

Address delivered by James P.B. Hyndman from Station WHAP, New York City, on Saturday, November 20, and Monday, November 22, 1926, on Americanism. Subject:

THE PILGRIM THANKSGIVING

Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands.

Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

Know ye that the LORD he is God: *it is* he that hath made us and not we ourselves; *we* are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, *and* into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him *and* bless his name.

For the LORD *is* good: his mercy *is* everlasting; and his truth *endureth* to all generations.

(Psalm 100)

Comeliness and grace are independent of matter. Being possesses its qualities before they are perceived humanly. Beauty is a thing of life, which dwells forever in the eternal Mind and reflects the charts of His goodness in expression, form, outline, and color. It is Love which paints the petal with myriad hues, glances in the warm sunbeam, arches the cloud with the bow of beauty, blazons the night with starry gems, and covers the earth with loveliness. (*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, 247:19-27 by Mary Baker Eddy)

The first the Pilgrims planted their feet on Plymouth Rock, frozen ritual and creed should forever have melted away in the fire of love which came down from heaven. The Pilgrims came to establish a nation in true freedom, in the rights of conscience. (*Miscellaneous Writings*, p. 176 by Mary Baker Eddy)

As we unfold in spiritual understanding we redeem our original heritage, — strength, health, love, joy, dominion over the ills to which flesh is heir, — a peace that cannot be described in human language, which only the soul-inspired can realize, and a love for God and man which enables us to follow Christ in his ministry of selfless service to awaken humanity to man's divine birthright, — sonship with God. The acceptance of the spiritual fact that we possess "the earth . . . and the fulness thereof" because it is the Lord's; that error, sin and its phenomena, — sickness, sorrow, and death, are produced by

the carnal mind and must be driven out of human experience, because they are no part of God's universe; and the conviction that the true man and the spiritual universe will be revealed, give a fearless wing on which to soar to spiritual heights, and a firm foundation (the rock, Christ) upon which to stand.

Oh! the wisdom and love of our Christly leader, Mary Baker Eddy, Oh! the irresistible spiritual power that Love is reflecting to the world through her in this age, as she draws all who have "oil in their lamps," into the immortal atmosphere of God and His Christ, She *lives*, and is in our midst.
(*Reminiscences, Sermons and Correspondence* by Augusta E. Stetson, C, S, D. pgs. 996 & 1013)

The great Pilgrim story, the adventure of the Pilgrim Fathers, is one of the chief causes of gratitude and thanksgiving which the Anglo-Saxon peoples, especially those of America, possess. The sweet and pure spirit of the Pilgrims, their quenchless devotion to God, and to the highest ideals of Christ's Christianity; their determination to attain their high goal, to find "Freedom to worship God", at all cost; their marvellous spiritual vision, and the remarkable intuition and inspiration which was theirs, for self-government, according to the highest spiritual law of God; their pioneer spirit, in braving the dangers of an angry sea and the terrors of an unknown vast wilderness, and in defending themselves against hostile savages, while maintaining their service to and worship of God; this mighty spirit of the Pilgrims laid the foundation of the American Federal Union. This Pilgrim tradition can never be effaced from the American consciousness; and it is destined to melt away frozen ritual and creed in the fire of love, which cometh down from heaven, to paraphrase Mrs. Eddy's words.

There is no heritage in the history of America which so reaches the very heart of the American people, forever welling up in a ceaseless flow of spiritual warmth and emotion, as the story of the Pilgrim Fathers. A verse from Mrs. Hernan's beautiful hymn, The Pilgrim Fathers, breathes their spirit:

Not as the flying come,
In silence and in fear;
They shook the depths of the forest's gloom
With their hymns of lofty cheer.
Amid the storm they sang,
And the stars heard, and the sea;
And the sounding aisles of the deep woods rang
To the anthem of the free!

Today I copied a few lines from an account of the first Thanksgiving in New England, from a small book published in the middle of the last century, found in the New York Public Library. The spirit of it so truly breathes the spirit of this essentially American institution of Thanksgiving, that I will read these lines to you. The sermon which was preached on that occasion, was delivered by a lay member of the Pilgrim company whose name was Robert Cushman. It was delivered on December 11,

1621, at Plymouth, New England.

Our harvest being gotten in, our Governor sent four men on fowling, so that we might in a special manner rejoice together, after we had gathered the fruit of our labors. At which time, among other things, we exercised our arms, many of the Indians coming amongst us, and among the rest, their greatest king, Massasoit, with some ninety men, whom for three days we entertained and feasted, the Indians contributing their share; and although it be not always so plentiful with us as it was at this time, yet, by the goodness of God we are free from want, and give thanks for our plenty.

The sermon which accompanied this love feast, and thanksgiving to God, was on the subject of unselfish service to others, and the danger of self-love. The text was taken from I Corinthians 10:21: "Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth." Here we must interpret the word "wealth" according to its original, pure Anglo-Saxon meaning, "weal-th" or the weal of others. The sturdy and God-fearing Puritan lay-preacher, exhorted his hearers not to wait to do others service, until they called for brotherly help or cooperation; we must stand at the gate, and wait and look for an opportunity to help others, as Christ has helped us. A man, said this Puritan preacher, must help himself, for this is right; but he will do this naturally. But he must go out of his way to help another, and thus not only avoid the deadening sin of self-love, but build himself up spiritually, in serving God, loving Christ, and helping his fellowmen.

The actual story of the Mayflower voyage, and of the experiences of the little band of Pilgrims prior to their crossing the Atlantic, in Scrooby, England, and in Leyden, Holland, is sufficiently familiar to all and I shall not take the time to rehearse it here. The touching address of Pastor Robinson, in bidding farewell to his flock, is one of the masterpieces of English spiritual writing. The story of Myles Standish, and John Alden and Priscilla Mullins, on which theme Longfellow wrote his immortal poem, "The Courtship of Myles Standish" will live as long as the English language, and makes its strong appeal because of the nobility of character of these three Pilgrims.

It is both interesting and spiritually significant here to note, that Augusta E. Stetson, C.S.D. whom Mary Baker Eddy, the discoverer and founder of Christian Science, called her "war-horse", is a direct descendant of Myles Standish, and of John Alden and Priscilla Mullins. This great American patriot and spiritual fighter, Augusta E. Stetson, like the beloved disciple of old, (John) stands as a sentinel, awaiting herself, and calling upon all who have spiritual vision, to witness with her, the second appearing of the Christ, and the actual dawn of the new heaven and the new earth, wherein Christ himself shall reign, and needs no vicar. Then sorrow and sighing shall flee away, and there shall be no more pain, neither sorrow, neither any more death, for the former things have passed away. (Revelation 21)

A beautiful statue of Myles Standish was erected to the memory of that hero,

some years ago, in Duxbury, Massachusetts, the cost of which, if I remember rightly, was paid by the legislature of Massachusetts. The statue was damaged by lightning, but has since been repaired. It stands on the highest prominence, overlooking Plymouth Bay. A beautiful statue, entitled The Pilgrim Maiden, was unveiled in Plymouth in 1925, and a statue to the Pilgrims' Indian friend, Massasoit, stands on the water front, not far from the Rock on which the Pilgrims first set foot.

The beauty of the Pilgrim story, its richness of spiritual wealth, its inspiration to high idealism and to ceaseless effort in attaining it, its eternal example of a courage wholly devoid of fear born of that spirit which, trusting God, felled forests, fought wild beasts, founded the greatest Republic ever known upon the earth, and established, for the first time in the history of mankind, the freedom to worship God according to the way of Christ, Truth — the beauty, power and strength of this Pilgrim story grow greater with each recurring year. The spirit of the Pilgrim Puritans is well exemplified and illustrated in the following paragraph, taken from their writings, as quoted in a book entitled "The Puritans", by the Reverend J, Gregory:

We believe the Word of God, contained in the Old and New Testaments, to be a perfect rule of life and manners; that it ought to be read and known by all people; and that the authority of it exceeds all authority, not of the pope only, but of the Church also, and of Councils, Fathers, men and angels.

We deem, as a tyrannous yoke, whatsoever men have set up of their own invention, to make articles of faith, and a binding of men's consciences, by their laws and institutions. (From the Confession of Faith, signed by those taking part in the Propesyings, 1571).

Over against this I quote from an article written by a Roman Catholic, Theodore Maynard, which appeared in the Jesuit organ, "America", January 24, 1925:

The experiment of the Pilgrim Fathers on the New England coast has alone touched the imagination of the people. The Puritan settlements constitute the only exhibition of religion intimately permeating the whole life of the Community that America is conscious of; and the Puritan tradition, remains unbroken. It is this tradition that colors America and that is because of the very vagueness that characterizes it. It is so insidious it would be highly vulnerable to attack . . . There could hardly be a moment more favorable to Roman Catholic action.

Here we have the declaration of war between popery and American Protestantism, as given to us by the Pilgrim Fathers, and extended, expanded, and brought to its full perfection, in Christian Science today. The battle is the Battle of Armageddon, and it is between Christ and the dragon, which is the Pope of Rome and Roman Catholicism with its Jesuitism and Jesuits. Today the spirit of the Pilgrim Fathers is a

living force in America, and its authoritative mandate is, that every Roman Catholic and Jesuit, and all Roman Catholicism, must depart from America, and must remain out of America forever. Christ is to appear, the second time, in America, the Christ whom the Pilgrims sought these shores in order to follow freely, without hindrance from the juggernaut of Romanism and popery and Jesuitism.

The Pilgrims sang their songs of praise and thanksgiving to God, amid the gloom of the forests, and they made the welkin ring with their hymns of cheer because God had delivered them from the hand of the oppressor. Today, we, their descendants, proclaim to an awakened world, that the popery and scholastic theology which drove the Pilgrims here, and compelled them to found a mighty Republic on the principle of pure religion — which the Constitution forbids Congress to touch — must depart from Christ-land, America. We declare, and reiterate, that no papist shall sit in any governmental chair in the United States of America; that Alfred E. Smith, who presumes to occupy the seat of the Governor of the State of New York, does not occupy that seat, because he is a subject of a foreign potentate, the pope of Rome; that no genuine American recognizes, in any degree, the right of Alfred E. Smith, or any other papist, to sit in the Governor's chair of any State of our American Union, nor in the chair of the President of the United States of America; and that this Declaration of Spiritual Independence and sovereign authority of the American people, is given under the mandate of God and His Christ.

Our thanksgiving today, and our hymns of cheer, which will, and do now, make the universe of God ring with "Paeans of praise and records of omnipotence" (Mary Baker Eddy) go up to God and to Christ, the ever living Son of God, because the darkness of this world — the awful hypnotism of the papal so-called empire — is done away, and the earth is coming forth into a new spiritual birth of freedom, freedom to worship God in the way of Christ's appointing, not of the pope's appointing, freedom for all, to find life, and health, and peace, and joy, and eternal life.

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky . . .
Ring out the old, ring in the new!
Ring in the Christ that is to be!

(Tennyson)

* See Macauley's description of the puritans.

James. P. B. Hyndman