

**AN ORATION DELIVERED BEFORE THE
CITIZENS OF CHARLESTOWN ON THE
FIFTY-SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF THE
DECLARATION OF THE INDEPENDENCE
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

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An Oration Delivered Before the Citizens of Charlestown on the Fifty-second Anniversary of the Declaration of the Independence of the United States of America by Edward Everett

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EDWARD EVERETT

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BY **EDWARD EVERETT.**

CHARLESTOWN :
WHEILDON AND RAYMOND.
BOSTON :
HILLIARD, GRAY, LITTLE AND WILKINS.
1828.

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*Received from the
Boston and Victoria Reminiscence Society*

DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO WIT:

District Clerk's Office.

BE it remembered, that on the tenth day of July, A. D. 1898, and in the fifty third year of the Independence of the United States of America, Wheelton & Raymond, of the said District, have deposited in this office, the title of a book, the right whereof they claim as proprietors, in the words following, to wit:—

"An Oration delivered before the Citizens of Charlestown, on the fifty-second anniversary of the Declaration of the Independence of the United States of America. By Edward Everett."

In conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, entitled, "An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned," and also to an Act, entitled, "An Act supplementary to an Act, entitled, 'An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned;' and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving and etching historical and other prints."

JNO. W. DAVIS,

Clerk of the District of Massachusetts.

CHARLESTOWN:

From the Aurora Press—Wheelton and Raymond.

Charlestown, July 7, 1828.

AT a meeting of the Committee of Arrangements for the celebration of the Fourth of July, it was

Voted, That Dr ABRAHAM R. THOMPSON, and Mr DAVID DEVENS be a Committee to present to the Hon. EDWARD EVERETT, the thanks of this Committee, in behalf of their fellow-citizens, for the ORATION delivered by him, on the recent anniversary of our National Independence, and to request a copy of the same for the Press.

Attest—

WILLIAM W. WHEILDON, *Secretary.*



ORATION.

FELLOW-CITIZENS :

THE event, which we commemorate, is all important, not merely in our own annals, but in those of mankind. The sententious English poet has declared, that "the proper study of mankind is man;" and of all inquiries, which have for their object the temporal concerns of our nature, unquestionably the history of our fellow beings is among the most interesting. But not all the chapters of human history are alike important. The annals of our race have been filled up with incidents, which concern not, or at least ought not to concern the great company of mankind. History, as it has often been written, is the genealogy of princes,—the field-book of conquerors,—and the fortunes of our fellow men have been treated, only so far as they have been affected by the influence of the great masters and destroyers of the race. Such history is, I will not say a worthless study, for it is necessary for us

to know the dark side, as well as the bright side of our condition. But it is a melancholy and heartless study, which fills the bosom of the philanthropist and the friend of liberty with sorrow.

But the History of Liberty,—the history of men struggling to be free,—the history of men who have acquired, and are exercising their freedom,—the history of those great movements in the world, by which liberty has been established, diffused, and perpetuated, form a subject, which we cannot contemplate too closely,—to which we cannot cling too fondly. This is the real history of man,—of the human family,—of rational, immortal beings.

This theme is *one*;—the *free* of all climes and nations, are themselves *a people*. Their annals are the history of freedom. Those who fell victims to their principles, in the civil convulsions of the short-lived republics of Greece, or who sunk beneath the power of her invading foes; those who shed their blood for liberty amidst the ruins of the Roman republic; the victims of Austrian tyranny in Switzerland, and of Spanish tyranny in Holland; the solitary champions or the united bands of high-minded and patriotic men, who have, in any region or age, struggled and suffered in this great cause, belong to that

PEOPLE OF THE FREE, whose fortunes and progress are the most noble theme which man can contemplate.

The theme belongs to us. We inhabit a country, which has been signalized in the great history of freedom. We live under institutions, more favorable to its diffusion, than any which the world has elsewhere known. A succession of incidents, of rare curiosity and almost mysterious connexion, has marked out America as the great theatre of political reform. Many circumstances stand recorded in our annals, connected with the assertion of human rights, which, were we not familiar with them, would fill even our own minds with amazement.

The theme belongs to the day. We celebrate the return of the day, on which our separate national existence was declared ; the day when the momentous experiment was commenced, by which the world, and posterity, and we ourselves were to be taught, how far a nation of men can be trusted with self-government,—how far life, and liberty, and property are safe,—and the progress of social improvement secure, under the influence of laws, made by those who are to obey the laws ; the day, when, for the first time in the world, a numerous people was ushered into the family of nations, organized on