# Dedication

OF THE

# TOWN HALL, WAYLAND.

## Dec. 24, 1878.

# PROCEEDINGS

AT THE

# DEDICATION

OF THE

# TOWN HALL, WAYLAND

DECEMBER 24, 1878

WITH BRIEF HISTORICAL SKETCHES OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND LIBRARIES

WAYLAND
PREPARED AND PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY OF THE TOWN
MDCCCLXXIX


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39
ARCH ST
BOSTON.

# ORDER OF EXERCISES.

The Order of Exercises at the Dedication was as follows:—

MUSIC.

Cochituate Brass Band.

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS.

Jas. S. Draper, Esq., President of the Day.

VOCAL MUSIC.

By a Select Choir.

Delivery of the Keys, by H. B. Braman, Esq., Chairman of Building Committee; Reception of the Same, by Dr. C. H. Boodey, Chairman of the Board of Selectmen.

MUSIC.

By the Band.

DEDICATORY PRAYER.

Rev. E. L. Chase.

VOCAL MUSIC.

ADDRESS.

Elbridge Smith, Esq., Principal of Dorchester High School, a native of Wayland.

SINGING.

Old Hundred, by the Audience.

BENEDICTION.

Rev. T. A. Merrill.

# EXERCISES.

At the appointed hour for the dedicatory services the seats of the spacious hall were filled with citizens of Wayland and others interested in the occasion.

On the platform were seated some of the more venerable gentlemen of the town, prominent among whom was the Rev. JOHN B. WIGHT, whose silvery hairs and benign countenance entitled him to peculiar respect.

Select music having been performed by the band, the opening address was then delivered by JAMES S. DRAPER, Esq.

*Fellow-citizens of Wayland; Ladies and Gentlemen :* —

The occasion which brings us together so pleasantly to-day has no slight significance in the affairs of this town. The erection of this building, and the construction of the Cochituate Water Works, — begun and carried on with an unusual degree of unanimity in the public voice, — will mark the year 1878 as one of the most important in its history; while the events themselves will stand conspicuous on its annals. The one, providing a good supply of pure water, — so suggestive of health, convenience, the protection of property, and of general prosperity; — and the other, with its suite of rooms for town officers, its ample apartments for the Public Library, and

this capacious hall for public meetings, — with their several arrangements for convenience, their beauty of design and thoroughness of finish, — must both be classed, not as ephemeral, fanciful results, but as important, substantial, permanent public works.

Expenditures for such projects may startle the conservative elements, and evoke words of denunciation at their alleged extravagance. But, from another point of view, may it not be asked, Is Wayland doing anything more than keeping her proper place in the grand movements of the hour? Is she not acting in compliance with the principles of universal law, by which all higher civilization is reached, all nobler destiny wrought out?

To attempt *no improvement* is equivalent to going backward. To have no aspirations for something higher and better, to be entirely content with present attainments, indicates the near approach to a condition more to be dreaded than death. The individual or the community that fails to seize every golden opportunity to advance personal or social interests, *is false to a trust* delegated by an authority higher than human.

Under pressure of such considerations as these, what intense activity prevails at the present time in all departments of human knowledge and pursuit! With what startling rapidity the Old is supplanted by the New!

Where are the implements and tools indispensable to the mechanic and farmer only a few years ago? Laid aside for the better ones of to-day. Where are hosts of utensils for household use that were once the pride of the good housewife? Preserved in her attic as relics ; she has something better for daily use. Where are civil governments and social customs once venerated for their long line of descent or their supposed divine origin? Retired or retiring before the majestic march of enfranchised man. Ask that venerable person, surnamed

Theology, why he so often feels obliged to restate his old dogmas, — *to remodel his dress*, so to speak, — and, if he tells the truth, his reply will be, "To keep up with the present advanced style of thought, and make a respectable appearance in modern society."

The daily press of to-morrow will announce projects, discoveries, inventions, that seem among the impossibilities of to-day. A distinguished journalist declared a few weeks ago that more than a thousand men were at work perfecting the new processes for producing artificial light. And since the comparatively modern way of lighting this hall [1] was contracted for by our excellent Building Committee (whose fidelity to their trust bespeaks our gratitude), the active brains of scientific and inventive genius have so far completed new plans as to announce the fact that all the brilliant effects of the electric light can be produced by incandescence only, without the consumption of a particle of charcoal.[2] An almost costless illumination.

Verily, we may almost say this gas is an antiquated affair, and must be consigned to the kitchen to cook our breakfast with until Nature's storehouse is rummaged for something better.

But, to return to sober earnestness, the Great Deific Mind seems to be unlocking the chambers of his treasure-house, and inviting, yes, *urging*, his intelligent offspring to examine his hitherto secret methods, whereby this grand Çosmos has been evolved from universal chaos. And to observe how the same all-contriving mind and all-executing hand are, even now, in the full tension of their activity.

At no former time has the human mind reached such sublime

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[1] Aerated gas from gasoline.

[2] By using the charcoal pencils in hermetically sealed vessels filled with pure nitrogen gas.

heights of knowledge. At no period have its future destinies been so fully unfolded, and the paths by which those destinies may be reached been so clearly defined. And yet no limit can be fixed, no barrier erected to prevent (scarcely to check, even) the upward and onward course of human thought and human power. If, three centuries ago, a Copernicus received a heretic's doom for disclosing the true movements of half a dozen planets, what should be the fate of the scientists of our day, whose vision pierces to the very "soul of things," and before whom the mighty agencies of the uncounted ages, so utterly inscrutable to the past, now are seen to move in all the harmony of a Divine order?

Our duty, then, seems plain. *We must accept the New inevitably*, if progression and not retrogression be our motto. Accept it with the grumbling protest of the conservative, if that is our highest ideal of propriety, — or with the cheerful gratitude of the pioneer, as we may and ought. Standing ever ready to say farewell to the once fondly cherished, while with equal readiness we welcome the better conditions of the ever freshly opening future.

In this spirit, we this day pass from the Old to the New, — hopefully, trustfully, joyously. These walls, planned by architectural science, and now fresh from the skilled hands of artist and artisan, will be our teachers in æsthetic culture. Their purity and harmony will rebuke all vulgar-voiced expression; and even the floor we tread upon will invite to cleanliness and utter its protest against some habits for the indulgence of which humanity should blush for very shame.

Looking back from the position we now occupy to the "Old Hall" across the street, — to its predecessor over the "Green Store," — to the "Old Meeting-house," that did double service beneath the tall sycamore, and to its predecessors in the "Old

Burying-ground," where stood the primitive structure for public use, with its walls of logs and roof of thatch, — all of which served well their day, and are to be remembered with feelings of veneration, for they were the lower leaves of that architectural plant now expanded and flowering in more stately dimensions of beauty above us, — we see what progress has been made during the two centuries and over of our municipal life.

Is there now a citizen of Wayland who would willingly return to any of these former conditions? Any who would retrace even by a single step the path by which the present has been reached? If any such anomaly may be found, it may possibly be accounted for on the ground that a very few minds, fortunately or unfortunately, seem to reach an *ultima thule* — a point of "thus far shalt thou go and no farther;" — in fact, they exhibit some pretty clearly defined symptoms of being on the verge of fossilization.

One of the latest writers on our National Government has said: "The good order of society; the protection of our lives and our property; the promotion of religion and learning; the enforcement of statutes, or the upholding of the unwritten laws of just moral restraints, — mainly depend on the wisdom of the inhabitants of townships. Our town officers are, in the aggregate, of more importance than our Congressmen."[1] Accepting these sentiments, may we not add, that in providing this structure, where free deliberation, discussion, and action will be accorded to every citizen voter, and from whose apartments specially appropriated to our Free Public Library will flow, as from a perennial fountain, streams of refreshing literature to gladden, instruct, and elevate the individual mem-

[1] H. Seymour, LL.D., in "North American Review" for Sept. — Oct., 1878.

bers of all our homes, — we have contributed something towards attaining in a higher degree the results enumerated as lying at the basis, not only of our municipal but of our national prosperity.

The speed of the fleeting years, seemingly accelerated as life advances, admonishes us that our works of to-day, whether wisely or unwisely planned, — whether successfully or unsuccessfully carried out, — must soon be transmitted to posterity. In doing this, as one by one we are relieved from duty at these outposts of life for nobler service elsewhere, may we not truly, and with a just sense of pride, say of this edifice, We leave an inheritance for others worthy of the public spirit of our times.

After vocal music by a select choir, H. B. BRAMAN, Esq., accompanied the delivery of the keys by the following address and statements : —

*Mr. President and Fellow-citizens:* —

As Chairman of the Building Committee it devolves upon me at the present time to submit to you a brief statement of our doings. We received our appointment in Town Meeting Oct. 5, 1877, when it was "Voted, That H. B. Braman, Horace Heard, R. T. Lombard, Thos. J. Damon, and Alfred H. Bryant, be a committee with full powers to contract for and superintend the erection of a Town House in the central part of the town, suitable for Town Meetings, Town Officers, and the Public Library, at an expense not exceeding ten thousand dollars, to dispose of the present Town House, purchase land, if necessary, and obtain plans and specifications."

In compliance with the foregoing instructions, the committee invited competitions of architects and received drawings from fourteen well-known artists.

After a careful examination of the different plans submitted, the one made by Mr. Geo. F. Fuller, of Boston, was adopted by the committee.

As soon as drawings and specifications were prepared by the architect, they were submitted to contractors; and twenty-three proposals were received from responsible parties, varying in amount from eleven thousand to sixteen thousand five hundred dollars.

Mr. Wm. B. Stinson, of Malden, being the lowest, the contract was awarded to him, with a few changes in the plans, for the sum of nine thousand seven hundred dollars.

The building was commenced early in the month of May, and completed and accepted on the 26th day of October. We have had a constant supervision from its commencement until its completion, and have no hesitation in saying that the construction has been most thorough and complete. In the course of erection, very few changes were found necessary; the only extra expense incurred amounts to seven dollars, making the whole cost of construction, including the architect's commission, ten thousand and thirty-five dollars.

The contractor, Mr. Wm. B. Stinson, has fulfilled his contract in a faithful and honorable manner, according to the plans and specifications. We bear cheerful testimony to his ability and fidelity, and heartily commend him to any in want of his services.

We feel that much credit is due to the architect, Mr. Geo. F. Fuller, for the tasteful design and for the very careful preparation of drawings and specifications, thereby enabling the committee to complete the structure without any material alterations of the original plans. The fact that but a few dollars extra expense has been incurred by the committee in the construction of this beautiful edifice, is chiefly due to the forethought and skill of the architect.

*Mr. Chairman of the Board of Selectmen:* — This building, having been completed and accepted by the Building Committee, in their behalf I present to you these keys. The care and responsibility which has rested upon us will now devolve upon you. We have endeavored to carry out the vote of the Town, and feel confident that we have, this day, surrendered to you, the representative of the Town, "a building suitable for Town meetings, Town officers, and the Public Library," — a structure ornamental to our village, and well adapted to the present and prospective wants of the whole community.

Dr. C. H. Boodey, on receiving the keys, replied as follows: —

*Mr. Chairman, and Gentlemen of the Building Committee:* —

It is with pleasure that I am permitted to thank you for the interest, the good taste, and the sound judgment which you have manifested in selecting and adopting plans for this building, resulting in such convenience of arrangement, and so much artistic beauty; and also for your faithful superintendence of its construction.

You may be assured that these valuable services are appreciated by the inhabitants of this town, who are ready this day to congratulate you on the successful completion of your labors.

In their name and behalf I accept these keys, trusting, as the edifice now passes into the custody of the public, that it will ever be held sacred for all proper uses, and especially for the free exercise of the Elective Franchise, — that sovereign right by which the enjoyment of all other rights of citizenship is assured.

Fellow-citizens, let it ever be regarded as our privilege, as it will be our duty, so to use this building that our every act within its walls may adorn our individual lives as its architectural appearance beautifies this village.

Following a performance by the band, Rev. E. S. CHASE offered the Dedicatory Prayer. After a selection by the choir, the Dedicatory Address was delivered, as follows: —

## DEDICATORY ADDRESS

BY ELBRIDGE SMITH, ESQ., A.M.

*Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen:* —

The occasion which calls us together prescribes to me the subject of my address; and that subject is so broad and inviting, that I shall waste no words in apology or introduction. I was, I confess, inclined to criticise your choice of a speaker for this occasion; but I concluded that if you had erred in your selection, I had more inexcusably erred in my acceptance; and that it ill became me to question the correctness of a judgment which I had the best possible means of correcting. Many a friend of my boyhood would have brought you a clearer head, but none, I maintain, would have brought you a warmer heart. You have come, I trust, in the full exercise of that charity that suffereth long and is kind, and will excuse a freer use of the first personal pronoun than the canons of a strict criticism would sanction.

Those of you whose privilege it has been to live from childhood to manhood, and even to old age, amid the scenery of this dear old town, little understand, I imagine, the fond enthusiasm that swells in the breasts of those who return to these scenes of their childhood from other and distant fields of toil and duty.

On the eve of your first centennial, ninety-nine years since your separate corporate existence began, you throw open for public convenience these ample apartments. It is well that you

signalize this event by a formal act of dedication. The event will mark an era in your social and civil history. It means that the town has outgrown its previous accommodations, and that its municipal, intellectual, and social life has taken a wider range. It is not often the case that the outward marks of progress for a century can be so distinctly traced as can now be done in this beautiful country village. At the beginning of your corporate life, and for nearly forty years afterwards, our fathers felt no need of a town-house save what they found in their meeting-house. Their religious, military, and civil life was so blended that they felt no incongruity in voting their taxes, laying out their highways, marshalling their trainbands, and, in fact, ordering their whole secular life where they met to worship God. The meeting-house was the armory and the magazine, not only of their spiritual but of their temporal warfare. The exhortation of the great Cromwell, "Trust in the Lord and keep your powder dry," sunk deep into the Puritan heart. The Puritan churches were literally as well as figuratively militant.

The meeting-house of a hundred years ago, in which the first town-meetings of East Sudbury were held, still stands in a modified form beside its more imposing successor. When the present meeting-house of the first parish was built, it was rightly judged too nice for the stirring and sometimes tumultuous scenes which characterized the town-meeting. The old meeting-house was transformed into the town-hall, which, for twenty-five years, was found sufficient for the varied municipal, secular, and social wants of the town. The town-hall, however, had a pretty active rival on the opposite side of the brook. The tavern-hall had certain conveniences and attractions which the town-hall could not boast; and the successive landlords had little hesitation, and suffered no loss, in showing a generous hospitality to the lyceum, to the dancing-school, to the private grammar-school, the scientific or popular lecture, and sometimes to the justice court.

Meanwhile, the centre school-house had served nearly two generations, and was beginning to feel the infirmities of age. A new school-house must be built, and the occasion was a favorable one for the erection of a larger building, which should at once accommodate the district and the town. And there was soon made provision for a public library which was destined to achieve so honorable a distinction as to give the free public library to the State, and become a great example to the nation.

It would be most grateful to my own feelings to pause here and notice at some length the events and the characters with which these structures are associated, and give utterance to the thoughts which they suggest to the mind. I would gladly dwell upon the old meeting-house,— the meeting-house of the revolution,— which I never saw in its primitive form, but which I so thoroughly learned by tradition that I feel scarcely less acquainted with it than with that to which I was led to worship in my childhood. Built by loyal subjects of the house of Hanover, in its devotions were often heard supplications for the success of our colonial arms at Louisburg and in the West Indies, on the St. Lawrence, on the Ohio, at Ticonderoga, and Crown Point, and devout thanksgivings for victories at Dettingen, at Cape Breton, at Minden, at Quebec, at Saratoga, and Yorktown. Its pulpit did its full share in training its congregation for the almost ceaseless conflicts with the mother country, through which the colonies passed during the last century. Fain would I notice the long pastorate of the Rev. Josiah Bridge, whose descendants in the last generation were so conspicuous in your social and civil life. Born in Lexington, and trained, in his youth, under the ministries of the Revs. John Hancock and Jonas Clarke, with two of his near kinsmen in Capt. Parker's company, we may well suppose that the east parish of Sudbury heard no uncertain sound from their spiritual watchman when the sword came on the land in

the earlier years of his ministry. I would glance at the much briefer ministry of the Rev. Joel Foster, in a period of even greater bitterness in political controversy and of scarcely less moment in our national history.

I would gladly follow the old meeting-house across the brook, after it had resigned the care of the church, which it sheltered for almost a century, there still to show its fondness for the town. Its stout timbers of sturdy oak, so thoroughly seasoned by the stern Calvinism of the Rev. Israel Loring, and the milder theology of the Rev. William Cooke, by discussions on the Stamp Act and the Boston Port Bill, would take no alarm from the vociferous debates on questions of local policy; and it was in no spirit of jealousy or schism that it welcomed back some portion of its former spiritual charge, and felt its young life renewed by the eloquence of that son of thunder, Lyman Beecher. I would gladly venture, with reverent steps, upon still more sacred ground, and recall scenes still fresh in the memories of some who hear me. I would take you with me upon some summer Sabbath morning to the first parish meeting-house, then in the freshness and beauty of its youth; and, after a long walk beneath the burning sun, we would pause for a moment in the delicious shade of its northern front, and climb the iron balustrade to enjoy the cool north-western breeze until the pastor should arrive. From the farm, the street, the plain, the Concord and the South roads, the devout worshippers are rapidly assembling. The horses come up the gentle slope at a smart trot, and after discharging their precious freight, the matrons and maidens of the parish retire silently across the beautiful green carpet to the sheds in the rear. The leading men of the town exchange their cordial weekly greetings in the porch or on the steps; the silver tones of the tolling bell, mingling with the radiance and stillness of the hour, diffuse a pleasing serenity over the scene, and raise the soul to that rapture of emotion — that divinest

melancholy of which Milton speaks — and though not the essence of worship, is its essential preparative.

I would point you to the loved and loving pastor, then in the prime of his virtuous manhood (whose gray hairs and venerable form on the verge of fourscore and ten are our pride and delight here to-day), entering the meeting-house with that benignity and courtesy which were in themselves an educating force. I would have you see him pass up the broad aisle and climb the long winding pulpit stairs, robed in that surplice of flowing silk in which the ladies of the town had clothed the pastor that they loved. I would have you listen with the ears of childhood to the invocation, to the reading of the Nineteenth Psalm in the good old Saxon of King James, and to the singing of the same in the metrical version of Dr. Watts: "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handy work. Day unto day uttereth speech and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. The law of the Lord is perfect converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure making wise the simple. Who can understand his errors, cleanse thou me from secret faults. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord my strength and my Redeemer."

Behold, the morning sun
  Begins his glorious way;
His beams through all the nations run
  And life and light convey.
But where the Gospel comes
  It spreads diviner light;
It calls dead sinners from their tombs
  And gives the blind their sight.

My gracious God, how plain
Are thy directions given!
Oh, may I never read in vain,
But find the path to heaven.

I have attended, not without interest, the imposing service of vast cathedrals, in which were combined all the influences that attract the eye or charm the ear. I have heard

. . . the pealing organ blow
To the full-voiced choir below
In service high and anthems clear.

I have seen ecclesiastical dignitaries arrayed in all the splendors of sacerdotal power; but in the simple, sincere, and artless worship of yonder meeting-house there was an impressiveness and a sanctity which conflicting creeds and scholastic dogmas have never been able to efface. And so, with Mr. Emerson,

I love the venerable house
Our fathers built to God.
. . . . . .
There holy thoughts a light have shed
From many a radiant face,
And prayers of tender hope have spread
A perfume through the place.

From humble tenements around
Came up the pensive train
And in the church a blessing found
That filled their homes again.

They dwell with God, their homes are dust.
But there their children pray,
And in this fleeting lifetime trust
To find the narrow way.

I would take you to the Lyceum of forty years ago; but you must pause a moment ere you cross the threshold, and lay aside all your sectarian robes and theological phylacteries; neither Unitarian nor Trinitarian nor Baptist nor Methodist can enter here. You must go as the conflicting states of ancient Greece

went up to their Olympia, under strict bonds of religious and political neutrality. You should listen to the lectures, and debates, and the essays, and learn that the Lyceum of to-day, with its intinerant lecturer with his pompous rhetoric and sensational eloquence, is far inferior, as an educator, to the original Lyceum as it came from the pure mind and heart of Josiah Holbrook, and in which were trained so many effective speakers and debaters, in which so many mature minds gained broader views, and so many young minds first felt the thirst for knowledge. It was in the Lyceum of the adjoining town that a young shoemaker began a career that ended in the Vice-Presidency of the United States.

I would take you into the district school-houses, those brick martello towers which used to dot our cross-roads and hillsides. You should there see the barefooted infantry just beginning to learn

> How hard it is to climb the steep
> Where Fame's proud temple shines afar.

Those little urchins and bright-eyed misses look as shy and wary as the young partridges in the neighboring thickets. But when they take the floor you shall see no skulking nor timidity. In the flash of their eyes, the smile of their countenances, and the clear ring of their voices, sending forth their words like pistol-shots, you would find a promise to be realized in all the fair fields of manly and womanly achievement. That boy at the head, with a ten-cent piece hung from his neck, is the intellectual bellwether of the class. In a few years you will be very likely to see him at the Cambridge Commencement, in his Oxford cap and gown, delivering the valedictory or salutatory. I would by all means have you there on committee day. You would find that the school-house had been most thoroughly

swept, washed, and garnished the preceding evening from turret to foundation-stone. Plentiful supplies of pine, hemlock, and evergreen have been plundered from the adjoining woods. Any want of taste in the arrangement is more than compensated by the abundance of the supply of the raw material. The teacher's work is light to-day. Sometime before the regular hour, all the scholars, in their best attire, are in their seats; the parents have gathered and filled all the vacant space, and all is hushed awaiting a crisis. Those scholars in District No. 4 are resolved not to be outdone in conduct or scholarship by those of Nos. 1, 2, 3, 5, or 6. That girl who sits near the window, and can command a view of the road, is the sentinel of the occasion. She is very studious, but she will do what girls so well know how to do, — she will keep watch of the road. At last her countenance proclaims by a gentle flush and a glance of the eye that the committee have arrived. In a moment a rap is heard at the door. The master opens it, and the scholars all arise and remain standing until the committee are seated. In a moment the grand review begins in the old Roman fashion, with the skirmishing of the light troops — the a-b-c-darians; and then the classes proceed in long array from the alphabet to Blair's Rhetoric, from the multiplication table to the profound mysteries of single and double position, from the punctuation to the canons of Aristotle; from the a-b abs to the concert spelling of the long sesquipedalian words; from the primer to the tale of Troy divine; from the calling of Abraham to the Declaration of Independence, until the committee, wearied and amazed that so small heads can carry so much knowledge, kindly remark, "That is sufficient."

*Claudite jam rivos, pueri; sat prata biberunt.*

Meanwhile, the writing-books and manuscripts are passed round for examination; specimens of map-drawing are exhibited,

and some samplers display the skill of cunning fingers and record the family history. The evening shadows have become too deep for continued work, and in the dim religious twilight you may listen for a moment to words of wisdom, warning, and encouragement from lips of gentleness and grace, and the scene will close with prayer from one whose reverent demeanor and consistent life will give double sway to his utterance.

I would most gladly continue to trace these threads of thrilling, sad, humorous, and pleasing reminiscence. I would trace them to the riverside and to the fireside, to hill and valley, to field and grove, to streamlet and stream; but the occasion demands a more serious word and more directly suited to the time and place.

Why has this building been reared? Why, in times called hard, have you esteemed this structure not a luxury, not a convenience merely, but a necessity? What is its real civil and political significance? It has been built by no party; it is appropriated to no sect. The man who pays only his poll-tax owns as much of this building as your wealthiest citizen. Such a building is hardly required out of New England. Had you a fine old feudal castle with its towers and battlements, its hall and bower, its moat and drawbridge, upon the top of Reeves's hill, you would never have needed this town-house, or I should rather say you might never have felt its need. Had our fathers maintained their loyalty to his most gracious majesty beyond the sea, we might even now be sharing with our Canadian brethren all the honors that flow from the presence of a royal princess. Had they been willing to give up their town-meeting, and drop all meddling with questions of State policy, you would never have been inclined to add this ornament to your village. But they had a very profound impression that they knew their own business best, and that no one

should do for them what they could do for themselves. You have and need a town-house, then, for the very simple reason that you are in the habit of holding town-meetings.

We are but just beginning to learn the greatness of a town government. It was a great French publicist, who came among us more than forty years ago, and taught us the real significance and greatness of the town organization and the town-meeting. Whence came the New England town? What Lycurgus or Solon, what Bacon or Locke, what seven wise men, what conclave or synod, laid down the laws which have so completely harmonized conflicting interests and welded into one glowing and fervid body politic the secular and religious forces which have so often sundered states and empires? The New England town-meeting was a growth, not a creation. No lawgiver devised and balanced its framework. Its several elements appeared as the occasion demanded. Its executive feature — the Board of Selectmen — may be clearly traced to its source in the meeting of the freeholders of Dorchester on the eighth of Oct., 1633. "It is ordered that for the general good and well ordering of the affairs of the plantation, there shall be every Monday before the Court, by 8 o'clock A.M., and presently by the beating of the drum, a general meeting of the inhabitants of the plantation at the meeting-house, there to settle and set down such orders as may tend to the general good as aforesaid, and every man to be bound thereby without gainsaying or resistance. It is also agreed that there shall be twelve men *selected* out of the company, that may, or the greatest part of them, meet as aforesaid to determine as aforesaid; yet so far as it is desired that the most of the plantation will keep the meeting constantly, and all that are there, though not of the twelve, shall have a free voice as any of the twelve, and that the greater vote, both of the twelve and the other, shall be of force

and efficacy as aforesaid. And it is likewise ordered, that all things concluded as aforesaid shall stand in force and be obeyed until the next monthly meeting, and afterwards if it be not contradicted and otherwise ordered at said monthly meeting by the greatest vote of those that are present as aforesaid."

This vote, but a temporary arrangement at the time, was adopted the next year by Watertown, and in the year following by Charlestown. It was little thought by the earnest freemen of that meeting that they had founded a prime feature in a civil institution which, at the distance of two centuries and a quarter, should guide the destinies of nearly fifteen hundred municipalities in New England, and, in a modified form, should have carried civilization across the continent. This form of town government, little different from what we see to-day, was approved and perfected by the General Court in 1636, and soon extended to the other colonies, — Plymouth, Connecticut, and New Haven, — and in ten years, at the time of the formation of the New England Confederacy, there were forty-nine distinct townships. Think for a moment upon their relative importance to the world's progress and civilization, or, as our Darwinian friends would say, consider their environment.

It was an important era in the history of this town. It was the year in which John Rutter built your first meeting-house for six pounds (and his name is a guarantee that he did the work well; and it seems worthy of mention that it was, as I suppose, a descendant of his — Gen. Micah Maynard Rutter — who was chairman of the committee who built the last church built by the town). It was the year in which Louis XIV. came to the throne of France, and began the longest reign in European history; it was the year in which the French began to colonize South America; it was the year in which Condé won the battle of Rocroi; it was the year in which these

settlers in Sudbury were saddened by the news of the deaths of Hampden and Pym. (They probably did not hear that a cousin of Hampden's was enlisting and drilling a regiment of horse; they will hear of them the next year at Marston Moor, and the year following at Naseby.) Charles I. was fighting his parliament; Germany was in the last agonies of the thirty years' war; Lutheran, Calvinist, and Romanist will soon agree at Westphalia to live and let live in matters of conscience. Galileo has just died; Isaac Newton is one year old; Descartes is busy with his vortices and analysis; Kepler will soon lay down the laws of planetary motion. These are some of the salient points in the political, religious, and scientific worlds. Absolutism is in the ascendant, and democracy, shielded by three thousand miles of ocean, unnoticed and scarcely known, is learning to debate civil and religious questions freely, to respect the will of the majority in town-meeting, to bow reverently to the verdict of a jury and the decisions of a magistrate.

These settlers in Sudbury, occupying one of the outposts of civilized life, gazed westward across their little Mississippi (in whose spring-tide they saw no unworthy compeer of the Great Father of Waters) upon a continent vast, unexplored, and uncultivated, the home of savage beasts and of more savage men. Its inland seas had been unvisited; its rivers flowed in unappreciated beauty and magnificence to distant and undiscovered oceans;

> . . . . . its continuous woods,
> Where rolled the Oregon, and heard no sound
> Save his own dashings,

waved over solemn and awful solitudes; its boundless prairies were deepening their dark rich mould and affording a paradise for the buffalo and the antelope; its cataracts, its Niagaras and Yosemites, wasted their thunders on the desert air. It is true

that the great valley had been the abode of something like a civilization, but its cyclopean remains, stretching from the lakes to the isthmus, undiscovered then, even now serve rather to deepen and intensify the mysteries which enshroud a country where man has been, but has ceased to be, than to bring it within the range of human sympathies, associations, and traditions.

The wilderness immediately around them was filled with real and imaginary horrors. Both the flora and the fauna were new and strange. The esculent vegetation was unknown or but sparingly and suspiciously tasted. The river and its numerous tributaries furnished many a delicious meal to appetites that had been strengthened by toil and sharpened by scarcity. The woods, with their stout growth of timber, oak, pine, and hemlock, and the thickets, sometimes almost impenetrable, were peopled by reptiles more dreaded than the wolf and the wildcat. When we contemplate these colonists in their log-huts, cut off from all communication with the old abodes of civilization, just fringing the eastern coastline of this vast continent, our feelings vibrate between admiration and pity. It is hard to see how any theory of "natural election," or "survival of the fittest," or "power without us tending to righteousness," can satisfy all the conditions of the problem. We rise instinctively above the range of second causes and natural laws, and find repose only in the sublime faith which filled and fired their souls. We leave them for a few moments with their Bible, their meeting-house, and their town-meeting.

Turn now to the very focus and centre of the world's culture, wealth, and power. In the year 1643, as I have already stated, the very year in which the forty-nine hamlets in New England had united in a common league against the wilderness and its savage tenants, Louis XIV. ascended the throne of France.

That throne was reared upon trophies which had been accumulating during sixteen centuries. Julius Cæsar, Clovis, Charles Martel, Charlemagne, had each in his turn contributed to its strength. Overrun by the Roman legions, France received language, laws, and institutions from her conquerors, and early took her place at the head of the march of European civilization. She led the van in the Holy War, which, for more than two centuries, enlisted the enterprise and the fanaticism of Europe for the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre, and she received in return her full share of the benefits and the curses resulting from those expeditions. The genius of Richelieu had contrived, that, while Spain, Germany, and Holland had been prostrated by thirty years of war, France should derive all the real advantages resulting from the conflict.

It is not, however, to coincidence of time merely, but rather to the absolute contrast in civil and political procedure, — the imposing array of rank, power, and precedent on the one side, and the utter absence of them on the other, — to which I desire to direct your attention. It is from these positive and negative theories of government, as illustrated in French and American history, — the theory of absolute monarchy and of absolute democracy, — that I think we may gather instruction suited to this time and place. Louis XIV. announced his theory of government in that celebrated saying, which has passed into proverb, "I AM THE STATE." And for a time that concise theory seemed triumphantly successful. Europe had never seen such display. The proconsuls and Cæsars in their three hundred triumphs, their arches and their amphitheatres, had far less of real grandeur than was seen in the magnificence of Versailles, Marly, and Paris. In all the great departments of human action, in the arts of peace or war, in literature, in science, — everything that can fire the imagination or please the fancy, — the court of the

grand monarch attained a distinction that awakened no less alarm than admiration.

Vauban carried the science of attack and defence to the highest perfection — reared or repaired three hundred citadels, directed fifty-three sieges, and was present in one hundred and forty-three battles. In the Cabinet there were names of equal distinction. In the Church, Massillon, Bourdaloue, and Bossuet reached the summit of pulpit eloquence, while Fénelon eclipsed them all, not indeed in the finish and force of his periods, but in that higher eloquence of life and power of character which made Louis, as centuries before it had made Felix, tremble. Cassini and Pascal taught science; Perrault built the Louvre; Mansard gave new architectural glories to Paris; Lebrun and Poissin painted; Racine and Corneille wrote tragedy, and Molière comedy. Nor was the ambition of Louis confined to the Old World. The time was when his rule seemed as firmly established from the mouth of the St. Lawrence, along the lakes and down the valley to the mouth of the Mississippi, as from the Seine to the Loire. For some years the Mississippi bore the name Colbert, in honor of his great minister, and Louisiana still retains the name which Lasalle gave it to express his loyalty to his sovereign; and the patron saint of France has given name to that great city whose geographical position seems to mark it for the future capital of the nation.

"The heir of all ages foremost in the files of time," there stood Old France, threatening the liberties of Europe, conquering by her arms or corrupting by her gold. New France, or France in America, held by unquestioned claims territories equal to all Europe,— territories extending from tropical heat to polar cold. Spain and Portugal divided between them the rest of the continent, with the exception of the coastline occupied by colonies from England. As Spain, France, and Portugal were foremost

in the work of discovery, so were they also in attempts at the work of colonization. Old Europe was thus to be transferred to the New World. Castilian pride and French culture with feudal notions of government, English pluck and manhood, in its Puritan form, were placed upon this great theatre to struggle for its mastery under their respective forms of civil and religious polity. New Spain was organized indolence; New France was a modified feudalism; and New England was organized industry, thrift, and enterprise. Which shall win the continent?

The New England, to all outward appearance, is greatly surpassed by the new France and the new Spain. She has left her loved island-home with no parental blessing, but with the foul stain of non-conformity in religion and disloyalty in politics. She occupies but a strip of territory, but she starts with the TOWN-MEETING. With no abstract theories of government, and no great affection for dynasties or nobilities, these sturdy Britons legislated for each emergeney as it arose. All questions of boundary, of equity, taxation, religion, and magistracy were discussed and settled by the whole body of freemen. When the labor became too great, and the meetings too frequent, and, we may suppose, the debates too protracted, they followed the Mosaic injunction, and *selected* wise men, who were to hear the cause that was too hard, and decide it with the right of appeal to the town. And so in five years from the arrival of the first settlers of Salem, Dorchester, Boston, and Charlestown, we find all the essential elements of a town government as it now exists in New England, and where it has become the wonder and admiration of the civilized world. If you will spread out before you a map of North America, and, without the least reference to political organization, mark with intelligent care those portions in which the great ends of human society have been most completely attained, where life, liberty, and property have been

the most abundant and at the same time the most sacred, and where intellect has put forth in its richest luxuriance, you will find, when your work is complete, that you have marked with remarkable accuracy the habitat of the town-meeting; you will find that you have included those divisions where the rights of majorities and minorities are both regarded; where the verdict of a jury is respected because it is honest and intelligent; and where all bow with respectful submission to the decision of a judge, because they know that judge cannot be bought. Nor is it difficult, I apprehend, to find the secrets of this strange power which resides in the town organization. It recognizes the rights of the humblest, and it cowers not in the presence of the wealthiest and most powerful.

It is worthy of remark how early the tenderest regard for the rights of all became manifest. I find in the early history of Dorchester that any man, though not a freeman, was allowed to attend town-meeting and lay before the town any grievance, and in an orderly manner to ask for redress. As its great aim was to protect the persons and property of all, so it presented a strong stimulus to the minds of all, and thus became an educating force of the highest order. The numberless questions arising in their new relations, — questions of education and religion, of boundary, territory, and highway; questions of subsistence for the passing hour, and questions of well-being when the heavens and earth should have passed away, — all these were pressed upon the mind of the New England colonists with an urgency from which there was no escape. The tough problems of their secular life, and the tougher problems of their theology, allowed no sluggishness of spirit, no indolence of body or mind. And when they gathered in town-meeting, discussion became a relief to minds burdened with thought, and interchange of opinions taught them to respect conflicting views, and to yield

in form, if not in feeling, to the vote of the majority. Nor did their debates cease in the town-meeting; they were adjourned to the field and the fireside. The cheerful circle of neighbors, gathered by chance or by invitation around the winter fire, or in the sheltering shade from summer heat, discussed the articles of the town-warrant, and anticipated or supplemented the action of the town-meeting. And this process of education you will readily perceive extended to all ages and conditions. The child of tender years shared its influence and partook of its power; maidens and matrons, with no right of suffrage recognized by law, not unfrequently directed that suffrage by a higher law than legislators and lawgivers can ordain or revoke. And so, with diversities of manners sometimes strongly marked, there grew up a unity of aim and spirit which had more than the force of a great central power. These little independent states, or nations, as they have been termed, have grown up side by side, have been multiplied, divided, and subdivided to the round number of fifteen hundred without shedding one drop of blood in civil strife, and without one conflict of interest which could not be settled in the supreme or General Court. Questions which have shaken the very pillars of continental Europe, and let loose the havoc of war from Cadiz to Archangel, from the Dardanelles to the Orkneys, have been settled by a vote in town-meeting by twelve men in a jury-box, or by a few calm words from the chief justice of the supreme court. The central force around which these communities have crystallized has been the *town-meeting*.

The religious controversies of New England, bitter though they have sometimes been, have never shaken the deep and solid foundations of the town-meeting polity. It is true that church and state have been separated, parishes have been sundered, families have been divided, but these changes, unlike

similar ones in the old world, have kindled no Smithfield fires, nor left behind them the blackened and smouldering ruins of whole cities to mark their career of desolation. Our fathers, and some of us now present, have differed about the strait and narrow way that leadeth unto life, but we have travelled in perfect harmony the rugged highways that lead us to the schoolhouse and the meeting-house. We have not always sat around the same communion table, but we have always used precisely the same multiplication table; and so the school — the great bulwark reared by the fathers against Satan — has remained beloved and inviolate. The people of Old Sudbury have once and again divided their territory, but they all still retain the same government. The original town acknowledged, nay was proud of its loyalty to Charles Stuart; it was even more loyal to the Commonwealth and its great Protector; it returned to the Stuarts; it shook off the tyranny of James II.; it welcomed the Prince of Orange, and was ardently devoted to the House of Brunswick; it defied George III.; it adhered to the Provincial and Continental Congresses; it upheld the Confederation, and for ninety years has been true to the Federal Constitution. Changes of dynasty, revolutions and reconstructions, have left your succession of boards of selectmen more peaceful and perfect than was that of the Pharaohs or Cæsars. Nor is this all: the town-meeting has been the special object of royal displeasure. James II. ordered its discontinuance; George III. obtained with supreme satisfaction from his parliament an act abolishing town-meetings in Massachusetts. Abolish town-meetings! Why did he not abolish the Gulf Stream, and stay the ebb and flow of the tide in Boston Harbor? And so this form of government proceeding from the people, carried on by the people for the people, has been the adamantine foundation upon which your higher political structures have been reared; your legislatures, your courts.

your county commissions, your city charters, all rest upon the primitive granite of the town. The "stars and stripes" do not float from the summit of Beacon Hill in Boston on the first Monday in March. Governor and councillor, senator and representative, from Barnstable to Berkshire, presume not to sit in council while the sovereigns to whom they owe allegiance are holding court at the town-house. Once only in our history has there been the semblance of domestic violence; but even that was not directed against the towns; it was aimed at the courts and the Legislature. I do not justify it, but I cannot wonder at it.

When I have stood upon the summit or slopes of Reeves's Hill, which command the river view from Beaver Hole to Sherman's Bridge, and gazed upon one of the fairest scenes in Middlesex, — fields clothed in the richest luxuriance of Ceres' golden reign, melting into the meadows at one time clinging close to the river banks, and then widening into the broad expanse of Sweetham and Landham; the causeways with their willow-tufted banks; the river creeping on its silver-winding way; the farm with its fertile and fruitful acres, its giant oaks, its historic elms with their pendent branches waving gracefully in the breeze; the cattle reposing beneath their shade, or grazing on the green-sward,

> Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood
> Arrayed in living green;

the copses and the thickets; the woods rising in grandeur around the cultivated plain, with Nobscut, Green, and Goodman's Hills in the immediate background, and Wachusett, Monadnock, and Chicorua in the horizon, rearing their Atlantean summits against the sky, — when I have seen these meadows, intended by bounteous Heaven for the sustenance of your flocks and herds, con-

verted into a millpond or pestilential marsh, and reflected that for two centuries you have been denied relief in the county and General Courts, and that all this has been borne without one act of violence,— I realize the truth of what De Tocqueville said when he affirmed that nowhere in the world is the authority of law so absolute as in America. And I may be allowed to add that you seem to me to have carried your obedience close to that point where it ceases to be a virtue. May we not hope that this part of our fair domain shall yet be redeemed. When Boston shall have taken from the head-waters of the river all she needs for her health, cleanliness, and adornment; when improved drainage, dredging, and engineering shall have cleared the stream; when Miss Hosmer and Mr. Gary shall complete their magnetic motors, which they promise us shall work so much cheaper than water, may we not hope that our river shall be allowed to flow unobstructed to the sea, and be no longer (to use the emphatic language of one of your citizens) "dammed at both ends, and cussed in the middle."

A few facts from our history will show that I have not overstated the efficiency of the town organization in those great crises which test the strength and tax the resources of states. I have tried to sketch the aspect of Europe and America at the time of the confederation of 1643. Advance a century in European and colonial history. Europe is in one of her dynastic convulsions, — the Silesian wars. France and England were arrayed on opposite sides in the conflict. War between Old France and Old England was also war between New France and New England. France was more liberal as a military power in her colonial policy than England. She had exhausted her military science and had spent thirty millions of francs in building the Dunkirk of America to guard her fisheries on the Grand Banks, to protect the valley of the St. Lawrence, and

to menace New England. The town-meeting colonies, without one soldier or one dollar from the mother country, and with but little aid from her navy, planted the provincial flag of Massachusetts Bay on the battlements of Louisburg, — the most brilliant achievement in a war made memorable by Dettingen and Fontenoy.

The loss of Louisburg was a keen affront to the military pride of France, and marked the colonies as objects for early and terrible revenge. Scarcely ten years had passed before the alarms of war again were heard along three thousand miles of frontier. France took to her alliance the untamed savage, and thought of nothing less than absolute submission or complete extermination. Possessed of twenty of the twenty-five parts of the continent, and leaving four twenty-fifths to Spain, it seemed an easy matter to conquer and appropriate the remaining twenty-fifth. But France did not consider the vast difference between subject and citizen, nor had England but a dreamy conception of it. The French colonists flocked to no town-meeting; in danger and difficulty, their only resort was to the governor and to the throne. But the five hundred parliaments that gathered in the meeting-houses along the Connecticut, the Charles, and the Merrimac, and on the shores of Narragansett Bay, were more than a match for the war-councils of the savage, and in practical wisdom in colonial affairs, were as much superior to the great parliament in Westminster. Cæsar tells us that in one of his battles, when he fought, not for victory but for life, it was of the greatest advantage that the soldiers, trained in previous conflicts, knew exactly what to do, and without waiting for orders, took their places in the ranks and did good service against the enemy. This was precisely the case in our colonial history. The colonists were always in advance of the mother country. The pompous Braddocks, the cowardly Abercrombies, and the haughty

Loudouns, sent over at the beginning of the seven years' war, to patronize, to discipline, and lead to victory the yeomen of America, were despised by half the soldiers whom they led to slaughter.

But a brighter day was at hand. The great English commoner was called to the helm of state. His imperial will was guided by intelligence, and his commanding eloquence spake not for prerogative or rank alone, but for all England. He sympathized with the colonists, and they rallied to his call as clansmen to the summons of their chief. The exertions and sacrifices of these towns at this crisis almost surpass belief. But they knew the nature of the conflict, and marched to the plains of Abraham as cheerfully as to their own village parade. Massachusetts sent six thousand eight hundred men, and she had spent a million in the cause the previous years. In the conflict on that memorable field were staked the destinies of colonial America. It was one of the most dramatic fields in all history. Numbers nor multitudes, it is true, were not ordained to the contest; but all the interest that can be derived from variety of character and culture, race and religion, from the near and the remote, from antecedents and consequents, from influences reaching backward to the first upheaval of the continent and forward to its final doom, representatives of the highest civilization which the world had reached, ranged side by side with those who knew only the rude arts of the stone age; from the disciples of Rome and Geneva, prelatical absolutism and pure congregationalism, worshippers of the Virgin and of the Great Spirit, memories of Champlain, Lasalle, Brébeuf, and Guercheville; from the holy rites and solemn vows with which the city was founded, with its seminary, its hospital, and its convent, before it had a population; memories of the captivities and cruelties of more than a century of border warfare; the desolation of Acadia

(now partially atoned for by the verses of our own Longfellow); Louisburg, twice captured and dismantled; from naval and military display; from natural scenery in the full blaze of its autumnal glories,— these were some of the influences that centred on a field where a continent was the price of the conflict. There was Montcalm, our most dangerous and most honorable foe, a scholar, a soldier, a gentleman, and a patriot, with scars and honor brought from German and Italian fields; there was Wolfe, weak and diminutive in body but great and valiant in soul, uttering from his scholarly lips, in the very manner and spirit of the Greek chorus, as he moved on his pathway of glory to his grave: —

> The heavens above him for his tent.
> And all around the night,

the verses of that immortal Elegy: —

> The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power.
> And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
> Await alike the inevitable hour, —
> The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

"Gentlemen," said he to his fellow-officers in the boat, "I would rather be the author of that poem than to take Quebec." In the fleet was James Cook, then unknown to fame, studying his Euclid and improving his seamanship. In ten years he will be observing the transit of Venus on the other side of the globe, will give his name to lands and waters then undiscovered and his life to science and to man. Side by side with Montcalm was Bourgainville, then a soldier, soon to become a sailor and rival Cook as a navigator, explore Pacific archipelagos, be the first to carry the flag of France around the world, then mount the quarter-deck in the French navy and help us gain our independence. There was Isaac Barré, the adjutant of Wolfe,

destined to lose his eyesight in the struggle, then to become our defender in parliament, and for ever remain the admiration of every American school-boy. There was Richard Montgomery, the promising young soldier, now risking his life to plant the standard of St. George on the battlements of Quebec, and in sixteen years destined to lose that life on that very spot in an attempt to replace it by the provincial flag of America. There was Richard Gridley, artillerist and engineer, who planned Long Wharf in Boston Harbor and built its first pier, dropped the first bombshell in the citadel of Louisburg fourteen years before, now raising to the heights, by the strong arms of his provincial troops, all the artillery to be used in the battle; in sixteen years he will draw the lines and direct the fortifications on Bunker Hill and be wounded in their defence; then, from his works on Dorchester Heights, compel his superior officer to evacuate Boston, and drive forever from the waters of Massachusetts Bay the hostile flag of England. That superior officer was William Howe, who was learning, under Wolfe, those arts of war by which he was to force at such fearful cost the lines at Bunker Hill and gain a Pyrrhine victory. Such were some of the personnel gathered upon that memorable field.

But more than all, and above all, more interesting because more interested, were the Canadian peasantry and the New England yeomen; more than the English veteran, whose tattered banner told of victories beyond the sea; more than the plaided Highlander; more than the regiments of Languedoc, Bearne, and Guienne,— names which carry the imagination back to feudal scenes and mediæval conflicts; more than the titled leaders who fought with equal courage on either continent, and followed their banners without questioning the merits of their cause,— were those who fought, not for the smiles of princes, but for their wives and children, their faith and their firesides. Foes by

race and national traditions, the followers of creeds more hostile than race or nation could make them, they now stood face to face on a fairer field than any on which they had before met. On the one side was political and religious absolutism, the most extreme form of unquestioning and unquestioned obedience; on the other, the extreme doctrine of individual freedom and responsibility — the Spartan and the Athenian, the subject and the citizen, the man who does what he is told to do and the man who commands himself. Of the regiments who bore the brunt of that charge, led by Montcalm in person, and held their fire as they did afterwards at Bunker Hill till not a bullet should be wasted, three out of four were Americans,— Americans who had debated and voted in your town-meetings, held your ploughs, manned your fishermen, swung your scythes and axes, tilled your fields, and reaped your harvests.

That bloody day virtually gave the continent of North America to the British crown and placed England on the highest pinnacle of glory that she has ever attained. And had she known at the Treaty of Paris the things that belonged to her peace and prosperity, had she followed the teachings of her Chathams and her Burkes, the world's history would have a very different reading for the last century to-day; but they were hidden from her eyes. Take another step forward in the course of empire, and you find England arrayed against the colonial town-meetings.

Up to that period the towns had done, as they do now, their own taxing, and they had done it well. Thirteen shillings in the pound had been cheerfully paid for their own defence and for England's aggrandizement. Massachusetts had sent more men into the field in proportion to her population than Napoleon's severest conscription took from France. But this was not enough. Ministers beyond the sea who knew not Joseph insisted on taxing

and governing. They sowed the wind and reaped the whirlwind. I will ask your attention only to a single scene. The rights of Englishmen as established by the English constitution, defined in *Magna Charta*, ratified no less than thirty-five times by the Plantagenet kings, sealed by the blood of Simon De Montfort, reaffirmed in the Grand Remonstrance and the Petitions of Right, vindicated on all the hard-fought fields from Edgehill to Naseby, — these rights were expounded in the Boston town-meetings by the great New England commoner, Samuel Adams, with a force of logic and vigor of rhetoric which aroused the astonishment and admiration of all British statesmen, but were met by the scoffs and jeers of a subservient ministry and an obstinate king. The debate lasted ten years, and was transferred from the formulas of logic to the *ultima ratio regum* on Lexington Green. The great commoner of Old England, Chatham, the veteran of a score of parliamentary campaigns, whose energy had carried victory to the Ohio and the Ganges, warned and thundered in vain. France, twenty years before, had tried to exterminate the town-meeting civilization, and had been made to drink deep of the cup of humiliation in consequence. The young giant of the wilderness, who had been her deadliest foe, she was now willing to make her offensive and defensive ally. Just one hundred years ago, in the early months of the year, England was trying to corrupt by her gold where she had failed to conquer by her armies, and was willing to become a suppliant where she had been a tyrant. At this awful moment the great English commoner entered the English Parliament for the last time. Burdened by age and disease, but with eye undimmed and mental force unabated, he rose to protest against the dismemberment of that monarchy, which, for more than forty years, he had faithfully and brilliantly served. It was the realization of the sublime scene which Milton imagined a century before, —

> With grave
> Aspect he rose, and in his rising seemed
> A pillar of state; deep on his front engraven
> Deliberation sat and public care;
> And princely counsel in his face yet shone
> Majestic though in ruin; sage he stood
> With Atlantean shoulders fit to bear
> The weight of mightiest monarchies; his look
> Drew audience and attention still as night,
> Or summer's noontide air.

That voice which had sent Clive to Plassey and Wolfe to Quebec was now heard for a moment in opposition to American independence; but it was too late. In a second attempt to speak, his strength failed, and he sank into the arms of his son to rise no more. It was, perhaps, the most solemn and impressive scene in English parliamentary history.

At the same time the great New England commoner spoke, not now to the town-meeting of Boston, but from his seat in the colonial congress to America, and the voice of the New England commoner prevailed even over the dying eloquence of Chatham. As England, by the aid of the town-meeting, had stripped France of four-fifths of the continent, so now France, by the aid of the same town-meeting, deprived the royal house of Brunswick of their fairest inheritance.

Call now to mind the state of affairs at the time of the confederation of 1643, and think again for a moment of the splendor, the pomp, the power, and the pride of the French monarchy at that period. Compare it with these exiles in the wilderness, sheltered by their log-houses and defended by their stockades. Since that period we have seen these infant States with their town-meeting polity subdue the wilderness, conquer the savage, scale the battlements of Louisburg, climb the heights of Abraham, drive from Boston Harbor the most powerful navy in the world without firing a shot, fling defiance

at France, Spain, and England, compel their alliance andc laim the continent as their own.

Look once more ere we leave this "specular moúnt." We began this panoramic sketch with a glance at absolute monarchy in France, and of absolute democracy in New England; let us close it with a glance at both at the close of a century and a half. In 1789, the French monarchy, ruined by its own excesses and abhorred by the nation, went down in its "imperial maelstrom of blood and fire;" and for three generations we have seen this great nation struggling to construct a government, subverting this year the constitution of the last, passing from monarchy to republicanism, from the wildest anarchy to the sternest military despotism, scourged and betrayed by each new dictator, tribune, and demagogue, shaking every throne in Europe in its frenzied agonies, and threatening the moral foundations of the world while it plunged with fatal recklessness from experiment to experiment of bloodshed and ruin.

In that very year the thirteen colonies, with George Washington at their head, not by the sword, not by usurpation, not by intrigue, not by corruption, but by the spontaneous choice of an enfranchised and grateful people, put on the sovereign robes of their separate national existence, and joined for peace and for war, the great procession of the nations, —

> Magnus ab integro sæclorum nascitur ordo.
> Jam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna
> . . et incipiunt magni procedere menses.

In this imperfect sketch of some leading events in our history, it has been my aim to give prominence and emphasis to the town-meeting as the great force which underlies our national strength, and the want of which in some parts of the country is the great source of our national weakness. But do

not understand me to say that the town-meeting or the town organization is in itself possessed of any magical power. A microscope or a steam-engine would be of no use to a New Zealand savage. He would spoil the former, and be blown up by the latter. Intelligent foreigners who come among us cannot hold a town-meeting. They can debate, sometimes five or six at a time, but they cannot, to use the significant phrase of the Charlestown freeholders in 1635,—they cannot "bring things to a joint issue." What a blessing would the town-meeting be to-day in France if she knew how to use it! Who can estimate its value to the Southern States of our own country, if they would train themselves to wear its easy yoke, and submit to its mild discipline? These peaceful and unostentatious gatherings under forms prescribed by law, where nearly all the great functions of States are performed, mark the highest point which social science has yet reached. To those who are captivated by ceremony, by stars, garters, and titles of nobility, the opening of an English parliament, the throne, the robes of state, the mace, the orders and vestments of the nobility, the Commons at the foot of the throne, the forms of procedure handed down from Saxons to Normans, from Normans to Plantagenets, from Plantagenets to Tudors, from Tudors to Stuarts, and from Stuarts to Hanoverians, — all this would seem very grand to grown-up children, nor, indeed, is the scene without interest to a reflecting and cultivated mind; but to the philosophic statesman who looks through show to substance, who regards realities, and not gaudy colors, character, and not ceremony, the quiet meeting of the farmer, the mechanic, the merchant, the manufacturer, the scholar, the artist, and the day-laborer, to talk over their common interests and decide upon their management,—this is the meeting where he discerns the strength of States; and it is this spectacle which De

Tocqueville has pronounced in human affairs the height of the moral sublime.

It is often said that it is but a step from the sublime to the ridiculous; and, in the case of the town-meeting, it is safe to say that the ridiculous is a part of the sublime. In the lives of towns, as in the lives of nations, crises occur and questions arise which seem, for the moment, to threaten the destruction of the very foundations of civil and social order. Conflicting interests, excited passions, intense ambitions, tear and rend these fierce democracies as tempest and tornadoes sweep the skies. These exciting contests, it is true, have their evils, but it is also true that they have their benefits; and in the long run it will be found that the benefits greatly outnumber the evils. When these storms are past it is wonderful how few are the marks of injury which they leave behind them. In far the greater number of cases the community is elevated, its deeper life has been stirred, and powers which had lain dormant are waked to healthful and vigorous action. How often has it been the case tha when these contests have reached the verge of the tragic, a comic scene, adroitly introduced, has prevented the threatened catastrophe! It is one of the chief elements of strength in the town-meeting that it is not insufferably respectable. It gives human nature a fair chance and full play, and weaves into the strength of its political fabric the grave, the gay, the lively, and the severe. A stroke of broad humor has sometimes, without answering, annihilated the most pompous and elaborate argument. The striped frock has often been found more than a match for the finest broadcloth. The sterling common-sense trained at the plough, the anvil, or the shoemaker's bench, has proved too much for wits that could boast their collegiate, their legal, or their theological learning, and the broad-axe of the carpenter, or the cleaver of the butcher, has cut many a Gordian

knot of sophistry, which no logic could penetrate or refute. Faction and unreason, it is true, will sometimes gain the ascendency; but in the long run nowhere is talent or wisdom better appreciated and rewarded, or humbug more mercilessly chastised, than in town legislation. James Russell Lowell has shown in Hosea Biglow's March-meeting speech what elements of power reside in the homely Yankee dialect, and that something more than orthography and technical grammar is essential in effective speaking. When the University of Oxford conferred upon Mr. Lowell the highest of her academic honors, the Biglow Papers were mentioned as the special merit which gained their author his distinction. What treasures of wit and wisdom are slumbering in the records and recollections of these rural legislatures awaiting the touch of some "Great Wizard" of the future to give them form and life in the nation's literature!

It cost East Sudbury twenty-six town-meetings before the six brick school-houses were completed seventy years ago; but the discussions and contentions, the passionate utterances of those meetings, I doubt not, carried the town forward a generation in her educational life. The seven years' contest, from 1806 to 1813, that preceded the erection of yonder meeting-house, the thirty-four battles which were fought in this village parliament, to decide on which side of the brook it should stand, made all feel happier when, at last, by a unanimous vote, it was decided to build it on its present beautiful site. The traditions of those parliamentary strifes are among the pleasantest recollections of my boyhood. The teachers and actors of fifty years ago, in the town of East Sudbury, were men of which any community might, without vanity, be proud. They marched at the front of your municipal progress, because the soundness of their judgments, the correctness of their lives, in short, because that

mysterious compound, which, without self-assertion, will, nevertheless, always assert itself, and which we call *character*, placed them there.

You must allow me to improve this opportunity of acknowledging a debt, "the debt immense of endless gratitude," which has been accumulating for threescore years, — a debt which I owe to those who, now gathered to their fathers, were then your trusted and trustworthy leaders in town affairs. I remember them on Sunday, and on the week-day, at the altar and at the plough, at the public meeting, and at the social fireside. The Reeveses, the Heards, the Shermans, the Glezens, the Damons, the Lokers, the Johnsons, the Drapers, and the Rices. And when I was at school and in college, I felt an obligation resting on me to do no discredit to a town which contained so many men whose approbation was worthy of my ambition. Had I incurred censure in conduct or scholarship, I should not have dared to look them in the face.

> From men like these New England's grandeur springs,
> Who make her loved at home revered abroad;
> Princes and lords are but the breath of kings,
> But honest men the noblest work of God.

It is a most interesting feature in the structure which we dedicate to-day that it marks so distinctly the intellectual growth of the town, and makes provision for its greater development. As I gazed upon the well-kept library of seven thousand volumes in its new home, I could easily have made myself unhappy in cherishing the wish that I had been born sixty years later, that I might satiate the "thirst that from the soul doth spring" at that abundant fountain. Yet I feel that I was fortunate in having my lot cast in this community, for the

very reason that it was a reading community a half century ago. The parish library and the social library, with which I early became acquainted, though they would seem meagre to-day in comparison with their successor, were treasures, I imagine, which but few towns possessed. You enjoy a proud distinction among the three hundred towns and cities of this Commonwealth. When, more than thirty years ago, you received a generous gift from a source which greatly increased its value, you were not content to enjoy it alone. You seized the golden opportunity of placing, through your reverend representative, this great blessing within the reach of every town and city in the State. Other communities have received more princely benefactions, have erected more imposing buildings, have gathered a larger number of volumes; but it has been your peculiar glory to give a bright example of that Fabian wisdom which saved Rome in her extremity, — the wisdom of doing much with comparatively little expenditure. It is a pleasure to me to reflect how the money with which your library was founded was obtained. The first five hundred dollars was earned by honest brain-work in teaching, first to the senior class of Brown University, and then publishing to the world the great principles of moral and political philosophy. The second five hundred was earned upon your own farms and in your own shops; and the document that records these gifts in their original form is one of the proudest in your whole history. The third was the product of honest agricultural industry, or it may have been in part derived from one of those useful applications by

> Searching wits of more mechanic parts
> Who've graced our age with new-invented arts.

The remainder has been furnished by your annual taxation. If so grand a result can be elsewhere found from the same

means, I know not where to direct you to search for it. There is another feature connected with your library which I must not pass over. You have called in the aid of art to enforce the instructions of the printed page. You would remind all who repair thither for instruction not merely of the names but of the countenances of those to whom they are so deeply indebted. I want words and judgment to do them justice as I pass them briefly in review. There, in lines of startling beauty and accuracy, you may be sure that you behold the features which gave expression to the thought and feeling of one of the ablest men[1] of the past generation; of whom it might be said, as Dr. Johnson said of Edmund Burke, that if a man were to go by chance with him under a shed to shun a shower, he would say, "This is an extraordinary man." You see the countenance in repose, and can hardly realize that so much gravity could dissolve into the most contagious laughter and play with the most mischievous and mirth-provoking humor. His personal presence was most imposing, and his intellectual and moral powers were in admirable harmony with his physical proportions.

In another you behold the village pastor,[2] who, in the earlier years of his ministry, felt that the intellectual and moral wants of his parish demanded his care along with their spiritual and religious culture; whose lot it was, not by chance but by choice, when representing you in the Legislature, to propose a measure which marks an era in the educational history of the State.[3] It was a peculiar pleasure to me, a few weeks since, to find that he was well remembered at the office of the Secretary of State. You are familiar with his venerable form, and ask no aid from art to keep his memory fresh; but the time will come when you will

[1] Rev. Francis Wayland, D.D., LL.D.

[2] Rev. John B. Wight.

[3] See Fortieth Report of Mass. Board of Education, where a full account of the Wayland Library will be found.

point with pride your children and your friends to the founder of free public libraries in Massachusetts, and say, in the language of Bryant: —

> Let the mimic canvas show
> His calm benevolent features; let the light
> Stream on his deeds of love, that shunned the sight
> Of all but Heaven; and in the book of fame
> The glorious record of his virtues write
> And hold it up to men, and bid them claim
> A palm like his, and catch from him the hallowed flame.

Again you behold, with admirable correctness, the features of one,[1] who, establishing himself here in the profession of law, at once became interested, not only in your schools, but in the scholars that composed them. To superior scholarship and sound judgment he united a suavity of manner, a quickness of perception, and a sympathy with young minds, that won their confidence, and made his visits to the schools occasions of enjoyment and excitement. Nor did he confine his labors to the school-rooms. The delight which he took in teaching, and in communion with scholarly minds soon drew to his hospitable home a circle who were stimulated and charmed by his instructions, and who learned from him to admire the "imperial minds who rule our spirits from their urns." How many of the best verses of Homer, Virgil, Milton, and Scott, of the stately periods of Cicero, Burke, Webster, and Everett, of the brilliant essays of Macaulay, have been read and reread, studied and admired, in parlors almost within the reach of my voice! Nor was this all; that home was presided over by a lady who possessed the rare art of entertaining without formality, of welcoming without ceremony, and of delighting without affectation. Nor need I inform this audience how many scenes of sorrow

[1] Hon. Edward Mellen, formerly Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas.

and of joy have been alleviated or heightened, how many hours of devotion hallowed, by strains of vocal music, untaught by art, and beyond its reach, proceeding from a soul —

> Whose raptures moved the vocal air
> To testify their hidden residence.

And so that modest mansion became a private high school of the first order, where no tuition was asked or received, but where some of the best minds of the town were trained to virtue and sound learning.

There is another countenance,[1] of a former pastor of the first parish, of a scholar, a divine, a Christian, dear to this community, nor to this community alone, whose life was a signal illustration of that purity and power of character which is content with the possession of the highest excellence without aspiration for place and preferment. He wrote, not from the promptings of ambition, but from the impulses of a warm heart and a highly gifted mind, and his writings have gained a permanent place in our higher religious literature; and he sung those "melodious strains," which, this very evening, will be wafted from thousands of devout lips upon the "listening ear of night."

> Still through the cloven skies they came,
> With peaceful wings unfurled,
> And still their heavenly music floats
> O'er all the weary world:

and they will continue to do so until the language we speak shall fail from the tongues of men.

There is still another[2] countenance; it is of a benefactor not inferior in the amount of his benefaction to that of the founder himself. His long life was passed among you, and he was often

[1] Rev. Edmund H. Sears.
[2] Deacon James Draper.

selected by you to perform the varied and responsible duties of your municipal life, — a fine example of those unostentatious virtues which are at once the cause and consequence of our New England character.

By the aid of plastic art you have presented the features of one [1] whose name is destined to hold forever no second place in our national literature. What lessons of labor under difficulty, of high aims and successful achievement are suggested by those features of classic beauty! The New World's discovery and discoverer, his royal patrons, the conquerors and their conquests, the Incas and Montezumas, the romantic daring that awakens our admiration, and the heartless cruelty that moves our hatred; the great career of Charles V., when all Europe woke from its mediæval dreams, — all these vast fields of research explored by one compelled to use eyes not his own, and dictate his classic English to his amanuensis. With every avenue of sensual pleasure open before him, and a fortune to stimulate the desire for indulgence, he nobly made the choice of Hercules; and as he sought the honors of his country, so he felt that he must remember what name he bore, and, like his ancestor, must serve that country greatly.

In another plastic form you see the features of the great leader [2] of Christian thought in New England for this century,— the man perhaps who has done more to emancipate Christian character from the thraldom of scholastic forms and restore it to its primitive purity and power, to redeem it from the letter that killeth, and inspire it with the spirit that giveth life, than any one man in Europe or America during the nineteenth century. In him, Puritanism gained the highest point which it has yet reached.

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[1] The bust of William H. Prescott.
[2] William Ellery Channing.

Finally, you behold in the same plastic form, the countenance of one[1] who belongs not to you alone nor to our country alone, — the country of his choice, — but to the civilized world. The pupil and friend of Cuvier, it was his rare fortune to enlarge the boundaries of human knowledge, to become one of the great interpreters of Nature, to study in fossil and living forms the thoughts of the Divine Mind. As I gaze upon those features of manly beauty, I recognize the same benignant smile which they always wore when he came to give his weekly lecture in my school at Cambridge twenty-five years ago. Such was his interest in our public schools that for a whole year he lectured gratuitously upon his specialties in that school, and bore a noble part in bringing Harvard College into closer sympathy with the public school system of the city and the Commonwealth.

These are the men of local, national, and world-wide renown whom you have chosen to grace your library. In their several spheres of action they have richly earned the distinction which you have given them.

To this great communion of the wise and good of every country and of every age, to the fellowship of the imperial lords of thought, to the great cloud of witnesses to the varied forms of truth, the people of Wayland are invited. There is a sacred fitness in the observance of the proprieties enjoined upon us as we enter that apartment. For who would stand with covered head or talk in boisterous speech in the very presence-chamber, as it were, of those sovereign minds appointed to rule us by the anointing of the Most High? Shall we rear piles of monumental marble over their unconscious dust and feel no emotion of awe where their spirits still linger and speak to us in their

[1] Louis Agassiz.

breathing thoughts and burning words? Shall we tread with reverent step and bated breath where dust is returning to dust, and waken to no rapture; where spirit is holding mysterious contact with spirit, and thought kindling at the fire of living thought?

Citizens of Wayland, you have been true to your trust. The five talents entrusted to your keeping have gained other five talents. They have given you a distinguished place in our social and intellectual history. And where the FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF MASSACHUSETTS had its birth, there may it always live in its pristine purity and with ever increasing usefulness and renown.

Pardon, I pray you, the well-meant earnestness which must have sorely tried your patience, and permit me, in conclusion, to urge you to guard and cherish the fond memorials of this ancient and beloved town. In these centennial years the thoughts of the nation are reverently turned to the past. Remember the toils and hardships of those who redeemed these fields from the rule of the wilderness, and

> The village Hampdens, that with dauntless breast,

withstood, not merely the petty tyrants of their fields, but the dread and incensed sovereign of a mighty empire when he came with his embattled host to subdue them. Their individual names may be gathered, in some cases, alas! not without difficulty from the headstones of yonder graveyard; but let the family names be found upon your streets, your streams, your hills, your valleys, and your plains.

I most heartily congratulate my old neighbors in the South Part upon having an abundant supply of pure water. I could, wish however, that they might no longer drink from *Snake* Brook. Call it Damon's or Bent's, or Rice's, or Bond's Brook,

and, if it does not improve the character of the water, it will at least sweeten the associations. It was a pleasure to me, in looking over the plan of Cochituate, to find Loker Avenue.

The high-toned sentimentality of the City of Boston could not drink from good old "Long Pond," and so she has restored a barbarous name for our old skating and fishing ground, and takes her water from Lake Cochituate. She is content, I believe, to take the water of Dudley Pond without meddling with the name. I hope she will not remove Bullard's Island. I think, sometimes, not without pleasure, when I see this water at so many points about my school-house, and enjoy the mild and comfortable heat from its steam, of the pleasant scenery which it has left so far away, and travelled its dark subterranean journey, and feel as though I had a little better right to it than my neighbors. But Boston has her virtues well mixed with her notions. She gives names to her schools which remind their scholars of high character and good men. You have names in your history which ought to mark your schools, and thus speak the gratitude which you feel to those who have gone before. And you have springs as pure and as sweet as Castalia, or Pieria, as Hippocrene, or Aganippe. Beginning with one not fifty rods from where you sit, which gushes from the hallowed feet of your village Zion, and flows into your Kedron; they may be found all along the skirts of the meadow to where the river, leaving the higher lands, sinks into the level of Beaver Hole. One of these, laid down in the atlas of Middlesex County, as a "never-failing spring," ought not to be allowed to lose the name of the first white man who settled by it. He came forth from the land of his fathers, inspired by a faith not unlike that which led the Father of the Faithful from Ur of the Chaldees, and pitched beside this spring, and drank thereof himself, his children, and his cattle; and, like the great Chal-

dean sheik, he has become the founder of a race which is as the stars of heaven for multitude. And while that spring shall continue to pour forth its limpid, healthful waters, not warmed by summer heat nor frozen by winter cold, let it bear the name of a family which has nobly done its work in church and state, in peace and war, and thither let his descendants repair to remotest generations in honor of their founder, EDMUND RICE. You can well afford to sell the water of your rivers and your ponds while you retain these sweet and sparkling fountains for home consumption. Heard's Pond is well named, suggesting as it does some of the best character which the town has produced, and Baldwin's Pond always reminds me of some of the brightest intellects which it has been my fortune to meet in life.

One thing more you need, and that is an historian, and you have not far to seek to find him. You will find him already well trained and furnished for his work. And, if necessary to secure his service, you would be justified in taking him by the right of eminent domain, and exacting his services, as our fathers did that of their magistrates, on penalty of a fine. The citizen who has served you in so many important relations, and has contributed so much to the efficiency and beauty of your library, and has, from time to time, published your annals, owes it to himself and to you to connect his name with your interests by becoming your historian.

You will soon be gathering in this spacious hall for the transaction of the business of the town. A large number of the direct descendants of those who came here two hundred and fifty years ago will come here to legislate in the place of their fathers. The spirits of the departed are in high communion with the spirit of the place. We see no light, we hear no sound addressed to the outward sense, nor do we need it to

catch the exhortation which they give. Let public and not party spirit reign as the presiding genius within these walls. Use the ballot as in the presence of the Most High, as the most sacred duty you are called upon to discharge. Let the school-house, and the town-house, and the meeting-house, still continue to be the landmarks and the symbols of this ancient village. Let it be your children's boast as it is yours, that they inherit a land of liberty and light. Let freedom, and knowledge, and morals, and religion, as they are your birthright, be the birthright of your children to the end of time.

The audience having joined in singing "Old Hundred," the Benediction was pronounced by Rev. T. A. MERRILL.

Opportunity was then afforded for visitors to examine the Library apartments, and the other rooms and offices of the building.

# SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES.

## The District School.

This institution is rapidly becoming a thing of the past. "The District School as it was," so graphically described and ridiculed by the Rev. Warren Burton, was not the district school of Wayland, or East Sudbury, rather, fifty years ago. I am not so much in love with the past as to be unable to appreciate the present, nor so radically bent on improvement as not to feel that all real progress must rest on principles and usages that have been tested by experience. I have seen something of schools, and been conversant with some variety of methods in education; but I have never seen a greater love of study for its own sake, for the pleasure which it imparts by calling into exercise our higher faculties; I have never seen a more generous emulation, free from all pollution of envy or jealousy, than in the district schools of East Sudbury. My allusions to them in the text of my address will seem to many as rhetorical extravagance, or playful hyperbole, but they are almost literally true. If the kindly emulation between districts and pupils ever gave rise to the least unkindness, I never heard of it. I well remember the stimulus that I received at an examination in the Street School, then under the instruction of Mr. William C. Grout. There is not a teacher in Boston to-day who would not be proud, and justly proud, of such scholarship as I saw on that occasion. Nor can I forget that one of my earliest associates in the work of instruction, one who had distanced in promise and scholarship all her classmates at the Normal School, began her brief and brilliant career in that same district. Owing to family relationships, or young friendships, visits were often exchanged by the scholars between the schools of the town. I need not say that while these visitors were always kindly received, they were also pretty carefully watched. From one of them I heard for the first time in my life a specimen of *really natural and spirited* reading. If I may be allowed to boast a little of the Thomas School in my native district, I should say that there may still be seen specimens of map-drawing executed by girls in that school, under the instruction of Mr. Beman Stone, which cannot be surpassed in our best schools to-day. History was studied with great enthusiasm. Worcester's Epitome and General History, and Whelpley's Compend, to say nothing of Goodrich's U.S. History, and smaller works, were despatched with an earnestness that would seem quite marvellous to the present

generation. Hedge's Logic, Blair's Rhetoric, Chemistry, and Natural Philosophy were committed thoroughly to memory, and partially to the understanding. Natural History did not receive much attention in the school-room; but before school, and after school, and at "noontime," it was pursued with great ardor. Pouts and eels, perch and pickerel, which had strayed from Dudley pond down the intermittent brook, reptiles of all sorts and sizes, squirrels red, striped, flying, and gray, woodchucks, and rabbits, birds in great variety, and not least, our articulate enemies, with whom we waged unceasing warfare, the black wasps, the mud wasps, the yellow wasps, the hornets, the butterflies, the grasshoppers, and the devil's darning-needles, — from all these we gathered much knowledge, though but little science. We learned their habits and modes of existence, but heard nothing of genera, species, orders, and families, etc. It was from specimens furnished from this district, as Agassiz informed me, that he first had the pleasure of witnessing a long-coveted sight of young bats at the breast of the mother. At home we had abundant opportunity in "taking care of the cattle" to become acquainted with some of the larger mammalia. And this was the style of education generally in all the schools of the town.

The Rutter District was famous for its scholarship. There I felt my ambition roused in hearing Mr. Josiah Rutter teach Virgil to a fine class of young ladies. There also I listened to the instruction of Mr. John N. Sherman from the North District, and of Mr. Josiah H. Temple from Framingham. It always seemed to me that a remarkable spirit of order and self-respect pervaded this school. It had, or seemed to have, a kind of traditional reputation for good behavior, which it took pride in sustaining. Private schools were frequently taught here between the winter and summer terms, and these I sometimes attended. When I say that just forty years ago the school committee pronounced this school the first in the town in spite of the crudity, awkwardness, and inexperience of its teacher, a young sophomore from Brown University, it will be readily understood that it had scholars of no common merit to gain this distinction in the face of such obstacles.

The Centre District was, however, all things considered, the first in the town. There was taught one who afterwards became the teacher of Laura Bridgman; and another lady who attained distinction in her native town, and also in Waltham received her early education there. I have had myself the opportunity of testing the scholarship and teaching ability of two other ladies who were trained in that school. I readily call to mind six young men who went to college from this district, — one to Harvard, one to Yale, three to Brown, and one to Williams, and some I remember who did not go to college because as I suppose they belong to that class of men of whom Cicero speaks: *Ego multos homines excellenti animo ac virtute fuisse et sine doctrina, naturae ipsius habitu prope divino*

*per se ipsos et moderatos et graves exstitisse fateor; etiam illud adjungo sæpius ad laudem atque virtutem naturam sine doctrina quam sine natura valuisse doctrinam.* Of the North and South Districts I had less personal knowledge. Their character was, however, substantially the same as that of the rest. Three of my teachers in the Thomas School came from those districts. It was a principle or practice rather (the practice was based upon a principle) to employ in one district teachers who had been taught in another. Teachers as well as prophets were likely not to be honored in their own country until they had shown their work in some other. And this interchange between the schools had a salutary influence upon the social character of the town. Families and neighborhoods were brought into more intimate and friendly relations, and the deficiencies of some were replaced by the excellencies of others.

I have said the town or township is a growth, not a creation. The remark is equally true of the district and its school. The first settlers brought with them no elaborate theories of education, and they had no time to construct them. The schools, at first, bore some resemblance to their English originals. It was without doubt the Grammar School of England that our fathers sought to establish here. And it is a fact, which I have nowhere seen noticed, that the early school-houses were constructed internally very closely upon the English models. Let any one compare the interiors of the Merchant Tailors', St. Paul's, and other English school-houses, as shown in "Staunton's Great Schools of England," with those of East Sudbury, Sudbury, and Weston fifty years ago and he will see at once that they are all of the same type. The large open space in the centre, the teacher's desk at the farther end, opposite the door, three rows of desks or forms (this is the English term) rising one above the other on the right and left of the central floor, — this was the arrangement of all, or nearly all, the school-rooms which I saw in my boyhood, and which may still be seen in the Grammar Schools of England. The branches taught at first were those of the English Grammar School, and so Latin and Greek at once gained a pretty firm foothold in New England, and though they yielded to the practical pressure and poverty of the Colonial era, they were always treated kindly and welcomed often to the district school, though not required by statute, when the teacher's scholarship admitted of their introduction. I learned French with great advantage while still at the district school, and taught Latin in a town school the first winter I was in college. The sciences were seldom, if ever, taught before the close of the first quarter of the present century; in fact, there was little science to teach. But in the second quarter of the century there was a great enlargement of the course of study. The great revival of common-school learning which began with the writings of James G. Carter, and in which the Alcotts, the Emersons, Josiah Holbrook, and Horace Mann soon joined, was felt in every school district in

the Commonwealth, and the district schools soon became universities in a small way, in which nearly all the osophies and ologies known to modern science were studied with more enterprise perhaps than wisdom. The schools were flexible and elastic, and allowed the claim of each new science as soon as it was urged. The Lyceum appeared at this crisis, and exercised a powerful influence upon the schools, and the schools in their turn reacted upon the Lyceum. The curriculum of the schools became so extended under this influence as to be practically unmanageable, and hence arose the demand for division of labor in the work of instruction, the consequent gradation of the schools, and the abolition of the district system.

The district system has passed, or is rapidly passing, into history. Its defects and shortcomings were sufficiently exposed in the long debates which preceded its abolition. Its virtues have been but partially appreciated. In the critical period of our history when the urgent questions were, not those of wages or currency, but of bare existence, this system brought the elements of knowledge to the very door of the farmer and the day laborer. When I consider the influence of the district schools in giving to all the means of passing through the great *trivium* of learning, to read, to write, and to cipher; of educating those who were to serve the towns as selectmen, as justices of the peace, as representatives in the General Court, of awakening in a smaller number a desire for knowledge which could only be satisfied at college; when I reflect that these schools were taught in a great measure by the students of the colleges, and that a large part of the money paid to the teachers went directly to the empty treasuries of the colleges, and that the schools supported the colleges while the colleges sent their students to teach the schools, that it was by this grand systole and diastole between the highest and the lowest schools throughout the whole body politic that some of the choicest spirits were recruited for the learned professions and for the highest offices of State, — I cannot but feel that the district system served its day and generation well.

The district system has generally given place to the graded system; the territorial divisions, which included all ages and all degrees of attainment, have been replaced by the high, the grammar, the intermediate, and the primary schools, — a classification based on acquirements and capacity for progress. This system, if wisely administered will retain the essential virtues of the old organization and afford advantages to which that could never attain. The success which it has already attained has abundantly vindicated its adoption. It admits of even a closer relation and a stronger sympathy with the higher schools of learning than was formerly possible. There was, of necessity, a break between the district school and the college, and this break was supplied by the parish clergyman, the private teacher, or the academy. In the graded system the pupil advances by regu-

lar stages from the primary to the professional school, from the nursery to manhood. The college may make itself felt in every grade of school and in every class in society, and the primary teacher may feel that she is "fitting her pupils for college" as well as the teacher who is dealing with Greek accents and Latin subjunctives. The theory is perfect and the practice under it may be made so. The case has never been more forcibly or beautifully stated than it was by Edward Everett, at the dedication of the Cambridge High School thirty years ago. "Connected as I am with another place of education," [Mr. Everett was at that time President of Harvard College] "of a kind which is commonly regarded of a higher order, it is precisely in that connection that I learn to feel and appreciate the importance of good schools. I am not so ignorant of the history of our fathers as not to know that the spirit which founded and fostered Harvard College is the spirit which has founded and upheld, and will continue to support and cherish, the schools of New England. I know well, sir, that universities can neither flourish nor even stand alone. You might as well attempt to build your second and third stories in the air, without a first floor or basement, as to have collegiate institutions without good schools for preparatory education and diffusion of general information throughout the community. If the day should ever come (which I do not fear in our beloved country) when this general education shall be neglected and these preparatory institutions allowed to perish; if the day should ever come (of which I have no apprehension) when the schools of New England shall go down, — depend upon it, sir, the colleges will go with them. It will be with them as it was with the granite warehouses the day before yesterday in Federal street, in Boston: if the piers at the foundation give way, the upper stories will come down in one undistinguished ruin."

Such were the views of a great scholar and statesman, in 1848, respecting the importance of our public school system, as related to higher institutions of learning, and such his confidence in its permanence and progress. In its establishment, he had himself borne a most distinguished part. The period of his administration of our State government was a critical one in our educational history, and it was under his wise direction that the broad and deep foundations of our educational prosperity were laid. He was not content with giving his formal sanction, by his official signature, to legislative acts which have changed the whole course of our school polity. He labored personally in all parts of the State. He pleaded for the cause with an eloquence which no other man in the State could command; and his pleadings, which have taken a permanent place in our literature, were based, not on considerations of party politics, but of profound statesmanship. But what would Mr. Everett have said had he been told that, ere the audience which he addressed had passed from the stage, that school system in which he had such

perfect faith would be assailed as hostile to religion and morals, that all that is grovelling in human nature would be appealed to, all that is selfish cajoled, all that is noble beguiled by sophistry or blinded by bigotry, half truths (those deadliest and most malicious of lies) and whole falsehoods would be published as eternal verities; nay, more, that from his "own ancient and beloved Harvard" there would go forth an educational philosophy in direct opposition to the teachings of Sparks and Walker and Felton and Agassiz!

One of the dangers threatening our schools is the unwise and undue deference shown to everything foreign and especially to everything German. "And so they do in Germany," is the end of all controversy in many School Boards. The finest scholars of New England can hardly hope for the choicest positions until they have first learned to smoke and drink in Berlin, Leipsic, or Halle. The stanza which Porson threw in disgust at some of his teasing inquisitors, after his return from Germany would be the best testimonial that could be presented to some educational functionaries.

> I went to Frankfort and got drunk
> With that most learned Professor Brunck.
> I went to Wortz and got more drunken
> With that more learned Professor Rhunken.

I mean no sneer at Germany or Germans. The first pilgrims from this country who found their way to the great seats of German learning,— the Everetts, the Bancrofts, and the Searses,— returned laden with the seeds of that precious lore which have found a congenial soil in our colleges and schools and give promise of an abundant harvest. They went Americans and returned Americans, in thought, in feeling, in purpose; they were not dazzled or misled by tinsel and gewgaw. The leaden casket with its treasure attracted them more than the gold and silver which covered emptiness and vanity; and so they gave an impulse to our schools of every grade which will be felt as long as those schools exist. And so, too, the German exiles, who have come over to us, because they could not rest in the luxuries and delights of mere learning and culture, were not content

> To sport with Amaryllis in the shade
> Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair.

The Follens, the Liebers, and the Becks have been welcomed to our homes, to our hearts, to our citizenship, to our academic and legislative halls, and have a thousand times repaid us for the political freedom which they received. Peace and honor to all such who deal in the sound learning which Europe has been long centuries in garnering, and to which we have only given a few decades. But let us never forget that American education, to be successful, must be American; it must not be an exotic. Our educational must be in

perfect accord with our political principles and procedure. Absolutism and republicanism will not harmonize. It is a century since the new wine of America burst the old bottles of Europe, and the fact may as well be considered as settled that we are in some way to work out our own salvation or destruction.

> God means to make this land
> Clear thru from sea to sea,
> Believe an' understand
> The wuth o' bein' free.

And this is as true of our education as of our politics. Our district schools have given or are giving place to graded schools; and normal, art, technical, and scientific schools are springing up like the creations of Fairyland. Universities are born in a day; but they are born *young;* they come forth, not like Athene from the head of her sire perfect in wisdom equipment and power, but in helpless, trembling infancy. What is universal and permanent in the old world can be transported without injury to the new; what is local and transient must remain on the soil from which it sprung. The verses of Homer, Virgil, and Milton were sung for the world and the world understands and appreciates them; the science of Newton is as true in the constellation Hercules as on the banks of the Cam; and the phases of Venus appear with greater distinctness through the great refractors of the New World than when they were first revealed to the eyes of Galileo through "the poor little spyglass" which now is shown at Florence.

What is permanent and universal in English and German schools will find its way to America, and be warmly welcomed and cherished. What is local and transient, what has grown out of the social and political condition of those countries, must forever remain there. The work of Thomas Arnold was universal, and every year adds to his influence and to his fame. The work of Samuel Parr was pedantic and transient, and his cumbrous octavos have long since passed to the upper shelves or to the closets. Those who think that they can catch the vitality of Eton and Rugby by adopting cricket and the "six forms" with their "removes," and those who think they have only to *vote* a gymnasium in order to get one, simply show that they are neither statesmen nor educators. Those who think that by sending their sons and daughters to France, to Italy, and to Germany to be educated they will, of necessity, become scholars, citizens, men, and women, will find that they have simply become denationalized with no country to love and no country that loves them.

## Reeves's Hill.

Reeves's Hill takes its name from a family honorably known in the social and civil history of the town. Before the advent of turn-

pikes and railroads, when the produce of the country towns found its way to Boston market, along the county roads, which were still steep, or rough, or miry, Reeves's tavern was a favorite resting or recruiting place for the farmers from Framingham, Southboro', Hopkinton, and even for the more westerly parts of the State. The hill was almost as serious for the wayfaring farmer as was the Hill Difficulty to Bunyan's pilgrims. The wayside inn at the top of this hill has not been so fortunate as its more celebrated contemporary on the west side of the river, in having a poet to give it immortality; but Mr. Longfellow might have found here all the stimulus for his imagination that he found

> in Sudbury town,
> Across the meadows bare and brown.

The last landlord of this ancient hostelry, Jacob Reeves, was one of those men who have given such character and strength to our country life. He was a model landlord — cheerful, kind and courteous — not like Chaucer's Reeve, "a colerick man," but of remarkable evenness of temper and soundness of judgment. His patrons found in his bar-room no temptation to the excesses which were often seen in the village tavern, but in the temperate speech and exemplary self-control of their host they saw an example worthy of their imitation. For eighteen years he was town-clerk, and received the office from his kinsman, Nathaniel Reeves, who had held it for fifteen years. As justice of the peace, he conducted a large part of the minor law business of the town, and for many years was representative in the General Court. As deacon of the first parish church, the purity and rectitude of his character were in perfect harmony with the sacred functions of his office.

The Inns of Old and New England, from the "Tabard" to the "Wayside," from Chaucer to Longfellow, from the pilgrimage to Canterbury to the ride of Paul Revere, have ceased to exist. But the historian of New England who overlooks the tavern will fail to notice an institution. It was a centre of social influence; it supplied in part the place of our daily newspaper; the farmers of the town or neighborhood repaired to the bar-room of the tavern to discuss town, county, and State politics, the agriculture of the day, to tell stories, and, last and worst, to drink *flip*. These meetings were sometimes profitable, always entertaining, but frequently too convivial in their character. Jacob Reeves often felt obliged to shake his head, not in anger, but in sorrow, when a glass too much was called for, and the applicant had so much confidence in "Squire Jake" that no offence was taken.

### Edmund Rice.

After alluding to the first white settler by this spring, I cannot persuade myself to allow this opportunity to pass without a brief

notice of the last — Edmund Rice — who lived upon the old homestead. He died in May, 1841, at the age of eighty-six. He was at once a fine representative of the old colonial farmer and of the revolutionary soldier. He was at Bunker Hill, in Capt. Russell's company, but was not stationed in the redoubt. He served, also, in the same company in Brewer's regiment of eight months' men. When Lafayette revisited this country, in 1824, he repaired again to Bunker Hill, with all the ardor of a patriot and soldier, to greet his old companion-in-arms. A fellow-townsman, who valued dollars rather too highly, remarked to Mr. Rice that Congress was too generous in their expressions of gratitude to the nation's benefactor. The old soldier's eye flashed with indignation, while he exclaimed, "Dumb it all! they can't do too much for him! How much did he do for us when we were too poor to help ourselves? I tell you they can't do too much for him." He was blessed with a "large increase." His sons and daughters — with the exception of one son who died in early life — all attained to an honorable manhood and womanhood. His home was celebrated for a quiet and generous hospitality. On Thanksgiving days it was always the scene of the most exemplary festivity. It was a "feast of harvest," fashioned very much after the Hebrew pattern. The best that his farm and farm-yard could furnish was served for this occasion. The "first of the first fruits" were always "offered to the Lord" in this feast of ingathering, and if he detected his excellent wife in making use of any specked apples in preparing her mince-pies for Thanksgiving, he peremptorily forbade it at once. As a farmer, he was rather conservative. He did not take kindly to new tools and new methods. He had more faith in hard work than in new-fangled notions; patent forks and ploughs with him were rather objects of scorn and suspicion than of admiration. But he was always esteemed a good man to work for. No man or beast upon his premises was allowed to suffer from want of care or food. In his last years he suffered much from lameness. He spent much of his time in the warm season in reading his family Bible at the open window, but esteemed it no profanation to turn from it for a little pleasantry with his neighbors. Such, substantially, I have good reason to believe, were all the Edmund Rices who lived by the spring and "honored the Lord with their substance, and with the first fruits of all their increase."

## Towns, Counties, etc.

The "town system" of local government, advocated and commended in my address, is confined to New England. I have thought it worth a while to quote Mr. S. A. Galpin's admirable digest of the minor political divisions of the United States contained in Prof. Francis A. Walker's Statistical Atlas, which is based on the returns of the ninth census, 1870: —

## I. The Town System.

The "Town" system, pure and simple, prevails only in the six New England States: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont. The area of these States is 68,343 sq. m.; their population 3,487,924. They thus contain about one-thirteenth of the area and one-eleventh of the population of the States of the Union. Under this system, the "town," which, in its area and general characteristics conforms closely to the "township" of the West, is the important political division of the State. It is a body corporate and politic, deriving its charter from the Legislature of the State, and generally entitled to an independent representation in the lower branch of that Legislature.

It has power to elect its own officers, to manage in its own way its own roads, schools, local police, and other domestic concerns, and collects, through its own officers, not only its self-imposed taxes for local purposes, but also those levied by the Legislature for the support of the State, or by the County officers for the limited objects of their expenditures.

Reference to the following table shows that the average area of the New England "town"—deduction having been made for the estimated unsettled area of Maine—is 34 sq. m., the number of its inhabitants averaging at the same time 2,450, or about 72 to the sq. m. Deducting the population of cities and towns having over 10,000 inhabitants, the average population of the town is 1,700, or 50 to the sq. m. In a community of such area and numbers, meetings of the legal voters to examine the accounts and official conduct of the town officers and to consider subjects of common interest are possible; and the increased strength of public sentiment serves no less than this direct supervision to induce a proper execution of public trust.

Where so much political power is vested in the town any larger subdivision of the State must necessarily have but a limited function. The County thus becomes, in New England, mainly a judicial, not a political, subdivision of the State. The jurisdiction of the executive officers of the County over the towns within it extends to the laying out of new highways, and is then in the nature of an appellative one only, while such duties of those officers as relate exclusively to County affairs are confined to the care and control of the County buildings.

## II. — The County System.

The "County" system, which is so markedly in contrast with that just noticed, is now found in seventeen States, viz., Alabama, Arkansas, California, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, Oregon, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas. These "County" States have an area of 1,234,295 sq. m., with a population of 11,955,731, — about

two-thirds of the area and more than one-third of the population of all the States.

Until a recent date the County system prevailed in every State south of the Ohio river and Pennsylvania. Within the last decade, however, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia have taken measures for dividing their counties into townships and for clothing those townships with more or less of political power; although South Carolina subsequently retraced its steps and abolished the townships thus erected. In view of this recent action of Virginia, the opinions of her great statesman, Mr. Jefferson, upon the merits of the "township" system, may not be irrelevant. Extracts from three of his letters are, therefore, inserted; the order of their dates being, for convenience of citation, reversed: —

Among other improvements, I hope they (a proposed constitutional convention) will adopt the subdivision of our counties into wards. The former may be estimated at an average of twenty-four miles square; the latter should be about six miles square each, and would answer to the hundreds of your Saxon Alfred.

In each of these might be, 1st. An elementary school; 2d. A company of Militia, with its officers; 3d. A justice of the peace and constable; 4th. Each ward should take care of their own poor; 5th. Their own roads; 6th. Their own police; 7th. Elect within themselves one or more jurors to attend the courts of justice; and 8th. Give in at their Folk House, their votes for all functionaries reserved to their election. (Letter of June 5th, 1824, to Major John Cartwright, Opera, Vol. VII., p. 357.)

In a letter to Samuel Kercheval, July 12, 1816 (Opera, Vol. vii., p. 13), Mr. Jefferson, after describing at greater length such a division of the County, adds: —

These wards, called townships in New England, are the vital principle of their governments, and have proved themselves the wisest invention ever devised by the wit of man for the perfect exercise of self-government, and for its preservation. We should thus marshal our government into, 1st. The general federal republic, for all concerns, foreign and federal; 2d, That of the State, for what relates to our own citizens exclusively; 3d, The County republics, for the duties and concerns of the County; and 4th, The ward republics, for the small, yet numerous and interesting concerns of the neighborhood; and in government, as well as in every other business of life, it is by division and subdivision of duties alone, that all matters, great and small, can be managed to perfection. And the whole is cemented by giving to every citizen personally a part in the administration of the public affairs.

And again, May 26, 1810, writing to Gov. Tyler, Mr. Jefferson says (Opera, Vol. v., p. 525): —

These little republics will be the main strength of the great one. We owe to them the vigor given to our Revolution in its commencement in the Eastern States, and by them the Eastern States were enabled to repeal the embargo in opposition to the Middle, Southern, and Western States, and their

large and lubberly divisions into Counties which can never be assembled. General orders are given out from a centre to the foreman of every hundred, as to the sergeants of an army, and the whole nation is thrown into energetic action in the same direction in one instant, and as one man, and becomes absolutely irresistible.

Resuming the consideration of the County system, it is to be noted, that under it all the conditions of the "town" system are reversed. The names of the greater and lesser subdivisions of the State may remain unchanged, but the powers and position of these subdivisions are in no case or degree the same. The town or township is but the skeleton of the New England town, while the County is clothed with all the political power. It derives its charter from the Legislature, and is responsible to the State authorities for its share of the State taxation. Its subordinate divisions formed — Delaware and Maryland being excepted — by its own officers, have no political power whatever, and exist only for convenience at the general elections, or to mark the district of a justice of the peace and a constable. The average area of the County in the State adopting this system is 1,040 sq. m., its populaton 11,236, the unorganized portions of these States being excluded in the computation; or, excluding also the partially organized and settled States of the Pacific slope, its area averages 734 sq. m., its population 11,515, or about 15 inhabitants to the sq. m. The radical differences between these two types may, perhaps, be emphasized by comparing the States of Rhode Island and South Carolina in respect to their organization. The area of Rhode Island, as given by the General Land Office, is 1,306 sq. m., less than double the average area of the political unit under the County system, yet it has within its limits 36 towns and cities, each being an independent political organization; while South Carolina, with an area of 34,000 sq. m., has only 31 organized Counties, which are in no respect the superiors of the Rhode Island towns in political power. On the other hand, the population of the Rhode Island town averages 6,038, or, excluding cities, 4,000 inhabitants, the area being about 36 sq. m.; that of the South Carolina County, 22,731, distributed over an average area of nearly 1,100 sq. m. Under these conditions of settlement and organization, differing widely as they do from those of New England, the methods of administration must also differ. The area of the County forbids any general gathering of its inhabitants vested with the legislative and executive functions of the "town-meetings" as well as any intimate mutual acquaintance between the inhabitants of its different sections. Of necessity, therefore, the administration of all local affairs is entrusted wholly to the county officers, and the political duty and privilege of the citizen begins and ends on election day.

The duly authorized officers of the County are thus charged with the care and control of the County property, the levy and collection of all State and County taxes, the division of the County in election

districts, the laying out and repairing of roads and bridges, the care of the poor, the police of the County, and, in general, all County and local affairs.

### III. The Compromise System.

There yet remains to be noted, however, what I have ventured to call the "Compromise" system, which, having its home in States lying between those already named, is itself the result of a fusion of the systems which prevail on either side of it. This third general type has been adopted in the organization of the States of the north-west, and now prevails in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wisconsin. These fourteen States contain 672,824 sq. m., and 22,671,986 inhabitants, their area being about one-third of that of the States of the Union, their population nearly two-thirds. The average number of inhabitants to the sq. m. is nearly thirty-four. The States above-named may be again subdivided with reference to the manner of electing their County officers into the "New York" system, and the "Pennsylvania" system, the former prevailing in Illinois, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wisconsin; the latter in the other States of this group. The difference between these two systems is one of form and name rather than substance. In New York the powers of the County are exercised by a Board of Supervisors, in which Board the towns of the County are represented as equal political communities. In Pennsylvania, on the other hand, the affairs of the County are managed by a Board of three Commissioners elected from the body of the County. In New York, also, the Supervisor who represents the town in the County Board has other town duties, and is thus an officer both of the town and the County, while the County Commissioner in Pennsylvania has no township duties whatever.

In the "Compromise" system, as seen in the largest and most important States of the Union, the political power, which, in New England is lodged with the town, and at the south with the County, is divided between the two organizations. The County is the creation of the State Legislature and the political unit. It is, however, subdivided into towns or townships, which possess considerable political rights, and thus become a miniature of a State as subdivided for local purposes into its Counties. The townships are laid out by the County officers in New Jersey only, by the Legislature of the State — and have power to elect their own officers, to lay out and repair their highways, to determine in township-meetings the amount of taxes to be raised for school and other local purposes, and submit an estimate of the same to the County authorities for approval, and, in general, to act upon all local matters in much the same way as the New England town, subject, however, to the *supervisory* control of the

County. The County thus becomes a more important factor in the administration of local affairs than in New England. Its executive officers are required to discharge all duties properly connected with the County administration, and, in addition, to audit the accounts of township officers and accounts and claims against the township, and direct the raising of funds for their payment, to approve the votes of the township for borrowing money, or incurring any extraordinary expenditure, and to levy on the property of the township such taxes for township purposes as may be duly certified to them by the township officers.

RECAPITULATION.

| | Total Number. | Average Area. | Average Population. | Average population excluding towns and cities having over 10,000 inhabitants. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| The "Town" System . . . . . | 1,424 | 34 | 2,450 | 1,700 |
| The "County" System . . . . | 6,961 | 79 | 1,301 | 1,255 |
| The "Compromise" System . . | 11,915 | 59 | 1,923 | 1,504 |
| | 20,300 | 69 | 1,695 | 1,433 |

# HISTORICAL SKETCHES.

Among the peculiarities of the Puritan settlers of New England, their views of civil and religious polity stand forth in a certain individuality of aspect at once unique and worthy of study. In the "mother country" they were the "come-outers" of their day, protesting alike against pontifical rule and the established forms of ecclesiasticism backed by civil power. But, while holding such views of dissociation with the most zealous intensity, they brought with them to these shores, in their "heart of hearts," a fixed belief that all human governments must not only be based upon religious principles, but that those principles must penetrate and permeate all civil institutions, to make them truly subserve human weal.

In accordance with such views, perhaps growing out of them as their natural fruit, it is found that at the establishment of their townships, and for a century or more after, while the meeting-house was the first public building to be erected, it was made not only to serve for public worship and religious instruction, but for such civil purposes as town meetings, courts of justice, for military drills, and, during the Indian hostilities, they were fortified as points of retirement for active defence in cases of invasion. The religious element was required by custom to interblend with and sanctify, outwardly at least, all public meetings for municipal business, by the exercise of formal prayer at their opening.

In this town, from the erection of the first meeting-house, in 1643, on the spot now seen in the North Cemetery, then the centre of business and population, to the year 1815, and through a succession of four generations of these structures, all the functions of both its civil and religious institutions found shelter and were conducted harmoniously under a common roof.

## MEETING-HOUSES.

The first of these was a building twenty by thirty feet, with log walls probably, six feet high. It had no floor but the earth, and was without seats. Its cost was six pounds sterling, which was paid in the produce of the farms.

The second, erected nine years after, on the same site, was a framed house, twenty-five by forty feet, with posts twelve feet high. It had gable ends, with two pinnacles, two entrance doors, and four

transom windows. The inside was finished with smooth boards, and contained oak benches. It continued in use thirty-four years.

In 1686 the town voted to build, on the site of the old house (that being sold for six pounds), a meeting-house "just like the new one in Dedham," at a cost of two hundred pounds sterling money. This was accomplished; and it served the entire town until 1723. At that date many settlers of the township occupied the territory on the west side of the river, and demanded a meeting-house for their special accommodation. This was granted, and a house was erected, probably on the site now occupied by the Unitarian church in Sudbury, at a cost of three hundred and eighty pounds. Henceforward, until 1780, town meetings were held alternately at the two houses.

The division of the territory of Sudbury into two townships by legislative act, in 1780, giving to the portion lying east of the river the name of East Sudbury, found its settlers spread over an area of seven miles in length. It is not surprising that occupants of the southern extremity soon perceived the inequality of distance from their common centre of business, — the meeting-house. A warm sectional contest ensued. The interference of the General Court was successfully invoked, which, by its special committee, selected a more central spot, and ordered the removal of the house. It was not moved entire, however, but taken to pieces, defective timbers replaced with new, and again set up, divested of its external ornaments, and supplied with a gable instead of a hip roof. The work was completed in 1726–7, at a cost of about two hundred and fifty pounds. Its unadorned appearance is remembered by the writer and others still living. It was the last building to serve the double purpose of municipal and religious operations. By agreement it was conveyed, in 1815, to J. F. Heard and Luther Gleason, on condition that they remove it to a convenient spot, and finish a hall in the second story for the free use of the town during thirty years. It was known for many years after as the "Old Green Store," from the color of its original paint.

In 1840, the common land on which the old meeting-house had stood having been sold in the mean time to Dea. James Draper, he proposed to erect a new building on a part of the same, for the use of the town, to contain a town-hall, a school-room, with anterooms, etc., for the sum of seventeen hundred dollars. His proposal was accepted, and the building was first occupied for town meetings Nov. 8, 1841. Subsequently the hall was used also for an academy, under Rev. L. P. Frost. The library occupied a part of the lower floor, and for this and other public uses it served the town until the erection of the new building in 1878.

The periods of time covered by the above data are rich in those incidents that make the historic page interesting and valuable, and would well reward the patient annalist for the necessary time and toil required to bring them to light.

EAST SUDBURY CENTRE IN 1814.

With a little effort of recollection, the "middle of the town" may be restored in pen portraiture as it appeared when the old meeting-house stood faithful to its last year of sacred duty, in 1814.

From the old elm, then in its prime, in front of the hotel, as a centre, and over a space swept by a radius of one-fourth of a mile, let all modern improvements effected since that time be banished. These will include every house and building, except the following, viz.: a part of the hotel and stable, of the Roby House, the S. Reeves' House, Mr. Braman's farm-house, the walls of Mrs Russell's house, Mr. Kernan's low house, and Dea. Morse's house; obliterate the Bridle Point road and the new Mill road; open the old drive-way, twenty-five feet wide, through the brook next to Captain Pousland's land, and narrow the road over the brook by removing fifteen feet of the sluice at its east end; remove the fences from the fronts of the houses; dispense with all window-blinds, and the territory is ready to restore the buildings to their former condition.

Beginning with the tavern, we have a two-story front with the roof on the back sloping down to cover a one-story kitchen; the front and ends appear of a dirty yellow color, and the back is painted red. The tavern barn stands side to the road, with great doors on each end. The old bar-room must not be forgotten, with its ample supply of "creature comforts"; and notice the great wood fire in the spacious fireplace, with stout andirons, and half-a-dozen loggerheads ready in the live coals for use.

Here, at the intermission of divine services on Sunday, the boys come to buy their cent's worth of gingerbread, and their elders to warm their half-frozen feet in winter, and have a talk about politics, the progress of the war, and to circulate news generally; always remembering to buy a "mug of flip," from a sense of generosity to the landlords.[1]

That dilapidated little building once painted red, standing just beyond the tavern barn, was formerly a store.[2] The blacksmith shop a little farther on is Silas Grout's.[3] His house without ells, and the barn a little back, are near by, in front of the sand-bank, with tall, slim poplars standing guard.[4]

On the other side of the road, nearly opposite, is the "Red Store," occupied by Heard & Reeves, for the sale of West India and Dry Goods. On that "heater" piece, where the Concord and Sudbury roads diverge, is Dr. Rice's little one-story house, facing the Sudbury road.[5] The new unfinished house, just beyond it is N. Reeves, Jr's.[6]

[1] Heard & Reeves.
[2] It stood on the south-west corner of the present Wellington lot.
[3] Its front resting on the line of the road at the south-west corner of the new Town House lot.
[4] The present site of the new Town House.
[5] Site now occupied by Capt. Dudley's house.
[6] Now standing.

At the left, farther on, is seen Elisha Cutting's large house;[1] and a few steps farther the little gambrel-roof cottage of N. Reeves, Sr., Esq., is seen;[2] the "bridle-way" to the river meadows passing between them.

Now, starting from Mr. Jona. Parmenter's towards the centre, first comes Alex. Smith's little house on Pea-porridge hill, the right-hand side of the road;[3] then on the left, beneath the shade of the two great elms, William Roby's fine two-story front and one-story back dwelling appears,[4] with his barn on higher ground a little farther on. Opposite the Roby house stands the small brick tenement (once the office of Dr. Roby), where "Mitchell" lives.

Now pass the centre elm, cross the brook, and, going towards Framingham, the first house passed on the right is Mr. Samuel Russell's, with two stories in front and one back;[5] it enjoys a coat of yellow ochre. In one of the front chambers is heard the clackety-bump of "Old Mrs. Sanderson's loom."

Around the generous fires of this domicil gathered the church-going dames to fill their foot-stoves during the cold season, and to speak of the sick and sorrowing; especially if at the morning service some one "had up a note" asking for prayers on account of the death of a relative, or to "return thanks for favors lately received."

Still south and on the left is Mr. Tim. Underwood's little low dwelling,[6] and over "Pine Brook," on the right, is seen the two-story house of Mr. John Cutting.[7]

Returning to the centre and on the road to Weston, Jerry Haws' house, the first on the left, is passed, with one story facing the road and a "cellar kitchen" beneath facing the east. In an ell to this, projecting east, Mr. J. F. Heard has opened a store for "Dry and West India Goods."[8] The little ten-footer on the opposite side of the road is where Johnny Bracket, the cobbler, lives. Daniel Learned's old two-story front and long low roof back is next passed on the right just back of the two elms.[9] In the right-hand front chamber may be seen, sitting at work with his legs doubled under him, Timothy Allen, tailor.

On the left, just beyond, is the low, yellow house of William Bracket, the shoemaker;[10] and farther on, back of the two elms, is the fine homestead of William Wyman, the miller.[11]

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[1] Location now covered by Mr. H. B. Braman's residence. The old house has been moved towards the centre, and remodelled.
[2] Site now occupied by the "Grout house" moved there, owned and occupied by Mrs. S. E. Heard.
[3] Present site of Miss M. E. Reeves' house.
[4] Now remodelled and owned by Mr. W. G. Roby.
[5] Site now occupied by Capt. Pousland's residence.
[6] Now the location of Rev. J. B. Wight's house.
[7] Location now covered by Mr. J. Bullard's house.
[8] The cellar to this ell was filled in 1878.
[9] Spot now occupied by the "Fisk Heard house."
[10] Now standing and owned by M. Kernon.
[11] Dea. Morse and sister are the present owners and occupants.

Resuming a position at the centre, "The Common" demands attention. It contains about one acre, and was purchased by the town in 1726–7 as a site, ordered by a Committee of the General Court, on which to place the meeting-house; to be used also as a training-field. Its form was nearly square, the southerly side bounded by the "Farm road" and its easterly by the "Great road."[1] On its south-westerly corner is seen the school-house, with two windows on the side next the "Farm road," three on the sides east and west, with the entrance door on the east side at the north-easterly corner. It had a hip-roof.[2] On the south-easterly corner stood the Meeting-house, removed to this place from the Old Burying Ground.

Dropping now the use of foot-notes, let it be understood that the frame of the building known as the "Old green store" is that of the "Old meeting-house of 1814," with partially diminished proportions, and excepting the timbers of the roof. Replace it then, in imagination, on its old site, with its side fronting the street and standing nearly on a line with Mr. J. Mullen's front fence, and let its southerly end fall eight or ten feet within Mr. M.'s house. In place of its present hip-roof, erect a common gable-roof with slight pediments and covings. Construct a projecting porch on the front side, and one also on each end, with eight windows in front, four on each end and four on the back, with one large circular-top window back of the pulpit, and a semicircular one in each gable end. This structure, with neither steeple, turret, nor chimney, to relieve its plainness, and with paint so completely weather-washed as to render its original color doubtful, was the old meeting-house of 1814. Its bleak appearance, however, was relieved by the beautiful sycamore which stood directly back of the pulpit window, and towered far above the building. The town Pound (formerly an important appendage) occupied the corner now covered by the "Law Office."

### LIBRARIES.

In the Free Public Library of Wayland are three folio volumes in old-style type and ancient-looking covers, bearing on their title-pages the imprint, "London, 1673," and containing the following, in manuscript, inside the covers: —

"These practical works of the late Rev^d. and pious Mr. Richard Baxter, in four volumes, folio, are given, in sheets, by the Hon. Samuel Holden, Esq., of London; and are bound at the charge of Mr. Samuel Sewell, of Boston, merchant, for the use of the Church and Congregation in the East Precinct of the town of Sudbury, now

[1] This last side extended to a point which would bring the north line of the Common within about fifteen feet from the front of Mr. L. K. Lovell's house. The line on the "Farm road" extended to one foot beyond the west wall of Mrs. Russell's house.

[2] The brick walls of this house now make the residence of Mrs. Russell.

under the care of the Rev. Mr. Cook, by the direction and disposal of the Rev. Mr. Benj. Colman, Pastor of a Church in Boston.

Boston, July 19, 1731."

These appear to be the first books owned by the town and kept for public use. They were kept in the meeting-house.

### EAST SUDBURY SOCIAL LIBRARY.

This association was organized April 6, 1796, by several citizens, who were "fully convinced that public as well as private happiness essentially depends on the general diffusion of knowledge; and that the easiest and most direct way to obtain that knowledge is by the free use of well-chosen books."

The above quotation from their records clearly indicates that the germ of *Free Public Libraries* existed among the citizens at that early date. It took root in a good soil and grew apace; but its fruit was gathered only by the proprietors who could afford to pay a four-dollar membership, with an annual assessment of twenty-five cents. It began with thirty-two members. Their first purchase was thirty-six volumes. In 1832 it contained two hundred and twenty-seven volumes. It was kept at the private houses of its successive librarians. Its Book of Records and eighty-two of its volumes are now in the Public Library.

### EAST SUDBURY CHARITABLE LIBRARY.

The Rev. John Burt Wight, on becoming the settled minister of the only religious society in the town in 1815, brought with him clear and enlarged views of the value of books. He soon commenced the formation of a Library, composed largely, but not exclusively, of moral and religious works, for the free use of any citizen of the town who might apply for them. It increased in a few years, by donations, and by purchases made from contributions taken occasionally at the meeting-house, to about three hundred volumes. For many years it was kept at the house of Mr. Wight, who gave his attention to the care and delivery of the books. Afterwards it was removed to the vestibule of the meeting-house, and through neglect many volumes were lost. Seventy-one of the books are now found in the Public Library.

### COMMON-SCHOOL LIBRARIES.

In 1845 the town ordered the purchase of books, to be kept in each of its six districts, for the use of scholars and others, under proper regulations. These libraries contained six different sets of

books (about sixty in each), and they were annually exchanged, in rotation, among the districts. Under this arrangement they were extensively read. In November, 1851, they were consolidated with the Public Library by vote of the town.

## WAYLAND FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY.

On commencement day at Brown University, R. I., in 1847, the president of that institution, Rev. Francis Wayland, D.D., made the verbal proposition to the Hon. Edward Mellen, a resident of the town of Wayland, and a trustee of the University, that he would give to the town the sum of five hundred dollars to establish a free public library, provided the inhabitants of the town would raise an equal amount for the same purpose.

This proposal was submitted in writing by Mr. Mellen at a meeting of the citizens held January 17, 1848. At that meeting an agent (J. S. Draper) was appointed to canvass the town for the necessary sum. The paper circulated (now in the archives of the Library) bears date of January 22, 1848, and contains the names of two hundred and eight persons, whose subscriptions amount to five hundred and fifty-three dollars and ninety cents, all of which was paid before the tenth day of February following. This sum, with five hundred dollars received from Dr. Wayland, was formally tendered to the town, and accepted by vote, at the annual town meeting, held March 6, 1848. Under an article in the warrant for that meeting, "To see if the town will provide a suitable room or building in which said Library shall be kept," the town voted to refer the matter to a special committee.

In effect, then, the Library was founded at this date.

The committee, with Hon. E. Mellen as chairman, were soon convinced that, without further legislation, either special or general, no movement could be legally made by the town to incur any public expenditure for founding or sustaining a Public Library.

Soon after, a proposal came from a private individual to erect a suitable building for the object desired. It being presented at a town meeting, May 8, 1848, the town chose a committee, with discretionary power, to accept such building when completed, or otherwise. At the same meeting a committee was chosen to purchase books for the Library, and a set of regulations for its management was adopted. The building was not deemed suitable for the purpose intended, and therefore was not accepted by the committee.

Becoming desperate under the delays, the town, at a meeting held March 4, 1850, voted to authorize a committee to prepare a room for the books in some proper and convenient place, and to borrow money on the town's credit to defray the expense. Under this authority a room was fitted up for the library on the front lower floor

of the Town House. On the shelves in this room the books were placed as fast as purchased.

The formal opening of the Library for the delivery of books to the public for reading occurred August 7, 1850.

In 1861, the number of books having increased beyond the capacity of its shelf-room, the town voted to fit up the room on the lower floor of the Town House, formerly used as a school-room, with suitable alcoves and cases, and transfer the books thereto. In this room, on the 4th day of July, 1861, the Library was again opened to the public. In December, 1878, the books were removed to the fine apartments designed for them in the new building; and on the 28th of the month they were again called for, and distributed to the readers throughout the town.

The present number of volumes is 7,485.

The number in circulation is 519.

Mr. Henry Wight was librarian during the first fifteen years, and was succeeded, in 1865, by J. S. Draper, the present occupant of that position.

To the above sketch, comprising the substantial facts of its history, may be added a few correlative statements.

Without a doubt it is the first Free Public Library in Massachusetts supported at the public expense. Consequent upon the discussions in the town meetings and among the citizens of Wayland relative to its complete establishment as a Public Institution, the Legislature of Massachusetts, through the efforts of Rev. J. B. Wight, a member of the House of Representatives from Wayland, in 1851, passed a law enabling any city or town in the State to "establish and maintain libraries for the use of the inhabitants thereof," etc. The results of this law are now seen in the very large number of public libraries in this State, and in others where similar provisions have been enacted.

In 1851 an invitation was extended to Dr. Wayland to visit the town, which was accepted August 26th of that year. The occasion was made one of the most interesting in the history of the town. The people assembled *en masse* to see and greet their noble-hearted benefactor. Men of literary distinction from other places were present to contribute an increased interest by their addresses, and to witness for themselves the anomaly of a new institution destined to work important and highly beneficial results in popular education.

### ENDOWMENT.

In 1863, James Draper, deacon of the First Church in Wayland, gave the sum of five hundred dollars as a permanent fund, the interest of which is to be annually expended in the purchase of books. He had been a resident in the town since 1810.

WORKS OF ART.

Life-size portraits of Rev. Francis Wayland, D.D., Rev. John B. Wight, Hon. Edward Mellen, Rev. Edmund H. Sears, and Deacon James Draper, have been presented to the Library, and adorn its walls.

Life-size busts of Wm. H. Prescott, Louis Agassiz, and Wm. E. Channing, have also been donated, and are placed in the Library.