

F

67

E93

copy 2



Class F67

Book .E 93

copy 2

AN

ADDRESS

DELIVERED

ON THE 28TH OF JUNE, 1830,

121

496

THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE

Arrival of Governor Winthrop

AT CHARLESTOWN.

Delibered and Published at the Request

OF THE

CHARLESTOWN LYCEUM.

BY EDWARD EVERETT.

CHARLESTOWN:

PUBLISHED BY WILLIAM W. WHEILDON.

BOSTON:

CARTER AND HENDEE.

1830.

copy 2

F67
E93
Copy 2

DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO WIT:

District Clerk's Office.

BE it remembered, that on the second day of July, A.D. 1830, and in the fiftyfourth year of the Independence of the United States of America, William W. Wheelton, of the said District, has deposited in this office, the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words following, to wit:—

“An Address delivered on the 28th of June, 1830, the anniversary of the arrival of Governor Winthrop at Charlestown. Delivered and Published at the request of the Charlestown Lyceum. By Edward Everett.”

In conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, entitled, “An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned,” and also to an Act, entitled, “An Act supplementary to an Act, entitled, ‘An Act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned;’ and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving and etching historical and other prints.”

JNO. W. DAVIS,

Clerk of the District of Massachusetts.

CHARLESTOWN :
From the Aurora Press—William W. Wheelton.

G. E. G. J. a. 28 15.

ADDRESS.

THIS day completes the second century, since **GOVERNOR WINTHROP** explored the banks of the **Mystic River**. From his arrival at **Charlestown**, accompanied by a large number of settlers, furnished with a supply of everything necessary for the foundation of the colony, and especially bringing with them the **Colonial Charter**, may, with great propriety, be dated the foundation of **Massachusetts**, and in it, that of **New England**. There are other interesting events, in our early history, which have, in like manner, been justly commemorated, for their connection with the same great era. The landing of the **Pilgrims** at **Plymouth**, has been regarded, from the first, as a period, from which we may with propriety, compute the settlement of **New England**; and has been celebrated, with every demonstration of pious and grateful respect. The completion of the second century, from the arrival of **GOVERNOR ENDECOTT** at **Salem**, was noticed two years since, by our fellow

citizens of that place, in a manner worthy of the interest and magnitude of the event ; and the anniversary of the commencement of the settlement of Boston, is reserved for a like celebration, in the autumn of the present year.

Were these celebrations a matter of mere ceremony, or of official observance, their multiplication would be idle and oppressive. But they are all consecrated to events of real interest.— They have a tendency to extend the knowledge of the early history of the country. They are just tributes to the memory of worthy men, to whom we are under everlasting obligations.— They furnish fit occasions for inculcating the great principles, which led to the settlement of our happy country ; and by connecting some interesting associations with the spots familiar to us, by daily visitation, they remind us that there is something worthy to be commemorated, in the soil which we inhabit ; and thus furnish food for an enlightened patriotism. The genius of our institutions has made this the chief means of perpetuating, by sensible memorials, the fame of excellent men and great achievements. Wisely discarding those establishments, which have connected with hereditary possessions in the soil and transmissible dignities in the State, the name and family of Discoverers and Conquerors, it has been with us left to the affection and patriotism, which prompt the observance of these occasions,

to preserve the worth of our forefathers from forgetfulness.

For these considerations, it was thought expedient, by the Members of the Charlestown Lyceum, that the arrival of Governor WINTHROP, on our shores, with the Charter of the Colony, should not pass unnoticed. When I was first requested to deliver an address on the occasion, it was my expectation, that it would be done with no greater publicity, than that, with which the lectures before this institution have been usually delivered. The event, however, has been considered as of sufficient importance to receive a more public notice ; and in this opinion of the Members of the Charlestown Lyceum, and our fellow citizens who unite with them, I have cheerfully acquiesced. It will not, however, be expected of me, wholly to abandon the form, which my address, in its origin, was intended to assume, although less adapted, than I could wish, to the character of this vast audience, before whom I have the honor to appear.

In performing the duty which devolves upon me, in consequence of this arrangement, I propose briefly to narrate the history of the event, which we celebrate, and then to dwell on some of the general topics, which belong to the day and the occasion.

When America was discovered, the great and interesting questions presented themselves, what

right had the European discoverers in the new found continent, and in what way were its settlement and colonization to proceed.

The first discovery was made, under the auspices of European Governments, which admitted the right of the Head of the Catholic Church, to dispose of all the kingdoms of the Earth; and of course of all newly discovered regions, which had not before been appropriated. This right of the Head of the Catholic Church was recognized by protestant princes, only so far, as it might be backed, by that of actual discovery;—and although the Kings of Spain and Portugal had received from the Pope a distributive grant of all the newly discovered countries on the Globe, the Sovereign of England claimed the right of making his own discoveries, and appropriating them, as he pleased, to the benefit of his own subjects and government. Under this claim, and in consequence of the discoveries of CABOT, our mother country invested herself with this great and ultimate right of disposing of the American Continent, from the gulf of Mexico, northwardly, till it reached the limits, covered by the like claim of actual discovery, on the part of other Governments.*

It is not my intention to enter into the discussion of the nature and extent of this right of dis-

*Opinion of the Supreme Court of the United States, in the case of Johnson & Gramham's Lessees, vs. McIntosh; 8th Wheaton.

covery. If we admit, that it was in the will of Providence, and for the interest of humanity, that America should be settled, by a civilized race of men, we admit, at the same time, a perfect right, in some way or other, to effect that settlement. And though it may be out of our power to remove all the difficulties, which attend the question,—although we cannot perhaps, on the received principles of natural law, theoretically reconcile the previous rights of the aboriginal population with the accruing rights of the discoverers and settlers, yet we must either allow that those rights are not, upon the whole, irreconcilable, or we must maintain that it was the will of Providence, and for the greatest good of mankind, that America should remain in the condition in which the discoverers found it.

No judicious person, at the present day, will maintain this; and no such opinion was entertained by the governments of Europe, nor by the enterprising, patriotic, and liberal men, on whom it devolved to deal practically with this great subject. How great it was,—it is true,—they did not feel; as we, with a like subject thrown practically into our hands, I mean the settlement of our own unsettled public domain, are equally insensible to its importance. Although there is a great lodgment of civilized men on this continent, which is rapidly extending itself, yet there is still a vast region wholly unsettled, and pre-

senting very nearly the same aspect to us, which the whole North American Continent, did to our forefathers, in Great Britain. But no man, I think, who analyzes either the popular sentiment of this community or the legislative policy of this government, will deny, that the duty to be performed, by the people of this generation, in settling these unsettled regions of our country, has scarce ever presented itself in its magnitude, grandeur, and solemnity, to the minds either of People or of Rulers. It was justly remarked, more than once this winter, in the great debate in the Senate of the United States, nominally on the subject of the Public Domain, that this subject was the only one scarcely glanced at, in the discussion; and that subject, I may say without fear of contradiction, is as important to the people of the United States and to the cause of liberty throughout the world, as the question of colonizing America, which presented itself to the Nations and Governments of Europe, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

These questions are never comprehended, till it is too late. Experience alone unfolds their magnitude. We may strain our minds to grasp them, but they are beyond our power. There is no political *calculus*, which can deal with the vast elements of a Nation's growth. Providence, or destiny, or the order of things, in which, while we think ourselves the agents, we

are humble instruments,—aided by some high impulses from the minds and hearts of wise and great men, catching a prophetic glimpse of the future fortunes of our race,—these decide the progress of nations; and educe consequences, the most stupendous, from causes seemingly least proportionate to the effect.

But, though we do not find any traces, in the public sentiment or in the legislation of Europe, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, of an accurate foresight of the great work, which that age was called upon to perform, yet there was unquestionably a distinct perception, that the enclosure of the civilized families of the earth had been suddenly enlarged. Spain and Portugal poured themselves forth impetuously into the new found region; and Great Britain, though with something of a constitutional tardiness, followed the example.

The first British patents for the settlement of the discoveries on the North American Continent were those of Sir HUMPHREY GILBERT and Sir WALTER RALEIGH, in the latter quarter of the sixteenth century. These and some similar grants were vacated, from inability to fulfil their conditions; or from other causes, failed to take permanent effect. When Queen Elizabeth died in 1603, not a European family was known to exist on the Continent of America north of the gulf of Mexico. On the 10th of

April, 1606, King James granted a patent, dividing that portion of North America, which lies between the thirty-fourth and forty-fifth degrees of latitude, into two nearly equal districts. The southern, called the first colony, he granted to the London Company. The northern, called the second colony, he granted to the Plymouth Company, and allotted it as a place of settlement to several knights, gentlemen, and merchants, of Bristol, Plymouth, and other parts of the west of England. This patent conveyed a grant of the property of the land along the coast for fifty miles, on each side from the place of their first habitation, and extending one hundred miles into the interior.*

Under these charters, various attempts at colonization and settlement were made, and at first, with very doubtful success, by the Virginia Company. These of course, it is no part of our present business to pursue. In 1614, the adventurous Captain SMITH, famous in his connections with the settlement of Virginia, was sent out by four individuals in England, who were disposed to engage in an enterprize on these distant shores, to explore the coast of North Virginia. He arrived on the coast of Maine at the end of April 1614, and in the course of the following summer, he visited the North Eastern

*For the authorities, see Dr Holmes' standard work, *The Annals of America*, under the respective years.

shores of America, from the Penobscot River to Cape Cod; entered and examined the rivers, surveyed the country, and carried on a trade with the natives.* Having, on his return to England, constructed from his surveys a map of the country, it was submitted to Prince Charles, who gave the name of New England to the region explored by SMITH, and bestowed his own name on what was then supposed to be its principal river. The season, in which Captain SMITH visited the country, is that, in which it appears in its greatest beauty. His account of it was such as to excite the attention, and kindle the imagination of men in England, and the profitable returns of his voyage, united with these impressions to strengthen the disposition, which was felt to colonize the newly explored region. Several attempts were accordingly made to carry this design into effect, for the benefit and under the auspices of the Plymouth company, but all without success. The great enterprise was reserved to be accomplished by a very different instrumentality.

In 1617, the church of Mr ROBINSON at Leyden had come to the resolution of exiling themselves to the American Wilderness. As the principal attempts at settlement had been made in the Southern colony or Virginia, their thoughts

*The account of this voyage is in Smith's History of Virginia, New England, and the Somer Isles. Vol. II p. 173. Richmond edition.

were turned to that quarter, and they sent two of their number to London, to negotiate with the Virginia company on the terms of their settlement; and to ascertain whether liberty of conscience would be granted them, in the new country. The Virginia company was disposed to grant them a patent, with as ample privileges as it was in their power to convey. The King, however, could not be induced to patronize the design, and promised only a connivance in it, so long as they demeaned themselves peaceably.— In 1619, the arrangement was finally made with the Virginia company; and in the following year, the ever memorable emigration to Plymouth took place. In consequence of the treacherous and secret interference of the Dutch, who had their own designs upon that part of the coast which had been explored by HUDSON, the Captain of the vessel, which transported the first company to America, conveyed them to a place, without the limits of the patent of the Virginia company; and where of course the Pilgrims were set down beyond the protection of any grant and the pale of any law. In three or four years a patent was obtained of the Plymouth company, and on this sole basis the first New England settlement rested, till its incorporation with the colony of Massachusetts Bay.*

*Robertson's History of America, Book X. Works Vol. XI p. 263.

In the year 1620, the old patent of the Plymouth company was revoked, and a new one was granted to some of the highest nobility and gentry of England and their associates, constituting them and their successors, "the council established at Plymouth, in the County of Devon, for the planting, ruling, ordering and governing of New England in America." By this patent, that part of America, which lies between the fortieth and forty-eighth degrees of North latitude in breadth, and in length by all the breadth aforesaid, throughout the main, from sea to sea, was given to them, in absolute property. Civil and jurisdictional powers like those which had been granted by the Virginia patent, were conferred on the council established by this charter; on which as on a basis, rested all the subsequent patents and grants of this portion of the country. By this grant, a considerable part of the British colonies in North America; the whole of the New England States, and of New York; about half of Pennsylvania; two thirds of New Jersey and Ohio; a half of Indiana and Illinois, the whole of Michigan, Huron, and the territory of the United States westward of them, and on both sides of the Rocky mountains, and from a point considerably within the Mexican dominions on the Pacific Ocean, nearly up to Nootka Sound were liberally granted by King James, "to the council established at Plymouth, in the County of Devon."

From the period of the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth, the intolerance of the established church in England became daily more oppressive. The non-conforming ministers were silenced, ejected, imprisoned, and exiled; and numerous examples of the extremest rigor of the law, were made both of them and the laity.—The entire extent, to which these severities were carried, may be estimated, from their amount in a single instance. On the impeachment of Bishop Wren, it was charged that during two years and a half, for which he administered the diocese of Norwich, fifty ministers were deprived of their places, for not complying with the prescribed ceremonies, and three thousand of the laity compelled to leave the kingdom.*

These increasing severities, and the necessity, under which conscientious men were laid, of abandoning their principles or their homes, turned the thoughts of many persons of consideration and property toward a permanent asylum in New England. The first steps were restrained and gradual; but a few years witnessed the fulfilment of the design. In 1624, Mr WHITE of Dorchester, in England, a celebrated non-conforming minister, induced a number of merchants and other gentlemen to attempt another settlement, as a refuge for those whose religious

*Neal, Vol. I. p. 117, 121; Grahame's United States, Vol. I. p. 239.

principles exposed them to oppression at home; and by their contributions, under a license obtained from the Plymouth settlers, an establishment was commenced at Cape Ann. The care of this establishment was the following year committed by the proprietors to Mr ROGER CONANT, a person of great worth, who had, however, retired from the colony at Plymouth. After a short residence at Cape Ann, ROGER CONANT removed a little further to the Westward, and fixed upon a place called by the Indians Naumkeag, as a more advantageous place of settlement, and as a spot well adapted for the reception of those, who were disposed to imitate the example of their brethren, and seek a refuge from tyranny in the Western wilderness. The accounts of this place circulated in England, among those who were maturing this design; and Mr CONANT, though deserted by almost all his brethren, was induced by Mr WHITE to remain at Salem, by the promise of procuring a patent and a reinforcement of settlers. Accordingly on the 19th of March 1628, an agreement was concluded between the council of Plymouth, and certain gentlemen associated in the neighborhood of Dorchester in England, under the auspices of Mr WHITE, of that place; and a patent was conveyed to these associates of all the tract of country, laying between three miles north of the Merrimack and three miles south of Charles

Rivers, and extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. These associates were Sir HENRY ROSWELL, Sir JOHN YOUNG, THOMAS SOUTHCOAT, JOHN HUMPHREY, JOHN ENDECOTT and SIMON WHETCOMB; and the patent ran to them, their heirs and associates.*

Mr WHITE, in pursuit of his project for establishing a colony for the non-conformists, was in communication with persons of that description, in different parts of England, and, through his agency, the six patentees, whose names I have just mentioned, were brought into connection with several religious persons in London and the neighboring country, who at first associated with them, and afterwards purchased out the right of the three first named of the six patentees.† Among these new associates were JOHN WINTHROP, ISAAC JOHNSON, and Sir RICHARD SALTONSTALL.

Thus reinforced, the strength of the company was vigorously bent upon the establishment of the colony in New England. They organized themselves, by choosing MATTHEW CRADOCK, Governor of the colony, and THOMAS GOFF, Deputy Governor, and eighteen assistants. By this company, and in the course of the same summer of 1628, JOHN ENDECOTT was sent

*Hutchinson's History of Massachusetts Bay, Vol. I. p. 8.

†See also the detail in Governor Dudley's most interesting letter, to the Countess of Lincoln, of 12th March 1630, written, as he says, "rudely, having yet no table, nor other room to write in, than by the fire side, on my knee, in this sharp Winter."—Historical Collections, First Series. Vol. VIII. p. 36.

over, with a considerable number of planters and servants, to “establish a plantation at Salem, to make way for settling the colony, and be their agent to order all affairs, till the patentees themselves should come.” ENDECOTT sailed from Weymouth on the 20th of June, and his first letter to the company, in London, bears date 13th September, 1628.*

In the same year of 1628, the foundation of the town of Charlestown was laid, under the patronage of Governor ENDECOTT, but not, I apprehend, by any of the members of his party. As this is a matter of some local importance, I shall dwell for a moment upon it. It is well known that RALPH, WILLIAM, and RICHARD SPRAGUE, in the course of the summer of 1628, traversed the country, between Salem and Charles River, and made a settlement at Charlestown; and it is commonly supposed that, as they came from Salem, with Governor ENDECOTT’S consent, they were of the company which he brought over.†

On looking, however, into our original town records, in the hand writing of INCREASE NOWELL, I find the following remark. After relating the arrival of ENDECOTT at Salem, the Record goes on to say:—“Under whose wing, there

*Prince’s Chronology. p. 249.

†“The Spragues, (who went thither [to Charlestown,] from Endecott’s company at Salem.)” Winthrop’s Journal, Savage’s edition, Vol. I. p. 63. *Note.* And so other writers.

were a few also that settle and plant up and down, scattering in several places of the Bay ; where though they meet with the dangers, difficulties, and wants, attending new plantations in a solitary wilderness, so far remote from their native country, yet were they not long without company, for in the year of our Lord one thousand six hundred and twenty-eight, came over from England several people at their own charges and arrived at Salem. After which, people came over yearly in great numbers, in — years many hundreds arrived, and settled not only in the Massachusetts Bay, but did suddenly spread themselves into other colonies also.

“Among those, who arrived at Salem, *at their own charge*, were RALPH SPRAGUE, with his brethren RICHARD and WILLIAM, who, with three or four more, by joint consent and approbation of Mr JOHN ENDECOTT, Governor, did the same summer of Anno 1628, undertake a journey from Salem and travelled the woods, about twelve miles, to the Westward, and lighted of a place, situate and lying on the North Bank of Charles River, full of Indians, called Aberginians. Their old chief Sachem being dead, his eldest son, by the English called John Sagamore, was their chief ; a man naturally of gentle and good disposition, by whose free consent, they settled about the hill of the same place, by the natives called Mishawum ; where

they found but one English pallisadoed and thatched house, wherein lived **THOMAS WALFORD**, a smith, situate on the south end of the westernmost hill of the east field, a little way from Charles River side ; and upon surveying, they found it was a neck of land generally full of stately timber, as was the main, and the land lying on the east side of the river called **Mistick** river, (from the farm **Mr CRADOCK**'s servants had planted, called **Mistick**, which this river led up into,) indeed, generally all the country round about was an uncouth wilderness, full of timber.''

This passage seems to establish the fact that the three **SPRAGUES**, the founders of the settlement in this place, were not members of **Governor ENDECOTT**'s company, but independent adventurers, who came over to Salem at their own cost. They were persons of character, substance, and enterprize: excellent citizens, generous public benefactors ; and the heads of a very large and respectable family of descendants.

The patent from the council of **Plymouth** gave to the associates as good a right to the soil, as the council possessed, but no powers of government. For this object, the royal charter was necessary. An humble petition for such a charter was presented to the **King** in council, and on the 4th of **March 1629**, the charter passed the seals, confirming the patent of the council of **Plymouth**, and creating the **Governor** and com-

pany of the Massachusetts Bay, in New England, a body politic and corporate, in deed, fact, and name. By this charter, the company were empowered to elect forever out of the freemen of said company a Governor, deputy Governor and eighteen assistants, annually on the 4th Wednesday of Easter term, and to make laws not repugnant to the laws of England.*

At a meeting, or court, as it was called, of this company, held at London on the 30th of April following, a form of government was adopted for the colony. By this form of government the direction of affairs was committed to thirteen individuals, to be resident in the colony, one of whom shall be Governor. Mr ENDECOTT was by the same instrument appointed Governor, and six individuals were named councillors. These seven persons were authorized to choose three more, and the remaining two, requisite to make up the number of twelve, were to be designated by the *old planters*, as they were called, or persons who had settled in New England previous to the Massachusetts patent:— and whose rights, though not provided for by that instrument, were treated with tenderness by the patentees. These magistrates were to continue in office one year. The mode in which their successors were to be chosen is not speci-

* See the Charter in Hazard's State Papers, Vol. I. pp. 239—255.

fied by this form of government, but was probably intended to be the same, as that observed in the first election.*

In the course of this summer of 1629, six ships in the service of the company sailed for the infant colony, carrying with them an ample supply of provisions and three hundred settlers. Mr FRANCIS HIGGINSON, who was named first on the list of the councillors chosen by the company, and the other ministers sent out for the spiritual instruction of the colony, embarked for Naumkeag or Salem, in this fleet.

The position at Salem, not being thought adapted to become the capital, Mr THOMAS GRAVES, an engineer in the service of the company, with about one hundred of the company's servants under his care, removed to this place in the course of the summer of 1629, where the SPRAGUES and their companions, had established themselves the year before, and at this time, from the name of the river on which it stands, they called the place, CHARLESTOWN.†

Thus far, the proceedings of the company were conducted, on the footing of a trading corporation, organized in England, for the purpose of carrying on a commercial establishment, in a foreign and dependent region. Whatever higher

* Hazard, Vol. I. p. 263. From Massachusetts Records, A. Folio 9.

† This event, and that of the arrival of Gov. Winthrop, are by a very singular anachronism, dated, the one in 1625, and the other in 1629, in our Charlestown Records. An attempt will be made on another occasion to explain this error.

motive had been proposed to themselves, by the active promoters of the colony, the royal government of Great Britain, in granting the charter of the company, had probably no design to lay the foundation of a new Commonwealth, established on principles at war with those of the mother country. But larger designs were entertained on the part of some of the high minded men, who engaged in the undertaking. The civil and ecclesiastical oppression of the times had now reached that point of intolerable severity, to which the evils of humanity are sometimes permitted to extend, when Providence designs to apply to them a great and strange remedy. It was at this time, to all appearance, the reluctant but deliberate conviction of the thinking part of the community,—of that great class in society which constitutes the strength of England as of America,—that Old England had ceased to be a land for men of moderate private fortunes to live in. Society was tending rapidly to that disastrous division of master and dependent, which is fatal to all classes of its members. The court was profligate, corrupt and arbitrary, beyond example,—and it remained to be seen, whether the Constitution of the Government contained any check on its power and caprice. In the *considerations for the Plantation of New England*, drawn up a year or two before, by those, who took the lead in

founding the colony of Massachusetts Bay, it was forcibly stated “that England grew weary of her inhabitants ; insomuch that man, which is the most precious of all creatures, was there more vile and base than the earth he trod on ; and children and families (if unwealthy) were accounted a burdensome incumbrance instead of the greatest blessing.”*

From such a state of things, and the assurance of a perfect remedy in New England, for some of the evils, which they suffered, a considerable number of persons of great respectability, of good fortune, and of consideration in society, came to the resolution of leaving their native land, and laying the foundation of a better social system on these remote and uninhabited shores. As a preliminary to this, however, they required a total change of the footing on which the attempts at colonization had hitherto proceeded. It fell far short of their purpose to banish themselves to the new world, as the dependent servants of a corporation in London ; and they required, as a previous condition, that the charter of the colony and the seat of its government, should be transferred from London to America. This was the turning point in the destiny of New England. Doubting the legality of such a step, they took the advice of counsel learned in

* Mather's Magnalia, p. 17.

the law, and from them received the opinion, that the proposed transfer of the charter was legal. Against this opinion, there is, at the present day, a pretty general consent, of the writers on America, both in England and the United States; and it may therefore be deemed presumptuous in me to express an opposite judgment.* But, though the removal of the charter was not probably contemplated, I find on reading it no condition prescribed, that the meetings of the corporation or the place of deposit of the charter itself, should be in London, or any other particular place. The very design, for which the charter was granted to the company, implied, of course, the possibility that a part of the freemen that compose it, should reside in New England, and I perceive nothing in the instrument, forbidding them all to reside in that part of the King's dominions.

Those, whose professional advice had been taken on the subject of removing the charter, having decided in favor of the legality of that measure, its expediency was submitted, at a court of the company, held at London, on the 28th July 1629; and on the 29th of August, after hearing the reports of two committees, raised to consider the arguments for and against the removal,† it was by the generality of the com-

* Grahame, in his History of the United States, expresses this opinion very strongly. Vol. I. p. 255.

† Prince's Chronology. p. 263.

pany voted, that the patent and government of the company, be transferred to New England. At a subsequent meeting held October 20th, “the court, having received extraordinary great commendation of Mr JOHN WINTHROP, both for his integrity and sufficiency, as being one very well fitted for the place, with a full consent, choose him Governor for the ensuing year, to begin this day.”—On the same day, the Deputy Governor and assistants were chosen, of persons at that time purposing to emigrate, some of whom, however, never executed this design.

JOHN WINTHROP was a gentleman of good fortune, and was born at Groton, in the County of Suffolk, on the 12th of January 1587,* and was educated by his father, who was himself eminent for skill in the law, to that profession. JOHN WINTHROP was so early distinguished for his gravity, intelligence, and learning, that he was introduced into the magistracy of his county at the age of eighteen, and acquitted himself with great credit, in the discharge of its duties.†

His family had, for two generations at least, distinguished itself for its attachment to the re-

*Mather says June. I am inclined to think that this, with numerous other errors, which have exposed Mather to severe reprehension, were misprints arising from the circumstance, that his work was printed in London, and consequently not corrected by him.

†Belknap's American Biography, Art. Winthrop, Vol. II. p. 337.

formed religion, and JOHN WINTHROP was of that class of the English church, who thought that the work had not all been accomplished, in throwing off their allegiance to Rome. I believe we have no account of the circumstances, by which he was first led to take an interest, in the settlement of New England, nor does his name occur in connection with the early history of the colony, till we find it mentioned among those, who, in 1628, united themselves with the Dorchester adventurers. Having been, in October 1629, elected Governor of the new State, for such it is henceforward to be regarded, he prepared himself to enter on this great enterprize, by disposing of his patrimony in England, which was valued at a rent of six or seven hundred pounds sterling per annum. The feelings with which he addressed himself to the noble work may be partly conceived from the nature of the enterprize and the character of the man, and they are more fully set forth, in his most admirable letters to his wife and son, with which the world has lately been favored.*

On the 22d of March 1629, we find the Governor with two of his sons, on board a vessel at the Isle of Wight, bound for America, with DUDLEY, the Deputy Governor, and several of the assistants, and with a large number

*In the Appendix to Mr Savage's edition of his journal.

of emigrants, embarked in a fleet which, with the vessels that preceded and followed them, the same season, amounted in the whole to seventeen sail, all of which reached New England.

From the period, at which Governor WINTHROP set sail for New England, till a short time before his death, he kept a journal of his life from day to day,—which has fortunately been preserved to us, partly in the original manuscript, of which a portion was brought to light, and for the first time published, a few years ago.* The voyage of Governor WINTHROP was unattended by any considerable incident, and on the 12th June, after a passage of about six weeks, the vessel, in which he sailed, came to anchor off Salem. On landing, they found the colony there, in a disheartening condition, eighty of their number having died the preceding winter, and the survivors looking for support to the supplies expected by the Governor, which unfortunately did not arrive, in the vessel which brought him.

The intention had been already taken not to establish the seat of Government at Salem.—After lying a few days at anchor off that place, Governor WINTHROP undertook to explore the Massachusetts Bay, “to find a place for sitting down.” On the 17th June, old style, he proceed-

* By Hon. James Savage, with learned annotations on the whole work, now for the first time published entire, in two volumes.

ed up the Mistick River, as far as the spot, which he occupied as a country residence during his life, and which has preserved to the present day the name of the Ten Hills, given to it by him.

Our records give but a melancholy account of the condition of things, which the colonists were called to encounter in their establishment at this place. We there read, that

“The Governor and several of the assistants dwelt in the *great house*, which was last year built, in this town, by Mr GRAVES, and the rest of their servants. The multitude set up cottages, booths, and tents about the Town-hill. They had long passage. Some of the ships were seventeen, some eighteen weeks a coming. Many people arrived sick of the scurvy, which also increased much after their arrival, for want of houses, and by reason of wet lodgings, in their cottages, &c. Other distempers also prevailed, and although people were generally very loving and pitiful, yet the sickness did so prevail, that the *whole* were not able to tend the *sick* as they should be tended; upon which many perished and died, and were buried about the Town-hill;—by which means, the provisions were exceedingly wasted, and no supplies could now be expected by planting: besides, there was miserable damage and spoil of provisions by sea, and divers came not so well provided as they would, upon a report whilst they were in England, that now there was enough in New England.”

It was the intention of the Governor and the chief part of those, who accompanied him, to establish themselves permanently in this place, and to this end the Governor made preparation for building his house here. But, as our records proceed, “the weather being hot, many sick, and others faint, after their long voyage, people grew discontented, for want of water, who generally notioned no water good for a town, but running springs; and though this neck do abound in good water, yet, for want of experience and industry, none could then be found to suit the humor of that time, but a brackish spring in the sands, by the water side, on the West side of the Northwest field, which could not supply half the necessities of the multitude, at which time the death of so many was concluded to be much the more occasioned, by this want of good water.”

In consequence of this difficulty, numbers of those, who had purposed to settle themselves at Charlestown, sought an establishment at other places, as Watertown and Dorchester, and still more removed to the other side of the river and laid the foundation of Boston.

“In the mean time,” continue our records, “Mr BLACKSTONE dwelling on the other side of Charles River, alone, at a place by the Indians called *Shawmut*, where he only had a cottage, at or not far off the place called Black-

stone's point, he came and acquainted the Governor of an excellent spring there, withal inviting him and soliciting him thither, whereupon after the death of Mr JOHNSON and divers others, the Governor, with Mr WILSON, and the greatest part of the church, removed thither."

Such were the inconveniences and distresses of the first settlement, which bore so heavily on the health and spirits of the colonists, that on the return of the vessels, which brought them out, more than a hundred went back to England.

But the necessary limits of this address will not permit me to pursue the narrative, and I can only ask your attention to a few of those reflections, which are suggested by the occasion.

What our country is, which has sprung from these beginnings, we all see and know:—its numbers, bordering upon twelve millions, if they do not exceed it; its great abundance in all that composes the wealth and the strength of nations; its rich possession of the means of private happiness; its progress in the useful and refined arts of life; its unequalled enjoyment of political privileges; its noble provision of literary, social, charitable, and religious establishments,—constituting altogether a condition of prosperity, which, I think, has never been equalled on earth. What our country was, on the day we commemorate, it is difficult to bring distinctly

home to our minds. There was a feeble colony in Virginia ; a very small Dutch settlement in New York ; a population of about three hundred at Plymouth ; about as many more English inhabitants, divided between Salem and Charlestown ; a few settlers scattered up and down the coast ; and all the rest a vast wilderness, the covert of wild beasts and savages.

In this condition of things, the charter of the colony was brought over, and the foundations were laid of a new State. In the motives, which led to this enterprize, there were unquestionably two principles united. The first projects of settling on the coast of New England had their origin in commercial adventure ; and without the direction, given by this spirit, to the minds of men, and the information brought home by fishing and trading vessels, the attempt would probably never have been made, to establish a colony. It deserves to be remarked, therefore, in an age like the present, when it is too much the practice to measure the value of all public enterprizes, by the returns in money, which they bring back to their projectors, that probably a more unprofitable speculation in a financial light, than that of the Council of Plymouth, was never undertaken. In a few years, they gladly surrendered their patent to the crown, and it is doubtful whether, while they held it, they divided a farthing's profit. Yet, under their patent,

and by their grant, was undertaken and accomplished perhaps the greatest work on record, in the annals of humanity.

Mixed with this motive of commercial speculation, (itself liberal and praiseworthy), was another, the spring of all that is truly great in human affairs, the conservative and redeeming principle of our natures, I mean the *self-denying enthusiasm* of our forefathers, sacrificing present ease for a great end. I do not mean to say, that even they had an accurate foresight of the work, in which they were engaged. What an empire was to rise on their humble foundations, imagination never revealed to them, nor could they, nor did they, conceive it. They contemplated an obscure and humble colony, safe beneath the toleration of the crown, where they could enjoy, what they prized above all earthly things, the liberty of conscience, in the worship of God. Stern as they are portrayed to us, they entertained neither the bitterness of an indignant separation from home, nor the pride of an anticipated and triumphant enlargement here. Their enthusiasm was rather that of fortitude and endurance; passive and melancholy. Driven though they were from their homes, by the oppression of the established church, they parted from her as a dutiful child from a severe but venerated parent. "We esteem it our honor," say they, in their inimitable letter from on board the *Arbella*, "to call

the church of England, from which we rise, our dear mother; and we cannot part from our native country, where she specially resideth, without much sadness of heart and many tears in our eyes, ever acknowledging that such hope and part as we have obtained in the common Salvation, we have received in her bosom and sucked it from her breasts." And, having, in this same pathetic appeal, invoked the prayers of their brethren in England, for their welfare, they add, "What goodness you shall extend to us, in this or any other christian kindness, we, your brethren, shall labor to repay, in what duty we are or shall be able to perform; promising, so far as God shall enable us, to give him no rest on your behalf, wishing our heads and hearts may be fountains of tears for your everlasting welfare, when we shall be in our poor cottages in the wilderness, overshadowed with the spirit of supplication, through the manifold necessities and tribulations, which may not altogether unexpectedly, nor, we hope, unprofitably befall us."*

In the spirit, that dictated these expressions, the disinterested enthusiasm of men,—giving up home, and friends, and their native land, for a conscientious principle,—we behold not merely the cause of the success of their enterprize, but

*Hutchinson, Vol. I. Appendix, No. 1.

the secret source of every great and generous work, especially in the founding of social institutions, that was ever performed. One trading company after another had failed; charters had been given, enlarged, and vacated; well appointed fleets had been scattered or returned without success, and rich adventures had ended in ruin; when a few aggrieved gentlemen, turning their backs on plenty, at home, and setting their faces towards want and danger, in the wilderness, took up and accomplished the work.

The esteem, in which we of the present day hold their characters, and the sympathy we feel in their trials, are, perhaps, qualified, by finding, that this enthusiasm, which inspired them, was almost wholly expended on the concerns of the church, and was associated in that respect, with opinions and feelings,—as we may think,—not the most enlarged and liberal. This prejudice, however, for such I regard it, ought not to be permitted to establish itself, in the minds of any generation of the descendants of the fathers of New England. The spirit that actuated them was the great principle of disinterested enthusiasm, the purest and best that can warm the heart and govern the conduct of man. It took a direction toward the doctrines and forms of the church, partly, of course, because religion is a matter, on which tender and ardent minds feel, with the greatest sensibility; but mainly because

they were, in that respect, oppressed and aggrieved. It was precisely the same spirit, which animated our fathers in the revolution, assuming then the form of the passion for civil liberty, and struggling against political oppression, because this was the evil which *they* suffered: And it is the same principle, which, in every age, wars against tyranny, sympathizes with the oppressed, kindles at the report of generous actions, and, rising above selfish calculation and sensual indulgence, learns “to scorn delights and live laborious days” and is ready, when honor and duty call, to sacrifice property, and ease, and life.

There is another thing, that must be borne in mind, when we sit in judgment on the character of our fathers. The *opinions* which men entertain, especially on great social institutions, and the duties which grow out of them, depend very much on the degree of intelligence prevailing in the world. Great men go beyond their age, it is true; but there are limits to this power of anticipation. They go beyond it in some things, but not in all, and not often in any, to the utmost point of improvement. Lord BACON laid down the principles of a new philosophy, but did not admit the Copernican system. Men who have been connected with the establishment of great institutions, ought to be judged, by the general result of their work. We judge of St PETER’S by the grandeur of the elevation, and the majesty

of the dome, not by the flaws in the stone, of which the walls are built. The fathers of New England, a company of private gentlemen, of moderate fortunes, bred up under an established church, and an arbitrary and hereditary civil government, came over the Atlantic two hundred years ago. They were imperfect, they had faults, they committed errors. But they laid the foundations of the state of things, which we enjoy;—of political and religious freedom; of public and private prosperity; of a great, thriving, well-organized republic. What more could they have done? What more could any men do? Above all, what lesson should we have given them, had we been in existence, and called to advise on the subject? Most unquestionably we should have discouraged the enterprize altogether. Our political economists would have said, abandon this mad scheme of organizing your own church and state, when you can have all the benefit of the venerable establishments of the mother country, the fruit of the wisdom of ages, at a vastly less cost. The capitalists would have said, do not be so insane, as to throw away your broad acres and solid guineas, in so wild a speculation. The man of common sense, that dreadful foe of great enterprizes, would have discredited the whole project. Go to any individual of the present day, situated as Governor WINTHROP was, at his family mansion, at Groton,

in England, in the bosom of a happy home, surrounded by an affectionate, prosperous family, in the enjoyment of an ample fortune, and tell him, inasmuch as the Government has ordained that the priest should perform a part of the sacred service in a white surplice, and make the sign of the cross in baptism, that therefore he had better convert his estate into money, and leave his home and family and go and settle a colony, on one of the islands of the Pacific Ocean, or establish himself at the mouth of Columbia River, where he would have liberty of conscience. I think he would recommend to his *adviser*, to go and establish *himself*, at a certain mansion, which benevolence has provided, a little to the north of Lechmere's Point.

I do not say the cases are wholly parallel: But such would be the view now taken, on the principles which govern men in our state of society, of such a course as that which was pursued by Governor WINTHROP and his associates.

I deduce from this, not that they were high-minded, and we, base and degenerate; I will not so compliment the fathers at the expense of the sons. On the contrary, let the crisis arrive; let a state of things present itself, (hardly conceivable, to be sure, but within the range of possibility), when our beloved New England no longer afforded us the quiet possession of our rights, I believe we should then show our-

selves the worthy descendants of the pilgrims; and if the earth contained a region, however remote, a shore, however barbarous, where we could enjoy the liberty denied us at home, that we should say, "where liberty is, there is my country," and go and seek it. But let us not meantime, nourished as we are out of the abundance which they, needy and suffering themselves, transmitted to us, deride their bigotry, which turned trifles into consequence, or wonder at their zeal, which made great sacrifices for small inducements. It is ungrateful.

Nor let us suppose, that it would be too safe to institute a comparison, between our fathers and ourselves, even on those points, with regard to which, we have both been called to act. It has so happened, that the government of the United States has, in the course of the last year, been obliged to consider and act on a subject, which was one of the first and most anxious, that presented itself to the early settlers of New England, I mean our relations with the Indian tribes. In alluding to this subject, I freely admit that, in the infancy of the colonies, when the Indians were strong and the colonists weak,—when the savage, roaming the woods, with the tomahawk and scalping knife, was a foe to the New England settlements, alike dangerous and terrible,—that some actions were committed in

the settlements, in moments of excitement, which we cannot too deeply condemn, nor too sadly deplore. In allusion to these actions, and in vindicating the course, which during the past year, has been pursued toward the tribes of civilized Indians, resident within the United States, it has been argued, that they have not been treated with greater severity, by the Government of the United States, or of any of the separate States, than they were treated by the fathers of New England. But it would seem not enough for an age, which is so liberal of its censures of the puritans, to show itself *only not more* oppressive than they. Has civilization made no progress, in two hundred years? Will any statesman maintain, that the relation of our Union, to the feeble and dependent tribes, within its limits, is the same, as that of the infant colonies, toward the barbarous nations, which surrounded them? It was the opinion of that age, that the royal patents gave a perfect right to the soil. We have *hitherto* professed to believe, that nothing can give a perfect right, to the soil occupied by the Indian tribes, but the free consent of these tribes, expressed by public compact, to alienate their right, whatever it be. They believed, that heathen nations, as such, might be rightfully dispossessed, by christian men. We have professed to believe, that this would be a very equivocal

way of showing our christianity. And yet, notwithstanding these opinions, I do not recollect that, in a single instance, our fathers claimed a right to eject the native population. For a long time, they were the weaker party. Among the the first acts of the Plymouth Colony, was an amicable treaty with the nearest and most powerful Indian Chieftain, who lived and died their friend. The colonists of Massachusetts, in a letter of instructions,* from the company, of 28th May 1629, were directed to make a reasonable composition with the Indians, who claimed lands within their patent. The worthy founders of Charlestown, an enterprizing handful of men, settled down here, with the free consent of the powerful tribe in their neighborhood, whose chief remained the friend of the English to the last.— In a word, the opinions of our forefathers, on this interesting subject, are expressed, by Mr PINCHON, of Springfield, with a discrimination and pointedness, almost prophetic of the present contest. “I grant,” says he, in reference to a particular case, “that all these Indians† are within the line of the patent; but yet, you cannot say they are your subjects, nor yet within your jurisdiction, till they have fully subjected themselves, (which I know they have not) and

*Hazard's State Papers, Vol. I. p. 277, to the same effect also a still earlier letter of instructions.

†See the case referred to in Winthrop's Journal, Savage's edition, Vol. II. p. 384.

until you have bought their land. Until this be done, they must be esteemed as an independent, free people.”

Contrast these doctrines with those latterly advanced by the Government, both of the United States and several of the individual States :—That the State Charters give a perfect right to the soil and sovereignty, within their nominal limits, and that the Indians have only a right of occupancy, and that by permission; that the treaties with them, negotiated for fifty years, with all the forms of the constitution, bind them as far as the treaties contain cessions of land, but do not bind us, when we guaranty the remainder of the land to them :—that when the Indians, on the faith of these treaties, cry to us for protection against State laws, unconstitutionally passed, with the known design and to the admitted effect, of compelling them to leave their homes, it is within the competence of the executive, without consulting the National Legislature, to withhold this protection, and advise the Indians as they would escape destruction, to fly to the distant wilderness:—and all this, in the case, not of savage, unreclaimed tribes, such as our forefathers had to deal with, who lived by the chase, without permanent habitations, to whom one tract of the forest was as much a home as another, but tribes, whom we have trained to civilization, whom we have converted

to our religion; who live, as we do, by the industrious arts of life, and who in their official papers, written by themselves, plead for their rights, in better English, than that of the high officers of the government, who plead against them.

But I protest against bringing the actions of men, in one age, to the standard of another, in things that depend on the state of civilization, and public sentiment throughout the world.— Try our fathers by the only fair test, the standard of the age in which they lived; and I believe that they admit a very good defence, even on the point, where they are supposed to be most vulnerable, that of religious freedom. I do not pretend, that they were governed by an enlightened spirit of toleration. Such a spirit, actuating a large community made up of men of one mind, and possessing absolute power to compel the few dissenters to conform, is not so common, even at the present day, as may be thought. I have great doubts, whether the most liberal sect of christians, now extant, if it constituted as great a majority as our forefathers did of the community, and if it possessed an unlimited civil and ecclesiastical power, would be much more magnanimous than they were in its use. They would not, perhaps, use the scourge, or the halter:—humanity proscribes them altogether, except for the most dangerous crimes; but that

they would allow the order of the community to be disturbed, by the intrusion of opposite opinions, distasteful to themselves, I have great doubts.— With all the puritanical austerity, and what is much more to be deplored, the intolerance of dissent, which are chargeable to our fathers, they secured, and we are indebted to them for, two great principles, without which all the candor and kindness we may express for our opponents, go but a short step toward religious freedom. One of these is the independent character, which they ascribed to each individual church ; the other the separation of Church and State. Our fathers were educated, under an ecclesiastical system, which combined all the churches into one body. They forbore to imitate that system here, though the hierarchy of the new churches would have been composed of themselves, with JOHN COTTON at its head. They were educated in a system, where the church is part of the state, and vast endowments are bestowed in perpetuity upon it. This, too, our fathers could have imitated, securing to themselves while they lived, and those who thought with them, when they were gone, the usufruct of these endowments, as far as the law could work such assurance. They did neither, although they had purchased the fair right of doing what they pleased, by banishing themselves, for that very reason, from the world.—

They did neither, although they lived in an age, when, had they done both, there was no one who could rightfully cast reproach upon them.— In all the wide world, there was not a government nor a people, that could rebuke them by precept or example. Where was there? In England the fires of papacy were hardly quenched, when tyrannies scarcely less atrocious against the puritans began. In France, the protestants were at the mercy of a capricious and soon revoked toleration. The Catholics, in Germany, were unchaining their legions against the Lutherans; and in Holland, *reformed* Holland, fine and imprisonment were the reward of Grotius, the man, in whom that country will be remembered, ages after the German Ocean has broken over her main dyke. Had our forefathers laid the foundation of the most rigid ecclesiastical system, that ever oppressed the world, and locked up a quarter part of New England in mortmain, to endow it, there was not a community, in Christendom, to bear witness against them.

If we would, on a broad, rational ground, come to a favorable judgment, on the whole, of the merit of our forefathers, the founders of New England, we have only to compare what they effected, with what was effected, by their countrymen and brethren in Great Britain. While the fathers of New England, a small band of in-

dividuals, for the most part of little account in the great world of London, were engaged, on this side of the Atlantic, in laying the foundations of civil and religious liberty, in a new Commonwealth, the patriots in England undertook the same work of reform, in that country. There were difficulties, no doubt, peculiar to the enterprize, as undertaken in each country. In Great Britain, there was the strenuous opposition of the friends of the established system; in New England, there was the difficulty of creating a new State, out of materials the most scanty and inadequate. If there were fewer obstacles here, there were greater means there. They had all the improvements of the age, which the puritans are said to have left behind them; all the resources of the country, while the Puritans had nothing but their own slender means; and at length, all the patronage of the government;—and with them they overthrew the church; trampled the House of Lords under foot; brought the king to the block; and armed their cause with the whole panoply of terror and of love. The fathers of New England, from first to last, struggled against almost every conceivable discouragement. While the patriots at home were dictating concessions to the king, and tearing his confidential friends from his arms; the patriots of America could scarcely keep their charter out of his grasp. While the former were wielding a reso-

lute majority in parliament, under the lead of the boldest spirits that ever lived, combining with Scotland and subduing Ireland, and striking terror into the continental governments; the latter were forming a frail Union of the New England Colonies, for immediate defence, against a savage foe. While the “Lord General Cromwell” (who seems to have picked up this modest title among the spoils of the routed Aristocracy,) in the superb flattery of Milton,

Guided by faith, and matchless fortitude,
To peace and truth his glorious way had ploughed,
And on the neck of crowned fortune proud
Had reared God’s trophies,

our truly excellent and incorruptible WINTHROP was compelled to descend from the chair of state, and submit to an impeachment.

And what was the comparative success?—There were, to say the least, as many excesses committed in England as in Massachusetts Bay. There was as much intolerance, on the part of men just escaped from persecution; as much bigotry, on the part of those who had themselves suffered for conscience’ sake: as much unseasonable austerity; as much sour temper; as much bad taste:—As much for charity to forgive, and as much for humanity to deplore. The temper, in fact, in the two Commonwealths, was much the same; and some of the leading spirits played a part in both. And to what effect? On the other side of the Atlantic, the whole experiment

ended in a miserable failure. The Commonwealth became successively oppressive, hateful, contemptible: a greater burden than the despotism, on whose ruins it was raised. The people of England, after sacrifices incalculable of property and life, after a struggle of thirty years' duration, allowed the General, who happened to have the greatest number of troops at his command, to bring back the old system—King, Lords, and Church,—with as little ceremony, as he would employ about the orders of the day. After asking for thirty years, What is the will of the Lord concerning his people; what is it becoming a pure church to do; what does the cause of liberty demand, in the day of its regeneration;—there was but one cry in England, What does General MONK think, what will General MONK do: will he bring back the King with conditions or without? And General MONK concluded to bring him back without.

On this side of the Atlantic, and in about the same period, the work which our fathers took in hand was, in the main, successfully done. They came to found a republican colony; they founded it. They came to establish a free church. They established what they called a free church, and transmitted to us, what we call a free church. In accomplishing this, which they did anticipate, they brought also to pass what they did not so distinctly foresee, what

could not, in the nature of things, in its detail and circumstance, be anticipated,—the foundation of a great, prosperous and growing republic. We have not been just to these men. I am disposed to do all justice to the memory of each succeeding generation. I admire the indomitable perseverance, with which the contest for principle was kept up, under the second charter. I reverence, this side idolatry, the wisdom and fortitude of the revolutionary and constitutional leaders, but I believe we ought to go back beyond them all, for the real framers of the Commonwealth. I believe that its foundation stones, like those of the Capitol of Rome, lie deep and solid, out of sight, at the bottom of the walls—Cyclopean work—the work of the Pilgrims—with nothing below them, but the rock of ages. I will not quarrel with their rough corners or uneven sides; above all I will not change them for the wood, hay and stubble, of modern builders.

But, it is more than time, fellow citizens, that I should draw to a close. These venerable foundations of our republic were laid on the *very spot*, where we stand; by the fathers of Massachusetts. *Here*, before they were able to erect a suitable place for worship, they were wont, beneath the branches of a spreading tree, to commend their wants, their sufferings, and their hopes to him, that dwelleth not in

houses made with hands ; *here* they erected their first habitations; *here* they gathered their first church; *here* they made their first graves.

Yes, on the very spot where we are assembled, crowned with this spacious church; surrounded by the comfortable abodes of a dense population; there were, during the first season, after the landing of WINTHROP, fewer dwellings for the living, than graves for the dead.— It seemed the will of Providence, that our fathers should be tried, by the extremities of either season. When the Pilgrims approached the coast of Plymouth, they found it clad with all the terrors of a northern winter :—

The sea around was black with storms,
And white the shores with snow.

We can scarcely now think, without tears, of a company of men, women, and children, brought up in tenderness, exposed after several months uncomfortable confinement on ship-board, to the rigors of our November and December sky, on an unknown, barbarous coast, whose frightful rocks, even now, strike terror into the heart of the returning mariner; though he knows that the home of his childhood awaits him, within their enclosure.

The Massachusetts company arrived at the close of June. No vineyards, as now, clothed our inhospitable hill-sides; no blooming orchards, as at the present day, wore the livery of Eden,

and loaded the breeze with sweet odours;—no rich pastures nor waving crops stretched beneath the eye, along the way side, from village to village, as if Nature had been spreading her halls with a carpet, fit to be pressed by the footsteps of her descending God! The beauty and the bloom of the year had passed. The earth, not yet subdued by culture, bore upon its untilled bosom nothing but a dismal forest, that mocked their hunger with rank and unprofitable vegetation. The sun was hot in the Heavens. The soil was parched, and the hand of man had not yet taught its secret springs to flow from their fountains. The wasting disease of the heart-sick mariner was upon the men;—and the women and children thought of the pleasant homes of England, as they sunk down from day to day, and died at last for want of a cup of cold water, in this melancholy land of Promise. From the time the company sailed from England in April, up to the December following, there died not less than two hundred persons, nearly one a day.

They were buried, say our records, about the Town-hill. This is the Town-hill. We are gathered over the ashes of our forefathers.

It is good, but solemn to be here. We live on holy ground; all our hill-tops are the altars of precious sacrifice :

This is stored with the sacred dust of the first victims in the cause of liberty.

And *that* is rich from the life stream of the noble hearts, who bled to sustain it.

Here beneath our feet, unconscious that we commemorate their worth, repose the meek and sainted martyrs, whose flesh sunk beneath the lofty temper of their noble spirits; and there rest the heroes, who presented their dauntless foreheads to the God of battles, when he came to his awful baptism of blood and of fire.

Happy the fate, which has laid them so near to each other, the early and the latter champions of the one great cause! And happy we, who are permitted to reap in peace the fruit of their costly sacrifice! Happy, that we can make our pious pilgrimage to the smooth turf of that venerable summit, once ploughed with the wheels of maddening artillery, ringing with all the dreadful voices of war, wrapped in smoke and streaming with blood! Happy, that here where our fathers sunk, beneath the burning sun, into the parched clay, we live, and assemble, and mingle sweet counsel, and grateful thoughts of them, in comfort and peace.

+

LBD'15

Handwritten signature

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 068 894 0

