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Burges, Tristram, 1770-1853.

An Oration, Delivered in the Baptist Meeting-House.

Providence, [ R. I. ], Carter, [ 1801 ]. 22 pp.

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A N  
O R A T I O N,  
DELIVERED IN THE  
BAPTIST MEETING-HOUSE,

I N  
P R O V I D E N C E,

O N T H E

*Fourth of July, 1801,*

I N C O M M E M O R A T I O N O F

**American Independence.**

• —————  
BY TRISTAM BURGESS, Esq;  
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P R O V I D E N C E :  
PRINTED AND SOLD BY JOHN CARTER.

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THE Committee of Arrangements, in behalf of the Town, return thanks to Mr. BURGES, for the elegant and spirited ORATION delivered by him this day, and request a copy for the press.

WILLIAM ALLEN,  
THOMAS P. IVES,  
JAMES BURRILL, jun. } Committee.  
JOHN WHIPPLE,  
WILLIAM LARNED, }

*Providence, July 4, 1801.*

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GENTLEMEN,

THE People of Providence merit and always may command my warmest gratitude. With their request, made by you, I readily comply; and beg the honour of dedicating to them the following cursory remarks, which you are pleased so politely to dignify with the name of an Oration. It is the production of a few days, interrupted by ill health, and professional avocations. It has many imperfections, which a want of time will not permit me to correct. These I hope the People of Providence will forgive. If they read with the same generous candour which gave their attention to the speaker, it will more than satisfy,

Gentlemen,

Your and their most obliged  
and most humble servant,  
TRISTAM BURGES.

*Providence, July 4, 1801.*

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AN

O R A T I O N .



**T**WENTY-five years ago, the fathers of our country delivered to the world the Declaration of American Independence. That declaration consecrates the Fourth of July, holds out to us the charter of freedom, and bids us forever remember the day which first shone on its existence. The American people have obeyed the injunction, and always solemnized the birth-day of their sovereignty. Once more the annual sun of our political year has risen on the world; our national independence is still our own, and again we hail the morning hallowed to freedom. On this occasion, the hardy genius of our country does homage to the cause of man. To-day, Labour relaxes his sinewy limbs; Agriculture leans on her plough, and Commerce furls her sail. The eye of Omniscience, whose immeasurable ken looks across the regions of the universe, and distinctly surveys the widely-extended kingdoms and empires of the earth, can surely find nothing in all this world, to mortals more sublime, to Heaven more acceptable, than the united hallelujah of a great, an independent nation of free and happy men. This is found in our country. At this moment, the whole

nation, as one august assembly of six millions of people, is offering up to Heaven the incense of gratitude.

AMIDST these delightful emotions, the origin of them should not be forgotten. Let that national independence, which we solemnize, be the mighty theme of contemplation. To think coolly on this subject has not always been in our power. This anniversary has often revolved, when more, far more fervid feelings glowed in the bosom of our country. At this time, no strong and universal sentiment agitates the American mind. We have no war; we are threatened with no invasion; Labour in tranquility reaps the fruit of his own toil. This crowded concourse evinces a joyous occasion. Thousands of glad souls seem to look through the vivid countenances of this numerous assembly. The arms and military habiliments which glitter before our eyes, are worn to-day, more to ornament a national festival, than to display any fervid and hostile sensation.

IN what manner, then, shall we contemplate our independence? You have, often, been told the dreadful story of revolution, in all the glowing diction of patriotic eloquence. Would you listen to a repetition of the bloody narrative? Must we pass before our recollection the misery of our fathers, before we can rejoice in the prosperity of our own condition? Must we break up the consecrated bosom of the earth, harrow out the bones of our buried heroes, and bear them along in military procession, that the awful spectacle may inspire us with courage? True, our liberties were violated, our country was oppressed; but when we have taken vengeance on a foe, to reproach is pusillanimous. Still have we enough remaining monuments of those dreadful days. The traveller yet gazes at the once fortified hill, the "green tomb" of the warrior, and the scattered bones left whitening on the field of battle.

WILL a recollection of all the horrors of our

