CENTENNIAL FOURTH OF JULY ORATION: DELIVERED AT CHESTER, PENNA

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Centennial Fourth of July Oration: Delivered at Chester, Penna by Isaac T. Coates

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ISAAC T. COATES

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Trieste

1776 CENTENNIAL 1876

FOURTH OF JULY ORATION,

DELIVERED AT

CHESTER, PENNA.,

BY

ISAAC T. COATES, M.D.

FELLOW OF THE AMERICAN GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY; MEMBER OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA; MEMBER OF THE ACADEMY OF NATURAL SCIENCES OF PHILADELPHIA, ETC., ETC.

METHINKS I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation, rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks; methinks I see her as an eagle, mewing her mighty youth and kindling her endazzled eyes at the full mid-day beam.—*Milton on the Liberty of the Press.*

I am all that has been, that is, and that shall be, and none among mortals has hitherto lifted my veil.—*The Enigma cut on the Pavement of the Temple of Minerva.*

The laws, the rights,
The generous plan of power delivered down
From age to age, by our renowned forefathers
So dearly bought, the price of so much blood,
Oh! never let it perish in our hands.—*Addison's Cato.*

Could we create so close, tender, and cordial a connection between the citizens of a State as to induce all to consider themselves as relatives,—as fathers, brothers, and sisters,—then this whole State would constitute but a single family, be subjected to the most perfected regulations, and become the happiest republic that ever existed upon the earth.—*Plato.*

PRESS OF
J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO., PHILADELPHIA.
1876.

CHESTER, PA., May 25, 1876.

DR. ISAAC T. COATES:

Dear Sir,—The citizens of Chester intend to celebrate, on the coming Fourth of July, the One Hundredth Anniversary of American Independence; and they respectfully invite you to deliver the Centennial Oration. The exercises will take place at the lawn of General E. F. Beale.

By order of the Committee,

B. F. BAKER, *Secretary*. WILLIAM C. GRAY, *Chairman*.

CHESTER, PA., June 1, 1876.

GENTLEMEN,—

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your note of the 25th ultimo, bearing an invitation from the citizens of Chester to deliver the Centennial Fourth of July Oration on their celebration of our One Hundredth National Anniversary, to be held here on the coming Fourth of July. While the time is entirely too brief for even abler hands than mine to do the great subject anything like adequate justice, I must yet accept the invitation, and thank my friends and fellow-citizens, through you, for the great, and certainly undeserved, honor their flattering partiality pays me.

With great respect,

Your friend and obedient servant,

ISAAC T. COATES.

To WM. C. GRAY, *Chairman*, and B. F. BAKER, *Secretary*.

DEDICATION.

MY DEAR MOTHER,—It seems very natural and peculiarly appropriate that I should dedicate to thee this Oration, which treats of my National Mother. Whatever good, if any, may be found in it, whatever inspiration that came to me in its composition, are the natural outgrowth of thy good instruction to me when a boy,—those lessons of Truth and Right, of Patriotism and Humanity, which have clung to me as the shadow clings to the substance that casts it. Remembering, with a deep sense of gratitude, thy perennial goodness and loving kindness to me, I come now, in sturdy manhood, to renew my oft-repeated pledge of filial affection; a love as tender as it was in childhood, and stronger now than love for life. During my somewhat checkered career of life, whether facing the dangers of battle or enjoying the sweet security of peace, whether safe on land or tempest-tossed in mid-ocean, whether dwelling amid the luxuries of civilization or denizened among wild men in the savage wilderness,—disputing with the condor, on the snowy peaks of the Andes, the possession of his beetling cliffs, or threading tropical forests,—no day has ever passed without a part of it having been spent in loved remembrance of thee.

Thy affectionate son,

I. T. C.

CHESTER, PA., December, 1876.

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