

**MASSACHUSETTS: ITS  
HISTORIANS AND ITS  
HISTORY. AN OBJECT  
LESSON; PP. 4-108**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649433940

Massachusetts: Its Historians and Its History. An Object Lesson; pp. 4-108 by Charles Francis Adams

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS**

**MASSACHUSETTS: ITS  
HISTORIANS AND ITS  
HISTORY. AN OBJECT  
LESSON; PP. 4-108**



**By Charles Francis Adams.**

**RICHARD HENRY DANA. A Biography. With  
Portraits. Revised Edition. 2 vols. crown 8vo,  
gilt top, \$4.00.**

**THREE EPISODES OF MASSACHUSETTS  
HISTORY. With two Maps. 2 vols. crown  
8vo, gilt top, \$4.00.**

**MASSACHUSETTS: Its Historians and its His-  
tory. Crown 8vo.**

**HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN & COMPANY,  
BOSTON AND NEW YORK.**

MASSACHUSETTS  
ITS HISTORIANS AND ITS  
HISTORY

*AN OBJECT LESSON*

BY

CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS



BOSTON AND NEW YORK  
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY  
*The Riverside Press, Cambridge*  
1893

can study the wholly different aspect and outcome of the Spanish side of the evolution in the pages of Robertson, Buckle and Prescott, with Ferdinand the Catholic and Isabella of Castille, the Emperor Charles and Philip II., — Columbus, Torquemada and Alva, — holding the leading parts. But the play and the plot are the same, — the scene only is shifted. Carlyle gives us two other scenes, — one in Germany, known as the wars of Silesia, and the other the final climax of the third Act in the catastrophe of the French Revolution, with its Rights of Man and Worship of Reason. Then, if we go back for a couple of centuries, and once more shift the scene, we can study the development of the plot in Holland through the pages of Motley, while the great figure of William the Silent looms up before us.

But the drama was not confined to Europe. Scenes, and not unimportant nor uninteresting scenes in it, were laid here in America, in New England, in Massachusetts, and these scenes are my present subject, — only let it be always remembered they were scenes, — and to this fact they owe their whole value in history, — they were scenes in the world-drama.

So far as Emancipation from Caste, or the Equality of Man before the Law, is concerned, this much must be said of it as compared with Religious Toleration, — it is exclusively and wholly an outcome of the last four centuries, — their offspring; whereas Religious Toleration is, in a way, only a revival. For, though it may sound like a paradox, it is historically well settled that religious persecution followed in the wake of Christianity, — followed it, indeed, as a logical necessity. There is no utterance of Christ more sadly prophetic than when, declaring that his mission was not

9-47307

~~Undergraduate~~  
~~Library~~

Stamps  
7-8-80  
(1661)

## PREFACE.

QUINCY, September 29, 1838.

MY DEAR PROFESSOR CHANNING:—

While occupied last winter on historical work in connection with a forthcoming publication of the PRINCE SOCIETY ON ANTINOMIANISM IN THE COLONY OF MASSACHUSETTS BAY, 1636-1638, I found myself led into an investigation the results of which were, in character, generally radical and somewhat iconoclastic. As I went on I became curious to see how those results would impress a class of students just entering upon history as a study.

You were kind enough to offer me, being an Overseer of the College, one of your classes to experiment on; and, as you remember, in April I occupied your desk for two morning hours. What I wished to say had to be greatly compressed to get it within the allotted time; but my audience, I thought, took rather kindly to views, general and particular, which would hardly have been encouraged in the Cambridge of forty years ago.

The four lectures, then condensed into two, I now publish entire; and ask for them your consideration, as well as that of the members of the class I addressed.

Believe me, etc.,

CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS.

PROF. EDWARD CHANNING, Cambridge, Mass.



24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

MASSACHUSETTS:  
ITS HISTORIANS AND ITS HISTORY.

---

I.

ON corresponding panels of the inner front of the Water-Gate at the Chicago World's Fair are these two inscriptions, prepared by President Eliot of Harvard, — at the left, as one faces to the east, "Civil Liberty The Means of Building up Personal and National Character;" at the right, "Toleration in Religion The Best Fruit of the last Four Centuries." Obviously, the last is the stronger, much the more comprehensive legend. But, in fact, the causes were, and are, equal as well as inseparable; and it is the struggle for them — for Freedom of Conscience on the one hand, and the Equality of Man before the Law on the other — which constitutes the theme of modern history. Nor does it make much difference where or when or how or by whom the course of that struggle is studied, — though it cannot be studied in too many phases or under too varied conditions, — it is an aspect, and the last great aspect, of human development. One writer of books of history, and one such writer only, so far as I know, has addressed himself to the subject in a comprehensive spirit; and he fell by the way, even as he crossed the threshold. Henry Thomas Buckle died more than thirty years

But with the principle of Human Equality before the Law nothing worthy to claim even kinship can be found in the past. It is the creation of the last four centuries. More than that, the battle over it has only recently been fought out here in America; and, elsewhere, is not yet wholly fought out even in Europe. Caste and slavery die hard.

Taking then this drama of modern history,—this Emancipation from Superstition and Caste, with its two underlying principles of Religious Toleration and Equality before the Law,—what part has America played in it? So far as Equality before the Law is concerned,—personal, civil liberty,—the record of no community seems to me more creditable, more consistent, nor, indeed, more important than that of the community composing the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The idea was the offspring of the English Commonwealth. Its godfathers were Hampden and Milton and Cromwell. It found inarticulate expression in the death of King Charles. No portion of the world was, however, then ready to accept so startling a paradox. All existing habits, traditions, institutions,—social, political, religious,—recoiled from it. It seemed like an absurdity on its face, to assert that the peasant who turned the clod was, before the law, or anywhere else, the equal of the lord at whose castle's gate he lived, or of the priest who represented God. Such an idea no more found acceptance with the peasant than it did with the lord or the priest. Indeed, the first, no long time before, had been a serf,—an adjunct to the soil and inseparable from it. Though a protest against human inequality, the English Commonwealth was, accordingly, only a passing protest. Law, usage, tradition, were forces too powerful to be