

know not what they do in believing that we worship images, that we imbrued our hands in the massacre of St. Bartholomew. Let the men who write these things look at their own hands; there is blood enough upon them. But the English people do not believe these things now; they are passed away. And there has come in the place of these impostures a desire after truth—"Only let me find it;" a craving after unity—"Can we never make an end of these divisions?" a thirsting for the presence of Jesus Christ upon the altar—"Where can I find him?" And what are all these aspirations? They are the evidences of the good odor of life unto life.

And now, dear brethren, in the midst of all the lordly triumph of the world, of all that which no doubt we shall hear to-morrow, be of good heart. As they said to the apostles so they will say to us: "If this be triumph, what can be defeat? We do not quarrel if you are content with these victories." Overhead there is a throne, and round about it are those whom no man can number; the powers and prerogatives of him who sits upon that throne are working mightily in the world. There is one who sits above the water-flood, with all its confusions, whose voice penetrates through all the jangling contradictions of men. He is bringing to its fulfilment the purpose which from all eternity he has predestined. He knows his own by number and by name, and he will gather them out as the shepherd gathers his flock, and he will separate the goats from the sheep. He will reign until the whole of that work is accomplished. When it is done, and when the last of his elect has been gathered in, and the last of his redeemed has been made perfect, then he will manifest himself to all men, and the world shall then know that he has triumphed always and in every place.

SERGEANT PRENTISS



ARGENT SMITH PRENTISS, an American orator and politician, was born at Portland, Me., Sept. 30, 1808, and died at Longwood, near Natchez, Miss., July 1, 1850. He was educated at Bowdoin College, studied law for a time, and after an interval spent as private tutor at Natchez, he was admitted to the Bar in 1829. He removed to Vicksburg in 1832, entered the Mississippi legislature in 1835, and three years later entered Congress. He did not engage much in the debates in the House, but on one occasion delivered a strong speech against the sub-treasury bill. He stoutly opposed the repudiation of the State debt, and, believing the State of Mississippi dishonored by its course in respect to repudiation, removed to New Orleans in 1845. There part of the last three years of his life was spent. Prentiss's forensic and other orations were greatly praised by his contemporaries, especially by Everett and Webster. One of his most famed speeches was a defence of his friend, Judge Wilkinson, who had been charged with murder. When addressing large masses of people he spoke with great impetuosity and appeared as if borne away on the stream of his own eloquence. In pleading at the Bar, he displayed perfect mastery of the subject in hand as well as great readiness and command of resource. The following address is a good exemplification of his style as an orator.

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THIS is a day dear to the sons of New England, and ever held by them in sacred remembrance. On this day from every quarter of the globe they gather in spirit around the Rock of Plymouth and hang upon the urns of their Pilgrim Fathers the garlands of filial gratitude and affection.

We have assembled for the purpose of participating in this honorable duty; of performing this pious pilgrimage. To-day we will visit that memorable spot. We will gaze upon the place where a feeble band of persecuted exiles founded a mighty nation; and our hearts will exult with proud gratification as we remember that on that barren shore our an-

cestors planted not only empire but freedom. We will meditate upon their toils, their sufferings, and their virtues, and to-morrow return to our daily avocations with minds refreshed and improved by the contemplation of their high principles and noble purposes.

The human mind cannot be contented with the present. It is ever journeying through the trodden regions of the past or making adventurous excursions into the mysterious realms of the future. He who lives only in the present is but a brute, and has not attained the human dignity.

Of the future but little is known; clouds and darkness rest upon it; we yearn to become acquainted with its hidden secrets; we stretch out our arms toward its shadowy inhabitants; we invoke our posterity, but they answer us not. We wander in its dim precincts till reason becomes confused and at last start back in fear, like mariners who have entered an unknown ocean, of whose winds, tides, currents, and quicksands they are wholly ignorant.

Then it is we turn for relief to the past, that mighty reservoir of men and things. There we have something tangible to which our sympathies can attach; upon which we can lean for support; from whence we can gather knowledge and learn wisdom. There we are introduced into nature's vast laboratory and witness here elemental labors. We mark with interest the changes in continents and oceans by which she has notched the centuries.

But our attention is still more deeply aroused by the great moral events which have controlled the fortunes of those who have preceded us and still influence our own. With curious wonder we gaze down the long isles of the past upon the generations that are gone. We behold as in a magic glass men in form and feature like ourselves, actuated by the same

motives; urged by the same passions, busily engaged in shaping out both their own destinies and ours. We approach them and they refuse not our invocation. We hold converse with the wise philosophers, the sage legislators, and divine poets. We enter the tent of the general and partake of his most secret counsels. We go forth with him to the battlefield and behold him place his glittering squadrons; then we listen with a pleasing fear to the trumpet and the drum, or the still more terrible music of the booming cannon and the clashing arms. But most of all among the innumerable multitudes who peopled the past, we seek our own ancestors, drawn towards them by an irresistible sympathy.

Indeed, they were our other selves. With reverent solicitude we examine into their character and actions, and as we find them worthy or unworthy our hearts swell with pride, or our cheeks glow with shame. We search with avidity for the most trival circumstances in their history and eagerly treasure up every memento of their fortunes. The instincts of our nature bind us indissolubly to them and link our fates with theirs. Men cannot live without a past; it is as essential to them as a future. Into its vast confines we will journey to-day and converse with our Pilgrim Fathers. We will speak to them and they shall answer us.

Two centuries and a quarter ago a little tempest-tossed, weather-beaten bark, barely escaped from the jaws of the wild Atlantic, landed upon the bleakest shore of New England. From her deck disembarked a hundred and one care-worn exiles.

To the casual observer no event could seem more insignificant. The contemptuous eye of the world scarcely deigned to notice it. Yet the famous vessel that bore Caesar and his fortunes carried but an ignoble freight compared with that

of the "Mayflower." Her little band of Pilgrims brought with them neither wealth nor power, but the principles of civil and religious freedom. They planted them for the first time in the western Continent. They cherished, cultivated, and developed them to a full and luxuriant maturity; and then furnished them to their posterity as the only sure and permanent foundations for a free government.

Upon those foundations rests the fabric of our great republic; upon those principles depends the career of human liberty. Little did the miserable pedant and bigot who then wielded the sceptre of Great Britain imagine that from this feeble settlement of persecuted and despised Puritans in a century and a half would arise a nation capable of coping with his own mighty empire in arts and arms.

It is not my purpose to enter into the history of the Pilgrims; to recount the bitter persecutions and ignominious sufferings which drove them from England; to tell of the eleven years of peace and quiet spent in Holland under their beloved and venerated pastor; nor to describe the devoted patriotism which prompted them to plant a colony in some distant land where they could remain citizens of their native country and at the same time be removed from its oppressions; where they could enjoy liberty without violating allegiance. Neither shall I speak of the perils of their adventurous voyage; of the hardships of their early settlement; of the famine which prostrated and the pestilence which consumed them.

With all these things you are familiar, both from the page of history and from the lips of tradition. On occasions similar to this the ablest and most honored sons of New England have been accustomed to tell with touching eloquence the story of their sufferings, their fortitude, their persever-

ance, and their success. With pious care they have gathered and preserved the scattered memorials of those early days, and the names of Carver, Bradford, Winslow, Standish, and their noble companions, have long since become with us venerated household words.

There were, however, some traits that distinguished the enterprise of the Pilgrims from all others, and which are well worthy of continued remembrance. In founding their colony they sought neither wealth nor conquest, but only peace and freedom. They asked but for a region where they could make their own laws and worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences.

From the moment they touched the shore they labored with orderly, systematic, and persevering industry. They cultivated without a murmur, a poor and ungrateful soil, which even now yields but a stubborn obedience to the dominion of the plough. They made no search for gold nor tortured the miserable savages to wring from them the discovery of imaginary mines. Though landed by a treacherous pilot upon a barren and inhospitable coast, they sought neither richer fields nor a more genial climate. They found liberty and for the rest it mattered little. For more than eleven years they had meditated upon their enterprise, and it was no small matter could turn them from its completion. On the spot where first they rested from their wanderings with stern and high resolve, they built their little city and founded their young republic. There honesty, industry, knowledge and piety grew up together in happy union. There, in patriarchal simplicity and republican equality the Pilgrim fathers and mothers passed their honorable days, leaving to their posterity the invaluable legacy of their principles and example.

How proudly can we compare their conduct with that of the adventures of other nations who preceded them. How did the Spaniard colonize? Let Mexico, Peru, and Hispaniola answer. He followed in the train of the great discoverer like a devouring pestilence. His cry was gold! gold!! gold!!! Never in the history of the world had the *sacra fames auri*¹ exhibited itself with such fearful intensity. His imagination maddened with visions of sudden and boundless wealth, clad in mail, he leaped upon the New World an armed robber. In greedy haste he grasped the sparkling sand, then cast it down with curses when he found the glittering grains were not of gold.

Pitiless as the bloodhound by his side he plunged into the primeval forests, crossed rivers, lakes, and mountains, and penetrated to the very heart of the continent. No region, however rich in soil, delicious in climate, or luxuriant in production could tempt his stay. In vain the soft breeze of the tropics, laden with aromatic fragrance, wooed him to rest; in vain the smiling valleys, covered with spontaneous fruits and flowers, invited him to peaceful quiet. His search was still for gold; the accursed hunger could not be appeased. The simple natives gazed upon him in superstitious wonder and worshipped him as a god; and he proved to them a god, but an infernal one—terrible, cruel, and remorseless. With bloody hands he tore the ornaments from their persons and the shrines from their altars; he tortured them to discover hidden treasure, and slew them that he might search, even in their wretched throats, for concealed gold. Well might the miserable Indians imagine that a race of evil deities had come among them, more bloody and relentless than those who presided over their own sanguinary rites.

¹Cursed thirst for gold.

Now let us turn to the Pilgrims. They too were tempted; and had they yielded to the temptation how different might have been the destinies of this continent—how different must have been our own! Previous to their undertaking the Old World was filled with strange and wonderful accounts of the new. The unbounded wealth, drawn by the Spaniards from Mexico and South America, seemed to afford rational support for the wildest assertions. Each succeeding adventurer returning from his voyage added to the Arabian tales a still more extravagant story.

At length Sir Walter Raleigh, the most accomplished and distinguished of all those bold voyagers, announced to the world his discovery of the province of Guiana and its magnificent capital, the far-famed city of El Dorado. We smile now at his account of the "great and golden city," and "the mighty, rich, and beautiful empire." We can hardly imagine that any one could have believed for a moment in their existence. At that day, however, the whole matter was received with the most implicit faith. Sir Walter professed to have explored the country, and thus glowingly describes it from his own observation:

"I never saw a more beautiful country nor more lively prospects; hills so raised here and there over the valleys—the river winding into divers branches—the plains adjoining, without bush or stubble—all fair green grass—the deer crossing in every path—the birds, towards the evening, singing on every tree with a thousand several tunes—the air fresh, with a gentle easterly wind: and every stone that we stopped to take up promised either gold or silver by its complexion. For health, good air, pleasure, and riches, I am resolved it cannot be equalled by any region either in the east or west."

The Pilgrims were urged in leaving Holland to seek this charming country and plant their colony among its Arcadian

bowers. Well might the poor wanderers cast a longing glance towards its happy valleys, which seemed to invite to pious contemplation and peaceful labor. Well might the green grass, the pleasant groves, the tame deer, and the singing birds allure them to that smiling land beneath the equinoctial line. But while they doubted not the existence of this wondrous region they resisted its tempting charms. They had resolved to vindicate at the same time their patriotism and their principles—to add dominion to their native land, and to demonstrate to the world the practicability of civil and religious liberty. After full discussion and mature deliberation they determined that their great objects could be best accomplished by a settlement on some portion of the northern continent, which would hold out no temptation to cupidity—no inducement to persecution. Putting aside, then, all considerations of wealth and ease they addressed themselves with high resolution to the accomplishment of their noble purpose. In the language of the historian, “trusting to God and themselves,” they embarked upon their perilous enterprise.

As I said before, I shall not accompany them on their adventurous voyage. On the 22d day of December, 1620, according to our present computation, their footsteps pressed the famous rock which has ever since remained sacred to their venerated memory. Poets, painters, and orators have tasked their powers to do justice to this great scene. Indeed, it is full of moral grandeur; nothing can be more beautiful, more pathetic, or more sublime.

Behold the Pilgrims as they stood on that cold December day—stern men, gentle women, and feeble children—all uniting in singing a hymn of cheerful thanksgiving to the good God who had conducted them safely across the mighty deep, and permitted them to land upon that sterile shore. See how

their upturned faces glow with a pious confidence which the sharp winter winds cannot chill, nor the gloomy forest shadows darken:

“Not as the conqueror comes,
They, the true-hearted came;
Not with the roll of the stirring drums,
Or the trumpet that sings of fame;
Not as the flying come,
In silence and in fear—
They shook the depths of the desert gloom
With their hymns of lofty cheer.”

Noble and pious band! your holy confidence was not in vain: your “hymns of lofty cheer” find echo still in the hearts of grateful millions. Your descendants, when pressed by adversity, or when addressing themselves to some high action, turn to the “Landing of the Pilgrims,” and find heart for any fate—strength for any enterprise.

How simple, yet how instructive, are the annals of this little settlement. In the cabin of the “Mayflower” they settled a general form of government, upon the principles of a pure democracy. In 1636 they published a declaration of rights and established a body of laws. The first fundamental article was in these words: “That no act, imposition, law or ordinance be made, or imposed upon us, at present or to come, but such as has been or shall be enacted by the consent of the body of freemen or associates, or their representatives legally assembled,” etc.

Here we find advanced the whole principle of the Revolution—the whole doctrine of our republican institutions. Our fathers, a hundred years before the Revolution, tested successfully, as far as they were concerned, the principle of self-government, and solved the problem whether law and order can co-exist with liberty. But let us not forget that they were wise and good men who made the noble experiment, and

that it may yet fail in our hands unless we imitate their patriotism and virtues.

There are some who find fault with the character of the Pilgrims—who love not the simplicity of their manners nor the austerity of their lives. They were men and of course imperfect; but the world may well be challenged to point out in the whole course of history men of purer purpose or braver action—men who have exercised a more beneficial influence upon the destinies of the human race, or left behind them more enduring memorials of their existence.

At all events it is not for the sons of New England to search for the faults of their ancestors. We gaze with profound veneration upon their awful shades; we feel a grateful pride in the country they colonized, in the institutions they founded, in the example they bequeathed. We exult in our birthplace and in our lineage.

Who would not rather be of the Pilgrim stock than claim descent from the proudest Norman that ever planted his robber blood in the halls of the Saxon, or the noblest paladin that quaffed wine at the table of Charlemagne? Well may we be proud of our native land, and turn with fond affection to its rocky shores.

The spirit of the Pilgrims still pervades it, and directs its fortunes. Behold the thousand temples of the Most High that nestle in its happy valleys and crown its swelling hills. See how their glittering spires pierce the blue sky, and seem like so many celestial conductors, ready to avert the lightning of an angry heaven. The piety of the Pilgrim patriarchs is not yet extinct, nor have the sons forgotten the God of their fathers.

Behold yon simple building near the crossing of the village road! It is small and of rude construction, but stands

in a pleasant and quiet spot. A magnificent old elm spreads its broad arms above and seems to lean towards it, as a strong man bends to shelter and protect a child. A brook runs through the meadow near, and hard by there is an orchard—but the trees have suffered much and bear no fruit except upon the most remote and inaccessible branches. From within its walls comes a busy hum, such as you may hear in a disturbed bee-hive.

Now peep through yonder window and you will see a hundred children with rosy cheeks, mischievous eyes, and demure faces, all engaged or pretending to be so, in their little lessons. It is the public school—the free, the common school—provided by law: open to all: claimed from the community as a right, not accepted as a bounty.

Here the children of the rich and poor, high and low, meet upon perfect equality and commence under the same auspices the race of life. Here the sustenance of the mind is served up to all alike, as the Spartans served their food upon the public table. Here young Ambition climbs his little ladder, and boyish Genius plumes his half-fledged wing. From among these laughing children will go forth the men who are to control the destinies of their age and country; the statesman whose wisdom is to guide the Senate—the poet who will take captive the hearts of the people and bind them together with immortal song—the philosopher who, boldly seizing upon the elements themselves, will compel them to his wishes and through new combinations of their primal laws, by some great discovery revolutionize both art and science.

The common village school is New England's fairest boast—the brightest jewel that adorns her brow. The principle that society is bound to provide for its members' education as well as protection, so that none need be ignorant

except from choice, is the most important that belongs to modern philosophy. It is essential to a republican government. Universal education is not only the best and surest, but the only sure foundation for free institutions. True liberty is the child of knowledge; she pines away and dies in the arms of ignorance.

Honor, then, to the early fathers of New England, from whom came the spirit which has built a schoolhouse by every sparkling fountain and bids all come as freely to the one as to the other. All honor, too, to this noble city, who has not disdained to follow the example of her northern sisters, but has wisely determined that the intellectual thirst of her children deserves as much attention as their physical, and that it is as much her duty to provide the means of assuaging the one as of quenching the other.

But the spirit of the Pilgrims survives, not only in the knowledge and piety of their sons, but most of all in their indefatigable enterprise and indomitable perseverance.

They have wrestled with nature till they have prevailed against her and compelled her reluctantly to reverse her own laws. The sterile soil has become productive under their sagacious culture, and the barren rock, astonished, finds itself covered with luxuriant and unaccustomed verdure.

Upon the banks of every river they build temples to industry and stop the squanderings of the spendthrift waters. They bind the naiades of the brawling stream. They drive the dryades from their accustomed haunts and force them to desert each favorite grove; for upon river, creek, and bay they are busy transforming the crude forest into stanch and gallant vessels. From every inlet or indenture along the rocky shore swim forth these ocean birds—born in the wild-wood, fledged upon the wave. Behold how they spread

their white pinions to the favoring breeze, and wing their flight to every quarter of the globe—the carrier-pigeons of the world!

It is upon the unstable element the sons of New England have achieved their greatest triumphs. Their adventurous prows vex the waters of every sea. Bold and restless as the old northern vikings, they go forth to seek their fortunes in the mighty deep. The ocean is their pasture and over its wide prairies they follow the monstrous herds that feed upon its azure fields. As the hunter casts his lasso upon the wild horse, so they throw their lines upon the tumbling whale. They “draw out Leviathan with a hook.” They “fill his skin with barbed irons,” and in spite of his terrible strength they “part him among the merchants.” To them there are no pillars of Hercules. They seek with avidity new regions, and fear not to be “the first that ever burst” into unknown seas. Had they been the companions of Columbus, the great mariner would not have been urged to return, though he had sailed westward to his dying day.

Glorious New England! thou art still true to thy ancient fame and worthy of thy ancestral honors. We, thy children, have assembled in this far-distant land to celebrate thy birthday. A thousand fond associations throng upon us, roused by the spirit of the hour. On thy pleasant valleys rest, like sweet dews of morning, the gentle recollections of our early life; around thy hills and mountains cling, like gathering mists, the mighty memories of the Revolution; and far away in the horizon of thy past gleam, like thine own Northern Lights, the awful virtues of our Pilgrim sires! But while we devote this day to the remembrance of our native land, we forget not that in which our happy lot is cast. We exult in the reflection that though we count by thousands the miles

which separate us from our birthplace, still our country is the same. We are no exiles meeting upon the banks of a foreign river to swell its waters with our homesick tears, Here floats the same banner which rustled above our boyish heads, except that its mighty folds are wider and its glittering stars increased in number.

The sons of New England are found in every State of the broad Republic. In the East, the South, and the unbounded West, their blood mingles freely with every kindred current. We have but changed our chamber in the paternal mansion; in all its rooms we are at home, and all who inhabit it are our brothers. To us the Union has but one domestic hearth; its household gods are all the same. Upon us then peculiarly devolves the duty of feeding the fires upon that kindly hearth; of guarding with pious care those sacred household gods.

We cannot do with less than the whole Union; to us it admits of no division. In the veins of our children flows northern and southern blood; how shall it be separated; who shall put asunder the best affections of the heart, the noblest instincts of our nature? We love the land of our adoption, so do we that of our birth. Let us ever be true to both; and always exert ourselves in maintaining the unity of our country, the integrity of the Republic.

Accursed, then, be the hand put forth to loosen the golden cord of Union; thrice accursed the traitorous lips, whether of northern fanatic or southern demagogue, which shall propose its severance. But no! the Union cannot be dissolved; its fortunes are too brilliant to be marred; its destinies too powerful to be resisted. Here will be their greatest triumph, their most mighty development. And when, a century hence, this crescent city shall have filled her golden horns;

when, within her broad-armed port shall be gathered the products of the industry of a hundred millions of freemen; when galleries of art and halls of learning shall have made classic this mart of trade; then may the sons of the Pilgrims, still wandering from the bleak hills of the north, stand upon the banks of the great river, and exclaim with mingled pride and wonder, Lo! this is our country; when did the world ever witness so rich and magnificent a city—so great and glorious a Republic!