

# HERALD OF GOSPEL LIBERTY

BY ELIAS SMITH.

No. 1.]

THURSDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 1, 1808.

[VOL. 1.

"FROM REALMS FAR DISTANT, AND FROM CLIMES UNKNOWN; WE MAKE THE KNOWLEDGE OF OUR KING YOUR OWN."

## ADDRESS TO THE PUBLIC.

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To the Subscribers for this paper, and to all who may hereafter read its contents.

BRETHREN AND FELLOW CITIZENS.

THE age in which we live may certainly be distinguished from others in the history of Man, and particularly, as it respects the people of these *United States*, the increase of knowledge is very great in different parts of the world, and of course there is an increase of *Liberty* among the people, and an increasing desire among *certain individuals*, accompanied with their fruitless exertions, to prevent them from enjoying what they have been taught belongs to them, as a right given by their *Creator*, and guaranteed by the government of the country in which we live.

The struggle which has and still continues to convulse the nations in the old countries, is in a great measure over here. *Liberty* as men, is what many are now making violent exertions to obtain, and others (though few in numbers) by every possible means are endeavouring to prevent.

This *Liberty* is in a great measure obtained in this country, to the great advantage of *Millions* and the grief of thousands, "who care not for the people;" but while we glory in being a free people, and of being independent of the nations which endeavoured to deprive us of the rights which God has given us in common with all nations, multitudes are enslaved with the principles bro't from Europe by those who first settled this country. Had *George the third*, when he withdrew his troops from this country, withdrawn all the principles respecting civil and religious affairs, which are in opposition to the rights of mankind, we should have been a much more united and happy people than we now are: but alas! they are left among us like the *Canaanites* in ancient times, to be overcome by little and little; and like the army of *Gog*, which fell upon the mountains of *Israel* they are to be buried by men employed for that purpose, while every passenger is to erect a monument, wherever he finds a bone in his way. It is not now a tyrannical government which deprives us of *Liberty*; but the highly destructive principles of tyranny which remain in a good government; and though these principles are not protected by law, yet men's attachment to them, in a free government, prevents the enjoyment of *Liberty* which God has given us, and which all might enjoy according to the Constitution of

the *United States*. A member of Congress said to me not long ago (while speaking upon the state of the people in this country, as it respects *Religious Liberty*) to this amount, "the people in this country are in general free, as to political matters; but in things of religion, multitudes of them are apparently ignorant of what *Liberty* is." This is true, *MANY* who appear to know what belongs to them as citizens, and who will contend for their rights; when they talk or act upon things of the highest importance, appear to be guided wholly by the opinions of designing men, who would bind them in the chains of ignorance all their days, and entail the same on all their posterity.—The design of this paper is to shew the *liberty* which belongs to men, as it respects their duty to God, and each other.

It is an established principle with me, that the man who appears in any public service and is faithful to his trust, will have a double character; by the unjust and them who judge from the testimony of such, he will be considered a disturber of the peace, as turning the world upside down, and stirring up the people to revolt; but by the well informed lovers of truth, he will be considered a light to them who otherwise would set in darkness. There is no doubt in my mind but many will be displeased at what may appear in this paper from time to time, unless they own that, *right is equal among all*.

How difficult the task may be, which is now undertaken, is unknown to me, experience will shew this;—this however is my design, to have a steady and persevering regard to truth, and the general good of men; and to treat every thing in a fair and manly way; not scandalizing any, or doing any thing by partiality. Should any scandalize themselves by bad conduct; let them not charge it to me. If men do not wish to have bad things said of them, let them not do bad things. It is my design in the following numbers to give a plain description of the rights of men, and to shew the principle on which they are founded, and likewise to shew the opposite. There are many things taking place in the present day respecting religion, which will be noticed as they occur. A particular attention will be paid to the accounts of revivals of religion in different parts of the world, among the various denominations who call *Jesus Lord*, as far as it can be obtained.

A religious News-paper, is almost a new thing under the sun; I know not but this is the first ever published to the world. \*

\*This was the first religious newspaper in the world.

The utility of such a paper has been suggested to me, from the great use other papers are to the community at large. In this way almost the whole state of the world is presented to us at once. In a short and cheap way, a general knowledge of our affairs is diffused through the whole; and by looking into a News-paper, we often look at the state of nations, and see them rise into importance, or crumble into ruin. If we are profited in political affairs in this way, I do not see why the knowledge of the Redeemer's kingdom may not be promoted or increased in the same way. It appears to me best to make the trial. The liberal subscriptions for this work in these trying times, has encouraged me to begin it, hoping that others will find an advantage in forwarding the work by adding their names to the list of those who have already wished such a work to appear in the world.

There are many things which will be taken up which are not new, but are important, and which if stated to the rising generation will serve to give them a knowledge of that liberty for which their fathers bled, and for which they ought to contend.

It is the design of the Editor, in describing the nature of civil and religious *Liberty*, to come to the capacities of those whose advantages have been small, as to acquiring a general knowledge of the world.

It may be that some may wish to know why this paper should be named the "HERALD OF GOSPEL LIBERTY." This kind of *Liberty* is the only one which can make us happy, being the glorious *Liberty* of the sons of God which Christ proclaimed; and which all who have, are exhorted to stand fast in, being that which is given and enjoyed by the law of *Liberty*; which is the law of the spirit of life in Christ *Jesus*, which makes free from the law of sin and death.

In this place, I give the meaning of the word *Herald*. This word is derived from the Saxon word *Herebaelt*, and by abbreviation, *Herald*, which in that language signifies the Champion of an army, and growing to be a name of office, it was given to him who, in the army, had the special charge to denounce war, to challenge to battle and combat, to proclaim peace, and to execute martial messages. The business of an *Herald* in the English government is as follows—"To marshal, order, and conduct all royal cavalcades, ceremonies at coronations, royal marriages, installations, creations of Dukes, Marquises, Earls, Viscounts



Barons, Baronets, and dubbings of Knights, embassies, funeral processions, declarations of war, proclamations of peace, &c. to record and blazon the arms of the nobility and gentry; and to regulate any abuses therein through the English dominions, under the authority of the earl Marshal, to whom they are subservient." As this is the meaning of an Herald and as many such things ought now to be attended to, I see a great propriety in the name. The origin of Herald is very ancient.

*Stentor*, is represented by *Homer*, as Herald of the *Greeks*, who had a voice louder than fifty men together. O may the voice of real liberty be heard above all the opposite sounds which can be made by tyrant kings, and priests!

### LIBERTY. NO. I.

IT was mentioned in the proposal, that a description would be given of the nature of civil and religious Liberty. These stand in connection with each other, and one cannot be enjoyed without the other. Where men are deprived of civil Liberty, they never enjoy the other.

LIBERTY, means a state of freedom, in opposition to slavery or restraint, and may be considered as either *natural*, *civil*, or *religious*.

The absolute rights of man, considered as a free agent, endowed with discernment to know good from evil, and with powers of choosing those measures which appear to him to be most desirable, are usually summed up in one general appellation, and denominated, the *natural liberty of mankind*.

This *natural liberty*, consists properly, in a power of acting as one thinks fit, without any restraint or controul, unless by the law of nature; being a right inherent in us by birth, and one of the gifts of God to man at his creation, when he endowed him with the faculty of *freewill*. But every man, when he enters into society, gives up a part of his natural liberty, as a price of so valuable a purchase; and, in consideration of receiving the advantages of mutual commerce, obliges himself to conform to those laws which the community has tho't proper to establish. This species of legal obedience and conformity, is infinitely more desirable than that wild and savage liberty which is sacrificed to obtain it. No man, that considers a moment, would wish to retain the absolute and uncontrouled power of doing whatever he pleases; the consequence of which is, that all other men would have the same power; in this way there would be no security to individuals, in any of the enjoyments of life."

*Political or civil Liberty*, which is that of a member of society, is no other than natural liberty, so far restrained by laws (and no further) as is needful and expedient for the general good of the whole. Hence the law which restrains a man from injuring his fellow citizen,

increases the civil liberty of mankind. Every causeless restraint of the will of a subject, whether done by one or more is *tyranny*, and every law concerning things indifferent, is a law destructive of LIBERTY. How many such laws are there to be found in the history of nations? To mention a few may suffice.

In the ninth, and tenth centuries, the greatest princes in Europe wore wooden shoes, with long points to them. The Clergy who ruled, being highly offended, declaimed against the long pointed shoes with great vehemence.—The points however continued to increase, till, in the reign of Richard 2d. they were of so enormous a length, that they were tied to the knees, with chains, sometimes of gold, sometimes of silver. At one time the upper part of the shoes were in imitation of a church window. The long pointed shoes were called *crackowes*; and continued in fashion for three centuries in spite of the *bulls of popes*, the *decrees of councils*, and the declarations of the *clergy*. At length the Parliament of England interposed by an act, A. D. 1463, prohibiting the use of shoes or boots with pikes exceeding two inches in length, and prohibited all shoemaker's from making shoes or boots with longer pikes under severe penalties. This was not sufficient; it was necessary to denounce the dreadful sentence of *excommunication* against all who wore shoes or boots with points longer than two inches.

What folly stands in connection with such tyrannical laws as these! This is like many of the clerical laws of ancient times.

Once in *France* potatoes were forbidden as an article of food. Once in Connecticut a fine of six pence was laid on every man who should smoke tobacco within so many rods or miles of any house.

Such laws as these, are now almost out of date in this country.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY, signifies a freedom to believe in God, and to obey him according to the manifestation which he has made to man, in his works, in the scriptures, and by the spirit of truth, the *manifestations* of which is given to every man to profit withal.

Every kind of human law respecting religion, is inconsistent with real *Religious Liberty*, and the interference of the magistrate in matters of Religion, is the same as though they should make laws to bind us to our food, manner of preparing it, how and when it should be eaten, &c. The operations of the mind, are not, cannot be subject to the laws of men, no more than the light of the sun, the rain, wind, or seasons of the year can be under their controul.

Liberty, either civil, or religious, has respect to something more than the name of liberty. Real liberty respects the rights of mankind in general, and this subject cannot be well understood, unless the rights of men are understood: this shall be the subject of the next number.

### RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

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#### *Revival of Religion—and reformation in Kentucky.*

Within seven years past, there has been the greatest out-pouring of the spirit of God, in Kentucky, Tennessee, and the adjacent parts, ever known since the settlement of North-America. It has extended not only to the conversion of Atheists, Deists, and men of wretched characters, of every rank, from the highest to the lowest: but it has produced a reformation in those who had formerly professed religion under the fashionable party names now contended for in the world.

It is our design in future numbers, to give the readers an account of the beginning and progress of the revival, and the view those reformed ministers and churches have of the church of Christ, as described in the new testament.

Those men have agreed to give up all the party names and rules made by men, and to name the name of Christ, and walk by his rule, which is the New Testament. The Presbyterians of Springfield have dissolved the Presbyterian body, and have given an account of it to the public in the following singular curious will; called, "The last will and testament of

#### SPRINGFIELD PRESBYTERY."

The *Presbytery* of *Springfield*, sitting at *Cane-ridge*, in the county of *Bourbon*, being through a gracious Providence, in more than ordinary bodily health, growing in strength and size daily, in perfect soundness and composure of mind; but knowing that it is appointed for all delegated bodies once to die and considering that the life of every such body is very uncertain, do make and ordain this our Last Will and Testament, in manner and form following, viz:

*Imprimis*. We will that this body die, be dissolved, and sink into union with the body of Christ at large: for there is but one body, and one spirit, even as we are called in one hope of our calling.

*Item*. We will, that our name of distinction, with its *Reverend* title, be forgotten, that there be but one Lord over God's heritage, and his name one.

*Item*. We will, that our power of making laws for the government of the church, and executing them by delegated authority, forever cease; that the people may have free course to the Bible, and adopt the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

*Item*. We will, that candidates for the Gospel ministry henceforth study the holy scriptures with fervent prayer, and obtain license from God to preach the simple Gospel, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, without any mixture of philosophy, vain deceit, tradi-



tions of men, the rudiments of the world. And let none henceforth take *this honor to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.*

*Item.* We will, that the church of Christ assume her native right of internal government—try her candidates for the ministry, as to their soundness in the faith, acquaintance with experimental religion, gravity and aptness to teach; and admit no other proof of their authority, but Christ speaking in them. We will that the church of Christ look up to the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers into his harvest; and that she resume her primitive right of trying those *who say they are Apostles, and are not.*

*Item.* We will, that each particular church, as a body, actuated by the same spirit, chuse her own preacher, and support him by a free will offering without written call or subscription—admit members—remove offences; and never henceforth *delegate* her right of government to any man or set of men whatever.

*Item.* We will, that the people henceforth take the Bible as the only sure guide to heaven; and as many as are offended with other books, which stand in competition with it, may cast them into the fire if they chuse: for it is better to enter into life having one book, than having many to be cast into hell.

*Item.* We will, that preachers and people, cultivate a spirit of mutual forbearance, pray more and dispute less; and while they behold the signs of the times, look up and confidently expect that redemption draweth nigh.

*Item.* We will, that our weak brethren, who may have been wishing to make the Presbytery of Springfield their king, and wot not what is now become of it, betake themselves to the rock of ages, and follow Jesus for the future.

*Item.* We will, that the Synod of Kentucky examine every member, who may be suspected of having departed from the Confession of faith, and suspend such suspected heretics immediately; in order that the oppressed may go free, and taste the sweets of Gospel liberty.

*Item.* We will, that Ja——, the author of two letters lately published in Lexington, be encouraged in his zeal to destroy *partyism*. We will moreover, that our past conduct be examined into by all who may have correct information; but let foreigners beware of speaking evil of things which they know not.

*Item.* Finally we will, that all our sister bodies, read their Bibles carefully, that they may see their fate there determined, and prepare for death before it is too late.

Springfield Presbytery, } (L. S.)  
June 28th, 1804. }

ROBERT MARSHALL,  
JOHN DUNLAVY,  
RICHARD M'NEMAR,  
B. W. STONE,  
JOHN THOMPSON,  
DAVID PURVIANCE.

Witnesses.

*State of Religion in Portsmouth, and the towns in the vicinity.*

Since last March to the present time, God has visited us with his Spirit in a remarkable manner. In Portsmouth and Newington, about one hundred have been baptized within a few months, who now walk in love. ELDER S. has baptized 127 within four months, chiefly in Portsmouth and within a few miles. The attention has been great in Newington—Ten have been baptized there lately. Several in Kittery, some in York—About twenty in Berwick—In Greenland there is a good work, four have of late been baptized—In Newmarket the work is increasing; several of late have been set at liberty to rejoice in God. There is some revival in Durham, and a great attention to hear the word in Dover. In Hampton and Kensington, the door is open for preaching. In Salisbury, about twenty have been baptized within a few months; some in Rye begin to ask "*what shall I do to be saved?*" Finally, the attention to hear the word in this part, exceeds what ever was before.

We have had field-meetings one week, five days out of seven, and a blessing has attended every meeting. Some of our brethren are now on their way preaching to the people in the fields, and calling on men to repent.

It is the design of the Editor to give a more particular account of the work hereafter. This must suffice for the present.

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*Extract of a Letter from a preacher of the Gospel, to the Editor, dated Cambden, June 20, 1808.*

DEAR BROTHER,

"I have seen much of the glory of God, since I saw you. I have baptized 170, within a short time. In Lincolnville, Hope, Cambden, and Thomaston, the work has been glorious.—Upwards of one hundred in each of these towns have professed to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, since last spring, and the work is now spreading marvelously. The Lord is working; Satan is roaming? wicked men are opposing; and the *calvinists* exceed them all. May God have mercy on such ministers as are found fighting against the work of God, when it does not come in their own way!

I desire to be remembered to my dear brethren in Portsmouth, Kittery, Boston, and wherever you see them. I long to see them all, but cannot leave the battle I am now engaged in.

From your brother and fellow Labourer."

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*Extract of a Letter from a minister near New Bedford, to his friend in Boston, dated July, 1808.*

"Time will not permit me to give any particular account of my travels since we parted; but in general it is this;—in my first tour, I baptized 13 persons, and several more

in that place since. I expect to baptize to day. At Rochester (great Neck) *ten*, who were baptized, were united together as a church, when I was there last. Br. Easty has baptized four in that place since. The 2d of August, if the Lord will, I expect to be at Br. Rounsevell's; fail not to meet me there, to go with me to Middleborough, and the long plain. We have glorious tidings from Dighton and Rehoboth, I am well informed that Elder Sawyer said, thirty persons of his society, had experienced religion of late, who date their first awakening from the first meeting we had there, besides many more who are saying what shall I do to be saved?

I received a letter from Br. Case yesterday, in which he mentions a general attention among the people. Parents are confessing to their children, and children to their parents. In one family he mentions, one daughter had been baptized, and five more, sensible of their need of a Saviour. He wrote me to come as soon as possible.

I am your friend and Br. Farewell, &c.

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*Extract of Letter from a Brother in Woodstock (Vt.) dated August 5, 1808.*

"DEAR AND BELOVED FRIEND,

We need help from the Lord Jesus by the communications of his servants as frequently as they can gain permission from him, and especially from you.

There is an increase of the good work of the Lord going on in the north part of Woodstock, in Pomphret, Barnard, Bridgwater and Windsor. A goodly number have of late been baptized, both of converts and old professors.—Nine of late were baptized at the place where you baptized sister Davis; five of whom were congregationalists. It was supposed that 5 or 6 hundred people attended, of men, women, and children. Notwithstanding the appointment was at 5 o'clock, A. M. I attend through much weakness—the people gathered in Br. M'Kinzie's door-yard, the people were so numerous, and so unexpected, for so short an exercise, that many of the brethren could not come near enough (for the press) to hear the candidates tell what the Lord had done for them. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth labourers into his harvest, for it is great, and labourers are few.

Opposition in the minds and conduct of many professors of religion is extraordinary. Some Elders and their Brethren have said that we, (meaning you and me and others in our fellowship) are persecutors of those that are established in the faith. This appears to me to be the last resource to turn in that way, in order to put a colour of blame upon our character.

I verily thought our ultimate object was Christ—Union of saints to all who love his appearing,—to follow peace with all men, and



holiness, and I mean to think so yet, and shall, until I am better convinced than by their word only.

Dear brother, pray for us, that we may prove what is that good, acceptable, and perfect will of God.

*I am your friend and Brother.*

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Information from Boston.

A Brother from Boston yesterday, informs us that the Christians there are blessed with the blessings of him who comes down like rain upon the mown grass, and by experience they find "the King's favour is like a cloud of the latter rain." He mentions that two were baptized there last Lords-day, who with the others are happily united in the spirit of love. Some have within a few days been baptized in Salem.

The account of the field meetings this week, as far as we have heard, is truly encouraging, on account of the great attention of people to hear the word.

## Portsmouth,

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THURSDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 1, 1808.

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### QUARTERLY MEETING.

The Quarterly meeting of the Free-will Baptists was holden at Elder Otis' meeting-house in Barrington, 3d Wednesday and Thursday in August last.

A large number of brethren from different directions, and a great distance attended. In the public meetings, the preaching was solemn and important; and in the Conference of the Elders a good spirit appeared to prevail among them; and favourable signs of a determination to have Christ the only Lord and LAWGIVER.

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### INFORMATION.

Elder Daniel Hig, from Dartmouth is to preach in Boston 2d. Lord's Day in Sept. Monday evening after in Salem. Tuesday in Chebacco. Wednesday at 2 o'clock, in Bradford. Thursday at 2 o'clock, in Haverhill; at which time a Brother is to be ordained to the work of the ministry.

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A meeting is to be attended at York on Wednesday, Sept. 7th at 2 o'clock, at, or near Samuel Jenkins house; it is expected a Brother will be ordained to the work of the ministry at the time, according to the NEW TESTAMENT.

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### ORDINATION.

ORDAINED in Hampton-falls 6th of July last, EBEN EZER LEVET, (member of the Christian Church) according to the simplicity of the NEW-TESTAMENT, in the following manner. After a discourse on the occasion by ELDER SMITH from 2, Cor. iii. 6. the ELDERS present prayed with laying on hands; afterwards they gave him the right hands of fellowship, according to Acts xiii. 3, Gal. ii. 9. to preach and baptize wherever the door of faith is opened

## POETRY.

### REDEEMING LOVE.

*HAD I a thousand mouths, a thousand tongues,  
A throat of brass and adamantine lungs,  
I'd sound redeeming love through all the earth;  
The love that gave me, first and second birth;  
I'd tell to all creation's utmost space,  
How great his goodness and how rich his grace;  
Till wond'ring nations should his grace adore,  
Jehovah's Christ, God blest forever more.*

## ANECDOTAL.

THE celebrated Mr. Robert Robertson, (a Baptist minister) in England, much respected on account of his wit, Learning, and Religion, was often in the company of some of the first men in the kingdom. One day, being in company with one of the nobility; The gentleman put this question to him—"Mr. Robertson, what is the reason that our ministers of the Church of England, preach well for a time after they first begin; but your ministers of the Dissenters, continue to preach well through all their lives?"

I will tell you Sir, (said Mr. Robertson,) and then taking his bible, turned to John, i. 1. and read "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God. Now said he, when your ministers of the Church of England, begin to preach, they read this text as it is, "The word was with God and the word was God;" and while they read so, they preach well. He then laid a Guinea on the last word of the verse, God. Now (said he) after your ministers have preached a while, a rich living is presented to them; and, instead of, "The word was God," they begin to read, "And the word was God;" this spoils their preaching. Our ministers are in general poor, and the people being obliged to support your ministers, are not able to do much for their own; this keeps them poor, and as they do not read, "The word was God," they read "The word was God," here they are called to look continually; and, in this way they preach WELL."

## ADVERTISEMENT.

THOSE who hold subscriptions for the HERALD, dated April 6 1808, are requested to return them to the EDITOR at Portsmouth immediately, by mail or otherwise, in order that the subscribers may receive their papers.

SUBSCRIBERS are requested to notice that one of the conditions of the HERALD is fifty cents to be paid when the first number is delivered. . . . This sum is necessary to enable the EDITOR to prosecute the business.

\* \* \* The agents will receive the money.  
SEPTEMBER 1, 1808.

THE HERALD OF GOSPEL LIBERTY is published at Portsmouth, N. H., every other Thursday evening

By ELIAS SMITH.

AT HIS HOUSE NEAR JEFFRY-STREET.

TERMS.—One dollar per year, exclusive of postage; fifty cents to be advanced when the first number is delivered; the other fifty when twenty-six numbers are delivered.

Those who are accountable for ten, to receive one free.

Fifty-two numbers to make a volume;—those who subscribe are expected to receive the paper until the volume is completed.

Where there are more than one subscriber in a town, an agent is appointed to receive the subscriptions and the money, and to deliver the papers.

Should any person subscribe in future for the HERALD, who may wish to receive the numbers which may have been published prior to his subscribing, the EDITOR requests information of the same,

If any of the subscribers live in a town where there is no post office; they are requested to inform the Editor at what office they will have their papers sent.

All interesting communications (post paid) addressed to Daniel P. Drown, Portsmouth will be thankfully received and attended to by the EDITOR.

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\* \* \* Those persons who are appointed agents, will be satisfied for their trouble. Should any be appointed who cannot attend to it, they will please to inform the Editor.

SEPT. 1.