

early associates seen in the two Houses of Congress—many in the State governments, and many more in all the walks of private life, patriarchal sires, respected for their characters, and venerated for their patriotic services. It was a grateful spectacle, and the more impressive from the calamitous fate which he had seen attend so many of the revolutionary patriots of the Old World. But the enthusiasm of the young generation astonished and excited him, and gave him a new view of himself—a future glimpse of himself—and such as he would be seen in after ages. Before *them*, he was in the presence of posterity; and in their applause and admiration he saw his own future place in history, passing down to the latest time as one of the most perfect and beautiful characters which one of the most eventful periods of the world had produced. Mr. Clay, as Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the organ of their congratulations to Lafayette (when he was received in the hall of the House), very felicitously seized the idea of his present confrontation with posterity, and adorned and amplified it with the graces of oratory. He said: "The vain wish has been sometimes indulged, that Providence would allow the patriot, after death, to return to his country, and to contemplate the intermediate changes which had taken place—to view the forests felled, the cities built, the mountains levelled, the canals cut, the highways opened, the progress of the arts, the advancement of learning, and the increase of population. General! your present visit to the United States is the realization of the consoling object of that wish, hitherto vain. You are in the midst of posterity! Every where you must have been struck with the great changes, physical and moral, which have occurred since you left us. Even this very city, bearing a venerated name, alike endearing to you and to us, has since emerged from the forest which then covered its site. In one respect you behold us unaltered, and that is, in the sentiment of continued devotion to liberty, and of ardent affection and profound gratitude to your departed friend, the father of his country, and to your illustrious associates in the field and in the cabinet, for the multiplied blessings which surround us, and for the very privilege of addressing you, which I now have." He was received in both Houses of Congress with equal honor; but the Houses did

not limit themselves to honors: they added substantial rewards for long past services and sacrifices—two hundred thousand dollars in money, and twenty-four thousand acres of fertile land in Florida. These noble grants did not pass without objection—objection to the principle, not to the amount. The ingratitude of republics is the theme of any declaimer: it required a *Tacitus* to say, that gratitude was the death of republics, and the birth of monarchies; and it belongs to the people of the United States to exhibit an exception to that profound remark (as they do to so many other lessons of history), and show a young republic that knows how to be grateful without being unwise, and is able to pay the debt of gratitude without giving its liberties in the discharge of the obligation. The venerable Mr. Macon, yielding to no one in love and admiration of Lafayette, and appreciation of his services and sacrifices in the American cause, opposed the grants in the Senate, and did it with the honesty of purpose and the simplicity of language which distinguished all the acts of his life. He said: "It was with painful reluctance that he felt himself obliged to oppose his voice to the passage of this bill. He admitted, to the full extent claimed for them, the great and meritorious services of General Lafayette, and he did not object to the precise sum which this bill proposed to award him; but he objected to the bill on this ground: he considered General Lafayette, to all intents and purposes, as having been, during our revolution, a son adopted into the family, taken into the household, and placed, in every respect, on the same footing with the other sons of the same family. To treat him as others were treated, was all, in this view of his relation to us, that could be required, and this had been done. That General Lafayette made great sacrifices, and spent much of his money in the service of this country (said Mr. Macon), I as firmly believe as I do any other thing under the sun. I have no doubt that every faculty of his mind and body were exerted in the Revolutionary war; in defence of this country; but this was equally the case with all the sons of the family. Many native Americans spent their all, made great sacrifices, and devoted their lives in the same cause. This was the ground of his objection to this bill, which, he repeated, it was as disagreeable to him to state as it could be to the Senate to hear. He did not mean to take up the time of the Se-

nate in debate upon to move any amendment, that, when such thing be done with a free principle of the bill, then proposed to be given 1

The ardent Mr. Harper of the bill in objections, and first from Lafayette, who with the proposed grants sacrifices in our cause the American service 1777 to 1783, the (\$140,000), and un—a foreigner, owing his fortune into the service in our cause. rank and fortune, a family, to come and see armies, and without armed a regiment for a vessel to us, loaded It was not until the ruined by the French forts in the cause of receive the naked pay, a general officer for the time He was entitled to land the Revolution, and 11 him, to be located on a the United States. acres adjoining the city Congress afterwards, a location, granted the site New Orleans. His was so informed; but saying that he would portion of the American location to be removed; ried upon ground of up what was then worth \$500,000. These were losses, and sacrifices, great value to our cause by the moral effect of and his influence with which procured us the The grants were voted and with the general consent of the people. Mr. Jefferson giving as a reason, in