



DORCHESTER
IN 1630, 1776, AND 1855.

AN

O R A T I O N

DELIVERED AT DORCHESTER,

ON THE FOURTH OF JULY, 1855.

BY

EDWARD EVERETT.

BOSTON:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY DAVID CLAPP.

EBENEZER CLAPP, JR.....184 WASHINGTON ST.

1855.

Dorchester, July 13, 1855.

HON. EDWARD EVERETT,—

MY DEAR SIR:

I have the honor herewith to transmit a Resolution of the Executive Committee for the late celebration in Dorchester, which passed that body with perfect unanimity.

Permit me also to express the sense of gratitude which the Committee, in common with their fellow citizens, feel for the most acceptable service performed by you on that occasion, and to hope that it may suit your convenience to place early in our hands, a copy of your very learned and eloquent Oration for publication.

With profound respect, your obd't servant,

MARSHALL P. WILDER.

Dorchester, July 9, 1855.

At a meeting of the Executive Committee for the Celebration of the Settlement of Dorchester and the Seventy-ninth Anniversary of the Independence of the United States, it was—

Resolved, That the thanks of the Committee be tendered to the Hon. Edward Everett for his eloquent, instructive, and truly patriotic Address delivered upon that occasion, and that a copy of it be requested for publication.

MARSHALL P. WILDER,
E. P. TELESTON,
DANIEL DENNY,
WILLIAM D. SWAN,
NAHUM CAPEN,
ENOCH TRAIN,
OLIVER HALL,

LEWIS PIERCE,
NATHAN CARRUTH,
E. J. BISPHAM,
JNO. H. ROBINSON,
CHARLES HUNT,
EDWARD KING.

Boston, 15 July, 1855.

MY DEAR SIR,—

I have received your letter of the 13th, with the resolution of the Executive Committee for the late Celebration in Dorchester, requesting a copy of my Oration delivered on the 4th instant.

I am much indebted to the Committee for their favorable estimate of my Address, and cheerfully place it at their disposal.

Be pleased to accept my acknowledgments for the kind terms with which you have conveyed the request of the Committee, and believe me, dear Sir, with great regard,

Very truly yours,

EDWARD EVERETT.

HON. MARSHALL P. WILDER.

DEDICATION.

TO THE INHABITANTS OF BOTH SEXES OF MY NATIVE
TOWN THIS ORATION IS, WITH WARM GRATITUDE FOR THE
SYMPATHIZING ATTENTION WITH WHICH IT WAS HEARD BY
THEM,

RESPECTFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY

DEDICATED, BY

EDWARD EVERETT.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

THE following Oration is printed from the manuscript as originally prepared (of which about a third part was omitted in speaking in consequence of its length), with the addition as far as recollected of what suggested itself in the delivery.

Besides the original authorities cited in their appropriate places, I would make a general acknowledgment of my obligations to the "Chronological and Topographical Account of Dorchester," by Rev. Dr. Harris, in the ninth volume of the first series of the Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, and to the three numbers of the "History of Dorchester," now in course of publication by a committee of the Antiquarian and Historical Society of that town. Other interesting materials, of which my limits did not permit me to make much use, were placed in my hands by Dr. T. W. Harris, partly from the manuscripts of his venerable father; by Mr. Nahum Capen on the connection of Roger Sherman with Dorchester; by Mr. Ebenezer Clapp, jr. on the subject of the Midway Church; and by Mr. Daniel Denny, from a memorandum of the late Mr. J. Smith Boies, on the occupation of Dorchester Heights. If those acquainted with the history of our ancient town should be disappointed at finding some matters of interest wholly passed over, and others lightly treated, they will be pleased to reflect upon the difficulty of doing justice to all parts of a subject so comprehensive, within the limits of a popular address.

In the narrative of the occupation of Dorchester Heights, I have followed the safe guidance of the "History of the Siege of Boston," by Mr. R. Frothingham, jr.

It may be thought ungracious, at the present day, to dwell with emphasis on the oppressive measures of the Colonial Government, which caused the American Revolution, and on the military incidents of the contest. I believe, however, that no greater service could be rendered to humanity than to present the essential abuses and inevitable results of colonial rule in such a light to the Governments of Western Europe, and especially to the English Government as that most concerned, as will lead to the systematic adoption of the course suggested on page 77 of this discourse;—that is, the amicable concession to colonies, mature for self-government, of that independence which will otherwise be extorted by mutually exhausting wars.

Among the novel lessons of higher politics taught in our constitutional history, as yet but little reflected on at home, and well worth the profound study of statesmen in the constitutional governments of Europe, is the peaceful separation from parent States of territories as large as many a European kingdom; an event of which five or six instances have occurred since the formation of the Federal Union, under whose auspices these separations have taken place.

Boston, July, 1855.

ORATION.

AMONG the numerous calls to address public meetings with which I have been honored during my life, I have never received one with greater pleasure, than that which brings me before you this day. Drawn up with unusual precision and care by a skilful pen, subscribed by more than one hundred and fifty of your leading citizens, and placed in my hands by a most respected committee of their number, it apprizes me that "the citizens of Dorchester, without distinction of party, actuated by motives of public good, and believing in the salutary teaching of national events, when contemplated with an inquiring spirit and an enlightened judgment, are desirous of celebrating the 4th of July, 1854, in a manner that shall prove creditable to that ancient town, instructive to the young, renovating to the aged, and morally profitable to the nation," and it invites me, as a native citizen of the town, to join you in carrying this purpose into effect.

You are well acquainted, Fellow-citizens, with the circumstances that prevented my appearing before you last year, in pursuance of this invitation. I might still, without impropriety, offer you a sufficient

excuse, in the state of my health, for shrinking from the effort of addressing an audience like this ; and I feel deeply my inability, under any circumstances, to fulfil the conditions of your invitation as I have just repeated them. But I confess I have not been able to forego this first opportunity, the last, also, no doubt, I shall ever enjoy, of publicly addressing the citizens of Dorchester ; — the place of my birth, of my early education, and of all the kindly associations of my childhood. I have felt an irresistible attraction to the spot. I behold around me the originals of the earliest impressions upon my mind, which neither time nor the cares of a crowded life have effaced. Some fifty-six or seven years have passed since, as a school-boy, I climbed,—summer and winter,—what then seemed to me the steep acclivity of Meeting-house hill. The old School-house (it was then the new School-house, but I recollect that which preceded it) has disappeared. The ancient Church in which I was baptized, is no longer standing. The venerable pastor,* whose affectionate smile still lives in the memory of so many who listen to me, has ceased from his labors. The entire generation to whom I looked up as to aged or even grown men, are departed ; but the images of all that has passed away have been cast and abide, with more than photographic truth, upon the inmost chambers of my memory. Some of us, my friends, companions of school-boy days, remain to cherish the thought of the past, to meditate on the lapse of years and the

* Rev. Dr Harris.

events they have brought forth, and to rejoice in the growth and improvement of our native town. We have pursued different paths in life ; Providence has sent us into various fields of duty and usefulness, of action and suffering : but I am sure there is not one of us who has wandered or who has remained, that does not still feel a dutiful interest in the place of his birth ; and who does not experience something more than usual sensibility on an occasion like this.

In those things, which in a rapidly improving community are subject to change, there are few places, within my knowledge, which within fifty years have undergone greater changes than Dorchester. The population in 1800 was 2347 ; in 1850 it was a little short of 8000. What was then called "the Neck," the most secluded portion of the old town, although the part which led to its being first pitched upon as a place of settlement, was in 1804 annexed to Boston ; and being united with the city by two bridges, has long since exchanged the retirement of a village for the life and movement of the metropolis. The pick-axe is making sad ravages upon one of the venerable heights of Dorchester ; the entrenchments of the other, no longer masking the deadly enginery of war, are filled with the refreshing waters of Cochituate lake. New roads have been opened in every part of our ancient town, and two railways traverse it from north to south. The ancient houses built before the revolution have not all disappeared, but they are almost lost in the multitude of modern dwellings. A half century ago there was but one church in the town, that which

stood on yonder hill, and the school-house which then stood by its side was, till 1802, the only one dignified by the name of a Town School. You have now ten churches and seven school-houses of the first class;—and all the establishments of an eminently prosperous town, situated in the vicinity of a great commercial metropolis, have multiplied in equal proportion.

But all is not changed. The great natural features of the scene, and no where are they more attractive, are of course unaltered:—the same fine sweep of the shore with its projecting headlands,—the same extensive plain at the North part of the town,—the same gentle undulations and gradual ascent to the South,—the same beautiful elevations. I caught a few days ago, from the top of Jones's hill, the same noble prospect (and I know not a finer on the coast of Massachusetts), which used to attract my boyish gaze more than fifty years ago. Old hill, as we called it then (it has lost that venerable name in the progress of refinement, though it has become half a century older), notwithstanding the tasteful villas which adorn its base, exhibits substantially the same native grouping of cedars and the same magnificent rocks, and commands the same fine view of the harbor, which it did before a single house was built within its precincts. Venerable trees that seemed big to me in my boyhood,—I have been looking at some of them this morning,—seem but little bigger now, though I trace the storms of fifty winters on some well-recollected branches. The aged sycamores which shaded the roof, beneath which I

was born, still shade it; and the ancient burial ground hard by, with which there are few of us who have not some tender associations, upon whose early graves may yet be seen the massy unhewn stones placed there by the first settlers for protection against the wolves, still attracts the antiquary with its quaint and learned inscriptions, and preserves the memory not merely of "the rude forefathers of the hamlet," but of some of the most honored names in the history of Massachusetts.

But I ought to apologize, my friends, for dwelling on topics so deeply tinged with personal recollection. The occasion on which we are met invites all our thoughts to public themes. It is two hundred and twenty-five years since the commencement of the settlement of our ancient town,—the first foothold of the pioneers of Governor Winthrop's expedition. It is the seventy-ninth anniversary of the Declaration of the Independence of the United States. Our minds naturally go back to the foundations of the ancient Commonwealth of which we are citizens, laid as they were within our limits. We dwell with pleasure and pride on the growth of our native town under the vicissitudes of colonial fortune, from its feeble beginnings to the dimensions of a large and flourishing municipality; and we meditate with just interest upon those eventful scenes at the commencement of the Revolutionary War of which our heights were the theatre, and which exerted an undoubted influence upon the Continental Congress at Philadelphia in hastening the Great Declaration.

Thus the appropriate topics of the day correspond

with the three great divisions, which make up the whole system of political philosophy. We have, first, The foundation of a State,—the measures and agencies by which, under Providence, a new people is called into the family of nations;—manifestly the most important event, humanly speaking, that can occur in the history of our race. Second, We have the institutions and events which make up the political life of a community;—the organization and action, by which the divinely appointed ordinance of civil government is administered, so as best to promote the welfare and progress of a people. Third, We have one of those great movements called Revolutions, by which a people for urgent causes introduces organic changes in the frame-work of its government, and materially renovates or wholly reconstructs the fabric of its political relations.

In reference to each of these three great branches of political science, the history of our ancient town and the occasion which calls us together furnish us with the most striking illustrations and instructive lessons. The foundation of a new State, in a quarter of the globe before unknown, is an event without a parallel in the domain of authentic history. The time and the manner in which the earliest predecessors of the present inhabitants of Europe became established there, are but imperfectly known; while the first settlement of Asia and Africa, after the original dispersion of mankind, is lost in those unfathomable depths of antiquity, which the deep sea-line of research has never sounded. It is only after comparing the authentic pages of our early history

with the clouds of insipid fable that hang over the origin of Athens, and Rome, and Great Britain,—fables which neither Plutarch, nor Livy, nor Milton has been able to raise into dignity and interest,—that we perceive the real grandeur of the work of which the foundations were laid two centuries and a quarter ago on Dorchester plain.

So with respect to the second branch of political philosophy, the organization and administration of States, I am disposed to affirm that there are secrets of practical wisdom and prudence,—elements of growth and prosperity,—in our municipal system, which deserve to be thoughtfully explored. Our towns of course are but units in the great sum which makes up the State. They possess none of the higher powers of government. Not by their hands is wielded the mace of legislation, or the scales of justice, the purse or the sword of the Commonwealth. But whenever the prosperity of New England and the younger States modelled on its type is traced to its ultimate causes, it will be found to a good degree in this municipal system. In the pages of these ancient volumes,—these old town records which have in few cases been better preserved than in Dorchester,—there will be found lessons of experience, of blessed common sense shaping itself to the exigency of uncommon times, of patient submission to present evils in the hope of a brighter day, of fortitude and courage in an humble sphere, of provident care for the rising generation and posterity, of unwearied diligence for the promotion of religion, morals, and

education, which in their joint effect have done much toward giving us this goodly heritage.

Lastly, of those great movements by which organic changes are wrought in established governments and a new order in the political world brought in, it must be admitted that the event which we commemorate to-day, in the character of the parties,—an infant confederacy of republics just starting out of a state of colonial pupilage on the one hand, and one of the oldest monarchies in Europe on the other; the long and silent preparation and the gradual approach; the soundness of the principles which impelled the movement, acknowledged as it was by the most illustrious statesmen of the mother country; the purity and pristine simplicity of manners that characterized the revolutionary leaders; the almost total absence of those violent and sanguinary incidents that usually mark the progress of civil war; and the gradual development, out of the chaos of the struggle, of well-balanced systems of republican government and federal union;—in all these respects, it must be allowed, that there is a solitary dignity and elevation in our American Revolution. They make it perhaps the only instance in history of the severance of a mighty empire, equally to the advantage of the new state and the parent country; the single case of a rising republic not built upon the calamitous ruins of earlier organizations.

You will readily perceive, my friends, that the thorough treatment of this subject in all its parts would occupy much more time than can be reasonably devoted to a public address; and that in attempt-

ing to embrace them all in the remarks I venture to offer you, I must wholly omit some important topics and pass lightly over others.

It is impossible fully to comprehend the importance of the work which was accomplished in the colonization of America, without regarding it as a part of the great plan of Providence, in disposing the time and circumstances of the discovery of our continent;—hidden as it was till the end of the fifteenth century from the rest of the world. This thought was brought so forcibly to my mind a few years since by a circumstance personal to myself, that I think you will pardon me for alluding to it, though in itself of a trifling domestic character. In the year 1841, I occupied with my family the Villa Careggi, near Florence, once, as its name imports (*Casa regia*), a princely residence, belonging to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, but of late years private property, and occasionally leased to travellers.* Half fortress, half palace, it was built by Cosmo de' Medici in 1444, nine years before the capture of Constantinople by the Ottomans in 1453. By that appalling event, a barbarous race (which had issued from the depths of Asia some centuries before, and had engrafted the Mahometan imposture on the primitive stock of Tartarian paganism) had stormed the last stronghold of

* Roscoe's Lorenzo de' Medici, p. 292. This most interesting Villa remained a part of the Grand ducal domain till 1788, when with other estates it was sold by the Grand Duke Leopold from motives of economy. It has lately passed into the possession of Mr. Sloane, an English gentleman of taste and fortune, by whom the grounds and approaches have been greatly improved, and the whole establishment restored to something like its original magnificence.

the ancient civilization, the metropolis of the Greek empire, and established the religion of the Koran at the heart of the old world. The relations of the Turks to the rest of Europe are so entirely changed, that it is now scarcely possible to conceive the terror caused by this event. Had nothing occurred to renovate and strengthen the civilization of the west, it is not easy to imagine what might have been at this day the condition of Christendom. Even as it was, the Sultan was for two centuries forward the strongest military power in the world; the scourge and the terror of the Mediterranean, and the master of some of the finest provinces of Eastern Europe.

But germs of revival sprung up from the ruins of the old civilization. A host of learned and ingenious men, Christian scholars, fled from the edge of the Turkish scimitar and took refuge in Italy. They were received with hospitality there, and especially by the merchant princes of Florence. The Platonic Academy was established in the arcades of the Villa Careggi. A great intellectual restoration took place in Italy, and spread rapidly to the west of Europe, where precisely at the same time the Art of Printing (after slowly struggling through successive stages in the cities of the Netherlands and the Rhine) burst upon the world in a state approaching perfection and not surpassed at the present day. The stores of learning and thought accumulated by the mind of antiquity were thrown open to the world. The modern bar and Senate were not yet created, and philosophy stammered in the jargon of the schools; but Cicero, and Demosthenes, and Plato, stepped

forth from the dusty alcoves of monkish libraries, and again spoke to living, acting men. The pulpit of the golden-lipped St. Chrysostom was hushed, but Moses and the prophets, the Evangelists and the Apostles rose, if I may venture to say so, as from the dead. The glorious invention was inaugurated in a manner worthy of itself. Two years only after the Koran began to be read at Constantinople (just four centuries ago this year), the Bible went forth on the wings of the press to the four quarters of the world.* Mahomet the second had struck down the last Christian emperor; but Fust, and Schœffer, and Guttenberg, the Strasburg printers, aimed a deadlier blow at Mahomet the first, his code of barbarism, and all the hosts of political and spiritual darkness throughout the world. The walls of Byzantium, spouting torrents of unquenchable flame, had crumbled; but the mind of the world rallied to the new combat under the living artillery of the press, and came off victorious. A conflict more important to humanity, was never waged on earth. And from that day to this, the civilized world of Europe and America is indebted for that superiority which no second night of ignorance can darken, no new incursion of van-

* My much valued friend, Mr. George Livermore of Cambridge, possesses a leaf on vellum, from an imperfect copy of the Mazarin Bible, the first book ever printed, and which, though without date, is known to have been completed in 1455, and a copy of the New Testament from the Bible of 1462, the first Bible printed with a date. "A metrical exhortation," says Mr. Hallam, "in the German language *to take arms against the Turks*, dated in 1454, has been retrieved in the present century. If this date unequivocally refers to the time of printing, which does not seem a necessary consequence, it is the earliest loose sheet that is known to be extant."—Literature of Europe, Part I., Chap. III., Sec. 23.

dalism can overthrow, to an enlightened, conscientious, independent press.

But Providence had other instrumentalities in store; higher counsels. A broader field of development was to be opened to renovated humanity. The East of Europe and the West of Asia, by nature and position the fairest region of the old world, was relapsing into barbarism, but the hour had arrived to "redress the balance of empire and call into existence a new world in the West." At the close of the century which witnessed these extraordinary events, a Genoese mariner, declined from the meridian of life, in pursuit of a vision which he had cherished through years of enthusiasm and disappointment, seeking a sovereign truth through the paths of sagacious but erroneous theory, launched forth, the living compass his pilot and the constellated heavens his only chart, to find a western passage to India, and discovered a new world. A Florentine navigator, following in his track, completed his discoveries, projected them on the map, and (oh, vanity of human renown), in spite of geography and history, in spite of orators and poets, in spite of the indignant reclamations of all succeeding ages, forever stamped upon the new found continent the name of a man who did *not* first discover it, almost before the ashes were cold of the man who did!

Thus, then, we have two of the elementary conditions of the political, moral, and religious restoration about to be effected in the order of Providence, at a moment when an overshadowing cloud of Mahometan barbarism had shot rapidly toward the

zenith, and seemed about to settle down on the Christian world. We have a general excitement in the Western mind, produced by the revival of the ancient learning, the art of printing, and other conspiring causes which I have not time to enumerate, and we have the boundless spaces of a new hemisphere, opened to the commerce, the adventure, and the ambition, in a word, to the quickened thought and reviving life of the old world.

But something further is wanting: a third condition is required, which should draw the two already existing into efficient coöperation; and that was the impulse and the motive, the moral machinery, the social inducement, the political necessity, which should bring the reviving intelligence of the age into fruitful action upon this vast new theatre, for the joint benefit of America and Europe, and the solid foundation of a higher civilization than the world had yet seen.

In the Villa Careggi, which I have just named, Lorenzo de' Medici, the merchant dictator of Florence, died, and his son Giovanni was born; created, through the influence of his fond father, an Abbot at the age of seven years, a Cardinal at thirteen, and raised to the papal throne at the age of thirty-eight, as Pope Leo X.* This aspiring, liberal and mu-

* The Villa Careggi is still supplied with water from a very deep well in the court yard, into which, according to a still existing but unfounded tradition, the servants of Lorenzo threw his physician for having, as they supposed, poisoned their master.—Roscoe follows the writers who represent Leo the tenth as born in Florence; but other writers and the local traditions make Careggi his birth-place. An extraordinary list of his early preferences is given by Roscoe, *Leo X.*, Vol. I., p. 12.

nificent Pontiff, who, regarded as a secular prince, was, with all his faults, the most enlightened sovereign of his age, cradled in all the luxuries of worldly power, nursed at the bosom of the arts, raised to the throne of the then undivided church in early manhood, devoted his short but brilliant reign to two main objects, viz.:—the expulsion of the Turks from Europe, and the completion of the Church of St. Peter's at Rome, the most splendid and costly structure of human hands, and designed by him to be the great Metropolitan Temple of Universal Christendom. Who can blame him, with the genius and taste of Michael Angelo and Raphael at his command, for the generous ambition? To defray the enormous expenditure incurred by these and other measures of magnificence and policy, Leo resorted to the famous sale of indulgences throughout the Christian world. The mind of Western and Northern Europe had been warming and kindling for a century and a half toward the reformation; the sale of indulgences was the torch in the hands of Luther which lighted the flame.

Some of the German princes put themselves at the head of this great popular revolution, which was in reality the movement of the age toward civil and religious liberty; but Henry VIII. of England was one of its earliest opponents. I have held in my hand, in the library of the Vatican, the identical copy of his book against Luther, sent by Henry to Pope Leo the Tenth, which acquired for him and all his successors the cheaply earned title of "Defender of the Faith." A few years passed by; new

light, kindled at no spiritual altar, shone into his mind; Catherine of Arragon was repudiated; Anne Boleyn was married, and the supremacy of the Pope abjured by Henry VIII.

This certainly was not the Reformation, but, in the hands of that Providence, which sometimes shapes base means to worthy ends, it was a step toward it. After the decease of the remorseless and sensual monarch, the conscience of England took up the work which his licentiousness and ambition began. The new opinions gained credit and extension rapidly, but with fearful dependence on the vicissitudes of the State. The service and ritual of the Church of England, substantially as they exist at this day, were established under Edward VI.; but his sister Mary, married to Philip II., the man who caused his own son to be assassinated for the good of his soul,* restored the old faith and kindled the fires of Smithfield.

With the accession of Elizabeth, the Church of England was cautiously restored, and Protestantism again became the religion of the State. But the trial of prosperity was scarcely less severe than the trial of adversity. Among the pious confessors of the reformed faith, who had been driven into banishment under Mary, bitter dissensions arose on the continent. One portion adhered at Frankfort to the ritual of the Church of England, as established by Edward; another, who had taken refuge at Geneva,

* This almost incredible fact seems to be supported by the authority of Louis XIV., who was great grandson of Philip II. Mad. Sévigné's Letters, Vol. V., p. 73, Edition of 1844.

preferred the simpler forms of worship, and the more republican system of church government, adopted by Calvin. On their return to England, after the accession of Elizabeth, these differences grew to formidable magnitude, and those inclining to the simpler forms received the name of "Puritans." The Queen leaned to the ceremonial of the ancient church; a large number of the clergy and laity regarded the ecclesiastical vestments, the use of the cross in baptism, and some other parts of the ritual, as remnants of Popery. There was no disagreement on points of doctrine; but difference of opinion and taste on these empty forms, the mere husk of religion, led to bitterness of feeling, to the formation of hostile sects (the constant scourge of Protestantism), to the interference of legislation to secure unity of worship, and when this failed, as it always has and always will, except under governments purely despotic, to the exercise of the iron arm of power to punish non-conformity. For this purpose courts of high commission and the star-chamber were established, tribunals abhorrent to the genius of the common law of England; and penalties of fine, imprisonment and death were denounced upon all whose consciences forbade them to conform to the established ritual. After various laws of greater or less severity passed for this end, the statute of 1593 was enacted, by which persevering non-conformists, guilty of no offence but that of failing to attend the Established Church, were required to abjure the realm and go into perpetual banishment;—if they did not depart within the

prescribed time or returned home from exile, the penalty was death.* This atrocious statute, in its final result, peopled New England. The *fundatio perficiens*,—the real foundations of Plymouth and Massachusetts,—are to be sought not in the patent of James or the charter of Charles, with their grant of zones of territory from the Atlantic to the Pacific, but in the stern text of this act of 1593.

Its thunders slumbered at the close of the reign of Elizabeth, but not long after the accession of James the penal laws began to be executed with rigor. He had early announced that no toleration was to be extended to dissent; and in his uncouth border English had threatened to “harrie” the Puritans out of the land. That portion of them who had formally separated from the church, and were known as Brownists, were the first victims. They were driven, under circumstances of great cruelty, from England, as early as 1608, and after suffering for some years the harsh discipline of exile in Holland, went forth, the immortal band of Pilgrims, to find a new home in the wilderness. The more appropriate duties of this occasion permit us to pay only a passing tribute of respect to the precious memory of Robinson and his little flock, canonized as they are in the patriotic calendar of America, and honored in a progeny which in every State of the Union proudly traces its lineage to Plymouth Rock.

* 35 Elizabeth, c. I. See Hallam's Constitutional History, Vol. I., p. 213.

The fathers of Massachusetts belonged to the more moderate school of the Puritans. They regarded the ecclesiastical vestments and ceremonies with as little favor as the separatists; but they considered the church as established by law a true church, and still clung to her communion. But the burden lay heavy on their consciences, and at length became absolutely intolerable. Shortly after the accession of Charles I. they prepared to execute the plan which they had for some years been meditating, that of transporting themselves to the new world; where, as they supposed, they could, without a formal separation from the Church of England, adopt those simpler forms of worship and church government, which their views of divine truth required.

The waters of Massachusetts Bay, both before and after the settlement at Plymouth, had been much frequented by English fishing vessels. As early as 1619, Thompson's Island, within our limits, is known to have been occupied by an Englishman. In the year 1624, as many as fifty vessels were employed on this coast,* mostly from the West of England. Among the leading non-conformists in that quarter, none was more active and respected than Rev. John White, of Dorchester. He encouraged his parishioners and their friends to engage in these adventures, and early connected with them the idea of a gradual colonization of the coast.

* Dr. Young's Chronicles of Massachusetts, and the authors cited by him, page 5.

Like Robinson, in reference to Plymouth, John White never set foot upon the soil of Massachusetts, but he was the most efficient promoter of the undertaking which resulted in the settlement, not merely of our ancient town, but of the colony.

In the county of Dorset, which stretches fifty miles along the British Channel in the West of England, upon an island formed by the divided stream of "a noble river in those parts," called the Frome, lies the chief town of the county, the ancient city of Dorchester. The Britons in all probability occupied it, before the time of Julius Cæsar. Druidical mounds still surround it. The Romans, who called it *Durnovaria*, fortified it and built near it the largest Roman Amphitheatre in England, of which the circuit still remains. It was a strong-hold in the time of the Saxon Kings; the Danes stormed it; under a rapacious Norman Governor, one hundred houses, out of one hundred and eighty contained in it, were destroyed.* Every age and every race has left land-marks or ruins within its bounds; it is, by the last English census, a prosperous city of six or seven thousand inhabitants; but perhaps its most honored memorial in after times will be that it gave origin to this its American namesake, and impulse to one of the noblest enterprises of transatlantic colonization.

Of this ancient Dorchester in England, John White was the minister for well nigh forty years,

* Camden's *Britannia*, Gough's Edition, Vol. I., p. 60. The *Durotriges* are placed by Ptolemy in this region; and a British word, *Dwor*, or *Dour* (water), is supposed to be the root of their name.

being rector of the ancient church of the Trinity. Upon the life and character of this venerable man, "the Patriarch of Dorchester," as he was styled by his contemporaries; "the father of the Massachusetts Colony," as he has been called in this country, you will expect me to dwell for a moment.* He was a Puritan in principle and feeling, but not deeming the ceremonies of vital importance, he adhered to the church. But in periods of great excitement, moderation is an offence in the eyes of violent men. The cavalry of Prince Rupert sacked his house and carried off his library. This drove him to London. He was a man of most excellently tempered qualities, "grave, yet without moroseness, who would willingly contribute his shot of facetiousness on any just occasion." He was an indefatigable preacher, and "had an excellent faculty in the clear and solid interpretation of the scriptures." His executive talent was not less remarkable, and he administered the secular affairs of his church so as greatly to promote the temporal prosperity of the city. Of two things not easily controlled he had, according to Fuller, absolute command, "his own passions and the purses of his parishioners, whom he could wind up to what point he pleased on important occasions." A generous use of his own means was the secret of his command of the means of others. "He had a patriarchal influence both in Old and New England." I find no proof that this

* Wood's *Athenæ Oxonienses*: Callender's Sermon, in the Rhode Island Historical Collections, Vol. IV., 67.

influence ever ceased over the hardy young men who, by his encouragement, had settled this American Dorchester; but at home his old age was embittered by factions and the "new opinions which crept into his flock." A generation arose which slighted the crown of his old age; and of this he was "sadly and silently sensible;" sadly, as was natural in a man who had reaped ingratitude where he sowed benefits; silently, as became the self-respect of a proud, good conscience. He was one of the most learned and influential of that famous assembly of Divines at Westminster, whose catechisms, after two centuries, remain accredited manuals of Christian belief to millions on millions in the old world and the new. The biographer of the "Worthies of England," after sketching his admirable character of our ever memorable founder, expresses the hope, that Solomon's observation of the poor wise man who saved the little city, "yet no man remembered him," will not be verified of "Dorchester in England, in relation to this their deceased pastor."* He lies buried, without a stone to mark the spot, in the porch of St. Peter's church; and if the good old patriarch should be forgotten in the Dorchester of Old England, let it be some atonement to his memory, that here in New England, after a lapse of two centuries and a quarter, he is still held in pious and grateful remembrance.

Mr. White's connection with New England preceded by several years the settlement of our ancient

* Fuller's Worthies of England, Vol. III., p. 24, Edit. of 1840.

town. He was the chief promoter of the attempt to establish a colony at Cape Ann under Conant; and after its failure there, it was his encouragement and aid that caused the transfer of what remained of it to Salem, where it became the germ of a permanent settlement.* It was Mr. White who brought the adventurers of the West of England into connection with the men of influence in London, in Lincolnshire, and the other eastern counties, and formed with them the ever memorable company, which under a charter from Charles I., engrafted Endecott's settlement at Salem upon the languishing enterprise of the single-hearted, persevering and ill-rewarded Conant; and finally fitted out that noble expedition in 1630, under the great and good Winthrop, which put the finishing hand to the work, and consolidated the foundation of Massachusetts. In all the labors and counsels tending to this end, John White, of Dorchester, appears to have been the person of greatest activity and influence; and when all was prepared for the expedition, and the "Arbella" and her chosen company were ready to set sail, the "Humble Request," as it is called, addressed to the churches of England, setting forth, in language which can scarcely yet be read without tears, the motives and feelings which influenced the pious adventurers, is ascribed to his pen.†

* The history of the establishment at Cape Ann, illustrated with a *fac simile* of the recently recovered patent under which it was made, is given with great learning and ingenuity by John Wingate Thornton, Esq., in his late publication on this subject.

† The authorship of this paper rests upon the authority of Hubbard, who speaks of it as a thing "commonly said." This must be considered good

With us, fellow citizens of Dorchester, his connection is still more intimate. There was a large body of "West Country," or "Dorchester men," in Gov. Winthrop's expedition, who were many of them of Mr. White's church, and all were enlisted, so to say, under his auspices and encouragement; and they were the first in the field. Early in March, 1630, they were ready to depart, and a large vessel was chartered at Plymouth, for their separate conveyance. The faithful pastor, guide at once in things divine and human—which in that age of trial ran strangely together, as in what age do they not?—went with them to their port of embarkation; met with them in the New Hospital at Plymouth, where they gathered themselves into a church under the ministers of his selection; held with them a solemn fast of preparation, and preached to them the last sermon they were to hear from his lips:—

—— prompt at every call,
He watched and wept, he prayed and felt for all.

And so on the 20th March, 1630, the Dorchester emigrants embarked in the *Mary and John*, Capt. Squeb master, a vessel of 400 tons. They had a prosperous voyage of seventy days, and arrived at Nantasket on the 30th of May, about ten days in advance of the "*Arbella*," and the vessels which accompanied her. The Dorchester company contained

evidence that such was the tradition in his time. Dr. Young thinks it more likely that the "*Humble Request*" was written by Winthrop or Johnson (*Chronicles of Mass.*, p. 299); but as its chief object was to define the relation of the adventurers to the Established Church, it appears to me more likely to have been written by a clergyman. Prince adopts Hubbard's tradition (*Chronology*, p. 275).

several persons of consideration and substance, a numerous party of emigrants with their wives and children, and a frugal store of worldly goods. They were attended by their pastors Messrs. Maverick and Warham,—by whom, says Roger Clap, in his narrative of the voyage, “we had preaching or expounding of the word of God every day for ten weeks together.”

Capt. Squob was under engagement to convey the company to Charles River, but by a latitude of interpretation not peculiar to him, and not perhaps strange at a time when the localities were so little understood, he insisted, greatly to their discontent, on landing them and their cattle at Nantasket. This spot furnished no room nor other facilities for the proposed new settlement, besides being already occupied by “Old Planters” as they were called (“old” on the coast of Massachusetts in 1630!); that is, individuals who had separated themselves from the other independent settlements such as those of Plymouth, Cape Ann, Weymouth, or Salem, or had found their way in the fishing vessels to these coasts. From one of these old planters, a boat was borrowed by the newly arrived company, and a party of ten, headed by brave Capt. Southcoat, who had served in the low countries, was sent up to explore Charles River in search of a place for a settlement. Roger Clap was one of this party;—they went up the river as far as Watertown, passed a day or two on a spot near the present arsenal, and still called “Dorchester fields,” and held friendly communications with the Indians of that place, which afterwards became the

first field of the apostolic labors of Eliot, who, when he was in the flesh, sat in the chair in which you, Sir (Gov. Gardner), now sit. The main body meantime had explored the coast nearer Nantasket, and having found "a neck of land fit to keep their cattle on," called Mattapan, had established themselves there.* This, after some hesitation, was adopted as the permanent seat of the settlement.

This "neck of land" was the present South Boston, which within my recollection was still called Dorchester neck. The curving bay, which sweeps round between the neck and Savin hill, still bears on our maps the name of "Old Harbor," and the rising grounds to the South were the site of the first habitations. The first humble meeting-house with its thatched roof,—which caught a year or two afterwards as Mr. Maverick the minister was "drying a little powder (which took fire by the heat of the firepan),"—it being one of the first cares of the puritan fathers to keep their powder dry,—stood probably at the northern end of the plain, now called Pleasant street; and close by its side,—somewhat to the north-east of the present ancient cemetery,—was the first place of burial, of which no traces now remain. It was at first supposed that Dorchester might become the emporium of the new colony. Capt. Smith, in his rude map of the coast, had placed the name of "London" on the spot afterwards and still called Squantum, and a fort was

* The facts relative to the organization of the Dorchester Church at Plymouth, the voyage, and the settlement at Mattapan, are recorded in Roger Clap's Memoir.

built on Savin hill, and a battery on the shore, for the protection of the future metropolis. It soon appeared, however, that the water was not of sufficient depth for this purpose, and Boston was ascertained to be the spot marked out by nature as the future capital of New England. On the 17th of September, 1630, at a meeting of the Court of Assistants at Charlestown, which had already received that name, it was "ordered that Trimountaine shall be called Boston; Mattapan Dorchester; and the towne vpon Charles Ryver Waterton." *

Such, fellow citizens, in the plainest language in which I can relate it, is the simple tale of the foundation of Dorchester, which preceded by a short time the settlements made by the main body of Gov. Winthrop's party at the other towns just named. The hardships of the entire emigration were for the first season severe. They were disappointed in the expectation of deriving supplies from the settlers at Salem; there was dearth there. The stock of provisions brought from England was inadequate for the support of so large a company, and it was too late in the year to plant; the diseases sure to be engendered by want and anxiety prevailed; the native tribes in the neighborhood were an object of exaggerated though natural terror; alarms of invasion from the French and Dutch penetrated to these remote corners of the earth; and the hearts of some failed them

* Massachusetts Records, Vol. I., p. 75. I quote, of course, the recently published edition of the Records, superintended and prepared with extreme accuracy by Dr. Nath'l B. Shurtleff, and printed in a style of unsurpassed beauty at the expense of the Commonwealth.

at the thoughts of their distant home, as want stared them in the face. "In our beginnings," says Roger Clap, "many were in great straits for want of provisions for themselves and little ones. Oh! the hunger that many suffered and saw no hope in an eye of reason to be supplied, only by clams, muscles, and fish."

With all our contemporary accounts and traditions, I imagine we form very inadequate conceptions of the hardships endured by the first settlers of this country. Modern art, with its various astonishing applications, traverses the ocean on its chariot wheels of fire, and transports the traveller in ten or twelve days from Europe to America. Even the sailing vessels accomplish the voyage in three or four weeks. The passages in the seventeenth century were more frequently of two or three months' duration. The *Mary* and *John*, without having met with any disaster, was out seventy days. Modern enterprise encounters the expected navigators at sea; sends out her pilot-boat, bounding like a sea-bird on the waves, a hundred miles from port (who that has witnessed the sight homeward bound will ever forget it); unrols her charts, where every shoal and rock is projected, and the soundings laid down so carefully, that you may find your way in the dark, studs the coast with light-houses, and receives the weather-beaten ship at convenient landing places. The first settlers were obliged to feel their way into unknown harbors, ignorant of the depths and shallows, the rocks and the currents, often finding the greatest

discomforts and dangers of the voyage awaiting them at its close.*

Nor were the difficulties less after landing. The "state of nature" in which they found the country, "bare creation" as it is expressively called by an early writer (Dummer), the goal of their wishes and prayers, was a far different thing from that which presents itself to the mind, when those words are used by us. Few, I fear, even in this intelligent audience, have formed an adequate notion of the hard rough nature that confronted our fathers, two centuries and a quarter ago, on these now delightful spots. The "nature" which we think of consists of dreamy lawns, dotted here and there with picturesque cottages, hung with festoons of prairie-rose and honey-suckle;—of shady walks, winding through groves carefully cleared of the thorns and brambles, that weave its matted underbrush into an impenetrable thicket;—of grand sea-views from the cool porticoes of marine villas;—of glimpses of babbling streams as they sparkle through meadows, vocal with lowing herds and bleating flocks. This we call nature, and so it is; but it is nature brought into loving union with the skilful hand and tasteful eye of man, the great "minister and interpreter of nature." Great heavens! how different the nature which frowned upon the fathers and mothers of New England;—harsh, austere, wearisome, often terrific.

* This is well illustrated in the voyage of the Rev. Richard Mather, the first pastor of Dorchester after the re-organization of the church in 1636.—Collections of Dorchester Antiquarian and Historical Society, No. III.

On the sea-board, broad marshes cut up with deep oozy creeks, and unfordable tide-water rivers,—no dykes, no bridges, no roads, no works of friendly communication of any kind ;—in short, no traces of humanity in the kindly structures for travel, shelter, neighborhood, or defence, which raise the homes of man above the lairs of wild beasts. In fact, the aboriginal tribes, in this respect, hardly went as far as the beavers, who in their small way were very tolerable engineers for wet meadows.

Such was the coast ; as you retreated from it, you entered the terrific wilderness, which stretched from ocean to ocean, the abode of the savage and the wild beast,—gloomy—awful ! No civilized foot had penetrated its depths,—no surveyor's chain had measured its boundaries,—no Christian eye had searched its dismal shades. In the ignorance that prevailed as to the real character of the new and unexplored country, imagination naturally added fictitious to real terrors. Unearthly cries were sometimes heard in the crackling woods ; glimpses were caught, at dusk, of animals, for which natural history had no names ; and strange foot-marks which men did not like to speak of, were occasionally seen in the snow. Even amidst the multiplying settlements, the hill-sides were alive with rattle-snakes, a reptile unknown and much dreaded in Europe ; and the ravening bear and wolf were heard by night around the farm-yard. Humanity lost the kindly links of intelligible language ; and was seen only under the aspect of a strange race, whose numbers and strength were unknown, and whose disposition toward the

new comers remained to be learned from experience.

But these hardships and terrors yielded to the courage and perseverance of our fathers, and the all-subduing power of time. Dorchester, with the usual vicissitudes of a new country, prospered. As it was by a slight priority the first town settled by Governor Winthrop's party, it retained for a short time a certain precedence. In 1633, a tax of four hundred pounds was laid, of which Dorchester paid eighty pounds,—Boston, Roxbury, Newtown (afterwards Cambridge), Watertown, and Charlestown, paid £48 each, Saugus £36, Salem £28, and Medford £12; and these were the whole of Massachusetts, two centuries and a quarter ago! In the year 1633, Wood calls our ancient town “the greatest town in New England.” The description of Josselyn is still more glowing. Its geographical extent, till reduced by the separation from it of several large new towns, was great. It comprised the modern towns of Milton, Stoughton, Sharon, Canton, and Foxborough, with a part of Wrentham and Dedham, being of the length of thirty-five miles, and the average breadth of five. Nor was it merely in time or wealth that it took for a short time the lead. It set the example, in 1633, of that municipal organization which has prevailed throughout New England, and has proved one of the chief sources of its progress. It has been supposed that the first stated provision for a public school was made here:—but the loss of the earliest leaves of our town records leaves us without the documentary proof of this fact, if it be one.

One would suppose that the extensive territory I have just described, would have afforded ample accommodation for some two or three hundred inhabitants. They had, however, scarcely established themselves in their new home, before they began to be straightened for want of room. It seems to have been thought extremely desirable, in the first settlement of the country, to be seated either on the sea coast or the banks of a river. The inhabitants of the Bay had been early made acquainted by those at Plymouth with Connecticut River, although the court declined an application from that quarter, to join them in anticipating the Dutch in their attempts to get possession of it. Three or four individuals, however, from Dorchester, had as early as 1633 crossed the intervening wilderness, and explored this magnificent stream.

Influenced by their reports of the noble range of pasturage to be found on its banks, aided, it must be confessed, by discontents in the Bay, an emigration was contemplated in 1634 by the inhabitants of Dorchester and Newtown. Mr. Ludlow, of Dorchester, it was said, thought that some other persons, himself included, would fill the chair of State as well as Governor Winthrop; and the star of Mr. Hooker in the church at Newtown, it was thought, was not wanted so near the light of John Cotton. The emigration was warmly debated in the Court. Fifteen out of twenty-five of the infant house of deputies, first elected that year, were for the removal; a majority of the magistrates placed their *veto* on the measure, and great heats ensued.

It was opposed on various grounds, but the “pro-cataretical” reason (as Hubbard somewhat learnedly expresses it) was, that so many of its inhabitants could not safely be spared from the Bay.* The next year the Rev. Messrs. Richard Mather, and Thomas Shepherd, with numerous associates, arrived in the colony. Mr. Mather’s company being prepared to fill the places of those desiring to leave Dorchester, and Mr. Shepherd’s to succeed to their brethren at Newtown (Cambridge), the Court gave way and permitted the undertaking. A portion of the emigrants went in the autumn of 1635, the residue in the following spring. Great were the hardships and severe the sufferings endured in this early American exodus through the wilderness, first faint image of that living tide of emigration which in all subsequent time has flowed westward from the Atlantic coast, till in our day it has reached the boundless west; and is even now swelling over the Rocky Mountains, and spreading itself on the shores of the Pacific. Still may it swell and still may it flow; bearing upon its bosom the laws and the institutions, the letters and the arts, the freedom and the faith, which have given New England her name and praise in the world! † The adventurers from Dorchester,—men, women and children,—were fourteen days in making the journey now daily accomplished in three hours, and reached the river

* Winthrop’s Journal for 4th September, 1634.

† This emigration is beautifully described in the *Life of John Mason*, by Rev. George E. Ellis; Sparks’s *Library of American Biography*, Vol. XIII., p. 331.

weak with toil and hunger, and all but disheartened. Both the Dorchester ministers, though it is said reluctantly, agreed to join their emigrating church. Mr. Maverick the senior died in Boston before starting; Mr. Warham conducted his flock to East Windsor, where they formed the first church in Connecticut, as they had been in Massachusetts second to Salem alone. Thus from our native town of Dorchester, and from Cambridge, not yet bearing that honored name, within five years from their first settlement, went forth the founders of Connecticut.

Nor was it for their own establishment alone that the early fathers of Dorchester were careful; they remembered the native children of the soil with kindness. When, a few years after the emigration to the Connecticut, the increase of the new comers about the falls of Neponset had begun to press hard upon the natives gathered about that spot, on the application of John Eliot a grant of six thousand acres of land, being the greater part of the modern town of Stoughton, was made by Dorchester for their accommodation; a grant, as one of our town clerks well says, without example in the history of the State.* In this pleasant retreat were collected the remnants of the friendly tribe, who gave us this venerable name of MASSACHUSETTS, and who ruled the shores of the noble BAY, which, in years past, added another epithet to this time-honored designation. The fair domain of this, our name-sake tribe,

* Noah Clap's letter, 4 Jan., 1792. Mass. Hist. Coll., First Series, Vol. I., p. 98.

extended from the broad smooth floor of Nantasket, where the whispering ripple, as it runs up the beach, scarcely effaces the foot prints of the smart little sand-piper, all round to the cold gray ledges of Nahant, on which the mountain waves of the Atlantic, broken and tired with their tempestuous weltering march through seventy degrees of longitude, conflicting with all the winds of Heaven, sink down upon their adamantine bed, like weary Titans after battling with the gods, and lulled by the moaning dirges of their voiceful caves, roll and rock themselves heavily to sleep. Some "old men of Massachusetts" affirmed that in the interior they extended as far west as Pocomtacook. They hunted small game in the blue-hills, and on their snowshoes they followed the deer to Wachusett. They passed in their bark canoes through Mother Brook into Charles River; the falls of Nonantum and the head waters of the Mystic were favorite resorts; they ranged even to the Nashua. Their war parties met the Tarratines on the Shawshine and the Merimac;—but they loved especially the fair headland of Squantum; the centre of their power was Neponset falls.

From the origin of the colony they were the friends of the white man, and in the first mention of Mattapan as the place of the future settlement, it is stated, that "there also the Indians were kind to us." Thinned by a pestilential disease before the arrival of the English, overshadowed by the numbers, the physical power, and the intellectual superiority of the new comer, reading in the events of

every day the terrible but inevitable doom, "he must increase, but I must decrease," they adopted the white man's faith, and by a miracle of Christian pains and charity read the white man's Book in their native tongue. But not even that mighty element of life, to which the civilized nations of the earth owe so much of their vitality, availed to prolong the red man's existence. Twelve families only of praying Indians, as they were called, the remains of those who removed from Neponset, were found by Gookin at Punkapoag in 1674.* John Eliot, jun., the son of the apostle,—and truly I know not who, since Peter and Paul, better deserves that name,—labored with them once a fortnight. But they dwindled with each generation; till in my boyhood I remember hearing of one poor solitary Indian, who, it was said, occupied a lonely wigwam on Stoughton Pond, and who used to come down, once or twice a year, to the sea-side; hovered a day or two about Squantum; caught a few fish at the lower mills; strolled off into the woods, and with plaintive wailings cut away the bushes from an ancient mound, which, as he thought, covered the ashes of his fathers; and then went back a silent, broken, melancholy man,—the last of a perished tribe.

The agency of Dorchester in the settlement of Connecticut is not the only incident of the kind in our annals. Two generations later, viz., in 1695, application was made to our minister, Mr. Danforth,

* Mass. Hist. Collections, First Series, Vol. I., p. 184.

both personally and by letter, from South Carolina, setting forth the spiritual destitution of that region, and asking aid from us. A missionary church was forthwith organized, in compliance with this request from the remote sister plantation. A pastor, Mr. Joseph Lord, was ordained over it;—it sailed from Dorchester in the middle of December, and arrived at its destination in fourteen days. The little community established itself on Ashley river, in South Carolina, and fondly assumed the name of Dorchester. Here, for more than half a century, the transplanted church and settlement enjoyed a modest prosperity. But the situation proving unhealthy, and the quantity of land limited, a removal to Georgia was projected in 1752. The legislature of that colony made a liberal grant of land, where the emigrants from Dorchester founded the town of Midway, as being half-way between the rivers Ogeechee and Altamaha. This settlement constituted a considerable part of the parish of St. John's, afterwards honorably known as Liberty County in Georgia. Its inhabitants, in the third generation, retained the character and manners, the feelings and principles, which their ancestors brought from our Dorchester eighty years before. On the assembling of the Continental Congress at Philadelphia in 1774, Georgia as a colony not having chosen delegates, the parish of St. John's addressed themselves directly to that body, and received from them a copy of the "General Association." The Convention of Georgia declining to join it without modification, the Parish of St. John's subscribed it on their

own account, and sent one of their number, Dr. Lyman Hall, a native of Connecticut, a member of the little Dorchester-Midway church, to represent that Parish in the Congress at Philadelphia. "At this period," says Dr. Stevens, the intelligent historian of Georgia, "the parish of St. John's possessed nearly one third of the entire wealth of the province; and its inhabitants were remarkable for their upright and independent character. Sympathizing, from their New England origin, more strongly with the northern distresses than the other parts of Georgia, and being removed from the immediate supervision of the Governor and his Council, they pressed on with greater ardor and a firmer step than her sister parishes. The time for action had arrived, and the irresolution of fear had no place in their decisive councils. Alone she stood, a Pharos of liberty in England's most loyal province, renouncing every fellowship that savored not of freedom, and refusing every luxury which contributed to ministerial coffers. With a halter around her neck and a gallows before her eyes, she severed herself from surrounding associations, and cast her lot, while as yet all was gloom and darkness, with the fortunes of her country, to live with her rights or to die for their defence. Proud spot of Georgia's soil! Well does it deserve the appellation (Liberty County) which a grateful State conferred upon it; and truly may we say of its sons, in the remembrance of their patriotic services, "nothing was wanting to their glory, they were wanting to ours."*

* Georgia Historical Collections, Vol. II., p. 24.

Dr. Hall appeared at Philadelphia on the third day of the session of 1775 (13th May), and was admitted as a delegate. On that day Congress was composed of the representatives of the twelve United Colonies, and Dr. Lyman Hall, the deputy from the Parish of St. John's. The patriotic example was soon followed by the colony, and four delegates, of whom Dr. Hall was one, were in the course of a few weeks deputed to Philadelphia. In this way, and by the strange sequence of events which pervades our history, the pious zeal of a few humble Christians of our ancient town, in 1695, was the remote cause that the great empire State of the South, then in its infancy, was represented at the opening of the Congress of 1775. A deputation from this distant offshoot of the old Dorchester stock has been expected to favor us with their attendance on this occasion. If they are present, we bid them cordially welcome.*

It cannot be expected that the annals of a small municipality like Dorchester should furnish many events of striking public interest. It is enough to say of our fathers that they bore their part faithfully in the silent work of progress, which was carried on under both charters. Among them were many individuals of great worth, and some who have played a distinguished part in public affairs.

Of Maverick and Warham, the first ministers, not

* This interesting and important incident in the History of Dorchester is fully narrated by the Rev. Dr. Holmes, who in early life was the pastor of the Midway church. See *Annals*, under the years 1696, and 1775. Also *Journals of the Continental Congress for 13th May, 1775.*

much is known. Warham had been the clergyman of Exeter in England, and they were both selected by Mr. White as the spiritual guides (and that imported little less than a moral dictatorship) of the infant colony. His name is still perpetuated in Connecticut.

When their services were lost to the church of Dorchester, by the decease of Mr. Maverick in 1636 and the emigration of Mr. Warham to Connecticut, their place was more than filled by Mr. Richard Mather, the leader of the second emigration, a person of great authority in the infant churches of the colony, the father of Increase Mather, the grandfather of Cotton Mather, and as such the head of a family which for nearly a century filled no second place in the church of New England.

Mr. Rossiter was one of the assistants chosen in London in 1629, but died in a short time after his arrival.

Mr. Ludlow, also one of the first emigration, was of the magistracy in 1630; deputy in 1634, and an unsuccessful candidate for the governorship the next year. He was unwise enough to let this want of success disturb his equanimity, and protested against the election of Winthrop. The constituency were offended at this, and refused to continue him in the second office. In the gentle phrase of Dr. Eliot, they "gave him an opportunity to enjoy private life." Disgusted with the turn things were taking in the Bay, he joined the emigration to Connecticut, and took a distinguished part in the affairs of that colony. He finally removed to Virginia.

I have already spoken of Roger Clap, whose diary relates the voyage and settlement of the first company of Dorchester emigrants, and is an interesting original contribution to our early history. Induced by his example and advice, several of his kindred followed him to America, among whose descendants are those of that name, who in every generation have creditably served their native town, as well as some of the most eminent sons of New England in other parts of the country. Of this stock was the learned President Clap of Yale College, and the venerable Nathanael Clap of Newport, of whom Bishop Berkeley said, "before I saw Father Clap, I thought the Bishop of Rome (Pope Clement XI.) had the most grave aspect of any man I ever saw, but really the minister of Newport has the most venerable appearance. The resemblance is very great." I may be permitted to allude to my own grateful associations with this name, as that of the patient and faithful instructress of the same lineage, who taught me to read before I could speak plain. Considerately mingling the teacher and nurse, she kept a pillow and a bit of carpet in the corner of the school-room, where the little heads, throbbing from a premature struggle with the tall double letters and ampersand, with Korah's troop and Vashti's pride, were permitted, nay encouraged, to go to sleep. Roger Clap was a military man; and in time succeeded, with the title of Captain, to the command of our stout little colonial Sebastopol,—originally the Castle, then Castle William, and now Fort Independence:—a fortress coeval with the colony; whose

walls first of mud, then of wood, then of brick, and now lastly of granite, not inappropriately symbolize the successive stages of our political growth. When the great Dutch Admiral de Ruyter, the year after that famous *Annus Mirabilis* immortalized by Dryden, having swept the coast of Africa had been ordered to the West Indies, intending, says Capt. Clap, not a whit daunted at the thought, "to visit us," the Captain adds, with honest satisfaction, "Our battery was also repaired, wherein are seven good guns," probably six pounders at least. De Ruyter, however, did not think it expedient to come within two thousand miles of their range.

John Mason was a chieftain of still greater eminence. He had served under Fairfax in the low countries. He commanded the Dorchester train band in 1633, but led the emigration three years afterwards to Connecticut. When the great Pequot war broke out, he commanded the river troops; and at the famous battle of the Mystic, in May 1637, he all but annihilated that hostile tribe. He was among the most active, useful, and honored of the Dorchester company, and of the founders of Connecticut; whose fate depended for the time on the success of the battle of the Mystic. The late Jeremiah Mason, one of the most distinguished of the statesmen and jurists of our own time, was among his descendants.

William Pynchon early removed from Dorchester to Roxbury, and thence to Springfield,—the most prominent of the founders of Western Massachusetts.

Israel Stoughton was probably one of the first emigration; his name appears on one of the earliest

pages of our Dorchester annals. He was a member of the first general court of deputies; a citizen of energy and public spirit. Unlike modern legislators, who, "without distinction of party," are accused of looking out for the loaves and fishes for themselves, worthy Col. Stoughton provided them for others. He built the first tide-mill for grinding corn, and established the first wier for taking fish in the colony. He, too, was a military man, and commanded the contingent from Massachusetts in the Pequot war. After filling important trusts in New England, he returned home and served as a colonel in the parliamentary army. By his will he bequeathed three hundred acres of land to Harvard College.

His son William fills a still more distinguished place in the history of Dorchester and Massachusetts. He was educated for the pulpit, and often urged to settle over the church of his native town and elsewhere. He preached the annual election sermon in 1668, from which one striking expression is still remembered: "God sifted a whole nation that he might send choice grain over into this wilderness." He was an agent for the colony at the court of Charles II., and was afterwards named Deputy Governor in the new charter, subsequently acting as chief magistrate on the departure of Phipps and Bellamont. He built a college at Cambridge, which bore his name;—a memorial of his liberality which has been perpetuated by a college edifice, of more recent construction, but bearing the same name. His monument, the most costly in our ancient burial ground, the work probably of a foreign artist,

is conspicuous for a highly rhetorical inscription, of which the material portion is borrowed from that of Pascal.

William Poole was of the first company of emigrants, for several years town clerk and school-master. He lived a considerable time at Taunton, where the benefactions of his sister procured for her the honorable title of the "Virgin Mother" of that town. William Poole is spoken of in our records as a "sage, reverend, and pious man of God." His epitaph, written by himself before his death, is still legible upon his grave stone, and is one of the best expressed of our mortuary inscriptions :

" Ho pasenger tis worth thy paines to stay
& take a dead mans lesson by ye way
I was what now thou art & thou shalt be
what I am now what odds twixt me & thee
Now go thy way but stay take one word more
Thy staff, for ought thou knowest, stands next ye dore
Death is ye dore ye dore of heaven or hell
Be warned, Be armed Believe Repent Fariewell."

Edmund Hartt is just mentioned in the list of the first company. I suppose him to be the ancestor of Edmund Hartt who built the frigate "Constitution." It has been denied that he drew the plan of that noble ship; doubted even if he superintended the work; but he was at least the "master" who "laid the keel;" and the master who laid the keel of "Old Ironsides," even if he worked with no higher instruments than mallet and chisel, was surely a workman that needeth not to be ashamed of his work, nor Dorchester of the workman.

Robert Pierce was of the first emigration, and was the ancestor of the late venerable and beloved Dr. Pierce of Brookline. He built the house in which one of his descendants, Mr. Lewis Pierce, lives at the present day, in whose possession is still preserved a portion of the bread brought from England by his ancestor; a "remainder biscuit" certainly, and by this time a pretty dry one.*

Humphrey Atherton was of the second emigration, a man of mark and influence in the colony. He filled some of the most important offices of civil life, and attained the highest military rank. He was "slow of speech;" but "downright for the business, one of cheerful spirit and entire for the country." After having been employed on almost every occasion of importance, in peace or war, for thirty years, he was thrown from his horse as he was riding from Boston, and killed. His death (in 1661) was regarded as a public calamity. The sensation caused by it has been handed down to posterity in the monumental record, still legible upon his tomb-stone, and still constantly quoted, in which, at some expense of grammar and rhythm, the high qualities of his character and the pomp of his obsequies are set forth with a certain solemn quaintness not unpleasing to a native Dorchester ear:

"Here lies ovr Captaine, & Major of Svffolk was withall;
A Godly Majistrate was he, and Maior Generall,

* Mr. Everett here exhibited in a glass case two sea-biscuits which were brought over by Mr. Robert Pierce, and have been carefully preserved in his family to the present day.

Two Trovps of Hors with him heare came, fuch worth his love
 did crave ;
 Ten Companyes of Foot also movrning marcht to his grave.
 Let all that Read be fure to keep the Faith as he has don
 With Chrift he lives now Crown'd his name was Hvmpry Atherton."

But time would fail me to mention even by name all the persons entitled to a respectful recollection in our history. It is enough to say that they comprehend a fair proportion of the eminent men of the colony, and that a large number of those most distinguished in New England, or the States settled from New England, trace their origin directly or collaterally to this spot. In proof of this assertion, besides the names already given, I might repeat those of Roger Sherman, Strong, Dewey, Wolcott, Hawthorne, Putnam, Phillips, Breck, Minot, Moseley, Withington, Robinson, and many others. So, too, it would be easy to show, from the contents of our ancient records, if the limits of the occasion permitted it, that the character of Dorchester, as a town, was at all times sustained upon the solid basis on which the fathers had placed it. When we bear in mind the great power and influence of the church in the early days, as a species of moral and spiritual government, outside and above the municipal organization, and exercising a paramount control far beyond the strict bounds of ecclesiastical affairs, we shall be prepared to admit, that the steadiness of our progress and the general prosperity which the town has enjoyed, are owing, in no small degree, to the diligent labors, faithful services, and excellent characters of its clergy, an unbroken line of pious, learned, and devoted men. The whole period, from

the emigration to Connecticut in 1636 to the resignation of Mr. Bowman in 1773, is covered by the lives of Mather, Flint, Danforth, and Bowman, who with Messrs. Burr and Wilson, both colleagues of Mather, make up the list. It would not become me to speak of Mr. Bowman's successor, a near relative of my own; while the memory of Dr. Harris, the last pastor of the first, and of Dr. Codman, the first pastor of the second Dorchester church, is too recent to require a tribute. It would not perhaps be easy to find a town, which has been more highly favored in a succession of ministers modelled upon the true type of a New England Pastor, in whom a well-digested store of human and divine learning, directed by a sound practical judgment, was united with an all-controlling sense of the worth of spiritual things; while the austerity of manners required by the taste of the age was sustained by spotless purity of life, and habitually softened by offices of charity and words of love. Notwithstanding the dissensions with which the churches of New England, in the course of two centuries, were too often agitated, and the consequent frequent disturbance of the friendly relations of Minister and People, I do not know that there is one of the Ministers of Dorchester who may not be considered as having adorned his office, and as having exercised a kindly and healing influence on the church and the community.

With respect to the great reproach of our puritan fathers, that of intolerance, too well founded as we must all admit and lament, I cannot find that our ancient town was above or below the standard of

the age. It was an age which sincerely believed itself in direct alliance with the Supreme Being. The Colonial government for two generations had all the essential features of a theocracy. Every event, from the sickness or death of the minister of a village church, to that of a foreign potentate, a winter's storm or a summer's drought, canker worms in the spring and frosts in the autumn, a heresy invading the church, a *quo warranto* threatening the charter, an Indian or a European war, was the occasion of a fast, and "improved" in a spiritual application. We use the same language as our forefathers in this respect. The difference between us and them, I fear, is, that they believed what they said, with a more profound conviction. But while their lofty faith gave a high tone to their characters, its influence was not in all respects favorable to the happiness of their lives, the wisdom of their counsels, or the charity of their opinions. Our poor natures are not strong enough to bear a direct personal union with the Infinite. We are too prone to do wrong, to be trusted with the consciousness of infallibility; too ignorant, to be safely animated with the conviction that we have grasped the whole truth. The annals of Dorchester, however, present a few noble examples of charity and toleration beyond the age. When the statute against the Quakers was enacted in 1658, a statute which reproduced the worst features of the cruel law against non-conformists of 1593, Thomas Clark, with one other deputy, voted against it. He was a Dorchester man, though removed to Boston, which

he represented at that time ;—and Nicholas Upsall, also of Dorchester, was fined, imprisoned, and eventually banished, for deeds of mercy toward that persecuted sect.

In all the important political events of the times, the town of Dorchester bore its part, often a conspicuous one. A very striking illustration of this fact may be seen in the Memorial addressed to the Colonial legislature in 1664, and signed by the principal inhabitants of the town.* The New England Colonies, though by no means what can be called a military people, had been led by circumstances to a large experience of the hardships and perils of war. This grew at first out of the necessity of protecting themselves against the native tribes ; which they were obliged to do, entirely without aid from the mother country. I do not recollect that, under the first charter, a dollar or a man was sent from England to the Colonies, to aid in their defence against the Indians, the French, or the Dutch. Under the new charter, and with the increase of population both in the French and British Colonies, American interests acquired a greatly increased importance ; and the Colonies, as a matter of course, were involved in all the wars of Europe. A considerable military and naval force was always kept up, and the royal navies and armies were recruited for foreign service in New England. In this way, the flower of our youth, for three successive genera-

* This interesting paper was published in the *New England Genealogical Register*, Vol. V., p. 393, with valuable notices of the signers.

tions, were engaged in a series of sanguinary but now almost forgotten conflicts on the inland frontier, the banks of the St. Lawrence, in Cape Breton, in Martinico and Cuba, and on the Spanish Main. Besides what was done still earlier, the New England Colonies raised two thousand men in 1690 for that fatal expedition against Canada, of whom one thousand perished, "not vagrants," says Dummer, "picked up in the streets and pressed into the war, but heads of families, artificers, robust young men, such as no country can spare, and least of all, new settlements."* Expeditions of this kind, sometimes prosperous, more frequently attended with the most distressing sacrifices, not merely of property but of life, recur too frequently even to be enumerated here. I mention only those which are alluded to in our histories. In 1740, five companies of one hundred men each, as the excellent Mr. James Blake, for so many years the faithful town clerk of Dorchester, relates, "went from this province to war with Spain. They went to Jamaica to Admiral Vernon, and so to Carthage and Cuba." Mr. Blake adds, "we hear many or most of them are dead." Let us hope that the town clerk of Dorchester will never again have to make precisely that record. Three thousand men were raised in New England for the memorable expedition against Louisburg in 1745. "Most that went from hereabouts," says Father Blake, "that I knew, either died there, or in their passage home, or soon after they came

* Defence of the New England Charters, p. 17.

home. 'Tis said there died of our New England forces about five hundred." This expedition, as you are well aware, was planned by Gov. Shirley. The Governor's stately mansion still stands upon our borders; the iron cross, brought from the market-place at Louisburg, adorns the library of Harvard College. But no monument is reared to the brave men who fell in these distant expeditions; no memorial remains of those who came back to their native villages, with wounds and diseases brought from the camp. On one mouldering stone only, in our ancient grave-yard, we read that it covers a person who "died in his majesty's sarvice."

The Indian's shaft, the Briton's ball,
 The sabre's thirsting edge,
 The hot-shell shattering in its fall,
 The bayonet's rending wedge
 There scattered death;—yet seek the spot,
 No trace thine eye can see,
 No altar; and they need it not,
 Who leave their children free.*

The great expedition against the Havana, in 1762, was on the point of sinking under the climate and the protracted resistance of the Spaniards. "A thousand languishing and impatient looks," says the historian, "were cast *on the reinforcements from America.*" None, however, as yet appeared; and the exhausted army was left to its own resources. Many fell into despair and died, overcome with fatigue, anguish, and disappointment. These reinforcements at length arrived in two divisions. Some-

* Holmes.

of the vessels composing the first, were wrecked in the Bahama passage; of the second, a part were intercepted by the French; but those who escaped, "arrived seasonably and rendered excellent service." On the 14th day of August, 1762, after a murderous siege of two months and eight days, under a burning tropical sun, in mid-summer, the Royal forces of England, with her brave provincial allies, marched together through the battered wall of the Havana.* This was an era in history; it was the last time in which England and her North American colonies stood side by side on the battle field. Their next meetings were fifteen years later at Lexington and Concord, at Bunker Hill and Dorchester heights;—No, not on Dorchester heights; it was not deemed expedient by the royal forces to meet them there.

In 1763, the temple of Janus was shut, and there was peace throughout christendom. England had gained an empire in the war; Canada had been acquired by her, and, with her elder American colonies, spread out before her one vast field for the promotion of human happiness and the culture of a high civilization. By the hand of Chatham she might have sown protection, and reaped grateful allegiance. From the lips of Burke she might have sown conciliation, and reaped union and love. But by the counsels of Grenville and North she sowed taxation, and reaped revolt. In 1764 she sowed the wind (a crop which never comes up in regular drills); she came for the harvest in 1775, and, lo! the whirl-

* Annual Register for 1762, chap. VIII.

wind; reaper, sickle, and sheaves swept before the tempest; the fountains of the great deep broken up; and the very soil itself, the rock-ribbed continent, torn from the British empire by the convulsion!

In the struggle, which began with the passage of the Stamp-act, Dorchester was in no degree behind the metropolis. In 1765 she instructed her representative, Col. John Robinson, "to use the utmost of his endeavors, with the great and general court, to obtain the repeal of the late parliamentary act, (always earnestly asserting our rights as free-born Englishmen), and his best skill in preventing the use of stamped paper in this government." But though resolutely bent on resisting the obnoxious and tyrannical act, they would nevertheless manifest to him their "utter abhorrence of all routs, riots, tumults, and unlawful assemblies; and if the laws now in being are not sufficient to suppress such high misdemeanors, that you would use your skill and interest in making such laws as would answer such a salutary purpose." (Dorchester Rec. III., 293.) When, in consequence of the dissolution of the general court in 1768, a convention of the Province was recommended by Boston, Dorchester voted "to choose one person to act as a committee in convention, with such committee as may be sent from other towns in the province, in order that such measures may be consulted and advised, as his majesty's service and the peace and safety of his subjects in this province may require." As a farther measure to promote his majesty's service and the peace and safety of the province, the next vote

passed at the same meeting was, that a "place be built under the roof of the meeting-house at the east end thereof, to keep the town's stock of powder in." (Rec. III., 333.) In 1770, Dorchester resolved not to purchase any articles of the traders in Boston, who had violated the non-importation agreement, and resolved that "whercas a duty has been laid on foreign tea, we will not make use of it in our families, except in case of sickness, till the duty is repealed." (Rec. III., 352.) On the 4th of June, 1773, Dorchester responded to the solemn exposition of the rights of America, drawn up by a committee of twenty-one of the citizens of Boston. The resolutions of this town were nine in number, expressed with perspicuity and force, and the representatives of Dorchester are instructed "to join in any motion or motions in a constitutional way, to obtain not only redress of the aforementioned grievances, but of all others, and that they in no wise consent to give up any of our rights, whether from nature or by compact." (Rec. III., 380.)

At the close of 1773, the great question of taxation, out of which sprung the independence of America, was brought to a practical issue in reference to the duty on tea. When attempts were made to persuade Lord North not to introduce the obnoxious article into the colonies, his answer was, "It is of no use making objections, for the King will have it so. The King means to try the question"; and the question was tried in Boston and its vicinity.* As soon as information was received that

* Bancroft's History, Vol. VI., p. 465, 472.

two or three cargoes of tea were speedily to arrive in Boston, the consignees were called upon, by a committee of the citizens in town meeting assembled, to resign their trust. This they refused to do ; and the further management of affairs was left by the citizens to the committee of correspondence. On Monday, November 22d, 1773, the committees of Dorchester, Roxbury, Brookline, and Cambridge met the Boston Committee in the Selectmen's room in Faneuil Hall. At this conference of the five committees, it was unanimously voted to prevent the landing and sale of the tea, and to address a letter on the subject to all the towns in the province. On Sunday the 28th, the Dartmouth, the first of the tea ships, arrived. On the following day Samuel Adams invited the committees of Dorchester and the three other towns, to meet the committee and citizens of Boston in Faneuil Hall. This is the memorable meeting that was adjourned to the Old South church, at which it was resolved that the tea should be sent back to England. On the 30th, a meeting was held in Dorchester, at which it was resolved, that " should this country be so unhappy, as to see a day of trial for the recovery of its rights, by a last and solemn appeal to Him who gave them, we should not be behind the bravest of our patriotic brethren, and that we will at all times be ready to assist our neighbors and friends, when they shall need us, though in the greatest danger." (Rec. III., 407.) In the course of a few days, two more ships arrived ; the committee of the six towns (for Charlestown had now been added) were in continual

conference. The consignees were urged to send back the tea; the collector would not clear the vessels till the tea was discharged; the governor refused a permit to pass the castle, unless the ships were cleared. No peaceable solution of the problem remained, and on the night of the 16th December, a party of persons, disguised as Mohawk Indians, boarded the ships and threw into the water three hundred and forty-two chests of tea.

One of these chests, partly emptied, and buoyant, was borne by the tide to Dorchester neck, and there picked up on the morning of the 17th, by a person who saw it on the marshes and "thought it no harm." He was speedily required to surrender the article, and it was only after apology made in public town meeting, that he was forgiven for his indiscretion. (Rec. III., 414.)

The destruction of the tea, I need hardly say, occasioned the Boston port-bill, and the occupation of the town by a greatly increased military force. These measures on the part of the government were met by the organization of measures of resistance, military and political, on the part of the colonies. On the 24th of August, 1774, delegates were chosen by Dorchester, to attend the celebrated meeting at Dedham, of all the towns in the County of Suffolk, not as yet divided. A month later, instructions were given to Capt. Lemuel Robinson to represent the town in the general court to be held at Salem. The writs for the meeting having been recalled by General Gage, Capt. Robinson was authorized to meet the representatives of the other towns IN GENE-

RAL PROVINCIAL CONGRESS, to "act upon such matters as might come before that body, in such a manner as may appear to him conducive to the true interest of this town and province, and most likely to preserve the liberties of all America." (Rec. III., 435.) The persons elected, to the number of ninety, assembled at Salem on the 5th of October, notwithstanding the recal of the writs. Having waited in vain for the appearance of the Governor to administer the usual oaths, they organized themselves into a convention the next day, with John Hancock as Chairman, and Benjamin Lincoln as Clerk. A committee was appointed to consider the proclamation of the Governor, and on their Report the following day (October 7th, 1774) it was voted, that "the members aforesaid do now resolve themselves into a PROVINCIAL CONGRESS." This body adjourned the same day to Concord, and afterwards held its meetings at Watertown. Its formation followed, by one month, the meeting of the Continental Congress at Philadelphia, and it was, I believe, the first regularly organized body assembled in any of the States, and assuming legislative powers of a revolutionary character.

Among its acts was one which may be considered of itself as forming, as far as Massachusetts is concerned, a precise date to the revolution in the government, regarded as a political measure; I mean the recommendation to the towns to pay their quota of the Province tax not to the Receiver for the Crown, but to a treasurer appointed by this Provincial Congress. Dorchester, on the 27th Dec. 1774,

complied with this recommendation, and resolved that "the collectors of this town pay the province tax, now in their hands or yet to be collected, to Henry Gardner, Esq., of Stow," a gentleman of sterling probity and a true patriot, prematurely removed from the stage of life; whose grandson, a native son of Dorchester, the chief magistrate of the Commonwealth, honors us with his presence on this occasion.

By another act equally decisive, the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts made military preparation for the approaching crisis. The enlistment of twenty thousand men was recommended, and officers of the seven years' war designated for the command.

In pursuance of this recommendation, Dorchester, on the 10th March, 1775, resolved that "the whole of the inhabitants of this town assemble on a certain day, those who are liable to do military duty with arms and ammunition *according to law*, in order to be reviewed, and to see whether any members of them will enlist and hold themselves in readiness as minute men; and those in the alarm list to choose officers to command them." (Rec. III., 442.)

On the 19th of April the all-important blow was struck; the blow which severed the fated chain whose every link was bolted by an act of Parliament, whose every rivet was closed up by an order in Council,—which bound to the wake of Europe the brave bark of our youthful fortune, destined henceforth and forever to ride the waves alone,—the blow which severed that fated chain was struck. The blow was struck, which will be felt in its consequen-

ces to ourselves and the family of nations, till the seventh seal is broken from the apocalyptic volume of the history of empires. The consummation of four centuries was completed. The life-long hopes and heart-sick visions of Columbus, poorly fulfilled in the subjugation of the plumed tribes of a few tropical islands, and the partial survey of the continent; cruelly mocked by the fetters placed upon his noble limbs by his own menial and which he carried with him into his grave, were at length more than fulfilled, when the new world of his discovery put on the sovereign robes of her separate national existence, and joined, for peace and for war, the great Panathenaic procession of the nations. The wrongs of generations were redressed. The cup of humiliation drained to the dregs by the old puritan confessors and non-conformist victims of oppression,—loathsome prisons, blasted fortunes, lips forbidden to open in prayer, earth and water denied in their pleasant native land, the separations and sorrows of exile, the sounding perils of the ocean, the scented hedge-rows and vocal thickets of the “old countrie” exchanged for a pathless wilderness ringing with the war-whoop and gleaming with the scalping-knife; the secular insolence of colonial rule, checked by no periodical recurrence to the public will; governors appointed on the other side of the globe that knew not Joseph; the patronizing disdain of undelegated power; the legal contumely of foreign law, wanting the first element of obligation, the consent of the governed expressed by his authorized representative; and at length the last unutterable and burning affront and

shame, a mercenary soldiery encamped upon the fair eminences of our cities, ships of war with springs on their cables moored in front of our crowded quays, artillery planted open-mouthed in our principal streets, at the doors of our houses of assembly, their morning and evening salvos proclaiming to the rising and the setting sun, that we are the subjects and they the lords,—all these hideous phantoms of the long colonial night swept off by the first sharp volley on Lexington Green.

Well might Samuel Adams exclaim, as he heard it, “Oh, what a glorious morning is this!” glorious, but as is too often the case with human glories, the germ and the fruit of sorrow, sanctified with tears and sealed with blood. Precious lives are to be sacrificed, great trials public and private to be endured, seven years of war are to desolate the land, patriot armies are to march with bloody feet over ice-clad fields, a cloud of anxiety must hang over the prospects of one generation of the young, while another of the aged go down to the grave before the vision is fulfilled:—but still glorious at home and abroad,—glorious for America, and, strange as the word may sound, glorious even for England! Lord Chatham rejoiced that America had resisted. Surely Lord Chatham never rejoiced in the shame of England; he rejoiced that America had resisted, because she resisted on the great principles of constitutional liberty. Burke, in the early stages of the contest, wrote these golden words: “We view the establishment of the British Colonies on principles of liberty, as that which is to render this kingdom venerable to

future ages. In comparison of this we regard all the victories and conquests of our warlike ancestors or of our own times as barbarous and vulgar distinctions, in which many nations whom we look upon with little respect or value, have equalled if not exceeded us. THIS IS THE PECULIAR GLORY OF ENGLAND!"* All the victories and conquests of our warlike ancestors or of our own times—Plantagenets and Tudors; Crecy, Poitiers, Agincourt; Dunkirk and Calais; Jamaica and Gibraltar; the Cromwells and the Blakes; the Williams and the Georges; the triumphs of Marlborough at the gates of France, the thunders of Clive on the banks of the Ganges; all, in Burke's judgment, barbarous distinctions, vulgar fame, compared with "the peculiar glory" of founding a colonial empire on the principles of liberty!

Of the great events which influenced the result of the revolution, few are more important than that which took place within our limits. At Lexington and Concord the great appeal to arms was irrevocably made. As the alarm of that day spread through the country, the men of Dorchester hastened to the field. They stood side by side with their countrymen, from every part of New England, when the great question of the capacity of a patriotic militia to contend with veteran troops was decided at Bunker Hill. But the occupation of our Heights produced a distinct strategic result, not inferior in importance to any other in the whole war. It was literally

* Burke's Works, Vol. II., 403.

victoria sine clade ; a noble victory achieved without the effusion of blood.

But there is another circumstance which must ever clothe the occupation of Dorchester Heights with an affecting interest. It was the first great military operation of Washington in the revolutionary war ; not a battle, indeed, but the preparation for a battle on the grandest scale, planned with such skill and executed with such vigor, as at once to paralyze the army and navy of the enemy, and force him, without striking a blow, to an ignominious retreat. Washington was commissioned as Commander in Chief of the American Armies on the day the battle of Bunker Hill was fought. The siege of Boston had been already formed ; and those noble lines of circumvallation, twelve miles in compass, of which some faint remains may still be traced, had been drawn along the high grounds of Charlestown, Cambridge, Roxbury, and Dorchester. An adventurous expedition against Quebec had failed ; partial collisions had taken place wherever there were royal forces throughout the country ; but nothing decisive was brought about, and a feverish excitement pervaded the continent. Congress was still conducting the war without a constitutional existence ; and all eyes and hearts were turned to the army and to Washington. Men at a safe distance and with nothing at stake, are prone to judge severely the conduct of those who are at the post of responsibility and danger. Washington himself felt the delicacy and the hazards of his position ; the importance of sustaining the expectations of the country ; the

necessity of decisive results. But his army was without discipline or experience, save a few veterans of the seven years' war, without adequate supplies of any kind, composed of men who had left their homes at a moment's warning and were impatient to return, weakened by camp diseases and the small-pox, with a stock of powder so scanty, that stratagem was resorted to by the commander to conceal the deficiency even from his officers. Thus the summer and the autumn wore away, and every week increased the public impatience and added to the embarrassments of Washington. His private letters at this time are filled with the most touching remarks on his distressed condition. In a letter to Colonel Reed, of the 14th of January, 1776, he says, "The reflection on my situation and that of this army, produces many an unhappy hour, when all around me are wrapped in sleep. Few people know the predicament we are in on a thousand accounts; fewer still will believe, if any disaster happens to these lines, from what cause it flows. I have often thought how much happier I should have been, if, instead of accepting the command under such circumstances, I had taken my musket on my shoulder and entered the ranks; or, if I could have justified the measure to posterity and my own conscience, had retired to the back country and lived in a wigwam."

At length, however, the re-enlistment of the army was completed; advanced lines were thrown up, ordnance captured at Ticonderoga had been transported by Knox with prodigious effort across the country, ammunition had been taken by Manly in

his prize ships, shells were furnished from the royal arsenal at New York. It was Washington's wish to cross the ice to Boston, to carry the town by assault, and destroy the royal army. The ice, however, did not make till the middle of February; and it was decided, by a council of war, that the town could not be assaulted with success.

It was then resolved to repeat, on a grander scale, with full preparation and ample means, the hasty operation which had brought on the battle of Bunker Hill, the preceding summer. It was determined first to occupy the heights of Dorchester, and as soon as an impregnable position was secured there, to establish batteries on Nook Hill and the other rising grounds nearest Boston. The fleet in the harbor was within range of the heights; the town was commanded from the hills below. The occupation of these points would of necessity compel the enemy to take the risk of a decisive action, or to evacuate the town.

Washington, though preferring the bolder measure, yielded to the decision of his council, and threw his whole soul into the work. A plan for a grand combined movement was matured. The heights of Dorchester were to be occupied on the night of the 4th of March, in order that the anticipated battle might be fought on the anniversary of the ever-memorable 5th of March, 1770. As soon as the conflict was engaged on the heights, Putnam was to cross from Cambridge with a body of four thousand men, land in two divisions in Boston, and forcing his way through the town burst open the

fortifications on the neck, and thus admit a division of the American army from Roxbury. To distract and occupy the attention of the enemy, the town was severely bombarded from Somerville, East Cambridge and Roxbury, during the nights of the 2d, 3d, and 4th of March.

I am told by professional men that these dispositions evince consummate military skill; and are among the facts which show that Washington, too often compelled by his situation to pursue the Fabian policy, possessed a talent for military combinations that entitles him to a place beside the greatest captains of the last century.

The 4th of March, the day so long and anxiously expected, at length arrives. The troops are put in motion in the evening, from the American lines at Roxbury and Dorchester. An advanced guard of eight hundred men precedes; the carts with intrenching tools came next, with the main body, twelve hundred strong, under General Thomas; the whole followed by a train of three hundred wagons loaded with fascines, gabions, and bundles of hay. They crossed Dorchester neck without being perceived, and reached their destination in two divisions, one for each of the heights. Bundles of hay were placed on the side of the causeway, at the most exposed parts, as a protection in case the enemy should discover and attempt to interrupt the movement. Under this shelter, parties from the American army passed several times during the night, without being perceived, though it was bright moonlight. This was owing, no doubt, to the cannonade

and bombardment of the town from the opposite quarter, by which also the whole surrounding country was thrown into a state of painful expectation and alarm. The operations were conducted by Gridley, an experienced engineer of the old French war. He was aided by Col. Putnam, in laying out and executing the works, which before morning, though incomplete, were adequate against grape-shot and musketry.

Washington was present on the heights. In the strictness of military duty, the presence of the commander-in-chief of the army was not required on the ground, on such an occasion; but the operation was too important to be trusted entirely to subordinates. Accompanied by Mr. James Bowdoin, then a young man of twenty-two, afterwards your respected fellow citizen, and the representative of Dorchester in the Convention of Massachusetts which adopted the Constitution of the United States, Washington, whose head quarters were at Cambridge, repaired, on this eventful night, to Dorchester heights.* He has left no record descriptive of the scene, or of his thoughts and emotions at what he must have regarded, at that time, as the most eventful hour of his life, and the most critical moment of the war. "The moon shining in its full lustre" (they are the words of Washington), revealed every object through the clear cold air of early March, with that spectral distinctness, with

* Eulogy on Hon. James Bowdoin, by Rev. Dr. Jenks, p. 19, 20; Addresses and Speeches, by Hon. R. C. Winthrop, p. 109.

which things present themselves to the straining eye, at a great juncture. All immediately around him intense movement, but carried on in death-like silence; nothing heard but the incessant tread of busy feet, and the dull sound of the mattock upon the soil, frozen so deep as to make it necessary to place the chief reliance on the fascines and gabions. Beneath him, the slumbering batteries of the castle; the roadstead and harbor filled with the vessels of the royal fleet, motionless except as they swung round at their moorings at the turn of the midnight tide; the beleaguered city, occupied by a powerful army and a considerable non-combatant population, startled into unnatural vigilance by the incessant and destructive cannonade, but yet unobservant of the great operations in progress so near them; the surrounding country, dotted with a hundred rural settlements, roused from the deep sleep of a New England village by the unwonted tumult and glare.

It has been stated, in one or two well-authenticated cases of persons restored after drowning, where life has been temporarily extinguished in the full glow of health, with the faculties unimpaired by disease and in perfect action, that, in the last few minutes of conscious existence, the whole series of the events of the entire life comes rushing back to the mind, distinctly but with inconceivable rapidity; that the whole life is lived over again in a moment. Such a narrative, by a person of high official position in a foreign country, and perfect credibility, I have read. We may well suppose that at this most critical moment of Washington's life, a similar con-

centration of thought would take place, and that the events of his past existence as they had prepared him for it,—his training while yet a boy in the wilderness, his escape from drowning and the rifle of the savage on his perilous mission to Venango, the shower of iron hail through which he rode unharmed on Braddock's field, would now crowd through his memory; that much more also the past life of his country, the early stages of the great conflict now brought to its crisis, and still more solemnly the possibilities of the future for himself and for America, would press upon him; the ruin of the patriotic cause if he failed at the outset; the triumphant consolidation of the revolution if he prevailed; with higher visions of the hopeful family of rising States, their auspicious growth and prosperous fortunes, hovering like a dream of angels in the remoter prospect;—all this, attended with the immense desire of honest fame (for we cannot think even Washington's mind too noble to possess the "last infirmity"), the intense inward glow of manly heroism about to act its great part on a sublime theatre,—the softness of the man chastening the severity of the chieftain, and deeply touched at the sufferings and bereavements about to be caused by the conflict of the morrow; the still tenderer emotions that breathed their sanctity over all the rest; the thought of the faithful and beloved wife who had followed him from Mount Vernon, and of the aged mother whose heart was aching in her Virginia home for glad tidings of "George, who was always a good boy,"—all these pictures, visions,

feelings, pangs;—too vast for words, too deep for tears,—but swelling, no doubt, in one unuttered prayer to Heaven, we may well imagine to have filled the soul of Washington at that decisive hour, as he stood upon the heights of Dorchester, with the holy stars for his camp-fire, and the deep folding shadows of night, looped by the hand of God to the four quarters of the sky, for the curtains of his tent.*

The morning of the 5th of March dawned, and the enemy beheld with astonishment, looming through a heavy mist, the operations of the night. Gen. Howe wrote to the minister that they must have been the work of at least twelve thousand men. In the account given by one of his officers, and adopted in the Annual Register, it is said that the expedition with which these works were thrown up, with their sudden and unexpected appearance, “recalled to the mind those wonderful stories of enchantment

* This imagery was partly suggested to me by a noble stanza in Gleim's Ode on the victory gained by Frederic the Great, at Lowositz, dimly retained in a recollection of forty years. Since the Address was delivered, my friend, Prof. Felton, has at my request, with the kind aid of Dr. Beck, helped me to the original, which is as follows:—

“Auf einer Trommel sass der Held,
 Und dachte seine Schlacht;
 Den Himmel über sich zum Zelt,
 Und um sich her die Nacht.”

Nearly in English as follows:—

Upon a drum the hero sat,
 And thought upon his fight;
 The heaven above him for his tent,
 And all around the night.

and invisible agency, which are so frequent in the Eastern romances.”

General Howe, like a gallant commander, immediately determined on the perilous attempt to dislodge the Americans before their entrenchments should be rendered impregnable. A powerful detachment, led by Lord Percy, dropped down to the castle in the afternoon, to rendezvous there, and thence cross over to Dorchester point, and storm the heights. A heavy gale (a “dreadful storm,” it is called, in the British account) scattered the barges, and prevented the embarkation of the troops. This delay gave the Americans time to perfect their works, barrels filled with earth were placed round the heights, an *abattis* of trees disposed around the foot of the hill, a reinforcement of two thousand men ordered to the support of General Thomas, and every preparation made for a decisive conflict.*

It was soon understood that the royal commander, not deeming it safe to take the risk of an engagement, had determined to evacuate Boston. To prevent the destruction of the town, Washington was willing that they should leave it unmolested. Finding, however, after some days, that no apparent movement was made for this purpose, he determined without further delay to occupy Nook hill and the other elevations fronting and commanding the town. This produced the desired effect, and General Howe was at length compelled to acknowledge the inability of a powerful land and naval force, under veteran

* Heath's Memoirs, p. 40.

leaders, to maintain themselves against untried levies whom they were accustomed to regard with contempt, led by officers from whom they affected even to withhold the usual titles of military command. He was obliged to acquiesce in an engagement with the Selectmen of Boston, tacitly sanctioned by "Mr. Washington," that his army should be allowed to embark without being fired upon, on condition that they would not burn the town.*

Thus, on the 17th of March, 1776, an effective force of many thousand men evacuated the town, and with a powerful fleet and a numerous train of transports, sailed for Halifax. Putnam, with a detachment of the American army, took possession of Boston. The beloved commander himself made his entry into the town the following day, and the first great act of the drama of the Revolution was brought to a triumphant close, on that old Dorchester Neck which, before the foundation of Boston, our fathers selected as a place for settlement.

This event diffused joy throughout the Union, and contributed materially to prepare the public mind for that momentous political measure, of which we this day commemorate the seventy-ninth anniversary. That civil government, however human infirmities mingle in its organization, is, in its ultimate principles, a Divine ordinance, will be doubted by no one who believes in an overruling Providence. That every people has a right to interpret for itself the will of Providence, in reference to the form of gov-

* Newell's Journal, Mass. Hist. Collections, Fourth Series, Vol. I., 272.

ernment best suited to its condition, subject to no external human responsibility, is equally certain, and is the doctrine which lies at the basis of the Declaration of Independence. But what makes a People,—what constitutes this august community, to which we give that name; how many persons—how few; bound to each other by what antecedent ties of physical descent, of common language, of local proximity, of previous political connection? This is a great question, to which no answer, that I know, has yet been given; to which, in general terms, perhaps, none can be given. Physiologists have not yet found the seat of animal life,—far less of the rational intellect or spiritual essence of the individual Man. Who can wonder that it should be still farther beyond our ability to define the mysterious laws which,—out of the physical instincts of our nature, the inexplicable attractions of kindred and tongue, the persuasions of reason, the social sympathies, the accidents as we call them of birth, the wanderings of nations in the dark ages of the past, the confederacies of peace, the ravages of war, employed by the all-fashioning hand of time, which moulds every thing human according to the eternal types in the divine mind,—work out, in the lapse of centuries, with more than Promethean skill, that wondrous creation which we call A PEOPLE!

The Declaration of Independence which we celebrate to-day, attempted no definition of these mysterious agencies; it assumed their result. It assumed that the late Colonies of England were a People, and entitled to all the rights implied in the name.

“When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one People to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and nature’s God entitle them, a decent respect for the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes that impel them to the separation.” Such is the dignified and solemn commencement of the great instrument by which, seventy-nine years ago, with the hearty concurrence of the citizens of Dorchester, the Continental Congress of America, renouncing allegiance to the British government, asserted the Independence of these United States.* They left,—they were com-

* The Council of Massachusetts directed (July 17th, 1776) that a copy of the Declaration should be sent to each minister of every denomination in the State, to be read to his congregation, and then handed to the town clerks, “who are required to record the same in their respective town or district books, there to remain as a perpetual memorial thereof.” It is found in Dorchester Records III., p. 461—5.

It is a matter of interest to compare the Declaration of the Independence of the United States of America, of the 4th July, 1776, with that of the States General of the United Provinces of Holland, of the 26th of July, 1581, by which they asserted their independence of the Spanish Crown. The two Declarations are necessarily altogether different in their details, but as the occasions which produced them are alike, so there is a similarity in their structure, and in the mode of treating the subject, which I hardly think can be mere coincidence. I have a black letter copy of the original in Dutch, printed at Leyden by the sworn Printer of the State of Holland, in 1581, with this title:—*Placcaet vande Staten generael vande ghevnieerde Nederlanden: byden welcken, midts den redenen in’t lange in’t selfde begrepen, men verclaert den Coninck van Spaegnen vervallen vande Ouerheyt ende Heerschappije van dese voors. Nederlanden, ende verbiet sijnen naem ende zeghel inde selue Landen meer te ghebruycken, &c.* A translation is contained in Lord Somers’s Tracts, Vol. I., p. 323, Sir Walter Scott’s Edition.

pelled to leave it to the bloody arbitrament of war, whether they were rebellious colonies to be lawfully reduced by force, or a sovereign people rightfully struggling to be free.

Happy for humanity would it be, if this question could find a peaceful and practical solution. It will, in the coming centuries, perhaps in times near at hand, be a frequently recurring question. Vast colonial dependencies exist in various parts of the world, subject to the powers of Western Europe. Such is the case with half the continent of North America; with all the West India Islands, with a single exception; with an immense region of southern Africa; with the vast territory of India, and with most of the islands of the Indian Archipelago; and with the whole Australian world. There is no reason to doubt that, in the lapse of time, these colonial dependencies will grow up in population, in wealth, in intelligence, and in all the elements of political life, to the stature of a perfect State. How devoutly is it to be wished that principles of public law should be established, regulating the transition of colonies into a condition of Independence, by great constitutional compacts, and not through the gates of bloody revolution!

There is another momentous question which is left undecided in the great declaration; and that is, whether all the inhabitants of British America in their united capacity, and in that alone, formed the "one People" which asserted their independence (which was perhaps the opinion generally entertained by the statesmen of 1776), or whether the inhabi-

tants of the several colonies were each a people who, if it had pleased them, could each have declared its separate independence (as some appear afterwards to have held and to hold);—this was a question not discussed this day seventy-nine years ago. That was a period of high patriotic excitement, of fervid sentiment, of impulsive effort against an impending danger. The metaphysics of state are an afterthought of prosperous and speculative times. But, however these questions may be decided, whatever foundation there may be for the opinion that the inhabitants of each State in the Union are entitled to the name and rights of an independent people; it may be safely affirmed that they cannot at one and the same time be the people of two different States or Territories; although the contrary doctrine seems to prevail to some extent, I trust not widely, in the West, where it has lately been maintained, by the sharp logic of the revolver and the Bowie-knife, that the people of Missouri are the people of Kansas!

It would have been a pleasing task, fellow citizens, had time permitted it, to pursue this rapid glance at the fortunes of our native town, through the period which has elapsed from the Declaration of Independence to the present time. Such a glance would have exhibited, at least since the commencement of this century, a picture of steady growth and almost uninterrupted prosperity, of which few brighter examples can be found in the Commonwealth. It is within this period that my own family associations with Dorchester, and my personal recollections, fall. I seem even now to hear the voice of the same

ancient bell which cheered us this morning with its festal peal, as fifty-five years ago it called together the citizens of Dorchester to the meeting-house on yonder hill, to listen to the eulogy on Washington from the lips of one, whom I was called too soon to deplore; and who is not to be named by me, after the lapse of so many years, but with tenderness and veneration.* In this period, under the influence of the principles of solid national growth which gave character to the earliest settlements of Massachusetts, and of which, thank heaven, the force is not yet expended, of that love of liberty which prompted the Declaration of Independence, and of that spirit of fraternal affection which produced the last great fruit of the revolution, —the union of the States under a constitution of confederated republican government,—our country has increased in population, in wealth, in strength, in all that benefits or adorns the societies of men, till it stands the admiration of the world. O fortunatos nimium, sua si bona norint! Happy, too happy, did we but know our blessings. Perfection belongs to nothing human. Times of trial have come upon the country, at different periods; wars abroad and dissensions at home,—alarming junctures of affairs;—and these vicissitudes must be anticipated in time to come as they have happened in time past. But hitherto an unfailing good Providence has carried us through the trials, without which this world would come too near perfection. Let us, my

* A eulogy on Washington was, at the request of the citizens of Dorchester, delivered on the 22d February, 1800, by my honored father, Oliver Everett, who died 19th December, 1802.

fellow citizens, on this anniversary of the nation's birth, rescue one day from the cruel dominion of those passions which fill us with bitterness toward each other, and unite in the hope, that we shall still be sustained by the same Almighty arm which bore our fathers over the waters,—supported them under the hardships of the first settlement,—conducted them through the difficulties of the colonial period,—protected them through the dangers of the revolutionary struggle,—and has guided their career as an independent State.

Thus, my friends, in the neighborhood of the spot where, in my early childhood, I acquired the first elements of learning at one of those public schools, which are the glory and strength of New England, I have spoken to you imperfectly of the appropriate topics of the day. Retired from public life, without the expectation or the wish to return to it, but the contrary,—grateful for the numerous marks of public confidence which I have received, and which I feel to be beyond my merits,—respecting the convictions of those from whom I have at any time differed, and asking the same justice for my own,—I confess, fellow citizens, that few things would better please me than to find a quiet retreat in my native town, where I might pass the rest of my humble career in the serious studies and tranquil pursuits which befit the decline of life, till the same old bell should announce that the chequered scene is over, and the weary is at rest.