

"AT Athens and Rome," says the Professor, "a town meeting could scarcely be held without being declined to immortality; a question of property between two individuals could not be litigated, without attracting the attention, and engaging the feelings of the remotest nations, and most distant assembly."

"This appears to me a very extraordinary sentence. To compare the Athenian or Roman assembly to a town-meeting!!! Surely the orator must have forgotten that these ancient assemblies convey, to the mind, the most refined sentiments—They suggest that two of the most distinguished nations that ever flourished had convened to deliberate upon the most important questions of peace or war, or to elect the great officers of the state.—What does the word Town-Meeting suggest? A pound keeper is to be chosen, a road-master appointed, and such contemptible matters.—The Roman assembly and town-meeting, when contrasted, bear the same resemblance to one another that the consuls do to petty constables.

But the meanness of expression and contrast is not the only objection I have to this sentence; if one of these assemblies could scarcely be held without being declined to immortality, where are the debates—Look at the very few authentic orations which have been handed down to us, and we shall find that hardly any of them are thus distinguished. Men were not all orators then more than they are now; indeed few of them were capable of delivering their sentiments, and it was in a great measure owing to the rareness of a good orator that his speech had so great an effect.

While Mr. Adams extols ancient eloquence at the expence of modern, he does not attend to a very material circumstance which seems sufficient to account for their different effects. It is this: When faction did not intervene, the Athenians and Romans went to their assemblies in a great degree ignorant of the subjects of deliberation. They had little or no chance of gaining information—they heard a question debated therefore upon which they had never thought, and it was necessary for them to come to an immediate decision—is it at all extraordinary then that the orator who could engage their passions should make a great impression by his speech, and that men so ignorant and unprepared should believe implicitly what he had said, and tumultuously adopt his opinion? In modern times, the case is altered—there is hardly any question that can now be debated, which people may not inform themselves upon through the medium of the press. The orators must therefore attend more to the reason than the passions of their hearers. This cause accounts much better for the different effects of ancient and modern oratory than the languages, the institutions and the manners of modern Europe. I am one of those, Mr. Reckoner, who do not think that ancient oratory possessed an immeasurable superiority over our own. How frequently have modern assemblies and courts of justice been electrified, and carried along with their speaker—How frequently have our orators astonished their audience by their vast abilities, by their animation and dignity, their imagination, their pathos, their reasoning and their eloquence? Let any one read the debates collected by Dr. Johnson, the works of Burke, and many writers whom it were easy to name, and then let them depreciate the eloquence of the present day? I am so far from supposing with this orator, that eloquence is exclusively confined to the pulpit, that I find little of it there, and surely he did not reflect when he wrote the following sentence—"In vain should we enter the halls of justice, in vain should we listen to the debates of senates for strains of oratory worthy of remembrance beyond the duration of the occasion which called them forth."—Did Mr. Adams ever hear a Hamilton—Can America boast no orators in her numerous legislative assemblies? For my part, I think she has many. The professor should have drawn his pen through this sentence, because if none but clergymen have succeeded in the cultivation of eloquence, it is needless to try to acquire it, and consequently his professorship is of no use. With all deference to the cloth, I have always found more eloquence at the bar, or in the legislative assemblies, than in the church; and were this the proper place, I could easily shew that it was much more easy to be eloquent in courts of justice, or in national assemblies, than in the pulpit. Mr. Adams tells us (page 17) that eloquence "sprang intuitively from the Forum, for the last object she remembered to have seen there, was the head of her darling Cicero planted upon the Rostrum." To shrink intuitively is an expression beyond my feeble comprehension, and surely Cicero was at vari-

ance with classical truth, to call Cicero the last of the Roman orators; he was the best, but not the last. The speeches of Livy attest that eloquence was still cultivated with success, and the reader of history knows that many eloquent writers flourished after this period—few of them were public speakers, because the times were unfavorable, but eloquence is not confined to speeches from the Rostrum. Besides the lawyers were celebrated for their taste and eloquence, long after the liberties of the people were lost—even in the time of Justinian, more than five centuries after the death of Cicero, they wrote in the most fascinating style. Could a learned professor and a lawyer and statesman be ignorant of this? If so, how well qualified for his office!—There is a want of precision, and a looseness of expression running through the whole oration, which prove that the writer had not meditated maturely on what he was to say. It is a fault that runs through this performance, that it confines itself to eloquence as if it were always to be spoken, and pays little or no attention to composition. This induces the author to exclaim, referring to the middle ages, (page 18) that "she (eloquence) found herself excluded from the sciences, and declared an outlaw from the realms of learning." Did Mr. Adams remember, when he wrote this, that Rhetoric was then one of the Seven liberal arts, and regularly taught at all the seminaries?

I had marked several other passages, but my letter is already sufficiently long. After making these observations, I must beg leave to repeat that in point of composition, this oration is far superior to most of those which issue from our press, and after making allowance for quaintness and exaggeration, the following may be selected as containing an important and striking remark: "Amidst the sacrifices of Paganism to her three hundred thousand Gods, amidst her sagacious and solemn consultations in the entrails of slaughtered brutes, in the flight of birds, and the feeding of fowls, it never entered her imagination to call upon the Pontiff, the haruspex or the augur for discourses to the people upon the nature of their duties to their Maker, their fellow mortals and themselves. This was an idea too august to be mingled with the absurd and the ridiculous, or the profligate and barbarous rites of her deplorable superstition. It is an institution for which mankind are indebted to christianity; introduced by the founder himself of this divine religion, and in every point of view worthy of its high Original."

These observations were written soon after Mr. Adams published, for the purpose of being inserted in the Post Folio, but with his inaugural oration were thrown aside and forgotten, till meeting, a few days ago, with two volumes of lectures on oratory, by the same author, of which this makes the first, I was curious to see whether he had corrected any of the absurdities which I have noticed, and exchanged his verbosity for a small portion of good sense; but after an interval of three years, neither his taste nor his abilities have improved. Little good could be anticipated from a professor so ignorant and careless, and I shall prove, by a short criticism on some of his other lectures, how unfit this man was to teach what he had not learned, and how happy a thing it has been for Harvard College that her professor of eloquence has been sent to Russia.

For the KINGSTON GAZETTE.

SEVEN and twenty years, Mr. Printer, have rolled away since my eyes for the second time beheld the shores of Cataraqui. In that space of time how many changes have taken place in the little circle in which Fate had destined me to move! How many of the seats of my old associates are now vacant! How few of these alas! remain to mourn with me the loss of the companions of our sufferings, or to rejoice with me at the prosperous condition of this our land of refuge! Yet will I not repine—they are gone, I trust, to "another and a better world," where HE who causeth the wilderness to smile and blossom like a rose hath assigned to them a distinguished place as a reward for their humble imitation of his labors.—Yes! Seven and twenty years ago, scarce the vestige of a human habitation could be found in the whole extent of the Bay of Quinte!—Not a settler had dared to penetrate the vast forests that skirted its shores—Even on this spot, now covered with stately edifices, were to be seen only the bark thatched wigwam of the savage, or the newly erected tent of the hardy loyalist.—"Then when the ear heard me it blessed me," for strong in my attachment to my sovereign, and high in the confidence of my fellow subjects, I led the loyal band, I pointed out to them the site of their future metropolis, and gained for persecuted principles a sanctuary—for myself and followers a home—"But now they that are younger than I, have me in derision"

—the voice of experience is drowned in the clamor of ignorant or self-interested individuals, and while my age and infirmities require the cheerful converse of my friends and the affectionate endearments of my children, of both am I deprived as effectually as though an interdiction were laid upon our thresholds. My footsteps are arrested when directed to the house of prayer; and altho' all the tender sympathies of my nature urge me to offer up my supplications at the same altar with the son of my late revered pastor, even that consolation is denied me.

*Thus insulated, who could blame  
The man whom sad reflection goads,  
If at one sweep, with curses deep,  
He'd to the devil pitch the—roads?*

G.

Kingston, 7th Dec. 1811.

FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE.

Boston, Nov. 14.

LATEST FROM ENGLAND.

London, Sept. 25.—The British minister, Lord W. Bentick, had suddenly left Sicily, and it was feared some outrage had occasioned his departure. It was also reported the British forces had evacuated that Island. But this is contradicted. The Queen has latterly discovered some jealousy of the British, and perhaps has a secret understanding with Bonaparte. A letter, said to be from Napoleon to the Queen, intercepted, was lately printed.

The Queen of Sicily is aunt to the Emperor of Austria; and the Emperor of Austria is father-in-law to Bonaparte.

New-York, Nov. 25.

FROM OPORTO.

We understand that accounts from Oporto dated October 8, and received in Baltimore, represent, that there was recently some hard fighting between the English & French armies in the neighborhood of Ciudad Rodrigo, and that the English were retreating towards the coast.

From Portugal.

A Lisbon paper has been received in Salem, containing despatches from Lord Wellington as late as the 29th of September, an abstract of which follows:—

By the letter of Lord Wellington, dated at his head quarters, at Quadraxel, on the 29th September, we learn that the English had an action with the French on the 25th and 27th September. His Lordship represents that the English behaved with great bravery, and he is particular in the praise of many of his officers. He says that, the enemy having united their forces to relieve Rodrigo, and having been strongly reinforced by troops from Spain, which had come from the army of Naples, & their whole army amounting to 60,000 men, of whom 6000 were of the cavalry, with 125 pieces of cannon, he could not pretend to continue the blockade of Rodrigo, and therefore not being justified in the risque for such an object, he had adopted the plan of his greater security. He then exhibited an account of the event of the two actions of Bodon and Aldea da Ponte.

Lord Wellington says, in the action of the 25th of Sept. on the heights of Bodon, besides the Portuguese, total loss, 1 lieutenant, col. 5 capt. 1 lieutenant. 1 quarter master of horse, 12 serjeants, 3 drummers, 139 soldiers, 87 horsemen, killed, wounded & missing—in the neighborhood of Rodrigo.

Aldea da Ponte.—In the action of the 27th of Sept. total of the English loss: 1 major, 5 capt. 4 lieuts. 2 serjeants, 1 drummer, 86 soldiers, 23 horse-men killed and wounded.

On the 28th the English were at Souto, about a league from the place they occupied on the 27th, towards Lisbon.

LATEST FROM CADIZ.

Capt. Wade of the ship Jupiter, arrived at Philadelphia in 41 days from Cadiz, has furnished papers of that place to the 4th ult. from which was translated the following:

On the 30th September, the Commander in Chief received the following letter from Lieutenant-General Don Francisco Ballile, under date of the 25th ult. from his camp at Ximena, which has been delayed no doubt by contrary winds.

"Most Excellent Sir,

"I haile to communicate to your excellency for the information of their royal highnesses the council of regency, the complete victory which has been obtained on this day, by the arms of his majesty. General Rignoux, with a division of 3000 men, chiefly grenadiers, united with the other division which I defeated on the 19th at Aleala, had been for nine days manœuvring in front of our present position, but has finally fallen into the snare which I had laid for him, and by our repeated movements and the activity of the troops I have the honor to command. Having by these means been able to surprize him, we engaged him and finally put him to flight, in the direction of the camp of St. Roche, notwithstanding a most obstinate resistance.—It is now 11 o'clock in the morning, and my troops are in close pursuit at their heels, over the most unequal and rugged mountains, in direction of Aleala, the only place they can find refuge in their present situation. At this moment a number of prisoners are brought in, among them a captain of grenadiers, and a colonel of the Polish infantry No. 4.

"The loss of the enemy has been horrible—but I cannot at present detail the circumstances. I am, &c."

FROM THE UNITED STATES.

AMERICAN CONGRESS.

The affair of the Chesapeake settled.  
MESSAGE.

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

I communicate to Congress copies of a correspondence between the envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary of Great Britain and the Secretary of State, relative to an agreement concluded by the British frigate Chesapeake, by which it will be seen that that subject of difference between the two countries is terminated by an offer of reparation which has been acceded to.

JAMES MADISON.

Washington, Nov. 13, 1811.

Mr. FOSTER to Mr. MONROE.

Washington, October 30, 1811.

SIR—I had already the honor to mention to you that I came to this country furnished with instructions from his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, in the name and on the behalf of his Majesty, for the purpose of proceeding to a final adjustment of the differences which have arisen between Great Britain and the United States of America in the affair of the Chesapeake frigate, and I had also that of acquainting you with the necessity under which I found myself of suspending the execution of those instructions in consequence of my not having perceived that any steps whatever were taken by the American government to clear up the circumstances of an event which threatened so materially to interrupt the harmony subsisting between our two countries, as that which occurred in the month of last May, between the United States' ship President and his Majesty's ship Little Belt, when every evidence before his Majesty's government seemed to shew that a most evident and wanton outrage had been committed on a British sloop of war by an American Commodore.

A Court of Enquiry however as you informed me in your letter of the 11th instant has since been held by order of the President of the United States, on the conduct of Commodore Rogers, and this preliminary to further discussion on the subject being all that I asked in the first instance, is due to the friendship subsisting between the two States, I have now the honor to acquaint you that I am ready to proceed in the truest spirit of conciliation to lay before you the terms of reparation which his Royal Highness has commanded me to propose to the United States' government, and only wait to know when it will suit your convenience to enter upon the discussion.

I have the honor to be, with the highest consideration and respect, Sir, your obedient humble servant.

AUG. J. FOSTER.

To the Hon. Secy. of State.