

Mr. CHESTER'S

S E R M O N.

A

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SERMON,

IN COMMEMORATION OF THE LANDING,

OF THE

NEW-ENGLAND PILGRIMS.

DELIVERED IN THE

566

381

2d. Presbyterian Church, Albany,

DECEMBER 22d, 1820:

ON THE COMPLETION OF THE

SECOND CENTURY,

SINCE THAT EVENT.

BY JOHN CHESTER,

Pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church, Albany.

“QUI TRANSTULIT SUSTINET.”



ALBANY:

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1820.



“THE Committee of Arrangements” for the celebration of the Second Centennial Era of the Landing of the Pilgrims of New-England, present to the Reverend JOHN CHESTER their warm thanks for the very interesting and eloquent discourse delivered by him, at their request, on the occasion, and respectfully solicit a copy for publication.

By order of the Committee,

JOSEPH ALEXANDER,
EBENEZER BALDWIN.

Albany, December 23d, 1820.



ALBANY, 26th December, 1820.

Gentlemen,

I have the honour to acknowledge your polite note of the 23d inst. I send you a copy of the Sermon, agreeably to your request, and submit it to your disposal.

*I am, with affectionate regard,
your Friend and Servant,*

JOHN CHESTER.

JOSEPH ALEXANDER, ESQ.

EBENEZER BALDWIN, ESQ.

A SERMON.



JEREMIAH, VI. 16.

Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest to your souls.

SOME of the most delightful and improving emotions, that the heart ever experiences, spring from recollections connected with our Fathers' sepulchres. We cherish with the tenderest interest the memory of our departed Ancestors. The places, where they lived and toiled, where they wept and prayed, where they fought and conquered, are dear to the sweetest efforts of memory, and the most sacred and most noble affections of the heart. Who, that has been long estranged from the venerable mansion of his birth, where his parents lived, where he began his first steps, does not find a thousand objects that produce the liveliest emotions of melancholy pleasure. The thoughts rush back to the moment when "life was young," and the warm tears of our childhood bedew the cheeks of maturity.—No virtuous mind is ashamed of these feelings; they are always honourable, as they are powerful. Many a prodigal has wept in the bitterness of remorse upon that threshold that he left rich in innocence, and rich in paternal blessings, and sighs as he remem-

bers the counsels he has neglected, and the anguish he has caused to the heart of his Sire. What the remonstrances of conscience and the warnings of truth could not effect, the memory of home has accomplished. "I will arise and go to my Father," is the first promise of penitence—he rises and goes, are the first acts of duty.—To cherish these emotions is a wise dictate of religion, and they are often sanctified to the highest purposes of practical piety.

"Our Fathers, where are they?" They spent their years "as a tale that is told," and they have passed away like the mountain shadow. The land they conquered is ruled by their Sons. Their fields spread their beauty to other eyes, and give their harvests to other generations. That narrow spot is all they possess. The stone that marks it is already hoary with moss,—the foot of time has worn out the inscription that filial affection had written. As individuals, few of them have any memento;—though as a community the history of their self-denial and valour, their wisdom and patriotism, will be cherished as long as their descendants shall inherit their spirit, or grateful affection shall exist. Their monument is neither brass, nor marble; but it is formed by churches and schools, by wise and noble institutions; by halls of public justice,—by intelligence, and virtue, and liberty.

Two Centuries are this day completed since the PURITAN PILGRIMS of New-England landed on the soil of the new world. What wonders have been effected! This wilderness, which they found filled with savages, and destitute alike of civilization and culture; where the worship of God was unknown, has

become joyful with improvement, and vocal with praise. More than ten millions of inhabitants occupy these regions. It is a land of "every land, the pride." It ranks high on the catalogue of Nations. It is filled with noble institutions—it is blessed with liberty—it is governed by laws.

And can it be uninteresting to the descendants of that people, who contributed so much to the settlement of this country; and whose wisdom and valour have had so happy an influence upon the prosperity, and the learning, the liberty and religion of their posterity, to remember and celebrate the event, which, while it is so honourable to us, is under God the cause of our independence and happiness?

Simple gratitude would place this retrospection among our duties, but we have here a deep personal interest. As the children of christian parents, as the posterity of patriots, of wise statesmen and brave and valiant Sires, we owe it to public happiness, to the service of truth, and to our posterity "*to stand in the way and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way and walk therein.*" This is peculiarly necessary in an age of enterprize and improvement, when the love of novelty is giving perpetual activity to research, and vigour to enterprize; when there is great danger of sacrificing important principles and safe and pure manners, for seductive and ruinous errors, and for vain and licentious courses.

The landing of the Puritan Pilgrims in New-England, is one of the most interesting and important events that has ever occurred on this Continent. The establishment of the Plymouth Colony, had a deeper connection with the prosperity and glory of

America, than any occurrence that ever existed. Cause and effect are alike under the supreme control of Almighty Jehovah. He does his pleasure every where, and works according to the counsel of his own will,—but under him, the event which we this evening celebrate, was intimately connected with all this country is, or promises to be. The twenty second of December holds as high a rank in our National calendar as the fourth of July. Without this, Washington would have been born in vain, and February and July would have passed in the circles of the months, without notice, or celebration.

This country was discovered at the close of the 15th century. It opened upon the old world when the cup of her abominations was full,—when her population was too numerous for her territory : at a period when letters were revived, when the art of printing was discovered, when men began to discern their natural rights, and the light of liberty and learning was beginning to shine upon a long benighted and ignorant world. Events of the most important character succeeded the discovery of Columbus. The Reformation soon followed, and made an impression upon the nations that nothing could obliterate or resist. The progress of the Reformation was slower and more partial in England than in any other land where it finally triumphed. The Monster who disgraced the throne when it commenced, became its friend that he might gratify his revenge, and indulge his lusts. His descendants, with but a single exception, were hostile to every thing like religious liberty or tolerance, until his family was driven from the throne.

The PURITANS, from whom the Pilgrims sprang, rose about the year 1555, and received this appellation by way of reproach on account of the solicitude which they manifested for the *purity* of the laws, ordinances and worship of God. It has long been consecrated as a title of respect, and will be considered honourable, as long as the true history of those who bore it shall be known. During the reigns of MARY, ELIZABETH, and JAMES 1ST. the Puritans made every exertion to obtain their natural and inherent right of religious liberty. They were loyal subjects, and holy men; but all their efforts were vain. Their last hope was in James, who not only disappointed, but scorned them. Notwithstanding all his fair and voluntary promises, he was zealously devoted to the Hierarchy, and lent his talents and his power to persecute and destroy.

The Puritans, whose love of truth, whose desire for freedom, and whose determination to worship God according to the dictates of conscience, nothing could repress or destroy, at length resolved to abandon a country from which liberty was exiled, and a government whose "tendermercy was cruelty,"—and which determined to crush them.

They fled from every port. The christian inhabitants of Germany and Holland received them with open arms. They cherished the Pilgrims with the most affectionate hospitality. Their lands were changed into cities of refuge. In those consecrated regions the Reformers and Protestants of every nation were welcome. Here were the followers of LUTHER and CALVIN; the PURITANS of England,—the

PRESBYTERIANS of Scotland, and afterwards, the HUGUENOTS* of France. They met and mingled here, and here was laid the foundation of the greatest blessings to the Church. Their union was cemented by principle and sympathy.—The benefit and benevolence of the Dutch hospitality can never be forgotten while religion endures.

Among the emigrants to Holland, in the beginning of the 17th Century, was the Congregation of the Rev. Mr. Robinson, some of whose direct lineal descendants are in this house this evening. They arrived in Amsterdam in 1609. They had suffered much from the jealousy and power of the Archbishop of Canterbury, who had made the utmost exertion to prevent their emigration. Their intentions were often defeated; but after much toil and suffering, after “bonds and imprisonment,” they succeeded in leaving England for ever.

After a few years spent in their retreat in Holland, they resolved to accomplish their original design of forming a settlement in America. Their object from the beginning was liberty of conscience and the glory of God. They intended to lay the foundation of a Christian Empire, and give Freedom and Religion as an inheritance to their children.

Purer motives never influenced men, and had not religion supported them, the United States had still been the land of Vassals and savages.

* The Huguenots obtained this appellation by way of reproach. It is supposed to be derived from Huguon, a word used in Touraine, to signify *Persons that walk at night, in the streets.* (See Moshier.) They were engaged with zeal in the cause of religion, and used to meet frequently in the evening for sacred worship.

A part of Mr. Robinson's church left Holland in the year 1620,—after a tedious and perilous voyage, they found Cape Cod at the close of that year. Their destination was the mouth of the Hudson, but the season was too far advanced to attempt the prosecution of their voyage.* They continued on that coast, to seek an habitation, until they agreed to fix their dwelling in PLYMOUTH. Here they landed on the TWENTY SECOND OF DECEMBER, 1620.

It would require volumes, to recount their toils, and sufferings—their wars and conquests—their valour and institutions. God cast out the Heathen before them, and gave them a rich inheritance. The noble, holy objects which made them Pilgrims, engaged all their ardour, and success rewarded all their toil. For many years they struggled for existence! Famine and pestilence raged in the midst of them; on every side the jealous savages were watching the opportunity to destroy them. “*He who transplanted sustained them.*” He had smoothed the waves of the ocean, and hushed its tempests. On all its storms he had planted the bow of his covenant, and his still small voice of love was heard amid the roar of waters and the thunders of the storm, saying “*fear not for I am with thee, be not dismayed, for I am thy God.*” He was a wall of defence round about them, and his arm was their shield and their hope. The causes

* It seems to be admitted that the Captain of the ship had been bribed by some interested persons, to land them far north of the place they intended. After they had found Cape Cod, they would have gone to the Hudson, but the Captain would not proceed, and in a short time the severity of the season made it impossible.

which led to their removal, and the success which attended their establishment, induced multitudes to follow them, to share their toil and partake of their blessings. Great accessions of numbers, and supplies of comfort and wealth continued to arrive until the Colonies became permanent, prosperous and safe.

This settlement at Plymouth, although clearly the most important, was not the first that was made in this country. Previous colonies were established in Virginia and New-York.* This city was founded some years before the landing of the Pilgrims.

But the event, which we this evening celebrate,

* In 1609, Henry Hudson entered New-York bay and discovered the river that bears his name. The most respectable Dutch writers declare, that the hostility of the Manhattan Indians was so great, that no land could be purchased on that Island; and for some time the Dutch traders were discouraged from attempting to make any settlements there. This also, is the reason assigned for the erection of the Fort and Trading House on the Island just below this city (Albany) in 1614. When Hudson discovered Manhattan Island, he was sailing under a commission from King James; he, however, sold his right of discovery to the Dutch.—The Fort below this City, was built by the “*Dutch West India Company*,” and called Fort Aurania. The English protested against Hudson’s sale, and soon after Sir Thomas Dale, Governor of Virginia, sent to the Dutch and demanded a relinquishment of their claim, and they submitted to the King of England. I have not the means of stating precisely the date of the commencement of the City; but it must have been some years after the Fort, on the Island below, was erected. The present City of New-York was commenced at the close of the year 1614. Fort Orange which is supposed to have stood on the scite of the house occupied by the Hon. Simeon De Witt, in South Market-street, was erected some years later.

Vide *Dr. Miller’s excellent Discourse before the New-York Historical Society*, 1809. *Dr. Trumbull’s History of Connecticut*, and *Smith’s History of New-York*.

was that which gave encouragement to their persecuted friends in England to follow them ; it was that which afforded *stability* and *vigour* to all the other settlements, and which in its progress and consequences led to the most interesting and important events, connected with the history and independence of this great empire.

The principles, which governed such men, their motives and supports, can never be subjects of indifference. The patriot, the philosopher, and the christian, cannot want interest and curiosity to examine the history of the New-England Pilgrims. No other men ever attempted to form an empire for the honour of religion and the glory of God ;—for the abode of liberty and for the protection of the oppressed of the whole earth. Others have explored new countries in quest of wealth—to gratify the lust of conquest and dominion. These alone, in the fear of God, that they might find a place for his temple, and an altar for his worship. Much as they have been ridiculed by frivolous pretenders, their history furnishes abundant proofs of their holy, dauntless spirit, which accomplished their benevolent objects, in as perfect a manner as can appertain to men. The results of their wisdom, patriotism, and piety are matters of history. They produced the independence of these United States. In giving this just praise to the New-England Fathers, it is not intended to detract from, or deny the merits of other colonies, but it is certainly true, that their spirit and wisdom led to the most important events that are connected with the history, independence, and glory of this great empire.

“ Thus saith the Lord stand ye in the way, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”

My brethren it is a solemn duty to “ *remember the days of old, the years of many generations.*” If we desire the most important information upon subjects connected with all that is venerable in the human character, all that is desirable in public felicity and order, all that is blissful in holiness and salvation—“ *go ask thy FATHERS and they will shew thee, thy ELDERS and they will tell thee.*”

May we not employ this occasion to advantage in contemplating “ *the good old ways*” of our Fathers, that we may be induced to walk in them, and thus secure the object for which they toiled and suffered—“ *rest to our souls.*”

In almost every thing relating to personal or public happiness, there is much need of obeying this injunction. Men may improve modes;—but never principles. We may extend religion in its influence upon multitudes that have never received it,—we may and ought to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, but truth is uniform, principles are eternal; and surely those which relate to natural rights and to salvation cannot be improved. They are independent of time and of circumstance, and are fixed by him with whom there is no “ shadow of turning.” No persons understood the doctrines of grace and the plan of salvation better than the primitive church. The revelation which was to be the foundation of their faith and the guide of their conduct was perfect and complete. The whole system was finished;—sealed with the blood of its

Lord, and reduced to the most delightful experience. There will be no new communications upon this subject, there is no other name given under heaven whereby we can be saved. Every fancied improvement is a real deformity. The pride of reason and philosophy have uniformly darkened the divine counsel and led to heresy and infidelity. We are to stand and enquire for the good *old* ways and walk therein. In religion, they had an infallible guide : and their views of *civil* liberty were nearly, if not altogether, perfect. Our fathers understood its principles and brought them into as happy and successful practice as any community that ever existed. It is questionable whether any people ever did, or ever will enjoy more perfect freedom, with so much security, so simple a government, with such wise and salutary restraints, as they enjoyed, until the light of millennial glory shall dawn upon the nations, as the morning on the mountains. Well may their children stand in the way and ask for their good old paths and walk therein.

The same remark may be applied to general manners. The good old way, if it had less of modern refinement, and of modish form, had *less* of hollow hypocrisy and unmeaning professions. If it had more bluntness, it had more sincerity,—and if it was less polished, it was more sound. If it wanted the image and superscription of modern coin, it was sterling bullion, whose value was more than its appearance.

A spirit of bold and licentious innovation, which prevails to an alarming degree in the world, is hostile to that humble, uniform course which true policy

and duty unite to demand. The fire of the imagination, the boldness of enterprize, the ardour of hope, are all enlisted against the caution and safety of established principles and settled forms. In a young country, there is so much seductive stimulus for innovation--where change is so flattering--where every thing promises so fair, and almost every vigorous effort is successful, there is peculiar danger of neglecting courses, opinions, and principles, merely for the sake of novelty and experiment. Nothing chastens this love of change but the experience of age, and this has often to lament errors which it has no power to reform, to weep over the recollection of privileges and advantages it once possessed, but which it can never recal.

In the humble hope that a view of the good old ways of our fathers, may save us from useless regrets, and a guilty abandonment of the true principles of religion, morality, and liberty, we proceed to attempt an examination of their characters and history.

They were distinguished for their RELIGION. Nothing but a deep and sincere conviction of the truth of evangelical piety;—a heartfelt experience of its power;—nothing but faith in its promises, and the support of its grace, could have induced them to leave their homes, their friends, and property, for a wilderness, for want, and for suffering. Had they not counted all things lost for Christ, they had never attempted a project which no human motive could either have dictated or sustained.

The love of truth, zeal for the honour of God, devotion and obedience characterized them in every

thing, connected with the establishment and progress of the New-England Colonies. The Bible was not only their text-book, but the foundation of their creeds, and the rule of their conduct. Their veneration for the Scriptures was sincere and profound. They received them as the inspired record of the will of God, and as an infallible guide in truth and duty. Every thing was subservient to their authority, and it was their constant effort and supplication to be conformed to their sacred precepts.

Their views of truth were uncommonly vivid and correct. They enjoyed the best opportunities to acquire a profound knowledge of the Scriptures. They were well acquainted with the writings and the disciples of the Reformers. They lived in a period when the ministers of the Protestant Churches were among the most learned and acute scholars and critics, that ever preached the Gospel. They were sound and able men. They brought with them the most valuable libraries,—they were familiar with the fountains of knowledge which all must seek, and at which, the distinguished divines of this day must be furnished, and instructed. The Gospel was preached “in the demonstration of the Spirit, and with power.” Its great truths were as ably stated,—as well defended,—and as powerfully enforced as they ever were, or can be, by mere un-inspired men.

They did not deal in the refinements of metaphysical speculation, but they contended in the humility, and simplicity of truth, “*for the Faith once delivered to the Saints.*” They did not view theoretical error with indifference. They had none of that li-

berality that led them to sacrifice to convenience, or fashion, the essential glory of truth, or to confound the distinctions of right and wrong,—evil and good,—truth and error. They resisted *infidelity*, as well in the odious deformity of its proper shape, as when it assumed the form of an angel of light. Their charity was neither “sounding brass nor a tinkling cymbal.” “It rejoiced not in *iniquity*, but it rejoiced in the *truth*.” The good old path, in which they travelled and found rest to their souls, was the “strait and narrow way,” which the Saviour had marked, which was worn with the feet of the apostles and martyrs, and which led to duty, holiness, and heaven.

They were distinguished for their love of the divine cause of religion, and for the honour of God their Father, Saviour, and Sanctifier. This absorbed their affections. They were borne away by the love of Christ. To promote the glory of his name and his kingdom, they devoted all they were, and all they possessed. This was their first, their chief object in all they designed, and all they performed. It was neither wealth, nor honour, that they sought,—they renounced both, that they might glorify God in the gospel of his Son.

Their bold and irrepressable desire for liberty was consecrated to the service of truth. They considered freedom as an unspeakable blessing to religion; for this they valued it,—for this they sought it at the price of their sufferings, at the expense of ease, and treasure, and blood. When they had secured it for themselves and their children, they consecrated it to its Giver, and employed it for the dif-

fusion of truth, as a means of personal improvement, of more profound humility, of more faithful obedience.

They loved the doctrines of grace, their freeness and sovereignty,—the purity of God's worship, and the order of his house, with holy fervour. For these they sacrificed all that this world holds dear. In perils of waters,—of enemies,—of savages,—of pestilence and famine, they could say, “none of those things move us, neither do we count life dear if we may finish our course with joy.”

They were distinguished for the good old ways of Scriptural *morality*. Believing, they were careful to maintain good works. Their virtue sprung from the only true fountain—faith. They entertained the strictest regard to the preceptive will of God. The purity of their morals gave them a name, which their enemies intended as a reproach, but which they received as an honour. Their whole history vindicates their claim to this appellation.

They were remarkable for their sanctification of the SABBATH. With them it was a day of sweet and sacred rest. It was wholly devoted to reading, meditation, and prayer, in private, and to family instruction, and social worship, in public. No secular employment disturbed its repose, nor interrupted its devotion. No traveller alarmed their peaceful villages. They rested from their labours, and blessed him, who “sanctified the Sabbath day and hallowed it.” One of the reasons which induced our Father to leave England, was the gross and universal profanation of this holy day. The licentiousness of that period, had left no trace of regard for the Sab-

bath. It had become a day of pleasure and dissipation, when fashion lent its power to corrupt the vulgar, and united all its seductions to bring religion into contempt. The Puritans well knew that when the Sabbath was overthrown, or disregarded, the citadel of religion,—the last defence of piety, would be destroyed. They would not leave their children to be educated in the midst of corruption, and they braved the ocean's tempest and its "mountain wave,"—the wilderness and its savage inhabitants, to "*find rest for their souls.*"

Oh, may their descendants, in whatever clime they make their home, stand in the way, and ask for this *good old path* of duty, and, like their Fathers, be distinguished for their sacred regard to the Sabbath of the Lord,—to its hallowed rest,—to its delightful duties.

Another remarkable fact in their history, was their devotion to the interests of EDUCATION. The church and school-house rose together, and were mutual supports. No where, on earth, are the benefits of common education so widely enjoyed as in New-England. On this subject she is a wonder, and a model. Her wise systems, her noble appropriations, have brought education to every farm-house in her territory, and spread the Bible, with all its treasures, before the eyes of all her children. Parents felt their responsibility, and they endeavoured to "bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Their object was to make their offspring Christians; to give them sound principles of holiness, while they gave them information of letters and business. They knew nothing of that

fatal indulgence, which now ruins such multitudes of our youth. Age was venerated;—there was true subordination. The distinctions of society were not broken down. Children did not affect to be men; they were not permitted to lisp in blasphemy, and to mingle oaths and imprecations with their sports. They were not left to the guidance of their passions. Our Fathers knew the evil propensities of the heart, and governed by the advice of the wisest men, they brought the power of the rod to aid the gentler motives of affection and remonstrance. Then there was some meaning in the terms master and servant. Subordination and obedience were common in the family and school-room, the shop and the counting-house, and order and happiness, were the consequences.

The head of each family was a priest in his own house. The domestic altars were numerous as the families. The morning and evening incense constantly ascended from these Bethels, to their preserver and benefactor. The influence of family order and piety, was diffused through the community. Magistrates were venerable and venerated. The child rose and stood uncovered before the antient. They walked in the good old way of “*rendering unto all their dues,—HONOUR to whom HONOUR,*” and if they wanted the etiquette of courts, they did not want that true respect, which makes office honourable and efficient.

Those were times of discipline in the family,—the church and the state. Authority was exercised with great moderation; but with great firmness, impartiality, and vigour. There were few crimes; but those were rigorously punished. There were but few to

connive at iniquity, and of course, the guilty seldom escaped. Public opinion was uniformly on the side of virtue, and operated as an immense restraint upon the wicked. Their laws were simple and intelligible, and they were executed with a promptness and a certainty, that made them terrible to the guilty:—of course public morals were pure. That there was an uncommon degree of order and submission, is evinced by the fact, that public crimes were extremely rare, and no where did public punishment produce such disgrace and dread. It was the general opinion that gave such severity to the executed law; it was the universal detestation, that branded the guilty, and made its mark more intolerable than Cain's.

On the subject of education, in its higher branches, their uniform conduct deserves praise and admiration. The attention which they paid to this subject, was wonderful, considering their circumstances. They were in a desert, struggling for existence. They were obliged to employ their implements of husbandry as weapons of defence. One would think that their safety would have occupied all their thoughts, and absorbed all their energies. Had they not been extraordinary men it would,—but they never neglected the true interests of learning; provision was soon made to establish an University.* As the colonies multiplied, their attention to this subject increased, and three respectable Colleges were founded, in the first century after they landed. The interests of learning have steadily advanced, and

* The first University that was established on this continent, is Harvard, in Cambridge, Massachusetts—the second, Yale, in New-Haven, Connecticut.

multitudes of men, of the first eminence, in every part of the United States, and in every department of civil and professional life, have been educated in New-England. Her inhabitants have expended for several years past, more than one million of dollars annually, in educating men who have left her territory, to devote their acquirements to the service of the inhabitants of other states. Her efforts upon this subject may be forgotten and treated with ingratitude; but she deserves great credit, and will secure it from the wise and candid. The foundation was laid by our Fathers, and the effects of their noble exertions have been felt, and will continue to be felt, through every portion of our country.

They were equally distinguished for their LOVE OF LIBERTY. They had tasted the bitterness of tyrannical power,—they had been crushed by despotic fury. The sufferings of the Puritans, in England, can scarcely be *credited*; they could not be endured. Exile and want, were favours in the contrast. They fled to the wilderness, and enjoyed in the woods, and amid savages, that which civilization and refinement had denied them. Their views upon this subject were wise and practical. Their liberty was as free as the mountain breeze; but it was the very opposite of licentiousness. It was not freedom from the salutary restraints of law, conscience, or the bible. They yielded all that was essential to the general order and safety; but nothing more. No man was so low, as not to be protected in his rights; none so high, as to be safe in his guilt. Public morals and general information, those corner stones of republican freedom, were “the stability of their times.”

Perhaps no government ever exhibited so perfect an example of pure democracy. The free institutions of the United States, and the Magna Charta of the Federal Government, owe some of their best provisions to their wisdom. They made the experiment, and settled the bounds of rational liberty, and to the astonishment of the world, exhibited a model of simple government, weak in its theory, but powerful and efficient in its operations. They shewed that sacrifice was compatible with freedom;—and that no tyrant might assume a throne and sway a sceptre, they established the principle and acted upon it in every thing connected with government,—that the source of political power is in the people alone.

They were distinguished for *personal bravery*. It required no ordinary courage to resist the torrent of persecution in their own country. They withstood the power of their enemies with a martyr's firmness. In their flight from England, they met obstacles that would have discouraged any thing but the courage of principle and faith. They left Holland under circumstances that would have appalled any hearts but their own. They met the tempest in the commencement of their voyage,—all the vessels were disabled and returned, but the single one in which they came. Before them was a trackless ocean,—they were leaving their friends, their homes, and their temples! If their courage did not perish under these discouragements, what must it have been to resist despair and prompt to exertion, when they reached our coast? Deceived in the *situation*, they enter, in their "tempest-tost bark," a bay unknown, and unexplored! The shrouds glitter with ice, the shore is desolate

with winter,—yet they leave their ship with praises, and land on the rock with prayer! Here was the courage of self-denial and holiness, that may challenge the wreath from the hero's brow. Here was no external excitement, no inspiring trumpet, no pennon streaming on the wind,—all without was bleak and desolate!—within all was calm,—they rested on an arm that was never weary, and “*found peace for their souls.*”

This spirit has distinguished the inhabitants of all the colonies in every generation. It resisted the oppressive acts of the British cabinet,—it animated the resolutions of the colonial government; it was seen in their councils, and in the field, and led to the revolution, and to our independence. The blood, that was shed at Lexington, and on the heights of Charlestown, was the evidence of what that spirit could dare and achieve, and subsequent history has shewn, that it was as wise as it was dauntless.

In review of this rapid sketch,—

We learn the true sources of national prosperity and glory. “*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding.*” “*Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is the reproach of any people.*” “*Pure and undefiled religion*” is the true basis of all lasting freedom. “*Where the spirit of God is, there is liberty.*”

If their posterity would send down to their children, the rich and blood bought inheritance which has been entailed upon them,—they must walk in the good old paths of their Fathers. They must venerate the BIBLE, the SABBATH, and the SANC-

TUARY. They must maintain a life of godliness,—grow in grace and in the knowledge of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

My brethren, we mu stattend, with uninterrupted fidelity, to family discipline and family prayer,—two duties which are dreadfully neglected. We must cherish a spirit of subordination. There is no freedom in licentiousness;—it is the gratification of the *few*, at the expense of the *many*. He who cultivates personal religion, and obeys the gospel, is the best friend to his country. Christian piety is practical patriotism. It is the good old patriotism, which commends the cause to God in the closet, which it advocates in the senate, and for which it bleeds in the field. Our Fathers acted up to profession, they promised *little*, they performed *much*!

If we neglect religion,—if children are suffered to grow up without discipline and restraint,—if the family altar is forgotten, and the sanctuary deserted,—if we despise the principles of our education and forsake the old ways of our fathers;—oh! then this “goodly heritage”—this land “flowing with milk and honey,”—this asylum for the oppressed—this last and favoured abode of liberty, will become desolate! The city full of inhabitants will be deserted! This enterprize will be palsied under the scowl of a tyrant, and this prosperity and freedom will be exchanged for poverty and servitude!!

Holiness is the path to rest,—it leads to happiness,—it has the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. We must pursue it if we would find peace for our souls, and secure their salvation.

Be assured, my brethren, when the inhabitants of this country shall become the advocates of immorality, of loose and infidel opinions; when the bible shall be the subject of lawless criticism, and is abandoned to liberal and fashionable heresy,—when the discipline of the fire-side and the church is relaxed, or omitted, and “THE PEOPLE LOVE TO HAVE IT SO,”—*then* anarchy will follow as the herald of despotism, and national felicity and freedom, will be exiled and destroyed.

This review teaches us to admire and adore the HOLY PROVIDENCE OF GOD, as it has been manifested in the settlement and progress of the United States.

All the causes which led to it were ordered in great wisdom, with a view to the learning, religion, and independence of this country. Every thing was directed in mercy. The discovery of America preceded the reformation. The knowledge of this country was for many years, very limited, and had the politicians of Europe understood its value, it would have been any thing now, but a free republic. Their ignorance was essential to the project of our Fathers. They themselves knew little more of it, than that it was too little valued to arouse the cupidity, and too distant to provoke the notice of their government. They had the greatest difficulty in leaving England. The providence of God was signally displayed in their escape. They found *much* in Holland to improve and prepare them to settle this country, and *every thing* to excite their gratitude, and that of their posterity. The DUTCH were the sincere friends of the New-England Pilgrims, and it must be the desire of every feeling heart, that a

friendship so sacred in our Fathers, may ever be perpetuated in their descendants.

Another remarkable thing in their history, which illustrates the kind and peculiar interposition of providence, was the PLACE on which they landed.

To those who are acquainted with our coast, at this day, it would seem that no place could have been more unfortunate. But here corn had been cultivated, and was actually stored, which they found, and which contributed to their support when threatened with famine. Many of the savages had lately been swept off by a mortal sickness, and all the tribes were much reduced. In this vicinity the Indians were more gentle and kind than in many places on the coast. The name of the amiable and faithful *Massasoit*, is a volume of testimony on this point.

Had they accomplished their intentions, and reached the mouth of the Hudson, they would have found insuperable difficulties. In that region there was no provision. There was a dense population of fierce warriors. They cherished a deep animosity against the white men, and they were determined to drive them from the country. Had they settled any where, between the Connecticut river, and the capes of the Delaware, this Jubilee would not have been celebrated, and their children would have wanted a name, and a country, as well as an existence.

What Christian can contemplate the history of his country without adoring its Benefactor? The more we examine its origin and progress, the more we shall wonder and praise! Its present situation is most propitious. The inhabitants, of all the north-

ern parts of the Union, are at this moment distinguished for their *hatred of slavery*,—for their *comparative good morals*,—for their *love of liberty*,—for their *attention to education*,—and for their *efforts to spread the Gospel*. And how is this population composed?—For the most part of the descendants of PERSECUTED PROTESTANTS. Besides the children of the New-England Pilgrims, and of the Reformed Dutch, we have many of the sons of the French Huguenots. Their Fathers fled from their country, at a time when a spirit of the most cruel persecution prevailed in France, under the direction of Louis XIV. impelled by the Cardinals. In 1685, in violation of all the faith of treaties,—all the obligations of truth,—and all the principles of justice and humanity, the EDICT OF NANTES was revoked. This act, which is the very blackest in the history of France, not excepting her awful revolution in 1793, threw a healthful and excellent population into our country.—Among the descendants of the Huguenots, may now be traced, some of the most distinguished of our citizens. They were among the very best subjects that ever lived under any government, and the act that drove them from their country, was one of the most impolitic, as well as cruel, that ever disgraced any power.

Scotland has also contributed to our character, by her salutary manners, and her sound religious knowledge.

The generous spirit of the Irish will also enrich our national character. Romantic and brave,—captivating and genuine,—the children of Erin will improve the nation that they have adopted, and benefit themselves by mingling with us.

Almost all the nations of Europe are contributing to our enlargement and strength, our wealth and glory. These different people, as yet peculiar and distinct, will soon melt down into one mass, possessing the good qualities of all, and form one character. Local prejudices will vanish, and we shall all surrender sectional and peculiar names, for the proud distinctive appellation of AMERICANS.

In the present prosperity,—in the future prospects of our beloved country, what heart can be unmoved, or ungrateful. How much occasion is there for devout thanksgiving to the Author of all our mercies. To him who has been our Counsellor in peace, and our Shield and Buckler in war. He brought our fathers by the good old way, into a land of “streams and broad rivers,”—he gave them and their children this rich, this blest inheritance.

Oh! hearer, if you are a lover of your country’s true glory,—if you appreciate your happy lot,—if you value your precious privileges, “stand in the way, inquire for the good old path, and walk therein.” Let me again exhort you to cherish the simple manners, the ardent love of liberty, and the fervent piety that distinguished our immortal Ancestors. Let us love, obey, and adore their covenant God, and live to his glory. Let it be the sacred patriotism of free Americans, to love their country, and promote its fame, by knowing and performing His *pleasure*, who is King of kings, and Lord of lords,

Let us ever continue to be the firm friends and patrons of the true interests of education and learning. On this subject we have much cause for congratulation. The noble funds, devoted to the diffu-

sion of common education, for the establishment and endowment of academies and colleges in this state, are honourable, in the highest degree, to its wisdom and patriotism.

Let us cherish a generous love of true LIBERTY, and walk in the good old path of subordination and obedience to the laws. Let us guard our freedom from the approach of licentiousness. “*Happy is he who condemneth not himself in the thing which he alloweth.*” Public immoralities have led on to ruin every free republic that ever existed. Vice is the parent of despotism! Nothing will preserve us, but the fear of the Lord.

Above all, then, let us cleave to the good old path of Scriptural Religion, unseduced by the specious sophistry of *infidelity* on the one hand, and *heresy* on the other. We must love the Lord our God, with all our hearts, and live by faith on the DIVINE SAVIOUR. We must “*do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God.*” “*In simplicity, and godly sincerity, and not with fleshly wisdom, we must have our conversation in the world.*”

Soon we shall sleep with our fathers. The interests and cares, which now occupy, and sometimes agitate and divide us, will pass into other hands. But if we are faithful to our privileges, our “*children will rise up and call us blessed.*” This favoured land shall contain a free and happy people to the latest times. Our souls, redeemed, shall unite with the spirits of our SAINTED SIREs, while our graves shall be made in the land of songs and joy, of freedom and happiness, and be watered by the tears of grateful posterity.

The following Hymns were composed for the occasion.

FATHER supreme of heaven and earth,
Creative SOURCE of all !
Whence infant nations spring to birth,
And empires rise and fall !

Thy throne, above the circling spheres,
Shall stand, while *cent'ries* roll ;
Nor boundless space, nor endless years,
Can limit thy control !

To Him from whom our blessings flow,
Who all our wants supplies,
This day the choral song and vow
From grateful hearts shall rise !

'Twas he who led the PILGRIM BAND
Across the stormy sea ;
'Twas He who stay'd the tyrant's hand,
AND SET AN EMPIRE FREE !

When shiv'ring on a strand unknown,
In sickness and distress,
Our FATHERS look'd to GOD alone,
To save, protect, and bless !

Be Thou our nation's strength and shield,
In manhood, as in youth ;
Thine arm for our protection wield,
And guide us by thy truth !

WHEN Israel's God had mark'd the way,
From persecution's fiery sway,
Our Fathers left their native land,
Sustain'd by his Almighty Hand.

His Providence, their trust and guide,
Securely, through the deep they glide :
A world unknown, their hopes explore ;
By faith, they reach the promis'd shore.

Fervent the Christian Pilgrims raise
On heathen soil, their shouts of raise ;
With thankful hearts, aloud proclaim,
In heathen lands, Jehovah's name.

Jehovah's name ! the hills rejoice,
Glad nature owns her Maker's voice ;
The wilderness breaks forth in songs,
To Him, to whom all praise belongs.

Let all their children rise, and bring
Their grateful incense, to our King ;
In his fair courts their voices raise,
And fill the land with songs and praise.