

bounty of individuals, the want of fidelity and attachment would be next to impossible.

Sir, when we talk of policy, it would be well for us to reflect whether pride is not at the bottom of it; whether we do not feel our vanity and self-consequence wounded at the idea of a dusky African participating equally with ourselves in the rights of human nature, and rising to a level with us from the lowest point of degradation. Prejudices of this kind, sir, are often so powerful as to persuade us that whatever countervails them is the extremity of folly, and that the peculiar path of wisdom is that which leads to their gratification.

But it is for us to be superior to the influence of such ungenerous motives; it is for us to reflect that whatever the complexion, however ignoble the ancestry or uncultivated the mind, one universal Father gave being to them and us; and, with that being, conferred the inalienable rights of the species. But I have heard it argued that if you permit a master to manumit his slaves by his last will and testament, as soon as they discover he has done so they will destroy him, to prevent a revocation. Never was a weaker defence attempted, to justify the severity of persecution; never did a bigoted inquisition condemn a heretic to torture and to death upon grounds less adequate to justify the horrid sentence. Sir, is it not obvious that the argument applies equally against all devices whatsoever, for any person's benefit? For, if an advantageous bequest is made, even to a white man, has he not the same temptation to cut short the life of his benefactor, to secure and accelerate the enjoyment of the benefit?

As the universality of this argument renders it completely nugatory, so is its cruelty palpable by its being more applicable to other instances, to which it has never been applied at all, than to the case under consideration.

HARRISON GRAY OTIS



HARRISON GRAY OTIS, American senator, jurist, and orator, nephew of James Otis, was born at Boston, Mass., Oct. 8, 1765, and died there, Oct. 28, 1848. He graduated at Harvard with high honors in 1783, studied law, and was admitted to the Bar in 1786. He soon distinguished himself in his profession, his polished manners and his eloquent oratory contributing largely to his success. From 1797 to 1801 he was a prominent Federalist member of Congress. He filled several official posts of importance in his native State, and, returning to Congress in 1817, sat for nearly five years (1817-22) in the Senate. In 1814, he took a conspicuous part in the Hartford Convention, a circumstance which led to his defeat when he became a candidate for the office of first mayor of Boston, though he was chosen mayor in 1829. His most famous speeches were his eulogy upon Hamilton, delivered in 1804, and his argument in the United States Senate on the admission of Missouri to the Union in 1820. His published writings comprise "Letters in Defence of the Hartford Convention," 1824, and "Orations and Addresses."

EULOGY ON ALEXANDER HAMILTON

PRONOUNCED AT THE REQUEST OF THE CITIZENS OF BOSTON,
JULY 26, 1804

WE ARE convened, afflicted fellow citizens, to perform the only duties which our republics acknowledge or fulfil to their illustrious dead: to present to departed excellence an oblation of gratitude and respect, to inscribe its virtues on the urn which contains its ashes, and to consecrate its example by the tears and sympathy of an affectionate people.

Must we, then, realize that Hamilton is no more! Must the sod, not yet cemented on the tomb of Washington, still moist with our tears, be so soon disturbed to admit the beloved companion of Washington, the partner of his dangers, the object of his confidence, the disciple who leaned upon his bosom!

Insatiable Death! Will not the heroes and statesmen whom mad ambition has sent from the crimsoned fields of Europe suffice to people thy dreary dominions! Thy dismal avenues have been thronged with princely martyrs and illustrious victims. Crowns and sceptres, the spoils of royalty, are among thy recent trophies, and the blood of innocence and valor has flowed in torrents at thy inexorable command. Such have been thy ravages in the Old World. And in our infant country how small was the remnant of our revolutionary heroes which had been spared from thy fatal grasp! Could not our Warren, our Montgomery, our Mercer, our Greene, our Washington appease thy vengeance for a few short years! Shall none of our early patriots be permitted to behold the perfection of their own work in the stability of our government and the maturity of our institutions! Or hast thou predetermined, dread King of Terrors! to blast the world's best hope, and, by depriving us of all the conductors of our glorious Revolution, compel us to bury our liberties in their tombs!

O Hamilton! great would be the relief of my mind were I permitted to exchange the arduous duty of attempting to portray the varied excellence of thy character for the privilege of venting the deep and unavailing sorrow which swells my bosom at the remembrance of the gentleness of thy nature, of thy splendid talents and placid virtues! But, my respected friends, an indulgence of these feelings would be inconsistent with that deliberate recital of the services and qualities of this great man which is required by impartial justice and your expectations.

In governments which recognize the distinctions of splendid birth and titles, the details of illustrious lineage and connections become interesting to those who are accustomed to value those advantages. But in the man whose loss we

deplore, the interval between manhood and death was so uniformly filled by a display of the energies of his mighty mind that the world has scarcely paused to inquire into the story of his infant or puerile years. He was a planet the dawn of which was not perceived; which rose with full splendor, and emitted a constant stream of glorious light until the hour of its sudden and portentous eclipse.

At the age of eighteen, while cultivating his mind at Columbia College, he was roused from the leisure and delights of scientific groves by the din of war. He entered the American army as an officer of artillery, and at that early period familiarized himself to wield both his sword and his pen in the service of his country. He developed at once the qualities which command precedency, and the modesty which conceals its pretensions. Frank, affable, intelligent, and brave, young Hamilton became the favorite of his fellow soldiers. His intuitive perception and correct judgment rendered him a rapid proficient in military science, and his merit silenced the envy which it excited.

A most honorable distinction now awaited him. He attracted the attention of the commander-in-chief, who appointed him an aid and honored him with his confidence and friendship. This domestic relation afforded to both, frequent means of comparing their opinions upon the policy and destinies of our country, upon the sources of its future prosperity and grandeur, upon the imperfection of its existing establishments; and to digest those principles which, in happier times might be interwoven into a more perfect model of government. Hence, probably, originated that filial veneration for Washington and adherence to his maxims which were ever conspicuous in the department of Hamilton; and hence the exalted esteem and predilection uniformly dis-

played by the magnanimous patron to the faithful and affectionate pupil.

While the disasters of the American army, and the perseverance of the British ministry presented the gloomy prospect of protracted warfare, young Hamilton appeared to be content in his station and with the opportunities which he had of fighting by the side and executing the orders of his beloved chief. But the investment of the army of Cornwallis suddenly changed the aspect of affairs and rendered it probable that this campaign, if successful, would be the most brilliant and decisive of any that was likely to occur. It now appeared that his heart had long panted for an occasion to signalize his intrepidity and devotion to the service of his country.

He obtained, by earnest entreaties, the command of a detachment destined to storm the works of Yorktown. It is well known with what undaunted courage he pressed on to the assault, with unloaded arms presented his bosom to the dangers of the bayonet, carried the fort, and thus eminently contributed to decide the fate of the battle and of his country. But even here the impetuosity of the youthful conqueror was restrained by the clemency of the benevolent man: the butchery of the American garrison at New London would have justified and seemed to demand an exercise of the rigors of retaliation. This was strongly intimated to Colonel Hamilton, but we find in his report to his commanding officer, in his own words, that, "incapable of imitating examples of barbarity, and forgetting recent provocations, he spared every man who ceased to resist."

Having soon afterward terminated his military career, he returned to New York and qualified himself to commence practice as a counsellor at law. But the duties and emoluments of

his profession were not then permitted to stifle his solicitude to give a correct tone to public opinion by the propagation of principles worthy of adoption by a people who had just undertaken to govern themselves. He found the minds of men chafed and irritated by the recollection of their recent sufferings and dangers. The city of New York, so long a garrison, presented scenes and incidents which naturally aggravated these dispositions, and too many were inclined to fan the flame of discord and mar the enjoyment and advantages of peace by fomenting the animosities engendered by the collisions of war.

To soothe these angry passions; to heal these wounds; to demonstrate the folly and inexpediency of scattering the bitter tares of national prejudice and private rancor among the seeds of public prosperity, were objects worthy of the heart and head of Hamilton. To these he applied himself, and by a luminous pamphlet assuaged the public resentment against those whose sentiments had led them to oppose the Revolution; and thus preserved from exile many valuable citizens who have supported the laws and increased the opulence of their native state.

From this period he appears to have devoted himself principally to professional occupations, which were multiplied by his increasing celebrity, until he became a member of the convention which met at Annapolis merely for the purpose of devising a mode of levying and collecting a general impost. Although the object of this convention was thus limited, yet so manifold, in his view, were the defects of the old confederation, that a reform in one particular would be ineffectual; he therefore first suggested the proposal of attempting a radical change in its principles; and the address to the people of the United States, recommending a general convention

with more extensive powers, which was adopted by that assembly, was the work of his pen.

To the second convention, which framed the constitution, he was also deputed as a delegate from the State of New York.

In that assemblage of the brightest jewels of America the genius of Hamilton sparkled with pre-eminent lustre. The best of our orators were improved by the example of his eloquence. The most experienced of our statesmen were instructed by the solidity of his sentiments, and all were convinced of the utility and extent of his agency in framing the constitution.

When the instrument was presented to the people for their ratification, the obstacles incident to every attempt to combine the interests, views, and opinions of the various States threatened, in some of them, to frustrate the hopes and exertions of its friends. The fears of the timid, the jealousies of the ignorant, the arts of the designing, and the sincere conviction of the superficial, were arrayed into a formidable alliance in opposition to the system. But the magic pen of Hamilton dissolved this league. Animated by the magnitude of his object, he enriched the daily papers with the researches of a mind teeming with political information. In these rapid essays, written amid the avocations of business and under the pressure of the occasion, it would be natural to expect that much would require revision and correction. But in the mind of Hamilton nothing was superficial but resentment of injuries; nothing fugitive but those transient emotions which sometimes lead virtue astray. These productions of his pen are now considered as a standard commentary upon the nature of our government; and he lived to hear them quoted by his friends and adversaries, as high authority, in the tribunals of justice and in the legislature of the nation.

When the constitution was adopted, and Washington was called to the presidency by his grateful country, our departed friend was appointed to the charge of the treasury department, and of consequence became a confidential member of the administration. In this new sphere of action he displayed a ductility and extent of genius, a fertility in expedients, a faculty of arrangement, an industry in application to business, and a promptitude in despatch, but, beyond all, a purity of public virtue and disinterestedness, which are too mighty for the grasp of my feeble powers of description.

Indeed, the public character of Hamilton and his measures from this period are so intimately connected with the history of our country that it is impossible to do justice to one without devoting a volume to the other. The treasury of the United States, at the time of his entrance upon the duties of his office, was literally a creature of the imagination and existed only in name, unless folios of unsettled balances and bundles of reproachful claims were deserving the name of a treasury.

Money there was none; and of public credit scarcely a shadow remained. No national system for raising and collecting a revenue had been attempted, and no estimate could be formed, from the experiments of the different States, of the probable result of any project of deriving it from commerce. The national debt was not only unpaid, but its amount was a subject of uncertainty and conjecture. Such was the chaos from which the secretary was called upon to elicit the elements of a regular system adequate to the immediate exigencies of a new and expensive establishment, and to an honorable provision for the public debt. His arduous duty was not to reform abuses, but to create resources; not to improve upon precedent, but to invent a model. In an ocean

of experiment he had neither chart nor compass but those of his own invention. Yet such was the comprehensive vigor of his mind that his original projects possessed the hardihood of settled regulations. His sketches were little short of the perfection of finished pictures. In the first session of Congress he produced a plan for the organization of the treasury department and for the collection of a national revenue; and in the second, a report of a system for funding the national debt. Great objections were urged against the expediency of the principles assumed by him for the basis of his system; but no doubt remained of their effect. A dormant capital was revived, and with it commerce and agriculture awoke as from the sleep of death. By the enchantment of this "mighty magician" the beautiful fabric of public credit rose in full majesty upon the ruins of the old confederation; and men gazed with astonishment upon a youthful prodigy who at the age of thirty-three, having already been the ornament of the camp, the forum, and the senate, was now suddenly transformed into an accomplished financier and a self-taught adept, not only in the general principles, but the intricate details, of his new department.

It is not wonderful that such resplendent powers of doing right should have exposed him to the suspicion of doing wrong. He was suspected and accused. His political adversaries were his judges. Their investigation of his conduct and honorable acquittal added new lustre to his fame and confirmed the national sentiment that in his public character he was indeed "a man without fear and without reproach."

To his exertions in this department we are indebted for many important institutions. Among others, the plan of redeeming the public debt, and of a national bank to facilitate the operations of government, were matured and adopted

under his auspices; and so complete were his arrangements that his successors, though men of undoubted talents, and one of them a political opponent, have found nothing susceptible of material improvement.

But the obligations of his country during this period were not confined to his merits as a financier.

The flame of insurrection was kindled in the western counties of Pennsylvania, and raged with such violence that large detachments of military force were marched to the scene of the disturbance, and the presence of the great Washington was judged necessary to quell the increasing spirit of revolt. He ordered the secretary to quit the duties of his department and attend him on the expedition. His versatile powers were immediately and efficaciously applied to restore the authority of the laws. The principal burden of the important civil and military arrangements requisite for this purpose devolved upon his shoulders. It was owing to his humanity that the leaders of this rebellion escaped exemplary punishment: and the successful issue was, in public and unqualified terms, ascribed to him by those whose political relations would not have prompted them to pay him the homage of unmerited praise.

He was highly instrumental in preserving our peace and neutrality, and saving us from the ruin which has befallen the republics of the Old World. Upon this topic I am desirous of avoiding every intimation which might prove offensive to individuals of any party. God forbid that the sacred sorrow in which we all unite should be disturbed by the mixture of any unkindly emotions! I would merely do justice to this honored shade without arraigning the motives of those who disapproved and opposed his measures.

The dangers which menaced our infant government at the