

**THE WORLD'S FAMOUS
ORATIONS; IN TEN
VOLUMES, VOL. IV,
GREAT BRITAIN-II**

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Bryan & Francis W. Halsey

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WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN & FRANCIS W. HALSEY

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The World's Famous Orations

VOL. IV

GREAT BRITAIN—II

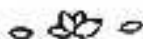
1789—1861



**THE
WORLD'S
FAMOUS
ORATIONS**



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IN TEN VOLUMES

Vol. IV
GREAT BRITAIN—II

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PITT

I

THE WAR IN AMERICA DENOUNCED¹

(1781)

Born in 1759, died in 1806; elected to Parliament in 1780; Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1782; Prime Minister in 1783-1801; secured the union of Ireland with Great Britain in 1800; Prime Minister again in 1804; formed the coalition with Russia and Austria against Napoleon, which was wrecked in 1815 at Austerlitz; Pitt's health being completely ruined, his death followed soon afterward.

GENTLEMEN have passed the highest eulogiums on the American war. Its justice has been defended in the most fervent manner. A noble lord, in the heat of his zeal, has called it a holy war. For my part, altho the honorable gentleman who made this motion, and some other gentlemen, have been, more than once, in the course of the debate, severely reprehended for calling it a wicked and accursed war, I am persuaded, and would affirm, that it was a most accursed, wicked, barbarous, cruel, unnatural, unjust and diabolical war! -

It was conceived in injustice; it was nurtured and brought forth in folly; its footsteps were marked with blood, slaughter, persecution and devastation—in truth, everything which went

¹ Spoken in the House of Commons in June, 1781, when he was twenty-two years old and had been only a few months in his seat. Abridged. The subject was Fox's motion for peace with the American Colonies. Pitt's maiden speech on February 26 of this year had evoked from Burke the remark, "He is not merely a chip of the old block, but the old block itself."

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to constitute moral depravity and human turpitude was to be found in it. It was pregnant with misery of every kind.

The mischief, however, recoiled on the unhappy people of this country,¹ who were made the instruments by which the wicked purposes of the authors of the war were effected. The nation was drained of its best blood, and of its vital resources of men and money. The expense of the war was enormous—much beyond any former experience.

And yet, what has the British nation received in return? Nothing but a series of ineffective victories, or severe defeats—victories celebrated only by a temporary triumph over our brethren, whom we would trample down and destroy; victories, which filled the land with mourning for the loss of dear and valued relatives, slain in the impious cause of enforcing unconditional submission, or with narratives of the glorious exertions of men struggling in the holy cause of liberty, tho' struggling in the absence of all the facilities and advantages which are in general deemed the necessary concomitants of victory and success. Where was the Englishman, who on reading the narratives of those bloody and well-fought contests, could refrain from lamenting the loss of so much British blood spilt in such a cause, or from weeping, on whatever side victory might be declared?¹

¹ Four months after the date of this speech Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown.