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THE PROCEEDINGS BY THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT
IN COMMEMORATION OF THE TERCENTENARY
ANNIVERSARY OF THE LANDING OF
THE LANDING OF THE PILGRIMS
ON PLYMOUTH ROCK
1620-1920

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The Proceedings

by the

State of Connecticut

in commemoration of the

Tercentenary Anniversary

of the

Landing of the Pilgrims on Plymouth Rock

1620-1920

EXCHANGE



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U. C. BECKERMAN



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PREFATORY NOTE

In 1919 a Special Act, in the following terms, was passed by the General Assembly of Connecticut:

“An Act making provision for the participation by this State in a celebration in commemoration of the Three Hundredth Anniversary of the Landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth Rock.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. A commission consisting of the Governor and Lieutenant-Governor, *ex officio*, and nine other members all to be appointed by the Governor, is raised for the purpose of representing this State and making such arrangements and plans as may be fitting and appropriate for the participation by this State in a celebration of the three hundredth anniversary of the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth Rock. Said commission shall serve without compensation, but their necessary expenses shall be paid by the State and it may employ such stenographic and clerical assistance as may be necessary to carry out the purposes of this Act.

Sec. 2. The sum of three thousand dollars, or so much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the use of said commission and all expenditures incurred under the authority of the provisions of this Act shall be approved by the board of control.

Approved May 21, 1919.”

The nine members to serve with the Governor and Lieutenant-Governor of this Commission were appointed by his Excellency, Governor Holcomb, on February 25, 1920, as follows: Simeon E. Baldwin, of New Haven; Frank B. Weeks, of Middletown; Charles E. Thompson, of Hartford; Rev. Frederick W. Harriman, of Windsor; Edward S. Boyd, of Woodbury; Charles E. Gross, of Hartford; Miss N. Louise Mitchell, of Hartford; Mrs. Clarence B. Bolmer, of New Haven; Mrs. Sara T. Kinney, of Hartford.

His Excellency, Governor Holcomb, having declined, on account of the pressure of other official engagements, to serve as chairman of the Commission, Simeon E. Baldwin was appointed to that position.

The Commission voted to make the main features of the celebration, first a general public meeting at Hartford, on December 21, 1920, and, second, meetings of school children, so far as practicable, in every school house in the State, during the preceding school term; and on October 1, 1920, announced its action by a circular letter to school officials, which concluded as follows:

“At such meetings, it is desired that there may be one or more short talks, appropriate to the occasion, from one of you, with music and singing, if practicable, and other appropriate exercises. A copy of a Public Letter from the State to her school children will be given to each child present at any such meeting.

The Commission requests each of you to arrange or join in arranging such a meeting of the school or schools with which he is particularly connected.”

A copy of the “Public Letter” from the State to her school children, prepared by the Commission, is annexed to this publication. 250,000 copies were printed, of which about 190,000 were distributed through the schools in the State, including eighty-four private or parochial schools.

Local celebrations of the tercentenary in these schools were quite general.

On December 21, 1920, the general public meeting was held at Parsons’ Theatre, in Hartford, according to the following program:

1620



1920

December the Twenty-first

Celebration

by the

State of Connecticut

of the

Tercentenary Anniversary

of the

Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers and Mothers
at Plymouth Rock

*“A great hope and inward zeall they had of laying some good foundation,
or at least to make some way thereunto . . . yea, though they should be
but even as stepping-stones unto others for ye performing of so great a work.”*
—From Bradford’s “History of Plymouth Plantation,” page 32

CELEBRATION

AS AUTHORIZED BY THE CONNECTICUT LEGISLATURE OF

1919

IN COMMEMORATION OF THE

THREE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

LANDING OF THE PILGRIMS AT

PLYMOUTH ROCK

1620

Parsons Theatre

Hartford, Connecticut

DECEMBER THE TWENTY-FIRST

1920

AT TWO-THIRTY O’CLOCK, P.M.

“Thus out of smalle beginnings great things have been produced by His hand yt made all things of nothing, and gives being to all things that are; and as one smalle candle may light a thousand, so ye light there kindled hath shone to many, yea, in some sorte to our whole nation.”

—From Bradford’s “History of Plymouth Plantation,” page 332

PROGRAM

The Honorable Simeon E. Baldwin, Presiding

INVOCATION

REVEREND ROCKWELL HARMON POTTER, D.D.
Minister of the First Church of Christ in
Hartford, Organized 1632

“FOREFATHERS’ HYMN”

Tune, *Duke Street*

O God, beneath Thy guiding hand,
Our exiled fathers crossed the sea;
And when they trod the wintry strand,
With prayer and psalm they worshipped Thee.

Thou heard’st, well pleased, the song, the prayer:
Thy blessing came; and still its power
Shall onward, through all ages, bear
The memory of that holy hour.

Laws, freedom, truth, and faith in God
Came with those exiles o’er the waves;
And where their pilgrim feet have trod
The God they trusted guards their graves.

And here Thy name, O God of Love,
Their children’s children shall adore,
Till these eternal hills remove
And spring adorns the earth no more.

—LEONARD BACON. 1833

A Message from the
State of Connecticut

“A PUBLIC LETTER FROM THE STATE OF
CONNECTICUT
TO THE CHILDREN OF HER SCHOOLS”

Read by
MISS CLARA M. COE

A group of Melodies
from the
Pilgrim Psalm Book
Sung by the
Glee Clubs

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

By

PROFESSOR WALDO S. PRATT, MUS.D.

"BOW DOWN THINE EAR," From Psalm 86

Bow down Thine ear, Jehovah, answer me,
For I am poor, afflicted and needy.
Keep Thou my soul, for merciful am I;
My God, Thy servant save, that trusts in Thee.

Jehovah, be Thou gracious to me,
For all the day call unto Thee do I,
Thy servant's soul rejoice Thou cheerfully,
For, Lord, I lift my soul up unto Thee.

"BY BABEL'S RIVERS," From Psalm 137

By Babel's rivers, there sat we,
Yea, wept, when we did mind Sion.
The willows that amidst it be
Our harps we hanged them upon.
For songs of us there ask did they
That had us captive led along,
And mirth, they that us heaps did lay—
"Sing unto us some Sion's song!"

Jehovah's song how sing shall we
Within a foreign people's land?
Jerusalem, if I do thee
Forget, forget let my right hand!
Cleave let my tongue to my palate,
If I do not in mind thee bear,
If I Jerusalem do not
Above my chiefest joy prefer!

"CONFESS JEHOVAH," From Psalm 136

Confess Jehovah thankfully,
For He is good, for His mercy
Continueth for ever.
To God of gods confess do ye,
Because His bountiful mercy
Continueth for ever.
Unto the Lord of lords confess,
Because His merciful kindness
Continueth for ever.
To Him that doth Himself only
Things wondrous great, for His mercy
Continueth for ever.

Which in our base state minded us,
Because His mercy gracious
Continueth for ever.
And from our foes did us release,
Because His merciful kindness
Continueth for ever.

Which giveth food unto all flesh,
Because His merciful kindness
Continueth for ever.
To God of heavens confess do ye,
Because His bountiful mercy
Continueth for ever.

Reading of

THE PILGRIM COMPACT

By

COLONEL CHARLES EDWARD THOMPSON
Governor

Connecticut Society of Mayflower Descendants

All Sing

"AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL"

To the Tune of *Materna*

O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties,
Above the fruited plain;
America! America!
God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood,
From sea to shining sea.

O beautiful for pilgrim feet,
Whose stern, impassioned stress
A thoroughfare for freedom beat
Across the wilderness;
America! America!
God mend thine every flaw,
Confirm thy soul in self-control,
Thy liberty in law.

O beautiful for glory-tale
Of liberating strife,
When valiantly, for man's avail,
Men lavished precious life;
America! America!
May God thy gold refine,
Till all success be nobleness,
And every gain divine.

O beautiful for patriot dream
That sees beyond the years,
Thine alabaster cities gleam,
Undimmed by human tears;
America! America!
God shed His grace on Thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood,
From sea to shining sea.

—KATHERINE LEE BATES. 1904

Address by

PROVOST WILLISTON WALKER, Ph.D., D.D., L.H.D.
of Yale University

“WHY WE HONOR THE PILGRIMS”

Singing
by the
Boys' and Girls'
Glee Clubs

(a) “THE VOYAGE OF THE MAYFLOWER”

Out across the broad blue ocean,
Daring wind and wave,
In their hearts a firm devotion,
Sailed the Pilgrims brave.

Calm or tempest might betide them
Still with purpose grand
Fared they on with faith to guide them
To their chosen land.

On and on the Mayflower plowing
Through the trackless deep,
Bore the ones with fervor vowing
Heaven's pledge to keep.

Through the lonely sea that held it
In its mighty scope,
Strove that ship while truth impelled it
Toward the land of hope.

With their valor tried and tested,
Their long voyage o'er,
Home at last the Pilgrims rested
On a new found shore.

There they toiled with faith undaunted
And with purpose high,
And in their splendid zeal they planted
Truth that shall not die.

—NIXON WATERMAN

(b) "LAND OF OUR HEARTS"

Land of our hearts, upon whose bounteous breast
Earth's weary sons from many lands find rest,
Bind us in love, that we may truly be
One blood, one nation, everlastingly.

—JOHN HALL INGHAM

All Sing

"AMERICA"

My country! 'tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing;
Land where my fathers died,
Land of the Pilgrims' pride,
From every mountain side
Let freedom ring!

My native country, thee,
Land of the noble, free,
Thy name I love;
I love thy rocks and rills,
Thy woods and templed hills,
My heart with rapture thrills
Like that above.

Let music swell the breeze,
And ring from all the trees
Sweet freedom's song:
Let mortal tongues awake,
Let all that breathe partake,
Let rocks their silence break,
The sound prolong.

Our fathers' God, to Thee,
Author of liberty,
To Thee we sing:
Long may our land be bright
With freedom's holy light;
Protect us by Thy might,
Great God, our King.

—S. F. SMITH. 1832

BENEDICTION

By the

RIGHT REVEREND CHAUNCEY BUNCE BREWSTER, D.D.

Appreciation is extended
to Messrs. Gallup & Alfred
for the use of the Mason
and Hamlin Piano.

HISTORICAL ADDRESS

By WILLISTON WALKER

December 21, 1920

We are gathered here to-day, a part of a great company who during the past few weeks have been observing the three-hundredth anniversary of the landing of the Pilgrims. Celebrations of momentous significance, with distinguished speakers, and often with generous planning, have been held, and are being held, not merely in the principal cities of this country but in Great Britain and in Holland. Leyden, where the Pilgrims made their home under the protection of the Dutch government, and the older Plymouth, from which they sailed as the final port from which to begin their momentous voyage, have been in particular the scene of noteworthy commemorations.

Such a wide extent of celebrations in so many different countries implies an unusual interest in this three-hundredth anniversary, and the existence of reasons for this general acclaim of more than customary significance. The founders of any long-enduring state command grateful recollection whatever may have been the motives that may have led to their resultful immigration, and however unromantic may have been the causes which induced them to seek new homes. But in the case of the Pilgrims a perennial interest attaches by reason of the picturesqueness of their endeavor and a significance inheres in their enterprise on account of the motives and aims which induced their great adventure.

The general features of the history of the Pilgrim enterprise are so familiar that it is not necessary on this occasion to recount them in detail. Every school boy and school girl knows, or should know, the outstanding facts of Pilgrim story. The speaker will therefore recount simply in the most cursory way the more obvious features of this well-known tale. England had witnessed repeated and far-reaching religious changes during the sixteenth century. Its original Roman Catholicism had been transformed by that "tyrant under legal form," Henry the VIIIth. into a polity and manner of worship in which the system, while remaining essentially Roman in doctrine, had rejected the authority of the pope and substituted for it the Tudor sovereignty, had confiscated monastic foundations, and had given to the people the Bible in the English tongue. The succeeding brief administration in the name of Edward the VIth., had ordained the use of a liturgy in English, and had enforced doctrinal creeds of a decidedly Protestant character, only to be succeeded, under Queen Mary, by the restoration of the Roman authority and the reëstablishment of the older form of worship, though without the restoration to their former owners of the confiscated ecclesiastical foundations. With Elizabeth, governmental authority had swung in the Protestant direction. The liturgy was again put into English, the Queen was now supreme governor of the church, and by her nomination its bishops were appointed. Queen Elizabeth, who was herself without profound religious convictions, was of remarkable political gifts, which she employed to the utmost in this struggle. Her task was one of exceeding difficulty. The majority of her subjects were unquestion-

ably Roman Catholic in sympathy at the beginning of her reign, while a strong Protestant minority desired to secure an earnest Protestant preaching ministry in every parish, and the abandonment of a number of remaining Roman usages. To accede to their wishes seemed dangerous to the Queen from a political point of view; it appeared much wiser, in her judgment, that all who would should quietly accept the new ecclesiastical requirements whatever their want of inward acquiescence. Hence the Queen, and the bishops as her agents, repressed all innovations beyond those which she was willing to sanction, and hence the "Puritans," as those who desired such further changes were soon called, felt the heavy hand of authority. Most Puritans, however desirous of what they deemed further reform, were willing to wait for its accomplishment by the government, meanwhile agitating for governmental action and introducing such changes as might be possible. The more radical of the Puritan party were not content with this waiting policy. They believed that God had revealed in the New Testament a pattern of what His church should be in membership, organization and government. To this model they believed that the State Church did not conform. It was, in their judgment, the duty, therefore, of Christian men to come out from the State Church and to organize on what they thought the divinely appointed plan. By their opponents these radicals were naturally nicknamed "Separatists."

It was from a small group of these Separatists dwelling mostly in the country region about 140 miles north of London, on the track of the great road from London to York, that that portion of the Separatist movement

came to which we give the name Pilgrim. How these men and women came to feel the Separatist impulse more strongly than the inhabitants of most other sections of England, is a problem which the inadequate state of our knowledge renders it as yet difficult to answer. Bradford gives the probable explanation that it was through the zeal of several radical Puritan preachers that the Separatist fire was kindled, and there is no doubt that the Separatist movement in the region indicated was fostered by the labors of several remarkable men, among whom may be mentioned as in the first rank, Rev. Richard Clifton, rector of Babworth; Rev. John Smyth, once a minister of the Church of England, who had adopted the Separatist position and was advocating Separatist principles in Gainsborough by 1605 or 1606; as well as by John Robinson, recently shown to be a native of Sturton-le-Steeple in the region, and a fellow of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, who had performed ministerial service in Norwich; and by a layman, William Brewster, who held the office of postmaster at Scrooby, on the Great North Road, and who dipped deeply into his pocket to defray the expenses of such preaching as he approved. Babworth, Gainsborough, Scrooby, Sturton and Austerfield, are all in near geographical relation to each other. Here, through the influence of these men and that of their associates a Separatist congregation was formed about 1606, which speedily divided for safety or convenience into two groups, one meeting in Gainsborough under the leadership of Smyth, and the other in Scrooby which enjoyed the guidance of Clifton, Robinson and Brewster, and of which William Bradford was a youthful member.

Opposition soon counselled emigration. That hostility, it has been claimed by a recent student of Pilgrim history, was due to the antagonism of neighbors, rather than that of the ecclesiastical authorities, but most scholars still believe, with Bradford, that ecclesiastical opposition was the principal factor, though there is no inherent improbability in the presence of both elements of discomfort.

At all events the two congregations made their way speedily to the more friendly atmosphere of Amsterdam, where Smyth's following ran its somewhat chequered and individual course, but from which the development of the English Baptist Churches in part traces its origin.

The Scrooby congregation, led by the cautious Robinson, and believing an independent existence more favorable, found a home in Leyden in 1609, and there flourished in modest fashion, increased by some accessions from England, and engaged in rather humble handiwork, but enjoying the remarkable spiritual guidance of Robinson, who sweetened and ripened with the passing years.

The Leyden exiles felt themselves still English. They dreaded absorption in an alien nationality, and furthermore they were moved by a strong missionary hope that they might plant what they believed to be the institutions of the Gospel, if not in England itself, from which they felt barred, at least on English soil in the new lands across the sea. Then followed earnest debate as to where they might locate. Guiana had its advocates. The fact that the London branch of the Virginia Company was looking for settlers, and in its eagerness might overlook ecclesiastical differences, as well as furnish sub-

stantial and indispensable pecuniary help, led to protracted negotiations which resulted in a determination of the younger and more physically vigorous minority of the congregation to undertake the momentous voyage. Next came their departure from Holland in the misnamed *Speedwell*, the unsatisfactory negotiations with the London partners who had been persuaded to finance the enterprise, the final sailing in the *Mayflower*, from the English Plymouth on what by our calendar would be the sixteenth of September, the arrival in what we now know as Provincetown Harbor on November twentieth, the signing of the famous "Mayflower Compact" a day later, since the Pilgrims found themselves without the jurisdiction where they expected to be, and must provide for civil order,—all followed by the landing and the beginning of the settlement in Plymouth on December twenty-first.

Of the difficulties experienced in making provision for shelter and food, of the mortality of that first terrible winter, of perils from the Indians and from false brethren, of painful negotiations with the London partners, and of the struggle of the colony to slowly-won independence and self-support, we have graphic and familiar accounts from the pen of Governor William Bradford. Little can be added to the picturesqueness of the story, as he tells it, though historical investigation has busied itself now for three-quarters of a century and has filled in many details omitted by him from the picture. Thanks to these patient labors we know the men and women who came on the *Mayflower* better than has any generation subsequent to their own. The chief recent contribution to their story is through the recognition, thanks especially to the examination of

Probate Records, that the Pilgrim Colony, after it got on its feet when the initial decade of struggle was past, was in a larger degree an economic success than was formerly supposed. Compared with later settlements in Massachusetts and Connecticut that material prosperity was meagre, but it was real to a degree not generally recognized till recently.

Picturesque as was the Pilgrim immigration, and dramatic as were the circumstances of the long voyage and of the establishment of homes in the wilderness, that significance is heightened by the recollection that they were plain men and women of the English countryside. They had among those who crossed the Atlantic none of conspicuous social position, of considerable learning, or political or military distinction. They were furthermore a company of younger men and women. The older members of the Leyden congregation had purposely been left behind as physically inadequate for its strain. All the more clearly by reason of the absence of adventitious aids, the real significance of their enterprise stands forth. It is to some of the elements of that abiding importance that attention may appropriately be directed.

The outstanding fact regarding the Pilgrims is that they came across the Atlantic in obedience to the dictates of conscience. It was no hope of material gain, no hope of bettering their fortunes from a worldly point of view that moved them. They gave up home with all its associations, its comforts and the satisfactions of wonted relationships, for self-imposed exile in the hard conditions of a foreign land and among people of an alien tongue, and they went on from Holland to carve out a place for themselves in the wilderness with all the sacri-

fices which the great adventure involved. They were by no means the only company of men and women who have made the effort for similar motives; but men honor, and rightly honor, those who thus put the claims of what they deem duty above those of material advantage. It sheds the light of glory of high sacrifice on their endeavor, as on the path of those who counted not their lives dear to themselves that they might accomplish what they believed to be their God-assigned task.

Yet here a frequent mistake is encountered. It is often asserted that the Pilgrims came to New England in quest of religious liberty, and they are praised as pioneers in a freedom which the present age justly prizes. This is to ascribe to them a distinction which they did not possess and to which few in their age could lay claim. Their aim was more simple and concrete. They were unable to organize their worship, to constitute their church, and regulate their religious life in England as their consciences dictated and as they believed alone to be right. They had no give and take feeling that they could go one way in such important matters while others with equal honesty could go another. Doubtless instances can be cited from their history of humane and kindly actions towards individuals of beliefs differing from their own. They were not fanatics or without their full share of the milk of human kindness. Yet as a general proposition it is certain that they thought their own the only right way, and that the freedom they sought in coming to New England was freedom to walk in it.

Undoubtedly the ultimate outcome of the Pilgrim movement, viewed in the long vista of centuries, was favorable to the attainment of that religious liberty

which America now enjoys; but that result was an unintended consequence rather than an end which the Pilgrims deliberately sought. American religious liberty, when it came, was the consequence of the necessity imposed on various forms of faith, brought by various immigrations to these shores that they find some way of working side by side in common political allegiance. That the Pilgrim point of view was strongly represented in America along side of other religious ideals ultimately contributed powerfully to the development of religious liberty, but that liberty, in the form of a general toleration of differing religious convictions was no part of the Pilgrim ideal, and to claim them as thus in advance of their age is to assert too much in their behalf.

The Pilgrims had a simpler philosophy than any abstract love of freedom. They had not the years of experience in the mutual companionship of divergent faiths that can alone induce such toleration. They held that God is to be obeyed, and they did not question that right-thinking men should understand God's commands in the same way that they did. In comparison with His will all of human enactment contrary in their judgment thereto was to be disregarded, no matter what might be the personal cost. This principle of obedience to a true and higher law introduced a remarkable simplicity and directness into their lives. Their goal was clearly apprehended and resolutely sought. There was little chance for wavering or the pursuit of divergent aims. It is this devotion to a high and unselfish ideal that lends a dignity to what they did, however humble their external surroundings and gives them a permanent significance. This apprehension may not in all respects be ours. It is hard for our altered age, with its modified

standards, to enter into full sympathy of appreciation with those who made the maintenance of a particular form of Church organization a prime purpose of life. We find it hard to appreciate their motives, and not to look upon them as narrow and one-sided in their interpretation; but, after all, it is not their particular interpretation but their larger purpose that we must take into consideration in estimating their character. That fundamental endeavor stands clearly revealed. That they sought to do the will of God, fully and unreservedly, sheds on their career an abiding luster.

Naturally they sought some definite standard in which they believed the will of God to be revealed, by which they could try their conduct, and to which they were to conform. That standard, they found, in common with others of their age and race, in the Bible. To them, as to other Englishmen of the period, though not all others followed it so unreservedly and of set purpose, it was the very word of God, divinely given to men as the sole and perfect rule of faith and practice. Hence the Pilgrims were above all else Biblicists. To the teachings of Scripture as they understood them, they would conform not only their own conduct but that of all over whom they had influence. From that divine record they would derive not only all doctrine as to God's purposes for this life and that to come, but all guidance in the proper ordering of church and state. Not that they thought all apprehension of the meanings of that transcendent divine revelation had been reached by their leaders or their generation. John Robinson had told them that "the Lord had more truth and light yet to break forth out of His holy word"; but sufficient was theirs already to make plain the path of duty, of aspiration and of endeavor.

Yet the Pilgrims loved what was best in their own country with devotion. One main reason for their emigration from Holland was a fear that their children might lose their English heritage and become absorbed in an alien population. They desired to live under their native flag and to introduce into their administration the laws and customs of the land of their nativity. Their descendants were, with time, and under the influence of altered conditions of climate, business, social conditions and developing political ideals to seek as earnestly separation from the parent country. That time was still far in the future when the Pilgrim settlers came to America. To them England was still home, even if a home which had cast them forth, and they looked to it with affection and brought with them as much of law and custom as they could retain in obedience to their overruling test of conformity to what they believed to be the divine commands. It was in no politically hostile or rebellious mood that they crossed the Atlantic.

Besides all their peculiar freightage which the Pilgrims brought with them they carried much that was distinctively of the general system of the religious thought in which they had been trained. No group of men can stand wholly alone, or be uninfluenced by the great intellectual trend of their age and environment. In their religious outlook the Pilgrims were primarily advanced and consistent Calvinists. Much that is often attributed to them as individual and peculiar is really part of their common heritage. Whether Calvinism is liked or disliked, whether it is true or false, whether it is adapted to the needs of the present age or not, are not here the questions. Our endeavor is to understand the motives of the Pilgrims as they were, and those

cannot be comprehended without a recognition of their inheritance.

The first great element in their conviction was their conception of God. God was to them the greatest of all sovereigns, before whose majesty any earthly sovereignty was but the puny shadow of a passing cloud. His will has disposed all that exists, or may exist, from eternity to eternity. His providence extends to all events, great and small alike. He is the source of all good everywhere. Without Him nothing can prosper. Against His will the strongest of merely human sovereigns lift their plans in vain. In knowledge of Him is man's highest attainment and only permanent blessing. Man lives, as the Puritan poet phrased the thought a decade later than the landing of the Pilgrims:

"As ever in my great Task Master's eye."

He dwells watched over, led, disciplined, and held accountable by God.

No one can deny the majesty of this thought of God, or deny the dignity and significance that it gave to those controlled by its power. Its simplicity, its greatness, its all-reaching immensity, shed in lesser measure its reflection on, and gave a largeness to, those dominated by it. This world is no hap-hazard sport of circumstances, nor were they who acted in it, humble though they might be in social station, the mere puppets of blind fate living out a brief and purposeless existence. They were all included in God's far-reaching and immutable purpose, and, whatever their personal trials and disappointments, His will regarding them and their enterprise would be accomplished.

Closely associated with this great thought of God, was the Pilgrim judgment of man. This too was their inheritance. That estimate of man was not flattering to his natural pride. By nature, since the fall of Adam, he is evil, of himself wholly incapable of accomplishing that which is worthy of divine commendation. But, from another point of view, this conception of man was among the loftiest ever presented. He may, by divine grace, become a fellow-worker with God, a real, though humble partner in the accomplishment of the divine purpose. He is chosen of God, if God chooses him at all, as an instrument by which the divine will may be accomplished. This touch of the divine gives to the meanest life a dignity and a worth of eternal significance. None is so humble that it may not be said of him that God has a place for him in the everlasting divine purpose,—a place vital, necessary, determined and predestined.

This conception of man's relation to the divine plan inevitably shaded into the conception of man's duty. That fundamental obligation is to make the will of God regnant as far as man's power extends, first of all over his own life and then over the lives and conduct of his associates. It is a conception of lofty nobility. It made the Pilgrim strenuous with himself and with others. It has rendered him and his descendants largely reformers. Yet it undoubtedly had its unlovely side, as when the generally kindly William Bradford, in the second year of the Plymouth colony, forbade the festive celebration of Christmas, then well-nigh universal in the English homeland; and it has given point in times since to that alleged intrusiveness in the affairs of others of what has been styled "The

New England conscience." At its best it made the Pilgrim a man who took life seriously, though by no means necessarily gloomily, and who felt that others should do so also. It made him a worker in all that made for the betterment of the world as he understood that betterment. The Pilgrim was no misanthrope, or enemy of good cheer on what he deemed suitable occasions. The harvests of 1621 and 1623 were duly honored, and our annual Thanksgiving traces its origin to these at first special and occasional celebrations.

From this conviction that the Christian's fundamental duty is to make the will of God regnant flowed a particular interpretation from which the present age has widely departed. It was the belief that the state owes support and protection to the church. While state and church were never identified in Plymouth, yet it was felt that the state should defend the church from false doctrine, and see that its worship was suitably maintained. Yet while the Pilgrims undoubtedly held this conviction, they were less strenuous in its application than most of their time, and their record for severity in the name of religion contrasts to their advantage, from the viewpoint of the present age, with that, for instance, of their Puritan neighbors in Massachusetts. It would be unjust, however, to attribute to them an enlightenment which almost none then possessed, and the general dominance of which was to be far in the future of their time. Something of this good record, as it would now be thought, was due to their situation on one side of what became the main routes of settlement and trade in New England. They were not so severely tried as some of their neighbors.

The Pilgrims were peculiarly favored by their out-

ward circumstances for the development of a democracy. There were, indeed, distinctions among them. Some had become members of the expedition for hire, and were on the *Mayflower* as in various capacities of service; but there were none who could claim rank as of the nobility of England in the party. They were a homogeneous, self-respecting group for the most part, of hard-working country folk, who had been schooled in the industrial life of a considerable city, without attaining any marked differences of financial status. The heads of the Pilgrim households met on a plane of unusual equality. They were, furthermore, trained in the administration of the Church, and recognized as the door of admission to Church-fellowship a mutual covenant between the disciple, his fellow-members and his Lord. It was, therefore, the natural expression of the social status and of the religious convictions of the Pilgrims alike, when finding themselves in Provincetown Harbor, outside the jurisdiction which they had expected before leaving England, and therefore without legal warrant, they bound themselves, on November 21, 1620, by the *Mayflower Compact*. By this constitutive document they:

covenant and combine our selves together into a civill body politick and by vertue hearof to enacte, constitute, and frame such just and equall lawes, ordinances, acts, constitutions, and offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meete and convenient for ye generall good of ye Colonie, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience.

Doubtless the full consequences of this step were not thought out. They were not a constitutional convention deliberating as to the fitting form of a great commonwealth. They had no intention of abrogating the

laws of England, subjects of whose kings they felt themselves to be. They were a small company, far from home, on a desolate shore, on the edge of a vast wilderness, who felt the need of government, and of the order which government alone can secure. They constituted themselves a civil body politic, as they formed themselves a church, by a mutual agreement. Yet in so doing they showed themselves highly democratic, they helped to lay the foundations of American institutions in democracy, and contributed to the forces that were to work together to make democracy, in due time, the fundamental policy of the American republic.

In regard to one final Puritan characteristic, emphasis on education, the Pilgrims certainly were backward. They had among them only one liberally educated man, Elder William Brewster, and even he, though he had matriculated in Cambridge University, had not gone on to graduation. Nor did any settler of even similar scholastic training join the Pilgrim commonwealth till the coming of Rev. Ralph Smith in 1629. Though Harvard College graduated its first class in 1642, few of its early students were from Plymouth Colony. Though doubtless there was elementary household teaching from the first, as they probably had already had in Holland, it was not until 1662 that formal statutory provision was made for instruction. Intimations in the Records imply that public interest had been aroused and schools had come into existence before that time; but, in this important respect the contrast between the Pilgrim settlement, and the early significant provisions for education in the Puritan colonies to the northward and westward, is striking, and to the disadvantage of the Pilgrims. The explanation is to be

found in the relatively humble origin of the Pilgrims, and in their relative lack of men of intellectual leadership. Had Robinson, their beloved and learned pastor in Leyden been permitted to cross the Atlantic the story might well have been different. New England needed in this respect to have the courage of the Pilgrims supplemented by the educational zeal of the later Puritan immigration before it could take on its characteristic development. In claiming virtues for the Pilgrims, and they are justly praised for many excellent qualities, service to education cannot be enumerated in the list. That this was so was doubtless more the misfortune of external circumstances than any deliberate rejection of educational claims.

The survey of the chief characteristics of the Pilgrims which has been made shows clearly their abiding claims to the respect of later generations. They were plain men and women, not eminent for such talents as command large success in business, in the field of politics, or in the realm of scholarship. Their financial resources were very meager. In many important respects there was little in their enterprise to promise success. Yet they were marked by industry, by a high sense of the importance of the undertaking in which they were engaged, and by a devotion to its achievements that was not daunted by difficulties. Above all they were animated by a unity of purpose and by a high sense of divine guidance which can come only from religion. They walked their difficult way as "seeing the invisible." That conviction gave to them strength and courage.

From the solidity and sincerity with which they held these principles came a tenacity of purpose, a trust in God, and a willingness to meet constant and bitter dis-

couragement which, as these perils were gradually overcome, made their venture an increasing economic success. Their agreement with the London Merchant Adventurers was a disappointment to both parties. Their attempts to send profitable cargoes to England were a failure. By 1627, the partnership with the Merchant Adventurers was dissolved on terms which left the Pilgrims deeply in debt, yet masters of their further fortunes. They had shown that settlers could live, govern themselves and maintain themselves economically in New England. Their debts were ultimately paid. Their institutions, both in Church and State, showed ability to live. Their great demonstration was that trans-Atlantic colonization in New England could be self-supporting, and even more, it could be a modest success. They blazed the road for all who came after them. Without them that further and larger settlement could not well have been. It was their strong confidence in God, their unshakeable conviction that they were doing His will, and their sense of His guidance and favor, that won them their success.

It is peculiarly as men of principle that they have their lesson for the generations that have entered into their heritage. With few of the external advantages which such a labor might seem to demand, a company of men and women in no way distinguished socially, pecuniarily, politically or educationally above the average of the "plain country folk" of their day and generation in England, they yet founded the beginning of an enduring commonwealth, in the heritage of which we rejoice to-day. That is not to say that they did not need the reinforcement of the much larger, more wealthy, more socially eminent and more educationally

alert Puritan settlements that were later to supplement their work and into whose larger life they were themselves ultimately to be merged. Yet they were the pioneers. To them belongs the distinction of showing the way.

A further and less tangible demonstration was theirs in the realm of the spirit rather than in that of material things. They stand as a symbol of high resolution, of earnest purpose, of dauntless conquest of difficulties. How fully their influence as a spiritual example affected those who came immediately after them is not easy to define. It cannot have been without its heartening significance. But for recent generations the Pilgrims have stood as the embodiment of a great ideal, and as such have an abiding symbolic value among the forces of the spirit which have given distinction to American life.

Nor is their story without its perpetual challenge to their descendants, whether of the flesh or of the spirit. In their day they were found faithful, and that they were what they were and did what they did has put us permanently into their debt. Shall we, with our vastly greater resources, our immeasurably superior advantages, our comparative wealth of knowledge, and our abounding variety of contact with life, be found similarly simple-hearted, direct and purposeful amid the perplexities of the present turmoiled and needy world? They did their work well. God grant that those who follow us may have like reason to make the same honorable affirmation as they think of us.

A PUBLIC LETTER FROM THE STATE OF
CONNECTICUT TO THE CHILDREN
IN HER SCHOOLS



*Tercentenary Anniversary of the Landing of the
Pilgrims on Plymouth Rock*

1620—1920

The State of Connecticut covers a part of what, for some years before 1620, had been known as New England. The name "Pilgrims" is given to a company of Englishmen who had been political refugees in Leyden, Holland, but in that year left Europe for America. Most of them came here mainly to secure liberty to worship God in their own way. The ship that brought them was named the *Mayflower*. Before they landed they signed a paper, called the "Mayflower compact." In it they agreed to constitute themselves a Colony, and to enact from time to time such just and equal laws as should be thought most for the general good.

This was the first government in the history of man-

kind avowedly founded on the principle that all governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed,—a truth long afterwards stated, July 4, 1776, in the Declaration of Independence of the United States.

The Pilgrims landed on December 21, 1620. It was on a rocky shore in what is now known as Plymouth, Massachusetts. The season was the dead of winter. The country was owned by England and they were all Englishmen. It was inhabited only by a few red Indians, who sold them, from time to time, their title to the possession of the land along the shore.

The Pilgrims set up such a government as was described in the Mayflower compact, and named it the New Plymouth Colony. They elected a Governor from among themselves and also assistants for him.

In England they had been called "Separatists," because they had separated themselves from the established church, and chose their own ministers. Only church members could vote at Colony elections.

In Connecticut, which also was another English colony, founded a few years later, church membership was not required as a condition of the right to vote.

Both colonies had town meetings, every year, of all entitled to vote, as electors, at which rules were made to promote good order. But Connecticut differed from Plymouth in having a full written Constitution, to which any such rules must conform.

This Constitution was framed and adopted in 1639, at a meeting of the settlers held at Hartford. It was the first written document in human history of that nature, setting up a new government and providing in detail certain "fundamental orders" as to the mode of conducting it.

Before 1643 there had come to be four English colonies in New England. These were called the New Plymouth Colony, the Massachusetts Bay Colony, the Connecticut Colony and the New Haven Colony. In 1643, they all joined in creating a confederation, under the name of the "United Colonies of New England." This lasted until 1664.

What, now, does the Landing of the Pilgrims in 1620 mean to us in Connecticut?

The founders of States have a place by themselves. They make history. They create a new and great political institution. They step forward into a place before untrodden. They set a precedent for similar action in constituting other governments.

The Pilgrims of Plymouth were, in effect, the founders of New England. When we set up a new government in Connecticut we looked to Plymouth for our warrant to set one up by virtue of a social compact, made by those whom it was to govern. Under such a compact the Plymouth settlers had lived for nineteen years. The Connecticut settlers had the benefit of this experiment of the Pilgrims. But the Pilgrims had put into their compact a statement that they were "loyal subjects" of the King of England. In our Constitution of 1639 there is nothing of this sort. The Connecticut settlers spoke for themselves only, in voting to establish by and for themselves and their successors "one Public State or Commonwealth."

The Pilgrims ran great risks, and submitted to great hardships in founding their Colony. It took them more than two months to make the voyage across the Atlantic. Half of them died within the next three months for want of proper food and shelter. They

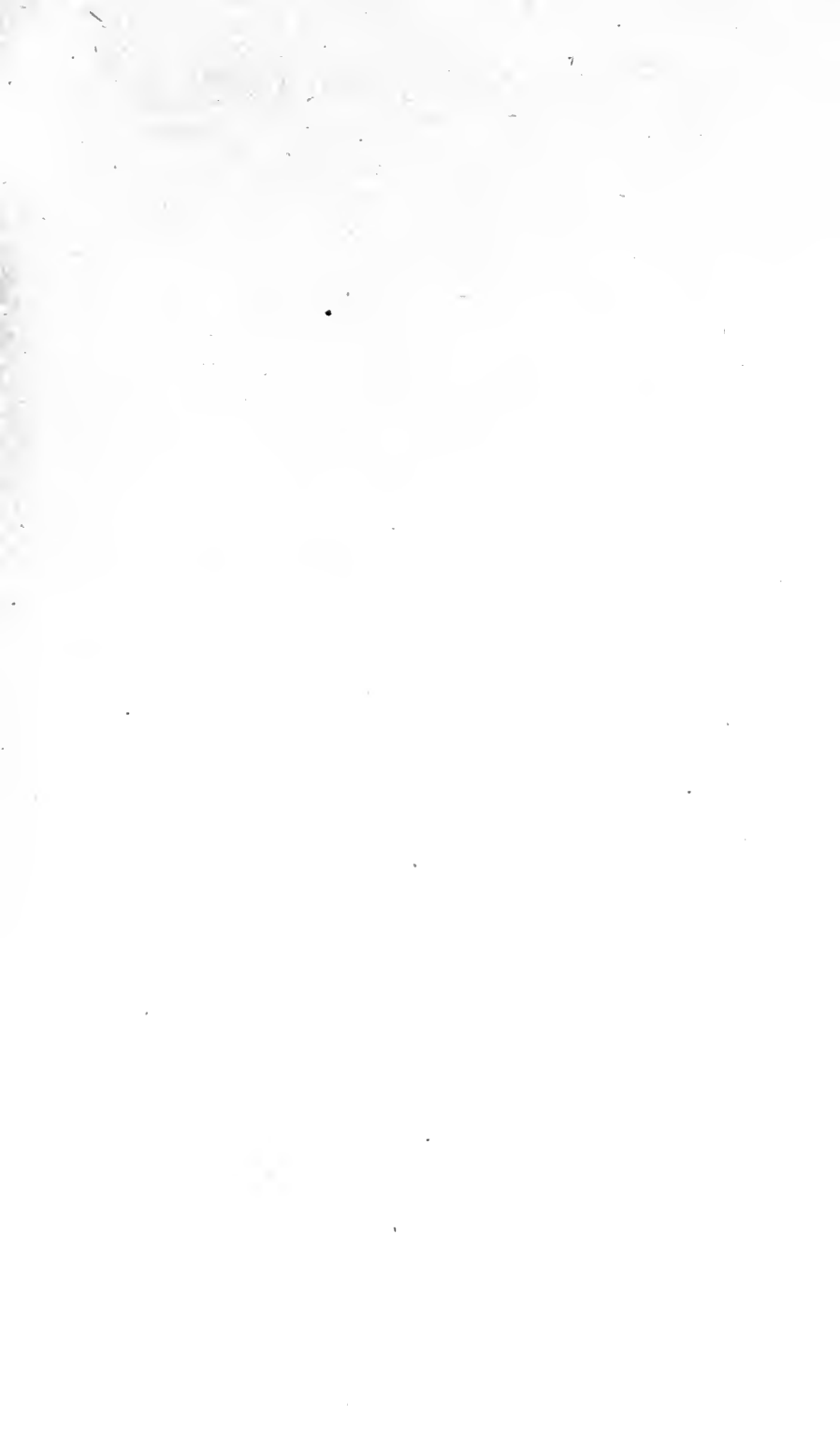
knew what dangers they had to encounter, but they knew also, as recorded by their Governor, William Bradford, in his history of their doings, "that all great and honorable actions are accompanied with great difficulties; and must be both enterprised and overcome with answerable courages."

This was the spirit in which the Pilgrims undertook their task. This was the spirit they hoped to infuse into their successors on the soil of New England. This was the spirit in which they came to plant free institutions in what was then almost as much a New World as when Columbus made his landfall in 1492. This was the spirit in admiration of which we are to celebrate this year the three hundredth anniversary of the Landing of the Pilgrims.

THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT,

By MARCUS H. HOLCOMB,

Governor.



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