

**GETTYSBURG ADDRESS
AND BUNKER
HILL ORATION**

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Gettysburg Address and Bunker Hill Oration by Abraham Lincoln & Daniel Webster

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ABRAHAM LINCOLN & DANIEL WEBSTER

**GETTYSBURG ADDRESS
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HILL ORATION**

Lincoln's Gettysburg Address

... AND ...

Webster's

Bunker Hill Oration

GETTYSBURG ADDRESS.

THIS address, brief as it is, is one of the purest gems in the whole realm of literature. It should be committed to memory by every pupil in our schools. The long and studied oration delivered by Edward Everett on the same occasion is one of the masterpieces of American rhetoric and oratory. He was our greatest scholar and most finished speaker, and yet these few utterances of the martyr President will be read by millions while the great oration remains dust covered on the shelves of the scholar's library. It is said that Mr. Everett told Mr. Lincoln he would gladly give his forty pages for Mr. Lincoln's twenty lines.

The relation of the battle of Gettysburg to the Civil War should be carefully studied. The field should be explained, the cemetery and monument described, and pupils should be encouraged to learn all possible from books and from their friends in the Grand Army of the Republic, about this, the most hotly contested, bloody, and decisive battle of the entire Civil War.

Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth upon this continent a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But in a larger sense we can not dedicate, we can not consecrate, we can not hallow this ground. The brave

men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here; but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us,—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion,—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain, that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth.

THE BUNKER HILL ORATION.

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE LAYING OF
THE CORNER STONE OF THE BUNKER
HILL MONUMENT AT CHARLESTOWN,
MASS., ON THE 17TH OF JUNE, 1825.

This uncounted multitude before me and around me proves the feeling which the occasion has excited. These thousands of human faces glowing with sympathy and joy, and from the impulses of a common gratitude turned reverently to heaven in this spacious temple of the firmament, proclaim that the day, the place, and the purpose of our assembling have made a deep impression on our hearts.

If, indeed, there be anything in local association fit to affect the mind of man, we need not strive to repress the emotions which agitate us here. We are among the sepulchers of our fathers. We are on ground distinguished by their valor, their constancy, and the shedding of their blood. We are here, not to fix an uncertain date in our annals, nor to draw into notice an obscure and unknown spot. If our humble purpose had never been conceived, if we ourselves had never been born, the 17th of June, 1775, would have been a day on which all subsequent history would have poured its light, and the eminence where we stand a point of attraction to the eyes of successive generations. But we are Americans.

We live in what may be called the early age of this great continent; and we know that our posterity, through all time, are here to enjoy and suffer the allotments of humanity. We see before us a probable train of great events; we know that our own fortunes have been happily cast; and it is natural, therefore, that we should be moved by the contemplation of occurrences which have guided our destiny before many of us were born, and settled the condition in which we should pass that portion of our existence which God allows to men on earth.

We do not read even of the discovery of this continent without feeling something of a personal interest in the event, without being reminded how much it has affected our own fortunes and our own existence. It would be still more unnatural for us, therefore, than for others, to contemplate with unaffected minds that interesting, I may say that most touching and pathetic, scene, when the great discoverer of America stood on the deck of his shattered bark, the shades of night falling on the sea, yet no man sleeping; tossed on the billows of an unknown ocean, yet the stronger billows of alternate hope and despair tossing his own troubled thoughts; extending forward his harassed frame, straining westward his anxious and eager eyes, till Heaven at last granted him a moment of rapture and ecstasy, in blessing his vision with the sight of the unknown world.

Nearer to our times, more closely connected with our fates, and therefore still more interesting to our feelings and affections, is the settlement of our own country by colonists from England. We cherish every memorial of these worthy ancestors; we celebrate their patience and

fortitude; we admire their daring enterprise; we teach our children to venerate their piety; and we are justly proud of being descended from men who have set the world an example of founding civil institutions on the great and united principles of human freedom and human knowledge. To us, their children, the story of their labors and sufferings can never be without interest. We shall not stand unmoved on the shore of Plymouth, while the sea continues to wash it; nor will our brethren in another early and ancient Colony forget the place of its first establishment, till their river shall cease to flow by it.* No vigor of youth, no maturity of manhood, will lead the nation to forget the spots where its infancy was cradled and defended.

But the great event in the history of the continent, which we are now met here to commemorate, that prodigy of modern times, at once the wonder and the blessing of the world, is the American Revolution. In a day of extraordinary prosperity and happiness, of high national honor, distinction, and power, we are brought together, in this place, by our love of country, by our admiration of exalted character, by our gratitude for signal services and patriotic devotion.

The Society whose organ I am was formed for the purpose of rearing some honorable and durable monu-

*An interesting account of the voyage of the early emigrants to the Maryland Colony, and of its settlement, is given in the official report of Father White, written probably within the first month after the landing at St. Mary's. The original Latin manuscript is still preserved among the archives of the Jesuits at Rome. The Ark and the Dove are remembered with scarcely less interest by the descendants of the sister colony than is the "Mayflower" in New England, which thirteen years earlier, at the same season of the year, bore thither the Pilgrim Fathers.

ment to the memory of the early friends of American Independence. They have thought that for this object no time could be more propitious than the present prosperous and peaceful period; that no place could claim preference over this memorable spot! and that no day could be more auspicious to the undertaking than the anniversary of the battle which was here fought. The foundation of that monument we have now laid. With solemnities suited to the occasion, with prayers to Almighty God for his blessing, and in the midst of this cloud of witnesses, we have begun the work. We trust it will be prosecuted, and that, springing from a broad foundation, rising high in massive solidity and unadorned grandeur, it may remain as long as Heaven permits the work of man to last, a fit emblem, both of the events in memory of which it is raised and of the gratitude of those who have reared it.

We know, indeed, that the record of illustrious actions is most safely deposited in the universal remembrance of mankind. We know that if we could cause this structure to ascend, not only till it reached the skies, but till it pierced them, its broad surfaces could still contain but part of that which, in an age of knowledge, hath already been spread over the earth, and which history charges itself with making known to all future times. We know that no inscription on entablatures less broad than the earth itself can carry information of the events we commemorate where it has not already gone; and that no structure, which shall not outlive the duration of letters and knowledge among men, can prolong the memorial. But our object is, by this edifice, to show our own deep