

WINTHROP

New England Society

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MR. WINTHROP'S ADDRESS

BEFORE THE

NEW ENGLAND SOCIETY,

IN THE

CITY OF NEW YORK,

December 23, 1839.

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AN

ADDRESS,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

NEW ENGLAND SOCIETY,

IN THE

CITY OF NEW YORK,

DECEMBER 23, 1839.

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BY ROBERT C. WINTHROP.

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NEW YORK, DEC. 31, 1839.

SIR,

In behalf of the NEW ENGLAND SOCIETY in the City of New York, and by their direction, it gives us much satisfaction to express to you their unfeigned thanks for the Oration pronounced by you, at their solicitation, in the Broadway Tabernacle in this City, on the 23d inst., upon the occasion of their public remembrance of the Anniversary of the 'Landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth' in 1620; an Address, which, in the principles it recommended, and, in the historic research and statesmanlike views it disclosed, was so entirely worthy of the family name you bear; and one which, in the eloquence and power with which it took possession of the mind of the hearer, gave full proof that the City of Boston, in its public speakers and leading minds, had not fallen away from the 'Town of Boston' of earlier days, and dearer associations. The Society earnestly request a copy for publication.

With great respect, we are

Your friends and servants,

JOSEPH HOXIE,  
THOMAS FESSENDEN,  
J. PRESCOTT HALL,  
EDWARD S. GOULD, } *Committee.*

ROBERT C. WINTHROP, Esq.

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BOSTON, JANUARY 10, 1840.

GENTLEMEN,

I am doeply indebted to the NEW ENGLAND SOCIETY in the City of New York, for the favor with which they received my Address on the 23d ult., and to yourselves for the flattering terms in which you have requested a copy for the press. I have no hope that, on perusal, it will answer the expectations which such terms and such a reception would seem to justify;—but I cannot refuse to submit it to your disposal.

I am, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant and friend,

ROBERT C. WINTHROP.

JOSEPH HOXIE, Esq., and others, Committee, &c.

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A D D R E S S .  

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TOWARDS the close of the year 1558, about 281 years ago, a little more than nine times the period which has been commonly assigned as the term of a generation, and only four times the three score years and ten which have been Divinely allotted to the life of man, a Virgin Princess ascended the throne of England. Inheriting, together with the throne itself, a full measure of that haughty and overbearing spirit which characterized the Royal race from which she sprang, she could not brook the idea of any partition of her power, or any control over her person. She seemed resolved that that race should end with her, and that the crown which it had so nobly won on Bosworth Field should seek a new channel of succession, rather than it should be deprived, in her person and through any accident of her sex, of one jot or tittle of that high prerogative, which it had now enjoyed for nearly a century. She seemed to prefer, not only to hold, herself, a barren sceptre—no heir of her's succeeding—but even to let that sceptre fall into the hands of the issue of a hated,

persecuted, and finally murdered rival, rather than risk the certainty of wielding it herself, with that free and unembarrassed arm which befitted a daughter of the Tudors.

Accordingly, no sooner had she grasped it, and seated herself securely upon the throne of her Fathers, than she declared to her suppliant Commons—who doubtless presumed that they could approach a Queen of almost six-and-twenty, with no more agreeable petition, than that she would graciously condescend to select for herself an help meet for her in the management of the mighty interests which had just been intrusted to her—that England was her husband; that she had wedded it with the marriage ring upon her finger, placed there by herself with that design on the very morning of her coronation; that while a private person she had always declined a matrimonial engagement, regarding it even then as an incumbrance, but that much more did she persist in this opinion now that a great Kingdom had been committed to her charge; and that, for one, she wished no higher character or fairer remembrance of her should be transmitted to posterity, when she should pay the last debt to Nature, than to have this inscription engraved on her tombstone—‘Here lies Elizabeth, who lived and died a Maiden Queen.’

In the purpose thus emphatically declared at her accession, the Queen of whom I speak persevered to her decease. Scorning the proverbial privilege



of her sex to change their minds at will upon such a subject, and resisting the importunities of a thousand suitors, she realized that vision of a *Midsummer Night's Dream*, which was so exquisitely unfolded to her by the immortal Dramatist of her day :

‘ I saw

Flying between the cold moon and the earth  
Cupid all-armed : a certain aim he took  
At a fair Vestal, throned by the West,  
And loosed his love-shaft smartly from his bow  
As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts ;—  
But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft  
Quenched in the chaste beams of the watery moon ;  
And the imperial votress passed on,  
In maiden meditation, fancy-free.’

But Elizabeth was not quite content to wait for a tombstone, on which to inscribe this purpose and its fulfillment. Proclaimed, as it annually was, through the whole length and breadth of the Old World, from almost every corner of which proposals of a character to shake and change it, were continually poured in upon her,—she resolved to engrave it once and for ever upon the New World also, where as yet there was no civilized suitor to teaze her with his pretensions, whose very existence had been discovered less than a century before by Christopher Columbus, and the Northern Continent of which had been brought within the reach of her own prerogative by the subsequent discovery of Sebastian Cabot. To that whole Continent she gave the name of VIRGINIA ; and at her death,

after a reign of five-and-forty years, that whole Continent, through all its yet unmeasured latitudes and longitudes, from the confines of Labrador to the Mexican Gulf, was known by no other title, than that which thus marked it as the dominion of a Maiden Queen.

But it was that Queen's dominion only in name. Four times, indeed, she had essayed to people it and plant her banners there. But in vain. Sir Humphrey Gilbert, to whom the first patent for this purpose was granted, being compelled to return prematurely to England by the disasters he had experienced on the coast of Newfoundland, was lost in a storm on the homeward passage, and all that survived of his gallant enterprise, was that sublime exclamation, as he sat in the stern of his sinking bark—'It is as near to Heaven by sea as by land.'—By the resolute and undaunted efforts of his illustrious brother-in-law, Sir Walter Raleigh, however, three separate companies of Colonists were afterwards conducted to the more Southern parts of the Continent, and each in succession commenced a settlement at Roanoake Bay. But two of them perished on the spot, without leaving behind them even so much as the means of ascertaining whether they had owed their destruction to force or to famine;—while the third, which, indeed, was the first in order, within a year from its departure, returned in disgust to its native land. And the whole result of Virginia Colonization and Virginia Commerce, upon which such unbounded

hopes of glory and of gain had been hung by Raleigh and cherished by the Queen, had hitherto consisted in the introduction into England, by this last named band of emigrants returning home in despair, of a few hundreds of *tobacco*, and in Queen Elizabeth herself becoming one of Raleigh's pupils in that most maidenly and most Queenly accomplishment—*smoking a pipe*. Not one subject did Elizabeth leave at her death in that wide spread Continent, which she had thus destined to the honor of perpetuating the memory of her haughty and ambitious virginity.

Within a year or two past, a second Maiden Queen has ascended the throne which the first exchanged for a grave in 1603. And when she casts her eye back, as she can scarcely fail frequently to do, to the days of her illustrious prototype, and compares the sceptre which Elizabeth so boldly swayed for nearly half a century with that which trembles in her girlish hand, she may console herself with the reflection, that if the strength and potency of her own are greatly inferior, its reach and sweep are, practically at least, vastly more extended. She sees the immediate successor to Elizabeth, uniting the crowns of England and Scotland, and preparing the way for that perfect consolidation of the two Countries which another Century was destined to complete. Ireland, too, she finds no longer held by the tenure of an almost annual conquest, but included in the bonds of the same great Union. While beyond

the boundaries of the Imperial Homestead, she beholds her Power bestriding the World like a Colossus, a foot on either Hemisphere—in one, military posts and colonial possessions hailing her accession and acknowledging her sway, which were without even a name or local habitation in the history of the World as Raleigh wrote it—and in the other, a Company of Adventurers which Elizabeth chartered a few years before her death, to try the experiment of a trade with the East Indies by the newly discovered passage round the Cape of Good Hope, converted from a petty Mercantile Corporation into a vast Military Empire, and holding in her name and expending in her service territorial dominions and revenues equal to those of the most powerful Independent Monarchies.

But where is *Virginia*? Where is the ‘ancient dominion’ upon which her great Exemplar inscribed the substance of that ‘maiden meditation’ which even now, mayhap, is mingled with the weightier cares of majesty in her own breast? Have all attempts to plant and colonize it proved still unsuccessful? Is it still unreclaimed from original barbarism,—still only the abode of wolves and wild men? And why is it not found on the map of the British possessions—why not comprised in the catalogue of Her Majesty’s Colonies? Two centuries and a third ago only, when Elizabeth quitted the throne, it was there, unsettled indeed and with not a civilized soul upon its soil, but opening its boundless territories to the adventure

and enterprise of the British People, and destined to all human appearances to be one day counted among the brightest jewels in the crowns of the British Princes. Why is it not now seen sparkling in that which encircles *her* brow?

If we might imagine the youthful Victoria, led along by the train of reflections which we have thus suggested, and snatching a moment from the anxious contemplation of Colonies which she is in immediate danger of losing, to search after those which have been lost to her already,—if we might imagine her turning back the page of History to the period of the first Stuart, to discover what became of the Virginia of Elizabeth after her death, how it was finally planted, and how it passed from beneath the sceptre of her successors,—if we might be indulged in a far less natural imagination, and fancy ourselves admitted at this moment to the Royal presence, and, with something more even than the ordinary boldness of Yankee curiosity, peering over the Royal shoulder, as, impatient at the remembrance of losses sustained and still more so at the prospect of like losses impending, she hurries over the leaves on which the fortunes of that Virginia are recorded, and the fortunes of all other Virginias foreshadowed,—what a scene should we find unfolding itself to her view!

She sees, at a glance, a permanent settlement effected there, and James the First, more fortunate than his mother's murderer, inscribing a name not on a mere empty Territory only, but on an or-

ganized and inhabited Town. A page onward, she perceives a second and entirely separate settlement accomplished in a widely distant quarter of the Continent, and the cherished title of NEW ENGLAND is now presented to her view. Around these two original footholds of civilization, she sees a hardy, enterprising and chivalrous people rapidly clustering, while other settlements are simultaneously established along the territory which divides them. Thousands of miles of coast, with their parallel ranges of interior Country, are soon seen thickly studded over with populous and flourishing plantations. The population of them all, which had run up from 0 to 300,000 by the close of the 17th century, is found advanced to more than two millions by the close of the 18th. And another page displays to her kindling gaze thirteen as noble Colonies as the Sun ever shone upon, with nearly three millions of inhabitants, all acknowledging their allegiance to the British Crown, all contributing their unmatched energies to the support and extension of the British Commerce, and all claiming, as their most valued birthright, the liberties and immunities of the British Constitution. Ah! did the volume but end there! But she perceives, as she proceeds, that in a rash hour those liberties and immunities were denied them. Resistance, War, Independence, in letters of blood now start up bewilderingly to her sight. And where the Virginia of Elizabeth was, two centuries and a third ago, a waste and howling wilderness upon

which civilized man was as yet unable to maintain himself a moment—she next beholds an Independent and United Nation of sixteen millions of Freemen, with a Commerce second only to her own, and with a Country, a Constitution, an entire condition of men and things, which from all previous experience in the growth of Nations, ought to have been the fruit of at least a thousand years, and would have been regarded as the thrifty produce of a Millennium well employed !

Gentlemen of the New England Society and Fellow Citizens of New York, of this wonderful rise and progress of our Country, from the merely nominal and embryo existence which it had acquired at the dawn of the 17th Century, to the mature growth, the substantial prosperity, the independent greatness and National grandeur in which it is now beheld, we this day commemorate a main, original spring. The 22d of December, 1620, was not the mere birthday of a Town or a Colony. Had it depended for its distinction upon events like these, it would have long ago ceased to be memorable. The Town which it saw planted, is indeed still in existence, standing on the very site which the Pilgrims selected, and containing within its limits an honest, industrious and virtuous people, not unworthy of the precious scenes and hallowed associations to whose enjoyment they have succeeded. But possessing, as it did originally, no peculiar advantages either of soil, locality or climate,

and outstripped, as it naturally has been, in wealth, size, population and importance, by thousands of other Towns all over the Continent, it would scarcely suffice to perpetuate beyond its own immediate precincts, the observance, or even the remembrance of a day, of whose doings it constituted the only monument; while the Colony of whose establishment that day was also the commencement, has long since ceased to enjoy any separate political existence. As if to rescue its Founders from the undeserved fortune of being only associated in the memory of posterity with the settlers of individual States, and to insure for them a name and a praise in all quarters of the Country, the Colony of New Plymouth never reached the dignity of Independent Sovereignty to which almost all its sister Colonies were destined, and is now known only as the fraction of a County of a Commonwealth which was founded by other hands.

Yes, the event which occurred two hundred and nineteen years ago yesterday, was of wider import than the confines of New Plymouth. The area of New England, greater than that of Old England, has yet proved far too contracted to comprehend all its influences. They have been coëxtensive with our country. They have pervaded our Continent. They have passed the Isthmus. They have climbed the farthest Andes. They have crossed the Ocean. The seeds of the Mayflower, wafted by the winds of Heaven, or borne in the Eagle's beak, have been



scattered far and wide over the Old world as well as over the New. The suns of France or Italy have not scorched them. The frosts of Russia have not nipped them. The fogs of Germany have not blighted them. They have sprung up in every latitude, and borne fruit, some twenty, some fifty, and some an hundred fold. And though so often struck down and crushed beneath the iron tread of arbitrary Power, they are still ineradicably imbedded in every soil, and their leaves are still destined to be for the healing of all Nations. Oh, could only some one of the pious Fathers whose wanderings were this day brought to an end, be permitted to enter once more upon these earthly scenes; could he, like the pious Father of ancient Rome, guided by some guardian spirit and covered with a cloud, be conducted, I care not to what spot beneath the sky, how might he exclaim, as he gazed, not with tears of anguish but of rapture, not on some empty picture of Pilgrim sorrows and Pilgrim struggles, but upon the living realities of Pilgrim influence and Pilgrim achievement—‘*Quis locus—Quæ regio*—What place, what region upon earth is there, which is not full of the products of our labors! Where, where, has not some darkness been enlightened, some oppression alleviated, some yoke broken or chain loosened, some better views of God’s worship or man’s duty, of Divine Law or human rights, been imparted by our principles or inspired by our example!’

This Country, Fellow Citizens, has in no respect

more entirely contravened all previous experience in human affairs, than in affording materials for the minutest details in the history of its earliest ages. I should rather say, of its earliest *days*, for it has had no ages, and days have done for it, what ages have been demanded for elsewhere. But, whatever the periods of its existence may be termed, they are all historical periods. Its whole birth, growth, being, are before us. We are not compelled to resort to cunningly devised fables to account either for its origin or advancement. We can trace back the current of its career to the very rock from which it first gushed.

Yet how like a fable does it seem, how even 'stranger than fiction,' to speak of the event which we this day commemorate, as having exerted any material influence on the destinies of our Country, much more as having in any degree affected the existing condition of the world! This ever-memorable, ever-glorious landing of the Pilgrims, how, where, by what numbers, under what circumstances was it made? From what invincible Armada did the Fathers of New England disembark? With what array of disciplined armies did they line the shore? Warned by the fate which had so frequently befallen other Colonists on the same Coast, what batteries did they bring to defend them from the incursions of a merciless foe, what stores to preserve them from the invasions of a not more merciful famine?

In the whole history of Colonization, ancient or

modern, no feebler Company, either in point of numbers, armament, or supplies, can be found, than that which landed, on the day we commemorate, on these American shores. Forty-one men,—of whom two, at least, came over only in the capacity of servants to others, and who manifested their title to be counted among the Fathers of New England within a few weeks after their arrival, by fighting with sword and dagger the first *Duel* which stands recorded on the annals of the New World, for which they were adjudged to be tied together neck and heels and so to lie for four and twenty hours without meat or drink—forty-one men,—of whom one more, at least, had been shuffled into the ship's company at London, nobody knew by whom, and who even more signally vindicated his claim no long time after, to be enumerated among this pious, Pilgrim Band, by committing the first murder and gracing the first gallows of which there is any memorial in our Colonial History—forty-one men, all told,—with about sixty women and children, one of whom had been born during the passage and another in the harbor before they landed,—in a single ship, of only one hundred and eighty tons burthen, whose upper works had proved so leaky, and whose middle beam had been so bowed and wracked by the cross winds and fierce storms which they encountered during the first half of the voyage, that but for 'a great iron screw' which one of the passengers had brought with him from Holland and by which they were enabled to raise the beam into

its place again, they must have turned back in despair—conducted, after a four months' passage upon the Ocean, either by the ignorance or the treachery of their Pilot, to a Coast widely different from that which they had themselves selected, and entirely out of the jurisdiction of the Corporation from which they had obtained their Charter—and landing at last,—after a four weeks' search along the shore for a harbor in which they could land at all,—at one moment wearied out with wading above their knees in the icy surf, at another tired with travelling up and down the steep hills and valleys covered with snow, at a third, dashed upon the breakers in a foundering shallop whose sails, masts, rudder, had been successively carried away in a squall, with the spray of the sea frozen on them until their clothes looked as if they were glazed and felt like coats of iron, and having in all their search seen little else but graves, and received no other welcome but a shout of savages and a shower of arrows—landing at last, with a scanty supply of provisions for immediate use, and with ten bushels of corn for planting in the ensuing spring, which they had dug out of the sand-hills where the Indians had hidden it, and without which they would have been in danger of perishing, but for which, it is carefully recorded, they gave the owners entire content about six months after—landing at last, in the depth of winter, with grievous colds and coughs and the seeds of those illnesses which quickly proved the death of many—upon a bleak and storm-

beaten Rock,—a fit emblem of most of the soil by which it was surrounded—*this*, this, is a plain, unvarnished story of that day's transaction,—this was the triumphal entry of the New England Fathers upon the theatre of their glory!—What has saved it from being the theme of ridicule and contempt? What has rescued it from being handed down through all history, as a wretched effort to compass a mighty end by paltry and utterly inadequate means? What has screened it from being stigmatized forever as a Quixotic sally of wild and hare-brained enthusiasts?

Follow this feeble, devoted band, to the spot which they have at length selected for their habitation. See them felling a few trees, sawing and carrying the timber, and building the first New England house, of about twenty feet square, to receive them and their goods—and see that house, the earliest product of their exhausted energies, within a fortnight after it was finished, and on the very morning it was for the first time to have been the scene of their wilderness worship, burnt in an instant to the ground.

They have chosen a Governor—one whom of all others they respect and love—but his care and pains were so great for the common good, as therewith it is thought he oppressed himself, and shortened his days, and one morning, early in the spring, he came out of the cornfields, where he had been toiling with the rest, sick, and died. They have elected another; but who is there now to be governed?

They have chosen a Captain, too, and appointed Military Orders; but who is there now to be armed and marched to battle? At the end of three months a full half of the Company are dead—of one hundred persons scarce fifty remain, and of those, the living are scarce able to bury the dead, the well not sufficient to tend the sick. Were there no graves in England, that they have thus come out to die in the wilderness?

But, doubtless, the diminution of their numbers has, at least, saved them from all fear of famine. Their little cornfields have yielded a tolerable crop, and the autumn finds such as have survived, in comparative health and plenty. And now, the first arrival of a ship from England rejoices them not a little. Once more they are to hear from home, from those dear families and friends which they have left behind them, to receive tokens of their remembrance in supplies sent to their relief, perhaps to behold some of them face to face coming over to share in their lonely exile. Alas! one of the best friends to their enterprise has, indeed, come over, and brought five-and-thirty persons to live in their plantation—but the ship is so poorly furnished with provisions, that they are forced to spare her some of theirs to carry her back, while not her passengers only, but themselves too, are soon threatened with starvation. The whole Company are forthwith put upon half allowance;—but the famine, notwithstanding, begins to pinch. They look hard for a supply, but none arrives. They spy

a boat at sea ; it is nearing the shore ; it comes to land ;—it brings—*a letter* ;—it brings more ;—it brings seven passengers to join them ;—more mouths to eat, but no food, no hope of any.—But they have begged, at last, of a fisherman at the Eastward, as much bread as amounts to a quarter of a pound per day till harvest, and with that they are sustained and satisfied.

And now, the Narragansetts, many thousands strong, begin to breathe forth threatenings and slaughter against them, mocking at their weakness and challenging them to the contest. And when they look for the arrival of more friends from England, to strengthen them in this hour of peril, they find a disorderly, unruly band of fifty or sixty worthless fellows coming amongst them to devour their substance, to waste and steal their corn, and by their thefts and outrages upon the natives, also, to excite them to fresh and fiercer hostilities.

Turn to the fate of their first mercantile adventure. The ship which arrived in their harbor next after the *Mayflower* had departed, and which, as we have seen, involved them in the dangers and distresses of a famine, has been laden with the proceeds of their traffic with the Indians, and with the fruits of their own personal toil. The little cargo consists of two hogsheads of beaver and other skins, and good clapboards as full as she can hold—the freight estimated in all at near five hundred pounds.—What emotions of pride, what expectations of profit, went forth with that little

outfit! And how were they doomed to be dashed and disappointed! Just as the ship was approaching the English coast, she was seized by a French freebooter, and robbed of all she had worth taking!

View them in a happier hour, in a scene of prosperity and success. They have a gallant warrior in their company, whose name, albeit it was the name of a little man, (for Miles Standish was hardly more than five feet high,) has become the very synonyme of a great Captain. An alarm has been given of a conspiracy among the natives, and he has been empowered to enlist as many men as he thinks sufficient to make his party good against all the Indians in the Massachusetts Bay.—He has done so, has put an end to the conspiracy, and comes home laden with the spoils of an achievement which has been styled by his biographer his ‘most capital exploit.’—How long a list of killed and wounded, think you, is reported as the credentials of his bloody prowess, and how many men does he bring with him to share in the honors of the triumph? The whole number of Indians slain in this expedition was *six*, and though the Pilgrim hero brought back with him in safety every man that he carried out, the returning host numbered but *eight* beside their leader. He did not take more with him, we are told, in order to prevent that jealousy of military power, which, it seems, had already found its way to a soil it has never since left. But his proceedings, notwithstanding, by no means escaped censure. When the pious



Robinson heard of this transaction in Holland, he wrote to the Pilgrims 'to consider the disposition of their Captain, who was of a warm temper,' adding, however, this beautiful sentiment in relation to the wretched race to which the victims of the expedition belonged—'it would have been happy, if they had converted some, before they had killed any.'

Inconceivable Fortune! Unimaginable Destiny! Inscrutable Providence! Are these the details of an event from which such all-important, all-pervading influences were to flow? Were these the means, and these the men, through which not New Plymouth only was to be planted, not New England only to be founded, not our whole Country only to be formed and moulded, but the whole Hemisphere to be shaped and the whole world shaken? Yes, Fellow Citizens, this was the event, these were the means, and these the men, by which these mighty impulses and momentous effects actually have been produced. And inadequate, unadapted, impotent, to such ends, as to outward appearances they may seem, there was a Power in them and a Power over them amply sufficient for their accomplishment, and the only powers that were thus sufficient.—The direct and immediate influence of the passengers in the Mayflower, either upon the destinies of our own land or of others, may, indeed, have been less conspicuous than that of some of the New England Colonists who followed them. But it was the bright and shining wake they left upon

the waves, it was the clear and brilliant beacon they lighted upon the shores, that caused them to have any followers. They were the pioneers in that peculiar path of emigration which alone conducted to these great results. They, as was written to them by their brethren in the very outset of their enterprize, were the instruments to break the ice for others, and theirs shall be the honor unto the world's end!

When the Pilgrim Fathers landed upon Plymouth Rock, one hundred and twenty-eight years had elapsed since the discovery of the New World by Columbus.—During this long period, the Southern Continent of America had been the main scene of European adventure and enterprise. And richly had it repaid the exertions which had been made to subdue and settle it. The Empires of Montezuma and the Incas had surrendered themselves at the first summons before the chivalrous energies of Cortes and Pizarro, and Brazil had mingled her diamonds with the gold and silver of Mexico and Peru, to deck the triumphs and crown the rapacity of the Spaniard and the Portuguese.

But the Northern Continent had been by no means neglected in the adventures of the day. Nor had those adventures been confined to the subjects of Portugal and Spain. The Monarchs of those two kingdoms, indeed, emboldened by their success at the South, had put forth pretensions to the sole jurisdiction of the whole New Hemisphere. But

Francis the First had well replied, that he should be glad to see the clause in *Adam's Will*, which made the Northern Continent their exclusive inheritance, and France, under his lead, had set about securing for herself a share of the spoils. It was under French patronage that John Verazzani was sailing in 1524, when the harbor of New York especially attracted his notice for its great convenience and pleasantness.

But England, also,—with better right than either of the others, claiming, as she could, under the Cabots—had not been inattentive to the opportunity of enlarging her dominions, and I have already alluded to sundry unsuccessful attempts which were made by the English to effect this object, during the reign and under the patronage of Queen Elizabeth.

Within a few months previous to the close of her reign and without her patronage, Bartholomew Gosnold added another to the list of these unavailing efforts—having only achieved for himself the distinction of being the first Englishman that ever trod what was afterwards known as the New England shore, and of having given to the point of that shore upon which he first set foot, the homely, but now endeared and honored title of Cape Cod.

Only a few years after the death of the Queen, however, these efforts were renewed with fresh zeal. As early as 1606, King James divided the Virginia of Elizabeth into two parts, and assigned the colonization of them to two separate companies,

by one of which, and especially by its President, the Lord Chief Justice Popham, an attempt was immediately made to settle the New England coast. A colony, indeed, was actually planted under his patronage, and under the personal lead of his brother, at Sagadahoc, near the mouth of the Kennebec River, in 1607. But it remained there only a single year, and was broken up under such disheartening circumstances,—the Colonists on their return branding the Country ‘as over-cold and not habitable by our Nation,’—that the Adventurers gave up their designs.

Five or six years later, notwithstanding, in 1614, the famous Captain John Smith, who had already, under the auspices of the other of the two Companies, established what afterwards proved to be, rather than really then was, a permanent settlement in Southern Virginia, having founded Jamestown in 1607, was induced to visit and survey this *Northern Virginia* also, as it was then called. And after his return home, Captain Smith prepared and published a detailed account of the Country with a map, calling it for the first time, and as if to secure for it all the favor which the associations of a noble name could bestow, *New England*, and giving a most glowing description of the riches both of soil and sea, of forests and fisheries, which awaited the enjoyment of the settler.—‘For I am not so simple,’ said he, (fortunate, fortunate for the foundation of the Country he was describing, such simplicity was at length discovered!) ‘for I am not

so simple as to think that ever any other motive than *wealth*, will ever erect there a common weal, or draw company from their ease and humors at home to stay in New England.?

During the following year this gallant and chivalrous seaman and soldier evinced the sincerity of the opinion which he had thus publicly expressed, as to the inviting character of the spot, by attempting a settlement there himself, and made two successive voyages for that purpose. But both of them were continued scenes of disappointments and disaster, and he, too, for whose lion-hearted heroism nothing had ever seemed too difficult, was compelled to acknowledge himself overmatched, and abandon the undertaking.

And where now were the hopes of planting New England? The friends to the enterprise were at their wit's end. All that the patronage of princes, all that the combined energies of rich and powerful Corporations, all that the individual efforts of the boldest and most experienced private Adventurers, stimulated by the most glowing imaginations of the gains which awaited their grasp, could do, had been done, and done in vain. Means and motives of this sort, had effected nothing, indeed, on the whole North American Continent, after more than half a century of uninterrupted operation, but a little settlement at one extremity by the Spanish, (St. Augustine in 1565,) a couple of smaller settlements at the other extremity by the French, (Port Royal, in 1605 and Quebec, in 1609,) and smaller and

more precarious than either, the Jamestown settlement about midway between the two—this last being the only shadow—and but a shadow it was—of English Colonization on the whole Continent.

But the Atlantic Coast of North America, and especially that part of it which was to be known as New England, was destined to date its ultimate occupation to something higher and nobler than the chivalry of Adventurers, the greediness of Corporations or the ambition of Kings. The lust of new dominion, the thirst for treasure, the quest for spoil, had found an ample field, reaped an overflowing harvest, and rioted in an almost fatal surfeit on the Southern Continent. It might almost seem, in view of the lofty destinies which were in store for the Northern, in contemplation of the momentous influences it was to exert upon the welfare of mankind and the progress of the world, as if Providence had heaped those treasures and clustered those jewels upon the soil of Peru and Mexico, to divert the interest, absorb the passions, cloy the appetite and glut the rapacity which were naturally aroused by the discovery of a New World. We might almost imagine the guardian Spirit of the Pilgrims commissioned to cast down this golden fruit and strew this Hesperian harvest along the pathway of the newly awakened enterprise, to secure the more certainly for the subjects of its appointed care, the possession of their promised land—their dowerless, but chosen Atalanta.

But I am anticipating an idea which must not be

thus summarily dismissed, and to which I may presently find an opportunity to do better justice. Meantime, however, let me remark, that we are not left altogether to supernatural agency for at least the secondary impulse under which New England was colonized. Nor were the earthly princes and potentates of whom I have already spoken,—Elizabeth, her Minister of Justice, and her successor in the throne,—though so signally frustrated in all their direct endeavors to that end, without a most powerful, though wholly indirect and involuntary, influence, upon its final accomplishment.

The daughter of Ann Bullen could not fail to cherish a most hearty and implacable hatred towards that Church, in defiance of whose thunders she was conceived and cradled, and in the eye and open declaration of which she was a bastard, a heretic, an outlaw and an usurper. So far, at any rate, Elizabeth was a friend to the Reformation. But she had almost as little notion as her Father, of any reformation which reached beyond releasing her dominions from the authority of the Pope, and establishing herself at the head of the Church. And, accordingly, the very first year of her reign was marked by the enactment of Laws, exacting, under the severest penalties, conformity to the doctrines and discipline of the English Church—a policy which she never relinquished.

For a violation of these Laws and others of subsequent enactment but of similar import, a large number of persons in her kingdom, whose minds

had been too thoroughly inspired with disgust for the masks and mummeries of Catholic worship, to be content with a bare renunciation of the temporal or spiritual authority of the Pope, were arrested, imprisoned, and treated with all manner of persecution. At least six of them were capitally executed, and two of these, as it happened, were condemned to death by that very Lord Chief Justice, whom we have seen a few years afterwards, at the head of the Plymouth Company, engaged in so earnest but unavailing an effort to colonize the New England Coast. Little did he know that his part in that work had been already performed.

In an imaginary ‘Dialogue between some Young Men born in New England and sundry Ancient Men that came out of Holland and Old England,’ written in 1648 by Gov. Bradford—a name which before all others should be this day remembered with veneration—the Young Men are represented as asking of the Old Men, how many Separatists had been executed. ‘We know certainly of six,’ replied the ancient men, ‘that were publicly executed, besides such as died in prisons. \* \* \* Two of them were condemned by cruel Judge Popham, whose countenance and carriage was very rough and severe towards them, with many sharp menaces. But God gave them courage to bear it, and to make this answer :—

‘My Lord, your face we fear not,  
And for your threats we care not,  
And to come to your read service we dare not.’



Nor did King James depart from the footsteps of his predecessor in the religious policy of his administration. Though from his Scotch education and connections, and from the opinions which he had openly avowed before coming to the English throne, he had seemed pledged to a career of liberality and toleration, yet no sooner was he fairly seated on that throne than he, too, set about vindicating his claim to his new title of ‘Defender of the Faith,’ and enforcing conformity to the rites and ceremonies of the English Church. And he cut short a conference at Hampton Court, between himself and the Puritan leaders, got up at his own instigation in the vainglorious idea that he could vanquish these heretics in an argument, with this summary and most significant declaration—‘If this be all they have to say, I will make them conform, or *I will harry them out of the land.*’

The idea of banishment was full of bitterness to those to whom it was thus sternly held up. They loved their native land with an affection which no rigor of restraint, no cruelty of persecution, could quench. Death itself, to some of them at least, seemed to have fewer fears than exile. ‘We crave,’ was the touching language of a Petition of sixty Separatists in 1592, who had been committed unbailable to close prison in London, where they were allowed neither meat nor drink, nor lodging, and where no one was suffered to have access to them, so as no felons or traitors or murderers were thus dealt with,—‘We crave for all of us but the liberty

either to die openly or to live openly in the land of our nativity. If we deserve death, it beseemeth the majesty of justice not to see us closely murdered, yea, starved to death with hunger and cold, and stifled in loathsome dungeons. If we be guiltless, we crave but the benefit of our innocence, that we may have peace to serve our God and our Prince in the place of the sepulchres of our Fathers.'

But there were those among them, notwithstanding, to whom menaces, whether of banishment or of the block, even uttered thus angrily by one, who, as he once well said of himself, 'while he held the appointment of Judges and Bishops in his hand, could make what Law, and what Gospel he chose,' were alike powerless, to prevail on them to conform to modes and creeds which they did not of themselves approve. They heard a voice higher and mightier than James's, calling to them in the accents of their own consciences, and saying, in the express language of a volume, which it had been the most precious result of all the discoveries, inventions and improvements of that age of wonders, to unlock to them—'Be ye not conformed—but be ye transformed'—and that voice, summon it to exile, or summon it to the grave, they were resolved to obey.

Foiled, therefore, utterly in the first of his alternatives, the king resorted to the last. It was more within the compass of his power, and he *did* harry them out of the land. Within three years after the utterance of this threat, (viz. in 1607,) it is re-

corded by the Chronologist, that Messrs. Clifton's and Robinson's church in the North of England, being extremely harrassed, some cast into prison, some beset in their houses, some forced to leave their farms and families, begin to fly over to Holland for purity of worship and liberty of conscience.

Religions, true and false, have had their Hegiras, and Institutions and Empires have owed their origin to the flight of a child, a man, or a multitude. Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh,—but he returned to overwhelm him with the judgments of Jehovah, and to build up Israel into a mighty People. Mahomet with his followers fled from the Magistrates of Mecca,—but he came back, with the sword in one hand and the Koran in the other, and the Empire of the Saracens was soon second to none on the globe. 'The Young Child and his Mother' fled from the fury of Herod,—but they returned, and the banner of the Cross was still destined to go forth conquering and to conquer. The Pilgrim Fathers, also, fled from the oppression of this arbitrary tyrant, and, although their return was to a widely distant portion of his dominions, yet return they did, and the Freedom and Independence of a great Republic, delivered from the yoke of that tyrant's successors, date back their origin this day, to the principles for which they were proscribed, and to the institutions which they planted!

But let us follow them in their eventful flight. They first settle at Amsterdam, where they remain for about a year, and are soon joined by the rest of

their brethren. But finding that some contentions had arisen in a Church which was there before them, and fearing that they might themselves become embroiled in them, though they knew it would be very much 'to the prejudice of their outward interest' to remove, yet 'valuing peace and spiritual comfort above all other riches' they depart to Leyden, and there live 'in great love and harmony both among themselves and their neighbor citizens for above eleven years.'

But, although during all this time they had been courteously entertained and lovingly respected by the people, and had quietly and sweetly enjoyed their Church liberties under the States, yet finding that, owing to the difference of their language, they could exert but little influence over the Dutch, and had not yet succeeded in bringing them to reform the neglect of observation of the Lord's day as a Sabbath, or any other thing amiss among them,—that, owing, also, to the licentiousness of youth in that Country and the manifold temptations of the place, their children were drawn away by evil examples into extravagant and dangerous courses, they now begin to fear that Holland would be no place for their church and their posterity to continue in comfortably, and on those accounts to think of a remove to America. And having hesitated a while between Guiana and Virginia as a place of resort, and having at last resolved on the latter, they send their agents to treat with the Virginia Company for a right within their chartered limits, and

to see if the King would give them liberty of conscience there. The Company they found ready enough to grant them a patent with ample privileges, but liberty of conscience under the broad seal King James could never be brought to bestow, and the most that could be extorted from him by the most persevering importunity was a promise, that he would *connive* at them, and not molest them, provided they should carry themselves peaceably.

Notwithstanding this discouragement, however, they resolved to venture. And after another year of weary negotiation with the merchants who were to provide them with a passage, the day for their departure arrives.—It had been agreed that a part of the church should go before their brethren to America to prepare for the rest, and as the major part was to stay behind, it was also determined that their pastor, the beloved Robinson, should stay with them. Not only were the Pilgrims thus about to leave ‘that goodly and pleasant City which had been their resting place above eleven years,’ but to leave behind them also the greatest part of those with whom they had been so long and lovingly associated in a strange land, and this—to encounter all the real and all the imaginary terrors which belonged to that infancy of ocean navigation, to cross a sea of three thousand miles in breadth, and to reach at last a shore which had hitherto repelled the approaches of every civilized settler! Who can describe the agonies of such a scene? Their Memorialist has done it in language as satis-

factory as any language can be, but the description still seems cold and feeble.

‘ And now the time being come when they were to depart,’ says he, ‘ they were accompanied with most of their brethren out of the City unto a Town called Delft Haven, where the ship lay ready to receive them. \* \* \* One night was spent with little sleep with the most, but with friendly entertainment and Christian discourse, and other real expressions of true Christian love. The next day, the wind being fair, they went on board, and their friends with them, where truly doleful was the sight of that sad and mournful parting, to hear what sighs and sobs and prayers did sound amongst them, what tears did gush from every eye, and pithy speeches pierced each others’ hearts, that sundry of the Dutch strangers, that stood on the Key as spectators, could not refrain from tears. But the tide (which stays for no man) calling them away that were thus loth to depart, their reverend pastor falling down on his knees, and they all with him, with watery cheeks commended them with most fervent prayers unto the Lord and his blessing ;—and then with mutual embraces and many tears they took their leave of one another, which proved to be the last leave to many of them.’

Such was the embarkation of the New England Fathers!—Such the commencement of that Pilgrim Voyage, whose progress during a period of five months I have already described, and whose termination we this day commemorate! Under these

auspices and by these instruments was at last completed an undertaking which had so long baffled the efforts of Statesmen and Heroes, of Corporations and of Kings! Said I not rightly that the Pilgrims had a power within them, and a Power over them, which was not only amply adequate to its accomplishment, but the only powers that were thus adequate? And who requires to be reminded what those powers were?

I fear not to be charged with New England bigotry or Puritan fanaticism in alluding to the Power which was over the Pilgrims in their humble but heroic enterprise. If Washington, in reviewing the events of our Revolutionary history, could say to the American Armies as he quitted their command, that 'the singular interpositions of Providence in our feeble condition were such as could scarcely escape the attention of the most unobserving,' and again to the American Congress, on first assuming the administration of the Union, that 'every step by which the People of the United States had advanced to the character of an Independent Nation seemed to have been distinguished by some token of Providential agency,' how much less can any one be in danger of subjecting himself to the imputation of indulging in a wild conceit or yielding to a weak superstition, by acknowledging, by asserting, a Divine intervention in the history of New England Colonization. It were easy, it is true, to convey the same sentiment in more fashionable phraseology—to disguise an allusion to a Wonder-

working Providence under the name of an extraordinary Fortune or cloak the idea of a Divine appointment under the title of a lucky accident. But I should feel that I dishonored the memory of our New England sires, and deserved the rebuke of their assembled sons, were I, on an occasion like the present, to resort to such miserable paltering.

No—I see something more than mere fortunate accidents or extraordinary coincidences in the whole discovery and colonization of our Country—in the age at which these events took place, in the People by whom they were effected, and more especially in the circumstances by which they were attended, and may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth if ever I am ashamed to say so!

When I reflect that this entire Hemisphere of ours remained so long in a condition of primeval barbarism—that the very existence of its vast Continents was so long concealed from the knowledge of civilized man—that these colossal mountains so long lifted their summits to the sky and cast their shadows across the earth—that these gigantic rivers so long poured their mighty, matchless waters to the sea—that these magnificent forests so long waved their unrivalled foliage to the winds, and these luxuriant fields and prairies so long spread out their virgin sods before the sun—without a single intelligent human being to enjoy, to admire, or even to behold them—when I reflect to what heights of civilization, ambition and power so many of the



Nations of the Old World were successively advanced, reaching a perfection in some branches of art and of science which has destined their very ruins to be the wonder, the delight, the study and the models of mankind for ever, and pushing their Commerce and their Conquests over sea and shore with an energy so seemingly indomitable and illimitable, and yet that these seas and these shores, reserved for other Argonauts than those of Greece and other Eagles than those of Rome, were protected alike from the reach of their arts and their arms, from their rage for glory and their lust for spoils—when I reflect that all the varieties of roaming tribes which, up to the period of the events of which I speak, had found their way nobody knows when or from whence, to this Northern Continent at least, were so mysteriously endowed with a nature, not merely to make no progress in improvement and settlement of themselves, but even to resist and defy every influence which could be brought to bear upon them by others, except such as tended to their own extirpation and overthrow—how they shrank at the approach of the civilized settler, melting away as they retired, and marking the trail of their retreat, I had almost said, by the scent of their own graves—or, if some stragglers of a race less barbarous, at some uncertain epoch, were brought unknowingly upon our shores, that, instead of stamping the Rock upon which they landed with the unequivocal foot-prints of the Fathers of a mighty Nation, they only scratched upon its surface a few

illegible characters, to puzzle the future antiquary to decide whether they were of Scandinavian or of Carthaginian, of Runic or of Punic origin, and to prove only this distinctly—that their authors were not destined to be the settlers, or even the discoverers, in any true sense of that term, of the Country upon which they had thus prematurely stumbled—when I reflect upon the momentous changes in the institutions of society and in the instruments of human power, which were crowded within the period which was ultimately signalized by this discovery and this settlement—the *press*, by its magic enginery, breaking down every barrier and annihilating every monopoly in the paths of knowledge, and proclaiming all men equal in the arts of peace—the *gunpowder*, by its tremendous properties, undermining the moated castles and rending asunder the plaited mail of the lordly Chieftains, and making all men equal on the field of battle—the *Bible*, rescued from its unknown tongues, its unauthorized interpretations and its unworthy perversions, opened at length in its original simplicity and purity to the world, and proving that all men were born equal in the eye of God—when I see learning reviving from its lethargy of centuries, religion reasserting its native majesty, and liberty—liberty itself—thus armed and thus attended, starting up anew to its long suspended career, and exclaiming, as it were, in the confidence of its new instruments and its new auxiliaries—‘ Give me now a place to stand upon—a place free from the interference of established power, a place free from

the embarrassment of ancient abuses, a place free from the paralyzing influence of a jealous and overbearing prerogative—*give me but a place to stand upon and I will move the world*'—I cannot consider it, I cannot call it, a mere fortunate coincidence, that then, at that very instant, the veil of waters was lifted up, that place revealed, and the world moved!

When I reflect, too, on the Nation under whose reluctant auspices this revelation was finally vouchsafed to the longing vision of the intrepid Admiral—how deeply it was already plunged in the grossest superstitions and sensualities, how darkly it was already shadowed by the impending horrors of its Dread Tribunal, and how soon it was to lose the transient lustre which might be reflected upon it from the virtues of an Isabella, or the genius of a Charles V., and to sink into a long and rayless night of ignorance and oppression—when I look back upon its sister kingdom of the Peninsula, also, which shared with it in reaping the teeming first fruits of the new found world, and find them matching each other not more nearly in the boldness of their maritime enterprise, than in the sternness of their religious bigotry and in the degradation of their approaching doom—and when I remember how both of these kingdoms, from any Colonies of whose planting there could have been so poor a hope of any early or permanent advancement to the cause of human freedom, were attracted and absorbed by the mineral and vegetable treasures of the tropical islands

and territories and by the gorgeous empires which spirits of congenial grossness and sensuality had already established there—while this precise portion of America, these noble harbors, these glorious hills, these exhaustless valleys and matchless lakes, presenting a combination of climate and of soil, of land course and water course, marked and quoted as it were, by Nature herself, for the abode of a great, united and prosperous Republic—the rock-bound region of New England not excepted from the category, which, though it can boast of nothing nearer akin to gold or diamonds than the sparkling *mica* of its granite or the glittering crystals of its ice, was yet framed to produce a wealth richer than gold, and whose price is above rubies—the intelligent and virtuous industry of a free people—when I remember, I say, how this exact portion of the new world was held back for more than a century after its discovery, and reserved for the occupation and settlement of the only Nation under the sun able to furnish the founders of such a Republic and the progenitors of such a People—the very Nation in which the reforms and inventions of the day had wrought incomparably the most important results, and human improvement and human liberty made incalculably the largest advance—I cannot regard it, I cannot speak of it, as a mere lucky accident, that this Atlantic seaboard was settled by colonies of the Anglo-Saxon race!

And when, lastly, I reflect on the circumstances under which this settlement was in the end effected,

on that part of the coast, more especially, which exerted a paramount influence on the early destinies of the Continent, and gave the first unequivocal assurance that virtue and industry and freedom were here to find a refuge and here to found themselves an empire—when I behold a feeble company of exiles, quitting the strange land to which persecution had forced them to flee, entering with so many sighs and sobs and partings and prayers on a voyage so full of perils at the best, but rendered a hundred fold more perilous by the unusual severities of the season and the absolute unseaworthiness of their ship, arriving in the depth of winter on a coast to which even their pilot was a perfect stranger, and where ‘they had no friends to welcome them, no inns to entertain them, no houses, much less towns, to repair unto for succor,’ but where,—instead of friends, shelter or refreshment,—famine, exposure, the wolf, the savage, disease and death seemed waiting for them—and yet accomplishing an end which Royalty and patronage, the love of dominion and of gold, individual adventure and corporate enterprise had so long essayed in vain, and founding a Colony which was to defy alike the machinations and the menaces of Tyranny, in all periods of its history—it needs not, it needs not, that I should find the coral pathway of the sea laid bare, and its waves a wall upon the right hand and the left, and the crazed chariot wheels of the oppressor floating in fragments upon its closing floods, to feel, to realize, that higher than

human was the Power which presided over the Exodus of the Pilgrim Fathers!

Was it not something more than the ignorance or the self-will of an earthly and visible Pilot, which, instead of conducting them to the spot which they had deliberately selected—the very spot on which we are now assembled—the banks of your own beautiful Hudson, of which they had heard so much during their sojourn in Holland, but which were then swarming with a host of horrible savages—guided them to a coast, which though bleaker and far less hospitable in its outward aspect, had yet by an extraordinary epidemic, but a short time previous, been almost completely cleared of its barbarous tenants? Was it not something more, also, than mere mortal error or human mistake, which, instead of bringing them within the limits prescribed in the patent they had procured in England, directed them to a shore on which they were to land upon their own responsibility and under their own authority, and thus compelled them to an Act, which has rendered Cape Cod more memorable than Runnamede, and the Cabin of the *Mayflower* than the proudest Hall of ancient Charter or modern Constitution—the execution of the first written original Contract of Democratic Self-Government which is found in the annals of the World?

But the Pilgrims, I have said, had a power within them also. If God was not seen among them in the fire of a Horeb, or the earthquake of a Sinai, or the wind cleaving asunder the waves of the sea

they were to cross, He was with them, at least, in the still, small voice. Conscience, Conscience, was the nearest to an earthly power which the Pilgrims possessed, and the freedom of Conscience the nearest to an earthly motive which prompted their career. It was Conscience, which ‘weaned them from the delicate milk of their Mother country and inured them to the difficulties of a strange land.’ It was Conscience, which made them ‘not as other men, whom small things could discourage, or small discontentments cause to wish themselves at home again.’ It was Conscience—that ‘*robur et æs triplex circa pectus*’—which emboldened them to launch their fragile bark upon a merciless ocean, fearless of the fighting winds and lowering storms. It was Conscience, which stiffened them to brave the perils, endure the hardships, undergo the deprivations of a howling, houseless, hopeless desolation. And thus, almost in the very age when the Great Master of human nature, was putting into the mouth of one of his most interesting and philosophical characters, that well remembered conclusion of a celebrated soliloquy—

‘Thus *Conscience* does make *cowards* of us all,  
 And thus the native hue of resolution  
 Is sicklied o’er with the pale cast of thought,  
 And enterprises of great pith and moment  
 With *this* regard, their currents turn awry,  
 And lose the name of action—’

this very Conscience, a clog and an obstacle indeed, to its foes, but the surest strength and sharpest spur

of its friends, was inspiring a courage, confirming a resolution, and accomplishing an enterprise, of which the records of the world will be searched in vain to find a parallel. Let it never be forgotten, that it was Conscience, and that, not entrenched behind broad seals, but enshrined in brave souls, which carried through and completed the long baffled undertaking of settling the New England coast.

But Conscience did more than this. It was that same still, small voice, which, under God, and through the instrumentality of the Pilgrims, pronounced the very Fiat of light in the creation of civilized society on this whole Northern Continent of America, exerting an influence in the process of that creation, compared with which all previous influences were but so many movings on the face of the waters.

Let me not be thought, in this allusion and others like it in which I have already indulged, to slight the claims of the Virginia Colony, or to do designed injustice to its original settlers. There are laurels enough growing wild upon the graves of Plymouth, without tearing a leaf from those of Jamestown. New England does not require to have other parts of the country cast into shade, in order that the brightness of her own early days may be seen and admired. Least of all, would any son of New England be found uttering a word in wanton disparagement of 'our noble, patriotic, sister Colony Virginia,' as she was once justly termed by the Patriots of Faneuil Hall. There are circumstances



of peculiar and beautiful correspondence in the careers of Virginia and New England, which must ever constitute a bond of sympathy, affection and pride between their children. Not only did they form respectively the great Northern and Southern rallying-points of civilization on this Continent—not only was the most friendly competition, or the most cordial coöperation, as circumstances allowed, kept up between them during their early colonial existence—but who forgets the generous emulation, the noble rivalry with which they continually challenged and seconded each other in resisting the first beginnings of British aggression, in the persons of their James Otises and Patrick Henrys? Who forgets, that, while that resistance was first brought to a practical test in New England, at Lexington and Concord and Bunker Hill, fortune, as if resolved to restore the balance of renown between the two, reserved for the Yorktown of Virginia the last crowning victory of Independence? Who forgets that, while the hand, by which the original Declaration of that Independence was drafted, was furnished by Virginia, the tongue by which the adoption of that Instrument was defended and secured, was supplied by New England—a bond of common glory, upon which not death alone seemed to set his seal, but Deity, I had almost said, to affix an immortal sanction, when the spirits by which that hand and tongue were moved, were caught up together to the clouds on the same great day of the Nation's Jubilee. Nor let me omit to

allude to a peculiar distinction which belongs to Virginia alone. It is her preëminent honor and pride, that the name which the whole country acknowledges as that of a Father, she can claim as that of a Son—a name at which comparison ceases—to which there is nothing similar, nothing second—a name combining in its associations all that was most pure and godly in the nature of the Pilgrims, with all that was most brave and manly in the character of the Patriots—a name above every name in the annals of human liberty !

But I cannot refrain from adding, that not more does the fame of Washington surpass that of every other public character which America or the world at large, has yet produced, than the New England Colony, in its origin and its influences, its objects and its results, excels that from which Washington was destined to proceed.

In one point, indeed, and that, it is true, a point of no inconsiderable moment, the Colonies of Jamestown and Plymouth were alike.—Both were colonies of *Englishmen* ;—and in running down the history of our Country from its first colonization to the present hour, I need hardly say that no single circumstance can be found, which has exercised a more propitious and elevating influence upon its fortunes, than the English origin of its settlers. Not to take up time in discussing either the abstract adaptation of the Anglo-Saxon character to the circumstances of a New Country, or its relative capacity for the establishment and enjoyment of

Free Institutions,—the most cursory glance at the comparative condition, past or present, of those portions of the New World, which were planted by other nations, is amply sufficient to illustrate this idea. Indeed, our own Continent affords an illustration of it, impressed upon us anew by recent events in the Canadian Colonies, which renders any reference to the other entirely superfluous. The contrast between the social, moral and intellectual state of the two parts of North America which were peopled respectively by Englishmen and Frenchmen, has been often alluded to. But a comparison of their political conditions exhibits differences still more striking.

Go back to the period immediately preceding the Stamp Act, and survey the circumstances of the two portions of Country, as they then existed. Both are in a state of Colonial dependence on Great Britain. But the one has just been reduced to that state by force of arms. Its fields and villages have just been the scenes of the pillage and plunder which always march in the train of conquest—the allegiance of their owners has been violently transferred to new masters as the penalty of defeat—and to keep alive the more certainly the vindictive feelings which belong to the bosoms of a vanquished people, and to frustrate the more entirely the natural influences of time and custom in healing up the wounds which such a subjugation has inflicted, the laws of their conquerors are enacted and administered in a strange tongue, and one which

continually reminds them that the yoke under which they have passed, is that of a Nation towards which they have an hereditary hatred.—The People of the other portion, on the contrary, owe their relation to the common Sovereign of them both, to nothing but their own natural and voluntary choice—feel towards the Nation over which he presides nothing but the attachment and veneration of children towards the parent of their pride, and are bound to it by the powerful ties of a common history, a common language, and a common blood. Tell me, now, which of the two will soonest grow impatient of its colonial restraint, soonest throw off its foreign subordination, and soonest assert itself free and independent?

And what other solution can any one suggest to the problem presented by the fact as it exists—the very reverse of that which would thus have been predicted—what other clue can any one offer to the mystery, that the French Colonies should have remained, not entirely quietly, indeed, but with only occasional returns of ineffectual throes and spasms, up to this very hour, in a political condition which every thing would seem to have conspired to render loathsome and abhorrent—while the English Colonies, snapping alike every link either of love or of power, breaking every bond both of affection and authority, resolved themselves into an Independent Nation half a century ago,—what other explanation, I repeat, can any one give to this paradox fulfilled, than that which springs

from a consideration of the comparative capacities for self-improvement and self-government of the Races by which they were planted? A common history, a common language, a common blood, were, indeed, links of no ordinary strength, between the Atlantic Colonies and the Mother Country. But that language was the language in which Milton had sung, Pym pleaded, and Locke reasoned—that blood was the blood which Hampden had poured out on the plain of Chalgrove, and in which Sidney and Russell had weltered on the block of Martyrdom—and that history had been the history of toiling, struggling, but still-advancing Liberty for a thousand years. Such links could only unite the free. They lost their tenacity in a moment, when attempted to be recast on the forge of despotism and employed in the service of oppression—nay, the brittle fragments into which they were broken in such a process, were soon moulded and tempered and sharpened into the very blades of a triumphant resistance. What more effective instruments, what more powerful incitements, did our Fathers enjoy, in their revolutionary struggle, than the lessons afforded them in the language, the examples held up to them in the history, the principles, opinions and sensibilities flowing from the hearts and vibrating through the veins, which they inherited from the very Nation against which they were contending!—Yes, let us not omit, even on this day, when we commemorate the foundation of a Colony which dates back its origin to British bigotry and British

persecution, even in this connection, too, when we are speaking of that contest for Liberty which owed its commencement to British oppression and British despotism, to express our gratitude to God, that old England was, still, our Mother Country, and to acknowledge our obligations to our British Ancestors for the glorious capabilities which they bequeathed us.

But, with the single exception that both emigrated from England, the Colonies of Jamestown and Plymouth had nothing in common, and to all outward appearances, the former enjoyed every advantage. The two Companies, as it happened, though so long an interval elapsed between their reaching America, left their native land within about a year of each other; but under what widely different circumstances did they embark! The former set sail from the port of the Metropolis, in a squadron of three vessels, under an experienced Commander, under the patronage of a wealthy and powerful Corporation, and with an ample patent from the Crown. The latter betook themselves to their solitary bark, by stealth, under cover of the night, and from a bleak and desert heath in Lincolnshire, while a band of armed horsemen, rushing down upon them before the embarkation was completed, made prisoners of all who were not already on board, and condemned husbands and wives, and parents and children, to a cruel and almost hopeless separation.

Nor did their respective arrivals on the Ameri-

can shores, though divided by a period of thirteen years, present a less signal contrast. The Virginia Colony entered the harbor of Jamestown about the middle of May, and never could that lovely Queen of Spring have seemed lovelier, than when she put on her flowery kirtle and her wreath of clusters, to welcome those admiring strangers to the enjoyment of her luxuriant vegetation. There were no Mayflowers for the Pilgrims, save the name, written, as in mockery, on the stern of their treacherous ship. They entered the harbor of Plymouth on the shortest day in the year, in this last quarter of December,—and when could the rigid Winter-King have looked more repulsive, than when, shrouded with snow and crowned with ice, he admitted those shivering wanderers within the realms of his dreary domination?

But mark the sequel. From a soil teeming with every variety of production for food, for fragrance, for beauty, for profit, the Jamestown Colonists reaped only disappointment, discord, wretchedness. Having failed in the great object of their adventure—the discovery of gold—they soon grew weary of their condition, and within three years after their arrival are found on the point of abandoning the Country. Indeed, they are actually embarked, one and all, with this intent, and are already at the mouth of the River, when, falling in with new hands and fresh supplies which have been sent to their relief, they are induced to return once more to their deserted village.

But even up to the very year in which the Pilgrims landed, ten years after this renewal of their designs, they ‘had hardly become settled in their minds,’ had hardly abandoned the purpose of ultimately returning to England, and their condition may be illustrated by the fact, that in 1619 and again in 1621, cargoes of young women, (a commodity of which there was scarcely a sample in the whole plantation—and would to God, that all the traffic in human flesh on the Virginian Coast even at this early period had been as innocent in itself and as beneficial in its results!) were sent out by the Corporation in London and sold to the planters for wives, at from one hundred and twenty to one hundred and fifty pounds of tobacco apiece!

Nor was the political condition of the Jamestown Colony much in advance of its social state. The Charter, under which they came out, contained not a single element of popular liberty, and secured not a single right or franchise to those who lived under it. And, though a gleam of freedom seemed to dawn upon them in 1619, when they instituted a Colonial Assembly and introduced the Representative System for the first time into the New World, the precarious character of their popular institutions and the slender foundation of their popular liberties at a much later period, even as far down as 1671, may be understood from that extraordinary declaration of Sir William Berkeley, then Governor of Virginia, to the Lords Commissioners:—‘I thank God, there are no free schools nor printing—and I hope we



shall not have these hundred years;—for learning has brought disobedience, and heresy and sects into the world; and printing has divulged them, and libels against the best government. God keep us from both.’

But how was it with the Pilgrims? From a soil of comparative barrenness, they gathered a rich harvest of contentment, harmony and happiness. Coming to it for no purpose of commerce or adventure, they found all that they sought—*religious freedom*—and that made the wilderness to them like Eden, and the desert as the garden of the Lord.—Of quitting it, from the very hour of their arrival, they seem never once to have entertained, or even conceived, a thought. The first foot that leapt gently but fearlessly on Plymouth Rock was a pledge that there would be no retreating—tradition tells us, that it was the foot of MARY CHILTON. They have brought their wives and their little ones with them, and what other assurance could they give that they have come to their *home*? And accordingly they proceed at once to invest it with all the attributes of home, and to make it a free and a happy home. The Compact of their own adoption under which they landed, remained the sole guide of their government for nine years, and though it was then superseded by a Charter from the Corporation within whose limits they had fallen, it was a Charter of a liberal and comprehensive character, and under its provisions they continued to lay broad and deep the foundations of Civil Freedom. The trial by

jury was established by the Pilgrims within three years after their arrival, and constitutes the appropriate opening to the first chapter of their legislation. The education of their children, as we have seen, was one of their main motives for leaving Holland, and there is abundant evidence that it was among the earliest subjects of their attention—while the planters of Massachusetts, who need not be distinguished from the planters of Plymouth for any purposes of this comparison, founded the College at Cambridge in 1636—set up a printing press at the same place in 1639, which ‘divulged,’ in its first workings at least, nothing more libellous or heretical than a Psalm-book and an Almanac—and as early as 1647 had instituted, by an ever memorable Statute, that noble system of New England Free Schools, which constitutes at this moment the best security of Liberty, wherever Liberty exists, and its best hope, wherever it is still to be established.

It would carry me far beyond the allowable limits of this Address, if, indeed, I have not already exceeded them, to contrast in detail, the respective influences upon our Country and, through it, upon the world, of these two original Colonies. The elements for such a contrast I have already suggested, and I shall content myself with only adding further upon this point, the recent and very remarkable testimony of two most intelligent French travellers, whose writings upon the United States have justly received such distinguished notice on both sides the Atlantic.

‘I have already observed,’ says De Tocqueville, that ‘the origin of the American settlements may be looked upon as the first and most efficacious cause, to which the present prosperity of the United States may be attributed. \* \* \* When I reflect upon the consequences of this primary circumstance, methinks, I see the destiny of America embodied in the first PURITAN who landed on these shores, just as the human race was represented by the first man.’

‘If we wished,’ says Chevalier, ‘to form a single type, representing the American character of the present moment as a single whole, it would be necessary to take at least three-fourths of the Yankee race and to mix it with hardly one-fourth of the Virginian.’

But the Virginia type was not complete when it first appeared on the coast of Jamestown, and I must not omit, before bringing these remarks to a conclusion, to allude to one other element of any just comparison between the two Colonies.—The year 1620 was unquestionably the great Epoch of American Destinies. Within its latter half were included the two events which have exercised incomparably the most controlling influence on the character and fortunes of our Country. At the very time the *Mayflower*, with its precious burden, was engaged in its perilous voyage to Plymouth, another ship, far otherwise laden, was approaching the harbor of Virginia. It was a Dutch man-of-war, and its cargo consisted in part of *twenty slaves*, which were subjected to sale on their arrival, and with which the

foundations of domestic slavery in North America were laid.

I see those two fate-freighted vessels, laboring under the divided destinies of the same Nation, and striving against the billows of the same sea, like the principles of good and evil advancing side by side on the same great ocean of human life. I hear from the one the sighs of wretchedness, the groans of despair, the curses and clankings of struggling captivity, sounding and swelling on the same gale, which bears only from the other the pleasant voices of prayer and praise, the cheerful melody of contentment and happiness, the glad, the glorious ‘anthem of the free.’ Oh, could some angel arm, like that which seems to guide and guard the Pilgrim bark, be now interposed to arrest, avert, dash down and overwhelm its accursed compeer! But it may not be. They have both reached in safety the place of their destination. Freedom and Slavery, in one and the same year, have landed on these American shores. And American Liberty, like the Victor of ancient Rome, is doomed, let us hope not for ever, to endure the presence of a fettered captive as a companion in her Car of Triumph!

Gentlemen of the New England Society in the City of New York—I must detain you no longer. In preparing to discharge the duty, which you have done me the unmerited honor to assign me in the celebration of this hallowed Anniversary, I was more than once tempted to quit the narrow track of re-

mark which I have now pursued, and indulge in speculations or discussions of a more immediate and general interest. But it seemed to me, that if there was any day in the year which belonged of right to the past and the dead, this was that day, and to the past and the dead I resolved to devote my exclusive attention. But though I have fulfilled that resolution, as you will bear me witness, with undeviating fidelity, many of the topics which I had proposed to myself seem hardly to have been entered upon—some of them scarcely approached. The principles of the Pilgrims, the virtues of the Pilgrims, the faults of the Pilgrims—alas! there are enough always ready to make the most of these—the personal characters of their brave and pious leaders, Bradford, Brewster, Carver, Winslow, Alden, Allerton, Standish,—the day shall not pass away without their names being once at least audibly and honorably pronounced—the gradual rise and progress of the Colony they planted, and of the old Commonwealth with which it was early incorporated, the origin and growth of the other Colonies, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Hampshire and the rest, which were afterwards included within the limits of New England, and many of the sons of all of which are doubtless present here this day—the history of New England as a whole, its great deeds and great men, its schools and scholars, its heroes and battle-fields, its ingenuity and industry, its soil,—hard and stony, indeed, but of inestimable richness in repelling from its culture the idle, the ignorant and the enslaved, and developing the energies of free, in-

telligent, independent labor—the influences of New England abroad as well as at home, its emigration, ever onward, with the axe in one hand and the Bible in the other, clearing out the wild growth of buckeye and hickory, and planting the trees of knowledge and of life, driving the buffalo from forest to lake, from lake to prairie, and from prairie to the sea, till the very memory of its existence would seem likely to be lost, but for the noble City, which its pursuers, pausing for an instant on their track, have called by its name, and founded on its favorite haunt—these and a hundred other themes of interesting and appropriate discussion, have, I am sensible, been quite omitted. But I have already exhausted your patience, or certainly my own strength, and I hasten to relieve them both.

It has been suggested, Gentlemen, by one of the French Travellers, whose opinions I have just cited, that, though the Yankee has set his mark on the United States during the last half century, and though ‘he still rules the Nation,’ that yet, the physical labor of civilization is now nearly brought to an end, the physical basis of society entirely laid, and that other influences are soon about to predominate in rearing up the social superstructure of our Nation. I hail the existence of this Association, and of others like it in all parts of the Union, bound together by the noble cords of ‘friendship, charity and mutual assistance,’ as a pledge that New England principles, whether in ascendancy or under depression in the Nation at large, will never stand in

need of warm hearts and bold tongues to cherish and vindicate them. But, at any rate, let us rejoice that they have so long pervaded the country and prevailed in her institutions. Let us rejoice that the basis of her society has been laid by Yankee arms. Let us rejoice that the corner-stone of our Republican edifice was hewn out from the old, original, primitive, Plymouth quarry. In what remains to be done, either in finishing or in ornamenting that edifice, softer and more pliable materials may, perhaps, be preferred—the New England granite may be thought too rough and unwieldy—the architects may condemn it—the builders may reject it—but still, still, it will remain the deep and enduring foundation, not to be removed without undermining the whole fabric. And should that fabric be destined to stand, even when bad government shall descend upon it like the rains, and corruption come round about it like the floods, and faction, discord, disunion, and anarchy blow and beat upon it like the winds,—as God grant it may stand forever!—it will still owe its stability to no more effective earthly influence, than, THAT IT WAS FOUNDED ON PILGRIM ROCK.

## NOTES.

Pages 15 and 16.—In this description, and in some other of the narrative portions of the Address, I have employed phrases and paragraphs gleaned here and there from the writings of Prince, Morton, and others, without deeming it necessary to disfigure the pages by too frequent a use of the *inverted commas*. I might cite abundant authority for such a liberty.

P. 28.—For the opportunity of perusing this Dialogue, I am indebted to Rev. Alexander Young, by whom it was copied from the Plymouth Church Records. I am happy to be able to add, that Mr. Young is engaged in preparing for the press, a volume to be entitled ‘The Old Chronicles of the Plymouth Colony, collected partly from original records and unpublished manuscripts, and partly from scarce tracts, hitherto unknown in this Country,’ in which this Dialogue will be contained, and which will be, in fact, a history of the Plymouth People, written by themselves, from 1602 to 1621. Mr. Young confidently expects to be able to recover or restore the most valuable portion of Gov. Bradford’s History, which was used by Prince and Hutchinson, but which disappeared during the War of the Revolution, and has been supposed to be irrecoverably lost.

P. 38.—Von Müller, in his Universal History, speaks of ‘the monument apparently *Punic*, which was found some years ago in the forests behind Boston,’ and adds, ‘it is possible that some Tyrians or Carthaginians, thrown by storms upon unknown coasts, uncertain if ever the same tracts might be again discovered, chose to leave this monument of their adventures.’ He refers, without doubt, to the same Rock at Dighton, which the Society of Northern Antiquaries in Denmark claim as conclusive evidence of the discovery of America by the Scandinavians.

P. 53.—The distinction of being the first person that set foot on Plymouth Rock has been claimed for others beside Mary Chilton, and particularly for *John Alden*. But I could not resist the remark of Judge Davis on this point, in one of his notes to Morton’s Memorial. After quoting the language of another, that ‘for the purposes of the arts a female figure, typical of faith, hope, and charity, is well adapted,’—he observes, that ‘as there is a great degree of uncertainty on this subject, it is not only grateful, but allowable, to indulge the imagination, and we may expect from the friends of John Alden, that they should give place to the lady.’









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