

avoid making any comparisons at present, but may venture to predict, that whatsoever State among us shall continue to make piety and virtue the standard of public honour, will enjoy the greatest inward peace, the greatest national happiness, and in every outward conflict will discover the greatest constitutional strength.

12 Governor William Livingston on the Republican Challenge

[*Votes and Proceedings, May 15-June 19, 1783* (Trenton, 1783). pp. 94-95.]

The War for Independence was not the American Revolution. As the fighting stopped and peace returned to the state, thoughtful Jersey men took stock of what had been achieved and what lay ahead. They realized that theirs was a bold, even audacious, undertaking. Never before had man attempted to establish a democratic republic based upon popular sovereignty. After a long and bloody war, independence had been achieved; only time would tell if the experiment in republicanism would be transitory or permanent. Many serious problems faced the new nation and its member states. But its ultimate fate would depend upon the ability of the people to measure up to the republican ideal of civic virtue. In the brief message to the General Assembly reprinted below, Governor William Livingston warned the solons of the public faith that must be observed if the prophecy of self-government was to become a reality.

Burlington, May 19, 1783

Gentlemen,

Providence having been pleased to terminate the late War in a Manner so honourable and advantageous to America, I most heartily congratulate you on the auspicious Event; but let us not flatter ourselves that because the War is over, our Difficulties are at an End. The Advantages to be expected from the Establishment of our Independence, will greatly depend upon our publick Measures, and a Conduct suitable to so important a Blessing. Perhaps at no particular Moment during our whole Conflict with Great-Britain has there been a greater Necessity than at the present Juncture of Unanimity, Vigilance and Exertion. The Glory we have acquired in the War will be resounded through the Universe. God forbid that we should ever tarnish its Lustre by an unworthy Conduct in Times of Peace. We have established our Character as a brave People, and exhibited to the World the most incontestible Proofs that we are determined to sacrifice both Life and Fortune in Defence of our Liberties. Heaven has crowned our victorious and heroic Struggles with the most signal Success; and our military Exploits have astonished the World. Let us now shew ourselves worthy of the inestimable Blessings of Freedom by an inflexible

NEW JERSEY IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Attachment to publick Faith and national Honour. Let us establish our Character as a Sovereign State on the only durable Basis of impartial and universal Justice; for whatever plausible Sophistry the artful may contrive, or the avaricious be ready from self-interested Motives to adopt, we may depend upon it, that the Observation of the wise Man will, through all Ages, be found an uncontrovertible Truth, that *Righteousness exalteth a Nation, but that Sin* (of which Injustice is one of the most aggravated) *is the Reproach of any People.* . . .

WIL. LIVINGSTON

13 Ashbel Green, Sr., to Ashbel Green, Jr.

[Joseph H. Jones, ed., *The Life of Ashbel Green, V.D.M.*
(New York, 1849), pp. 37-43.]

While the immediate consequence of the revolutionary war was American independence, the long-range outcome of the Revolution itself was profound political, social, and economic change in American society. Ashbel Green, Sr., (1762-1848) was one of the few Jerseymen who lived to record and reflect upon the impact of the Revolution on American ideals, institutions, and practices. As the son of an ardent Whig, the Reverend Jacob Green of Hanover in Morris County, young Ashbel experienced firsthand the events leading to the break with Great Britain in 1774-1776; like many other teenaged boys, he saw militia service during the war. He later made significant contributions to the new nation as one of the foremost theologians and educators of the times. A member of the College of New Jersey class of 1783 (later Princeton University), he served his alma mater as tutor (1783-1785), professor of mathematics and natural philosophy (1785-1787), founder of the Presbyterian Seminary (1811), and president (1812-1822). Universally acknowledged as the dean of American Presbyterianism at the time of his death, he was for many years the minister of the Second Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia and from 1792 to 1800 was chaplain of the Congress of the United States. In the following letter to his youngest son, Ashbel, Jr., the elder Green comments on some of the more pronounced developments that had occurred during his lifetime. It is a very personal observation, one that reflects his special interests and biases. Others of his contemporaries might well have discussed such things as the advent of universal white adult male suffrage; the rise of political parties; the political and social ascendancy of the "common man" symbolized by the election of a folk hero president, Andrew Jackson, ("Old Hickory"); the development of manufacturing capabilities that heralded an industrial revolution; the creation of a cultural identity through art and literature devoted to American subjects; the development of a national consciousness through the formation of historical