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AN

A D D R E S S ,

DELIVERED AT A

Re-union of the Sons of Weston,

JULY 4, 1853.

BY REV. ASA D. SMITH, D. D.

WITH A SKETCH OF THE

ACCOMPANYING EXERCISES.

B O S T O N :

PRESS OF T. R. MARVIN, 42 CONGRESS STREET.

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Sgt. J.

Sam. Dana Hoosier,
of

Cambridge -
(Class of 1850.)

INTRODUCTORY SKETCH.

THE "Re-union," of which this publication is designed to be a memorial, was first suggested in the Spring of 1853. From the town of Weston, Vermont, lying at the base of the Green Mountain Range, in the south-west part of Windsor County, one of the smallest towns in that County, both in extent and population,—its present number of inhabitants being less than one thousand,—a very large number of emigrants had gone forth. Many of them had become citizens of Boston, Mass.; and it was in that city the design of a Re-union originated. After some private conference in relation to it, a general meeting was called of the Sons of Weston resident there; at which the project met with a favorable and even enthusiastic reception. One by one, as opportunity offered, they had delighted to return to the haunts of their earlier days; but since the town was organized, no such gathering had taken place as was now proposed. The plan was grateful to them, not merely on their own account, but because the contemplated meeting would afford pleasure, as they believed, to the people of Weston. The inhabitants of that place had always taken a peculiarly genial and friendly interest in those who had gone forth from among them—in the many young men, especially, who had made their way into the various walks of business and of professional life. They had watched the course of such—not as sometimes happens, with jealousy and envy, but with sympathizing solicitude; they had been ready to aid them in their struggles; they had rejoiced in all their successes. It was a joy, therefore, to the emigrant sons of the place, to take part in a movement which, while it ministered to the

gratification of those friends both of their earlier and later days, would make some imperfect expression of their responsive love and thankfulness.

At the meeting in Boston, a Committee was appointed, who immediately addressed a communication to one of the prominent citizens of Weston, announcing the proposed Re-union. A meeting was immediately called in the village school-house there, at which the matter was laid before the people. With what favor it was received, will appear from the following Preamble and Resolutions, drawn up by a Committee consisting of MESSRS. SOLON RICHARDSON, WILLIAM P. DALE, and ABIEL PEABODY, and unanimously adopted:—

Whereas, the Anniversary of our National Independence is again approaching, and having received information from a reliable source, that a large number of the Sons and Daughters of Weston, now residents abroad, are desirous of returning to their native home among the green hills of Vermont, to unite with us in celebrating the birth of that independence which so proudly distinguishes us from the other nations of the earth;—therefore, we, the present citizens of Weston, adopt the following Resolutions:—

Resolved, 1. That we extend our hearty welcome to all former citizens, who can come and unite with us in celebrating that glorious anniversary.

Resolved, 2. That we feel proud when we call to mind the large number of gifted and enterprising men who have originated among our hills, and have gone forth to shine as stars of the first magnitude, in whatever meridian their business relations have placed them; and that it would add joy to our pride, to see the whole constellation together in their native sky.

Resolved, 3. That we appoint a Committee of seven to co-operate with the Committee at Boston in making arrangements for the day, so that nothing in our power shall be wanting to make the reception and entertainment as interesting as possible, and the day one long to be remembered.

Resolved, 4. That having implicit confidence in the Committee at Boston, we wish to refer the arrangements of the day to them, feeling ourselves in duty bound, however, to give them such assistance or information as they may require.

A Committee was appointed, in accordance with the third of the preceding Resolutions. A list of former residents was made out, embracing more than five hundred. To all these a circular was addressed by the Boston Committee, which, as

it is desirable as far as possible to daguerreotype the occasion, is here inserted:—

BOSTON, MAY 17, 1853.

A Re-union of the Sons and Daughters of Weston is proposed, at their old mountain home, on the ensuing Anniversary of our National Independence. There are, it is believed, few places of the same size that have sent out so large a number into the various professions and business walks of life as the small town of Weston. It will be good for us to return once more to our native hills, gather around the old hearth-stones and altars, look upon each other's faces, and mingle with those who remain, in celebrating our National Festival. That such a re-union, on such an occasion, would be agreeable to the present residents of Weston, we have direct assurance from them. Arrangements will be made to celebrate the Day and Occasion with appropriate and interesting services; and it is confidently believed, that it will prove "a day long to be remembered" with pleasure by all who participate in its festivities.

Will you be there? There being a larger portion of our number in Boston and vicinity than in any other locality, and it being necessary for somebody to take the initiative, it was deemed advisable to appoint a Committee here to take such steps as might be necessary and proper to promote the object contemplated. This Committee opened a correspondence with the people of Weston; and a similar Committee has been appointed there, consisting of JOHN WILDER, SAMUEL PEARODY, SOLON RICHARDSON, WILLIAM P. DALE, PERKINS N. WILEY, J. B. BALDWIN, and A. J. GRAY. It is our intention to address this circular and invitation to all within our knowledge now living and absent from Weston, who have ever resided there; and, to make our list as complete as possible, you are requested to furnish us with the names of any such in your vicinity. You will also confer a favor by informing us, immediately on the receipt of this, whether you will be able to attend. Arrangements are being made to secure Excursion Tickets for the occasion from Boston to Chester, at a reduced fare, which shall be good from the Thursday preceding to the Wednesday following the Fourth, inclusive. They may be had of A. W. FARRAR, at his Store, corner of Broad and Batterymarch Streets, Boston. Communications may be addressed to our Secretary, THOMAS L. WAKEFIELD, Esq., No. 10 Court Street, Boston, Mass.

ABRAHAM W. FARRAR, HORACE E. SMITH, JOHN G. T. WINSHIP, JOHN H. WAKEFIELD, THOMAS RICHARDSON, IVORY W. RICHARDSON, SAMUEL DALE,	}	Committee.
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Another Committee was appointed by the people of Weston, to have charge of certain matters pertaining to the occasion,

which devolved solely on them. This Committee consisted of **MESSRS. SOLON RICHARDSON, JOHN T. BRYANT, T. P. RUSSELL, G. P. HANNUM, and A. G. FOSTER.** A notice was circulated by them in the neighboring places, giving information of the intended celebration, and saying, "It is anticipated, that nearly all who have formerly resided in this place, will be present on that day. We cheerfully invite the inhabitants of the adjoining towns, to join us in our endeavors to welcome back our old friends to the Green Mountains, and cheer us with their presence on the occasion."

The Fourth of July, 1853, occurred on Monday. For several of the last days of the week preceding, the former residents of Weston, gladly obedient to the call of the circular, were making their way back to their old mountain home. More than one hundred came from Boston. Great was the enthusiasm of all concerned, as on Saturday especially, stage-coach after stage-coach, fully freighted with them, and each welcomed with hearty acclamations, entered the dear old village. Quiet enough is the pleasant "Green" ordinarily, but it was now all alive and astir with joyful excitement and the bustle of preparation. Delightful were the greetings of old friends—many of them having been separated for years—as they met there again. Touching were the private family re-unions all over town—parents, children, grandchildren, brothers and sisters, meeting once more at the old fireside. It was estimated that not less than four hundred of the emigrants from the place, including members of their families, were present at the Re-union.

On Sabbath-day, the 3d of July, the usual services at the three churches in the place were omitted, that all might assemble in the great tent of the Windsor County Agricultural Society, which had been brought from Woodstock, a distance of some forty miles, for the purposes of the occasion, and had been set up on the Village Green. A discourse was delivered in the morning, to a very large audience, by the **REV. ASA D. SMITH, D. D.,** of the City of New York. In the afternoon, a Conference-meeting was held in the same place, at which, in connection with devotional exercises, addresses were made by **MR. CHRISTOPHER MARTIN,** and **REV. HARVEY WEBSTER,** of the Methodist Church, and **REV. CALEB W. PIPER,** Pastor of the Congregational Church

in Troy, Vermont. The interest of the Sabbath services was enhanced by the admirable performances of the Choir, embracing, very appropriately, some of those old tunes, so well fitted to call up touching echoes of memory.

The Fourth was ushered in, as usual, by the peals of the church-bell, and of cannon. The clouds, which during the night had been watering the land, and which for a time seemed to look frowningly upon the occasion, passed early away, leaving the earth and the air in the best condition for the exercises. In addition to the present and former residents of the place, there was a great concourse of persons from neighboring towns. It was judged, that during the day there were some four or five thousand people in the village. At 10 o'clock, A. M., a very large Procession, formed on the Common, under the direction of Maj. JOSHUA B. BALDWIN, Chief Marshal, and his efficient Aids, marched to a grove, on a gently sloping hill-side, about a quarter of a mile south of the village. There platforms had been prepared for those who were to take part in the exercises, and seats for a very large audience. On the main platform, fronting the people, were the President of the day, Dr. HENRY GRAY; the Vice Presidents, Messrs. JOHN WILDER, PERKINS N. WILEY, ASA B. FOSTER, JONATHAN WEBSTER, PARKER SHATTUCK, and AMOS N. BURTON; the Orator of the day, Rev. ASA D. SMITH, D. D.; the Chaplain, Rev. JOHN WALKER; the Reader of the Declaration of Independence, Mr. JOHN M. BURRAGE; and Mr. NICHOLAS LAWRENCE, a Revolutionary Soldier, and the oldest inhabitant of the town. On a platform at the right, were the Choir; on another, at the left, the Woodstock Brass Band, with Prof. KENDALL, the celebrated bugle-player, from the City of Boston. The number of auditors was variously estimated, from two to three thousand.

In calling the meeting to order, the President of the day made a brief and pertinent Introductory Address. He adverted felicitously to the early history of the town; and remarked that forty-eight years ago, upon a rude platform, on the village Common, he addressed an audience on the Anniversary of American Independence. "Our Fathers," said he, "where are they?" But few faces which he then beheld, were before him now. But eight humble dwellings then dotted this now

crowded, busy village—those of Messrs. Taylor, Farrar, White, Watkins, Chubbuck, Gilmore, Drury, and Richardson; to which might be added the store of Fullertons and Henry. This great company of Weston's Sons, which adorns every section of the country, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, has sprung up since that time. He proceeded to inquire why it was that from Weston and the neighboring region—for, said he, pleasantly, we call all this vicinity Weston—so many men have gone forth, with superior physical and mental powers. It might be referred, he thought, to various causes. One was the fact, that only enterprising and efficient men would settle in a region rough and forbidding as this once was. Another was the tendency of the very difficulties and trials here encountered to strengthen character. He referred also to the mutual dependence of the people, in the early times of the town, inducing frequent intercourse and lively sympathy, and fostering all the social virtues. He made a touching reference, also, to maternal influence, so largely efficacious in the case of Washington, and to which many of the sons and daughters of Weston must own themselves indebted for all they are. He traced, in the course of his remarks, the steady progress of the town from the beginning; and adverted playfully, in passing, to his own profession. The people, he said, to their eternal credit, always paid their doctor's bills—if they lived. And this crowded assembly, he added, presents *prima facie* evidence of good practice. He closed with an affectionate reference to those departed and sainted mothers of whom he had spoken, and an introductory allusion to the Orator of the day.

Prayer was then offered by the Chaplain; after which the Choir sung, in a most appropriate and effective manner, to the tune of "America," the following Ode, written for the occasion by one of the Sons of Weston:—

Amid our native hills,
 Wild woods and sparkling rills,
 And fountains clear,
 We raise our mingled song,
 The echoing notes prolong,
 While visions round us throng
 To memory dear.

Lo, childhood's joy returns!
 On the old hearth-stone burns
 The cheerful fire;
 The dear home-group are there,
 Brothers, and sisters fair,
 And, in "the old arm-chair,"
 Mother and sire!

Ye friends of other days,
 We meet your kindly gaze,
 With throbbing heart.
 How swift earth's glories flee!
 What shadows all are we!
 What broken ranks we see,
 While tear-drops start!

Yet thanks for all the past!
 Where'er our lot be cast,
 Whate'er betide,
 He who the fathers kept,
 Till low in dust they slept,
 By gathering kindred wept,
 The sons shall guide.

God of these mountains grand,
 God of our native land,
 Our native vale!
 Here may thy grace abound,
 Thy choicest gifts be found,
 And here thy praise resound,
 Till time shall fail!

Then followed the reading of the Declaration of Independence. This was succeeded by exquisite music from the Woodstock Band, all whose performances, it may be here remarked, were of the most gratifying kind. Then came the Address, by Dr. SMITH. This was followed by music from the Choir; and the whole was concluded with the Benediction by the Chaplain.

The Procession formed again and marched to the Great Tent, where, at 2 o'clock, P. M., about seven hundred and fifty persons sat down to a sumptuous and well-ordered dinner,

furnished by Mr. A. G. FOSTER. After doing ample justice to the viands, and to the skill and efficiency of him who had provided them, the company entered upon the more intellectual part of the feast. A series of regular toasts were given, with the usual accompaniment of music and artillery. These were followed by volunteer sentiments. As a portion of the toasts have been lost or mislaid, it must suffice to give only the substance of some of them, those especially in connection with which speeches were made.

To a sentiment respecting "Liberty in the Old World," IVORY W. RICHARDSON, Esq., of Boston, Mass., made a brief response. HORACE E. SMITH, Esq., also of Boston, spoke to a toast eulogistic of "Kossuth." A sentiment in relation to "The Green Mountain Boys," called forth R. W. CLARKE, Esq., of Brattleborough. JAMES M. DUDLEY, Esq., of Oppenheim, N. Y., spoke to a toast respecting "Ethan Allen." On the offering of a sentiment respecting the "Re-union," A. H. CRAGIN, Esq., of Lebanon, New Hampshire, made a brief speech. Mr. AUSTIN W. ADAMS, of the Cambridge Law School, responded to a toast in regard to the "Sons of Weston." In the course of the exercises, Rev. DANIEL PACKARD, of Mount Holly, spoke briefly, and in a complimentary strain, of the "Daughters of Weston." JOHN H. WAKEFIELD, Esq., of the City of Boston, offered a sentiment, accompanied with a speech, touching "The youth of our mountain home." To a toast presented by A. H. CRAGIN, Esq., complimentary to the "Orator of the day," Rev. Dr. SMITH briefly responded. Rev. CALEB W. PIPER offered a sentiment, and spoke concisely, respecting the perpetuity of those fraternal feelings which had brought together the Sons of Weston. Toasts were offered complimentary to Prof. Kendall of Boston, and the Brass Band, and to the President of the day.

Among the interesting letters which were received by the Boston Committee, in reply to their circular, was one from Rev. A. H. DAVIS, of Natick, Mass., who, unable to attend the Re-union, transmitted a sentiment commemorative of "Our esteemed and lamented fellow-townsmen, ADDISON GILMORE." This was read at the table. Mr. Davis remarked in his letter—it may not be amiss to state in this connec-

tion—that while at Weston on a visit, ten years ago, he ascertained, that “at that time, from one small school-district in the south part of the town, nine individuals had gone out, and were then engaged in professional life; and two others, ladies, had married professional men.”

T. L. WAKEFIELD, Esq., of the City of Boston, after a few prefatory remarks, read the following letter received by the Committee from the Rev. WILLIAM S. BALCH, of the City of New York :—

NEW YORK, JUNE 9, 1853.

GENTLEMEN,—Your circular reached me a few days since, and I hasten to reply.

I can scarce imagine a purer pleasure than such a re-union as you propose, of Green Mountain Boys among their native hills. Coming from their far wanderings—from marts, and factories, and offices, from busy, bustling cities, from spreading prairies and heaving ocean—to sit down in the shadow of the old trees that adorn their early homes, and in social and familiar converse tell the story of their lives, of what they have seen, and known, and felt, while journeying hither and thither in the devious and difficult paths which lead off from the spot where you propose to meet—what can excel it? The naked thought inflames my spirit, and stirs my memory, which rushes back to my starting point of mental being; for, though born in Andover, the earliest thing I remember was a ride on the carriage of Farrar’s saw-mill which my father tended. Vivid and strange is the contrast which passes before me. West River was to me a great, almost impassable stream. Where did it begin? where end? Deep questions of Geography then, on the map of my untrained mind—more difficult than the Mississippi, Rhine or Nile now. Farrar’s Pond seemed greater than the Atlantic now, and the boats the boys *whittled out*, as finished craft as Collins’s steamers. Mount Terrible and Markham’s Mountain were more *terribly* sublime than the Alps or Lebanon seem now. But vast changes have “come o’er the spirit” of those dreams. I have been out into the wide world; I have roamed over the most interesting parts of its surface; stood in the Roman Forum; sat on Mars Hill; ascended the Rhine, the Danube, and the Nile; gone over Mount Lebanon to Damascus, and by Nazareth to the Holy City; wandered among the vast ruins of Baalbeck, Thebes, and other once famous cities of the East; have descended into those vast mausoleums of Egypt, and climbed the tallest pyramid. I have seen the pride of France, the glory of England, the arts of Italy, and the wisdom of Germany. But on no spot of earth stand there relics to thought so dear, nor flow streams to memory so sweet, as in the midst of the scenes of my childhood. How are the deep pulsations of my heart quickened at the thought of meeting and communing with childhood companions, grown strangers by time, distance and occupation.

Cheerfully would I lay by the gleanings I have been able to gather into a small sheaf of knowledge, and resume the round-about of boyhood, to play over the innocent pranks of my young ambition, at your feast of memory among our native hills. And then the thought that we should be near the spot of the hallowed dead—but I must not speak of that. Too deep, too solemn for a feast!

“Will you be there?” I will try. But, oh! the cares, the toils of life! How strangely do they sometimes seem to clash with pleasure. I cannot say positively. My time is not my own. My absence of last year has made my duties to others more imperious; and the meeting follows so close upon an important service at home, I fear I may not be able to gratify my own desires. But whether present or absent in body, I pray you be assured of the most cordial sympathy of,

Gentlemen, your friend and formerly

Green Mountain companion,

WILLIAM S. BALCH.

To the Committee.

It would be aside from the design of this sketch, to characterize in other than general terms “the feast of reason and the flow of soul,” a mere outline of which has been thus given. Suffice it to say, that the company hung on the lips of the speakers, as the mountain shadows were lengthening, till it was found, on rising from the table, that they had been seated there from two o’clock to about half-past five.

Immediately after the dinner, a meeting of the Sons of Weston was held in the Old Meeting House, at which J. H. WAKEFIELD, Esq. was called to the Chair, and H. E. SMITH, Esq. was appointed Secretary. At this meeting, the following Resolutions were adopted:—

Resolved, 1. That we tender our thanks to the Orator of the day, for his able, instructive and eloquent Address.

Resolved, 2. That a Committee of three be appointed to present our grateful acknowledgments to the Orator, and solicit a copy of his Address for publication.

Resolved, 3. That, if this request be acceded to, the Address be printed, together with the opening Remarks of the President of the day, and a Sketch of the other Proceedings.

Resolved, 4. That we tender our thanks to the President of the day, for the able and efficient manner in which he has discharged his duty.

Resolved, 5. That our thanks are due to the people of Weston, for the cordial welcome they have given us, and the generous manner in which they have entertained us.

Resolved, 6. That we will cherish the remembrance of this day as an era in our lives which will probably never return.

Resolved, 7. That a complete list of the persons addressed by circulars be deposited in the office of the Town Clerk of Weston.

The Committee appointed under the second of the above Resolutions, consisted of **REV. CALEB W. PIPER, DR. HENRY C. GRAY, and ABIJAH W. FARRAR, Esq.**

The proceedings were closed with a brilliant display of Fireworks in the evening. Nothing had occurred to detract from the general gratification. It was not the least pleasing aspect of the occasion, that there was not only an utter absence of wine and strong drink at the dinner, but through the operation of the "Maine law," or of a law in some respects better than that of Maine, there was no vending of intoxicating liquors during the day; and among all the multitude assembled, of course, there was the most perfect sobriety and order. The Re-union was as happy, it is believed, in all its moral influences, as it was delightful to all who took part in it.

A D D R E S S .

WE are here again ! It is ten—twenty—thirty—forty years, since many of us, in the blithesomeness and hopefulness of boyhood, roamed over these quiet valleys, and climbed these rugged hills, and sported beside these mountain streams. From the noisy and dusty paths of life, various, and far apart, we have come back as fond pilgrims to the oldest and dearest shrines of memory. *We* have changed somewhat. There are touches of time—we hope not for the worse—upon our minds and our hearts ; its furrows mark the countenances of some of us, and there are heads among us, on which its snows have gently fallen. Nor has change been lacking *here*. The busy hand of industry has been clearing away the old forests, and smoothing down the roughnesses of the virgin soil ; and art has been multiplying the comfortable and tasteful dwellings which cluster in the village, or are scattered over the township. Yet the great features of the landscape are still the same ;—and as the fervid though erratic imagination of the ancient Greeks and Romans peopled the whole realm of nature with

the objects of their religious worship, assigning a Faun to every field, a Dryad to every forest, and some congenial deity to every mountain-top ; so, with a fancy hardly less ardent, though we trust less idolatrous, we crowd the scenes which stretch out around us with forms, not divine, indeed, but precious and even sacred.

Yonder murmurs along, as of old, West River. In the mind's reverie, the loved companions of our childhood are with us again, as aforetime, on its banks. We bathe in it ; we daringly ford it ; we float our raft upon it. We follow, once more, the swift and foaming brook that dashes into it, casting our hook for the tiny trout. Some of us have looked on other streams, important to commerce, or renowned in song—upon the beautiful Hudson, and upon the venerable Father of Waters ; upon the Thames, making its way through the world's metropolis, and freighted with Britain's pride and strength ; upon the swift-flowing Rhone, as it takes its winding course from its native glaciers to "the great and wide sea." Yet none of these have charmed us like those dear old pellucid waters, the music of whose ripple mingled with life's earliest dream.

We behold again, uplifting itself toward the firmament, that same old Green Mountain Range, whose summit we saw so often in childhood, arrayed in gorgeous sunset hues ; and again we gaze on those eastern hill-tops, amid whose gently waving pines the stars of evening seemed to nestle, and

along which we loved to trace the brightening light of morning. Other sunsets we have seen, other daybreaks, other sunrisings ;—but none like those. Other mountains we have looked upon, some of the noblest of our own land, and the most renowned of other climes ; but the grandeur and the romance even of Alpine cliffs have palled upon our thought, as on the far-off horizon of memory these evergreen heights have risen to our view. As in this our vale of Tempe, one and another of us notes “ the cot where he was born ” ; as we look upon the old meeting-house, its spire the first that here pointed heavenward, and at the laying of whose foundations many of us were present ; as at every turn visions of the past flit around us, natal and baptismal scenes, bridal and burial occasions, school-fellowships and school-joys, scenes of toil and festive hours, the harvest-home, and the winter’s leisure, the dear ones of the neighborhood, and the still dearer members of the broken family-circle,—we cannot but utter to this mother of many of us and this foster-mother of us all, what in our voluntary and various exile, we have each felt :—

“ Where’er I roam, whatever realms to see,
My heart untraveled fondly turns to thee.”

A theme ample enough for the time allotted me at this re-union, and appropriate enough, I might find in the history of our own township. Little, indeed, does that history present, which to the world at large would be of signal or extraordinary

interest. A still youthful community is this. No mists of antiquity gather around its origin; no fabulous old forms or scenes give an air of romance to its earlier annals. It is but fifty-three years since it received, as a town, a being and a name. The place is one of comparative quiet and seclusion. No navigable stream flows through it; no canal furnishes here a highway for travel or for trade; the whistle of no rail-car startles here the mountain echoes. It has no extensive manufacturing establishments; it is a farming-town chiefly. Nor can we speak of any special fertility of the soil. It is only by liberal investments of labor, that the rough and rocky fields are covered with waving harvests. After all—as the present occasion reminds us—the chief product and export of this our dear old mountain home, has been *men*; men a little, perhaps, like herself—exhibiting at times, possibly, traces of her roughness—yet retaining in their affections, they would fain hope, something of the freshness of her gushing fountains, and in their principles and purposes for good, something of the firmness of her granite cliffs. On the whole history of the place, nevertheless, from its small beginnings to its present enlargement and prosperity, I should love to dwell. I might speak of the toils and hardships of the first settlers, many of whose descendants are here to-day—of their rude and comparatively uncomfortable dwellings, their coarse and sometimes scanty fare; when on the frowning wilderness but here and there a breach had been made; when merchandise of all

sorts must be sought at a distance, over the roughest possible roads; when neighbors were few, and when for sickness and the mortal agony and the burial scene, the only accessible appliances were of the most simple and meagre sort; when "the sound of the church-going bell," these valleys and rocks had never heard. There are some here, men of grey hairs, whose own remembrances, as I speak, tenderly revert to those early scenes. I can myself recollect the time when where now stands your pleasant and growing village, there were in "the city," as we used to call it—a little ambitiously, I confess—only some four or five dwellings; and over the river, in what I am told has been since called "Charlestown"—with a growing ambition, perhaps, for where does not this master passion of the human heart leave its impress?—there were only two or three mansions more. And not one of them all, I can assure you, had either a freestone or granite front. In not one of them was a carpet to be found; a bare flooring furnished by your mountain pines sufficed, having, perhaps, in the "spare room" only, the simplest possible adornment of paint. To not one of them, I think, was there any better vehicle attached than a plain, open, one-horse waggon, with springs made not of the flexible steel in which pleasure-carriages now rejoice, but of such lithe pieces of timber as might be culled from the surrounding woods. How strongly am I tempted to enlarge on those days, as I see, here and there, in the crowd around me,

the playmates of my boyhood. A mournful satisfaction it would be, especially, to linger in yon grave-yard on the hill, and to speak, as I might, of the precious dust it embosoms. There honored names are graven—many dearly loved forms are sleeping their long sleep. Their spirits, not oblivious surely of their old haunts, may be hovering around us to-day ; and a pleasing, though solemn task it would be to rehearse the lessons, which, could they speak to us, they would now utter, and which, being dead, their example does speak.

I see before me, however, men of other places ; and I would not, besides, on a day like this, confine your thoughts within too narrow limits. It was meet we should begin with our town ; our hearts forbade us to do otherwise. Yet it is not unmeet that we pass now from our town to our STATE. We are here, many of us, as sons of Weston, but we are here, too, in a higher relation—as sons of Vermont. Not a few of us have come back from other States, to look again on this, the Switzerland of our country. Though not the largest, or the most fertile, or the most wealthy of the sisterhood, there is yet in her history, as in her physical aspects, a large development of character, and of character which is worthy to be studied. Every State has a common life, not resulting from the mere aggregation of individuals, or from the mere confluence of their independent characteristics, but from their affinities and relations to each other,—from action and reaction—from sympathy—from a felt oneness

of interest—from a thousand partnerships and mutual dependencies, as of the household, the neighborhood, the school, the civil organization—from the inevitable flowing of thought and feeling in the same channels. This common life, like that of the individual, is more or less affected by circumstances; as of origin, of relation to other States, to the world, and to the age. It reacts, too, upon individual life. As what the community is, depends mainly upon the nature of the elements of which it is made up; so every incorporated element receives a certain tinge and shape from the great whole. As individuals, we have all helped to make Vermont what she is; and Vermont has had much to do in making us all what we are. It will not be uninteresting, then, nor unprofitable, to glance at some of the leading traits in the character of our State; traits which as they may be ascribed to the community, are ordinarily, of course, to be looked for in its particular members. In treating of these, we shall have much reference to our early history; for it is about as true of the State, as of the individual, that

“The child is father of the man.”

The first characteristic of our people to which we shall advert, is *patriotism*. This is not, indeed, one of the most elemental attributes, and in a strictly philosophical analysis would not claim the first place. Yet it seems to me to stand first in the

order of the day's suggestions. Taken as a sentiment, how grows up the love of country, but out of the earliest, most natural and simple loves of our being; out of the very affections which the scenes now about us are suited to stir afresh in our souls? The child learns to love the mother who bends over his cradle; the father upon whose knee he sits; the brothers and sisters who so tenderly love him; the hearthstone around which they all gather; the very roof which covers objects so dear; the garden, the field where he sports; the neighboring companions of his play. Gradually the tendrils of his affection cling to all the landscape that stretches around him, and make their way into all the little community to which he belongs. It is through these media the heart reaches the greater and encompassing region and community, the whole State, and the whole country. Thus the chief nursery of the patriotic sentiment is *home*. Where that word is scarcely known, as in gay and pleasure-loving France, it is no wonder there is so little true patriotism. Better to Old England than all other defences on the land or the sea, are her "merry homes." Well then may the love of country come first in our thought, as we gather here again, not in the native State merely of most of us, but in our native vale. If we regard the trait of character we speak of as something more than a sentiment, as an intelligent and hearty conviction both of duty and of privilege, it may well claim a prominent place on a day which reminds us, not only of the

heroism and the sacrifices of our revolutionary fathers, but of the greatness of the boon and the trust they have committed to our hands.

There are reasons, we incline to think, in the physical features of our State, for the ardent attachment to it so common to its sons. The dwellers in level countries are not apt, we suspect, to die of home-sickness. They are good at emigration; nor is it necessary to burn their ships. But put a native of the Swiss Oberland in the ranks of a foreign army; and it is not well, if you would keep him there—such has been the indication of actual experience—that he should hear sung or played one of the familiar airs of his country. His heart will die within him, as he listens, for the longing it hath toward the old crags and ravines, and the old vine-covered cottage. I know not exactly why this is; it may be scarcely worth our while to essay its philosophy. Possibly, it may come of the fact, that as the hills lift up their sides before us, more of the landscape is distinctly seen, and thus a deeper impression made on the heart. On flat regions, the optical angle of incidence must be mostly very acute. It may result partly from the love of variety, and of the beautiful, the picturesque and the grand. Or it may arise from a certain conformation of mental habitudes to surrounding objects, the boldness of the mountain scenery inducing a greater positiveness and energy of the affections. Be the cause what it may, there is not a little evidence of the fact. We may fitly apply to the

dweller among our own hills, what the poet has so aptly said of his European prototype :—

“ Thus every good his native wilds impart,
 Imprints the patriot passion on his heart ;
 And e'en those ills that round his mansion rise,
 Enhance the bliss his scanty fund supplies.
 Dear is that shed to which his soul conforms,
 And dear that hill which lifts him to the storms ;
 And as a child, when scaring sounds molest,
 Clings close and closer to the mother's breast,
 So the loud torrent, and the whirlwind's roar,
 But bind him to his native mountains more.”

There was a bearing, also, of your early history on the patriotic element. You are familiar with that long and fierce contest amid which the foundations of your State independence were laid. I need not detain you with any minute rehearsal. The cords of memory will vibrate here at the slightest touch. From trustworthy annals you have learned how pertinaciously New York laid claim to your territory, and how steadfastly she was resisted, not by the adverse claimant New Hampshire alone, but by the hardy and resolute settlers themselves ; how she established courts of justice for the disputed region, and obtained decisions making void the grants by which the indefatigable conquerors of the wilderness held the lands they tilled. I need not tell you how impossible it was against such men to enforce such decisions—decisions which I make bold to say, though a citizen now of the Empire State, were not fit to be enforced. I will not depict at large the stirring scenes that followed ;

the intense excitement, and frequent popular commotion ; the banding together of the people to maintain their rights ; the interruption of courts ; the occasional resistance of civil officers, and in one instance, at least, the shedding of blood even. Matters came in 1763 to such a pass, that an explicit order from England to the Governor of New York, to stay for the present all legal proceedings, was utterly disregarded. You remember how, under the conduct of the eccentric but heroic Ethan Allen, with his efficient coadjutor, Seth Warner, the cause of the Vermonters was vigorously maintained till the Revolutionary War opened ; how the interposition of Congress was then sought in vain ; and how, at last, in the Convention of Delegates held at Westminster, in 1777, it was resolved, that the disputed territory be formed into a distinct and sovereign State. Then and there, amid the glooms that enveloped the land, the star first gleamed forth, that now shines so brightly and proudly in the federal galaxy.

How a place in the Union was asked in vain for the new State, I need not say at length ; nor how through most of the War of Independence the unhappy controversy with New York was continued. It was in the county just south of that in which we are now assembled, that a collision took place between a military force of five hundred men, arrayed in support of the New York Court, and a body of "Green Mountain Boys," under the command of Colonel Ethan Allen. New Yorker though I am,

in my present relations, I am obliged to admit, that the commander of the company of five hundred was soon captured, and his men put to flight. In spite of the efforts of Commissioners appointed at length by Congress, among whose names is to be found that of the excellent Dr. Witherspoon; in spite of the solicitude and kind interposition of General Washington, whose views I may say, in passing, favored the original claim and the present limits of your State, and whose counsels in the premises were on her part fully complied with, it was not till February 18, 1791, eight years after the close of the revolutionary contest, and four years after the Federal Constitution was adopted, that her Independence was acknowledged, and she was received into the Union.

I am sorry that I cannot quite justify, in these matters, the conduct of my own adopted State. I do not marvel that indignation was awakened among the Vermonters. The sign of the old Green Mountain tavern at Bennington, it is said, was “a catamount’s skin stuffed, and sitting upon the sign post, twenty feet from the ground, with large teeth grinning towards New York!” It is a little difficult to account, satisfactorily, for the great obstinacy manifested by that State. Could I make these events synchronize with the reign of Peter the Headstrong, the occurrences of which are so vividly set forth by that veracious historian Diedrich Knickerbocker, there would be perhaps an easier solution. It would lie mainly in Peter’s iron will, and his

mortal dread of the Yankees. I can only say, *errare est humanum*; and all history shows that States are quite as human as individuals—with this difference, perhaps, that they have somewhat less of conscience. If New York erred, she has made some atonement for it in the respect she has long felt for this neighboring Commonwealth, and in the honor she has delighted to put on many of its sons. Adopted as her citizens, not a few of them have been placed by her in posts of high trust, both in the State government and the National. The catamount's teeth are out now; there is no longer on your borders, a hostile and defiant grin New Yorkward. Firmer now than the bands of iron which bind these States together, are the ties of mutual confidence and regard.

I have glanced at these painful scenes of early conflict, not to revive old animosities, but to illustrate various points, and especially to show how the principle of patriotism was nourished in the young heart of Vermont. What was the germ and the gist of the unhappy controversy? It was not that, in itself considered, a connection with New York was deemed less desirable than with New Hampshire. It was not the authority of New York, generally and abstractly regarded, that was dreaded by the Vermonters; it was primarily and chiefly a particular exercise of that authority. As we have already intimated, the title to their lands was touched. All that was dear to them in the homes they had found for themselves in the wilderness—

and which, though rough and unsightly, scantily furnished and beleaguered by fierce winds and pitiless storms, were yet girt about, as a New Englander's home must always be, by a thousand sanctities—the legal decisions we have spoken of, put to hazard. It was no merely mercenary strife they waged, like that of the hard-faced speculator, or the greedy and rapacious fillibuster. Thoughts of wives and children, of morning and evening orisons, of scenes around which innumerable filaments of love and of memory had twined themselves, urged them on. It was *pro aris et focis* they contended; and the very soul of patriotism was in the strife. More precious to them, every day of its continuance, became the soil for which they struggled, and the whole broad land of which it formed part. What Vermont felt in the morning of her life, has been inwrought most naturally into her whole being, and has been a controlling principle of her maturer years.

That in all this we utter no mere speculation, facts evince. It would have been no strange thing, if when she sought redress in vain at the hand of Congress, when she was refused a place in the sisterhood of States, and driven with contumely, almost, from the doors of the capitol, she had withdrawn in disgust from the great national strife. It would have been human nature to do so. Why should she spend her blood and treasure in behalf of those who had so deeply wronged her? She had no representatives in Congress; she had uttered no

solemn oaths and pledges there. She had a right, it might be forcibly argued, in virtue of her untrammelled sovereignty, to make terms with the common enemy. Terms she might easily have made. There was a willing mind on Britain's part; nay, it is obvious from history that tempting advances were made. The ægis of British power would have been readily thrown over the territory; almost any form of State government might have been secured; and while peace and quietness, comparatively, would have blessed the masses, ample largesses of gold and silver, and even the ribbons and stars, and all the proud emblazonments of nobility, might have been the portion of the dominant spirits. How seldom, in the world's history, has either a State or its leaders, been put to such a test. Did Vermont falter under the trial? She was shrewd; she was wise. The clear-headed men who directed her councils, were disposed, evidently, to turn to the advantage of truth and righteousness the unique position in which they found themselves. There is little doubt that on the British side fond hopes of prevailing with them were at times entertained. But they were better known, as with masterly sagacity, and without swerving a hair's breadth from the line of fidelity to their country, Thomas Chittenden, Ira Allen, and their colleagues pressed straight onward, through all the mazes of a delicate and difficult diplomacy, toward the goal of their wishes; as Colonel Ethan Allen contemptuously likened the splendid bribe proffered him in the

name of Sir William Howe, to the devil's offer of all the kingdoms of the world to our Lord ; and as the incorruptible Seth Warner came at last, after fighting his battles over again, in the delirium of his last hours, to lie down in the grave, leaving his wife and children well nigh penniless. How the great body of the yeomanry demeaned themselves, let many a revolutionary battle field proclaim. Let Ticonderoga, and Hubbardston, and Bennington, and Saratoga bear witness. Let an enemy speak—the haughty but ill-fated Burgoyne. “The Hampshire Grants in particular,” he says, “a country unpeopled and almost unknown in the last war, now abounds in the most active and most rebellious race on the continent, and hangs like a gathering storm on my left.” Gazing into the past, I behold the noble form of this youthful State, rising amid the clouds and tempests of the times, like one of her own mountain cliffs. I hear her cry to her sisters of the great family : “Scorn me, cast me out, if ye will ; seek even to tear from me rights and privileges dearer than life. I will still cleave to my country's cause and yours ; for her and for you I will pour out, freely as water, my treasure and my blood. Sooner shall Killington Peak topple down into the valley, or Mansfield Mountain yield to the winter's blast, than my feet depart from the high and perilous post of duty and of patriotism.” Who of us, as such reminiscences come over him, but blesses God that he first drew breath among these hills, or that at least the fostering hand of this

glorious State was gently laid upon his boyhood's brow?

Nor has the old love of country died out here. True, there are few of your citizens, it is to be hoped, who have adopted the motto, "My country, right or wrong." That, in the sense in which it is commonly used, is not the expression of a true American patriotism, but of the patriotism of Pandemonium rather. You love your country too well, with too high and holy a love, not to sorrow, with a peculiar bitterness, over any wrong-doing into which she may be seduced. You would have her delivered from evil. You would have her rise above all wrong-doing. You would see her "purging and clearing" her sight "at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance." You would have her abjure the principle, that might makes right; you would have her restrain alike the lust of gold and the lust of conquest. You say, indeed,

"With all thy faults I love thee still."

Yet it is never with such a blindness to those faults as to foster or sanction them. Vermont has, I know, been accused of lightly esteeming the Union; we have been pointed in proof of it to her enactments touching the fugitive slave law. I am not about to discuss that topic, but this, at least, I may say; if there has been in the matter referred to—and how this is I leave it for jurists to decide—the least departure from the strictest constitutional and legal principles, it has sprung, I am sure, rather from the

fervor than the failure of your patriotism. It is not because you have loved your country little, but because you have loved it much ; so tenderly and deeply, that you would see its glorious banner without spot or blemish.

So german to the associations and sympathies of the day, is the aspect of character thus presented, that I have dwelt upon it at what might otherwise be deemed a disproportionate length. In treating those that remain, I must study the more, as you will be glad to learn, compression and brevity. I speak, next, of the characteristic *energy* of your people. Sluggish spirits there doubtless are among you—timid, irresolute, inefficient men ; for such are to be found the world over. But more obviously here than in most other regions, they are exceptions and anomalies. Nature herself seems here to put her ban on all softness and effeminacy of manners. The men who can climb these hill-sides, and make their way over these mountain-tops ; who can thread the mazes of these yet lingering forests, and gradually uprooting them, subdue to the purposes of husbandry the rough and rocky soil ; who can not only endure the manifold labors of your brief and busy summer, but can face the sleet, and snow, and chilling winds of your long and inclement winter ; the men who can not only live but thrive here—as the great majority of your people do—must needs take counsel, not of a fearful and slothful, but of a bold and energetic nature. Working men are the great mass of the people—accustomed to endurance.

They are early taught to depend on themselves, to invent or create resources, to master difficulties. Having ordinarily no large patrimony, they become of necessity the architects of their own fortune. The whole process of discipline to which they are subjected, while it gives tone to the nerves, and iron firmness to the muscles, infuses courage into the heart, and determination into the will.

What results thus from the early nurture of the individual, has a connection also with the early training of the State. It was by fierce tempests, we have seen, that the cradle of the infant Commonwealth was rocked. Of the roughness and hardness then endured, strength was born. A certain boldness and effectiveness was inwrought into the common mind—reacting, as all general habitudes do, upon individual character. Nor have we lost yet, what all communities are slow to lose, the impress of our origin and early fortunes. Long time is it before the blood of Romulus and Remus ceases to quicken the pulsations of the great empire they have founded.

These general representations it were easy to substantiate by particular facts. Our whole history is full of them. In this respect, as in many others, that remarkable personage already referred to, Colonel Ethan Allen, may be considered as a representative man—as in his athletic frame, his vigorous mind, his lion heart, a type of the State in whose early affairs he took so prominent a part. Whether we note his youthful rencontre by night, as victorious

as it was valiant, with the fancied ghost in the wilderness, or behold him undertaking the first important enterprise of the revolutionary war, as he leads his forlorn hope through the wicket gate at Ticonderoga, and demands the surrender of the fort, "in the name of the Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress;" whether he utters his sententious and Cromwell-like proclamation to the people of Guilford, or with a boldness and force of appeal, reminding you of Lamartine amid the Parisian mob, pacifies and disperses the crowd who would have inflicted Lynch law upon the traitor Redding; whether you mark the steadiness and fearlessness with which, both in council and in the field, in despite of whatever difficulties, and at whatever hazards, he struggles for the independence both of his State and his country, or note the indomitableness of his spirit under his long and distressful captivity—as he spurns a proffered bribe, as with his manacled hands he puts a vaunting lieutenant to flight, as to the threats of a naval officer, he sarcastically replies, that "if they stayed till they conquered America before they hanged him, he should die of old age;" we see in him Vermont personified; we see substantially what every true-hearted Green Mountain Boy was in the days that "tried men's souls," and what the genuine Vermonter has ever since been.

While in every section of the State, and in relation to all its interests—in its farms and its factories, its roads and its bridges, its school-houses, academies, and colleges, its progress in all the appli-

ances and advantages of a Christian civilization—we have unmistakable evidence of the unconquerable energy of the people ; that same energy is finding channels and fields for itself in all the world. Of the universal Yankee nation, Vermonters, I am sure, are not the least universal. In what part of the land, or of the habitable globe—I had almost said the uninhabitable—are they not to be found ? Over what sea have they not sailed ? The windings of what river have they not traced ? Over what prairie have they not wandered ? To what mountain-top have they not ascended ? In what department of industry, of art, or of trade,—in what sphere of responsibility or of usefulness,—have not their powers found scope ? We who return to you to-day, would deem ourselves the least among all the thousands of Vermont's emigrant sons. But if to a town so limited both in extent and population, so quiet and retired, four or five hundred of us have been summoned back from so many quarters and stations ; what a re-union would that be—and what a history would be linked with it—of all who have gone forth from under the shadow of the Green Mountains ?

Another prominent trait of Vermont character is *intelligence*. To the development of mind, over which torrid regions are apt to send an enervating influence, our bracing climate cannot but be favorable. Here, if anywhere, we may look to see the *mens sana in corpore sano*. To the same result tends the comparative absence of luxury, that

“bane,” in all respects, “of elated life and affluent states.” Those various necessities for effort, which your circumstances impose, are favorable also to force of intellect. Necessity is at times, indeed, a hard taskmaster to the soul as well as to the body; but then there is much truth in the old adage, that she is the mother of invention. The scenes of your early history, it may be further said, had a powerful tendency to awaken and acuminate the general mind. By the contest with Britain on the one hand, and with sister States on the other, to what careful and painstaking investigations were the people led; to what a study of land titles, and questions of jurisdiction, and great principles of liberty and of government. It was not a vain thing for them, this exact and correct thinking; all their home joys and privileges were connected with it, all that was dear to them as a civil community. Vigorous thinkers are they apt to become, who instead of wandering in a region of merely abstract speculation, think in the very presence of great and momentous realities. The syllogism on which one’s all is suspended, is very likely to be compactly constructed. On the habits thus formed, all your institutions have exerted a fostering influence,—your eminently democratic civil polity, your noble system of common schools, and your excellent establishments of liberal learning.

The truest intelligence, while it maintains a happy equipoise, never despising the wisdom of

the ancients, nor seeking needlessly to overturn the established order of things, is yet favorable to all good progress. It has no squeamish dread of innovation. It has no desire either to stereotype or to petrify all present forms. Like the good householder, it brings forth out of its treasury things new as well as old. Such is the intelligence which has characterized all your history. In all its departments, progress has been manifest. Of this habitude of the common mind, there is one unique expression in the very framework of your government. I allude to the provision for a Council of Censors. It was designed, at first, to form the best possible system of government, and to guard most carefully against maladministration. Yet it was not forgotten that, through infirmity or depravity, abuses might occur; and it was foreseen, too, that as the world moved onward, changes might be called for in your organic law. On the science of government, as on all others, more light might break. The constitution provides, therefore, for the election, once in seven years, of a body of men, charged with the duty not only of reviewing State affairs during the septenary past, but of inquiring, also, whether amendments of the supreme law be not necessary, and of calling, if they see fit, a Convention for that purpose. Other State Constitutions do, indeed, point out a possible method of effecting needful alterations of their own provisions; but not one of them—so far as I know, not another constitution

in the world—ordains a deliberative body, a sort of periodic fixture, for the express purpose of securing such alterations. To your civil polity alone, belongs what may be appropriately termed *an organ of progress*.

Time would fail me to rehearse all the names which, in the various walks of life, have done high honor to the intellect of your State. Of the clerical profession, there was Dr. BURTON, the acute and indefatigable metaphysician, whose name will be remembered so long as the "taste and exercise" controversy holds a place in the history of theological dialectics. There was the lamented WILBUR FISK, the first President of the Wesleyan University at Middletown, a man of large and varied attainments, knowing no superior, perhaps, as an orator, in the denomination to which he belonged. There was Professor MARSH, a serene dweller on the loftiest heights of science, a fond explorer of the innermost recesses of the palace of Wisdom. There was JEREMIAH EVARTS, the friend of the Red Man, the William Penn of recent times, the prophet-Secretary, whose vision of our country's destiny stirred so mightily all Christian hearts. There was ROYAL TYLER, the man of letters and the able Judge, concerning whose Charges it was often doubtful which was most to be admired, the clearness of the thought or the beauty of the diction. There was WILLIAM CHAMBERLAIN, the learned professor in my own alma mater, whose star of bright promise set so early. There was

SILAS WRIGHT, too, the far-seeing statesman, not unworthy to be associated, in the councils of his country, with that trio of great men whose names have just been given to the tablet of history. If I may speak of the living, there is PRENTISS, with his "meekness of wisdom," and PHELPS, with his force and fervor of eloquence; to both of whom the Bar and the Senate have been wont to listen with deferential regard. There is COLLAMER, too, distinguished alike on the Bench and in the Cabinet. There is GEORGE P. MARSH, the man of many tongues, and of thought varied and profound enough to freight them all; a man of weight and of mark, both in the walks of legislation and the sphere of diplomacy. There is JOHN G. SAXE, I can only add, who in the polish and piquancy of his almost Horatian verse, is giving evidence to the world that the spirit of poesy has a home among your mountains.

I had thought of specifying, as another of the leading characteristics of Vermont, *the love of liberty*. But on this point, after all that has been said, I need not enlarge. That early history of which I have spoken, what was it all but a two-fold struggle for freedom? To a double discipline in the school of human rights, was the infancy of your State subjected, and her profiting has been manifest down to the present period. We have already seen how unfalteringly she clung to the cause of her country's emancipation. It was in the same spirit, the spirit of the whole community,

that Ethan Allen declared, "I am as resolutely determined to defend the independence of Vermont, as Congress are that of the United States; and rather than fail, will retire with the hardy Green Mountain Boys into the desolate caverns of the mountains, and wage war with human nature at large." Is it strange that the sons of Vermont should have still an unutterable horror of oppression, a lively sympathy with the enthralled, of whatever clime or hue; that they should utter a shout of exultant joy at every step in the progress of genuine freedom? Can you not pardon something, if need be, to a spirit like this?

Slavery, fellow-citizens, could not breathe the air of these hills. It is too bracing for her old, decrepit form. The bright sunlight that shines here, would but dazzle and torture her purblind eye. The voice of these unfettered, babbling, laughing rills, would be but as discord to her selfish, sullen heart. She loves rather the barren plain—the low and cheerless marsh, with its poisonous exhalations—the region of burning sands. Liberty is the mountain nymph; and here she has ever delighted to dwell. Were she driven from all the world besides, here, methinks, in these old familiar haunts, bedewed by the tears, and hallowed by the blood of her martyrs, she would find still a refuge and a home.

I cannot conclude without glancing at one other conspicuous characteristic of this favored community, *religious principle*. I say not *moral principle*,

though I include it; for I hold, with the Father of our country, that there can be no sound and abiding morality which is not founded on religion. Religion, like the granite formation, as it towers up nearest to heaven, so it lies deepest in our nature. It originates and sustains whatever is fairest and most noble in human character and condition. The great failures of France, after such great struggles for the attainment of liberty, have been mainly owing to the fact that she has no open Bible. Give her a religion, not of form, but of the Word; not of genuflexions and prostrations and processions, but of holy principle rooted in the heart; and you have secured a fulcrum for your moral lever, more effective than that which Archimedes fancied. That both the history and condition of your State are what we have to-day represented, is owing mainly to the prominence of the religious element.

You sprang, as a people, from the old Puritan stock. The first settlers of the region came from the Bay State; and the accretions that followed were mainly of the same general character. The solitudes, and the prayers, and the benevolent regards of the Christian men in the older parts of New England, were early and largely busy with these new settlements. They sent missionaries here; they scattered among the people religious books. I remember to have met with some of those books, in that meagre town library, which, in the days of my boyhood, was kept in my

father's dwelling; and from them I received some of my earliest impressions of the great themes of Revelation. That library was originated, if I mistake not, by donations from Connecticut. The early citizens of the State were not indeed all religious; yet the influence of Christianity was then, as it has ever been, wide-spread and potent.

I see proof of this in the purity and steadfastness of that patriotism which I have depicted. I see it in the comparative good order which prevailed, even in the most troublous times; in the disposition generally felt to be regardful of law, and respectful toward its functionaries, even when the foundations of the State were mainly unsettled. Commotions there were, indeed, as we have said—collisions between the people and those whose authority they did not acknowledge. Yet it is no slight proof of the prevalence of religious principle—it stands in significant contrast with the anti-rent disturbances of a neighboring State—that in all those twenty-six years of controversy touching the rights of the settlers to their own hearth-stones, life was taken, so far as appears, in but a single instance. A like significance has the peacefulness, and industry, and comparative absence of crime, which have marked all your subsequent history. I read the same fact in the sanctity of your Sabbaths; in the multitudinous church-spires which from your hills and valleys point heavenward; in the purity and power of the

gospel ministry here; in the streams of Christian benevolence which are ever flowing out from among you; in the martyr spirit which has sent your Bingham, your Winslow, and your Spaulding, to publish in other and distant lands that Christianity in which we rejoice. I have yet another and more recent evidence, that the religious element has power here. It is that victory which you have gained—not a final one, but the presage of it—over a foe far more to be dreaded than hostile armies, a foe cruel and fearful as was never wild beast from your mountain-forests—the property-wasting, health-ruining, soul-destroying demon of Intemperance.

Such is the State, ye gathered sons of Weston and of Vermont, to which we gratefully point as the home of our boyhood. We bless God for all it has been, both to us and to the world. We are thankful that as the strength of the hills passed into our souls, and as to the four winds the spirit of enterprise or the sense of duty led many of us forth, we found in all our broad land a field of effort so hopeful. No oppressive monopolies frowned upon us, no superincumbent strata of caste crushed us to the earth. The avenues of industry, of traffic, of literature, of political life, were open to us all. Provided we were but true men, genuine Vermonters, it mattered little if, like Bias of old, we bore about all our treasures in our own persons. It was quite as well that we should hew out, through the rock even, our own pathway. For

whatever we have accomplished, we are indebted primarily, indeed, to the great Giver of all good, but subordinately and largely to those peculiar formative influences with which our early life-time was crowded. We return to grasp by the hand those we left behind us; or if, in the case of some of them, death has forbidden us that joy, to drop anew a tear to their memory. We thank you all for your kindly greeting, your generous, open-hearted, magnificent welcome. We heartily congratulate you on whatever of individual progress, or of social advancement, has gladdened our sight. We bid you God-speed in all the worthy and noble purposes you cherish for the future. To you, young men of "the hill country," the fathers of many of whom we learned in our childhood to love and reverence—to you, our successors in the incipient struggles of life, toward whom our hearts yearn, to-day, with inexpressible sympathy—we cannot but utter, in closing, a single word of kindly monition. May you clearly discern, not only the hopes and solitudes which attend your every step, but the peculiar obligations which rest upon you. While the world opens before you, as it opened before us, filled with perils indeed, but with golden opportunities, may you prize as it deserves, your glorious birth-right. May you gird yourselves, as becomes your early privileges, with strength and righteousness, and have occasion in coming years for even higher strains of thanksgiving than ours.

I said, at the outset, we are here again. Yet we are not all here! From our re-assembled band, we miss more than one familiar form. To the dull, cold ear of death, even your loving summons has been all in vain. We shall look upon the faces of those departed ones no more—they shall look no more upon this home of their childhood. Their work is done; and so will ours soon be. Let us not murmur at the thought; but meet so manfully the yet remaining responsibilities and trials of life, that the world shall be the better for our having lived in it; that when we sink to our rest, we shall leave memories of us amid these hills, pleasant as those rays of the sun which linger after his setting on yon mountain's summit.

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An address, delivered at a re-union

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