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and Songs

## Samuel Low: Ode for the Federal Procession New York, 23 July 1788

ODE FOR THE FEDERAL PROCESSION,  
Upon the Adoption of the NEW GOVERNMENT.  
*Composed by Mr. L \* \*.*

### I.

Emerging from Old Ocean's bed,  
When fair Columbia rear'd her awful head  
To his<sup>(a)</sup> enraptur'd view, whose dauntless soul  
Heav'n had impell'd t' explore the unknown goal;  
The Genius of the solitary waste,  
With extacy the god-like man embrac'd,  
    Prophetic of her future state:  
And smil'd serene, and bless'd th' approaching day,  
When older Nations, envious, should survey  
    Our Wisdom, Virtue, Pow'r how great!  
    But still she sigh'd and dropt a tear,  
    And still she entertain'd a fear,  
Anticipating what she knew too well;  
And what, this memorable day, the Muse  
With retrospective ken reluctant views,  
And this blest Epocha forbids to tell.<sup>(b)</sup>

### II.

Distress'd she saw—but, with predictive eyes,  
Through scenes of horror future bliss descrys;  
Sees greater good from partial evil rise.  
She knew how Empires rise and fall;  
That all the changes on this terrene ball  
    Revolve by Heav'n's command,  
    Nor can its will withstand—  
Submissive she that Pow'r ador'd,  
The Sovereign Universal Lord,  
    Almighty, wise and good!

Whose eye omniscient saw 'twas right,  
We should attain that glorious height,  
Through Seas of kindred blood.

III.

And, lo! the all-important period's nigh,  
And swells the mighty theme—  
An Æra, greater than the golden age  
Of which the Poets dream;  
And adds a wond'rous, an illustrious page  
To this terrestrial Globe's vast history.  
Begin oh Muse,  
And far diffuse  
Th' inspiring news  
To Earth's remotest bound:  
Throughout the world let joy like ours be found,  
And Echo catch the animating sound,  
Now all our highest hopes are crown'd.  
Through time's incessant round,  
Fame shall resound  
This long desir'd event,  
And tell what mighty blessings Heav'n has sent;  
Immortal Fame,  
Whose loud acclaim  
Is deathless as the Poet's song,  
To countless ages shall the theme prolong.

IV.

Ten Sovereign States, in Friendship's league combin'd,  
Blest with a Government, which does embrace  
The dearest Interests of the human race,  
This festive day, to joy resign'd,  
This signal day we celebrate—  
Let ev'ry patriot heart dilate,  
Let ev'ry care be banish'd far,  
Nor aught the honors of this solemn season mar.  
Behold th' admir'd Procession move along,  
Our sister States, the happy ten, to greet—  
What animation in the crouded Street!  
What buzzing eclat from each tongue!  
In beautiful arrangement lo!  
Majestically slow,  
Some thousand souls, a federal band,  
Advancing hand in hand—

Heart-cheering sight! not half so much applause  
Did Alexander's<sup>1</sup> pompous entries crown;  
Nor did he ever gain such true renown—  
This grand display can boast a nobler cause.

V.

Hail Liberty, thou heav'n-born child!  
Young, smiling Cherub, virtuous, mild  
We feel, we feel thy pow'r divine!  
These solemnities are thine!  
Our hearts o'erflow,  
Our bosoms glow,  
Sorrow fades,  
Joy pervades  
Th' intoxicated senses!  
Floods of Transport fill the soul,  
And Melancholy's haggard train controul,  
For now our Country's happiness commences!

VI.

Joy to the Union! Fair Columbia hail!—  
Distraction in our Councils now shall fail,  
And Strength, Respect and Wisdom join'd, prevail:  
Justice shall lift her well-poiz'd Scale.  
With placid aspect, Peace her wand extend,  
And white rob'd Virtue from the Sky descend;  
Genius shall mount a glorious tow'ring height,  
By genial Science foster'd and refin'd,  
And never-dying wreaths our Offspring's temples bind—  
While dwindled Europe sickens at the sight.  
Arts, still encreasing, shall our clime adorn,  
Success and Wealth crown millions yet unborn,  
Glorious and smiling as the op'ning Morn!  
And, if fair Industry but prompt the hand,  
The cultur'd Earth shall teem at their command,  
And Health and Plenty glad Heav'n's fav'rite land;  
Pomona's<sup>2</sup> charge shall grow luxuriant here,  
And bounteous Ceres<sup>3</sup> crown the blissful year;  
Commerce shall raise her languid head—  
The Nation's dignity, which with her fled,  
Triumphant shall her place resume,  
And Navies start from the tall forest's gloom.

VII.

Joy to our far-fam'd *Chief!*<sup>4</sup> whose peerless worth  
Makes Monarchs sicken at their royal birth;  
And thou, grown dim with honorable age,  
Whose Lore shall grace the scientific page,  
*Franklin*, the patriot, venerable Sage,  
Of philosophic memory! And thou,<sup>(c)</sup>  
Our City's boast, to whom so much we owe;  
In whom, tho' last and youngest of the three,  
No common share of excellence we see:  
In ev'ry grateful heart thou hast a place,  
Nor Time, nor Circumstance can e'er erase.  
All hail, ye Champions in your Country's cause!  
Soon shall that Country ring with your applause—  
With such, and with ten thousand Patriots more,  
To what vast Fame this Western World shall soar!  
Discord shall cease, and perfect Union reign,  
And all confess that sweetly-pow'rful chain,  
The *Fed'ral System*, which, at once, unites  
The Thirteen States, and all the people's rights.  
Oh, may those rights be sacred to the end,  
And to our vast posterity descend;  
That beauteous Structure flourish and expand,  
And ceaseless Blessings crown our native Land!

(a) *Columbus*.

(b) *Alluding to the late war*.

(c) *Alexander Hamilton, Esquire*.

1. Alexander the Great.
2. A nymph at Rome, who presided over gardens and was the goddess of fruit trees.
3. Goddess of grain and harvests.
4. George Washington.

CITE AS: John P. Kaminski et al., eds., *The Documentary History of the Ratification of the Constitution*, Vol. XXI:  
New York [3] (Madison, Wis.: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2005), 1605–9.