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GEORGE WASHINGTON

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GEORGE WASHINGTON

A Drama

BY
BELLE WILLEY GUE ✓



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TO
THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES
OF NORTH AMERICA

GEORGE WASHINGTON

GEORGE WASHINGTON

ANNOUNCER

Beyond the knowledge of the wisest man,
Beyond the visions of the ones who dream,
There is a most gigantic perfect Plan
The separate parts of which we each may scan
Although no finite intellect can span
The whole of it. Its golden glories gleam
Upon the lives of those alone who seem
To take the leading parts in the great scheme.

The most of us live out our little day,
With sorrow or with joy we go our way,
Uplifted by success, crushed by defeat,
We journey on our destinies to meet.
From time to time some kindred soul we greet
Engaged like us in serious work or play.
No one can either alter or delay
The game in which all mortals must compete.

But some there are who move toward the sun
As when the swelling buds burst into flow'r;
Each step they take until their journey's done
That on their life's first morning was begun
Brings them a little nearer to the hour
When they shall hold within their hands the
power
That is, of all earth's gifts, the richest dower,
The heritage of fame by heroes won.

There is a time when winds that are serene
Are wafted, gently, over life's strange scene,
So that the shining verdure of the trees
Is stirred into soft ripples by the breeze,
Until the sober brown and living green
Combine to make a bronzed and blended sheen.
There is a time of calm and peaceful seas,
When blue skies smile, and charming zephyrs
please.

There is a time when spring is in the air,
When buds and bees and birds are everywhere,
When music over all the woodland rings,
When ev'ry lark, in wild abandon, sings,
And, lifted up by nature's rapture, brings,
From some far height, sweet comfort, on his
wings.

There is a time when Nature's face is fair,
And sends out hope for everyone to share.

There is a time when every wind that blows
Brings messages from fragile, fragrant flowers,
And whispers of those secret, sylvan bowers,
Where fairies meet, and spend unnumbered hours,
This is the time when latent power grows,
So that, although invisible, it towers
Above all other attributes, and shows
Itself, alone, when called to meet its foes.

Men take the places they were meant to fill,
If they are but obedient to God's Will,
For He will never fail to make them know
The way in which their human feet should go.

The voice, with which He speaks, is small and
still,

Yet, through its accents, truth and wisdom flow.
This voice is heard in waters, deep and slow,
And in the noisy, dashing mountain-rill.

Companions and the force of circumstance
So hedge a mortal round, that he must be
Impervious to fear and flattery,
Quick to descry, with but a single glance,
The beckoning hand of opportunity,
Swift to select the merits of each chance
To heed the urgent call of destiny,
If he would toward his final goal advance.

Each one his mede of bitter woe must bear.
Our deepest sorrows no one else can share.
On some far height, that one must dwell alone,
To whom the greatest honors have been shown,
For many minds, with zealous, patient care,
Combine to place, and keep, their idol, there.
Such matchless truths are, on that height, made
known,
That they, for everything that's lost atone.

There is a land whose children speak with pride
And reverence, that is to awe close kin,
Of those who nobly lived and bravely died
Before warm, pulsing life had entered in
The hearts of those whose single boast has been
That this fair land was *free*. Whate'er betide,
It always *must be free* for as its guide
George Washington leads on. It follows him.

SCENE I

The library of George Washington's home at Mount Vernon. An evening in December, 1773. John Adams and Samuel Adams are awaiting the entrance of their host. The former is seated, while the latter is pacing nervously back and forth across the room.

SAMUEL ADAMS

(Pausing before John Adams)

We have, now, surely thrown the gauntlet down
Before the one who has us as it seems
Almost entirely within her pow'r.
What she will do about that evening's work
In Boston harbor, time alone will tell.
There is no doubt that she will deal with us
Severely. If it were a first offense
Reprisal might not be so swift and sure
As I feel certain that it will be now.

JOHN ADAMS

(Looking up at his companion who has begun again to stride nervously back and forth)

The mother-country has presumed too far
Upon the colonists' obedience.
Because we have, good-naturedly, agreed
To almost all that she has asked of us
She takes unfair advantage of the place
She occupies with reference to us,

And most unjustly puts upon our necks
The galling yoke that tyrants always use
To force their helpless slaves to do their will.

SAMUEL ADAMS

*(Pausing again before the chair in which the
other man is seated)*

Great Britain knows now that we will not bear,
At least with meekness her indignities.
I feel that I myself am much to blame
For what occurred in Boston recently.
I know my words urged on the daring men
Who threw the tea far out into the bay,
And so I feel I am as culpable
As any of the ones who did the deed.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

*(As he enters the room he draws his commanding
figure up to its full height, and stops so that
he is standing in front of the two guests, both
of whom advance to meet him)*

You feel that you are culpable for what?
Is it because your words have rung so true
That they have found an echo in men's hearts?
Is it because your clarion voice cried out
Against injustice and oppressive laws?
Such men as you two are, are needed now.

(Taking a hand of each of his guests in his own)

There is not, I believe, so much as one
Dissenting voice among the colonists,
Except the owner of it has his own
Most selfish reasons for the stand he takes
Regarding what is right and what is wrong

As to the questions all are talking of.

(He directs the others to chairs, then seats himself near to them)

I think that we should all, at once, unite
Against our common foe, who'd bind our hands
And take away our right to live and breathe
As our forefathers meant that we should live
When they, in quest of freedom, made their way
Into the unknown, pathless wilderness.
I think that we should all at once unite,
For in close union only there is strength,
And we shall need to be as strong and firm
As adamantine rock from this time on.
And we know well our people can be firm;
All through the year the hateful stamp act lived
They did not yield a single inch, but stood
In solid phalanx, scorning all the threats
That England chose to send across the sea.
They did not hesitate but made her know
That her stern mandates would not be obeyed.
He who sends forth his primal, lusty cry
Into the clear, life-giving, wholesome air
That we are breathing here in this New World
Is not the child of weaklings, and will show
The sort of blood that flows within his veins
If he should be required so to do.

SAMUEL ADAMS

(Rising and standing with his back to the open fire, facing the others)

When that wild war-whoop echoed through the
hall,

Electrifying all who heard the sound,
Upon a night I shall not soon forget,
I knew the thews of those who uttered it
Were strong and supple, trained to do the will
Of those to whom they had been giv'n, who wore
The outward guise of him whom we have named
The red man of the forest who has roamed
Among the trees and o'er the plains, unbound
By any printed laws or any printed rules.

JOHN ADAMS

(Quietly and emphatically)

The wild men are, at least in many ways,
Like to the fierce wild beasts that make their lairs
Within the dark, forbidding fastnesses
Where primitive, unbridled passions reign.
But education and advancing thought
Can conquer both the creature and the man.
It is the stronger mind that finally
Must win the day in any mighty test.
And so it will be, as it seems to me,
In the black struggle that is looming large
And ominous so near to us tonight.
The one who as we know will surely be,
Unless we yield to all that she demands,
Our cruel, bitter, unrelenting foe,
Not only very far outnumbered us
But has both wealth and training on her side,
Which we as yet retain or have acquired
But very little of, for we have been
Too busily engaged in daily toil,
Too much concerned in planning ways and
means

For meeting unexpected happenings,
 And fending from ourselves and those we love
 The many dire dangers that await
 The pioneer, who, boldly, turns his face
 Toward the setting sun, to spend much time
 In piling up the riches of this world,
 Or looking into military lore.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

*(Looking, earnestly, and, almost, sadly, into the
 faces of the other two)*

There is one pregnant principle, my friends,
 That is more potent than the far-famed might
 Of the triumvirate of olden times;
 This principle it is that animates
 The breasts of those whom you and I will hail
 As brothers and as comrades, while we live.
 It is the principle that entered in
 The soft and gentle bosom of the girl
 Whom France, once, hailed as her deliverer.
 It is the principle that lifted up
 The courage of another modest girl,
 Until she crept within a secret place,
 And spilled the life-blood of an evil man.
 It is the sacred principle, my friends,
*(Rising, and joining Samuel Adams, who is still
 standing before the fire)*
 That lives and moves within the patriot's heart.
 Our patriotic zeal will, I believe,
 Be mightier than the sword that will, ere long,
 Be drawn from out its sheath and raised against
 The ones who will not, humbly, bow their heads,

Or bend their suppliant knees before a king,
Because he occupies an earthly throne,
On which his father, or his mother, sat,
Before he came into the world of men.

SAMUEL ADAMS

(Turning so that he faces George Washington, to whom he particularly addresses his remarks, overlooking, but at the same time not ignoring the presence of the third party)

When that sword is unsheathed, it will be stained
With precious blood, that is as innocent
As any human blood could ever be.
The three men whom the British soldiers killed,
In Boston, not so very long ago,
Were, as I fear, but the first victims of
The arbitrary, autocratic rule,
That England, at that time, established for
The government of those she chose to deem
Defiant revolutionists, who should
Be placed in chains, and borne across the sea,
There to be tried, condemned, and forced to spend
The balance of their lives, as felons, in
Some dark prison, where the air is foul,
And where the only time they see the sun,
Through the whole day, is just a glimpse, at noon.
For one who has enjoyed the open sky,
And wandered through the trackless wilderness,
From his youth up, a fate like that would be
Far worse than earthly death. I know that I

(Throwing back his shoulders, and standing, as if at attention)

Would much prefer to ride beside you, Sir,

*(Looking, admiringly, at the one whom he is
addressing)*

Or follow you, for you would be in front,
Until we reached a bloody battle-field,
And, facing those who dare presume to takè
The liberty we dearly love, from us,
Fight with my might, although I'd leave my bones
To bleach upon the senseless ground, than meet
The thing that they call justice, overseas.

JOHN ADAMS

(Rising, and joining the others, before the fire)

I fear me much, that many will do what
Your words present so plain a picture of:
And I am sure that none, among us all,
Could, with such dash and daring, yet, with such
Cool, sober judgement and with such profound
Unshaken understanding of the right,
Ride at the head of all of those who seek
To breathe the air of freedom, while they live,
And leave behind them freedom for the ones
Who will come after them, as he who stands
Between us, here, tonight. George Washington,
You were designed to be a leader. You
Have but been waiting for the day to dawn
On which you would be called to take your place,
Which is the highest in our power to give.
And, Sir, it seems to me, no higher place
Has ever been, or ever will be, filled
By any mortal man. To lead a band
Of patriots, such as wait upon your word,

Devoted to a cause that seems to them
 Worth every sacrifice that they can make,
 Determined, every one of them, to do,
 And, if they fail in doing, then, to die,
 And, dying, thank their God they had a life
 To lay upon an altar they adored,
 Would be enough of honor to be gained
 In one, short, fleeting span of human life;
 But added to that, Sir, would be the joy
 Of leading that small band to victory,
 Though dearly bought,

(The three men bow their heads)

won from the power,
 That has oppressed and is oppressing now
 All those that are beneath the iron heel
 With which Great Britain seeks to hold us down.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

*(Turning so that he partially faces the fire and
 thus the two others)*

We must remove her heavy yoke, my friends,
 From off our galled and bleeding necks. Free men
 Were never meant to bear what we have borne.
 There is a limit set to meek endurance,
 And we, as British colonists, have reached
 And even gone beyond that limit now.
 As for the place that I will occupy
 In the great conflict that is soon to come,
 The only boon I ask, or hope to gain,
 Is that I may be here until the work
 That I was meant to do is fully done.
 Although it may be very hard to do,
 Although perhaps some may not understand

My reasons for the doing of it, yet
I trust that God in His great Goodness will
Bestow upon me necessary strength,
So that in no particular I'll fail
In doing my full duty in this world,
No matter where my conscience bids me go.
Obedience to the holy Will of God
Was one of the first lessons that I learned
As to the course I should pursue, in life.
If happiness should be our lot, in this
That we are just about to undertake,
For, very soon, I fear shots will be fired,
And, after that, in North America,
More blood than history has, up to now,
Recorded, will be freely, nobly, shed,
Then we, together, those of us who stay,
*(He pauses, turns, and fixes his eyes, dreamily,
as if upon a distant scene)*
When battle-smoke and dying groans have ceased
To make a horror of this earthly life,
Will reap a rich reward, for we can, then,
Hand down to our posterity, a gift,
That is beyond all price, more precious than
The riches of Croesus, or the fame
That comes to those who do heroic deeds.
For, what were wealth, and what were fame, to
one
Who is deprived of liberty to speak,
And move, and act, and live, and love, and learn,
Within the law, that is, for one and all,
As just and perfect as laws can be made
By those who give that matter serious thought?

The multitude as you our countrymen?
 And so I beg of you, do not rashly put
 Yourself in a position to be placed
 Where if we need your voice you cannot speak.

PATRICK HENRY

(Thoughtfully regarding his companions with a somewhat subdued expression of countenance)

The rumor is that parliament will
 At its next meeting, take some drastic steps
 To make another move, like what occurred
 In Boston, recently, impossible.
 'Tis said a port bill will be passed, that will,
 At once, close Boston harbor to the world,
 So that no merchandise, of any kind,
 Can, after that, be landed on its wharves.
 The custom-house, they say, will, then, be moved.
 And the dictator, who assumes control
 Of our affairs, hopes, thus, to make us see
 Our helplessness, hopes, thus, to make us bend
 Beneath his boorish, autocratic will!

JOHN ADAMS

His selfish hopes will not be realized,
 With reference to us, my orator.
 Your golden tongue, alone, would make his hope
 To rule our people, as a despot rules,
 A futile one, and, even, dangerous
 For him, who entertains it, to express.
 When British soldiers showed them how they felt,
 By cutting down a pole, that was, to them,
 A symbol of the liberty they love,
 It did not take our neighbors very long

And, so, perhaps, in time, we may remove
The bridles from our jaded, tired tongues.

JOHN ADAMS

(Looking, sadly and fixedly, at his three companions, who are quite near together, while he is standing, at some little distance from them)

The darkness has descended, and our land
Is filled with dread and danger and with hate.
Before the morning dawns, I fear that we
Will look, in vain, for faces that are dear,
And listen for fond voices that are still.
We do not know which one of us will be
The first to lay his earthly life upon
The altar of full freedom for us all.
But this we know. It is as fair a shrine
As any that a mortal man could choose
To immolate his earthly life upon.

SAMUEL ADAMS

(As the three guests are leaving, in an undertone to Patrick Henry)

We have invited our host, here, to lead
Our forces forth to battle for the right.

PATRICK HENRY *(Enthusiastically)*

There is no place he is not fitted for!
There is no place he would not, ably, fill!
He is a man who has, within himself,
A perfect poise, that is, to me, sublime,
A balancing of manly qualities,
Such as, it seems to me, no other man,
In normal human guise, has, ever, had.
He is so calm, and, yet, so capable!

He is so steadfast, yet so deeply moved!
He is not stubborn, yet he is determined!
He's bold and daring, yet he's never rash!
He's not opinionated, yet, he knows,
When there is need for action, everything
That goes to make up knowledge, and he feels
The slightest change of sentiment, and yet,
He is not moved by sentiment, but acts,
As his best judgment dictates, and, I know
That his best judgment is both wise and just.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

*(Left alone, standing before the open fire, in
deep reverie)*

And, so, as all agree, the die is cast!
There is no way for us, but to go on!
The path behind us, now, is rough and hard,
And full of bitterness and burning wrath.
What is before us, only God can know,
But, as it seems to me, it is His Will
That we, who are His earthly Instruments,
Should, now, unite against the evil pow'rs,
That have oppressed the weak and innocent,
And left their fatal mark upon the brows
Of many set apart for sacrifice.
The sun of liberty, as Franklin wrote,
Has set for us, indeed, unless we light
The torches, that will make it possible
For us to see our way through fogs of doubt,
And over arid wastes, where dead men's bones
Lie, thickly scattered, where our foe has passed,
And left, behind her, tears and broken hearts.
There is but one way, now, and that way leads

Where none of us have ever been, before.
 Opposed to her whose arms we have upheld,
 Drawn up, in battle line, against the ones
 Upon whose help we've counted, in our need,
 How strange a paradox will be displayed!
 What a terrific holocaust will, then,
 Have changed to ashes many fair, sweet hopes!
 How dull and cold those ashes will appear
 To those, if such there be

(He shudders)

who still remain,

To whom the hopes they represent were dear!
 And, if it be the Will of Him, Who rules
 This world, that we inhabit, for a time,
 As well as all those wider worlds, that are
 Beyond, and over, and around, this one,
 That I should lead the noble colonists,
 Who, with the blessings of the ones they love,
 Go forth to meet, and conquer, England's might,
 Then, may He add, unto my feebleness,
 The strength and courage He, alone, can give!
 Then, may He set my feet within the path
 That leads to righteousness and mercy, too!
 For fifteen years, and more, such outrages,
 As few, with self-respect, can, calmly, bear,
 Have been heaped up, aggressively, until,
 They've gone beyond the bounds, our fortitude
 Has made us able to maintain, thus far.
 There is no way left for us, but the way
 That stretches on, until it meets the hosts,
 That England, soon, will send across the sea.
 Since I, first, wakened to the consciousness

Of the realities of human life,
I've known that tyranny, though well disguised,
Has stalked abroad, throughout the length and
breadth

Of this fair land, that is a beauteous, and
A most munificent, prolific land,
As nature gave it to the ones who claim
Their right to freedom and to happiness,
Within its boundaries, and upon its shores.
And tyranny has, now, become rampant!
No longer does she hide behind the law,
But, if, perchance, the law will not conceal
The thing she wishes covered, then, she seeks
Some subterfuge, and nothing is too thin
To serve her selfish purpose. Where she goes,
Go many other evils, in her wake.

And, now, the time is drawing very near,
When, from their work, in field and factory,
My countrymen will answer to the call
That will be sent to all who love this land,
That is too fair and plenteous a land
To be laid waste by war.

(He breathes, deeply, and clasps his hands, together, behind his back)

But, as there is

But one way left for us to go, we will
Advance, together, always hoping that
We're acting in accordance with the Will
*(He bows his head, and is, evidently, engaged in
silent prayer)*

Of him Who is the Maker of us all.

THE CURTAIN FALLS

ANNOUNCER

The tiger, in her lair, is not more brave,
Or ready, with her own life, to defend
The helpless ones that she from harm would save,
Than patriots are, when they for right contend.
They throw within the balance all they have.
Advancing toward a much-desired end,
Their nearest kin unto his death they'd send,
And, in his blood, their hands they'd, coolly, lave.

A king, who sits upon a mundane throne,
May, through the exercise of force, hold sway
O'er myriads of people, all unknown
To him: he may have had his cruel way
So long, it seems to him his will, alone,
Should, always, be obeyed; he may have grown
To think that nothing could his armies stay.
Thus, men prepare a future reckoning day.

But kings and courts and courtiers are weak,
Compared with those who glorious freedom seek.
The ones, who, in their fervor, crossed the sea,
In search of unrestricted liberty,
Were just as far as Hottentot from Greek,
From lassitude or imbecility,
For they were moved by feelings that bespeak
Possession of innate nobility.

The man who loves his own hearth's cheerful
light,
And keeps steadfast affection burning, there,

Looks to his shining sword and armor bright,
Lest danger come upon him, unaware.
In times of peace, wise men for war prepare,
And, in the sunshine, guard against the night,
Do not, in safety, sane precautions slight,
But have some shelter near, though all is fair.

A tender heart grows serious and stern,
If it be forced to face unbridled wrong.
A thoughtful mind is very hard to turn,
Because the steps it takes are firm and strong;
Its course is independent of the throng,
Who only simple easy lessons learn.
The night departs, however dark and long,
And smouldering fires, with fresh fuel, burn.

SCENE II

A late afternoon. The deserted battle-field of Bunker Hill. George Washington, accompanied by an orderly, both mounted on high-lifed horses, appears. He rides, slowly, forward, until he reaches the centre of the scene of the conflict. Here, he dismounts, and leaving his horse in charge of the orderly, begins to pace back and forth. He is wearing the full uniform of the commander-in-chief of the colonial armies.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Here, patriots, nobly, battled for the right!
This earth has been drenched, deep, with brave
men's blood!
Against a host of British veterans,

A handful of my eager country-men,
With steadfast and devoted hearts of gold,
With stoutly taut, unbending nerves of steel,
Upheld the honor of our colonies,
And showed that they, although untrained for
war,

Were ready to go forward, without fear,
Through cannon's roar and blinding battle-smoke,
Unmindful of the hurts that they received,
Because they were uplifted by the thought
Of what they hoped, and proudly meant, to win.
The pow'r that is behind the brawny arm
Has more to do, than mortal strength alone,
With any blow delivered or received.

When men are driven toward an enemy,
Through fear of threatened death that follows
them,

They cut and slash, because they hope to save
Themselves from harm, by harming other men:
The outcome of the battle does not move
Them much, if it but leaves them safe and sound:
And, so, they do the work they're forced to do,
Deliberately, and with unconcern.

But, when a fiery spirit volunteers
To offer as a living sacrifice,
Its human body, for a cause it loves,
It hurls itself into the yawning breach,
With fervor and self-sacrificing zeal.
One soldier, fighting through his own desire,
Is equal to a dozen driven men,
Who kill, because they have no choice, or, who
Assassinate for money, in cold blood.

The love of man for his Creator is
The deepest love that he can ever know,
For it is, always, the foundation of
The lesser loves, of which it is a part.
No one, who does not strive to please his God,
Can entertain a worthy, noble love
Within his heart, for anything that lives.
There is a forceful, mortal element,
That is, by very many, known as love,
And, often, brings dishonor on the name
It bears, because it is its opposite.
For love means sacrifice of self, and this,
That, often, masquerades as holy love,
Is what but brutalizes and degrades
The nature that it finds a lodgment in,
Because its chief, and, often, sole, desire
Is satisfaction of itself, alone,
Without compassion and without forethought
For what it finds to feed itself upon.
There is no man who is so low and vile
As he, who, pampered, flattered, and deceived
By the belief that wealth and influence
Could take the place within the human heart
That should be held by virtue, and respect
For what is best and noblest in the world
He is surrounded by, of which he is
An active, or a merely passive, part,
Presumes upon the place he occupies,
But only for a time, the length of which
No mortal can foretell, to satisfy
The passions, that he knows, within himself,
To be the basest and most brutal ones

That he is conscious of. And such an one
*(He pauses, and, clasping his hands behind his
 back, faces the audience, as he continues)*

Now dares to dictate, absolutely, what
 My fellow-country-men, as well as I,
 Shall do with what, through our frugality,
 And through the exercise of our own wits,
 We have at our command, to make ourselves,
 And those about us, happy and content.
 He dares to dictate to such patriots
 As those who won the fight at Lexington,
 Although they were outnumbered, many times,
 By their opponents, trained and seasoned, too.
 He'd dare to dictate to the noble soul
 Of such a man as our own Paul Revere,
 Who rode away, as if upon the wind,
 To notify the waiting minute-men
 To be prepared to meet the enemy!
 He'd send his hired minions forth to kill
 Those who are subject, only, to God's Will,
 If they would not accept his word as law.
 But, here comes one,

*(He changes his attitude to that of attention, and
 goes toward a form that is seen to be rapidly
 approaching)*

who will not brook delay,
 Or private meditation, on my part,
 For he advances, with great confidence.

ETHAN ALLEN

*(Awkward in appearance, enthusiastic and
 abrupt in manner, attired in motley, mis-*

matched, semi-military garments, hurrying up to, and facing, George Washington)

They tell me, Sir, that, when I took that fort,
And all the red-coats that my men could find
Inside of it, I made a great mistake;
They say I spoke of what had not occurred,
As if it were a fact that was assured;
I hope that you'll forgive me, Sir, if I
(He grins, and shifts his weight from one foot to the other)

Did wrong. I know I yelled, with might and main,

And told them to surrender, in the name
(He bows his head, and looks down, reverentially)

Of Him, Who is the great Jehovah, and
The Continental Congress, too, and, now,
They tell me that the Congress had not, yet,
Convened. What shall I do about it, Sir?

Shall I go over to Connecticut

And get the British prisoners, and all
The military stores we took, that day,
And turn them over to King George? I'd hate
(Looking, quizzically and whimsically, at the Commander-in-chief)

To give the ammunition up. We'll need
The powder and the other things we took,
Before we're through with this mess we are in.
When I came down here, Sir, I know that I
Was green. Perhaps, almost as much so as
The mountains are, from which the boys and I
Descended on Ticonderoga, and,

On the authority I've told you of,
 Commanded it to give up, instantly.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

(Clasping Ethan Allen's hand, warmly, in his own, and gazing, benignly and calmly, directly into his animated eyes)

The fact that you succeeded in the thing
 You tried to do, and that the thing you tried
 To do was right, is all I need to know.
 The methods you employed were typical
 Of you, and of the life that you have lived,
 Up there, among the mountains, near the sky,
 Where you could look upon the stars, and count
 The constellations, as they marched along,
 Above your head, and breathe the clear and clean,
 Free air of heaven, until you could not bear
 The thought of slavery, until you came
 To meet our common enemy and made
 Him kneel, a suppliant at your hasty feet.
 Just how you went about the work you did
 Is not a question we'll consider, now.
 The only thing I'm anxious, now, to know,
 So far as you're concerned, is, when will you
 Be ready to repeat that daring deed,
 Or do another deed as brave as that?

ETHAN ALLEN

(Looking, with respect that is akin to awe, into the face of his companion)

From this time on, I'm at your service, Sir,
 With all the strength I have, and all the men
 I can command, or coax, to follow me.

There's nothing I'd enjoy, just now, so much,
As taking forts, that are as well supplied
As that one was, away from Englishmen,
Until they learn, if that time ever comes,
That we are just as good, and just as smart,
And have as much a right to live and breathe,
And move, in independence, as they have.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

(Looking around, as if to leave the scene)

I think that we'll be busy, all of us.
There is no doubt that I shall need your skill,
As well as that of ev'ry honest man,
Who loves our own United Colonies,
For thus we are beginning to be known,
Although America is added to
The name, by those who wish to make it clear,
As to which British Colonies are meant.

ETHAN ALLEN

(Walking a little in the rear of the commander-in-chief, who is nearing the place where the orderly is, still, holding the two horses)

I hope we'll not be known as British, long!
I wish they'd call us the United States,
Instead of colonies; America
Is a good word to use, but British States
Would never suit my taste. And, as to kings,
There is not one, among our burgesses,
Who could not sit upon a throne, and make
A better stab at it, than King George does,
At least, in my opinion, though, of course,
There may be some who do not think that way.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

*(Mounting his horse, and riding forward to the
centre of the battlefield)*

However that may be, we'll, soon, be freed,
If we but persevere, with patience, and
With humble prayer, in our sublime endeavor,
From all the binding-chains, with which we're
bound.

But there will be, I fear, more fields like this,
That will be scattered through the length and
breadth

Of all the clearings we have made, and all
That have been made by those devoted ones,
Who went before us, here, and blazed a trail,
With their own hands, that we might find a way
Across the pathless wilderness, and build
Our homes, and leave, behind us, monuments,
When we are called to leave this mortal life.

And is there anything that we could leave
(Looking far away, as if into the dim distance)

Here, in this world, when our last sun has set,
When our last day of earthly life has passed,
That would be such a fitting monument,
Or that would do as much of lasting good,
As liberty for all, within the law?

As independent, free and equal rights,
For everyone, who leads a normal life?

The priceless boon I ask, for all of us,
Who've given everything to this great cause,
Is that the mighty monument we build
Will be the independence of this land,
Whose single boast will be that it is *free*.

NATHANIEL GREENE

(Riding, slowly and thoughtfully, as if he and his spirited horse were old friends and understood each other perfectly, comes into view, and as he draws near to the commander-in-chief, stops his horse, by picking up the loosened reins, that have been hanging on his charger's neck, and salutes Washington)

I find you, here, upon this battle-field,
That will be, often, visited by those
Who love their country, in the years to come,
Long after you and I have passed away,
And are no longer seen as we are, now.
It seems to me the name of Bunker Hill
Will be as widely known as Lexington,
To those who love to browse among the books,
Where great achievements are recorded, Sir.
For we are making history, each day,
That will be studied by the ones who come
From distant lands, to find a refuge, here,
Among the boundless forests, and the hills,
That stretch away, so far beyond our ken.
There must be minerals within those hills.
There must be virgin wealth concealed beneath
The mighty mountain ranges, that, no doubt,
Lift up their snowy summits to the clouds,
That roll, in majesty, above the plains,
That lay their flowery verdure at their feet.
There must be many wonders, yet unseen,
Between us and the distant, western shore
Of this vast continent, for we are, now,
Marooned upon its narrow, eastern edge.

Sometime, there will be ways and means employed,
By those who will have enterprise and pluck,
To span great distances, more rapidly,
Than any that we know of, now, but we
Are privileged, because we are the first
To break away from English dominance,
In this wide western world whose untold wealth
Was never sanely utilized until
Our daring fathers sailed across the sea.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

(Looking earnestly and sadly at his companion)

I fear that many cultivated fields
And many fine plantations will be laid
In ruins, such as those that are around
Us now before the time of which you speak
Will come, but so it has been ordered by
The One Who doeth all things well, for we
Have tried to fend from us and from this land
The devastating horror war will bring,
With all our strength and all our might we've
tried
To keep this land, this well-beloved land,
In self-respecting peace with all the world,
But when our mother-country, through her king,
Commanded England's Parliament to send
A haughty English General to reduce
Through force of arms alone our colonists,
So that they would be helpless slaves to do
Whatever England ordered them to do,
We had then to unleash our dogs of war

And send them forth to meet a cruel foe,
Although we knew their dripping fangs would
 be
Dyed deeply red with our own brothers' blood.

NATHANIEL GREENE

(Cheerfully and as if he wishes to alleviate his superior's evident distress)

And now that they have tasted victory,
And know which way to run in a retreat,
I don't believe they will be satisfied
Until they've driven Gage into the sea.
They're on his trail. He'd better find a way
To save himself, before it is too late.
Our dogs of war have been chained up, so long,
That they are almost rabid, in their hate
Of him who held them in captivity.
They're strong and willing, although not well-
 trained;
They may be unfamiliar with some rules,
That dogs, who have been trained for war, know
 well,
But they are tough, as well as fresh, and they
Are keen of scent. . . they'll find our enemy
And make him cease to harass those who dwell
Within the homes they love, and watch, and
 guard.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

*(Guiding his horse toward the edge of the battle-
field, stops beside some dismantled breast-
works, where a flag-staff has been planted, and*

*where parts of a broken gun-carriage have
toppled over; Ethan Allen, who is, now, also,
mounted, and Nathaniel Greene have followed
him, and stop, when he does)*

War is malignant and contagious, too!
No sooner does it plant its vicious seed
Within a human heart, than it begins
To spread from that heart to another one.
And, yet, it seems that war, at certain times,
Is necessary, for it burns away
So much of prejudice, and time's mistakes,
That it may be a beneficial means
Of clearing up an ailing nation's blood.
It may be that we will assimilate
Some of the qualities that we admire,
That are so strictly English, we have lost
Them in the hurry of our busy lives,
By being thrown in the society
Of those who, still, have strictly English ways.
And, so, it may be war will do great good
To those who stay here, after war has passed.
It is for those who'll stay, and those to be,
In years that are to come, we will contend
With our stern foe, until we wrest from her
Our independence and our liberty.
There are, now, consecrated to this cause,
As fine a band of men, and women, too,
As ever were devotedly attached
To any principle, or any faith.
And here is one whose heart is wholly bound,
With ours, in the great work we'll have to do.

ISRAEL PUTNAM

(Riding, slowly, forward, until he joins the others)

I came to view the spot where Warren died.

As you may know,

(Directly addressing the commander-in-chief)

although a General,

He served, as if he were a private, in

The trenches with the others, for, that day,

Our men were few, compared with those who
sought

To take our lives, or make us prisoners.

If, ever, Sir, there was a gentleman,

A noble, brave, and gallant, gentleman,

He lived, and fought, here, where we are, and
died,

Because he loved his country well enough

To die for her, as many others did.

NATHANIEL GREENE

(Looking, admiringly, at Israel Putnam)

I think that General Putnam, too, was one,

Who did whatever he could find to do,

Wherever he could find the proper place

To do his duty in, and, when he found

Our patriots could not win the day, he led

Them safely from the battlefield, although

He faced a row of British bayonets.

ISRAEL PUTNAM

(Modestly, as if somewhat abashed)

But he survived, and lives to tell the tale.

Perhaps his life was saved

(Calmly and grimly)

to be laid down

Upon some other bloody battlefield.

God grant, if that be so

*(Bowing his head reverently, as all the others
also do)*

that he may die

As bravely and as nobly as the ones,

Who gave their human lives, on Bunker Hill,

For freedom and for liberty for all.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

(Regarding his companions, gravely)

We've known, from the beginning of our lives,
That earthly life will, sometime, cease to be.

A few years, more or less, can only mean

A little longer time for work or play.

And, if the work that one might do, in years,

Should be accomplished, in a single hour,

And, in that hour, the life involved should end,

Then, what the life was given for might be

Completed, though the life, itself, were short.

And, so, it seems to me, although we may

Meet death, through violence, before the night

That is descending, now, shall lose itself

Within the dawning of another day,

We must go forward, with a confident

Assurance that the work we are to do

Will not be left undone, but that it will

Be, speedily and perfectly, dispatched.

NATHANIEL GREENE

(After a moment, spent by all in silent meditation)

You speak of sudden death; I've, often, thought
Especially of late, that danger lurks

For you,

(Regarding his superior officer, with great respect)

and others of great prominence,
Behind each tree, and under ev'ry bush,
For there are many, here, whom we regard
As trusted friends, who are in sympathy
With those who are our bitter enemies.
Some of them wear a thin disguise, but some
Are well concealed, beneath a heavy veil.
The tory, in America, today,
Is so, for one, or more, of three good reasons:
It may have been his habit, through his life,
To cling, without a question, to belief,
That he had, once, agreed to have and hold;
And, having, once, espoused a certain side,
Of anything that had two sides to it,
He would not brook advice regarding it,
Or listen to opposing arguments.
And some have only been here a short while,
And, still, think of old England as their home,
Intending, maybe, sometime, to return
To what they left behind, in the Old World.
And some there are who think that we must lose
What they consider as a hopeless fight,
And, wishing to secure what wealth they can,
They range themselves upon the sides they think

Will, surely, win, and act as willing spies
Upon the actions of the ones they meet,
Although they may be unsuspecting neighbors.
And if, perchance, a deed of violence
Would win them favor in the watchful eyes
Of royalty, they would not hesitate
To do the deed, and, then, excuse themselves
For doing it, by thinking that the king,
Instead of censuring, would honor, them.
And, so, we have, within our circle, now,
A class of people who are dangerous
And may, at any time, expose our plans
To those who would make use of them to harm
The cause to which we have devoted all
We have, or ever hope to have. These are
The vipers we have nourished on our hearths
And are not worthy of our sympathy,
Instead, they all deserve to be sent back
To those for whom their time and strength are
spent.

ETHAN ALLEN

(Spiritedly and decidedly)

It seems to me that any Englishman,
Who lands upon America's rich soil,
As soon as he's had time to look around,
So that he knows the ground he's standing on,
And gets his bearings, where a man's a man,
Regardless of his clothes or ancestors,
Should be compelled to make a lasting choice,
Should say, in no uncertain words, that he
Will, always, be an Englishman, and go
Where, he declares, things are more to his taste

Than anything that we can offer, here,
Or, on the other hand, be one of us,
And cast his fortunes in with ours, and be
What you are, Sir,

(Looking, with great respect at his superior)

as nearly as he can,

Or, if he cannot rise above the rest,
And must be one among the common run
Of human beings, let him be, like me,
A man who loves this country well enough
To live and fight for her, and die for her.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

(Seriously and contemplatively)

It seems to me that something of this sort
Will have to be considered, here, sometime.
It does not seem to me that it is right
For anyone to take advantage of
The opportunities of this New World,
And, yet, not place himself where he would be
Responsible. To ride along, when all
Goes well, yet, never put a shoulder to
The wheel, when things are going wrong, is not
The part an English gentleman should take,
According to tradition, and the claims
That Englishmen are very fond of making.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

*(Riding, slowly, forward, until he is abreast of
the commander-in-chief, and a little apart from
the others)*

I was informed correctly, then. They said
That I would find you on the battle-field

Of Bunker Hill...a spot that gives us food
 For deep and earnest thought...a spot that will
 Be visited by countless thousands of
 The ones who will be loyal citizens
 Of this broad land, when you and I are gone.
 There are wide distances beyond, that, then,
 (*The entire party turn and gaze into the distance*)
 Will yield the fruits of fig-trees and of vine.
 There will be fields of waving, golden grain.
 There will be herds of cattle on the plains,
 And many mills and factories, within
 The forests, that are, now, but hunting-grounds.
 There will be schools and colleges, where youth
 Will be prepared to go forth in the world,
 To solve the many riddles that will be
 Presented to it, in its human life.
 And we, who are together, here, amid
 The desolation of this battle-field,
 Will, with our feeble might, be instruments,
 Selected by the Maker of us all,
 To bring about the happiness and peace
 Of generations who are yet to be.
 And, Sir,

(*Turning, so that he looks, directly, into the
 face of the commander-in-chief*)

among the first, few, lisping words,
 That children of Americans will speak,
 Will be the much-loved name of Washington,
 A name that, soon, will be a household word,
 And, yet, a name so dear and dignified,
 That every child will honor and revere,
 And, if need be, defend, it, with his life,

From hints of calumny or ill-repute.
And that time is not very far away,
For, Sir, although you may not know of it,
In fact, I've hoped to be the first to tell
You of the news, some southern people have,
Already, made a document they've called
A declaration, hastily compiled,
Of their own independence; separate
From England's rule and England's insolence.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

*(The benign expression of his countenance is
mingled with sincere satisfaction)*

Each step of this kind hastens that glad day,
When we'll no longer be obliged to kill,
And maim, our fellow-men, to drive away
The pow'r that would invade our privacy,
And make us slaves, beneath a tyrant's will.
May that day, quickly, come, and may the sun,
If it but be the holy Will of God,
That, in its rising, gilds this eastern shore,
Shine only on the free, until it sinks
Within the opalescent, western sea!

THE CURTAIN FALLS

ANNOUNCER

As surely as the sombre shades of night
Succeed the warm, soft tints of sunset's glow,
So surely selfishness will put to flight
The highest sense of justice weak minds know.
Although the dawning day be fair and bright,
Portentous clouds may be, by noon, in sight,
And, ere the gentle evening breezes blow,
From earth to sky the lightning's glare may go.

No matter how devoted to the cause,
That is the noblest known to all mankind,
A human heart may be, there will be flaws
In human undertakings; close behind
The highest hope, comes deep despair, designed
To test the temper of a mortal's mind,
And make the ones depending on it, pause
To watch the working of its psychic laws.

Life's pendulum keeps swinging, forth and back,
The central force, that holds it in its place,
Is steady and persistent, with no lack
Of perspicacity and subtle knack,
So that, apparently, with easy grace,
It gains new strength from ev'ry fresh attack,
And proves that nothing can its pow'r deface,
And thus it always wins in ev'ry race.

The man, who is successful, finds a swarm
Of sycophants are fawning at his feet.
Those, who are in high places, always, meet
Enough unsought attentions to disarm

Their faith in human nature. All the charm
Is taken from men's praises, when they greet
The winner of a vict'ry, howe'er sweet,
And, secretly, desire to do him harm.

No matter what the world, without, may be,
If we but have assurance from within
That everything is well, we do not see
The outer darkness, but complacently,
Go forward, though we know pit-falls, that sin
Has set, are just ahead; through battle-din
And battle-smoke, we are serene, for we
Feel certain, in the conflict, we will win.

SCENE III

A large, plainly furnished room, in George Washington's head-quarters, at Valley Forge, in the early evening. The commander-in-chief of the United States armies is alone, seated before a table, upon which are spread many maps and plans; among these, a large ink-horn, with many quill-pens near it, is conspicuous.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

(Leaning back in his chair, with a sheaf of papers in his right hand, while, in his left hand, he holds a quill-pen)

The men are suffering, as I know well,
Although they make no protest or complaint;
I found a bloody foot-print, in the snow,
Today; I know that they are poorly clad;

And, surely, some are very poorly shod.
The cabins, where they live, are very far
From being weather-proof; the wind blows
through

The cracks that are between the rough-hewn logs.
They lack in common comforts, and they have
No hint of luxury of any kind.

To see them bearing all this cheerfully
Gives me perpetual proof that they are men
Such as the far-famed Spartans must have been,
Men such as very few have ever had
To follow after them and give them strength
Through their example to bear everything,
No matter what its nature or its source,
With equanimity and buoyant hope.

The winter has been long and very full
Of misery and disappointment too.
Harsh criticisms have been freely made
Concerning what the critics had small chance
To know much of; they have not spared my
name,

But those who know me best are satisfied
To put full faith in my integrity.
So long as I can keep my self-respect
And do not lose the friendship of the men
Who've shared the hardships I have undergone
I'll thank the Giver of all perfect gifts
And pity those who do not speak the truth.
It was a daring thing for us to do,

(I see our seeming rashness more and more,)
Surrounded by the pathless wilderness
Known only to the wild things of the hills,

And the wide, rolling plains that stretch between
The rivers that must flow in majesty
Beyond the boundless forests that we know,
Until they find their way into the sea,
Without a map or chart of any kind,
Should we, in desperation, think we must
Move on toward the west, where there is room
For freedom's hosts to live and breathe and move
With freedom's starry banner over them,
It was a daring thing for us to do.

*(He rises from his chair, lays papers and pen,
carefully, down upon the table, and, with his
hands clasped behind his back, begins to pace,
slowly, back and forth, before the open fire,
where logs, supported by huge, unwieldy
andirons, are blazing)*

Sometimes, the thought that I have led my
friends

Into a corner, where we have been caught,
As if within a trap, and where we stand,
With backs against a high and solid wall,
To face our cruel and relentless foe,
Oppresses me, and, when I see men fall,
Or staggering, as they walk, or lying, dead,
Within the coffins, made by comrade's hands,
I shudder, and shrink back within myself,
And wonder if the sun will ever shine
Again, upon the cause that I still hold
To be the noblest cause that I have known,
Or ever hope to know, upon the earth.
And, yet, the fact that my life-blood is warm,

Within the veins, through which my pulsing heart
Sends it to give my human body strength,
Declares to me that there is work to do,
For me, here where I'm placed in human life;
Proclaims to me, that I have, still, a part
To take, in the perfection of the Plan,
The magnitude of which is far beyond
My comprehension, but of which I have
No doubt, as to its wisdom, for, I know,
That God, in His great Mercy, guides us all,
If we but, humbly, ask him for His Help.
And that I have been guided to this spot
Is evident to me. I know that I
Have been prepared, through education and
Environment, and through the aid of books,
That it has been my privilege to read,
To meet some great emergency, and what,
In one short, feeble, human life could be
As urgent and as noble a demand
As this, that, plainly, is required of me?
There is, bound up within the pages of
A book, that is so small, a little child
Could hold it, in his weak and clutching hand,
The whole of ev'ry phase of human life,
As well as many thoughts concerning what
Will follow, after life on earth is done;
For William Shakespere knew the height and
depth
Of ev'ry kind of human love or passion;
He knew the tools, and how to use them, too,
Of ev'ry sort of work, and all professions;
There is no feeling known to man or woman

That he has not described in such a way,
That a clear picture is presented to
The one who reads his words with thoughtful
care;

There is no complication known to man,
That he has not untangled and made straight,
So far as human action is concerned,
For he points out that destiny controls
The end toward which all action is the means,
And makes us see that all that is required
Of anyone, is never to neglect
To listen to the voice, that speaks to all,
And tells them which, whenever two roads meet,
Is the direction they should take to reach
The goal that has been set for them, on earth.
And William Shakespeare opens wide the door
Of that fair world, that is above, beyond,
The sordid things that help to make our lives,
And takes us where the sprites and fairies dwell,
So that he lifts us over peace and pain,
And carries us into that beauteous world,
That his imagination makes him see.

And, thus, he did the work that he was meant
To do, in mortal guise, and, thus, I trust,
That I may have the strength to do the work
That, I can see, was meant for me to do.
I did not choose a military life,
But I was led to enter it, because
The road my nature loved was joined to it,
And, shortly, ended there; I did not choose
To lead the continental armies in

What seemed their desperate struggle with a
king,

Who held them in his hateful power, but
My country-men decided that for me.

And, so, my life has been mapped out for me,
And, so, I have been led unto this spot.

*(He is standing before the fire, facing the door
that leads into the hall)*

Sometimes, I falter, for I have no one,
Upon the earth, to tell me what to do;

*(He bows his head, in an attitude of great de-
jection)*

For all responsibility is left

To rest on me, alone, and in my hands,
My feeble, human hands, is what affects
The happiness or woe of many people.

I cannot doubt the wisdom of the choice
That placed me where I am, and I desire,
Most earnestly, to do my duty, always,

And, yet, I, often, realize, that I
Am but a finite being, and I fear,

That I have misinterpreted, through stress
Of untoward circumstances, and through deep
Emotions that have swept across my soul,

The meaning of what seemed to me to be
A definite and clear command, from Him,
Who overlooks, and orders, all our deeds;

If so, I may have taken the wrong road,
And led my trusting followers astray.

*(An expression of gloom settles down over his
countenance, and he takes his lower lip between*

his teeth, and gives other evidences of great agitation. He looks toward the door leading into the hall, for a sentinel, who has been pacing back and forth before it, has stopped. After a few moment's hesitation, the face of an orderly appears at a narrow opening in the door, and, at a nod from the commander-in-chief, he enters and salutes his superior officer)

ORDERLY

Someone is here, who wishes very much
To speak with you, in person, Sir, at once.
He is a soldier...one of our own men.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Do not delay a moment...send him in.

(A man, wearing an ill-fitting uniform, and shoes that are too large for him, besides being badly broken, but with a face indicating refinement and education, and an upright, military bearing, enters and salutes the commander-in-chief)

SOLDIER

(Standing, hat in hand, not far from Washington, who remains before the fire)

I'm very sorry to disturb you, Sir,
But one of my detachment who has been
For weeks, now, ill, I fear, tonight, is dying;
He asked me, Sir, to come to you, myself,
And tell you of his plight, and see if you...

(He hesitates, and is silent)

GEORGE WASHINGTON

(Hastily crossing the room, to where his outer coat and hat are hanging, on a large, wooden peg; as he takes these articles of wearing apparel down, and puts them on)

I will return with you. Perhaps he may
Have something to communicate to me,
That he deems of importance, and that I
Could deal with better than another might.

(As they are about to leave the room, the orderly, again, presents himself; behind him can be dimly seen a ragged veteran, without hat or overcoat, who has, evidently, been running. At a nod from the commander-in-chief, he joins him and the soldier, already there, in the large, inner room, and Washington directs him to draw near to the fire, which he does, gladly, for he is shivering. At length, he recovers his breath sufficiently to speak, while the others listen, eagerly and earnestly)

SECOND SOLDIER

(Looking, first, at one, and, then, at the other, of his auditors)

It is too late, my Comrade. He is gone.

(There is a pause, and all three are, evidently, engaged in silent prayer)

GEORGE WASHINGTON

Another noble soul has joined the host
Of those brave men, who, now, have passed be-
yond

The narrow boundaries, that have been set
For all of us, who dwell upon the earth.
I wish I might have had the message, he
Desired to give to me, he might have seen,
Just at death's door, a little farther than
We do, who are, as yet, more closely bound
Within this earthly house of crumbling clay.
How did he pass? Was his mind clear and keen?

SECOND SOLDIER

He had been wounded, Sir, at Bennington;
He came, from the New Hampshire hills, to meet
His country's foe; his hand was firm, his heart
Was true; he did not shrink from British steel,
But he helped to gain the victory, that thrilled
Us all, and gave us added courage to
Renew our struggles 'gainst the ones who sought
To wrest from us our sacred, inborn right
To settle for ourselves, and, so, for those
Who are dependent on us, now, and who
Will, after we are gone, inherit all
We leave behind, the way we ought to go
To reach the goal that all of us are seeking.
He had a wife and children, Sir, and, when
He knew that he would never see, again,
The faces that he dearly loved, on earth,
He looked at those who stood around his cot,
And, though his eyes were dimmed by death's
cold dew,
He recognized them all, and spoke their names,
And said farewell to many of them, and
His tones were never clearer, or his words

More plainly spoken; then, he raised himself,
 So that he rested on one hand, and cried,
 In ringing accents, just one word. It was
 Your own name, Sir, the name that represents,
 To all of us, our loved ones and our homes,
 For, in that name, all that we love, is merged.
 He cried out "Washington!" and, then, he died.
 He left it all with you, as all of us,
 Who've thrown our all into the balance, with
 The cause that you uphold, are willing, Sir,
 To do. He knew that if, in all this world,
 There is a chance for happiness, for those
 He loved, you would secure it for them. He
 knew

That, in your hands, they would be safe, and, so,
 He left them, for he had, bravely, done
 The utmost that was in him, for the work,
 That he believed it was the Will of God
 That he should do, and cheerfully, he bore
 The sufferings and trials, that were his
 To bear; he used to say 'twas all that he,
 Like many of the rest of us, could do
 To help in your great undertaking, Sir.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

(Evidently, powerfully moved)

When we do right, as we are giv'n to see
 The right, and do the best that we can do,
 It seems to me that we are doing all
 That will be asked of us. When such a man
 Must leave our midst we are bereaved, indeed.
 His widow and his orphans, now, must be

Regarded as a sacred legacy,
To be protected and defended by
The cause for which his human life was giv'n.
You said

*(Directly addressing the soldier who had, first,
entered)*

 he was one of your detachment, were
You, also, one of those intrepid men,
Whom John Stark, boldly, led at Bennington?

FIRST SOLDIER

(Deferentially, but easily)

I did not have that honor, Sir; I was
Not with your armies, then; I have not had
My mettle tried in battle, yet; I hope
To make a record for myself, sometime,
But, now, I base my reputation for
Veracity, and willingness to help,
In any way I can, the patriot's cause,
Upon the word of one, whom, I know well,
You trust, and honor, too, for she has shown
Her valor, and complete devotion to
Her country and its representative.
When General Howe, at Philadelphia,
Was talking over plans, through which he hoped
To take you by surprise, at Whitemarsh, and,
Perhaps, to capture you, he little thought
That Lydia Darrah overheard his words.
I helped her put the bags of grain upon
Her horse, as if she were about to go
To mill, the day she brought you the alarm,
And, when I saw her fervor and her faith,

Although I did not know the causes of,
Or reasons for, the revolution, here,
For I had only been upon your shores,
A very little while, I pledged my word
To her, and took her hand in mine, and said
That I would join my fortunes to the cause,
For which she, gladly, risked her life, that day.
And, so, Sir, here I am, a patriot
By proxy, as it were, and, yet, a man,
Who will, upon occasion, as I trust,
Be worthy of the confidence of one,
Who could not come, in person, but sent me.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

*(Looking, earnestly, at the one who has just
spoken)*

She is a woman who has seemed to have
Good judgment, and good understanding of
Whatever people or events have come
Beneath her notice, and she surely is
An excellent example of the sort
Of women who are splendid pioneers;
As kind and courteous, and thoughtful, too,
As any idle lady in the world,
And, yet, prepared, at any time, to be,
Should circumstance make such demands on her,
As helpful, and, almost, as hardy, as
A stout and hearty man; such women are
The best of wives, and best of mothers, too;
They are the inspiration and the hope
Of all the honest and true-hearted men,
Who must, at times, be separated from

The ones with whom they wish to spend their lives.

But, now,

(Addressing both soldiers)

you two have work to do, tonight.

Make every arrangement, that you can,

To have him buried as he would have been,

So far as decency and honor are

Concerned, had he remained at his own home.

(He accompanies the two men to the door that leads into the hall; as this door is opened, the sentinel stops, and, by a sign invites someone who can be dimly seen, to come forward; the two soldiers go into the hall, and out of sight, after having properly saluted both officers.)

The person, who, evidently, has been waiting, approaches; it is then disclosed that this person is a woman, of middle age, clothed in deep mourning; the commander-in-chief looks at her, searchingly, but motions, courteously, for her to enter the room, at the door of which he has been standing; as she draws near to the fire, and stretches out her hands toward the gratifying warmth, it can be seen that she is, now, or has, recently, been, the victim of a deep and withering sorrow)

VISITOR

(Turning, so that she faces her host, who has, also, drawn near to the fire)

It seemed to me that I must let you know

The facts concerning my son's shameful death;

I am the mother, Sir, of Nathan Hale;

'Twas only just the other day, it seems,
That he was in my arms, as innocent,
As handsome and as dear a baby boy
As any mother ever had to love!
And, now, he lies within a nameless grave!
They would not even let him send to me
A letter he had written, at the last.
They took his bible from him, hoping, thus,
To break his spirit, through their cruelty.
But they did not succeed!

(Her eyes flash, triumphantly)

He rose above
The treatment they accorded him, and made
Them understand that they were powerless
To shake his firm determination and
To change his strong resolve to be what you
Would have him be, although he was so young,
A dignified and quiet gentleman.
He knew the work he undertook to do
Was dangerous and difficult, and that
The end might be what it has been.
I knew that this was so, and, yet, I gave
My hope, my pride, my joy, for they were all
In him, and in his future happiness,
Because I hoped the work that he might do
Would benefit the cause of liberty,
So that, in years to come, it would be said,
That those, who long for freedom to do right,
Have but to enter our United States.
And, now, I hope that other mothers may
Be happier, because my boy was brave,
And did not quail, or falter, at the last

Of his short life, but bore the tortures laid
Upon him, nobly, as a patriot should.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

(Gazing, with admiring respect, upon his visitor)

The life of each of us, upon the earth,
Is but a short, and, often, weary journey.
Had your son lived to be what men call old,
He might not have accomplished what he has;
The very fact that he, in his first youth,
Could be oblivious of everything
Except the sacred cause that he espoused,
Makes that cause doubly precious to the ones
Who know of his self-sacrifice, and yours.
And, on the pages of the history,
In which will be recorded notable,
And epochal events, that mark the road
We're passing over, now, there will be names
That will be known to all who love this land,
And, prominent among those names, will be
The name of Nathan Hale, who laid his life
Upon his country's altar, willingly.

*(He takes the hand of his visitor, who is, now,
going toward the door, that leads into the hall,
in his own, and, gravely, bows above it)*

We understand each other, better, now,
Dear Madam, than we did before you came.
We, both, are striving toward the same bright
goal.

Before our vision gleams a shining star...
The star of liberty within the law,
That is a just and righteous, worthy law.

(As the woman passes through the outer door, it can be seen that someone else is waiting, for a figure, hastily, rises from a bench, and draws near to the door. The commander-in-chief, smilingly, greets the eager young man, who enters the room, and, as soon as his host, after removing his outer coat, and hanging it, carefully, under the hat, which he has, already, placed upon the wooden peg, has seated himself in the chair that is before the table, takes a position upon a settle, at one side of the fireplace.)

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

It seems to me that we must, surely, win
 The struggle that we're all engaged in, Sir;
 So many things that did not seem to be
 Within the range of possibility,
 That have transpired, already, go to show
 That Providence is, plainly, with us, and,
 No matter what opposes us, we know
 That we are doing right, and, so, of course,
 The victory will, in the end, be ours.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

I, humbly, trust that this is so, and, yet,
 At times, I am discouraged and cast down.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

(Looking, quizzically, and appraisingly, at his host)

Of course, I do not know how I would feel,
 If I were in your high position, Sir,
 If everything were resting on me, as

It is on you, I would be conscious of
The heavy load that must be carried by
The one on whom responsibility
For everything depends; I know the load
Is very heavy, and the road is rough,
And I have but a minor part to play
In this great undertaking, and I know
The clouds are very dark, and ominous
At present, but, when we look back upon
The pit-falls that you've guided us around,
The narrow, shaky bridges that your strength
Has helped us over, and note, carefully,
The place in which we stand, today, and, then,
The one in which we were, when we began
To try to break the fetters, that were forged
To bind the hands, and break the wills, of slaves,
We see how much we have advanced, for, now,
We are both free and independent, and
We will be free, forever, from now on!

GEORGE WASHINGTON (*Fervently*)

God grant that your last statement is correct!
It is my constant and my heart-felt prayer!
When we could see there was no hope at all
Of reconciliation or redress,
When we could see that, only with our blood,
The page, that had been blotted, many times,
By England's arrogance, and England's crimes,
Could be made clean again, when hireling hordes
Were sent across the sea by England's king,
When wild men of the forest, who had been
Our friends and trusted allies, were misled,

By false reports and fire water, so
That they became our bitter enemies,
When, many times, our women, left at home,
Were, with their little children, massacred,
Or dragged away into captivity,
That was far worse than death, itself, and when
We saw that nothing would be done to right
The wrongs that cried aloud to us, by those
Who were supposed to see that honesty
And justice walked, together, in the land,
We girded on our armor, and went forth,
And shook the shackles off that crippled us.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

*(Rising, and striding across the room, until he is
near to the commander-in-chief, and beside the
table, upon which he rests the extended fingers
of his right hand)*

And never shall they put those gyves, again,
Upon the strong and supple limbs of those,
Who, having tasted freedom, will not brook
Commands from those who are inferior,
No matter what high place they occupy,
To any man who has his own respect,
And that of those with whom he is in touch.
When we remember, Sir, how nature helped
Us when, it seemed, our fate was almost sealed,
When Howe was just about to storm the Heights,
But was held back by wind and wave, until
The men within the trenches had been made
Much stronger, through your exhortations, Sir,
Until the Heights had been well fortified,

So that the British forces sailed away...
Ah, Sir, it was a proud and happy day,
When you and your triumphant army came,
And marched upon the streets of Boston, that
Were lined with people, who were wild with joy!
For you had won a bloodless victory
O'er one, who never had, until that day,
Been put to flight, by those whom he oppressed,
And treated as if they were pitiful
Dependents, born to do his selfish will.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

(Looking, benignly, at his young companion)

It is to youthful spirits, like your own,
That I owe much, and hope to owe yet more.
'Twas such as you who tore the statue down,
That represented, in New York, the king,
And cast it into bullets, for the use
Of those who had declared themselves to be
No longer under his tyrannical
Dominion, and who shouted, in their glee,
When the old bell-man at the State House, rang
Assurance that the document was signed
By those who had, with one accord, agreed
To set our young and lusty nation free.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

(Enthusiastically)

And that old bell will, always, be, I think,
Preserved, and looked upon with reverence,
By countless thousands, yet unborn, who will
Connect it with the message that it bore!

GEORGE WASHINGTON

(Smilingly regarding his companion)

It will, if there are young enthusiasts,
Who have the blood of heroes in their veins.
It will, if there are those who love the cause,
That is the noblest cause that they could love.
It is for those who are to come, that we
*(He rises, and paces forth and back across the
room)*

Have carried on this fight, for well we know
That there are turbulent and troublous times
Ahead of us, now, even should we win
This struggle, that seems, often, even yet,
An almost hopeless one, for we must meet,
With stores and strength depleted by the strain
That we have undergone, a mighty foe,
Who is prepared, in every way, while we
Are almost at the end of our reserves,
That never were sufficient to our needs.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

*(Stepping in front of, and looking, lovingly, at,
his host)*

Ah, Sir, I feel assured that help will come!
It cannot be the cause we love is lost!
I know that I would follow you, through fire,
And I am only one of those who would,
If it were our last ditch, stand there, and fight,
As long as God, in His great Goodness, gave
Us strength to stand at all, as long as you
Would lead us on, we'd, gladly, follow you!

GEORGE WASHINGTON

(Laying one hand on the younger man's shoulder)

Such men as you, encourage me to go
Into the jaws of death, itself, and we
Must leave behind us, in this land, our flag
To float above the ones who will be *free*.

THE CURTAIN FALLS

ANNOUNCER

When, in the heat of battle, men contend,
They do not, very often, count the cost,
But, when the battle has been won or lost,
And there is no need, longer, to defend
What they protect, hate vanishes, like frost
Before the sun, and reason, at the end
Of struggling, takes command of passions, tossed
By ev'ry chance and change that fate may send.

The habits that are formed in human life
Are very hard to govern or to break,
And, when years have been spent in daily strife,
Their after-math will, almost surely, make
A thirst for wild excitement, hard to slake
At peaceful springs; when violence is rife
Men shun the silences, and, boldly, take
The blaring bugle and the piercing fife.

There is a passion, typical of man,
And of some lesser creatures that we know,
That has been powerful, since time began,
In heaping insult on a vanquished foe.
Small-minded men will boast, and cocks will
crow,
When what they deem their victories they scan.
So it has been, and, always, will be so,
While selfish interests enter ev'ry plan.

But there are natures that will rise above
The lust for conquest and the battle's din,
And, yet, through their efficiency, they'll prove,
That those, who are sincere, are apt to win.
For these are they who do not enter in
A contest, when in anger, but begin
A struggle for the sake of what they love.
Such natures only higher motives move.

But once in many centuries, a mind
Of certain pow'r, controls a human frame.
A leader of great armies we will find,
An orator, who'll make the masses flame
With zeal, a statesman, with a well-earned fame,
A country gentleman, shrewd, keen and kind,
But, only once, were all of these combined,
Known, for all time, by one immortal name.

SCENE IV

The library in George Washington's home, at Mt. Vernon. It is early afternoon, in the year 1785. Robert Morris, Alexander Hamilton and George Washington are seated, and engaged in earnest conversation. Papers are lying, loosely, upon a table near to them, as if they had, recently, been examined. Alexander Hamilton is holding a long parchment, or paper, in his hand, to which, from time to time, he refers.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

This matter, as it seems to me, demands
Immediate attention, and should be

Looked into, carefully, by all of us.

For we must leave no stone unturned, by means
Of which we might make more secure the plans,
We have already made, regarding those,
Who will, I think, refer to what is done
By us, in these first glorious days of freedom.
Thus far, we have adopted ways and means,
As the emergency has called for them,
And they have served their purpose, very well,
While we were, still, unsettled and unformed.
The Continental Congress did the work
That was required of it, before we were
An independent nation of free States.

While we were, still, engaged in active war,
With an increasing need of daily strength
To hold our hearth-stones and our household
fires,

While we were harassed, constantly, and made
To be defenders of our native rights
To individual life and liberty,
Within the homes, that we, ourselves, had carved
From nature's stern and solid masonry,
The Continental Congress was behind
Our efforts, that exhausted all our strength,
And did not give us much time for reflection.
We had among us those who were prepared,
Through education and inheritance,
To take the helm of our new ship of state,
And guide it through the far from peaceful seas,
That were before us, when we ceased to be
The colonies of England, and became
The free, and separate, but United States.

Each State, of course, had drafted its own laws,
As soon as it was free to take that step,
And it was, then, a part of statesmanship
To study all of these, selecting such
As seemed to be the best, for each and all.
The ones, who had this work to do, convened,
Consulted, and compared each other's views.
As each State was an ally of the rest,
Each State had representatives, and these,
Together, formed a company of men,
Who used their best endeavors to conform
To the desires of all the separate States.
But some of these conflicted, and it was
No easy task to please and satisfy
The representatives of all the States,
Because each one brought with him special rules,
That would apply to his own State, but not
To all the States, at once, with the same force.
And, so, it seems to me, the league of States,
Or the confederation, is not what
Must be our final, fixed and permanent
And lasting form of government, because
It is not, as it seems to me, quite just.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

*(Leaning forward, and speaking with great
fervor)*

There is but one form, Sir, that will be so,
According to my judgment, anyway,
And that is constitutional, and will
Be certain of adoption, I believe,
When thinking men among us fix their minds

Upon its wisdom, and its justice, too.
 There should be three distinct and separate parts
 To government of national affairs,
 And each of these should fit into the others,
 Yet none should be antagonistic to
 The power and the work of any other,
 But each should have some certain duties to
 Perform, but none of these should interfere
 With those that would be differently assigned.
 A friend of mine, one Madison, and I
 Drew up some articles, the other night,
 Embodying a portion of our views
 Concerning what, it seems to us, would be,
 Perhaps, with certain changes, that you

(Looking at his host, almost reverently,)

Sir,

Might after having seen them, wish to make,
 A constitution that would stand the test
 Of ev'ry complication that may come.
 A fortress is no stronger than its base,
 And, so, you see,

(Handing one of the papers he has been holding in his hand, to George Washington)

we've, wisely, started out,

By pleading with our Maker for His Help
 And, then, with this foundation, firmly laid,
 We state the reasons why the government
 We recommend would be a safe, secure,
 And stable government, for all of those,
 Who, now, inhabit, or, who, ever, may
 Be citizens of this fair land, that we,
 Now, call a free and independent land,

One that is worthy of the highest form
Of government, that can be known to man,
Which is the form that we, herein, describe,
Because it rests, and, evermore, will rest,
Upon the free, and openly expressed,
Consent of those who will be governed by it.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

(Examining the paper that he, now, holds in his hand)

You've made some very wise provisions, here.
We will investigate this, carefully.
If you do not object, we'll study these
Ideas of yours, when we are joined by those
Whom I have asked to come, today, so that
We may confer regarding what we think
Would be the best and safest thing to do
For all concerned, what steps we ought to take
To make a constitution, that will bear
The strain of changes, that the years will bring,
That will withstand the shocks of blows that will
Be sure to fall upon it, by and by,
The criticisms of its friends, at home,
And of its bitter enemies, abroad.
There is but one intrinsic right, and this
Will never fail, or falter, or mislead,
No matter what upheavals, far or near,
May seem about to shake, or ruin, it.
It is this principle of simple right,
That, in the conference we hold, today,
Must be the uppermost and leading thought.

ROBERT MORRIS

(Looking, perplexedly, from one of his companions to the other)

The only way we can recoup ourselves
For losses we have met, in this sad war,
That we have just survived, it seems to me,
Would be to make the rights of property
A prominent, and, even, paramount,
Consideration in this document,
That is, at present, under our advisement.
It should be so arranged that no one could,
Without his own consent, be forced to pay
A tithe of everything he owns, into
The bulging coffers of the government.
The general good should be considered, when
The rights of property are, properly,
Adjusted, for the good of one and all.

(There is a soft knock at the door leading into the hall, and Washington, handing the paper he has in his hand back to Alexander Hamilton, rises and approaches it, slowly and with dignity; he opens the door, disclosing a servant, who, hastily and somewhat affrightedly, whispers a message that deeply affects the master of the house; at a nod from him, the servant retires.)

GEORGE WASHINGTON

(Turning toward his guests)

This seems to be a matter that demands
Immediate attention, Gentlemen.
As those who are to come have not arrived,

As yet, perhaps you will excuse me, for
The space of half an hour, and you can meet
The others, as they come, and talk with them,
Until I am, again, at liberty.

You'll find the drawing-room quite comfortable.

(The two other men rise at once, Hamilton gathering up his papers from the table, and withdraw, bowing to their host, who ushers them, smilingly, from the room. The servant, again, appears, and receives an order. Soon after, the same servant opens the door of the library, and four soldiers, wearing the colonial uniforms that they had, for a time, thrown aside, file into the room, saluting their former commander-in-chief, as they do so. One of them, evidently the spokesman of the party, draws near to Washington, who rises to meet him.)

SOLDIER

(With great respect, but, also, with decision)

We represent your former army, Sir;
I mean the rank and file of those who fought,
With might and main, because you were our
leader,

Because, also, you made us, plainly, see
The justice of the cause for which we fought.
I was with Wayne, at Stony Point, when he
Retook the fort, with muskets that had been
Unloaded, but with bayonets, fixed and ready.
Mad Anthony led on, and we, with one
Accord, were close behind him, for we knew,
That he was following your orders, Sir.

He was devoted to you, as we were. . .

As we are, now

(As he says these words, all four of the soldiers salute their former chief)

As we will, always, be.

Since you have released us, we have tried to be

An honor to you and the principles

You taught us to be guided by, but we

Have been regarded with contumely, and

Have not been recognized, as veterans,

By those who have the power, in this land,

That we, and our dead comrades, helped to make

A country that should be respected by

The nations of the world. . . a happy land.

There is but one thing lacking, Sir, and you

Can fill the breach that is between us, and

Prosperity and peace and the reward,

That we, and those for whom our comrades gave

Their lives, deserve, through all the years, that

are

Before us, in this world, and for the ones,

That we will leave behind us, when we go.

When you were leading us, against all odds,

We won the day, and drove Cornwallis from

Our shores, that star-lit night, he sailed away.

We do not need to battle, now, against

A foreign foe, but *we need you* as much

As when you crossed the Delaware, with but

A handful, as to numbers, but a host,

In courage, and devotion to the cause.

We need you, Sir, and we have come to ask,

As representatives of those who love

And honor you, above all living men,
That you will be, as you have, always, been,
Within our hearts our sovereign and our king.

(There is a pause, and the four soldiers, after saluting, stand at attention, while Washington, evidently surprised, hesitates and looks down.)

GEORGE WASHINGTON

(Extending his right hand, first, to the leader, and, then, to the three others, of the soldiers, who grasp it, eagerly)

You are my comrades and my friends, and I
Am but a plain and humble citizen
Of this fair land, whose single boast shall be
That it is free and independent, that,
No longer shall it be beneath the sway
Of any single individual.

(An expression of chagrin spreads over the countenances of the soldiers)

I do appreciate the motives that
Have brought you, here, to me, today, and I
Commission you to take to those who sent
You here, my earnest thanks, and deep regard.
Tell them that, I believe, the matter they
Are chafing under, now, will be made right,
Within a short while, if they will but hold
Themselves in quiet readiness to help,
When help of theirs shall be required. Say, too,
That I hope to hear from them, again,
And that, from time to time, I wish to know
The real condition they are in, and all
That they desire to tell me of themselves.

(The four soldiers, evidently crest-fallen, but willing to obey, file out, saluting, as they go.)

GEORGE WASHINGTON

(Sighing and speaking with great earnestness)

This goes to show that we must hasten with
The work, that we are contemplating, for
They have been driven to the state of mind
That brought them, here, to me, with that re-
quest.

(The servant appears at the door, evidently awaiting further orders, and, having received them, goes out, soon ushering into the library the two guests who were, formerly, there. John Jay has been added to their number, and is greeted by the host, as he enters, behind Morris and Hamilton.)

GEORGE WASHINGTON

(After seating his guests, taking the chair he formerly occupied)

The interruption, Gentlemen, but makes
The work we have to do more urgent, and
Important. Ripples on the surface show
The way the current, underneath, is going.
It may be necessary for us, though,
To use precaution, and proceed, with care,
In our deliberations, for there may,
And, doubtless, will, be opposition to
The views we hold. As you are well aware,
There are some, always, who will not agree,
If only to be contrary, and find
Some room for argument, with anything

That is presented to them. And, there are
Some who will not agree with anything
That you and I may say, because we say it.
The tories did not, all of them, depart,
When Lord Cornwallis took a few away.
And, though they were defeated, they, still,
 whine,
And beg their masters, overseas, to aid
Their base and secret efforts to undo
What we, and those assisting us, accomplished.
These men are all around us, and will watch
Each move we make, and, if they can, find fault
With everything we do, and we must meet
With much advice, bestowed on us by those
Who think we should be satisfied, if we
Have institutions copied after those
Our fathers left behind them, when they came,
As colonists of England, to a world,
With new and different possibilities.

JOHN JAY

It seems to me it would be well to note,
That, though we are, now, free from England's
 rule,
And England's domination, yet, we are
An English race, transplanted, it is true,
And, hence, as I believe, and hope, improved,
And, many of our customs must, of course,
Conform to those that we have always, known,
But only just as far as these accord
With the place that we occupy, that of
A free and independent nation, one
That is sufficient unto its own needs.

(John Adams and Edmund Randolph are ushered into the room, and greetings are exchanged between them and those already there. After the newcomers are seated, Alexander Hamilton spreads out on the table the papers he has before called attention to, the host, smilingly, approving of his action.)

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

I have, here, a rough draft of what might be,
 With alterations, or erasures, such
 As you, and other statesmen, might decide
 Would add to its efficiency and strength,
 The constitution of our new Republic.

I had already called attention to

Some parts of this, before you came,

(Looking at John Jay, John Adams and Edmund Randolph)

and, so,

I'll ask you to inspect those parts,

(Handing some sheets of paper to one of those whom he last addressed)

while we

Discuss some portions of the rest of it.

(There is a short pause, while the papers handed to the new-comers are passed from one to the other and, evidently, read with great interest.)

I have, already, said we think there should

Be three distinct and separate kinds of pow'r;

And these would be. . .the legislative, and

Executive, and the judicial heads,

Which, altogether, would compose, and be

The goverment of our United States.

Though all of these would be quite separate,
Yet, each of them would, in a way, control,
And overlook the work of all the others ;
The legislative power would be lodged
In Congress, which, in turn, would be composed
Of Representatives and Senators,
Each body to discuss and formulate,
And hold deliberations, by itself.

The people, by their votes, would choose the ones
Who would be Representatives, as well
As Senators, and, also, they'd elect
Another body, which, in turn, would choose
A President, who would be at the head
Of all the other pow'rs, and, yet, who would
Not have an absolute authority
To change the laws, or to enforce the ones
Already made, but who would have great force
Through his own personality, if he
Should prove to be what his constituents
Believed that he would be, a just, upright,
And worthy representative of those
Who, through their right of suffrage, sent him to
The presidential chair, which would be deemed
The greatest honor that could be conferred
On any humble, honest citizen.

The highest Court would be the Court of last
Appeal from all the lesser Courts, throughout
The States, and this Court would be called
Supreme.

The treaty-making pow'r is vested in
The President, with the concurrence of
The Senate, thus, a check is, constantly,

Kept, everywhere, on everything, so that,
There cannot be injustice, on the part
Of anyone who is in pow'r, unless
His influence is great enough to sway
The consciences and minds of all the rest.

(There is a noise in the hall, as of hurrying feet, and after a sort of scuffle, the face of the servant, who is, evidently, badly frightened, appears, for an instant, at a crack between the door and its casing, but is quickly withdrawn, as if the servant had been jerked back; then the door is rudely thrown open, and two men enter the room; one of these is a hunter and trapper, dressed in rough and weather-beaten garments, with a cap made from the skin of some animal, roughly dressed, upon his head, and a long-muzzled rifle in his hand; he is a little in advance of his companion, who is an American Indian, in native costume; the latter's face has fantastic streaks of various colored paints upon it; his head has been shaven, with the exception of the centre of the top of it; the hair that grows abundantly upon this unshaved portion of his scalp has been gathered into one long braid, into which have been stuck several dangling feathers; he carries, in his belt, conspicuously displayed, a tomahawk and a long sharp knife; the two advance into the room, and approach Washington, with confidence, as if they already know him. All of those already in the room silently await an explanation of this unexpected visit.)

WHITE HUNTER

(Addressing Washington, and ignoring the presence of the others)

My friend, here, Dawn-of-Day, has news that will

Not keep, and that is why we busted in,
The way we did, just now; he has a wife,
And they, together, have a darter, who
Is just as sweet and innercent a child
As ever lived or died; they have queer names;
He calls them Morning Breeze and Summer
Rain.

He does not speak our language, so I came
To do his talking for him; he and I
Have followed many trails, in the deep woods,
In company; he is an honest man,
If any red-skin ever was, on earth.
And, now, the trouble he is in, is this.
His wigwam, Sir, is empty, and his heart
Is sad, for Morning Breeze and Summer Rain
Have both been kidnapped and are held for
ransom.

They've told him, when the moon comes up, to-
night,

His family will be brought to a place
He knows of, in the forest, where a rock
Is almost broke in two; and they demand
That he must bring, when he comes there, to-
night,

A sum of money, that is more than he
Has ever seen, much less been master of.
If he don't bring the money, then, they say,

They'll murder Morning Breeze and Summer
Rain.

His gifts are not a white man's gifts, but they
Are good; I wish I had the cash to give to him.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

*(Rising, and going to a cupboard, that is set into
the wall)*

How much is it, that they demand of him?

WHITE HUNTER

They said that he must bring them fifty pounds.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

*(Taking a leather pouch from the cupboard, and
counting some money, that he removes from it,
and hands to the white hunter, who, immedi-
ately, transfers it to the Indian)*

Here is the sum required; tell your friend
To bring his family with him, when he comes
This way, again; I hope they will be safe.

*(The Indian fixes his glowing gaze upon his host,
as if he meant never to forget any detail of
his appearance; he backs out of the room, look-
ing, searchingly, at Washington, as long as he
is within the range of his vision. The white
hunter turns, as if to follow his companion, but
stops at the door, and faces the little company
within the room.)*

WHITE HUNTER

If all white men would do as you have done,
There would not be so many tales about,
Of red-skin treachery and other meanness.

They were here first, and would have been our
friends,

If we had, always, used them as we should.

*(He hurries out, as if anxious to overtake the In-
dian, who has disappeared.)*

GEORGE WASHINGTON

*(Turning toward his guests, who are waiting his
leisure)*

The natives have a right to our protection.
They must be treated as our wards, and taught
Such useful occupations, as will make
Them capable of caring for themselves.
For many generations, they have lived
As Savages, and wandered where they willed
To wander, roaming over hill and dale,
Without regard to anything, except
Their own desires, and superstitious fears.
And, now, that we have come among them, here,
With institutions that are new to them,
We must endeavor to enlighten them,
And give them confidence, and make them see
That we intend to be their friends, and mean
To benefit, instead of harming, them.
Sometime, they will be citizens, and share
In choosing those who'll formulate the laws,
By which they will, with us, be ruled and gov-
erned.

Up to that time, we must remember that
They have not had our own advantages,
In many ways, and that we found them, here,
Also, they made us welcome, when we came.

EDMUND RANDOLPH

(Looking, earnestly, at his host)

I think that what you've said is only just.
What we have, thus far, suffered at the hands
Of those who are wild men, compared with us,
Has been, in many cases, the result
Of inconsiderate and hasty words,
Or, often, acts, of those who should have been
More careful of the power that they held,
For good or ill, to use as they saw fit.

JOHN ADAMS

*(Approaching the table, and laying thereon the
papers he has been inspecting)*

And, so, for these, as well as all the rest
Of those who, now, reside, or will reside,
Within the confines of this plenteous land,
We must prepare, so far as in us lies,
Provisions for a stable government,
That will outride the storms that it will meet,
That will be just to all, and favor none,
That will protect each private citizen,
In the enjoyment of his natural rights
To the pursuit of happiness, and to
His freedom, as to person, property,
Religion, and to speech. We must provide
Against foes from within and from without.
There, always, will be danger from within,
As long as those remain upon our soil,
Who will not recognize the general good,
As paramount to any selfish need.

JOHN JAY

(Smilingly, but sadly)

I fear me, then, that there will always be
An evident necessity for wise
Provisions against opportunities
To overthrow, and villify, and make
A ruin of the structure that we'll build.

GEORGE WASHINGTON *(Reverently)*

I trust, when there is danger, such as this
That you describe, there will appear among
His fellow-country-men, a man, who will
Embody, in his personality,
The rugged principles, that will appeal
To those who have been shorn of subterfuge,
And enervating, idle, selfish whims,
By stern endeavor, and, with dignity,
Be versed in all the knowledge of the time
In which he lives, through study of the past,
And a clear insight into all that comes
Beneath his notice, and a fixed resolve
To do the right, as it is giv'n to him
To see the right, regardless of all things
That narrow minds might twist and turn into
Good reasons for delay, or for entire
Abandonment of fealty to our flag.
For it will, always, be the visible
And starry symbol of our equal rights,
And independent strength, among the pow'rs,
That are the other nations of the world.
And, I believe, that He Who rules all life,

Both national and private, will raise up,
 Should such necessity present itself,
 So that he will be chosen by the ones,
 Who have the pow'r to choose a leader, then,
 A man, who will unite, within himself,
 The wisdom of a just and learned judge,
 A deep, undying love for all his kind,
 The calm and steadfast courage of the ones,
 Whose souls, alone and lonely, always dwell,
 Through all the turmoil of their human lives,
 In the safe, secret fastnesses, well known
 To those who seek the Holy Will of God,
 With that mysterious charm, that makes men
 marked
 Among, and followed by, their fellow-men.

ROBERT MORRIS

(Meditatively)

Perhaps, it might be possible, if we
 Would, carefully, consider them, to change,
 And, hence, of course, improve, the articles
 Of the Confederation, now in force,
 Instead of taking such a radical
 And binding step as this that you propose.
(Looking, speculatively, at Alexander Hamilton)
 It might be that the several States should be
 Consulted, separately, or we might call
 For representatives of all of them
 To meet, in a convention to be held
 At some time in the future, to consult
 Regarding what is best for everyone.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

*(Argumentatively, and as one who has thought,
deeply, upon the subject under discussion)*

The union, now existing, is too loose!
There is no central government at all!
Each State is independent of the rest.
There is no general, judicial pow'r
To settle mooted questions, that might rise
Between the separate States. And there should
be

A Chief Executive, who would preside
At all affairs of state, and would enforce
The laws of Congress, always being sure
That they were strictly in accordance with
The Constitution, which he would support,
As he'd agree to do, when he would take
The oath of his high office, which would be
The highest place that anyone could hold,
And those who would bestow it, would confer
The greatest honor in their pow'r to give,
Upon the one whom they would choose to fill
The presidential chair, for he would be
The President of The United States.

GEORGE WASHINGTON

*(Rising, and drawing near to the table, where he
stands, with his right hand on the papers, which
Alexander Hamilton, who has been holding
them while he talked, has just laid down)*

The one who would be chosen, first of all,
To fill the office you have spoken of,

Just now, would have responsibility,
That would be weighty, placed upon him, and
Would need to be a man whom all would trust.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

(Rising, and looking, significantly, at the other guests, who, with one accord, rise to their feet and group themselves around their host, who looks from one to the other, with an expression of lofty dignity upon his countenance)

There is but one who could be chosen. There
Will not be one dissenting voice among
The representatives of all the States,
When they are called together in convention.
The name of him, who will be chosen, is
Your own name, Sir.

(Bowing before his host)

George Washington will be
The first in everything we have to give. . .
First President, and first in peace, in war,
And in the hearts of all his country-men.

(The guests continue to observe with an expression of respect amounting almost to reverence the face of their host, while he stands among them, quietly, thoughtfully, benignantly.)

THE CURTAIN FALLS



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