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Description

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Some additional Lines, which were recited at the CARACTACAN Meeting, at Longnor, in Shropshire, in July, 1776. •

So sung the bard, who, in Silurian groves
Sequester'd, chaunted his prophetic strain.
Far other scenes, beyond the vast Atlantic,
Horrid with arms, and stain'd with civil blood,
The Muse with grief beholds, and with soft Pity's
Mournful eye deplores, weeping the dire ills
Of lawless Faction, blasting the fair fruits
Which Freedom and true Liberty bestow'd,
In happiest climes, on those her favorite sons.
Instead of regal sway, for general good,
Fierce democratic rage usurps the seat
Of Empire, spurning with rebellious pride
The hand parental, which has rais'd and nurtur'd
Their infant weakness up to the strength and power.
Yet, amidst the conflict of this impurpled field,
If Victory should crown our warriors brows,
O yet may Britons, in whose generous breasts
Firm Valour is with gentlest Mercy join'd,
(Noblest distinction of the brave and good!)
Learn to forgive even blind deluded zeal
For what was rashly deem'd their Country's Cause.
Each real grievance, every public wound,
By Wisdom's mild and lenient councils heal'd,
May smiling Peace, and every liberal art,
Return again to bless Columbia's shores;
Commerce with swelling sails waft o'er the Main
The various bounties of each distant clime:
May Albion's wide-extended Empire's bounds,
In closest union link'd, defy her foes,
And kindred nations hail one Patriot King!

NOTES:

Title CARACTACAN An originally Welsh society honoring Caractacus, the Briton king who led the war against Rome's invasion of England (*National Library of Wales*); Longnor Village near the Welsh border.

1 Silurian [O]f ancient southeastern Wales • (OED).

2 *chaunted* Chanted.

15 *impurpled field* A field made purple by the spilling of much blood.

25 *Columbia* America.

26 *Main* The Atlantic Ocean.

28 *Albion* • A poetic or literary term for Britain or England • (OED).

30 *Patriot King* King George III, who reigned from 1760 to 1820, but possibly also a reference to Henry St. John, 1st Viscount Bolingbroke's 1740 treatise, *The Idea of a Patriot King*, which claimed that England needed an outside-of-politics king to take power and save the country from the factional and corrupt party politics that plagued England's government under Robert Walpole in the 1720 and 1730s. Before he became King, George was said to have been an admirer of Bolingbroke's tract.

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