

grossly deceived as ever was human being. And unless some of our influential men exert themselves to allay the storm, a few short months will exchange doubt into awful and dreadful certainty.

While I was deliberating about the sacrifice which such a publication as this requires, one serious and affecting consideration removed my doubts, and decided my conduct. Seeing thousands of the flower of our population—to whom the spring of life just opens with all its joys, and pleasures, and enchantments—prepared in the tented field to risk, or, if necessary, sacrifice their lives for their country's welfare; I thought it would be baseness in me, whose sun has long passed the meridian, and on whom the attractions of life have ceased to operate with their early fascinations, to have declined any risk that might arise from the effort to ward off the patricidal stroke aimed at a country to which I owe such heavy obligations. With this view of the subject I could not decide otherwise than I have done.

On the execution of the work it behoves me to offer a few remarks. I know it is very considerably imperfect. It is hardly possible to prepare any work under greater disadvantages than have attended the Olive Branch. A large portion of it is, therefore, crude, and indigested, and without order. Were it a treatise on morals, religion, history, or science, which could not suffer by the delay necessary to mature and methodize it, I should be unpardonable, and deserve the severest castigation of criticism, for presenting it to the public in this unfinished state. But the exigencies of the times are so pressing, that were it delayed till I could digest it properly, it might be wholly out of season.

It would be unjust were I not to acknowledge the numerous and weighty obligations I owe to "The Weekly Register," edited by H. Niles, the best periodical work ever published in America, from which I have drawn a large portion of the facts and documents that I have employed. I venture to assert that no American library can be complete without this work.

I have carefully studied to be correct in point of fact and argument. But the circumstances under which I have written render it probable that I may have fallen into errors. I shall therefore regard it as a most particular favor, if any gentleman who discovers them, however minute, will frankly point them out, and they shall be most cheerfully corrected. If of sufficient importance, I shall make a public acknowledgement in the newspapers. If the cause I espouse cannot be supported by truth, candor, and fair argument, may it perish, never to find another advocate!

## PREFACE

### TO THE SECOND EDITION.

*Philadelphia, Jan. 4, 1815.*

THE unequivocal and decided approbation with which the former edition of this work has been favored by respectable men of both the hostile parties that divide this country, I regard as among the most grateful circumstances of my life. Its numerous defects—its want of method and the great imperfection of its style and manner—were, I presume, regarded as atoned for by its obvious and