

**THE ORGANIZATION OF LIBERTY ON THE
WESTERN CONTINENT. AN ORATION
DELIVERED BEFORE THE MUNICIPAL
AUTHORITIES OF THE CITY OF BOSTON, AT THE
CELEBRATION OF THE SEVENTY-SIXTH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE DECLARATION OF
AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE, JULY 5, 1852**

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The organization of liberty on the western continent. An oration delivered before the municipal authorities of the city of Boston, at the celebration of the seventy-sixth anniversary of the declaration of American independence, July 5, 1852 by Thomas Starr King

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THOMAS STARR KING

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OF THE

CITY OF BOSTON,

AT THE

CELEBRATION OF THE SEVENTY-SIXTH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

Declaration of American Independence,

JULY 5, 1853.

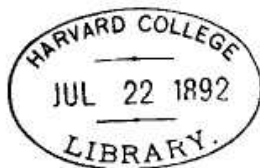
BY THOMAS STARR KING, A.M.

BOSTON:

ROCKWELL AND CHURCHILL, CITY PRINTERS.

1892.

KF 18275



The City of Boston

CITY OF BOSTON.

IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN, December 21, 1891.

WHEREAS, The Fourth of July Oration delivered in 1852 by Rev. THOMAS STARR KING is the only one of the series since 1822 which has not been printed; and as his family is willing that it should now be issued,

ORDERED, That the Chairman of the Record Commissioners, under the direction of the Committee on Printing, cause the said Oration to be printed, bound, and distributed; the edition to consist of fifteen hundred copies: and the expense, not to exceed four hundred dollars, to be charged to the appropriation for Printing.

PASSED. Sent down for concurrence. December 23 came up concurred.

Approved by the Mayor December 26, 1891.

A true copy.

Attest:

JOHN T. PRINCE, *Asst. City Clerk.*

PREFACE.

THOMAS STARR KING was born in the city of New York, Dec. 17, 1824, his father being the Rev. Thomas F. King, and his mother Susan Starr, both natives of that city. His father became the pastor of a church in Charlestown, where he died before his son was qualified to enter college. The young man however continued his studies while serving as a public school teacher and clerk in the Navy Yard, and in September 1846 he succeeded Rev. E. H. Chapin in the pulpit which his father had occupied. In December 1848 he married Miss Julia M. Wiggin, and soon after was installed at Hollis-street church, Boston, where he continued for eleven years. His popularity as a preacher and lecturer was very great, and few men have gained more devoted or appreciative friends.

"It was," says Dr. Henry W. Bellows, "the hidden, interior man of the heart, the invisible character behind all the rich possessions, intellectual and social, of this gifted man, that gave him his real power and skill to control the wills, and to move the hearts, and to win the unbounded confidence and affection of his fellow-beings."

In 1860, Mr. King accepted a call from a church in San Francisco. His fame as a lecturer as well as a preacher had preceded him, and he was called upon to visit all parts of our western coast. At the outbreak of the Rebellion he was thus in a position to exert a great influence upon the public of California, then tempted by the suggestion of a Pacific republic. No one who reads the pages of this

oration can doubt the energy or the eloquence with which Mr. King combatted this heresy, nor the unflinching support which he gave to the cause of the Union. "He went forth appealing to the people taking the constitution and Washington for his text," and he is confessedly entitled to the credit of having preserved the Pacific states to the Union.

In January 1864 his new church edifice was dedicated, but after a brief illness with diphtheria he died March 4, 1864.

Mr. King published in 1859 a well-known book in regard to the White Hills, whose beauties were his favorite theme, and which, in a popular sense, he almost discovered. Several volumes of his sermons were printed after his death; but during his life-time his compositions were reserved for use on the lecture-platform. It was owing to this fact, that the following Oration was not published as usual, at the date of its delivery, by the City of Boston. Finding recently that this was the only one in the series of Fourth of July Orations, delivered by request of the City of Boston, which had not been printed, application was made to the widow and children of Mr. King, and their consent was readily given to the publication. The manuscript was found to be in perfect form, and only one or two verbal corrections have been needed.

W. H. W.

CITY HALL, BOSTON, March 4, 1892.

THE ORGANIZATION OF LIBERTY ON THE WESTERN CONTINENT.

Mr. Mayor and Fellow-citizens:

The seventy-sixth anniversary of the day which proclaimed our country a distinct and independent power on the earth has dawned upon us. And it finds us in such prosperity and peace, and such rapidly increasing greatness, that our thoughts are invited to rise in adoration and gratitude to Him who "hath not dealt so with any nation," and whose favor alone is permanent strength.

The topic to which I shall ask your attention is the "Organization of Liberty on the Western Continent." In connection with this theme the Fourth of July at once assumes its real importance in our whole history, and unveils its highest claim to our reverent memory and lasting gratitude.

The day is distinguished by its historical marriage with the Declaration of Independence; but it is not the production of that vigorous revolutionary rhetoric that we celebrate. Literature abounds with denunciations of oppressions and

assertions of human worth and rights, that have higher quality than the periods of our venerated state paper, and yet we do not dignify them with national holidays. We venerate the Declaration as *a deed* more than as a composition or a collection of doctrines. It was a bold blow for the liberty of three millions of people; and we should honor the noble manner in which the deed was done,—the deliberate and solid statesmanship that comprehended the responsibilities, and took upon its shoulders the duties of such a radical position,—more than the words and the deed together.

In fact, the whole Revolution itself is not of any great importance in military history as a series of battles and a protest of physical force. Its achievements in the field are immortalized by the cause it served and the manner of the service. Our revolution was turned into a dignified force instead of a flash of enthusiasm and a rattle of musketry, by the compact, passive resistance of character and the moral fidelity to the cause, in privation and suffering, manifested all over the land; through these qualities it stood in right relations with the gravity of our earlier history, and offered no obstructions, but powerful aid rather, to the completion of the destiny to

which from the first our land was pledged—
the peaceful organization of Liberty.

Let us glance for a moment at the physical universe, and catch a few of the broad instructions given in it, as to the relative value of the process of organization. Nature is not satisfied with a boundless treasury of elements and a happy balance of them into inorganic harmonies. She sends up a chorus of praise to God as the organizer as well as creator; for her materials are combined into forms, and the spirit that superintends our world revels in varieties of form that defy numeration.

The globe we live on is thoroughly organized by an array of antagonistic forces, and is made to play as a wheel of a celestial orrery. The clouds, the tides, the winds, are wrapped by laws, and made through their movement and their oscillations to manifest subtle harmonies that cannot be broken. Yea, even the light is made to obey a steady rein, and to be punctual as time, and exact as mathematics, in the dispensation of its floods. The dancing light is not suffered to be capricious and fitful in its visitations, but is required to be dutiful, and so that it shall break here and there in flashes, or stream in vivid sheets now and then athwart