were supposed to be indolent, and luxurious, and, at any rate, but little was expected from such a seeming stripling as John Rutledge; he spoke, and sober and thoughtful old men were surprised into admiration and respect by the eloquence of the young representative from South Carolina. His power over his constituents is very great. When news of the Boston port-bill reached Charleston, expresses were sent over the state to call a general meeting of the inhabitants. They came, and it was easy to induce them to appoint delegates to a general Congress; but then came propositions to instruct

them how far they might go in supporting the Bostonians. John Rutledge rose in all his might; his subject was, "No instructions to the representatives," but full authority to exercise their discretion, and a pledge, to the men of New England, that South Carolina would, to the death, stand by all her delegates promised for her. Some one in opposition asked what should be done if the delegates made an improper use of this large grant of power? With an energy of manner which was in itself as forcible as an argument, the clear sound of his voice rose above the listening auditory, and rung out in his short words, full alike of decision and honesty, "*Hang them.*" The impression was irresistible, and the delegates went without directions as to their conduct, ready to help Boston to the full extent of their ability. John Rutledge was one of those delegates. Washington cherished always the highest estimate of his virtues, and he referred to him, while he was himself a member of that body, as the greatest orator in the Continental Congress. He has served his state in her highest offices; she has unbounded confidence in his patriotism, talents, decision, and firmness, and has now sent him to assist in making a Constitution.

But here is another worthy son of South Carolina, Charles Cotesworth Pinckney. He also is a lawyer, and was educated at Westminster, Oxford, and the Temple. But he is a soldier too, and has passed through all the vicissitudes of a soldier's life. When his country needed him he relinquished law, and, girding on his sword, took the field as a captain, and was soon promoted to a colonelcy. The danger of invasion being over in South Carolina, he joined the northern army, and General Washington appointed him one of his aids. He fought at Brandywine and Germantown, and, returning to the South, was intrusted with the defence of the fort on Sullivan's Island. The enemy passed without attacking it, when he instantly hastened to Charleston to defend the lines.

Here he was made a prisoner of war, and as his influence and energy were well known, he was treated with unusual and unmanly rigor, in order to crush his spirit, and intimidate others. Menaces and promises were alike resorted to to corrupt his fidelity. He was unmoved either by severity or temptations. He was true to his country. General Washington has a very high opinion of him, and he deserves it. He is a man of fine mind, and, as a scholar, ranked with the most eminent at Westminster and Oxford.

There is yet another from South Carolina, of the same name. This is Charles Pinckney. He is a gentleman of great polish of manners, remarkable colloquial powers, and fervid eloquence. Throughout the revolutionary struggle he proved himself equally sagacious, earnest, and unchangeable.

Only one more remains of whom we will speak; not that the remaining characters before us are undistinguished or uninteresting, for there are several who might justly claim our notice; but there is danger of becoming wearisome. Here is Abraham Baldwin, a Connecticut man, but now a representative from Georgia, in which State he has resided, as a lawyer, for many years. He has been a representative in the legislature of his adopted state; and, with the aid of Mr. Milledge, may be said to have induced that body to found the university, at Athens. He has also been a delegate in the Continental Congress; and is a faithful, industrious man, of excellent common sense.

We shall find that we have here no assemblage of common men, but that the convention is composed almost entirely of those who have had experience, and have distinguished themselves by their talents and public services. In the very first assembly of the colonies, held at Albany, in 1754, Dr. Franklin was a member; in the Stamp Act Congress, of 1765, Dickinson of Delaware, Johnson of Connecticut, and Rutledge of South Carolina were members; in

the Continental Congress, beginning in 1774, and continuing up to 1786, no less than eighteen of those we have particularly pointed out — Washington, Franklin, King, Gerry, Langdon, Sherman, Robert Morris, Gouverneur Morris, Clymer, Livingston, Dickinson, Read, Mercer, Wythe, Madison, Williamson, Rutledge and Baldwin—sat at different periods. Of these, Franklin, Wythe, Sherman, Read, Gerry, Robert Morris, and Clymer, signed the Declaration of Independence; and so also did Wilson, who is here from Pennsylvania—as able and worthy as any of them, but of whom we had not time to speak particularly. The fact is, there are but twelve of the whole Convention who have not, at some time, sat in the Continental Congress. The army is represented, too, for here are Washington, Mifflin, Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, and Hamilton; so that we may well call this an assembly of our most able, most tried, and most patriotic countrymen.

Regarding the public characters who presided over our affairs during the stormy period of the war, and those on whom is devolved the yet more difficult and even more important duty of creating a system of government for the republic they have conducted to independence, we cannot refrain from a conviction that they were specially called to their high mission by an all wise and all beneficent Providence. The extraordinary intelligence and virtue displayed in the Continental Congress, were recognized by sagacious and dispassionate observers throughout the world; Mirabeau spoke of it as a company of demigods; and William Pitt, the great Earl of Chatham, exclaimed, "I must declare that in all my reading and observation—and it has been my favorite study: I have read Thucydides, and meditated the rise of the master states of the world—for solidity of reasoning, force of sagacity, and wisdom of conclusion, under such a complication of difficult circumstances, no body of men can stand before the national Congress of Philadel-

phia." Those who were greatest in the revolutionary congresses, with many others, worthy to be associated with them, are in this ever to be remembered convention, assembled to define for centuries, perhaps for ever, the just limits of individual liberty and public sovereignty. They will not fail to erect a monument which shall separate distinctly all the Future from all the Past in human history.

REMOVAL OF THE GOVERNMENT.

I.

THERE was no subject before the first Congress which produced a deeper feeling or more warm debate than that of the permanent establishment of the seat of government. On the twenty-first of October, 1783, the old Congress, insulted at Philadelphia by a band of mutineers whom the state authorities were unable to put down, adjourned to Princeton, where it occupied the halls of the college, and finally to New York, where it assembled in the beginning of 1785. The question continued in debate, not only in Congress, but in the public journals and private correspondence of all parts of the country, and was brought before the convention for forming the Constitution, at Philadelphia, but by that body referred to the federal legislature. It was justly considered that extraordinary advantages would accrue to any city which might become the capital of the nation, and it is not surprising, therefore, that a sectional controversy arose which for a time threatened the most disastrous consequences. The eastern states would have been satisfied with the retention of the public business in New York, but Pennsylvania wished it to be conducted on the banks of the Delaware, and Maryland and Virginia, supported very generally by the more southern states, were not less anxious that the legislative centre of the republic should be on the Potomac.

Efforts were made to postpone the consideration of the subject another year, but against this all the southern parties protested, as New York in the mean time would be likely to strengthen her influence, and it was contended that the danger of selecting any large city was already apparent in the feeling manifested in favor of the present metropolis by persons whose constituents were unanimously opposed to it. Dr. Rush, in a letter to General Muhlenberg, after the passage of a bill in the House of Representatives for the establishment of the seat of government on the banks of the Susquehanna, wrote, "I rejoice in the prospect of Congress leaving New York; it is a sink of political vice;" and again, "Do as you please, but tear Congress away from New York in *any way;* do not rise without effecting this business." Other persons, whose means of judging were much better than those of Dr. Rush, believed with Wolcott, that "honesty was in fashion" here, and Mr. Page, a member from Virginia, sagacious, moral, and without local interests except in his own state, declared that New York was superior to any place he knew "for the orderly and decent behavior of its inhabitants." As to Philadelphia, the South Carolinians found an objection in her Quakers, who, they said, "were eternally dogging southern members with their schemes of emancipation."

There was another very exciting proposition at the same time before Congress, respecting which the supporting interests were in a different direction; the Carolinas, Georgia, and Virginia, were nearly as much opposed to the assumption of the state debts, as New England and New York were to establishing the seat of government in such a position that nine of the thirteen states should be north of it; and Mr. Hamilton, setting an example of compromises for the germinating statesman of Kentucky, then a pupil of the venerable Wythe, proposed an arrangement which resulted in the selection for federal purposes of Conogocheague, on the Potomac, now

known as the District of Columbia. Hamilton and Robert Morris, both strong advocates for the financial measure, agreed that if some of the southern members were gratified as to the location of the national capital, they might be willing to yield the other point, and two or three votes would be sufficient to change the majority in the House of Representatives. Mr. Jefferson had not been long in the city; he was ignorant of the secrets of its diplomacy; and complains that he was most innocently made to "hold the candle" to this intrigue, "being duped into it," as he says, "by the Secretary of the Treasury, and made a tool of for forwarding his schemes, not then sufficiently understood." Congress had met and adjourned, from day to day, without doing any thing. The members were too much out of humor to do business together. As Jefferson was on his way to the President's, one morning, he met in the street Hamilton, who walked him backwards and forwards in Broadway for half an hour, describing the temper of the legislature, the disgust of the creditor states, as they were called, and the danger of disunion, ending with an appeal for his aid and coöperation, as a member of the cabinet, in calming an excitement and settling a question which threatened the very existence of the government. Jefferson proposed that Hamilton should dine with him the next evening, and promised to invite another friend or two, thinking it "impossible that reasonable men, consulting together coolly, could fail, by some mutual sacrifices of opinion, to form a compromise which was to save the Union." The meeting and the discussion took place, and it was finally decided that two of the Virginia members who had opposed that measure should support the assumption bill, and that, to allay any excitement which might thus be produced, Hamilton and Morris should bring sufficient influence from the north to insure the permanent establishment of the government on the Potomac, after its continuance in Philadelphia for

ten years, during which period public buildings might be erected, and such other preparation made as should be necessary for the proper accommodation of persons engaged with public affairs. Morris had hitherto strongly advocated the claims of Philadelphia to be the permanent metropolis, and he now shrewdly concluded, President Duer observes, that if the public offices were once opened in that city they would continue there, as, but for the silent influence of the name of Washington, whose wishes on the subject were known, would have been the case. Dr. Green mentions that some person who was in company with the President during the discussion, remarked, "I know very well where the federal city ought to be." "Where, then, would you put it?" inquired Washington. The fellow mentioned a place, and was asked, "Why are you sure it should be there?" "For the most satisfactory of all reasons," he answered; "because nearly the whole of my property lies there and in the neighborhood." The insolent meaning was, of course, that Washington favored the location of the capital in its present site because it was near his estate. The people of New York were disappointed and vexed at the result, and they exhibited their spleen against Morris, to whom it was in a large degree attributed, in a caricature print, in which the stout senator from Pennsylvania was seen marching off with the Federal Hall upon his shoulders, its windows crowded with members of both Houses, encouraging or anathematizing this novel mode of deportation, while the devil, from the roof of the Paulus Hook ferry-house, beckoned to him, in a patronizing manner, crying, "This way, Bobby!"

II.

Captain Philip Freneau had remained in New York ever since the inauguration, and for the greater part of the time had been employed by Childs and Swaine, printers of the Daily Ad-

THE SOUTHERN TOUR.

I.

THE winter of 1790 and 1791 was one of continual and various excitement at the seat of government. In the Congress it was chiefly remarkable for a succession of stormy debates on the great financial schemes of Hamilton, resulting in the establishment of a national bank, and a tax on ardent spirits. It required no prophet to foretell the irritation which would be produced by the last measure; it was an attack on the special interests of the enemies of the administration, those interests which we may well believe were most dear to them, and its consequences are a familiar part of history.

"My health is now quite restored," the President wrote to Lafayette on the nineteenth of March, "and I flatter myself with the hope of a long exemption from sickness; on Monday next I shall enter on your friendly prescription of exercise, intending at that time to begin a long journey to the southward." To this tour he had been invited by many of the leading characters of the southern states, who promised him everywhere as sincerely cordial and enthusiastic greetings as two years before had marked his triumphal progress through New England.

The carriage in which he travelled was the one in which he usually appeared on public occasions in the city; it was built by a Philadelphia mechanic, and is described as a "most satisfactory exhibi-

tion of the progress of American manufactures." * It was drawn by six horses, which had been carefully selected for their handsome appearance and probable capacities for endurance. He started from his residence, in Market street, at twelve o'clock, with Mr. Jefferson and General Knox, who escorted him into Delaware, and Major Jackson, one of his private secretaries, who was his companion until he returned to the metropolis.

At Annapolis, where he arrived on the morning of the twenty-fifth of March, he remained two days. An accident on the Severn caused a great deal of anxiety for a few hours. The vessel which contained the President and his suite entered the river about ten o'clock on a dark, rainy and windy night, and soon after struck on a bar, where she remained until daylight. Frequent signals of distress were made, but it was found impossible to go to her relief. On arriving in town in the morning he was met by the entire population, and before his departure was entertained at public dinners and a ball. The Governor of Maryland, on the twenty-seventh, accompanied him on his way until he reached Georgetown.

He remained a week at Mount Vernon, and then proceeded on his journey. At Fredericksburg he dined with his old friends and

* This carriage has been carefully preserved by an eminent citizen of Philadelphia, in a house built expressly for its reception, in which it has remained half a century. Mr. Watson is mistaken in supposing it was removed to New Orleans, as mentioned in his "Annals," i. 581, and also in the suggestion that it was a present from Louis XVI., or that it had been the property of Governor Penn. The "state coach" used in New York was built in that city. In this he made his journey through New England. The only other carriage for six horses which Washington owned while President is the one above referred to, built by a Mr. Clark of Philadelphia.

Referring to the simplicity of the President's equipage and the modest style in which he travelled, a contemporary journal quoted the following passage from M. Flechier's oration on the great Marshal de Turenne: "He strives to conceal himself, but his reputation discovers him. He marches without a train of attendants, whilst every man, in his own mind, places him upon a triumphal car. As he passes by, the enemies he has conquered are reckoned, and not the servants who follow him. Alone as he is, we imagine him surrounded in all places with his virtues and victories. There is something extremely noble in this elegant simplicity; and the less haughty he is, the more venerable he becomes."

neighbors, whom he was always happy to meet, and with whom, Chancellor Wythe informs us, he delighted to recall the scenes of his youth and earlier manhood, which he contemplated, with their associations, with feelings of the tenderest interest. He arrived in Richmond at two o'clock on the afternoon of Monday, the eleventh of April, and an immense assemblage of citizens greeted him with acclamations as he passed along the streets, and the military signal ized his presence with salutes of artillery. In the evening the city was brilliantly illuminated, and the two days during which he remained there were surrendered by all classes to a proud enjoyment; for the Virginians regarded Washington as their especial glory, and exulted in all his triumphs as sharers of his greatness. At Petersburgh, and at Halifax, Newbern,* Wilmington, and other places in North Carolina, he was received with every possible demonstration of attachment by the authorities and the people. The military companies of Wilmington met him ten miles from the city, and a large proportion of the inhabitants went out between five and six miles to join the procession which welcomed him to that ancient town. The next day he accepted an invitation to a public dinner, and in the evening attended a ball at which there was an unprecedented display of the fashion and beauty of the state. On his departure he was rowed across the Cape Fear river in an elegantly decorated barge by six masters of vessels.

* At Newbern the President attended a public dinner and a ball at the old palace of Governor Tryon, which was probably at that time the most splendid residence in America. An engraving of it appears in Mr. Lossing's "Field Book of the Revolution," from original drawings made by Mr. John Hawks, the architect, in 1767, and preserved by his grandson, the Reverend Francis L. Hawks, D.D., LL.D., of New York. On a tablet in the vestibule were some lines in Latin, by Sir William Draper, which the late Governor Martin of North Carolina translated, not very gracefully, as follows:

"In the reign of a monarch who goodness disclosed,
A free, happy people, to dread tyrants opposed,
Have to virtue and merit erected this dome.
May the owner and household make this their loved home,
Where religion, the laws, and the arts, shall invite
Future ages to live in sweet peace and delight."