

AT a Meeting of a number of Inhabitants of the Towns of Franklin, Medway, and Bellingham, at Adams' Hall in Franklin, July 5. 1802.

Voted, that *Mr. Hanan Metcalf, Dr. Nathaniel Miller, and Mr. Oliver Smith*, be a Committee to wait upon the Rev. NATHANAEL EMMONS, D. D. and thank him for his excellent and pertinent Discourse, delivered in Commemoration of our national Independence, and to request a Copy for the press.

Attest, ASA HARDING,
Clerk of the Meeting.

GENTLEMEN, I

I have no scruple in consenting to the publication of the Discourse, which has obtained your approbation; and I only regret, I was unable to place its leading sentiments in a clearer and stronger light.

I am, with much Respect,
Gentlemen,

your obedient Servant.

N. EMMONS.

Franklin, July 6. 1802.



A

DISCOURSE.

—XXXXXX—
EXODUS XII. 14.

This day shall be unto you for a Memorial.

NOTHING can be more correspondent with the joyful occasion upon which we are convened, than this passage of divine inspiration. It contains the express command of God to his ancient people, to commemorate, every year, the auspicious day of their national independence. From a single family, in the course of about four hundred years, they rose into a numerous and independent nation. They were of the seed of Abraham in the line of Isaac and Jacob. The darling son of this pious patriarch was carried into Egypt, where he was raised to superior power, and where he became the happy instrument of preserving his father's family, who rapidly increased to a numerous people. During the life of Joseph, his infant nation were extremely prosperous and happy; but, some time after

after his death, they found themselves in a very wretched condition. There arose a king in Egypt, who knew not Joseph, and who attempted to diminish the growing population and strength of the children of Israel. Among other arbitrary acts, he set over them certain officers, who treated them with intolerable rigor and severity; but the more they sighed, and groaned, and complained, the more they were oppressed by their unfeeling masters. At length, the God of Israel heard their groanings, and raised up a deliverer. Moses was born, and providentially preserved, educated, and prepared to execute the gracious design of Heaven. God vouchsafed to speak to him face to face, and give him authority to go to the king of Egypt, and demand deliverance for his chosen people. Though diffident and reluctant, he accepted the divine appointment, and undertook his important and arduous work. He repeatedly applied to Pharaoh, and repeatedly met with a repulse; but being clothed with divine authority and miraculous power, he brought such a series of sore and wasting judgments upon him and his subjects, that he finally gave his full consent, that the people of God should leave his kingdom, and return to the country from which they came. This was the joyful day of their Independence; and this day God appointed as a standing Memorial of that great and happy event.

The causes and circumstances, which concurred to bring about the independence of the Israelites, are so similar to the causes and circumstances, which concurred to bring about the American Revolution, that we may justly conclude, there is a peculiar propriety, in commemorating the Birth-Day of our national existence. Many instances might be adduced from scripture, to illustrate this conclusion. God sanctified the sabbath, for a memorial of the great work of creation. He appointed the bow in the clouds, for a memorial of his preserving Mercy to Noah and his family in the midst of a perishing world. He ordained, that the pot of manna and Aaron's rod which budded, should be kept as perpetual tokens of his special kindness and awful justice. He likewise commanded his people, whom he conducted through Jordan upon dry ground, to take stones from the bottom of the river, and raise a lasting monument of that miraculous interposition in their favor. Justly reasoning from such instances as these, Mordecai, with the express approbation of Esther the queen, appointed the days of Purim, to commemorate the great deliverance of the Jews from the hand of Haman. Each of these cases exactly applies to the case before us, and completely illustrates the *Propriety* of commemorating the Day, upon which we took the rank, and claimed the character of a free and independent Nation.

But

But what I further propose in the present discourse is, to point out some of the important purposes, which may be answered, by keeping up the remembrance of this great and interesting event.

First, it must have a tendency to give us a realizing sense of the overruling hand of God, in all that takes place in the moral, as well as, in the natural world. While we observe the common course of nature, which is no other than the common course of providence, in producing similar effects in a similar manner, from day to day and from year to year; we are extremely prone to lose a realizing sense of that invisible hand, which governs all natural causes and moral agents. But when God comes out of his place, and shakes kingdoms and nations, by sudden and unexpected revolutions, we are constrained to awake from our stupidity, and "to know that he is the LORD," who governs the world. The visible manifestation of his overruling hand in such uncommon and extraordinary events, strikes us with a strong conviction, that others more common and ordinary, are equally under his constant and controlling influence. Nothing is more easy and familiar to our minds, than to trace causes into all the variety and multiplicity of their effects. When we recollect and contemplate any great and unusual event, we naturally conclude, not only that the hand of God was in that, but in every other event,

vent, which appears to have been intimately or remotely connected with it. Who can contemplate and realize the hand of God in the work of creation, without realizing his hand in upholding and governing the world, from that day to this? Who can contemplate and realize the hand of God in the destruction of Pharaoh and the redemption of Israel, without realizing, that he governs the kingdoms of men, and gives them to whomsoever he will? Hence a standing memorial of that great event, was wisely calculated to give the people of God a realizing sense of his universal providence. Accordingly, he directed them, when they celebrated the day of their deliverance, to rehearse in the ears of their children, the evils they suffered and the scenes they saw in the land of Egypt; and to recount the great and distinguishing blessings, which flowed from that memorable interposition of providence in their favor. This could hardly fail of causing both them and their children, to acknowledge and realize the hand of God in all events.

The same important purpose may be answered, by keeping alive the remembrance of the eventful day of our national Independence. The hand of God was clearly displayed in preparing the way, in raising up the instruments, and supplying the means, for the American Revolution. Though no miracles were wrought in our favor, as in the case of Israel; yet

