

**EULOGY ON LAFAYETTE,
DELIVERED IN FANEUIL HALL, AT
THE
REQUEST OF THE YOUNG MEN
OF BOSTON, SEPTEMBER 6, 1834**

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Eulogy on Lafayette, Delivered in Faneuil Hall, at the Request of the Young Men of Boston,
September 6, 1834 by Edward Everett

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EDWARD EVERETT

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SEPTEMBER 6, 1834.

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

BY EDWARD EVERETT.

BOSTON:
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1834.

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BOSTON, SEPT. 6, 1834.

HON. EDWARD EVERETT :

Sir,—The subscribers are directed by the Young Men's Committee of Arrangements for rendering Honors to the Memory of LAFAYETTE, to present you the thanks of the Committee and their constituents, for the eloquent Eulogy you have this day pronounced, in their behalf, on the virtues of the truly great man whose decease they have commemorated, and to request you to furnish them a copy for the Press.

Permit us, Sir, to offer you individually, the assurance of our high respect, and in the name of the Young Men of Boston, to subscribe ourselves your obedient servants,

L. M. WALTER,
E. G. AUSTIN,
BENJAMIN F. HALLZIT,
JOHN CODMAN,
ISAAC McLELLAN, JR.

NOTE.—In preparing the following Eulogy for the press, some topics have been introduced and others treated more at length, which, on the delivery, were either wholly omitted or briefly alluded to. To avoid the necessity of frequent marginal references, I would observe, that the account of Lafayette's first visit to America is chiefly taken from a very interesting article, on that subject, communicated by Mr. Sparks to the Boston Daily Advertiser of 26th June 1834, from his edition of Washington's Works, now in the press. Among the other authorities which I have consulted, are the well known work of Sarrans, the Memoirs of Lafayette and the Constitutional Assembly by Regnault-Warin, Montgaillard's History of France from the close of the reign of Louis XVI. to the year 1825, and Mr. Ticknor's beautiful Sketch of the Life of Lafayette, originally published in the North American Review. But I owe a more particular acknowledgment to Mr. Sparks, who not only furnished me with the sheets of those parts of the unpublished volumes of Washington's Works, which throw light on the military services of Lafayette in the war of the American Revolution, but placed in my hands a great mass of original papers of the highest interest and value, relating to the career of Lafayette, and furnished to Mr. Sparks by the General himself, from his own collections and the public offices at Paris. These papers contain the Correspondence of Lafayette with Washington, from the year 1778 to his death; his Correspondence and Notes of his conferences with the Count de Vergennes and other French ministers; his Correspondence with his family and friends from America and from his prisons in Germany; Notes and Commentaries on the most important incidents of his life; his Correspondence with the Governor of Virginia and officers of the Army, especially during the campaign of 1781, and miscellaneous papers bearing on the main subject. They form altogether ample materials for a History of the Life and Services of Lafayette; a work which no one is so well qualified as Mr. Sparks to execute, and which it is greatly to be wished he might be induced to undertake.

EULOGY.

WHEN I look round upon this vast audience,—when I reflect upon the deep interest manifested by so many intelligent persons in the occasion, which has called us together,—when I consider the variety, the importance, and singularity of the events, which must pass in review before us, and the extraordinary character of the man whom we commemorate,—his connection with Europe and America, in the most critical periods of their history,—his intercourse in both hemispheres with the master spirits of the age,—his auspicious, long protracted, and glorious career, alternating with fearful rapidity from one extreme of fortune to the other,—and when I feel that I am expected, by the great multitude I have the honor to address,—the flower of this metropolis,—to say something not inappropriate to such an occasion nor wholly beneath the theme, I am oppressed with the weight of the duty I am to perform. I know not how, in the brief space allotted to me, to take up

and dispose of a subject so vast and comprehensive. I feel it to be an arduous, I had almost said a presumptuous effort, to attempt to dismiss, in a few sentences, the interest of a mighty career of usefulness,—the riches of a long life,—and the glory of a great and a pure name. I would even now, were it possible, retire from the undertaking; and leave to your own hearts, borne upwards with the swelling strains of yonder choir,—whose pious and plaintive melody is just dying on the ear,—to muse, in expressive silence, the praise of him we celebrate. But since this may not be,—since the duty devolved upon me must, however feebly, be discharged,—let me, like the illustrious subject of our contemplation, gather strength from the magnitude of the task. Let me calmly trace him through those lofty and perilous paths of duty, which he trod with serenity, while empires were toppling round him;—and, trampling under foot the arts of the rhetorician, as he trampled under foot all the bribes of vanity, avarice, and ambition, and all the delights of life, let me, in the plainness of history and the boldness of truth, not wholly uncongenial to the character of the man I would reproduce to your admiration and love,—discharge as I may, the great duty, which your favor has assigned to me.

There is, at every great era of the history of the world, a Leading Principle, which gives direction to the fortunes of nations and the characters of distinguished men. This principle, in our own time, is that of the action and reaction upon each other of

Europe and America, for the advancement of free institutions and the promotion of rational liberty. Since the discovery of America, this principle has been in operation, but naturally and necessarily with vastly increased energy, since the growth of an intelligent population, this side the water. For the formation of a man of truly great character, it is necessary that he should be endowed with qualities to win respect and love ;—that he should be placed in circumstances, favorable to a powerful action on society ;—and then, that with a pure affection, a strong, disinterested, glowing zeal,—a holy ambition of philanthropy,—he should devote himself to the governing principle of the age. Such a combination, humanly speaking, produces the nearest approach to perfection which the sphere of man admits. Of such characters the American Revolution was more than commonly fertile, for it was the very crisis of that action and reaction, which is the vocation of the age. Such a character was Washington ; such was Lafayette.

LAFAYETTE was born at Chavaniac, in the ancient province of Auvergne, in France, on the sixth day of September 1757, seventy-seven years ago this day. His family was one of the most ancient in the country, and of the highest rank in the French nobility. As far back as the fifteenth century one of his ancestors, a marshal of France, was distinguished for his military achievements ;—his uncle fell in the wars of Italy in the middle of the last century ;—and his father lost his life in the seven years' war, at the battle of Min-