

## Circular.

SIR,

It is matter of public notoriety, that, about a year since, an Act of Incorporation was granted by the Legislature of the Commonwealth, to the Bunker Hill Monument Association. The gentlemen, who applied for, and received that act of incorporation, have no other interest in the subject, than what actuates them in common with their fellow citizens. They were induced to take this step, from the very general private expression of feeling in favor of the erection of a monument, on the spot alluded to; from the opinion that the suitable time for such an undertaking had now arrived; and from strong assurances received from many most respectable persons, that in order to concentrate the public sentiment and ensure a general cooperation towards the end in view, it was only necessary that some few individuals should take upon themselves the unpretending but indispensable office of formally soliciting the attention of a liberal and patriotic community to the subject.

It would be a very superfluous, though a pleasing task, to insist upon the importance of the event, to be commemorated in the monument proposed. The action of the seventeenth of June 1775, is too well known, not merely to Americans, but to the readers of history throughout the world, to require any attempt at illustration. It may only be observed, that this action is most important, considered merely in the astonishing resistance made by raw militia, badly armed, scantily provided with ammunition, facing an enemy for the first time, and that enemy the flower of the best troops in the world; and actually killing and wounding a number scarcely less than the whole of their own engaged.

It is still more worthy of commemoration, when we consider it in its effect on the fortunes of the war, in teaching the enemy to respect the spirit of the people whom he had endeavored to crush, and inspiring America herself with the consciousness of her own power. Lastly, the spectacle itself, presented by the action, was justly styled by General Burgoyne, who witnessed it from Boston, 'one of the greatest scenes of war that can be conceived;'—the reinforcements moving over the water, the fire of the floating batteries and ships of war, the flames from three hundred houses in Charlestown, the ascent of the British troops, pausing from time to time, as their artillery played upon the American works, the coolness and intrepidity with which that fire was sustained by our countrymen, and the fatal precision with which they returned it, the broken and recoiling lines of the enemy, the final retreat of the gallant band, who had withstood them; the tens of thousands looking on from the house tops, and steeples, and hills of Boston and all the neighboring country, and beholding with the most conflicting emotions the awful struggle in their view. It would, perhaps, be difficult to select in history an event more entitled to celebration by the character of the exploits, its great national effects, its astonishing grandeur, and its affecting incidents.

The spot itself, on which this memorable action took place, is extremely favorable for becoming the scite of a monumental structure. Competent judges have pronounced the heights of Charlestown to exceed any spot on our coast, in their adaptation to the object in view. Their position between the Mystic and the Charles, with the expanse of the harbor of Boston, and its beautiful islands in front, has long attracted the notice of the stranger. An elevated monument on this spot, would be the first landmark of the mariner, in his approach to our

harbor ; while the whole neighboring country, comprising the towns of Roxbury, Brookline, Cambridge, Medford, and Chelsea, with their rich fields, villages, and spires, the buildings of the University, the bridges, the numerous ornamental country seats, and improved plantations, the whole bounded by a distant line of hills, and forming a landscape which cannot be surpassed in variety and beauty, would be spread out, as in a picture, to the eye of the spectator, on the summit of the proposed structure.

Nor are these the only natural advantages of the spot. Though essentially rural in many of its features, it rises above one of our most flourishing towns, the seat of several important national establishments, where the noble ships of war of the American Republic seem to guard the approach to the spot, where her first martyrs fought and bled. Its immediate vicinity to Boston, and its convenient distance from Salem, make the access to it direct from the centres of our most numerous, wealthy, and active population ; and will be the means of keeping continually in sight, or bringing frequently to view, to the greatest masses of the community, the imposing memorial of an event, which ought never to be absent from their memory, as its effects are daily and hourly brought home to the business and bosom of every American citizen.

These are a few of the circumstances, very briefly stated, which point out the battle of the 17th of June, 1775, as a suitable event to be commemorated ; and which illustrate the great adaptation of the spot where it was fought, to the erection of a monumental structure. The present moment seems peculiarly marked out as auspicious to the enterprise. Fifty years have now nearly elapsed, since the curtain rose on this momentous scene of our national drama. A half of one of those great periods, by which the history of our race is reckoned,

is drawing to its close, and bringing with it the jubilee of our political existence. This long period has laid down in the soil which they combined to liberate, most of the high minded men, who raised their hands or their voices in those trying times. A few only remain, the venerable witnesses of what we may do to show our gratitude toward those, to whom we owe all 'that makes it life to live,' our liberty. A few only remain to carry to their compatriots, who have gone before them, the welcome tidings, that we tenderly cherish their memory, and that we are determined to bestow upon it every mark of honorable and grateful respect. The presence of these few revolutionary patriots and heroes among us seems to give a peculiar character to this generation. It binds us by an affecting association to the momentous days, the searching trials, the sacrifices, and dangers, to which *they* were called. The feeble hands and grey hairs of those, who before we were living, faced death, that we, their children, might be born free, are a sight, which this generation ought not to behold without emotion; a sight which calls upon us not to delay those public expressions of gratitude, which soon will be too late for those we would most wish to honor.

Nor is the present moment, in other respects, less adapted to this honorable enterprise. It is a time, not indeed of adventurous speculations and dazzling gains, but of steady general prosperity. Dwelling houses and warehouses are rising in unexampled numbers in our large towns; manufactures with equal rapidity and on the most solid footing are advancing in every district of the country; and agriculture, the great substantial interest, the basis of every other pursuit, is daily assuming an improved, liberal, and more productive character. It is only when we compare these well known features of our present position, with the general

languor, the scanty population, and the poverty which existed at the opening of the revolutionary war, that we can do justice to our present prosperity. Nor is this enough. Now in the days of our independence, of our prosperity, of our growing internal wealth, of our participation in all the world's commerce, of our enjoyment of every thing, which can make a people happy, we ought to remember the sacrifices and losses of our fathers. No grateful mind can, from the fruits of this unexampled welfare, refuse to bestow a trifle upon a work, proposed as a decent and becoming tribute to the memory of the great and good men, to whose disinterestedness, in putting to hazard their property and lives, we owe our being, our rights, our property, our all.

In forming an estimate of the cost of the structure proposed, a single eye has been had to the principle which dictates its erection. Every thing separated from the idea of substantial strength and severe taste has been discarded, as foreign from the grave and serious character both of the men and events to be commemorated. With this principle in view, it has been ascertained, that a monumental column, of classical model, with an elevation to make it the most lofty in the world, may be erected of our fine Chelmsford Granite, for about thirty seven thousand dollars. The nature of the work allows the estimate to be made with great accuracy, and little fear of being exceeded. There is also ground to hope that such contracts may be made with the proprietors of the part of the hill, on which the monument must stand, as will bring the whole additional expense for land, within reasonable limits.

From the interest which has been discovered in this object, even in this early stage, by many distinguished citizens of Boston, Charlestown, Salem, and other places; from the disposition which has been

everywhere evinced to afford a hearty cooperation in the plan, it has been hoped, that the corner stone of the monument may be laid on the seventeenth of June next, the day that completes the half century, from that on which the battle was fought, and which it is proposed to commemorate with every demonstration of respect, joy, and gratitude, becoming the anniversary of such an event.

As the entire success of the undertaking depends on the zeal, with which it may be seconded by a liberal and patriotic community, it has been thought proper that this address should be thus early made; not with a view of urging those considerations, which so obviously suggest themselves to the mind of every American citizen, particularly of this State and the vicinity, but merely to bring the subject seasonably to the public notice.

The general propriety and expediency of erecting public monuments of the kind proposed are acknowledged by all. They form not only the most conspicuous ornament, with which we can adorn our towns and our high places, but they are the best proof we can exhibit to strangers, that our sensibility is strong and animated toward those great achievements, and greater Characters, to which we owe all our national blessings. There surely is not one among us, who would not experience a strong satisfaction, in conducting a stranger to the foot of a monumental structure, rising in decent majesty on this memorable spot.

Works of this kind also have the happiest influence in exciting and nourishing the national and patriotic sentiment. Our government has been called, and truly is, a government of *opinion*; but it is one of *sentiment* still more. It is not the judgment only of this people, which dictates a preference of our institutions; but it is a strong, deep-seated, inborn sentiment; a feeling, a passion for

liberty. It is a becoming expression of this sentiment to honor, in every way, the memories and character of our fathers; to adorn a spot where their noble blood was spilt, and not surrender it uncared for, to the plough. Years, it is to be remembered, are rapidly passing away; and the glorious tradition of our national emancipation which we received from them, will descend more faintly to our successors. The patriotic sentiment, which binds us together more strongly than compacts and constitutions, will, if permitted, grow cold from mere lapse of time. We owe these monuments therefore not less to the character of our posterity, than to the memory of our fathers. These events must not lose their interest. Our children, and our children's children have a right to these feelings, cherished and kept warm by a worthy transmission. It is the order of nature that the generation to achieve nobly, should be succeeded by the generation worthily to record, and gratefully to commemorate. We are not called to the fire and the sword; to meet the appalling array of armies; to taste the bitter cup of imperial wrath and vengeance proffered to an ill provided land. We are chosen for the easier, more grateful, but not less bounden duty of commemorating and honoring the labors, sacrifices, and sufferings of the great men of those dark times.

There is one point of view, in which we seem to be strongly called upon to engage in the erection of works like that proposed. The beautiful and noble arts of design and architecture have hitherto been engaged in arbitrary and despotic service. The pyramids and obelisks of Egypt, the monumental columns of Trajan and Aurelius, have paid no tribute to the rights or feelings of man. Majestic or graceful as they are, they bear no record but that of sovereignty, sometimes cruel and tyrannical.

nical, and sometimes mild ; but never that of a great, enlightened, and generous people. Providence, which has given us the senses to observe, the taste to admire, and the skill to execute these beautiful works of art, cannot have intended that, in a flourishing nation of freemen, there should be no scope for their erection. Our fellow citizens of Baltimore have set us a noble example of redeeming the arts to the cause of free institutions, in the imposing monument they have erected to the memory of those, who fell in defending their city. If we cannot be the first to set up a structure of this character, let us not be other than the first to improve upon the example ; to arrest and fix the feelings of our generation on the important events of an earlier and more momentous struggle, and to redeem the pledge of gratitude to the high souled heroes of that trying day.

In a work calculated to appeal without distinction to every member of the community, we trust we need no apology for respectfully soliciting your cooperation and interest. The Monument must be erected by the union of all the classes and members of society, and the smallest assistance, by contribution, or encouragement, will aid in the great design.

DANIEL WEBSTER,  
H. A. S. DEARBORN,  
BENJAMIN GORHAM,  
GEORGE BLAKE,  
JOHN C. WARREN,  
SAMUEL D. HARRIS,  
WILLIAM SULLIVAN,  
JESSE PUTNAM,  
ISAAC P. DAVIS,  
SETH KNOWLES,  
EDWARD EVERETT,  
GEORGE TICKNOR,  
THEODORE LYMAN, JR. }

*Directors.*

EDWARD EVERETT,  
Secretary of the Standing  
Committee of the Directors.

*Boston, September 20, 1824.*