

of the country from its colonial condition to the present period:—

“It is but forty years since the revolutionary war closed, and the United States took their station among the independent powers of the civilized world. From the peace of 1763, which rendered England master of all North America as far as the Mississippi, the colonies began to feel strength. The attempts of the mother country to tax them, without the consent of their own representatives, kindled the flames of insurrection. The spirited resistance made at Bunker Hill in 1775, showed that the Americans would not be easily conquered, if they found an able leader—as they did find in the brave and prudent Washington. By and by, the wisdom of Franklin was employed in fixing the basis of a free constitution, and the independence of the states was proclaimed on the 4th of July, 1776. France and Spain concluded an alliance with the new republic, and the English, after having witnessed the humiliation of their armies by the defeats of Burgoyne and Cornwallis, were constrained to acknowledge the independence of the colonies in Nov. 1782. Since this period, their progress has been unexampled. There were thirteen states in the Union when the war commenced, and there are now twenty-four; and their population, which then amounted to two millions and a half, is now ten millions. In 1805, they acquired by purchase the vast territory of Louisiana—under which name was then