LOCAL MATTERS.

REPORTED FOR THE PITTSBURGH GAZETTE.

TWO HUNDRED AND THIRTEENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LANDING OF THE PILGRIMS.—The members of the New England Society met at the Saint Charles Hotel, on Thursday evening, to celebrate the two hundred and thirteenth anniversary of the arrival of their pilgrim forefathers. At an early hour the sons and daughters of Puritan old New England commenced assembling, and spent their time very pleasantly in social conversation until supper was announced, which they all retired to the dining room.

The assembly was called to order by Mr. H. W. Williams, and a blessing pronounced by the Rev. Mr. Howard.

After the guests had partaken of the good things so abundantly spread before them, by their worthy host of the Saint Charles, Mr. D. R. Miller, H. W. Williams, Esq., rose and requested them to fill their glasses, and prepare for the regular toasts, which were then read in the following order.

G. F. Gilmore, from the Committee on toasts not being present, sent to the President the following:

Our Pilgrim Fathers—Their mission was to extend the domain of civilization, and lay the corner stone of a Great Republic.

Plymouth Rock—Some call it the "Blarney Stone of America." Let us all *kiss* it then and be of *sound*.

The Plymouth and Jamestown Colonies, and the Colony of William Penn—The three germs of a mighty empire of Freemen, whose bounds are the shores of a Continent.

The Old Plymouth Colony—The mother of six Republics. These children are already of giant stature, but have not *done growing* yet.

The Yankees in Pittsburgh—We are native children of New England, and adopted children of Pennsylvania, and we are proud of both. We will never forget from whence we came, nor where we are.

New England Ladies—Too good to *need* flattery; too sensible to *desire* it.

"The Old Thirteen" Colonies—A baker's dozen of rebellious *"brats"*, that, nearly broke their old mother's heart

The United States—A common origin, and common interests unite them. *Patriot* be the *hand* that would divide them.

New Hampshire—The Switzerland of New England: Starke, Cass, Woodbury, Webster, specimens of the soldiers and statesmen reared amid her granite hills, and nurtured in her common schools.

The Friends we left in New England—affectionate remembrance for the dead—love and good wishes for the living.

The President then rose, and said, that he felt deeply the honor conferred upon him, in calling him to preside over so large and respectable a meeting of the sons and daughters of *New England*, on an occasion so interesting as the present. It was an honor of which any one might be proud, but at the same time a position which involved no inconsiderable degree of responsibility, and he very much regretted the absence of the talented gentleman, who had presided over their last anniversary meeting. It was however the duty of all to contribute, however humbly, to the general entertainment, and he would freely give his mite.

This was not an occasion of mere festivity.—They had not assembled only to interchange friendly regards and greetings. Their purpose was higher and holier, since they had come together to show their regard for "the pilgrim fathers," their *fathers*, the early settlers of New England, and to commemorate their landing on Plymouth rock. This was an event worthy of commemoration in all future ages—it formed an epoch in the history of the world! He did not revere them simply because they were the first to settle on the bleak shores of New England—he loved them chiefly on account of the causes which compelled them to make that settlement—the glory of God, and the advancement of the Christian faith. Ardent lovers of freedom, they yet prized their religious views above all other considerations, and claimed their right to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences.

For this they suffered persecution in Germany, for this they resolved to fly and seek an asylum, first, on the shores of Holland, and next to cross the billows of the broad Atlantic, to find a home on a barren shore, among savage Indians, and beasts of the forest. They came not with an array of pomp and power. Their very name *pilgrims* was a term of reproach. No fleet protected their frail vessel, the Mayflower. No powerful baron of the old world lent them aid—They came under the protection of Almighty God, with their bibles open, and their trust reposed in him. In the narrow cabin of the Mayflower, they formed their compact, and laid the foundation of a government such as the world never saw.

"Not as the conqueror comes,
They, the true hearted came;
Not with the roll of stirring drums,
And the trumpet that sings of fame;

Not as the flying come,
In silence and in fear;—
They shook the depths of the desert's gloom
With their hymns of lofty cheer.

Amidst the storm they sang,
And the stormy heard, and the sea;
And the sounding aisles of the dim woodsrang
To the anthem of the free.

The ocean eagle soared
From his nest, by the white wave's foam,
And the rocking pines of the forest roared—
This was their welcome home.

Ay, call it holy ground,—
The soil where first they trod!
They have left unstained what there they found,
Freedom to worship God!"

A liberal minded Englishman, of the present day, had said that he knew of no spot so holy as that on which the pilgrim fathers landed, except that most holy one, where the Savior died on the cross—the just for the unjust. If such was the opinion of an Englishman, how should *they* review it! The pilgrims were men eminently fitted for the work they were called on to accomplish, and they evidently anticipated future power in the midst of their present feebleness. Their chief regard—their great concern—was for posterity, and they had made an abundant supply for their wants—more especially for their intellectual wants. They had founded "Common Schools," open to the children of all their citizens, and as their wealth increased, they established academies and colleges. Much of the subsequent prosperity of our country was owing to the fact that they had provided so liberally for the interests of education.—He saw around him, many eminent Pennsylvanians, and he was sure that they would agree with him, when he said that it William Penn had made similar provisions for common schools, the old Keystone State would have been far in advance of her present position. Since then, their forefathers had manifested such a regard for them, it was but proper that *they* should exhibit a due degree of reverence for their memory, and while upon this subject, they should not forget those kindred spirits, the Lutherans, of Germany, the Covenanters, of Scotland; and the Hugenots, of France. Their sun had set, but he prayed for the rise of another—or European liberty was lost." Though the prospect was darker than when they met two years ago, the spark yet lived, and burned. He trusted that it would blaze up, and that despotism would be overthrown.

Mr. W. concluded by giving a toast: "The pilgrim fathers, and the old reformers, may they be held in perpetual remembrance."

The President of Allegheny County—not appearing to say in Pennsylvania.

This toast called up Judge Lowrie, who said that he saw he would be compelled to pay for it in the usual coin.

After some happy introductory remarks, the learned Judge observed that they celebrated the day as peculiarly devoted to the pilgrim fathers—he might be permitted to refer to it as a type of similar pilgrimages yet to be.

He saw around him persons, in whose veins flowed Celtic, Germanic, and perhaps old Gaulish blood. Certainly many of the faces were not those of New Englanders. If they would, with him, mount the light-house of history, and look back through the dim vistas of three thousand years, they would behold the extreme limits of population fixed around the borders of the Caspian sea. If they would observe closely, they would see tribe after tribe coming down upon the unoccupied plains of Europe. Watching them as they moved on westward, they would see the Cymbrians and Celts—then came the Germani, driving other tribes into the Western Ocean, and the islands near the shores of the Continent. Then came the Scythians, and next the Goths and Vandals—from whom, he had no doubt, many present were descended. (Laughter.) After they had established themselves firmly, they crossed the seas, and drove the Celts into the Highlands of Scotland and Wales, and into Ireland. The conquerors remained here until they were driven out in their turn, by the Normans. Anglo Saxons, Celts, Normans, and all, finally mingled in Great Britain, thereby, in all probability, greatly improving the race. (Laughter.) His New England friends saw one pilgrimage alone, but there had been many before it, equally important, as regarded their bearing on the destinies of the world.—England had sent forth colonies, which settled in various parts of Asia and America; but the greatest of all was that which landed on the rock at Plymouth. But that colony did not stop there. Westward the star of Empire takes its way, and the descendants of the Pilgrims are now settled on the borders of the mighty Pacific. Where will they go next? To China, and so on, until they or their descendants, will arrive at the point from which their forefathers started, *the Caspian sea*. (Tremendous applause.)

By one of the company—Honorable A. W. Loomis, a most accomplished advocate, and one of the brightest ornaments of the legal profession.

The Hon. A. W. Loomis rose to acknowledge the compliment, and made an apology for *not making a speech*, which, in itself, was considered by the company as a very eloquent address. In compliance with the wish of Mr. Loomis, we omit his remarks, which, though short, were very amusing, and received, as they merited, great applause.

"William Penn"—Blessed are the graves that keep it.

The Rev. Mr. Howard was loudly called for, and rising, said, that they had given him two very good texts on which to speak, but he felt discouraged, if the learned gentleman who had just sat down considered his remarks as a mere apology for a speech, what ought a speech to be? The subject of the toast had doubled the common weight in which they all resided, and of which many of them were natives. He thought well of New England—he claimed connection with it, since, though born in the Keystone State, some pilgrim blood flowed in his veins. Though the pilgrims were good and great men, braving as they did, the dangers of the deep, and, of unknown wilds, for conscience sake, yet William Penn was not one whit behind them.

The reverend gentleman then went on, at some length to relate an anecdote, in relation to the manner in which William Penn had been converted to the Quaker persuasion, by listening to a sermon on faith, delivered by a clergyman in Cork, thereby incurring the displeasure of his father, Admiral Penn, of the English Navy.—Having obtained a grant of territory from the King of England, he came to America, and planted a colony of which religious toleration was a distinguishing characteristic, and in which all were permitted to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences. William Penn had been willing by a great and popular historian of the present day, Mr. Macauley, but he did not believe that his accusations were true. Penn had, it was true, the ear of the King, but he used it to secure the liberty of fifteen thousand persecuted members of his own faith, and of many persons of other denominations. He well deserved their esteem, and should be held in everlasting remembrance. They were living in a Commonwealth founded on justice and religion, for every foot of land, though freely granted by a bad King, had been fairly purchased from its Indian owners.—Faithfully had the treaties he formed with them been observed. They had never had to extend the sword, and the sun and moon should endure, and, to the credit of a people now fast fading away, be it said, they have ever religiously adhered to them.

The President Judge of the Court of Oyer and Terminer, and Quarter Session—His labors are Herculean—We hope that no new cases will result from our meeting to-night.

Judge McClure was called on to acknowledge the toast, and one of the company requested him to "charge the jury."

He remarked that he had done that once before that day, already, and in so doing had, as he thought, discharged himself. He was not a revolver, or a double barreled pistol, and if he should go off, he was afraid he would make a mere flash in the pan.

Seriously, when he went there that night, he had not the most remote idea that he would be called on for a speech. He held a bill of the play in his hand, and saw nothing about it there.—(Laughter.) He had heard politicians frequently say that they were too full for utterance—so was he. (Laughter.) Any man who had eaten his way, as he had, (laughter) through such a bill of fare, must feel as he felt—too full for utterance. He had been at many meetings where ladies and gentlemen sat down to talk together, yet he never was at one where they were so equally distributed. Every man seemed to have his sweetheart by his side. At any he ever attended before, the ladies were all at one end, like the raisins to a badly baked plum-pudding. (Laughter.) In his youthful days he had read the *Pilgrim's Progress*, (laughter.) It had, it was true, no connection with the pilgrim fathers, but somehow reminded to him at the time. John Bunyan, that master of allegory! John Bunyan, through whose portrait his infant mind became so distorted that in never saw a likeness of that good old man, without thinking of the head of John the Baptist, *in a charger*! John Bunyan! He was one of the great lights of the world at what stage of the pilgrim's progress they were then. They all remembered the *fight with the lion*—(applause)—it was not there. They were not, certainly, on the highroad to Heaven, in their passage. They had a traveller up the hill, and had arrived, over pleasant discourse, at supper.

The leading subject of his present address to the ladies, proceeded to call on one of his local brethren for an exposition of the "Blue Laws," among which, he maintained was to be found a law against kissing, while at the same time, he saw, around him more than a peck of lasses. This crime was the most atrocious, since they profess to be descended from the pilgrim fathers, who had enacted such stringent laws against kissing.

Judge McClure then proceeded to descant upon the laws passed by those who landed upon Plymouth Rock, forbidding any person to wear long hair. He did not know what he had said—what he was going to say—but of one thing he was certain, and that was, that the rock of Plymouth was one of the most sacred relics in the world—for very fragments were treasured in our cabinets—its dust was sacred, and yet our nation was scarcely of age. Where was the dust of a thousand avenues, leading to a thousand marble halls, the entrances to a thousand palaces of crowned kings? Gone forever! But the rock of Plymouth taught us a mighty lesson, and that was, that greatness does not live with trappings, but with goodness. This nation was born when the pilgrims landed on that barren rock—no, no, not barren—it was prolific in lessons of patriotism and religion, to every man, woman, and child, now in existence. The lessons with which this event inspired them, were richer than all the dust of California—if the gems of Golconda—all the rocks of golden Pactolus, or of yellow mountains of Ophir. The commencement of the eminence of these nations was wrapped in mystery. Who could point to the precise moment at which Pizarro, Cortez, Rome, even England, sprang into being? Here, however, was a nation which, with its first inspiration, breathed the truths of liberty and religion! After a happy allusion to the empty distinctions of the old world, Judge McClure referred to the new. Its stars had multiplied, and its stripes increased. Its flag staffs pierced the skies, and its flag fanned whole continents. The eagle soared to the sun, and perched on flag staff, after flag staff, until he flew from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

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