

## II

### PLYMOUTH TERCENTENARY LECTURE

#### WHAT THE PILGRIM FATHERS LEFT BEHIND THEM<sup>1</sup>

ON this side of the Atlantic we are pretty well informed as to what the Pilgrim Fathers found on their arrival. It may be, however, worth while to consider for a time what they left behind them.

Much they abandoned certainly would not have been appreciated or even known to them. They were almost wholly plain country folk, used to husbandry and life on the land. They sought freedom in Holland, and found it, but not happiness. Still were "Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel." They agreed among themselves "how grievous it was to live from under the protection of the State of England," and "how like we were to lose our language, and our name, of English." And, since the England of James I would have none of them, save at a price they would not pay, they set out in quest of "some corner of a foreign field" which they might make "for ever England." One of the reasons why they left Holland after a ten years' sojourn was that in order to earn a living they were compelled to practise the arts of the factory. Only by intense mechanical and indoor labor and by the use of an intensive child labor were they able to get a bare living in Holland. Further, they wished to remain

<sup>1</sup> A lecture in commemoration of the tercentenary anniversary of the founding of Plymouth Colony, delivered at the Rice Institute October 14, 1920. Parts of this address appeared subsequently in *The Outlook* (New York), and certain other parts in the *Saturday Magazine* of the *New York Evening Post*.

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English folk and to be under the English king, though they were as anxious as anybody to put a quite considerable distance between themselves and His Majesty.

Much that they left behind them was bad: perpetual strife between the countries of Europe; strife in the church and between the churches. Superstition was as rampant then as it is to-day; but then it was accompanied by far more cruelty. Under the Tudors the laws against witches were milder than in other countries; but under James I these laws were repealed, and he himself took an active part in the cruel and senseless persecution. "From Witches, Warlocks, and Wurricoes, an' evil Spirits an' a' Things that gang bump i' the Nicht . . . Guid Lord deliver us," was a frequently repeated prayer from the Scottish litany. On an average nearly a thousand men and women were annually done to death for alleged witchcraft in the first half of the seventeenth century.

The first fifth of this century, 1600-1620, in Europe was a period of intense interest in every form of human activity. At its beginning, Queen Elizabeth—like all the Tudor monarchs most highly educated—was on the throne of England. She was succeeded in 1603 by James VI of Scotland and first of England—the most learned fool in Christendom. Robert Cecil was still chief adviser to the English crown. Henry IV, the first of the Bourbons, was on the throne of France, and before our period was complete, Richelieu was taking command of the policies of his comparatively insignificant son, Louis XIII. The martial Julius II, the della Rovere Pope, who began to build St. Peter's, sat in the Apostle's Chair in Rome. He was succeeded by Leo XI, the last of the series of Medici Popes.

As usual, half the countries of Europe were more or less at war. England was fighting Ireland, who had the sup-

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port of Spain, which had at Lisbon (1599) equipped a second Armada, turned to naught at its first sailing by a storm. The Poles were fighting Russia and had taken Moscow. About the middle of our period the first of the Romanoffs, Michael, son of Philaret, patriarch of Moscow, became czar and founded the unhappy and tragic line of Romanoffs. Spain was fighting for the Netherlands. The Thirty Years' War, which for three decades devastated Central Europe, was commenced in Bohemia by the act of the Bohemian nobles, led by Thurn. They had revolted and hurled the two regents from a window of the palace at Prague in 1618. In the following year Maurice the stadholder, who was warring with the Holy Roman Empire (which, as somebody—probably Lord Bryce—has pointed out, was neither holy, nor Roman, nor an empire), was executing Barneveldt and imprisoning Grotius in the castle of Louvestein. The Hungarians were fighting and annexing first Transylvania and then Moldavia; Savoy was trying to annex Geneva, and so it all went on. Some of these incessant wars were due to the ambitions of the several rulers for more territory, some were due to religious antinomies, many owed their being to a combination of the two. One doubts if our Pilgrim Fathers, first at Amsterdam, then at Leyden, knew much about it all, or if they knew, whether they cared. They had other things to think about.

It was a period of great commercial activity. In 1600, owing to the increase in the price of pepper by the Dutch, whose fault has ever been in "giving too little and asking too much," an association of London merchants, with 125 shareholders and a capital of £70,000, was formed for trading with the East Indies. The numerous Dutch companies trading in the East amalgamated two years later into the Dutch East Indian Company, and, after ejecting

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the Portuguese from the Moluccas, they monopolized the spice trade. Two years later, Henry IV sent De Monts to colonize Acadia, and Annapolis, then called Port Royal, was founded. Champlain was exploring the western coast of North America. The following year the Barbadoes, "the first British Colony," was taken by the British, but not "settled" until 1624, and in 1607 John Smith was starting a settlement at Jamestown, in the south of Virginia. Many years later Captain John Smith, the hero of the Pocahontas story, offered his services to the Pilgrim Fathers, but they were declined, and it is with a certain complacency that the inveterate soldier of fortune tells us how "their humorous ignorances caused them for more than a year to endure a wonderful deal of misery with an infinite patience." In 1608 Champlain founded Quebec and began his protracted struggle with the Iroquois, and next year Paraguay was handed over by Spain to the Jesuits, who established there a theocracy based on communism. About the same time the Bermudas were annexed by the Virginia Company, and a colony was first planted there in 1612. Champlain was in 1615 exploring Lake Huron, whilst the year before the United New Netherland Company, recently established in Holland, received territories at the mouth of the Hudson.

The intense desire to find a shorter way to China than that around the Cape was the cause of much exploration during our period. Henry Hudson made no less than four attempts to get round the north of America between the years 1607 and 1611, on the third of which he made his way one hundred and fifty miles up the river which bears his name. At the same time Champlain was coming down from the northern lakes—in fact, these two explorers approached within twenty leagues of each other. In 1610 he penetrated into Hudson's Bay, at once his monument and his grave.

Some of these activities on the eastern shores of America may have been known to the leaders of the Pilgrim Fathers, but one doubts if they knew or would have cared to know about the great changes which were taking place in the eastern world. The Manchu Tartars were invading China and in the year of the Pilgrims' voyage proclaimed their independence of that country. The Sikhs were fighting a holy war against the Mogul emperors. The Dutch, about the same time, were buying the Island of Goree and establishing Batavia in Java, and a British company was chartered to trade with West Africa and establish forts on the Gambia and the Gold Coast. In the East the Dutch had just obtained permission to trade with Japan, whilst the British at the same time were making a settlement at Surat, near Bombay, under the auspices of Sir Thomas Roe, Ambassador to Jehangir, the son of the great Mogul emperor Akbar.

In 1616 the cultivation of tobacco was introduced into Virginia, probably much against James I's wishes, and three years later the first colonial parliament, that of South Virginia, met at Jamestown. This was the first constitutional, free-elected parliament in America, and but for the fact that a similar but naturally much smaller institution had been established in the Bermudas a few months before, it would be reckoned second in point of time to the House of Commons in England. In the same year negro slaves were brought to this "Plantation."

William Baffin, a year or two later, explored the great inlet, afterward called by his name. Later he went east and is said to have been mate in a ship voyaging to Surat and Mocha. It is believed he was killed while helping the Persians to expel the Portuguese from Ormuz.

A distinguished Spanish explorer, Torres, in 1606, was sailing between New Guinea and Australia through what we

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now call the Torres Strait. In 1614 Pietro della Valle was starting on his journey through Syria, Persia, and India.

The world was shrinking.

The Pilgrim Fathers left behind them great heritages of art, literature, and science. They were nearly all of them young men, few of them on the "shady side" of thirty-two, and the twenty years at the beginning of the seventeenth century were the formative years of their lives. Still one doubts whether they had any real appreciation of even the Dutch and Flemish art, which they can hardly have escaped seeing. Guido Reni, who died the same year as Galileo (1642), was painting in Rome, and Rubens had returned from his seven years' study in Italy and had settled at Antwerp to become court painter to the Archduke Albert. He completed his "Descent from the Cross" in 1612. Murillo and Rembrandt were born in our period, and Van Dyck, Goyen, and Frans Hals were young men. Inigo Jones was designing his magnificent palace at Whitehall after the manner of Palladio; only the banqueting hall was carried out. The most beautiful part of the Schloss at Heidelberg, the Friedrichsbau, was completed in 1607; Velasquez was reaching the crowning point of his career and was shortly to be asked to settle in Madrid and to accept the appointment of court painter.

The first oratorio, composed by Cavaliere, was performed in the Oratory at Rome in 1600, and at the same time "Eurydice," the libretto by Rinuccini, the music by Peri, was performed at the marriage of Henry IV and Mary de Medici. From it came modern opera.

Ben Jonson was publishing his "Volpone" and beginning to compose plays and masques with music and scenery, which remained popular at the court until the Puritans cleared all this sort of thing out of the country.

Shakespeare's Sonnets appeared without his sanction in 1609. "Hamlet," published seven years previously, was the first of his greater plays, the remainder of which were written in the nine succeeding years.

The two supreme glories of the English tongue are "Mr William Shakespeare's Comedies, Histories and Tragedies" and the wonderful translation of the Bible ordered by King James I in the early part of our period. This was published in 1611 and has ever been known as the Authorized Version, which found its way to the hearts of English people as no other book has ever done, and we may be sure it found its way to the hearts of the Pilgrim Fathers.

Milton at the time of the Pilgrim Fathers had just been painted by Cornelius Janssen as "a boy of ten." He made a charming picture of a serious-looking but charming boy.

Stow had just completed his "Survey of London," Coke was issuing his "Law Reports," and Casaubon his "Commentaries." "Don Quixote," the chief masterpiece of Cervantes—one of the great writers of all time—appeared within our period, and Lope de Vega was then publishing his pastoral novels and his poems. Calderon was born with the century.

The same year that Cervantes published his "Don Quixote" saw the birth of Francis Bacon's "Advancement of Learning," and his still greater "Novum Organum" was printed in the very year of the sailing of the Pilgrim Fathers. Harvey, who was working when Bacon was writing, said of him, "He writes philosophy like a Lord Chancellor." This, perhaps, is true, but his writings show him a man weak and pitiful in some respects, yet with an abiding hope, a sustained object in life, one who sought through evil days and in adverse conditions "for the glory of God and the relief of man's estate."

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Captain John Smith was almost beginning American literature by the publication of the "True Relation of Virginia"; Donne, the melancholy and certainly morbid dean of St. Paul's, was publishing his "Anatomy of the World" and his "Satires"; Robert Burton was publishing his "Anatomy of Melancholy," which in later editions he greatly enlarged.

It was also the time for the establishment and inception of many learned and scientific societies and academies. In 1603 Cesi established the Academia dei Lincei in Rome, and four years later the Lutherans deserted Marburg in Hesse and founded in the same state a rival university at Giessen. The Ambrosian Library at Milan was started in 1609 by Cardinal Federigo Borromeo. Francis de Sales, who in 1608 had published his "Introduction to a Devout Life," with Madame Chantal founded in 1610 the female Order of the Visitation, modeled on the Ursulines, which spread with great rapidity and met with the Pope's approval. The establishment of the Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft in Weimar on the lines of the Italian societies made literary circles in Germany popular. Madame de Rambouillet began to form a circle of litterateurs which dominated French taste for a generation. The Accademia della Crusca was issuing its Dictionary, and various experiments were being made with education.

All these activities, however, would have left the Pilgrim Fathers unmoved: they were beyond the sphere of their vision.

But great as were the first years of the seventeenth century in art and in literature, it was equally great in every branch of science. In 1613, the New River, still the source of much of London's water supply, was brought into the city by Sir Hugh Myddleton. That at any rate they would have appreciated and understood.

In 1600 Gilbert published his "De Magnete," the first considerable contribution to British science since those made by Roger Bacon nearly four centuries before. Kircher invented the magic lantern, and the great Danish astronomer, Tycho Brahe, died in the first year of our century. Kepler (1571-1630) was explaining the structure of the eye and how images of objects are formed on the retina. He was also throwing much light on rainbows, tides, and the motion of the planets. In 1608 Lippersheim, about whom little or nothing seems to be known, invented the telescope, and the next year either Galileo or Joannides, or both, invented the microscope. There are very few clear-cut inventions in the world,—most are the result of successful efforts of many inventors striving after a common end. The telescope was greatly improved by Jansen, a Dutch spectacle-maker, and by Galileo, who applied it to astronomy; for the first time the four satellites of Jupiter, the mountains in the moon, Saturn's rings, sun spots, and the various phases of Venus were seen by the human eye. Galileo determined the period of the revolution of the sun on its axis and confirmed his faith in the Copernican system, which was indeed adopted by the learned of the time, although the world at large accepted the Ptolemaic system—a system which, as a schoolmaster, Milton taught. Mark Pattison has pointed out that these two systems "confront each other" in Milton's poems in much the same relative position which they occupied in the mind of the public. "The ordinary, habitual mode of speaking of celestial phenomena is Ptolemaic; the conscious or doctrinal exposition of the same phenomena is Copernican." As is well known, Galileo got into trouble with the church, who, after all, did not treat him very harshly. The Pope had to take official cognizance of the heresy as Pope; but he seems to have been a kindly old

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gentleman—at any rate, according to the story which relates that when Galileo told him the earth moved round the sun, he replied, “That is all very well, but what are you going to do about it?” However, this may be as apocryphal as the classical words put in the astronomer’s mouth on the occasion of his recantation before the inquisitor in the church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva, “*E pur si muove.*”

Napier of Merchiston had made known his discovery of logarithms and his friend Briggs published the first tables in 1617. A few years later the slide rule, which to-day plays a great part in physical and engineering science, was invented by Edmund Gunter. Algebra was being written in the notation we still employ, and decimals, with their “damned little dots,” as Lord Randolph Churchill described them, were coming into use. At the end of our period Drebbel constructed a thermometer, employing spirits of wine in his bulb, and Bacon was suggesting that heat might be a form of motion. About the same time a certain Dutchman named Snell discovered the law of refraction of light and calculated its index for water and other substances.

On the biological side great discoveries were being made. Fabricius in 1603 discovered and described the valves in the veins, and nineteen years later Assellius was for the first time describing the lacteal system. But most important of all, before the end of our period, Harvey was lecturing in St. Bartholomew’s Hospital on his discovery of the circulation of the blood. Harvey, “the little choleric man,” as Aubrey calls him, was educated at Cambridge and at Padua, and was in his thirty-eighth year when, in his lectures on anatomy, he expounded his new doctrine of the circulation of the blood to the College of Physicians, although his *Exercitatio* on this subject did not appear till 1628. His notes for the lectures are now in the British Museum. He was

physician to Charles I, and it is on record how, during the battle of Edgehill, he looked after the young princes as he sat reading a book under a hedge a little removed from the fight.

In the chain of evidence of his convincing demonstration of the circulation of the blood, one link only, to be supplied by the invention of the compound microscope, was missing. This, the discovery of the capillaries, was due to Malpighi, who was among the earliest anatomists to apply the compound microscope to animal tissues. Still, as Dryden has it,

The circling streams once thought but pools of blood—  
 (Whether life's food or the body's food),  
 From dark oblivion Harvey's name shall save.

Harvey was happy in two respects as regards his discovery. It was, in the main and especially in England, recognized as proven in his own lifetime, and, again, no one of credit claimed or asserted the claims of others to priority. In research, all enquirers stand on steps others have built up; but in this, the most important of single contributions to physiology, the credit is Harvey's and almost Harvey's alone. Cowley, a man of wide culture, wrote an "Ode upon Dr. Harvey," in which his achievement was contrasted with a failing common to scientific men of his own time, and, so far as we can see, of all time:

*Harvey* sought for Truth in Truth's own Book  
 The Creatures, which by God Himself was writ;  
 And wisely thought 'twas fit,  
 Not to read Comments only upon it,  
 But on th' original it self to look.  
 Methinks in Arts great Circle others stand  
 Lock't up together, Hand in Hand,  
 Every one leads as he is led,  
 The same bare path they tread,

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A Dance like Fairies a Fantastick round,  
But neither change their motion, nor their ground:  
Had *Harvey* to this Road confin'd his wit,  
His noble Circle of the Blood, had been untroden yet.

As we have seen, the Pilgrim Fathers left all these things behind them: "the rumours and the marching and the strife"; unparalleled development in science, in literature, and in art. It is more than probable they knew not what they left. Much of the activity of the first twenty years of the seventeenth century was taken up with religious and civil controversies and contentions; to these we have not alluded, for the Pilgrim Fathers did not leave these behind—they took them with them.<sup>1</sup>

The Pilgrim Fathers crossed in the *Mayflower*:

I think some angel christened her,  
Touched her black bows with dew and flame,  
And watched her through the sunset bear  
The light of England's loveliest name.

O little fragrant stars of snow  
That bloom in England, laughing May,  
The sea wind wafts your scent to-day  
Across three thousand miles of spray.

From the "Mayflower," by ALFRED NOYES.

We must never forget that the Pilgrim Fathers were young men—few of them were on the shady side of thirty-two—and all young men have something of the spirit of adventure in them. With the exception of that soldier of fortune Miles Standish, who was thirty-six, they were all born in the year (1588) of the Spanish Armada or thereabouts, and as children must have heard much about it.

<sup>1</sup> For many of the facts and dates in the above pages I am indebted to "Annals of Politics and Culture," by G. P. Gooch, M.A., Cambridge University Press, 1901.

Their boyhood was spent in one of the most stirring times in the history of England. Queen Elizabeth's reign was drawing to a close, but the adventurous spirit of the great Elizabethans still persisted.

They were not the only people who had left Europe in the hope of obtaining religious liberty in the New World.

Froude tells us that "a colony of Huguenot refugees had settled on the coast of Florida. The Spaniards heard of it, came from St. Domingo, burned the town, and hanged every woman and child, leaving an inscription explaining that the poor creatures had been killed not as Frenchmen, but as heretics. Dominique de Gourgues of Rochelle heard of this fine exploit of fanaticism, equipped a ship, and sailed across. He caught the Spanish garrison, which had been left in occupation, and swung them on the same trees—with a second scroll saying that they were dangling there not as Spaniards, but as murderers."

The great colony of Virginia, ever associated with Kingsley's great novel "Westward Ho!" was founded by folk who frankly acknowledged adventure and commercial aims as the chief objects in their enterprise, but the Pilgrim Fathers—and by Pilgrim Fathers I mean those that crossed in the *Mayflower*, and not their more intolerant successors, the Puritans—mingled a certain spirit of adventure and speculation in their historic voyage for religious liberty. But they meant to stay: they were no birds of passage. They brought their wives and children with them. They were real colonizers.

Certainly many of their supporters took a great interest in establishing English dominion and English trade in the temperate regions of North America. If the claims of Britain to the temperate regions of North America were to be made good, it was needful that some effective settlement

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of English folk should be established there. Captain John Smith, the navigator, saw this clearly. He knew that Dutch and French traders were casting eager eyes on the fair territories which he fondly named "New England." But he found it hard to arouse interest at home. "Nothing," he says, "would be done for a Plantation till about some hundred of your Brownists of England, Amsterdam, and Leyden went to New Plymouth." There, in the first year, he goes on to say, they endured a "wonderful deal of misery with an infinite patience . . . but those in time doing well, divers others have, in small handfuls, undertaken to go there to be several lords and kings of themselves; but most vanished to nothing."

Plymouth Plantation, however, did not vanish. The Pilgrims succeeded in showing that hard work and intelligent management could wring a fair living from an inhospitable soil. At first they started on a wrong basis. Like the Soviet Government of Russia to-day, they believed in the community of goods; still, they were intelligent men, and it took them little more than a year and a half to learn "that the doctrine of 'no private property' was impracticable even in a community bound together by religious convictions." To this day "people of American stock believe heartily in private property, individual and family thrift, and the transmission of savings to descendants. The teachings of Lassalle and Marx therefore take no hold on Americans."

They certainly had something of the spirit of Sir Walter Raleigh in them. Raleigh, who broke his heart and lost his head over the matter, never failed to believe that a great British kingdom would arise on the western shores of the Atlantic. "I yet shall see her an English nation," wrote Raleigh as he sat in his cell in the Tower of London. Many of his adventures went awry. His colony on Roanoke

Island, North Carolina, collapsed, and it was Drake who brought its few survivors back to England. It is interesting to recall that Drake subsequently became member of Parliament for Plymouth, and without knowing much about the intervening members of that seaport borough, we may recall that one of the present members, the first woman to sit in Parliament, Lady Astor, is a native of the neighboring State of Virginia.

Throughout the recent celebrations in memory of the *Mayflower* stress has been laid, and rightly laid, on the religious motive of the Pilgrim Fathers' great adventure. Conceding this to be the primary stimulus, there yet remain others. At the beginning of the seventeenth century men were becoming emancipated; no longer did they find security in the written words of the ancients. This emancipation impelled men to seek new outlets, and it was aided and enforced by the commercial requirements of the time. Everywhere exploration was going on. The French, the Spaniards, the Italians, the Portuguese, and the English were seeking new worlds to conquer. The earth was growing smaller.

Too much stress must not be laid—as the clergy are apt to lay it—on the purely religious principles which impelled our Pilgrims to make their great break with their life in the Old World. Still, the fact that they came not entirely for gain played a large part in their success as colonizers. Not only had they the high spirit of enterprise, but they had the sober, constant quality of enduring industry. To be a successful colonist one must not only have the light-hearted adventurous spirit of Hawkins, Drake, and Raleigh, but a deep and abiding seriousness of purpose. This the Pilgrims had, and in spite of persecution and affliction their stern qualities enabled them to endure to the end, and if they were

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intolerant, they were less so than their successors, the Puritans. They supplied that element in New England which is expressed by the Englishman who has described the New Englander as the "east wind made flesh."

The fact that their landing place was named for their port of sailing, a name first suggested by Charles I, then Prince of Wales, has given rise to the erroneous idea that many of the Pilgrim Fathers came from the west of England. This is not so. More than 75 per cent. came from the eastern side of England—32 from Norfolk, 17 from Kent, 17 from the City of London, 11 from Essex, and from the north of England came the balance. There were, indeed, no westerners among their band, and what perhaps is still more remarkable, there were no Jews, no Scotch, and no Irish. They were, in fact, of pure English extraction. Three of them were fellows of Cambridge colleges, but it does not appear that Oxford contributed in any way to their number.

In conclusion, we must pay a brief tribute to the Pilgrim Mothers. Their sufferings and their courage must at least have equaled that of their husbands. They had to endure the grumbling of the Fathers—think of the food!—and the wailing of the children, and, in their cramped quarters, had to humor and to comfort both.

Some of the discomforts and perils of the voyage are recorded by Governor Bradford:

"These troubles being blown over, and now all being compact together in one ship, they put to sea again with a prosperous wind, which continued divers days together, and was some encouragement to them. Yet, according to the usual manner, many were afflicted with seasickness. . . .

"After they had enjoyed fair winds and weather for 'a season, they were encountered many times with cross winds,

and met with many fierce storms, with which the ship was shrewdly shaken, and her upper works made very leaky. . . .

“In sundry of these storms the winds were so fierce and the seas so high as they could not bear a knot of sail, but were forced to hull [drift] about without canvas set for divers days together. . . .”

Still, we may well believe that each of them said in her heart what another Pilgrim lady said in another Pilgrim's Progress:

Bless'd be the day that I began  
A Pilgrim for to be;  
And blessed also be that man  
That hereto movèd me.

A. E. SHIPLEY.