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our conscript fathers and brethren. No man will then be at the mercy of reporters, but will speak for himself to all who read him. And many a man who cannot speak, at least in the Temple of the Winds, can write intelligibly on an interesting subject. Such is our device for the cure of this inveterate disease of the tongue, or rather of the lungs, for we believe that after all, the chief ingredient of our legislative eloquence is wind. To avert the criticisms of physicians, druggists, and apothecaries, we make haste to add, that this form of pthisis is entirely *sui generis*, arising from excessive strength of lungs, and ending in consumption of the public money, time, and patience.

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### ZACHARIAH JOHNSTON.

Among the distinguished Virginians brought out by the American revolution was Zachariah Johnston, a plain farmer of Augusta, who had received no other education than what a common English school could afford. When "Committees of Safety" were appointed in every district, he was by the recommendation of his neighbours, made a member of the committee for his native county. In this office he discovered so much good sense, and such ability to express his opinions with clearness and force, that he was persuaded to become a candidate for a seat in the Virginia legislature. When he entered that body, no one expected that a plain, uneducated farmer would undertake to make speeches on the same floor with many of the greatest men whom the state ever produced; but Johnston, conscious of his own power, was not long a member before he astonished the whole house by delivering on an important occasion, a speech without embarrassment, in which he exhibited his views with the utmost perspicuity and energy. No man in the Assembly was more

fluent, or expressed himself in more proper language than Zachariah Johnston. He did not speak often, but when important subjects were brought before the house, he commonly delivered at least one speech; and no man in the Assembly, unless we except Patrick Henry, commanded the attention of the members in a greater degree than the backwoods farmer.

The people of the Valley, or country west of the Blue Ridge, being of a different stock, and of different habits and manners from the Old Virginians, who were of English descent, have always manifested some jealousy, because in the laws enacted there frequently was not an impartial regard to their interests, and Johnston being a representative of this region, when any subject touching the interests of his constituents came up, was always ready with uncompromising firmness to defend their cause. In occasional speeches on these subjects, he was so severe in his remarks on the measures of some of the leading men of the house, that they dreaded his assaults. What seemed very wonderful in this man was that he would speak for an hour without the smallest hesitation, and never had to recall a word or failed to express his ideas in the most forcible language.

The people of the valley were proud of their champion, as well they might be. What gave force to his eloquence was his pure and incorruptible integrity. He was a man of sterling honesty and undoubted patriotism. Indeed, he was a strictly religious man, and was not ashamed of his profession of Christianity. The writer was too young, when he knew Johnston, to be a judge of his character; but not long since, a friend communicated to him a copy of a letter written by him to his wife, when detained in Richmond longer than he expected; and it breathes not only the strongest language of conjugal affection, but is fraught with the spirit of genuine piety. He continued to represent the county of Augusta, every year until the contest with the mother country was brought to a termination; and no one thought of

opposing his election. Like most other eloquent men, Zachariah Johnston excelled in his conversational powers. And when in the country, people would be met at church, before the worship commenced, he would commonly have a large group around him listening to his discourse. On one of these occasions, the writer was among his hearers, when he felt at first somewhat shocked at hearing him describe the conduct of a certain man, who when at home passed for a moral man, but when in Richmond, associated with the vilest character: but his object was to produce a salutary effect on the minds of the youth who were hearing him.

It was a common report, that he was never seen to smile. Whether this was true I cannot tell; but being present when the students of an academy acted (as was then common) a ludicrous farce, while the rest of the audience were convulsed with laughter, Zachariah Johnston was not observed to relax a muscle of his face.

Johnston was a member of the Virginia convention, which adopted the federal constitution. In that august assembly he remained silent, until near the close of the debates, when he arose and delivered a short, sensible discourse in favour of the constitution; the substance of which may be found in the printed Debates of the Convention.

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## MOTHER-COUNTRY AND FATHER-LAND.

### A DIALOGUE.

*F. L.* Good morning, Mother-Country, I hope I see you well.

*M. C.* As well as I can expect to be, since you came in and robbed me of my rights.