Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2015

https://archive.org/details/addressbyrevcarl00stap_0

ALLEN COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 1833 01114 8753

AN

ADDRESS,

BY

REV. CARLTON A. STAPLES, OF MILWAUKEE, WIS.;

A POEM,

BY

HON. HENRY CHAPIN, OF WORCESTER, MASS.,

AND

OTHER PROCEEDINGS,

IN COMMEMORATION OF

THE TWO HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

INCORPORATION OF MENDON,

MASSACHUSETTS.

WORCESTER:
PRINTED BY CHAS. HAMILTON,
PALLADIUM OFFICE.
1868.

THE
NEWBERRY
LIBRARY

1774695

TWO HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY.

MENDON, MASS.

F
84452
.49

Mendon, *Mass.*

An address, by Rev. Carlton A. Staples, of Milwaukee, Wis.; a poem, by Hon. Henry Chapin, of Worcester, Mass., and other proceedings, in commemoration of the two hundredth anniversary of the incorporation of Mendon, Massachusetts. Worcester, Printed by C. Hamilton, 1868.

2 p. l., [3]–89 (*i. e.* 95) p., 3 l. 24½cm.

Paging irregular.

1. Mendon, Mass.—Hist. I. Chapin, Henry, 1811–1878. II. Staples, Carlton Albert, 1827–1904.

Library of Congress F74.M59M5 1-11517 Revised

PRELIMINARY PROCEEDINGS.

At a town-meeting of the citizens of Mendon, held March 25, 1865, it was voted "To choose a Committee of three persons to make arrangements for celebrating the two hundredth anniversary of the incorporation of the town," and John G. Metcalf, Nathan George and Silas Dudley were chosen said Committee.

At a town-meeting, held March 17, 1866, a majority of the Committee made a report, recommending the 15th day of May, 1867, as the day for the celebration; and that a Committee of Arrangements be chosen which shall have the charge of all matters pertaining to the celebration.

The Committee of Arrangements chosen by the town, after filling vacancies occasioned by resignations and adding new members, consisted of the following persons: Putman W. Taft, Charles A. Davenport, Austin D. Davenport, John G. Metcalf, John S. Gaskill, Henry A. Aldrich, Lysander Grow, Gilbert Gaskill, Albert W. Gaskill, Willard H. Swan, Samuel Gaskill, Laban Bates, Perry Wood, Austin Wood, Silas Dudley, Jr., Gustavus B. Williams, Olney Cook, Scammell Aldrich, Alanson Taft, Edward H. Taft, John R. Hayward and David Adams.

March 30, 1866, the Committee met and organized by the choice of Putman W. Taft as Chairman, and John G. Metcalf as Secretary.

At the same meeting it was voted to invite Rev. Carlton A. Staples, of Milwaukee, Wis., to deliver an Address, and Hon. Henry Chapin, of Worcester, a Poem, on the day of the celebration.

In discharging their duties, the Committee held frequent meetings, at which the various arrangements were made, and sub-committees appointed for their execution.

The following persons were chosen as officers of the day appointed for the celebration:

Dr. JOHN G. METCALF, President.

VICE PRESIDENTS.

Eben'r W. Hayward, Uxbridge,
William Knowlton, Upton,
Paul Whitin, Northbridge,
John S. Gaskill,
P. W. Taft,
Perry Wood,
Asa Pickering, Bellingham,
A. C. Mayhew, Milford,
Jas. K. Comstock, Blackstone,
Laban Bates,
H. A. Aldrich,
Lysander Grow.

COMMITTEE OF RECEPTION.

Henry A. Aldrich,
Perry Wood,
Lysander Grow,
P. W. Taft,
John S. Gaskill,
A. W. Gaskill.

GEN. WILLIAM F. DRAPER, CHIEF MARSHAL.

ASSISTANT MARSHALS.

Col. JAMES H. BARKER, Capt. A. S. TUTTLE, Capt. WILLIAM EMERY, LUCIUS LOWELL, CHARLES H. SPENCER, HERBERT A. BENNETT, NATHAN WHEELOCK, HIRAM O. GIBSON, and HENRY BATES.

H. A. ALDRICH, TOAST MASTER.

The day of the celebration, May 15th, in the early morning, opened with no very favorable prospect of fair weather—the whole sky being obscured with heavy and watery looking clouds. Very soon, however, the clouds broke away and the appearance of the sun gave assurance of the pleasant day which followed.

At an early hour, delegations began to arrive from Bellingham, Uxbridge, Upton, Milford, Northbridge and Blackstone, with numerous bands of music, and which, with those from outside the family circle, swelled the number of those present, until, by the estimation of competent observers, from four to five thousand had arrived.

At 10 o'clock A. M., a lengthy procession was organized, under the direction of the Chief Marshal and his aids, and marched through some of the principal streets to the Unitarian Church, where the address was to be delivered. The following was the order of the procession:

American Brass Band.

Milford Encampment of Knights Templars.

Chief Marshal and Aids.

Military.

Firemen.

Committee of Arrangements.

Selectmen of Mendon.

President of the Day, Vice Presidents, &c.

Orator, Poet, and Invited Guests.

(Incorporated 1719.)
Bellingham Delegation, Escorted by Societies.

(Incorporated 1724.)
Uxbridge Delegation, Escorted by Societies.

(Incorporated 1735.)
Upton Delegation, Escorted by Societies.

(Incorporated 1772.)
Northbridge Delegation, Escorted by Societies.

(Incorporated 1780.)
Milford Delegation, Escorted by Societies.

(Incorporated 1845.)
Blackstone Delegation, Escorted by Societies.

Citizens of Mendon on Foot.

Carriages.

The programme of the services in the Church was as follows:

1. Welcome Home, by Dr. John G. Metcalf, President of the day.
2. Voluntary, by the American Brass Band, Providence, R. I.
3. Reading of the Scriptures, by the Rev. Augustine Caldwell.
4. Anthem, by the Choir.
5. Prayer, by the Rev. Adin Ballou.
6. Hymn, "Come Thou Almighty King."
7. Address, by the Rev. Carlton A. Staples, of Milwaukee, Wis.
8. Original Hymn, by Rev. Adin Ballou. Tune—"*Auld Lang Syne.*"

O, Ancient of eternal days,
  Whom countless worlds adore,
Whose goodness wakes all nature's praise,
  And tunes her choral lore;—
On this fair hill our fathers reared
  An altar to thy name,
By children's children still revered,
  Who now thy blessing claim.

When first those hardy pilgrim sires
  Made here their humble home,
And kindled their domestic fires
  Beneath the vast blue dome,
A howling wilderness o'erspread
  This now delightful land,
And savage life was wildly led
  By many a warlike band.

And once where now a numerous seed
  Uplift their peaceful hymn,
The hideous Indian's wrathful greed
  Hurled desolation grim;
Drove hence our settlers to the coast,
  Laid waste their infant town,
And o'er its ruins danced their boast,
  With scorn's triumphant frown.

We stand on consecrated ground,
  With embered homes inwrought,
Whose green and fruitful soil around
  With hallowed dust is fraught;
While sainted forms from sunken graves,
  Whose spirits wing the skies,
And winds that stir yon lakelet's waves,
  Inspire our sacrifice.

Then rise with grand memorial voice,
O, congregation bless'd,
And bow your heads as ye rejoice
In mercies thus confessed,
To Him that sitteth on the throne,
And Christ the lamb divine,
With rapture make your worship known,
Around this ancient shrine.

9. Music, by the Band.

10. Benediction, by Rev. Richard Coleman.

The choir, under the leadership of Mr. Warren Batcheller, Mr. O. B. Young presiding at the organ, performed their part in the programme much to the satisfaction of the crowded auditory. The band also elicited much applause by their tasteful and accurate performances.

The church, having been recently thoroughly repaired, presented a pleasing prospect among the stately elms and evergreens with which it is surrounded. The interior was decorated with flowers and evergreens. The words, "Welcome Home," in large letters, being attached to the arch in the rear of the pulpit, was an appropriate motto for the address of the President of the day.

The stated services in the church being concluded, the procession was re-formed and marched to the tent, which was pitched on a beautiful lot opposite the cottage house of A. A. Taft. The tables were spread for twelve hundred persons, by Mr. William Tufts, of Boston, and that number were present. The following programme was intended for the order of the exercises in the tent, but, owing to some unforeseen impediments, was not fully carried out:

1. Music, by the Band.
2. Blessing, by Rev. Adin Ballou.
3. Dinner.
4. Music, by the Band.
5. Poem, by Hon. Henry Chapin, of Worcester.
6. Toasts, Sentiments and Responses.
7. Music, by the Band.
8. Benediction.

Nothing occurred to disturb the harmony of the occasion, and the festivities of the celebration were terminated by a Promenade Concert and Ball at the Town House.

Opening Address, by Dr. John G. Metcalf, President of the day:

Friends and Fellow Citizens:—It has been made a part of my pleasant duty to say a few words, by way of introduction to the memorial services to which we have invited you on the present occasion.

I should be lacking in courtesy to those who have kindly consented to speak for us to-day, as well as to yourselves, were I to detain you from the intellectual repast which they have provided, by any lengthened remarks of my own.

We are assembled upon no ordinary occasion. But forty-nine towns, over which the Massachusetts colony exercised jurisdiction, have been able to celebrate their 200th birth-day.

Two hundred years ago! and what changes have been wrought in that period of time? Two centuries have moved the line of the frontier from the Blackstone to west of the Missouri.

Two centuries back, and our forefathers stood picket upon these green hills of ours, ready to respond to the interrogatory, "Watchman, what of the night?" *To-day*, we are assembled, undisturbed by the war-whoop of the Indian, or the alarms of war.

We have come together, around the old hearth-stone, to exchange our congratulations—to brighten the golden chain of friendship—to reproduce and fix the pleasant memories of the past, and to offer our devout acknowledgments to God that the same goodness, the same paternal love which watched over and protected the fathers, is still vouchsafed to the children.

I close, my friends, by bidding you, in behalf of the men and women of Mendon, a cordial and heart-felt welcome home, to the amenities and festivities of this commemoration of our natal day.

ADDRESS.

ADDRESS.

BY THE REV. CARLTON A. STAPLES, OF MILWAUKEE, WIS.

In the fall of 1663 or the summer of 1664, a small company of settlers, numbering perhaps a dozen families, hewed their way through the wilderness to the spot where now stands the village of Mendon. Here they made the first clearing, erected the first rude dwellings, organized the first civil and religious institutions within the bounds of the town. They came from Braintree and Weymouth, bringing their few household goods piled into carts, or on the backs of horses, and driving their cattle before them. It was a bold push into the unbroken wilderness, of twenty or twenty-five miles, and the journey must have occupied two or three days. The year before, viz. in 1662, they had obtained from the General Court a grant of a new plantation in the Nipmuck country, eight miles square, and had bought the land from the Indian sachems pretending to own it, paying therefor the sum of twenty-four pounds sterling. On the 8th of September, 1662, says the deed, Great John set to his hand and seal, and delivered the deed to Moses Payne and Peter Brackett,—the men in whose names the deed was taken. Subsequently, Messrs. Payne and Brackett assigned to the selectmen of Mendon all their right and title in the new plantation. Afterwards, King Philip set up a claim to some portion of it for himself and the Narragansetts, and offered to sell it to the Dedham folks.

Whereupon the selectmen petitioned the General Court that they of Dedham "be not allowed to buy of Philip what has been already granted to them and paid for."

Let us glance at the boundaries of this new plantation. Just where Charles River, running almost due south from the factory at South Milford, bends at right angles to the east, there stood a white oak tree,—the stump of which remained until within the memory of some now living,—known as the Dedham Tree; this is the first mentioned bound. The line ran a mile eastward on this river to a black oak on the North side, thence four miles wanting forty rods due north, thence eight and one half miles west, thence eight south, thence seven and one half east, and thence four miles wanting forty rods north to the Dedham Tree. The deed fixes the north and south lines in a curiously indefinite manner. The Plantation was to extend five miles north of the path leading to Nipmuck Great Pond, and three miles south,—an Indian path, probably, from some point on Charles River to Mendon Pond,—but where the path was tradition saith not.

Broad as this new plantation was, however, our good fathers seem never to have been fully satisfied with their territorial limits. We find them complaining to the General Court immediately that the town was "meanly provided with meadow." In truth, like many of their descendants, they had an itching to own all the land that joined theirs; and whenever they saw a particularly fine piece of meadow or upland beyond their lines, they could not rest until by purchase or grant it belonged to Mendon. Evidently they had a genius for annexation. First, they obtained a grant of all the meadow lands lying within two or three miles of their boundaries; then they purchased of the Indians a large tract on their northern border and extending toward Marlborough; and, finally, they obtained jurisdiction over two thousand acres on their eastern line, because it lay conveniently and temptingly near, and the people living there, came to Mendon to church.

What a splendid tract of country for a town this original grant embraced! The Charles River ploughs half its eastern front. The Mill River cuts it completely through from north to south. The West River, the Blackstone,—then called the Nipmuck,—and Mumford's River, sweep through its western border and unite to form what the settlers called the Great River. Long reaches of meadow, flooded by the autumn rains and the winter snows, whose brooks afford convenient sites and abundant power for saw-mills and shops, natural ponds fed by springs that gush out among the rocks, grand old hills rough with granite boulders and ridged by ledges,—Misco on the north, Waterbug on the south, Wigwam and Caleb's in the centre, and a score of others scarcely less elevated,—with broad ridges running from north to south that mark the course of the rivers, unite to form a wonderful variety of surface, and give a delightful charm to the scenery.

What finer view than that from the top of Wigwam Hill, where the eye takes in at a single glance on the west, the villages of Whitinsville, North Uxbridge, Uxbridge Centre and the Woolen Mills, and the long line of the Uxbridge hills, the three rivers that wind through those broad intervales, the scores of neat farm houses that dot the country all over, and the blue peaks of the Wachusett and the Monadnock in the distance. Or the view from Caleb's Hill to the east and north, embracing the towns of Bellingham, Franklin, Medway, Medfield, and Milford, with the Blue Hill of Milton and the Dover hills in the background? Or what more charming landscape than that seen from Neck Hill,—the dividing ridge between Milford and Mendon,—at some point where the eye takes in this long slope from the village down to Muddy Brook, and northward embracing farm after farm, with broad fields of grass and grain, orchards and pastures, and the quiet sleeping village beyond? At this season of the year, when fields and woods have put on their fresh green robes, and the soft air and the busy fingers of the sunbeam have covered thousands of

apple trees with their rich bloom, no sweeter, lovlier scene can be found.

A splendid tract of country it was indeed that the sachem Great John and others parted with for twenty-four pounds, when he set to his hand and seal on the 8th day of September, 1662. To-day scarcely less than twenty-five thousand people are living within its bounds, and I am safe in saying that it would be difficult to find outside of our large cities, an equal extent of territory richer in all the varied industries of an intelligent and enterprising people. But how must it have appeared to those brave, hardy men who a little more than two hundred years ago planted themselves here with their wives and children? It was a dense, unbroken forest, heavily timbered with oak, chestnut, cedar and pine. If they came in the autumn, as it is most probable, they could barely erect a few log cabins and make a small clearing before winter set in. Their stock was kept on the hay they were able to cut in some of the open meadows on the rivers and around the ponds, and the grain they brought from Medfield and Marlborough, the nearest settlements. All their provisions, except what they killed in the woods or caught in the streams, came from the same places, over roads that were mere paths cut through the wilderness, and across bridges of logs laid over the rivers. If one was sick or dead, they must go to Medfield for the doctor and minister, the Rev. John Wilson, who was physician for both body and soul.

What a winter of loneliness and suffering the first must have been! Locked in here from the world, the snow lying deep through the woods, their cattle scantily fed and poorly sheltered, the wolves and savages prowling around, their miserable dwellings destitute of every comfort, their tables supplied with only the coarsest food, no papers, books, Sunday preaching or new faces, to enliven the dreary months. What wonder if there was much sickness of body and faintness of heart, longings for the cheerful firesides and home faces which they had left behind? But all through

the long winter, the axes rung merrily in the forests, the stately chestnuts and oaks came thundering down; from great cedars and pines clapboards and shingles were rifted, and planks sawn by hand, to make their dwellings more comfortable. And when spring at last unbound the streams and brought back the birds, the cheerful sun looked down upon a little cluster of rude cabins, and many broad, rich acres, ready for gardens and fields.

The first settlement was made along the line of what are now the Providence and Uxbridge roads. The former was called the ten rod road, and the latter the country road. The civil affairs of the new Plantation were managed, at first, by a committee appointed by the General Court, consisting of four persons—Messrs. Atherton, Clap, Lusher and Parkes, of Dorchester and Roxbury. They decided that none but *honest* men and of good report were to be received as settlers. Second, that every man bringing to the town an estate of £100 was to receive one hundred and fifty acres of land—forty acres in a house lot, and the remainder in meadow, swamp and upland, and those of smaller or larger estates in the same proportion. All subsequent divisions of land, (of which there were eleven), were made on the same basis. They drew lots for choice in selecting sites, that it might be decided according to the will of Providence, and half a house lot each was set aside for the ministry and the school.

The Committee order that an able and approved minister be settled with them, and advise that "five or seven meet persons" be chosen to manage their affairs. They agree with Benjamin Alby, of Roxbury, to erect a corn mill for the use of the settlers, and grant him a twenty-acre house lot and fifty acres additional on the side of the river farthest from the town, with an equal right in all future divisions of land. The site was undoubtedly that of the Alvin Allen place, and the fifty acres was in the plain beyond Mill river. Here was the first grist mill, or mill of any kind, within the bounds of the town. The last recorded act of the Committee was the appointment of Colonel Crowne "to enter all the

public acts respecting this plantation up to Feb. 2nd, 1667.' In April following, Joshua Fisher makes return of his survey of the township of Quinshepauge to the General Court, and recommends that it be called "*Mendham*." The report is accepted, and on the 15th of May, 1667, the act of incorporation is passed, and *Mendon* becomes a town.

The first town meeting, under this act, was held on the 7th of June, 1667, when Colonel Crowne, Benjamin Alby, Ferdinando Thayer, Daniel Lovett and John Tomson, Sen., were chosen selectmen. On the 24th of April following, the town voted to give Mr. Benjamin Eliot a call, "with his father's leave," to be their minister. Mr. Eliot was the youngest son of the great Indian apostle, John Eliot, and engaged at this time with his father in the Indian Missions at Natick and Grafton. Though he did not accept the call, it is probable that he was the first preacher of the gospel within the bounds of this town. At this meeting the people seem to have been greatly in earnest. They voted to call a minister, and to build "a meeting house with all speed, and to locate it near Jos. White's saw pit, on the highest part of the land," which must have been near the old bank building. In September following they voted "to make the meeting house twenty-two feet square and twelve feet studd, with the roof gathered to a seven foot square and a turret on top." The roof, therefore, was of the now fashionable French style, and the steeple was in the centre! It was built of logs, without floor, seats or windows, and with the timbers and roof open, so that, standing within, you could look up into that famous turret on top!

In the winter of 1668–9, Mr. John Rayner was preaching here, and in a petition of the inhabitants to the General Court for more meadow, they say, God has given us good hope to enjoy the gospel and gather a church here by the help of Mr. Rayner whose labors we have had comfort of this winter, and trust that he will settle with us; besides several good people, members of churches, offer themselves to come, had we meadow to supply them. But the people

were disappointed in this hope of settling Mr. Rayner, and acting on the principle of the man who, finding a horse shoe, immediately went to work to build a stable for the horse, they began to build "a house for the minister's encouragement who might settle with them."

The minister's lot seems to have been where the Caleb Hayward place is, and all we know of the appearance of his house, built by the town, is, that it "had two fire-places and a little *lean-to* sixteen feet long, with a chimney, as a kitchen, towards Goodman Cook's house."

The building of the minister's house proved effective in bringing a minister, and in December, 1669, the Rev. Joseph Emerson was settled, under the following stipulations, viz: "First, that he should receive £45 yearly—£10 at some shop in Boston or in money at this town, the remainder of the half year to be made up of 2 lbs. of butter for every cow, the rest in pork, wheat, barley, and so to make up the year's pay in work, Indian corn, Rye, Peas, and Beef." Second. "The third year after he is settled to be paid £55 yearly, and so as God shall enable them." Third. That the house be made fit to move into with all convenient speed. Fourth, to get for him twenty cords of wood yearly. And, lastly, that if the major part of the people inhabiting here shall carry it so unworthily toward Mr. Emerson as that there cannot be a reconciliation made amongst themselves, then it is agreed to refer the difference to the churches of Medfield, Dedham and Roxbury, to hear and determine it. This agreement is signed by Mr. Emerson and twenty-two of the inhabitants, among whom we find the familiar names of Aldridge, Thompson, White, Cooke, Reed, Thayer, More, Staples and Tyler.

The first assessment made by the selectmen was in the summer of 1668, for the sum of ten shillings "to pay Caleb the Indian, for killing the wolf near the town," and subsequently there was another assessment of seven pounds for killing these formidable enemies to the growing flocks of the settlement. But our fathers had other troubles

more serious to them than prowling wolves or savages.

We can readily understand some of the many hardships of their position, in this place twenty-five miles from magistrate or minister, or anybody "able to marry, and give the constable his oath," with a wilderness to subdue and the institutions of civilized and Christian society to establish. Every bushel of grain and pound of beef, pork and wool which they sold, to be transported to Boston, and every article of comfort or necessity which they required, to be brought back over roads of which only backwoodsmen can have any conception. But there was more than this.

We read in the book of Job that on a certain day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, Satan came with them. So it was here, so it is everywhere. Men never attempt to build a secure fold for the saints and the excellent of the earth, but the other kind are *sure* somehow to get in. And though the "Hon. Committee" put up over the gate "none but honest men and of good report admitted here," where the sons of God were to make their home, yet Satan came also. It is evident that they had very serious dissensions among themselves, nor is it difficult to understand how these dissensions may have arisen. Only a small portion of the inhabitants were freemen. Eight years after the first settlement there were but twelve, including the minister, when the number of householders was nearly forty. To be entitled to the privileges of a freeman at this time, a man must be a member of some orthodox church, and hold a certain amount of real estate. Two-thirds of the population here were shut out from this distinction and the privileges belonging to it, either wanting the required amount of property, or soundness of religious opinions, or standard of character, though they were compelled to share in all the expenses and dangers of the infant settlement.

We can easily understand how this exclusion from the rights and privileges of citizenship on the ground of heresy in doctrine or poverty of purse, how the investing of a

favored few with the dignity and importance of freemen, because they were a little richer or sounder than the mass, must have been the source of great discontent, bitterness and strife. It raised up a class of bold, defiant, reckless men, who had no particular interest in the affairs of the church or state, who had little or nothing at stake in the government, who felt deeply wronged by its dealings with them, and who regarded ministers and church members as linked together to keep them down. And at the same time it drew into the church a class of men with whom religion was only a stepping-stone to privilege and place, and who were continually bringing it into contempt among honest men. Certain it is that the twelve freemen, who, in 1672, petitioned the General Court to take "this poor place" under their immediate care, and heal if possible the dissensions of its people, had a very stormy time of it. They were disgusted with their experiment at town government, and desired the Court to appoint a committee to take charge of their affairs and re-establish peace among them, and so hinder "the workings of Satan."

One Job Tiler seems to have been Satan's especial representative in this plantation. The first we hear of Job, he lived in Roxbury, and was arrested and fined for stealing hay from the Indians at Natick. Afterward he came to Mendon. How he should have got in here where only "honest men and of good report" were permitted to settle, it is difficult to understand. Probably he came as Satan usually does, in the guise of an angel of light. Job was ordered by the selectmen to come and work on the minister's house; but he never came. They sent the constable to summon him to appear before them on a certain "Friday, at one of the clock, at Gregory Cook's house, and answer for contempt of their orders." But Job told the constable "that he could n't and he would n't come, but if the selectmen had more to say to him than he to them, they might come where he was,"—the insolent hay-stealer. Imagine the look of the selectmen when this answer was

reported to them! But what could they do? Job would not work on the minister's house, and he had insulted the town's authority. They "resolved to make complaint to the magistrates, of his mis-carriages on the Lord's day and at public assemblies, if he do not submit." But Job held out for five years, and in the meantime the minister's house was finished, and not a day's work had he done on it. At last, however, probably on the appearance of the committee of the General Court, he submitted, and the record says, "gave satisfaction for that offence." Stubborn, irreverent Job Tiler! Good blood was in thee, nevertheless,—for John, afterwards deacon of the church, was thy son, —and a long line of useful, brave and good men came of thee! Who but Captain Nathan, thy grandson, could be trusted by the town with that forty pounds voted in 1737 to make the fish run up Pawtucket Falls. And who but Captain Nathan that dug and watched and coaxed so patiently to make them come up to these hungry regions from the sea, could represent the town so well at "the Great and General Court," through the stormy days that preceded the Revolution,—and when that desperate struggle came, then an old man, was foremost in all matters relating to the public safety and weal? It was a good day for the town when "Job Tiler" came here, though he never worked on the minister's house, and grossly insulted the selectmen.

We come now to troubles in the town's history more serious than the scoffing of heretics and the mis-carriages of Sabbath breakers. When travelers described to Thoreau, the Concord naturalist and misanthrope, the wonderful things in Arctic or tropic regions, he would say, "I have observed the same phenomena in Concord." It is somewhat the case in the history of our town. The mustering of armies, the sack and conflagration of houses, the murder of men, women and children by the barbarous hand of war, which form the great staple of history, have taken place in this our native town, in the woods and fields and roads most familiar to our feet.

Eleven or twelve years have passed since first the settler's axe was heard on this spot. Wide and fair now is the clearing. Not less than forty houses are scattered up and down this eastern and southern slope, from the Seth Davenport place to Alby's mill at the Allen place, and from Muddy Brook to the Pond. Broad and rich are the fields of corn, wheat and clover, pleasant the little dwellings with their gardens and lilac bushes, and a few apple and cherry trees. Sheep, cows and oxen begin to be numerous in the rich pastures. Hard-working men and women have made the wilderness smile and blossom as the rose.

The honorable committee have healed the dissensions, and peace and security have settled down upon "this poor place." July has come, and the men are busy in cutting their meadows and gathering their first crops of English hay. On the fourteenth of that month, 1675, the Nipmuck Indians, led by Matoonas, at the instigation of King Philip who was then in the neighborhood, fell upon the town and killed four or five men working in a field. Who they were and where they fell we have no means of determining. It is singular that an event which must have made so deep an impression on the people, has left so slight a record in our history, and that we cannot tell where this, the first blood shed in that terrible war within the bounds of the Massachusetts colony, was spilled. Others were killed afterwards in the neighborhood, among them the wife and son of Matthias Puffer.

A dark cloud of anxiety and fear now settled down upon the place. With tears and lamentations they tenderly gathered the bodies of the slain and laid them away in some pleasant spot, we know not where. The houses and farms remote from this central point were abandoned, and the people fled to other places, or gathered here to save their flocks and growing crops. All sense of security was gone. They only dared to go abroad in companies. While some worked in the fields and gardens, others watched for the lurking foe. While the wife was milking the cow, the hus-

band stood guard with the loaded musket. They carried their guns to church, and worshipped God, momentarily expecting the murderous cry of attack. A garrison of twelve men was formed, and placed in charge of Sergeant Joseph White. A stockade was built, and a guard nightly set over the town. The Council of Magistrates sent a troop of horse to range the woods between Mendon and Hingham. A small force was sent to strengthen the garrison, and the inhabitants ordered not to desert the place, on penalty of the forfeiture of all their rights here. Many had already gone to Rhode Island, and other places. Those who remained, were gathered into the largest houses. Their cattle were driven off to places of safety or stolen by the Indians, and many fine fields of corn, wheat and rye were destroyed or lost. On the 27th of July, Capt. Henchman was ordered to march into the Nipmuck country to treat with the Indians, and secure, if possible, those concerned in the attack on Mendon. Two months later we find Rev. Mr. Emerson, the minister, and Ferdinando Thayer sent as messengers to the council, to ask that the Praying Indians, of Hassanamisset or Grafton, be removed to Mendon, and employed in erecting fortifications. The petition was granted, but the Indians deserted their Christian teachers to join their own kith and blood. Three weeks later, we have a letter from Mendon, written by Lieutenant Upham, giving the Council an account of the desolate condition of the people. He says there are but twelve men in garrison here, and "they are but poor helps, with their arms very defective. He has just returned from a long expedition in search of the foe, which was entirely unsuccessful."

On the same day a report of the above expedition was written here and forwarded to the Council by Captain John Gorum, the commander. He and Lieutenant Upham had joined their forces at Mendon, amounting to eighty-eight men, and marched in pursuit of the Nipmucks through Hassanamisset, but could find nothing of them. Says "they had been fourteen weeks in the field and are much worn

out, but will march on the morrow towards Mount Hope." In the meantime the means of subsistence were fast becoming exhausted in the town. The few remaining cattle were killed to maintain the soldiers, the people were huddled in great discomfort into two houses, they were almost destitute of arms and ammunition, and feared the soldiers nearly as much as the Indians. The garrison send a letter to the Council representing that the town's people will give them no assistance on the fortifications, and that some of them say "if a thousand Indians should attack the soldiers they would not stir out of the house to help them." The old Job Tiler spirit of insubordination was still rife among them; and no doubt, looking forward to a long, dreary winter when they would be almost cut off from the world, they were anxious to desert the town and return to the Bay. Captain Henchman is sent out here in November to look after the Nipmucks again. He writes to the Council on the day of his arrival that the inhabitants of the town "are in a pestered condition." The next day he writes and says his scouts have just returned from Hassanamisset, and report that the Indian houses there are still standing, and the doors fast; that they found about sixty bushels of corn, and that the Indians are building wigwams at a new planting; that he shall march to their new fields, or go in the night to capture them. Two days later he writes he has marched to Hassanamisset, and found nothing new. Would have brought away the corn but the Mendon people would not assist him. Calls this a distressed place,—says the people have not fire or lodging-places to answer their necessities,—that they cannot subsist if they stay; says in conclusion, "I am about to march away and leave the command with Sergeant White, as I found it, having pressed upon them the sad consequences of breaking up a town, rending a church, dismantling a garrison and encouraging the enemy." Evidently the situation is becoming desperate and the fortress of Mendon must be dismantled.

On the sixth, Secretary Rawson writes him that he has

sent five hundred biscuits to Mendon and five hundred to Marlborough, for his soldiers, and orders him to bring the corn across the river, and secure it from the enemy. On the 10th of November, 1675, the valiant captain gives an account of his attack on the Indians, at Hassanamisset. With twenty-two mounted men, "in the close of the night," he marches to Hassanamisset, then, discovering their fire, dismounts and marches "in two files, himself leading the right, and Lieutenant Curtis the other," to within musket shot of the wigwam, when their dog gave the alarm. He orders some to fire, halloos and runs on to charge as fast as he could. The lieutenant first reaches the wigwam and receives a mortal shot at the door. He supposes his men were following, but finds there are not above five in all—the others having mysteriously disappeared. "One soldier more," he says, "was wounded, who cried out exceedingly, disheartening them with me at the wigwam. I called on my men to fall on and shoot into the wigwam, which no more doing, them up with me fell off. I cried of them for the Lord's sake to stay from retreating as we did. I gave up myself and them with me for lost, and it was a peculiar mercy we were not all slain. As soon as mounted I would have had my men ride up and fire, to get off the wounded and secure the rear, but all were upon flight, though I threatened to run them through. At our return we find only the two first wanting. My lieutenant is a great loss to me and have not to supply his place, but I beg a sanctified use of this and former frowns; for we might and had an opportunity to *cill* all in the wigwam off." How utterly the poor captain's hopes must have been dashed by the disastrous result of this expedition. "This sad frown," as he calls it, came from no want of courage or skill in him, but a panic seized his men and they became uncontrollable. The Council immediately sent him twelve troopers well equipped and mounted, who are ordered to go to Captain Henchman's assistance at Mendon, or wherever he may be.

This is nearly all we find in the records concerning King

Philip's war in relation to Mendon. The town must have been abandoned soon afterwards by the garrison and the inhabitants. In February, 1676, soon after the attack on Lancaster, the Indians burned all the dwellings and that wonderful meeting-house. The fruits of twelve years of hard toil were swept away in a few hours, and this flock in the wilderness scattered over the country. During the spring and summer of 1676, the war was virtually brought to a close. The chiefs of the Nipmucks were the first to make peace with the English. They delivered up Matoonas, who led the attack on Mendon, and he was bound to a tree and shot by men of his own tribe, on Boston Common. His body was hung in chains beside that of his son, who had been previously executed, and both remained there, a ghastly and sickening spectacle, for years. Peace and security were not restored, however, for two or three years. Gradually the old settlers came back, and in 1678 we find them here in considerable numbers. Rev. Mr. Emerson never returned; he died in Concord, in 1680, the ancestor of six generations of distinguished clergymen and scholars.

The re-establishment of the town, after the war, was a slow and difficult work. The former inhabitants generally came back, but they had saved little from the wreck of their property and were all poor, and it was many years before they felt entirely secure from the Indians. They ask the General Court to prohibit the Indians from coming into their territory, and also to forbid the sale of spirituous liquors to them. Three murders, they say, have already been attempted here by drunken Indians. They complain of Robert Tafte for trading with them, and ask that he be restrained from such traffic.

It is indicative of the character of the early settlers that the first public business transacted by them, after the war, except the choice of selectmen, was in relation to building a house for the minister "that should first settle with them." They had lost almost everything—they could only re-establish the town by facing great hardships and dangers; but

poverty and privation should not hinder them from maintaining the worship of God in "this poor place," and keeping themselves and their families under the influence of religious teaching! In a noble spirit of self-sacrifice they began, at once, to build again the Lord's house and prepare a fitting place for the minister.

The second meeting-house was probably erected on the site of the first, but we find nothing about its location or appearance. The minister's house was "24 ft. long, 18 ft. wide, and 14 ft. between joynts, with a lean-to and a gable end"! and the frame cost twenty pounds. Rev. Grindal Rawson was called to be their minister, October 4th, 1680, at a salary of twenty pounds and board, with a horse to be kept for his use. To the new parsonage he brought his young wife, the daughter of Rev. John Wilson of Medfield; but his earthly felicity was not quite perfect, for the chimneys of the new house would not carry up the smoke. Whereupon the town chose a committee, consisting of Ferdinando Thayer, Simon Peck and Abraham Staples, "to take down and rectify Mr. Rawson's chimneys, and see that the work be carried on to the town's best advantage, according to their prudence and discretion." A minister was of some importance in those days, when even the smoking of his chimneys was a matter of public concern.

After his settlement, Mr. Rawson's salary was fifty-five pounds a year. He remained the minister of this church until his death, in 1715,—thirty-five years. In a petition to the General Court from the inhabitants of Mendon, he is spoken of as "an able, faithful, painful minister of the Word, by whose labors we do hear the joyful sound, a famine whereof we hope is esteemed by us a more fatal punishment than a famine of bread." He was a noble, self-sacrificing Christian minister. With his salary of fifty-five pounds a year,—less than two hundred and fifty dollars,—he reared a family of eight sons and five daughters, giving them all a good education, and preparing them for high positions in society. Grindal Rawson, Jr., was graduated

at Harvard College,—probably the first graduate from this town,—and became the minister of South Hadley. His grandson, Deacon Edward, took an active part in all the affairs of the town, was representative for many years in the General Court, and a delegate to the Continental Congress. Three of the daughters of the Rev. Mr. Rawson married clergymen. He was undoubtedly one of the cultivated men of that period. He learned the Indian language, that he might preach to the natives in their own tongue. For years he gathered a little congregation of them in the church here, on Sunday evening, and made great efforts to instruct them in the truths of religion. In 1709 he proposed to the town if they would employ a Latin schoolmaster, to board him for *four* years without charge, in order to provide the best means for the education of the youth. The proposition was accepted, and a school established here, where boys were fitted for college at the town's expense, more than an hundred and fifty years ago. Cotton Mather, in his Lives of Good Men, says of Grindal Rawson, "Such services as he rendered the country are pyramids"! Thirty years after his death, the town voted to erect a monument over his grave, in grateful remembrance of his character and work. Grindal Rawson and Susanna Wilson, his wife, lie side by side in the old burying ground, and many generations have risen to call them blessed.

The population seems to have increased quite rapidly after the re-establishment of the settlement. The first tax list that has been preserved in our records, is that of 1685, which contains fifty-three names, and probably represents upwards of two hundred people. It contains the familiar names of Chapin, Thayer, Cook, Torrey, Taft, Aldrich, Fairbanks, Hayward, Holbrook, Warfield, Staples, Tyler,* Reed, Wheelock, Alby, Darling, Pratt, and Thompson, the ancestors of the principal families found here to-day. On this list Samuel Hayward pays above one-twentieth of the

* Formerly spelled *Tiler*.

whole tax, and Josiah Chapin, Joseph White, John Thompson, Wm. Holbrook, and James Lovett, about the same. On the tax list of 1704 there are seventy-three names, of which nearly one-fourth are Tafts, Thayers, and Cooks, which indicates that these families have held their present relative numerical strength in Mendon for one hundred and fifty years.

At this time, each man belonging to the militia company or train band, was obliged to cut wood for the minister one day in the year! The first saw-mill that we have any account of, was erected between Rock Meadow and School Meadow, by Josiah and Angel Torrey, in 1691, the site now occupied by the saw-mill of the late Obadiah Wood. That spot has probably been occupied more than one hundred and seventy-five years for a similar purpose, and a portion of School Meadow was held by the Torrey family for nearly the same period. In 1690 the town had outgrown its meeting-house, and voted to build a new one, which was the third. We know nothing about its location and appearance, except that it was thirty feet square, and sixteen feet between joints, and that "it was let out to John Andrews of this town." Deacon Warfield was "discharged from his tax for the minister's salary, for taking care of the meeting-house, sweeping out the same, and keeping the doors from being dammified." I suppose the "dammifying" of the door was by putting up notices on them. Subsequently, there were four posts erected in different parts of the town, on which all warrants and notices were posted, and a vote passed that anybody might tear down notices of strays put on the meeting-house.

Josiah Chapin was the first representative to the General Court after the King Philip War. He was chosen in 1692. It is singular that the town should have been so long without representation in that body. Probably it was on account of the poverty of the people, who found it very difficult to pay their town and county taxes, and who preferred to be unrepresented rather than carry the additional

burden of paying their representative. In 1693 the town chose Timothy Winter as their representative; but not feeling quite satisfied as to his capacity to fill the place, they appointed a committee of three, consisting of Josiah Chapin, Samuel Hayward and Josiah Torrey, to instruct him. They gave him written directions how to act on all matters pertaining to the town's welfare, and then charged him, if any new business came up where he was in doubt what to do, to consult them immediately. The seventh division of the town lands was made in 1719, when there were one hundred and fifty persons, including the ministry and the school, entitled to shares or lots, which would indicate, if these were heads of families, a population of six or seven hundred.

The first mention that I have found of a public school, is in 1701, when Deacon Warfield was chosen schoolmaster, the town paying him "£5 for six months for his pains, and a penny a week for each child that came to school." After this a Latin teacher was employed, but who he was we have no means of determining. As the settlement extended farther from the Centre, west, south and east, the people became greatly dissatisfied that the school should be kept through the year in this village. Accordingly, in 1714, they voted to employ "Martin Pearce to keep school for the year, and to give him £17, and find him board and dyett," the school to be kept "six months at the schoolhouse, and six months on the outskirts of the town,"—meaning by outskirts, what is now Uxbridge and Milford. The next schoolmaster was Wm. Boyce, who was to receive twenty-eight pounds per annum "if he kept the school in one place, but if he kept a *moving* school, then he should have £30; and what time the said Boyce is unnecessarily absent from the school, or what time is lost, he shall give an account to the selectmen, and so much of his wages be reducted proportionably."

The entire expenses of the town in 1721 amounted to £110, of which the minister received one-half, the repre-

sentative £16, the school master £20, and the balance was used for the poor and for miscellaneous charges. A fund had been gradually accumulating from the sale of school lands, the annual income of which was devoted to school purposes. In 1727 this fund amounted to nearly £180. "School Dames" were first appointed in that year, "for the outskirts," and Milford and Uxbridge had each a school taught in a private house. We find the first mention of Quakers in the same year, and also of irons for the town stocks; not that the latter had any relation to the former, for Mendon always maintained a large hospitality towards the Quakers, and voted, in 1742, to allow them to take two rods in width off from "*the ten rod road*" to enlarge the yard of their meeting-house, provided it was not more than fourteen rods in length. Josiah Marshall, A. M., was employed for four years, at £30 per annum, to keep school, according to the Province law, first, for six months in the school-house, and afterwards wherever the selectmen thought most likely to serve the general interest. He was succeeded by Joseph Dorr, Jr., and Moses Taft, both natives of this town, at that time in Harvard College, who were employed "to keep school by *spells*, as they could agree with them." In 1750 the first school-house was erected in Milford, then called East or Mill River Precinct, near the meeting-house, and thus one of the outskirts was provided for.

The present system of district schools was established in 1759, more than a hundred years ago, when the town was divided into eleven districts for highway and school purposes. For a long period each district drew from the town treasury only what it paid in on the school tax, which of course operated badly for the poorer districts in the outskirts. During the period immediately preceding the Revolution, the the annual sum expended for schools was generally £60 including the income from the school fund. The town seems to have held this fund in trust and paid the annual interest as a part of the town expenses. During

the Revolution, when the burdens and sacrifices of the war fell heavily on the town and the currency became as worthless as that of the late confederate states, this fund seems to have been absorbed and lost.

One of the most prominent objects in the memory of the people of this town is the old meeting-house that stood close by the burying ground, on the road leading to Dam Swamp. It was abandoned by the church after the erection of this edefice, in 1820, and for twenty-five years was used for town meetings and other secular purposes. How well we remember it, standing there forsaken and dilapidated, looking down upon the silent abodes of the dead. Many of us stealthily tried our skill in smashing its windows, though in the night, when darkness brooded over it and the graves around, some of us I know had an awe of it which led us to pass it with hushed and quickened step. That old meeting-house had a history that reached back to 1730, when the town voted to build it,—one hundred and eighteen years from the time when it was finally pulled down. It was the fourth meeting-house erected here. It had its origin in storms and strife. There was a long and desperate struggle over its location. The outskirts of the town, Milford and what there was then of Blackstone, pulled to the east and the south. At length it was fixed there by the majority, but the minority was strong enough to withhold supplies from time to time, and block the wheels, and so it was six or seven years before it was finally completed. A grand time the people had when the new church was raised. They made a great effort to erase all the old differences and grudges, voting a barrel of *Rhum* to introduce an era of general good-feeling. But the mal-contents were not to be won in that way, and so on the night after it was raised, they undertook to cut it down with axes; but an alarm was raised and the sacrilegious rebels dispersed. It created a tremendous sensation. A town meeting was instantly called, and the selectmen instructed "to find out who, by cutting, had damnified the meeting-house!" With what re-

sult we know not. In 1849, when it was demolished, the marks of the battle were seen on its sound and massive posts—a century and a quarter after they were made.

This was the first meeting-house that contained pews. But they were built by individuals at their own expense—the town selling the space for them, and giving "the elderly men who bore the greatest charge in the town," the first choice.

The Reverend Joseph Dorr, the third minister, successor and son-in-law of Mr. Rawson, was settled in 1716, and remained here until his death, in 1767—above fifty-one years—a long, peaceful and prosperous ministry. Many of our grandfathers and grandmothers were baptised by Mr. Dorr, in the old meeting-house. There were gathered the people to deliberate on the state of the country when the news came of the passage of the Stamp Act, and of the Boston Port Bill, and of the Boston Massacre. There were heard speeches, full of a great earnestness for the rights of men, and a holy devotion to the sacred cause of liberty and country. There were gathered the little bands of brave men and true which the town sent out to fight in the great struggle for Independence, to receive the parting "God-speed" of neighbors and friends, and invoke the blessing of the Almighty on themselves and the cause. And there they came when the struggle was over, and the victory won, to pour out their souls in thanksgiving to God who had given them the victory! What a thrilling history of anxiety, doubt and sorrow, of enthusiasm and rejoicing, of faith, hope and love, centers in that venerable house where, through the storm and sunshine of a hundred years, the people gathered to deliberate on the affairs of the country, and worship their God.

The part taken by the people of this town in those difficulties with Great Britain, which culminated in the war of the Revolution, was a most honorable one. The questions which brought on the struggle were met by our fathers in a firm and manly spirit. So far as we can ascertain from the

records, there was but one sentiment among the people, and that was to resist to the last every invasion of their charter rights and privileges. But when they saw a determined and persistent purpose, on the part of the mother country, to disregard all her pledges made to the American colonies, and trample upon their constitutional rights as British subjects, they were among the first to proclaim the great ideas of free, republican government, and strike for the prize of independent national existence. I am not well enough acquainted with the state of opinion existing at that time among the several American colonies, and among the different towns of this colony, to be a competent judge in this matter; but of this I am very confident, that no town within the bounds of Massachusetts was much, if at all, in advance of this in discerning what the true issue was and proclaiming in what it must end. It is my impression, from the little I do know about this matter, that some of the first utterances of the principles of the immortal Declaration were heard in that old meeting-house, from the lips of Joseph Dorr, that the first whispers of independence were among the people of this town who had caught the idea from his glowing soul. I make this claim in no spirit of boasting or self-exaggeration. It is not for the mountain peaks to boast that they are first lighted up by the glory of the coming day. It is not for the warm and sheltered villages to boast that they first feel the soft breath of spring and blush into beauty and fragrance. No more is it for the country, the town or the man, in which the breath of the Almighty kindles anew the flame of liberty, humanity or religion. In every great era of progress, the same ideas and the same spirit take possession of the minds and hearts of men, "as the wind bloweth where it listeth — thou canst not tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth." So it was in the two years preceding the revolution, the sacred fires of liberty were lighted in ten thousand souls. The great ideas of the Declaration silently dawned on the minds of the people. They were in the air they breathed and the light by which they saw.

It is a matter of record, however, that more than three years before Jefferson wrote the Declaration, and the Continental Congress proclaimed it, its fundamental principles were embodied in a series of resolutions reported to a town meeting held here, adopted, and entered on the town book. On the tenth of February, 1773, a letter was laid before the town from the Committee of Correspondence of the town of Boston, showing "wherein our invaluable charter rights and privileges were infringed upon by sundry acts of the Parliament of Gr. Britain." The town voted to choose a committee of seven freeholders, to consider a matter of so great importance, and prepare resolutions proper for said town to act on at the adjournment of the meeting. The committee consisted of Joseph Dorr, Esq., James Sumner, John Tyler, Deacon Ed. Rawson, Lieutenant Joseph Johnson, and William Torrey. At the adjourned meeting, held March 1st, 1773, the committee reported the following resolutions:

1. *Resolved*, That all men have naturally an equal right to Life, Liberty, and Property. Therefore,

2. *Resolved*, That all just and lawful Gov't must necessarily originate in the free consent of the People.

3. *Resolved*, That the Good, Safety and Happiness of the People, is the Great End of Civil Gov't; and must be considered as the only rational object in all original compacts and Political Institutions.

4. *Resolved*, That a Principle of self-preservation being deeply planted by the God of Nature in every Human Breast, is as necessary, not only to the well-being of Individuals, but also to the order of the Universe, as attraction and cohesion are to the preservation of material Bodies, and the order of the natural world. Therefore,

5. *Resolved*, That a Right to Liberty and Property, (which are natural means of self-preservation), is absolutely *Inalienable*, and can never lawfully be given up by ourselves or taken from us by others.

Finally, When we reflect on the arduous enterprise of our forefathers in transplanting themselves to the Wilds of America, the innumerable fatigues and dangers, the vast expense of treasure and of blood that attended their beginning and carrying on a Settlement here among the Savages of the Desert; and at the same time consider the prodigious accession of wealth and power to the mother country from these extended Settlements, it still sets a *keener* edge on the sense of our numerous grievances. And we cannot help viewing the late rigorous

and burdensome Impositions laid on us by the hand of the Parent Country, as a departure from those truly noble and magnanimous Principles of Liberty which used heretofore to add a distinguishing Lustre and glory to the British name.

"*Voted*, that the foregoing Resolves be entered on the Town Book, that our Children in years to come may know the sentiments of their Fathers in regard to their invaluable Rights and Liberties."

On the fourteenth of July, 1774, the town took action concerning the Boston Port Bill, and the blocking up of the harbor of Boston. How grandly these words sound as we read them to-day:

"Conscious of no alternative between the Horrors of Slavery, or the Carnage and desolation of Civil war, but suspension of all Commercial intercourse with the Island of Great Britain, the inhabitants of this Town do come to the following Resolutions:

1st. That from henceforth we will suspend all commercial intercourse with Gr. Britain, until said Act for Blocking up the harbor of Boston be repealed, and the restoration of our Charter Rights be obtained.

2nd. That we will not knowingly purchase, or suffer any one under us to purchase, or consume, in any manner, any goods, wares or merchandise, we shall *know*, or have good reason to *suspect*, to be imported into America from Great Britain.

3rd. That if any persons preferring their own private Interest to the salvation of their now perishing country, shall still continue to import goods from G. B., or purchase them of those who do import, they shall be looked upon by us as persons inimical to their Country."

But they were not satisfied with resolves. They soon became satisfied that their only hope was in active resistance, and accordingly began to make preparations for the desperate struggle whose dark clouds were fast gathering about them.

Dr. William Jennison and Mr. Henry Penniman, each presented the town with a fieldpiece. One hundred and thirteen pounds was raised to buy powder, fire arms, lead, flints, iron balls for the two fieldpieces, and carriages to mount the same. A committee was appointed consisting of Captain Nathan Tyler, Captain Nelson and David Daniels, "to purchase said arms and procure said carriages as soon

as possible." A Committee of Correspondence and of Safety was chosen, consisting of Captain Tyler, Deacon Ed. Rawson, Jas. Sumner, Nath. Nelson, and Benoni Benson; and Joseph Dorr was elected the *first* delegate to the Provincial Congress. A third of all men liable to military duty were enrolled as minute men, and supplies provided for them when called to march. And on the twenty-seventh of May, 1776,—two months before the Declaration was made, —the town voted to advise and instruct their representative to acquaint the General Assembly, that if the Honorable the Continental Congress shall think it for the benefit and safety of the United American Colonies to declare them independent of the Kingdom of Great Britain, the said town will approve the measure, and with their lives and fortunes support them therein.

Joseph Dorr I suppose to have been the moving spirit in forming the public sentiment which led to these grand utterances, and these bold and decided measures. He was the son of the third minister, Rev. Joseph Dorr, born here, and graduated at Harvard College. I find that he preached occasionally for several years, and that he was licensed by the Mendon Association of Ministers, of which his father was the founder, and the moderator during his life, but that he was never ordained. He resided here for twenty years after his graduation,—was representative to the Great and General Court for four years, delegate to the Continental Congress, town clerk, church clerk, selectman, moderator of town meetings,—anything and everything to serve the public weal,—one of those characters, or geniuses rather, who can fill any place and fill it well. In this respect, much like a certain physician, now a resident of the town, whom I have in my eye. Dorr threw his whole strength, mind and soul into the contest. It is said that he gave three hundred days of each year, for six years, to the cause, refusing any compensation for his services from town or country. After the war he became judge of probate for this county, which office he held for eighteen years. He

1774695

removed to Brookfield, where he lived until his death. He was undoubtedly a man of fine ability and culture, and one of the noblest men the town has produced.

It would be interesting to follow the records through the War of the Revolution, and notice the action of the town, from time to time through the struggle. Joseph Dorr did not stand alone here. Around him were gathered many noble, devoted patriots,—Deacon Ed. Rawson, Jas. Sumner, Captains Nathan and John Tyler, Lieutenant Jos. Johnson, Doctor Jennison, Peter and Henry Penniman, Captain Nelson, Lieutenant Jos. Gibbs, and Benoni and Joseph Benson,—all have an honorable place and deserve grateful remembrance. I should be much more interested, however, in tracing the footsteps of the men who went into the field, and won, by their sufferings and blood, what many of these only resolved should be done,—the men who went from the humble homes of this town in the rank and file, and perhaps never rose above it, who stood in the trenches on Bunker Hill and beat back the hosts of tyranny, who were with Washington in the dark days of the retreat from Long Island and the winter at Valley Forge, who helped to crush Burgoyne at Bennington and Saratoga, and gather the fruits of final triumph at Yorktown,—the men from this town who followed Arnold through the awful sufferings of that march into Canada, and those who tasted something of the horrors of Andersonville on the *Jersey* prison-ship at New York. We catch glimpses of the sons of Mendon in all these places, and know that their graves were made on many of the principal battle-fields of that war. These are the men who bore the burden and heat of that terrible day, winning for us our national existence. A halo of glory shall forever encircle their labors, and the benedictions of mankind rest upon their heads.

Mendon may not have much to boast of in the present. The hand of the spoiler has been laid upon her again and again, and she has been shorn of her once grand proportions. One hundred and fifty-seven years ago the legisla-

tive shears clipped off a goodly breadth for the benefit of her eastern neighbor, Bellingham. Seventeen years later they cut her through and through, to endow her fairest daughter, Uxbridge, with a princess' portion. The old lady gave her consent cheerfully, for she dearly loved the fair maid that sits by the bountiful streams, but she bestirred herself to save the remnant of her tattered robe, and so fought desperately to keep her bouncing but somewhat impertinent boy of Mill river from rending it again. But after nearly forty years of cuffs and blows, the sturdy upstart tore off the veil through which she looked out on the coming day! Her neighbors of Northbridge and Upton, watching their opportunity, stole away her bonnet and shawl. But still was the old lady strong and rich and noble, with her great river wound close about her feet, studded with busy villages; still was she proud, secure and dignified. But, alas! in an evil day, the Philistines stole upon her, and, unkindest act of all, cut off her *waterfall!* And now the old dame sits here on the hills, in age, poverty and loneliness, proud of her past, proud of her poverty. She has made herself poor by enriching her children. Like the Spartan mother, when asked for her jewels, pointing to the east and the west, the north and the south, she says, "behold them." To-day, opening her arms, she calls them back to nestle once more on the bosom whence they drew their lusty life; and when, in future, they are tempted to make light of her shorn and tattered robes, she asks them to remember how they came to be in such condition, to honor, in her age, the mother that bore them.

Looking back over this broad field of two hundred years, there are many names which it would be pleasant to call up and dwell upon—names that we might claim with pride as belonging to our history. It would not be modest in me to say that the best portion of her young men has gone out from her to build up great fortunes and win reputations in distant cities; that the best part of her brain and heart is drawn off, year by year, to enrich other portions of the

country. But it is only just and right to say that her sons and daughters are found in all the principal cities and villages of the land; that they have risen to eminence in all the different fields of enterprise and of usefulness spread out before them; that they have won high and honorable places as merchants, teachers, lawyers and statesmen; that if we could, this day, call the long roll of her good and true men and her noble women, whose homes are scattered over the whole continent, it would be a list that none of us need blush to own. But I am not specially interested in tracing out the men, who are or have been rich or great, that were born in Mendon. It is a matter of very little importance to us or to the country, where this man or that woman happened to be born, or the few who have lived here and gained some little notoriety in one way or another. That is no fair estimate of the fruits of these two hundred years of our history. What if half a dozen farmers here have raised a few large cabbages, or turnips, or pumkpins, in their gardens and fields, or half-acres of corn, or rye, or grass, that may take the prizes at the fair! Of what consequence are these exceptional growths to the general interests of agriculture and of the people? But what the general yield may be in the ten thousand corn fields and wheat fields of the land, is a matter of immense importance. For when the general average rises above a certain point, prosperity and abundance are found in all our villages and homes; but when it falls much below that point, ruin and famine stare millions in the face. It is of no public importance how deep and clear the water may be in your well or cistern, but it is of vital concern that the water gushing from ten thousand springs among the hills be pure, and sweet, and living. So life, in this town, is to be measured; not by what the few have attained or done, but by what the many are; not by this merchant, lawyer, minister or physician who chanced to be born or to live here, but by the fathers and mothers dwelling in these homes and the sons and daughters they train up for life's work, by the height to which the general average of intelli-

gence, of virtue and goodness here rises. When life in these homes and on these farms and in these shops sinks down to the level of things material, sensuous and base, then it matters not that some great lawyer, author, or statesman was born here, strife and confusion and misery will dwell here. And when the springs of influence in these homes are pure, sweet, and Christian, the tide of life will rise to higher and higher levels, and a nobler work be done, and a halo of ever-brightening glory rest upon the place. You will care little about this man or family that has risen into notice, but point with pride to your farms and schools and churches, and the men and women found on them and in them, as the true measure of what you have done and what you will continue to do.

Two hundred years of our history have gone,—its struggles and hardships are over. Nearly six generations of men have lived and toiled and died since it began. Much of their work has perished with them. The only enduring fruit is in the souls that have been trained here for the better life beyond the grave, and the influence for good which they have left behind.

POEM.

POEM.

BY THE HON. HENRY CHAPIN, OF WORCESTER.

THE real poet, when he strikes the lyre,
Lights up the gleam of ever-burning fire,
Clothes with sweet music every rippling rill,
With magic grandeur every mount and hill:
While the mere rhymer, playing with his pen,
Makes jingling nonsense every now and then;
Looks round in vain the poet's field to glean,
Then settles back and starts the old machine.

The *Doctor* knew it, when he sent me word,
If I came here, I surely must be heard,
And heard in rhyme—such was the strange command,
Writ down in ink in that *peculiar* hand.
So, reading onward in a dumb surprise,
Scarcely believing I could trust my eyes,
I struck the vein, which, with a sort of joy,
Cheered school-day moments of an orphan boy.

Be startled not, for musing on the past,
A pleasing radiance o'er the scene is cast;
It hinteth thus, and giveth sweet relief;
The rhyming fits, though violent were brief;
As little streamlets, gathered in a pond,
Stopped by a dam, and not one spring beyond,
May froth and foam, upon some warm March day,
Just raise the gate, and quick they rush away.

It chanced, of late, when stars their vigils kept,
And tired with toil, I laid me down and slept,
Strange forms in dreams came dancing round my bed,
And queer-wrought fancies flitted through my head.
The years rolled backward; on each vale and hill
The forest stretched in quiet silence still;
And dusky forms, all in their strange attires,
Roamed o'er the lands since peopled by our sires.

No teeming fields with crops of living green,
No cultured homes of happiness were seen;
No busy mills to grind the gathered grain,
Or cut the monarch of the grove in twain;
No traveled way, no nicely graded street,
No wayside inn, the weary guest to greet!
Look where you would, you saw no culture there:
The forest reigned unbroken everywhere.

The rivers flowed unhindered to the sea;
Beast, fish, and fowl, were radiant and free;
They saw the rising and the setting sun,
But saw no Yankee with his hook and gun;
The Nipmuck hunter roamed the forest wide,
The lord and master of his dusky bride;
And dark-hued children, in a motley throng,
Learned the first lessons of their young war-song.

I looked again. The Anglo-Saxon came,
Scheming and wise, and always just the same;
I saw him, as with solemn steps and slow,
He trod this soil two hundred years ago;
And looked about him with a conscious pride,
That he had landed—thanks to wind and tide—
Where, free to worship, and as free to trade,
He'd pitched his tent where money could be made.

I saw the Indian, stern and stately stand,
To fix the price of this—his own fair land,
And coolly sell his birthright then and there,
For fifteen pounds, at least full eight miles square;
While Quinshepauge, so musical in name,
Is blotted out to meet some English claim;
The wild, sweet music 'mong the hills and trees,
Is heard no longer on the summer breeze.

The mighty red men, from that fatal day,
Like morning snowflakes seemed to melt away;
Jealous and cruel through the waning years,
The dreaded phantoms of our childish fears;
Till at this hour, the remnant of the race,
With quiet step, and sad and dreamy face,
Are poor and humble, where they reigned before,
And wander lazily from door to door.

The sturdy veterans of the olden time,
  Of stern resolve, and purposes sincere,
Whose names were never made to sing in rhyme,
  Whom children's children honor and revere,
Come in my dreams as puritan as when,
  Building their cabins on the forest plains,
They worked and prayed among the sons of men.
  In summer sunshine, or in wintry rains.

We read the names we've always known,
  And with a sort of pleasure,
We claim them, as we claim our own,
  Although we change the measure;
I'd read the list, if there was time,
  Of names there written in it,
But they would make such awful rhyme,
  I tremble to begin it.

We read, that Col. William Crowne,
  Who was the first recorder,
Who has the records written down
  So nicely and in order,
Could just the right credentials bring,
  At Say and Seal's suggestion,
To stand and plead before the king,
  Upon the Charter question.

We read the records of the town,
  Which tell its honest story,
Each page ablaze, as we come down,
  As with a sort of glory.
That brave men trod the soil we tread,
  Is clear as demonstration,
The fathers of the noble dead,
  Who've saved this struggling nation.

They fought wild beasts, subdued the soil,
  And found the treasures in it;
They learned the blest results of toil,
  And hardly lost a minute.
No eight-hour prophet beat the drum,
  To set the world half crazy,
Preaching a kind of kingdom come—
  A premium to the lazy.

They cleared the forest, ploughed the field,
  They built the church for meeting;
And when Job Tiler would n't yield,
  They sent the rebel greeting;
While Job defied official noise,
  And scorned the fearful warning,
As impudent as singing boys
  Who "won't go home till morning;"

Till he who dared to speak so plain
  Of meeting-house and preaching,
Found that he struggled all in vain
  'Gainst puritanic teaching;
Denounced in proper terms at last,
  The way he had conducted,
Obtained forgiveness for the past,
  And thus was *reconstructed.*

The fathers thought they understood
  The way to deal with sinners,
And always did the best they could,
  In taming the beginners:
They trusted in the living God,
  And had large faith in preaching;
But never wholly spared the rod,
  Nor its benignant teaching.

They took fast hold of the decrees,
  And battled stout and hearty;
They never trembled in their knees,
  Whate'er their sect or party;
They scaled the mountain-tops of thought,
  And faced the rolling thunder,
Men who were never sold nor bought,
  Who would n't stand from under.

What cheered those hardy pioneers,
  That band of friends and brothers,
In the dark forest calmed the fears
  Of sisters and of mothers;
Who, self-devoted and sincere,
  All calmly did their duty,
To help to found a township here,
  In freedom, thrift and beauty?

In faith and hope, the cherished few
  Just struggled on together,
And builded better than they knew,
  In spite of wind and weather;
They float along the stream of time,
  The banks all gray and hoary,
And need no word of prose or rhyme,
  To tell their simple story.

* * * * * * * *

I dreamed again, or seemed to dream,
  Of which I sometimes doubt,
That by the light of the moon's beam,—
  Few honest folks about,—
I met hard by an aged man,
  Of sturdy look and form,
Who never hid himself, nor ran,
  In danger or in storm.

He stopped, and leaning on his cane,
  With white and flowing hair,
And coat which in King Charles's reign,
  The fathers used to wear;
He seemed a man of days gone by
  Beneath the British yoke;
He looked me squarely in the eye,
  And these the words he spoke:—

"If I can read your name and race,
  Your ancestor Josiah,
On what is called the Doggett place,
  Once burned the household fire;
Beloved and honored, long and late,
  He saw his fame increase,—
Selectman, Captain, Delegate,
  And Justice of the Peace.

"'Tis fortunate to meet with one
Who 's numbered with the flock,
Who proudly claims to be a son
Of the old Mendon stock;
And it must be an easy task
For one like you to bear,
To answer questions which I ask
About the eight miles square.

"I see some old familiar look,
As I attempt to rally,
The waters in the running brook,
The hillside and the valley;
But such a lot of fence, and wall,
Such lines of separation
Confound me so, I can't recall
The old-time occupation.

"How queerly ladies dress to-day,
The bonnets all are going;
How noiselessly they fade away,
While *waterfalls* are growing;
And hoop skirts sort of stay and go,
'Twill do to wear no others;
Oh, if our girls had *figured* so,
How 'twould have shocked their mothers.

"The boys seem old, whom I have seen,
Considering their knowledge;
To see them one would think they 'd been
In Congress or in College:
Their coats, and boots and shoes and hats,
More costly than adorning,
Their fathers must be blind as bats,
Not to observe the warning.

"I hear of oil and fancy stocks,
And second-sight physicians,
Who look one through, from hat to socks,
And tell his whole conditions;
They order pills and powders, too,
All ready just in season,
To guarantee a cure for you,
With neither sense nor reason.

"I ask you, as a piece of news,
Whence comes this smell of leather,
Which makes one dream of boots and shoes,
At least in sultry weather!
What means that thick and motley throng
Of every name and nation,
I noticed as I passed along,
Down near that Boot-shop station?

"Why are there, but a few miles north,
Such monstrous piles of bonnets,
Where bright-eyed damsels sally forth
To tempt a lover's sonnets!
'T is fearful as the rebel raids,
Takes courage to go by it,
Yet lose those bonnets and those maids,
Still worse would be the quiet.

"Pray tell me how that little stream,
Which was n't worth the naming,
Now glitters with so bright a gleam
From sundry forges flaming:
What mean those lights among the hills,
Like stars each night illuming?
Why run by steam those cotton mills,
The wood and coal consuming?

"Explain to me the mystery
Which marks the southern quarter,
The mills, and cars, and tracks I see,
Where once was only water;
Where once the birds among the trees
In solitude were singing,
Are heard the bells on every breeze,
Their busy orders ringing.

"What means that low and rumbling sound,
Just over by the river,
Which seems to shake the solid ground,
And put one in a quiver?
I saw a train a half-mile strong,
Which filled my soul with wonder,
An iron horse dragged it along,
And puffing smoke like thunder!

"I never saw so queer a thing,
As down among the bridges,
The fiery trains, with what they bring,
Come on those gravel ridges;
When hurrying up with all their might,
From inland and from ocean,
They look to me, both day and night,
Like fighting cocks in motion.

"Now if you once will condescend
These various points to christen,
My questionings shall have an end,
While quietly I listen;
I knew where once was eight miles square,
I knew the Mendon people,
While now there meets me everywhere
Some meeting-house or steeple.

"You call it Milford over there?
And Upton over yonder?
Northbridge and Uxbridge? I declare!
Old Mendon 's rent asunder;
For Blackstone, growing discontent,
Began the same old story,
Last of the wayward sisters went
And left her in her glory.

"Shorn of her strength at every turn,
First one side, then another,
'T is time the parricides should learn,
They 've helped to slay their mother;
She 's learned to drink the bitter cup,
All flavored with desertion;
She 's had an awful cutting up,—
The victim of *coercion*.

"Let Milford boast of boots and shoes,
Of choicest kinds of leather;
And Upton girls grow rich as Jews,
On bonnet, band and feather;
Northbridge and Uxbridge thrive and grow,
On cotton, steam, and water;
While Blackstone spreads her branches so,
Though she 's the youngest daughter!

"Old Mendon yet shall raise her head;
She is not dead but sleepeth;
She yet remains the old homestead,
The fathers' dust she keepeth;
She hath her share of home-made joys,
The choicest soil she tilleth;
This day she welcomes home her boys,
The fatted calf she killeth.

"The waters murmur in the brooks,
The fields are sweet with clover;
How bright this loving mother looks,
As this day's work is over!
Around us earthly angels here
Their choicest gifts are bringing;
Above us, sweet, and soft, and clear,
The spirit choirs are singing.

"The voices of the buried past
Here chant their sweetest numbers,
Their loving echoes here shall last,
To soothe our quiet slumbers;
And life, with all its hopes and fears,
Shall brighter be and clearer,
As on the rolling tide of years,
Heaven comes to all the nearer."

He ceased his strain. No more he sang;
But after he had started,
His farewell like a trumpet rang,
And thrilled as he departed:
"Toil on for honor, power, or pelf,
There's need enough of growing;
But make your other rhymes yourself,
'Tis time that I was going.

"If on the fifteenth day of May,
I'm at the celebration,
I'll tell you on that festal day,
My name, and age, and station;
But if, perchance, I am not there,
Whate'er the wind or weather,
Just read these lines, and we will share
The praise or blame together."

* * * * * *

One simple thought, which comes not now of dreaming,
Fills every heart;
One simple word, this Festival beseeming,
Before we part:
The men, who met us with their kindly greetings,
In days of yore,
Are gone, and at our friendly meetings
Are seen no more.

We'll read their history, name, and station,
In words that burn,
As, filled with heartfelt admiration,
Each page we turn;
We'll fancy as we read, that nobler mortals
Than one now meets,
Once passed benignly through these earthly portals,
And walked these streets.

The friends and neighbors we have loved so dearly
In later days,
On whom the light of memory sheds so clearly
Its kindling rays,
Seem with us now, as on these honored places
We look with pride,
While they, with their familiar forms and faces,
Seem by our side.

Prince, Russell, Rawson, Wood and Cook, and others;
Hayward and Green,
Hastings and Davenport, like friends and brothers,
So often seen;
Taft, Gaskell, Allen, Stone, and George, and Mowry,
Aldrich and Thayer,
Bates, Adams, Thurber, in his honest glory,
With fame so fair.

That noble brother of our friend, the speaker,
Whose spirit burned
With brighter lustre as his frame grew weaker,
And home he turned;
His body in the quiet churchyard sleeping,
His soul so clear,
While we this happy Festival are keeping,
Seems listening here.

Men of the days gone by, the starry token
Adorns each name;
The worthy tribute, all too long unspoken,
Ye well may claim:
Immortal now, for on the glowing pages
Of this bright day,
Shall shine your memories, for future ages,
With purest ray.

It stirs the blood, it sets the pulses leaping,
Say what we will,
To feel that friends, for whom we yet are weeping,
Are with us still;
To feel their warm and loving presence ever,
In scenes like this,
To know that they forget the feeling never,
Of social bliss.

We hear their human voices here no longer,—
Their forms are gone;
But ah! the feeling in our hearts grows stronger,
As time rolls on.

The hour may come when other souls may listen,
And think us true;
When tears in other eyes may glisten
Like morning dew:
Enough for us if children's children reading
Names we call ours,
Shall strew our tombs, our faults and sins unheeding,
With sweetest flowers.

TOASTS.

TOASTS.

At the close of the delivery of the poem, Henry A. Aldrich, Toast-Master, in behalf of the Committee of Arrangements, presented the following sentiments:

1. The day we celebrate, and its moral lessons.

Response by Rev. Adin Ballou, of (Hopedale), Milford:

Mr. President and Friends:

We have all reiterated our mutual congratulations on the auspicious circumstances under which so many thousands of people have thronged this ancient vicinage, to celebrate the two hundredth anniversary of its incorporation. Never before were such multitudes congregated on this hill, and never before were better moral lessons suggested to reflecting and receptive minds by a civic celebration. These crowding hosts are of the sixth and seventh generations from the original Mendon hive. Swarm after swarm went out in all directions, to multiply families, neighborhoods, and corporate communities. To-day, their representatives cluster *en masse* in this maternal parish, where two centuries ago a brave handful of ancestors took up their abode in the wilderness, to sow in tears the seed of that prosperity which we are now reaping with joy.

The able and eloquent orator of the occasion has sketched with masterly hand the history of this settlement and its diffusive progress, down almost to the memory of the present generation. His performance is worthy of a talented son "to the manor born." The ingenious poet, too, has amused and instructed us with his admirable contribution to the entertainments of the day. So what has been sketched of the olden past, and what we know of more recent times, can hardly fail to afford us ample moral lessons to treasure up and improve.

We have seen that the parental pioneers of Mendon were of the old Puritan stock and stamp. They came hither, not a godless set of reckless adventurers, in quest of plunder, gain, and carnal pleasure, but a religious people. They acknowledged and worshipped Jehovah. They trusted in his providence. They had faith in the testimonies of divine revelation. They reverenced Christianity and its institutions according to their highest light. They built at the outset a

sanctuary of religious service in the midst of their rude homes, and devoted their substance liberally to the maintenance of sacred instruction, ordinances and institutions. Was it not well for them, and well for their descendants, that they did so? Would it not be well for us all, whatever our alleged greater light, to be as conscientious, as religious, as devoted, as they? Is not here a wholesome moral lesson for us?

But we are reminded that they were quite *human*,—some of them intensely so, —even the saints, as well as the interloping sinners whom they strove to shut out. Is this strange? Mankind have always been human. The chosen twelve were not super-human. Most of our angels in flesh and blood are the creatures of poets and novelists. And the angels of God, even, are said, in the sacred book, to have been charged by him with folly. We are therefore admonished to expect more or less of imperfection in the best of human associations. What if there was a Job Tiler here in times of yore? What if there were turbulent dissenters, and heretics, and wayward free-thinkers? Such seem to have been always indigenous to the soil of this region. They are not yet extinct. Well, as an offset there was plenty of liberty, religious as well as civil and social. Mendon was never much priest-ridden, nor churched. The tide was often strong the other way. The old Parish has now its fifteenth pastor. I happened to be the eighth in the line of descent. Some of them were certainly eminent for talents and acquirements, both as ministers and men; but none of them ever suffered much from idolatrous deference, a fat salary, or high living. This was all right; well for them, well for religion, and well for the people. No great good ever came from worshipping or pampering the clergy. Happily they have generally escaped such ensnarements in this quarter, and the danger is probably remote in the future. And what of all this? What is our moral lesson? Work for noble ends. Work with the best available materials. Build up society. But expect human nature to be human nature in some of its evil, as well as its good phases. Stand up for liberty, civil, religious, and even irreligious, rather than tyranny or oppression in its most saintly guise. But do not forget that all abuses of liberty are hateful and pernicious to human welfare. There is no more in licentiousness for enlightened minds to love, than in superstition. We must go for religion without superstition, and liberty without licentiousness.

The founders of Mendon and its offspring municipalities were an enterprising, industrious, frugal and heroic people. What must have been their privations, toils, hardships, perils, and sufferings, in subduing this once howling wilderness, now a cultivated, populous and wealthy section of the Commonwealth. In vain we stretch our imaginations to conceive the reality. Scarcely had they planted themselves here when the Indian war-whoop resounded in their borders, and their entire settlement was swept away by the tomahawk, scalping knife, and firebrand. Some perished by savage massacre, and the majority fled in poverty to the eastern towns whence they had emigrated. But they returned again, when the war was over, and resumed their arduous undertaking. What they did and suffered we can never estimate. The ashes and cinders of their devastated homes are under our feet, commingled forever with the soil. Their graves, marked and unmarked, are round about us. And the fruits of their self-sacrifice, persistent labors, and hard-earned success, have become the inheritance of a highly favored posterity. What pioneers! How many rough places they made smooth! What foundations they laid for after generations, in things physical, intellectual,

moral, civil, and social! Shall they be forgotten? Shall their works and sufferings pass unappreciated into ungrateful oblivion? God forbid! What, then, is another moral lesson of this day's celebration. Gratitude to the most high; honor to the memory of the illustrious departed; and strong resolves to do something worthy of such an ancestry and such a transmitted legacy. Hereof let us fail not. What abundant means of usefulness and enjoyment have they bequeathed to us? And is there not a future for us to bless as they have blessed us? Have we not our work also to do, whereof posterity may make some account at another centennial or bi-centennial celebration? We have not their work to repeat. We cannot move in their old ruts. Progress is onward and upward. Railroads, and steam horses, and lightning trains, and electric telegraphs, are ours to work with. What will we do for posterity,—for the present and future generations? What will we do to elevate and regenerate society? What to fill the earth with useful, holy knowledge, with wisdom, virtue, order, peace? What to fulfill the ancient sacred prophecies of universal brotherhood, harmony, and bliss? Let us be ashamed to do less for our descendants than our progenitors have done for us.

But let me not be tedious. Other lips are ready to open with more interesting speech. I will forbear to advert to the numerous topics which are fraught with moral suggestions in the wide range of this commemorative occasion. Let it suffice that I exhort you all to select and study them for yourselves, when the excitement of our present proceedings and festivities shall have passed away. Revolve the history of the two centuries during which this town has had a corporate existence. Mark the onward course of men, things, and events. Honor all the excellencies which brighten the record, and cherish their memory for imitation. Note also the defects, frailties, errors, follies and sins which tell you how imperfect your progenitors were; not to magnify them, not to be uncharitable in denouncing them, and above all not to justify or excuse your own short-comings. Be just, be generous, be grateful, and be faithful to your greater light, ability and opportunity. Thus let us all endeavor to make a history for ourselves and times, worthy of our augmented responsibility; that the now unborn celebrators of the next centennary on this venerable hill, may have abundant reason to hallow our memories long after the last survivor of us shall have been welcomed by God and our revered ancestors to the mansions of immortality.

2. 1719; in answer to the petition for a new town, comprising a portion of Mendon, it is ordered that the prayer of the petitioners be granted, and that the name of the town be *Westham*, their brethren, the Deputies, consenting thereto The Deputies consent, *only* that the name be *Bellingham*.

3. The town of *Uxbridge*, the daughter of Mendon. Her history since her majority is industry, economy, good neighborhood, and Christian virtue; gone out, as she has, from under the maternal wing, may she not disgrace her parent by returning a prodigal, to beg the husks cast from her parent's bountiful table.

Responded to by Francis Deane, Esq., of Uxbridge.

Mr. President: In behalf of the citizens of the town of Uxbridge, the home

of my adoption, I thank you for the complimentary sentiment which has now been read. And I will say a few words in response. The town was incorporated by an act of the General Court, on the twenty-seventh day of June, in the year 1727, and is consequently one hundred and forty years old the succeeding month. It was taken from the westerly portion of Mendon, and included in her limits, substantially what is embraced in its present territory, and the principal part of that which is now Northbridge. Some inconsiderable portion of territory has since been acquired from other towns, on her northwest border.

In the year 1772, the "North End," so called, was incorporated into a District, by the name of Northbridge, which, on the twenty-third day of March, 1786, became a town by a general law. So that Uxbridge alone, of the numerous children that encompass the parent town, is able to introduce to your notice a grandchild. And that one, too, of much promise, well nigh one hundred years old. She is present to-day in force, and will answer for herself.

And here, Mr. President, allow me also to introduce to your notice an aged and respected citizen of our town, (Mr. Independence Whipple), about ninety years of age, as the oldest man present. And I can affirm with safety that he is the only man present that has seen General Washington. He remains as the connecting link between the Revolutionary fathers and the generation of to-day.

At the first town meeting, held on the twenty-fifth day of July, 1727, "It was voted that the annual town meetings be held on the first Wednesday of March, for choice of officers." This arrangement, in fixing a different day for holding their annual town meetings, from that of other towns of the family, was made to facilitate social intercourse between them, and was continued for over one hundred and twenty-five years.

The first work of the town, in the true spirit of the times, was to provide a house to worship God in. Accordingly on the eighth day of July, 1728, when the building materials had been collected, on the ground where now stands the third house of worship, "It was voted also at said meeting that there be fifteen gallons of Good Rum provided for ye raising ye meeting-house." And you may be assured that all Mendon were invited to the raising.

Again, on the fifteenth day of August, 1728, when the county of Worcester was about to be organized, it was "Voted at said meeting about Worcester's being a shire town, That unless Mendon be made a Shire Town as well as Worcester, to hold half of ye County Courts att, They had rather remain as now, in the County of Suffolk."

I have referred to a few of these ancient records, as tending to show the friendly feeling that pervaded the inhabitants of these towns in olden times, and that the separation of these two towns was one of acknowledged expediency and necessity, and that it was unattended with that bitterness of feeling, which so frequently characterize political divisions of this character.

The deprivations incident to new settlements, inured our fathers to many hardships, and trained them to habits of industry and economy now almost forgotten. But animated by the persevering spirit of the Puritan, the primitive forests early fell before his sturdy blows. The earth was made to contribute to civilized life. Her territory was formed into a network of roads. Her beautiful rivers,—the "West river," the "Mumford's river," and that classic river, the "Blackstone," —were made to speed the spindle and the loom, and contribute largely to her prosperity. Nor were the more modern improvements entirely neglected. The

famous "Blackstone Canal" was constructed, and when we looked upon our fleet of boats as they moved sluggishly along through their narrow bed, we imagined we were a "seaport town." But the progressive spirit of the age laid its iron rails on its banks, where the iron horse now speeds his course with a velocity that has left the old "canal" in the shade, and numbered it with the things that were.

Though our town contains less population and less wealth than some of her younger sisters, she has made commendable progress, and contains the elements of increasing prosperity. She sustains four churches, fourteen public schools, and several charitable and philanthropic institutions. She has a population of three thousand souls, and an aggregate wealth of two millions of dollars.

See, sir, there she is, surrounded by her beautiful scenery, inviting all to pleasant homes. Such is the report of progress we make to-day, and such is her promise of the future.

The occasion suggests to the mind the wonderful changes time has wrought in the land, and the contrast between civilized and savage life. In imagination we see the pioneer settler ascend yonder western hills, with his title deed in hand, to possess his newly acquired estates. He meets the aged sachem, at his wigwam door, dejected, suspicious, timid. He recites to him those mysterious words, "Know all men by these presents," written upon the scrawl. They are the "Mene Tekel" of the Indian. He replies, Is not this my home? Have not my people possessed these lands for untold ages? And these forests, were they not his hunting grounds? And these beautiful rivers, that meander in the meadows at our feet, were they not his fishing grounds? And are they not mine? No, sir! no. You have suffered these broad acres to run to waste. You have done nothing to raise your fellow-man into a higher life. You have failed to fulfill the conditions of inheritance, and you have lost. It is with a melancholy interest that we see this once renowned nation of the tomahawk, savage though it be, recede before civilization, to its final extinction. His history is unwritten. His deeds of exploit unhonored. His virtues as well as his vices unrecorded, save in that cruel warfare waged for self-preservation.

In conclusion, I will offer a responsive sentiment. All honor to the ancient town of Mendon. Though severed asunder by successive acts of legislation, she now forms a bright constellation of seven municipalities, bound together by a common interest, mutual friendships and social ties.

4. The third branch of the family tree; one hundred and thirty-two years of age: Upton.

Responded to by Hon. E. B. Stoddard, of Worcester.

Mr. President:

The sons of Upton have requested me to say a few words in their name upon this interesting occasion.

Thanking you for the kind remembrance of your *daughter*, I feel that she has done her duty here to-day, in being able to produce a *son* who has delighted you all with his poetry, and I am sure, before I close my remarks, you will be con-

vinced that the *poetry* which Upton produces is much more charming than her sober *prose*.

The record shows that the territory of Upton once constituted a part of Mendon. I feel, therefore, that I can claim sufficient relationship with the inhabitants of Mendon to represent my fellow townsmen at this time.

In reference to the past and present sons and daughters of Upton, I claim for them an intelligence and moral worth, equal to that which distinguishes the population of other parts of Worcester County.

I need only name the Woods, the Chapins, the Tafts, the Nelsons, the Fiskes, the Warrens, and the Knowltons, and you will recognize a class of men whose works and characters have produced "a golden chain, whose links will grow stronger and brighter as their descendants come upon the stage of action."

The principles of industry and economy, of civil and religious liberty, which our ancestors have planted upon your borders, appear to-day in the honest faces of their descendants, who return to show reverence and love for their native soil.

What man or woman here does not remember the Rev. Benjamin Wood of Upton,—one of the most distinguished and beloved divines of this county,—a man whose very countenance was full of the "inspiration of faith, hope, and charity." I remember him as he appeared when he delivered the centennial address for the town of Upton thirty-two years ago. That address, like yours Mr. Orator, to-day, was earnest, eloquent and touching; it was full of that inspiration which makes the heart beat quicker, as we recall the early associations of our *homes*. I allude to Mr. Wood, because so many of us early learned to revere his character and power.

The sons of this part of Worcester County have reason to remember and love their early homes and native soil.

When we contemplate the broad contrast between the privations and sufferings of the early settlers, of the simple habits of *our* fathers and mothers, and the benefits and blessings everywhere enjoyed by their descendants, thankfulness and gratitude should fill our hearts.

We have come together to mingle our feelings and rekindle our affections at the family altar. The scenes and friends of our childhood return, and whose heart is not made better, whose arm will not be made stronger as he gives this day to the hallowed associations of the *past*?

My belief is, that the boy, who has spent his earliest days in this part of the county, whether he has gone to the sunny South or to the far West, so long as he lives, will cherish among the first recollections of his heart, what he remembers of the friends of his early days, and the circumstances of his boyhood.

Let us here drop the tear of affection and friendship to the memory of the loved ones who have gone before us, and leave this place stimulated with the firm resolve that *we* will devote our powers to promote and advance the best interests of the community, wherever our lot may be cast.

5. Our only grandchild: Northbridge. The credit of the family is safe in her keeping.

Responded to by the Rev. Lewis F. Clark.

I regret, Mr. President, that some other one has not been called upon to re-

spond to this sentiment. It is known to you that I am not a native of Northbridge, nor of either of the towns claiming a part of the old "ten miles square." I cannot but feel that those who can speak of this as their birth-place are peculiarly fortunate, to-day. But though I am not "native to the manor born," I have been for twenty-five years an adopted citizen of Northbridge, and feel a deep interest, not only in every thing affecting the welfare of that town, but of every other portion of the old town of Mendon.

Northbridge, as you have intimated in the sentiment just read, is to be regarded as the granddaughter, and the only one sustaining that relation—it having been formerly a part of Uxbridge. It was incorporated July 14, 1772, in compliance with a petition presented to the General Court, headed by Colonel John Spring, grandfather of Rev. Dr. Spring, of New York. The town contained, at that time, seventy-one families and a population of about four hundred. Measures were soon taken for erecting a house of worship, but on account of delay, occasioned by difference of opinion as to location, it was not completed until the close of 1774. The "pew spots" were sold in February, 1775, but a permanent pastor was not secured until some years later. As the war of the Revolution was coming on, the people labored under great embarrassments in their efforts to sustain gospel institutions. But though the burdens pressed heavily upon them, they persevered, never shrinking from duty as Christians or patriots. Most of the early votes of the town have reference either to the interests of religion or to the impending national struggle.

In the very able and interesting address to which we have listened to-day, allusion was made to some of the votes passed by Mendon, just before hostilities commenced, indicating the spirit that pervaded the people. Votes of a similar character may be found in the old town records of Northbridge, and if I mistake not, in those of the other towns represented here to-day. Eight months previous to the battle of Lexington, our town chose a committee "to correspond with committees of other towns concerning public affairs." At the same time it was voted "to provide a town stock of ammunition, viz: one barrel of powder, and lead and flints answerable to it, and that every man be supplied with arms and ammunition," thus showing that the people were expecting the conflict and that they intended to be prepared to meet it. At a town meeting held in June, 1776, it was voted "to support the Continental Congress with our lives and fortunes, if they should declare the United American Colonies independent of Great Britain." From 1775 to 1781 a large part of the business transacted at the town meetings had reference to the war. More than fifty men were furnished for a longer or shorter term of service, and, among these one chaplain, Rev. Dr. Samuel Spring, then a young man just entering the ministry, afterwards settled in Newburyport. He accompanied the disastrous expedition to Canada under Arnold. Northbridge men were in the service in the vicinity of Boston, in Rhode Island, at Ticonderoga, at Saratoga, at different points on the Hudson, in New Jersey and other parts of the country.

Much of the spirit of '76 was also manifested by the people of our town in our recent National struggle. Nine days after the fall of Fort Sumter a meeting of citizens was held, at which preliminary steps were taken for organizing a military company for the war. This company was organized and went into camp at Worcester, in June, as a part of the fifteenth Massachusetts regiment, a regiment that made for itself a noble record. The men from our town also rendered good

service in other portions of the army and in the navy. In most of the great battles east of the Alleghanies we were represented, and the sacrifice of life tells how we were represented. Thirty-two of our men laid down their lives for their country—twenty of these dying in battle or from wounds received in battle.

In the matter of education as well as attachment to country, Northbridge has aimed not to fall behind the neighboring towns. In the amount last year appropriated to common schools, in proportion to the taxable property of the town, it ranked as the second in the state and the first in Worcester County. This interest in education may be due, in part, to the influence of Rev. Dr. Crane, the first minister of the town, who was settled in 1783, and labored there for nearly half a century. We have never had any prominent literary institution of which to boast, and yet this pastor's house was an institution of no mean character. For many years he was accustomed to receive young men into his family and fit them for college, or prepare them for the work of teaching. Some who have occupied very prominent positions in their profession received their early classical training in that old parsonage. Among these were that distinguished jurist, Honorable Theron Metcalf, of Boston; Professor Alexander M. Fisher, of Yale College, who was lost at sea in 1822*; John B. Brown, M. D., of Boston; Rev. Dr. Spring, of New York, and his brother, Rev. Dr. Samuel Spring, of East Hartford, Ct.; the late Rev. Dr. Calvin Park, professor in Brown University; Rev. Dr. Hawes, of Hartford, and the late Rev. Willard Preston, D. D., of Savannah, Ga. Dr. Crane was not only an able and faithful preacher, but a thorough instructor. It was a common remark that his pupils were never rejected on their application for admission to college.

Did time permit I might speak of the material interests of the town—of the agency of one man, the late Colonel Paul Whiting, in laying the foundation of a manufacturing property, now represented by a cotton business, giving employment to some six hundred persons, and a machine shop in which nearly five hundred men are employed. But I am occupying more than my share of the time on this occasion. Please accept, Mr. President, our thanks for your invitation to join you in this celebration, and for the kind manner in which you have noticed "the granddaughter" in the sentiment to which you have called upon me to respond.

6. The old South Parish: at the age of nearly one hundred years, regenerated and christened Blackstone in 1845, now, in the comeliness and fair proportions of youth, comes back to the old homestead, in company with her elder sisters, and greets our common mother,—good old Mendon.

Responded to by Moses D. Southwick, M. D.

Mr. President: Since the incorporation of Blackstone, in 1845, her history is brief, and well known to many in this audience. But for more than a century and a half after the first settlement within her limits, she formed a component part of Mendon. As the first inhabitants of Mendon multiplied, and began to expand and spread out over the surface of the adjacent country, the beautiful streams and rich intervales of Uxbridge and Northbridge, proved more attractive

* Judge Metcalf and Professor Fisher were both natives of Franklin, Massachusetts.

than the uneven and rocky soil of Wigwam Hill and Dam Swamp. Among the first settlers in the territory of Blackstone, we find no emigrants from Mendon, except along the course of Mill River. The middle and western portions were settled by individuals from many different places. Before the year 1700, Josiah Thayer, son of Ferdinando Thayer, settled near where Millins Taft now lives, and is believed to have been the first white man who located in the town of Blackstone. A son of his was a Major in the army of the Revolution. He was present at the obstinate defence of Red Bank, near Philadelphia, and on the last day of the fighting, he commanded the troops with distinguished skill and valor. He was afterwards promoted to the rank of Colonel and General. He resided in Providence, after the war was over.

Josiah Thayer was followed not long afterward by a Mr. Aldrich and a Mr. Cook, who settled in what is now called Mill River Lower Village. These three are believed to have been the only emigrants to Blackstone from Mendon at that early period. About the same time or soon after, the road was laid out leading from the settlement in Mendon to Cumberland, and was called the Rehoboth road. Tradition informs us that there was an Indian path where the road was located, and passing over Cumberland Hill to Rehoboth, which was incorporated a few years before Mendon. This appears to have been the first public highway in Blackstone. Not long afterwards the road was laid out from the Coverdale place, by the Five Corners, to a point near where the Blackstone town house now stands, then turning to the left, passed down to Woonsocket Falls. Another of the earliest roads is that which branches from the Rehoboth road, near the house of Andrus Wheelock, passes through Quissett, Dam Swamp, over Waterbug Hill, to Millville, and there being no bridge across the Blackstone River at that place, when it was laid out, it was continued up the east side of the river, by the residence of the Holbrooks, to Skull Rock Bridge. This bridge was the first built across the Blackstone between Uxbridge Centre and Woonsocket Falls. Another of the earliest roads which passes through a corner of Blackstone, is that which passes along the head of Nipmug Pond, through Albeeville, over Wigwam Hill, turns at the corner by Caleb Taft's blacksmith shop, passes by the house of Nathan Fisher, over Skull Rock Bridge, and so on to the Rhode Island line. The prolific race of Tafts early settled on this road, or contiguous to it. Indeed, at a period almost within the memory of the oldest inhabitant, their residences were scattered at irregular intervals from the village of Mendon to Burrillville.

The first settlers in the southwest part of Blackstone, are believed to have been three men by the name of Darling,—two brothers and an uncle. Benjamin settled near the Blackstone Poor House. Daniel settled at the top of the Darling Hill, near the present residence of Mrs. Holbrook; and John settled at the Job Darling place, so-called, where Mrs. Shaw now lives. They came from Bellingham or Cumberland, were all farmers, and left a numerous offspring at their deaths. But few of the name, however, now live in this part of the town.

Not long after the Darlings, Samuel Thompson settled on the west bank of the river, where Collins Capron now resides. He is believed to have been the first white inhabitant of Blackstone on the west side of the river. He built the first dam, and erected a gristmill on the island, which he connected with the west shore by a bridge. The bridge east of the island was built not long afterwards by the town of Mendon. There is a tradition that the gristmill was chiefly

remarkable for the slow rate at which it converted grain into meal. A freshet carried away both the gristmill and the bridge. When the mill was lifted from its foundation by the swollen waters, and hurried along the rushing stream, a bystander remarked that it was never known to go half as fast before.

About one hundred and thirty or forty years ago, many of the Quakers in Salem, being persecuted for their religious tenets and mode of worship, emigrated to the south part of Mendon, and settled near the Rhode Island line. The piety of that day appears to have been of a more ardent and persistent character than that of the present. From the time of the exile of Roger Williams, Rhode Island had been a city of refuge for the persecuted of all lands, and doubtless our Salem Friends felt safer and more comfortable, to be near the borders of a colony in which the consciences of men had a more unlimited scope than in any other part of the civilized world. About a century ago, the south part of Mendon was constituted a parish, embracing substantially the territory now included in the town of Blackstone. A small portion of Uxbridge was annexed for religious purposes. A meeting-house was built forthwith, in Chestnut Hill, and is now standing in tolerably good repair, a fair specimen of the church architecture of the middle of the last century. The square pews, the high pulpit, the sounding-board above it, and the heavy substantial galleries, still remain precisely as they were placed by the hands of the builder. By the help of shingles and paint, and a little aid from the glazier, it promises to stand firm and erect for at least another century. These will doubtless be furnished by the thrifty and industrious dwellers of Chesnut Hill, many of them the descendants of those who reared its structure.

The parish immediately called the Rev. Mr. Baleh to the ministry, and he was settled, and presented with a parsonage and a small farm. Tradition represents him to have been a man of fair abilities, but he proved to be an unfaithful shepherd. After a few years he sold his farm, put the money in his pocket, and departed suddenly for some unknown country. His people's confidence in the reliability of the clerical profession, appears to have been greatly shaken, for no successor has ever been permanently located.

The South Parish continued to form a part of Mendon till the year 1845. The population had increased to such an extent, principally in the extreme southern part, that the town was represented in the General Court by four members, before the amendment of the Constitution. A great majority of the people residing in the northern and extreme southern parts, the attendance at town meetings was effected with much trouble, and the transaction of town business was attended with great inconvenience. The division was opposed chiefly in the north parish, and by the democratic party, which had controlled the politics of the town for many years. Many arguments were advanced against a division, among the strongest of which was the following: "That inasmuch as Mendon united constituted a large and respectable democratic town, a division would create two inferior whig towns."

Blackstone, in the present century, has greatly increased in population and in wealth. More cloth is manufactured in her several villages than in any other town in Worcester County. Few towns impose upon themselves a higher rate of taxation for the purposes of education. Twelve passenger trains daily, pass through her principal villages. By the Providence and Worcester Railroad she has direct communication north and south; and east and west by the Boston, Hartford and Erie Railroad. The Blackstone river lends its tremendous and

unwearied forces to the assistance of human labor. But unfortunately the preponderating resources of the town are owned and controlled by non-residents. The giant powers of her noble river are exhausted in coining money for the residents of distant cities. So long as this state of things continues, Blackstone is likely to rank as a second or third-rate town.

Religion and morality, although cherished and fostered to some extent by different agencies, are very far from being neglected. They should be as inseparable as goodness and happiness are in the future state of existence. Six religious meetings are regularly and respectably attended every Sabbath, in the various parts of the town. They are a blessing to the community. Their object is to make folks better. But it is feared that in many instances, faith bears an undue proportion to works.

For the last forty years the temperance lecturer has been abroad with his pledge of total abstinence. In Blackstone, the cause has received a powerful impetus within the last two years. The foreign population has not yet been reached to any great extent. But among the natives, within the memory of those in middle age, the consumption of intoxicating drinks has been diminished four fifths, if not nine-tenths. In consequence, disease has been diminished, and the average duration of human life much increased. We much more frequently meet an octogenarian now than forty years ago.

While we are enjoying the festivities of this occasion, and listening to the intellectual offerings of the day, while we are shaking the friendly hand, and holding social communion with our neighbors and acquaintances, the sad thought will intrude itself, that before this anniversary again recurs, all this vast assembly will have totally disappeared from the face of the earth. Yet, since the secret of prolonging life has been partially discovered, I am tempted to prophecy that the child now breathes the vital air, who will be present here one hundred years from this day.

7 The Courts of Massachusetts: with an incorruptible bench, and an honest and a learned bar, rogues, as well as honest people, will have justice done them.

8. In *memoriam majorum*. The American Antiquarian Society.

9. The Colonel of the Second Nebraska Regiment at Fort Donelson,—now on picket duty beyond the Missouri.

Responded to by General John M. Thayer, now Senator in Congress from Nebraska.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Before I respond directly to the sentiment with which my name has been presented, I desire to express to you, in behalf of the citizens of Bellingham, of which town it was my lot to be a native, their appreciation of this interesting commemoration. Bellingham being a child of Mendon, the people of the former earnestly unite with those of the latter, in rendering honor to the memory of its founders. They rejoice that you determined to commemorate with becoming observances the two hundredth anniversary of the settlement of your town.

Mr. President, you have connected my name with the region beyond the Missouri. How strikingly this illustrates the contrast between then and now—between two hundred years ago and to-day. Then, Mendon was the outpost of civilization. The settlers had their pickets along the banks of the Blackstone. But ere long, the westward tide passed the Hudson, topped the Alleghanies, crossed the valley of the Mississippi and the Missouri, and to-day the frontier is along the shores of the Pacific. We have recently stretched out our arms towards the north-west—have taken in Russian America, and our flag will soon kiss the breezes that are wafted from the shores of Asia. As the American people have a kind of constitutional inclination for expansion, I am strongly inclined to the belief that many years will not roll away before we shall embrace within our national area the "Dominion of Canada."

Our fathers, when they settled this goodly town of Mendon, struck out into the forest far away from the neighboring settlements. They went armed as they cultivated the field, or assembled to worship God. I am reminded that within the last ten years I have seen the people on the border of the state from which I come, go armed to the field and to the church, to guard against the descendants of the same wily foe who at times spread terror among the settlements of our fathers in this region.

It would be an interesting task, if time permitted, to contrast the institutions, customs and system of government of the present time with those of the period which we are commemorating, to see what progress we have made, to see whether we have, in all respects, improved upon them. By contemplating the character of the people of that day, we may shun their faults and imitate their virtues. They were stern and austere men. They did many things which we should hardly think of doing now. They administered what they deemed justice with an unrelenting hand. I believe they sometimes took the lives of offenders upon very slight causes. If a distinguished citizen of Salem (Dr. Loring) was not present, I might recall the fact that persons in and about that town suffered very severe penalties because they were believed to be possessed of the *Evil One*. And in other places Quakers were publicly whipped while tied to the "cart's tail."

But, my friends, I will tell you what you would not have seen in those days. If a portion of the colonists had rebelled against their government, and, after a long and bloody struggle, had been subdued and their leader caged, you would not have seen one of the loyal men going down to Richmond to sign the bail bond of the great criminal of the rebellion. You would not have seen then what the loyal people of this nation are compelled to behold to-day, namely: the discharge of the leader of the rebellion in the sight of Belle Isle and Libby, whose walls had witnessed month after month and year after year, the groans and agonies of our noble boys in blue, whom the fate of war had thrown into their hands. No, gentlemen, those who could have rebelled against the rightful authority of the colonists would have been compelled to suffer the just penalties of their crimes. Treason then would have been punished. To-day it defies justice and goes scot-free, and an administration is tolerated which favors rebels and hates loyal men.

Our fathers were not free from responsibility for the fastening upon this country that stupendous national crime of human slavery; but they and their children made haste to remove it from their section. It, however, had attained such a hold upon the rest of the country, that it required the convulsions of war to shatter its

power. It was the master. But Massachusetts was indoctrinated with the spirit of liberty, and was, essentially, anti-slavery. Some thirty years ago an eminent citizen of this state, clothed with the authority of the commonwealth, appeared in the city of Charleston for the purpose of testing in the United States Court, the right claimed there of invading merchant vessels and seizing and imprisoning citizens of Massachusetts because they were free men of color, and he was obliged to flee the city before the fury of a Charleston mob. To-day, a citizen of Massachusetts utters the sentiments of freedom and the doctrine of the equality of all men, on "*Citadel Green*," in that same city of Charleston, and Massachusetts and Samuel Hoar are vindicated in the person of Henry Wilson.

If our fathers could be conscious of what is transpiring to-day, we may feel assured they would rejoice with us at the advanced civilization which exists in the land where they were the pioneers. They would rejoice with us at the progress which has been made over the rude customs and crude arts and undeveloped sciences of those times. Above all, would they rejoice that the great curse of human slavery is wiped out, and forever, from this land, and that in its stead there shall reign universal Law, universal Justice, and universal Freedom!

10. The frontier towns of Massachusetts on her western border in the olden time: *Brookfield, Mendon,* and *Oxford.*

Responded to by Hon. Ira M. Barton.

Mr. President: As a native of the town of Oxford, I recognize your right to call on me to respond to that sentiment. But I can remain with you only a few moments, and instead of a speech, I shall give you in response, a short sentiment, indicating the essential part of what I would say on this occasion.

The ancient towns of Mendon, Brookfield and Oxford, originally constituted the larger part of the Worcester South District, and embraced contiguous territory, except that New Sherborn, (now Douglas), was interposed between Mendon and Oxford. The history of those three towns, including that of the several towns carved out of their original territory, it is obvious would constitute interesting chapters in the local history of the county of Worcester. Some progress has been made in that direction in the town of Brookfield. And in Oxford, materials for such history have not only been collected, but, to a good extent written out by the late lamented Rev. Dr. Bardwell. As to the early settlement of French Huguenots in that town, something has been added to the interesting tract of the Rev. Dr. Holmes upon that subject, by the reports of the Council of the American Antiquarian Society, an institution that is always ready to aid in such researches.

In the case of your town, Sir, the complete historical materials which, I understand, it has been your recreation from professional labors to collect, with such addition as the interesting services of this day may afford, will leave little more to be desired for a most satisfactory history of Mendon. And in conclusion, in the presence of the representatives of all the original territory of your ancient town, as indicating my estimate of the importance of such history, I give you the following sentiment:

THE FUTURE HISTORIAN OF MENDON: Discovering the liberal co-operation of the present, he will receive the gratitude of all after generations.

11. The Farmer and Mechanic of Massachusetts; the one has accomplished the feat of making *two* spears of grass grow where *one* grew before; and the other has annihilated both time and space, so that, in a trial of speed of four thousand miles, across the Atlantic, he distances sunrise by four hours and a half.

Responded to by Dr. George B. Loring, of Salem.

MR. PRESIDENT: At this late hour of the day it is not easy to respond to the comprehensive sentiment which you have just pronounced. The farmers and mechanics of Mendon, to say nothing of the great mass of their brethren in Massachusetts, have always enjoyed peculiar privileges, and have always acquitted themselves well. With that skill, which was so remarkable in our early history, they selected the fertile lands of this region for their home, and I need not assure you and those around me, of the correctness of their judgment, after the experience which we have had of the good quality of the soil, under this tent this afternoon. That, as mechanics, they builded well, let the substantial old dwellings of this town testify,—which, after a lapse of two centuries, are but just now passing away.

But not only in the practical labors of life did they acquit themselves well. In the earliest period of our history, they insisted on the enjoyment of those rights and privileges which have now become a part of the great inheritance of every American citizen. We who listened to the stirring and graphic address of a son of this town, in your church this morning, cannot soon forget the bold and honorable stand taken by forty farmers of the township of Mendon, when they demanded and secured the right of voting on public affairs, as against the privileged orders of the early colonial days. They secured in their small sphere the rights of free and independent citizens, setting an example which all might follow, until universal freedom in this country should be secure. Of the mechanics, who can ever forget Job Tiler, perhaps ungovernable, and refractory before the magnates of his day, but determined to assert his right to his own labor and freewill, by refusing to work on the minister's house when ordered so to do by the ecclesiastico-civil authorities of a puritan community? Who can tell what Job Tiler did for freedom of speech and religion, by refusing to recognize the authority of the church even in material affairs, at a time when all law had an ecclesiastical flavor?

And when I heard that remarkable resolution, passed by the farmers and mechanics of this town, long before the Revolution, when the fires of freedom were kept burning at the hearthstones of the "little democracies" of this country alone,—the resolution that "all men are created equal," I was more than ever filled with wonder and astonishment at the intellectual grasp and free instinct of our fathers. That resolution, written undoubtedly by that intelligent and remarkable man, Joseph Dorr, was but the expression of the popular sentiment of that day,—a sentiment common to all those who have demanded free suffrage as their first right, and who from generation to generation cherished the ballot box, the school-house, and the meeting-house, as the pillars of their community. What

an illustration it was of that wise saying of my Lord Bacon, that "in the management of practical affairs, the wisdom of the wisest man is less reliable than the deliberate and concurring judgment of common minds!" How remarkable that the Declaration of Independence found expression in a popular assembly held in your old church here, long before its great general truths had entered the brain of Thomas Jefferson, or had been recorded by his eloquent pen! Can any man wonder at the freedom of a people whose farmers and mechanics, in the small towns, uttered such sentiments as these, and sent them forth as a guide to the leading minds of their day,—wiser, in their "deliberate and concurring judgment," than the wisest and greatest!

I have listened with the highest pleasure, to the historical reminiscences of this old town and her daughters, which I have heard to-day. I cannot express the gratitude which I feel to you, sir, for your kind invitation to be present. For all I have seen and heard has filled me with renewed respect and regard for the intelligence of those in whose hands rest the interests of Massachusetts, and who have only to follow the example set them by their fathers, to be useful in their day and generation.

The town of Mendon had an honorable record in its early days. Its inhabitants defended manfully their possessions against a savage foe; and when the strife for independence came on, they rallied around the cause of their country, first in the field and last to leave. So, too, in our own time, have her sons written one more honorable record; and while they have carried their intelligence into every walk in life,—into the pulpits of our land, into all honest enterprise,—they have also shared the trials and sufferings of our hard-fought war for freedom, and have written their names in that bright page of our country's history. May all prosperity and honor attend her future career, and irradiate that new century on which she is just now entering.

12. The Massachusetts Volunteer Militia: The history of the past *has proved* their patriotic devotion to freedom; the history of the future *will record* their unflinching faithfulness in its defence.

13. The early settlers of Mendon. This day and ever we would cherish their sterling virtues and hold their names in the highest veneration.

Responded to by Putnam W. Taft, of Worcester.

Sweet May has come with blossoming buds,
  And the rippling silvery notes
Are heard, high up in the leafy boughs,
  From the song birds' tufted throats;
The robin 's come back, from wandering far
  In the sunny southland tair,
And the blue-bird pipes in merry glee,
  As he breathes his mountain air.

So, we've turned, with joy, our roving feet,
From the varied walks of earth,
To join in this gathering, household band,
At the place that gave us birth.
We answered with joy, your call, "Come Home,"
For our feet were tired and sore;
The road has been hard since last we left
The path that leads to your door.

There are joy gleams, bright, in every eye
As we pledge, with solemn truth,
The purest love, that our hearts can know,
To the dear home of our youth;
No blush of shame need mantle the brow
Of the man of high renown
As he turns aside, from worldly strife,
To his quiet, native town.

I look abroad, o'er the green crowned hills
And the valleys spreading wide,
And the stern old woods, that many years
Have the storm-king's power defied;
The fruitful orchards, clustering stand,
And the cherry blossoms, white,
Are sprinkling the earth with snowy leaves,
As they fall so pure and light.

And, scattered about, embowered with trees,
All over the goodly land,
Crowned with contentment's sweetest joys,
The homes of the farmers stand.
And my grateful heart responds with joy
To the sentiment just read,
We 'll wreathe, with laurels of well-earned fame,
The names of the honored dead.

We stand erect in our manhood's prime,
And our hearts, with pleasure glow,
As our thoughts turn back to days long past,
When, "two hundred" years ago,
Where our goodly town now prosperous stands
Was a forest far and wide,
And the Indian warrior roamed at will,
And the white man's power defied.

But there came from 'cross the foaming deep,
  A firm and stalwart band,
Who sought a home 'mid the dreary wilds
  Of a distant, stranger land;
They fled from tyranny's iron rule,
  To the drear New England's shore,
Where the white waves dashed against the rocks
  With a constant, sullen roar.

While the snow-king wove a mantle white,
  And covered the frozen ground,
The bleak winds whistled through branches bare
  With a wailing mournful sound:
And the hungry wolf roamed through the woods
  With a fierce and fearful cry,
The war-whoop shrill of the Indian brave
  Rung through the winter sky.

But *their* hearts changed not from their stern resolve,
  Though their cheeks turned white with fear,
When the reaper Death, with cruel hand,
  Gathered their loved ones dear;
In the dim old woods and meadows sweet,
  Where *our* childish feet have trod,
The pilgrims found what long they had sought,
  The freedom to worship God.

While the changing years passed one by one,
  In their never-ceasing flight,
They brought success to the pilgrim band,
  For God was with the right;
The sunlight ripened their corn and grain;
  In the golden Autumn time,
They gathered, from off their wide-spread fields
  A beautiful harvest fine.

The people learned, on the Sabbath day,
  The golden rule of love,
At the little church with the spire upraised
  Towards the arching blue above:
They built the school-house down by the hill,
  Though the winds blew cold and drear,
The children came, with willing feet,
  From the homesteads far and near.

And the village grew and prospered too,
  Was a place of great renown,
And they sought a name worthy the fame
  Of their busy thriving town;
When the fathers gazed, with conscious pride,
  On each brave and stalwart son,
They gave it a name which suited well,
  The one it still bears—Men-don(e).

With pleasue to-day we've turned aside
  From the vexing cares and strife,
From the troubles which shadow every path
  'Long the weary march of life;
Our youth days come *back* with magic power,
  As we see each well-known face,
And hearts grow *light* as we gaze upon
  Each well remembered place.

There are the woods, which in summer time,
  Bent low o'er the rippling pond,
Where we sailed at eve for the lilies sweet,
  To the further side beyond;
There is the hill where we coasted oft,
  When the snow, so pure and white,
Covered the top and sloping sides
  With a fleecy mantle light.
In those good old days, strong common sense
  Was taught in the country schools,
And the young folks then knew not the power
  Of dame fashion's iron rule.
The boys rose up with the morning sun,
  And whistled a merry lay,
They ate their breakfast with right good will,
  And off to the fields away.

They plowed and sowed, reaped and mowed,
  Though rough and rocky the soil,
But the harvest fine in Autumn time
  Well paid for their hardy toil.
When Winter came with chilling blast,
  And the farm work all was done,
With a willing heart and busy brain
  They studied till set of sun.
Then, Daboll's arithmetic they conned,
  Learned Murray's grammar too,

The American preceptor read,
  And Morse's geography through.

But young *America* rules to-day;
  'Tis sad indeed but true,
Their wisdom exceeds, when ten years old,
  Whatever their fathers knew.
They roam all night and sleep all day,
  And labôr, to them, is disgrace;
Their hair is curled by barber's hand
  And powdered their simple face;
With dainty gloves and their feet well pinched
  To a small and high heeled boot,
Their little forms are padded and stuffed,
  To fill out a fashionable suit;
They carry a cane with graceful air,
  Or handle a lady's fan,
No wonder people ask as they pass
  If that *thing* is called a man.

The girls were taught, in their youthful days,
  To make the butter and cheese;
To spin the yarn and to knit and sew
  And cook a dinner with ease.
They spun and wove the flannels so soft,
  And the linen pure and white,
The bedquilts warm, all quilted so firm,
  Indeed were a goodly sight.

But *now* a little Latin and French
  Goes into each feeble brain,
With all the "isms" and "ologies,"
  And they soon fly out again.

But the ladies fair can promenade,
  Or join in the mazy dance,
They can gossip and simper and smile
  With the ease and grace of France.

Like lilies, they neither toil nor spin,
  Their hands are folded in ease,
While Solomon in his glory bright
  Was never arrayed like these.

They have many a dress and robe so gay,
  But weep in bitter despair,
Like "Flora McFlimsey," renowned in song,
  Because they have nothing to wear.

O! sad are the changes time has made,
  For everything now is fast,
And we pray, with anxious, waiting hearts,
  For the good old time that 's past.

I wandered along the well-known road
  With an aching heart this morn,
And passed, all shaded with ancient trees,
  The homestead * where I was born.
The robin sang clear its notes of joy
  As it sang in bygone Mays,
But I gazed in vain for the loved ones dear
  Who gladdened my boyhood's days.

The voice is hushed that tenderly soothed
  Each childish trouble and pain,
And the *cradle* song with its magic power
  Will never be heard again.
In sorrow's hour I have sadly felt
  The loss of that mother love,
But I know the spirit, robed in white,
  Roams the better land above.

I sought for the landmarks known in youth,
  For each old familiar spot,
Where I often strayed in childish hours,
  But alas! I found them not.
The blacksmith shop of old "Uncle Sim,"
  Where I often stopped to play,
And watch the sparks from the heated iron,
  Has long since passed away.
How well I remember the patient John,
  His good-natured face aglow,
As he stood with strong and steady arm,
  Ready to strike or blow.

* The Jonathan Russell place.

A little farther, just around the corner,
  Nestled a cosy hatter's shop,
Where Mr. Stone, with a skillful craft,
  Made coverings for the head.
I 've watched him bowing the rabbit fur,
  And making the lofty crown;
With a generous brim he formed each hat
  For the staid men of the town.
Genuine hats—not shoddy or sham—
  Were made in the days of yore.
For *best* they were worn full fifteen years,
  For common some ten years more.

Up under the elms was the bake-house old,
  Where Mr. Brackett baked our bread,
And the crackers light, and buns so sweet,
  With which the hungry were fed.
O! what a feast we might have enjoyed
  If he had been here to-day.

We are proud to-day of our noble sires,
  And high on the roll of fame
Is writ, in letters of blazing light,
  Many an honored name.
That of "Aldrich" stands first on the list;
  George and Nathan, soldiers bold,
At Crown Point and old Ticonderoga
  Fought in the days of old.
Peleg the surveyor, and Jabez the postmaster,
  Anson, Scammel, and Quissett Luke,
And that other Luke at the turnpike gate,
  Who is here to-day with a smiling face,
All free from the world's contending strife,
  To welcome the children home.
Methinks the angel of health came down
  And granted a new lease of life.

There was Eben, and William, and Major Rufus
  Who anxiously watched the fray
At the bloody battle of Bunker Hill
  Where the sons of freedom lost the day,
Tho' Putnam, Prescott, Warren, Stark and Reed
  "'Mid death shots, falling thick and fast,"
With Spartan valor, thrice beat back the foe
  Covering the ground with British dead.

He saw the flames of the city rage,
  And heard the pealing bell
Toll, e'er it fell, with a crashing sound,
  The oppressor's funeral knell.

Of Tafts there were at least a score or more,
  Intelligent and good-looking of course;
Zacheus, Enos, 'Villa, Elijah and George,
  Jotham, Alvin, and Amariah,
Thomas, Nathaniel, Eben and Japheth,
  Good citizens, farmers all;
And if I 'm not mistaken *this* gathering shows
  The race is yet not *quite* extinct.

A famous tribe were the well known Thayers,—
  Allen the merchant, Alexander the doctor,
Over the river were Moses, Aaron, Nahum and Ben,
  And Aleck and Captain Amos;
And down by the tavern, near the Five Corners,
  Were many more of the name,
Henry, Artemas, Ichabod, Joseph and Nicholas;
  At "Waterbug Hill" lived Uncle Robert,
At "Chestnut," Captain Caleb and Esquire Elijah,
  All eminently useful men.

The Kelleys who owned the factories and mills
  At the "Upper" and "Lower Canadas,"
Asa, Seth, Willis, Daniel, John and David—
  Good Quakers of the Hicksite sect;
They sawed our logs and ground our grain,
  Dyed our wool and carded our rolls,
And dressed the cloth which busy hands at home
  Had spun and wove.
The limpid stream, which turned their wheels,
  Still runs its meandering course
Towards the great ocean, but the miller
  And his vocation are gone.

There was the old forge, down by the spring,
  Which made iron for the farmers' use,
Whose ponderous hammer could be heard
  To ring, oft in the stilly night;
But the forge, and its owner, Mr. Paine,
  Have gone the way of all the earth,

While the spring, whose cooling waters quenched
  The thirst of the heated forgeman,
Surrounded by mossy stones and grassy banks,
  Fresh and green as the memories
Which cluster around it, only remains
  To mark the spot and tell the story.

There was Doctor T., a kind and genial man,
  With the mark of wisdom in each eye,
A word of cheer for the children dear,
  And a smile for each passer-by.
One pleasant morning, to a neighboring mill,
  The Doctor carried a grist to grind,
And gaily chatted with the miller hale,
  While rumbled the noisy stone.
The miller said with a laughing air,
  "What good are your drugs and pills?
You *kill* the people and still pretend
  To *cure* all earthly ills."
Then spake the Doctor, with solemn air;
  "Just read the papers, please,
And you 'll see, we 've found a wondrous cure
  For consumption's dire disease;
The medicine, it is sad to say,
  Though we 've sought the earth around,
Is the meal-dust on an *honest* miller's hat,
  But has never yet been found.

In the green and shady Quissett vale
  Lived the blacksmith, Mr. P.,
Who toiled from morn till the set of sun
  For his little family.
In those old days each man was taxed,
  The minister to pay;
Whether he heard the preaching fine,
  Or whether he staid away;—

The blacksmith refused to pay the tax,
  And they started him for jail;
He turned away with an anxious heart,
  From his peaceful quiet vale.
Before he reached his journey's end,
  He met good Parson D.,
The blacksmith said, in sorrowing voice—
  "'Tis very hard for me,

To be sent to jail because I have
No money the tax to pay,
When I never came inside your church,
And never heard you pray."

"But Ah!" the parson blandly said,
"My doors were open wide,
'Tis your own fault, nobody's to blame
That you never came inside;
But for fear your family might want,
This time the tax I'll pay."
The blacksmith thanked the generous man,
And homeward took his way.

While musing, he roamed along the road,
In the weary march he paused;
He had found a way the parson to pay,
For the trouble he had caused.
So the blacksmith made and sent a bill
Right up to Parson D.,
For shoeing his horse at sundry times,
And a good round sum charged he.

In indignation the parson came
A galloping down the hill,
And asked the blacksmith what right had he
To send him such a bill;
"For I have not been inside your door,
In your shop I never trod,
I don't understand the meaning of this,
For my horse you never shod."

"My tools were ready," the blacksmith said,
"And my doors were open wide,
'Tis no one's fault but your own, dear sir,
That you never came inside."
The parson left with a knowing air,
Nor went that way for days,
But the blacksmith sung, "'Tis a very poor rule
That does not work both ways."

Our hearts are grieved as we close our lay,
And the sad tears dim our sight,

As we sing the changes time has wrought
  In his onward rapid flight;
And *our* lives are drawing to a close,
  And soon we shall bid farewell
To the homes made dear by memories sweet,
  Where the loved and loving dwell.
Let us strive with earnest, faithful hearts,
  Stern duty's call to obey,
And walk with a firm and steady tread
  In the straight and narrow way.
Let us imitate with purpose firm
  Our fathers' virtues of old,
And defy oppression's cruel power
  With a courage firm and bold.
Let us nobly stand for freedom and right
  Till the setting of life's sun,
Till our ears shall hear the Master's voice:
  "Servants of God, well done."

My muse is sad as I gently breathe
  That sweet old word good-bye,
But we hope to meet in union sweet
  In the better world on high.
At the river side, for the boatman pale,
  We stand and tremblingly wait,
Loved ones will welcome who've gone before,
  When we reach the pearly gate.
No sorrow or parting can sadden,
  In those mansions of the blest,
Where the wicked cease from troubling
  And the weary are at rest.

14. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts: she furnished the *first martyrs* for the establishment of American Independence, in the *streets of Boston*, and the *first martyrs* for its preservation in the *streets of Baltimore*.

15. The memory of Abraham Lincoln.

16. The Ladies: with Clara Barton and Florence Nightingale as representatives, they need stand in no fear of being overlooked or counted out, in the great trial-balance of humanity.

LETTERS.

LETTERS FROM INVITED GUESTS.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT.

BOSTON, May 14th, 1867.

HON. JOHN G. METCALF,

Mendon,

MY DEAR SIR:

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your kind invitation to participate in the ceremonies commemorative of the incorporation of your ancient town. Regretting that the urgency of public duty will deprive me of this privilege, I cannot conceal from you my deep interest in all that concerns my native county. I view with pride her material prosperity, and intelligence, and recognize in the industry, virtue and patriotic devotion of her people, those elements which constitute the true greatness of a State. The lessons of the fathers have not been lost upon their sons, and six generations of men have preserved the enterprise and manly fortitude of the early settlers of her towns, only to exemplify them in the pursuits of peace, and illustrate them yet more conspicuously in the conflict of arms.

Of this stronghold of free principles and free men, so early established in the heart of Massachusetts, and maintained with such persistent courage, Mendon was a most important buttress; and though desolated by savage warfare, and long enduring the trials and perils of a frontier settlement, the perseverance of her substantial yeomanry has reaped, as it merited, a most bountiful reward. Thriving towns have sprung up on her ancient domain, and from all, the close of two centuries will summon the lineal descendants of the old pioneers, to celebrate the birthday of their common parent. And from other counties, and other States, and it may be from distant lands, the children will return to the old homestead and hearthstone, to revive the associations of youth, to strengthen the bonds of friendship, and perhaps to drop a tear over the ashes of their kindred.

In this commingling of congratulations my warmest sympathies will be with

you; and I shall abide in the earnest hope, and fullest confidence that when the hour of parting shall come, each son and daughter of the ancient town will carry to a near or distant home, the purpose and the will to cherish and practice, and teach even unto children's children, the lessons of frugality and piety transmitted through two hundred years, from an honorable and God-fearing ancestry.

I remain, my dear Sir, with sentiments of the highest respect and esteem,

Your friend and servant,

ALEXANDER H. BULLOCK.

WORCESTER, May 13, 1867.

JOHN G. METCALF;

MY DEAR SIR:

Your most kind note of the twenty-ninth of April reached me when confined to my chamber by sickness, and even now I have little strength beyond what may be required to its brief acknowledgement. I thank the committee which you represent most cordially, for the great honor of the invitation to attend the public commemoration of the two hundredth anniversary of the incorporation of Mendon, and to respond to a sentiment which may be offered at the festival. It would, indeed, be a high gratification to me to be present on so rare and interesting an occasion, and to speak, as I might do, of the things which pertain to the past. My own long life is to the full measure, within sixteen years of the one-half of the entire existence of your "ancient town," and memory, true to its office, bears with it vivid recollections of the times and the men of a generation which has gone,—of pleasant acquaintances and precious friendships, never to be forgotten.

The Mendon of the present is not, indeed, the Mendon of a half-century since. Time, in a country of ever vigorous enterprise and progress, like our own, soon changes the relation of places to each other, and *your town*, once scarcely second in territory, and population, and business, to the shire itself, again and again shorn of its original fair proportions, is now most to be honored in the grateful remembrance of those representative men, who, as *citizens of the county*, in their day, were prominent in the public service, and contributed greatly to the integrity, prosperity, and glory of the larger community, of which they were members. Penniman, Davenport, Thurber, Hastings, the elder and the younger, Rawson, George,—names still familiar and cherished, as I doubt not, in the hearts and households of your people.

I am not of the number of those who admit the wisdom of a division of *great things* for the only purpose of a multiplication of *smaller things*. Happily, in the tendency of the times to the creation of new municipalities, the *unity* of our noble county remains substantially unimpaired, although somewhat disturbed, as I think, in the harmony of its proportions, by the poor expedient of a *part shire* on

its northern border. If Fitchburg and the adjacent towns shall ever, in turn, be sent across the State for the administration of justice, as has been sometimes threatened, it may then come to be better understood, that the extremities are farther distant from each other than from a common centre, and at *how great cost to the general welfare*, relief may be sought from merely partial, but necessarily incidental local inconveniences.

When it was first proposed to divide the "old county of Hampshire," a county once like our own, magnificent in its greatness, it was urged in objection, by one of its most eminent citizens, that the result of the process would inevitably be to *belittle the men*. Through the persistence of sectional interests, and personal petty ambitions and jealousies, the measure was at last accomplished. And where now are to be found *there* such men as were the Strongs, Starkweather, Ashmun, Mills, the Dwights, Bliss, Hooker, and others,—"River Gods," as they were called,—awaiting whose presence in the General Court, it was said, the purpose and action of legislation would be suspended.

For myself, I cling with inextinguishable love and pride to the integrity of this grand old County of Worcester, in all its length and breadth of territory, stretching from State to State, in itself ample enough for a Commonwealth; with its one hundred and eighty thousand population, larger even than that of some of the States of the Union, its still rapid growth, its diversified interests, its material wealth, its educated intellect, its moral power, its political weight and influence as a great community, in the concerns of State and Nation. I glory in it that all these are its distinguishing characteristics. I pray they may never be fewer nor less. They have been our enjoyment, and belong, as a rightful inheritance, to the generations which shall come after us.

If it were the fashion of the times to "drink toasts," I would offer as a sentiment,

THE COUNTY OF WORCESTER: with the willing co-operation of *every part* to its perpetual integrity, prosperity and greatness.

I have the honor to be, dear Sir, with sentiments of the highest respect for yourself, and your associates on the committee, very truly their and your gratefully obliged friend and servant,

LEVI LINCOLN.

NEW BEDFORD, May 7, 1867.

HON. JOHN G. METCALF,

Chairman Committee, &c. &c.

MY DEAR SIR:

On my return home from a recent absence, I found your very kind note, inviting me to be present and participate in the celebration of the two hundredth an-

niversary of the incorporation of the ancient town of Mendon. Slight as my claims are to be thus recognized and remembered, I esteem it a high honor to be permitted to unite with your citizens in this grateful commemoration of the founding of their municipal home, with which I have so many agreeable associations. Some of the pleasantest and most profitable days of my youth were spent within its borders, and I should rejoice to be able to renew, under the inspiration of such an occasion, my recollections of those, now passed away, whose hospitality and kindness made my residence there the subject of such grateful memories.

My venerable and faithful old tutor, Rev. Simeon Doggett, the Russells and the Hastings—father and sons, the Haywards and the Holbrooks, the Davenports an Torreys, and many more who come thronging before me only at the prompting of your word of invitation, and whose familiar faces would, I am sure, be vividly re-produced in the family circle which you will gather and re-unite on the day of your commemoration, are all freshly remembered. But it grieves me, my dear Sir, to be obliged to say that I must forego this great pleasure. My engagements, already fixed, and which cannot be postponed, inexorably exclude me from your festival. With my best wishes, that all good influences may combine to render it a propitious and successful one, and with my sincere thanks to the Committee,

I am, very truly,

Your obliged and obedient servant,

JOHN H. CLIFFORD.

NEW YORK, May 6th, 1867.

MY DEAR BROTHER:

The celebration to which you invite me, and to which our towns-people are looking forward with so great anticipation of pleasure, is one of a most interesting character, and calculated to do great good.

The influence of the town in moulding the character of the people of our country, and in contributing to the support and excellence of our free government and institutions, is an element not to be overlooked nor forgotten.

It is well that the citizens of our town now, at the close of a history of two hundred years, have seen fit to call upon her children to meet and celebrate the blessings which she has bestowed—to take note of the past and its significance, and to gather new inspiration for excellence and usefulnesss in the present and the future.

Two hundred years have sped away! Many generations of townsmen and townswomen have passed away with them! But the town still remains.

So the waters of the flowing stream go ever hastening onward to the depths

and darkness of the sea, but the river still *continues* to give gladness to the eye and beauty to the earth.

Feeling, then, the certainty and swiftness of our mortality, may it be our wisdom and our joy to give honor and support to the institutions which are to survive us, and to bless those who are to come after us.

I am not certain whether I can meet with you on this interesting occasion. I shall come if I can without doing injustice to my engagements and duties here.

In any event, I send you the sentiment of my heart: OUR NATIVE TOWN,—she merits the gratitude and love of all her children.

Your affectionate Brother,

E. N. TAFT.

P. W. TAFT, Mendon.

GROTON, May 1, 1867.

SIR:

Your letter of the 29th ult. places me under obligations to you and to the committee of the citizens of the town of Mendon. I take an interest in all that relates to our towns, and their early history and records are full of instruction and encouragement. The little municipalities of New England have ever been schools of self-government, and nurseries of true political principles. Let them be cherished and strengthened. Let their histories be rehearsed, their policy and power explained, that their influence and authority in the government of the state may continue. As I am to leave Massachusetts for Washington in a few days, I am compelled to decline your invitation.

Very respectfully,

GEO. S. BOUTWELL.

JOHN G. METCALF, Esq., Mendon, Mass.

CITY OF WORCESTER, May 4, 1867.

HON. JOHN G. METCALF.

MY DEAR SIR:

Your letter of the twenty-ninth ultimo is before me. I thank you personally, and through you the committee who kindly invited me to be present at the cele-

bration of the of the two hundredth anniversary of the incorporation of the town of Mendon. Commemorations of such epochs in local history, are of the highest importance to the general historian, and shed much light on the origin, formation, and growth of our social, civil and religious institutions. Most deeply do I regret my inability to be present and participate in an event so interesting and instructive. Allow me to express my best wishes for the truest and highest enjoyment of the sons and daughters of Mendon, who may have the happiness to engage in this bi-centennial celebration.

With respectful consideration, I am, Sir,

Your friend and obedient servant,

ISAAC DAVIS.

LOWELL, MASS., May 2, 1867.

DEAR SIR:

I am much obliged to the Committee of Arrangements of the good old town of Mendon, for their invitation to participate with my fellow-citizens upon the occasion of the celebration of the 200th anniversary of the incorporation.

I am grieved that pressing private engagements will keep me away.

The Town organization took our fathers safely through the Revolution. Our towns were the mainstay of the Commonwealth in the War of the Rebellion. It was a mistake when we changed from Town to District representation.

Let the rights and privileges of the towns be carefully cherished and guarded from infringement.

Yours Truly,

BENJ. F. BUTLER.

JOHN G. METCALF, ESQ., Chairman

Committee of Arrangements, Mendon, Mass.

DEDHAM, May 4, 1867.

SIR:

I feel very deeply obliged for the invitation extended to me by the Committee

of Arrangements to be present at the 200th anniversary of the incorporation of Mendon, and would gladly accept the same if my imperative duty did not require me to be at this place at the time referred to.

The occasion which gathers together the citizens and towns which have sprung from your ancient corporation will be a most interesting one, and I can offer her no better wish than that the century to come may write for her as fair a record as that which the centuries past have inscribed on the pages of History.

Had I been fortunate enough to be with you, I should have endeavored to render some tribute, however inadequate, to the exertions of your citizens at home, and your sons in the field, during the late terrible struggle with rebellion and treason, and should have ventured to offer the following sentiment:

"The Town of Mendon—The changes of time may have diminished its territory, but the valor of its sons has shown that the noble spirit of self-devotion and patriotism has not diminished from that which two centuries ago animated their great forefathers."

Believe me, Sir,

Yours very truly and respectfully,

CHAS. DEVENS, Jr.

HON. J. G. METCALF

and Gentlemen of Committee.

CAMBRIDGE, May 4.

DEAR DOCTOR:

Your kind invitation to be present at the bi-centennial celebration of the incorporation of the good town of Mendon has been received, and has quite disturbed my equanimity in the struggle between my sense of duty here and my desire to be there at one and the same time. From my childhood, when I began to read Whitney's History of Worcester County, I have been interested in studying the progress and improvement of the towns of which it is composed. This, together with my long familiarity with more or less of the leading men in the various towns, in public and private life, has extended something like a home feeling all over the County, and brought me into the relation of neighborhood kindness and regard with its people wherever I have found them. Nor has this feeling been diminished by my removal from my former associations with the County. The habits of youth and middle life have clung to me, though so many of the generations I then knew have passed into history.

All that I have said is specially true of the ancient town of Mendon. A crowd of associations are awakenened as I recall its natural beauties; its cultivated farms, and the names and homes of the men of influence whom I have known there.

It would have given me great pleasure to come and be permitted to speak of these, and recall the moral and social influences which that town and its institutions have exerted in the County. But that pleasure is denied me by my duty here. I do not see how I can be absent without sacrificing what I owe to others to the gratification of my own wishes and desires.

I have no doubt you will have an excellent time. Such occasions are the means of much good to the passing generations, by reminding them of the character of those who laid the foundations of society in these little Democracies which are the life and soul of our free institutions, and teaching them, by the lessons of the past, the work they have to do, if they would carry forward the progress which another generation had begun.

Pardon this long note,—I would not decline your invitation without saying how much I regretted in doing so, and I was, before I was aware of it, involved in a train of thought which the history of Mendon, as I recalled it, awakened.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

EMORY WASHBURN.

HON. J. G. METCALF, M. D.

WORCESTER, May 14, 1867,
Tuesday, 8 P. M.

DR. JOHN G. METCALF,

Of the Committee of Mendon.

DEAR SIR;—I regret that I have just now received a summons to attend public business at Boston, at noon to-morrow, which will deprive me of the great pleasure, which I anticipated, in attending the commemoration of the 200th anniversary of your town. If I could have been present I should not have attempted to make any important addition to the historical discoveries brought out by the orator and by yourself, but I should have taken the liberty of speaking of some familiar facts as they strike a stranger. There is often some influence and a good deal of history in a name, and the name of your town, written in successive early colonial records as Mendham, plainly signifies improved or improving hamlet or town. Among many efforts for improvement indicated in your history, I will mention the free use of the process of amputation: First, Bellingham was cut off on the east, then the large slice of Uxbridge and Northbridge was taken from the west side, then Upton was struck off from the north, and

nothing prevented your poet, for this occasion, who was born on the spot, from crying to George II.:

> "Ruin seize thee, worthless king—
> Confusion on thy banners wait,"

but the fact that the bard was born one hundred years too late. Then, successively, Milford and Blackstone were cut off; and after all this, the old corporation was so vigorous and bore the knife so well without the aid of of chloroform, that our neighbors of Rhode Island have attempted to repeat the operation. But the good old town is here, to-day, inviting us to cut and come again, and I am much disappointed that I cannot enjoy your hospitality.

Will you offer, in my behalf, the subjoined sentiment, and believe me,

Very respectfully yours,

STEPHEN SALISBURY.

THE TOWN OF MENDON:—"be the same more or less,"—in all its losses of territory, may it never lose the power to furnish happy homes within its borders, andhonored and useful men for the service of the state.

HARRISBURG, Pa., May 8th, 1867.

PUTMAN W. TAFT, ESQ., Mendon, Mass.

MY DEAR SIR:

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your kind letter of the 1st inst., advising me of the proposed celebration of the *Two Hundredth Anniversary of the Settlement of Mendon*, and inviting me to be present to participate in the pleasures of that occasion.

It would afford me much gratification to comply with your very polite invitation, (did not a pressure of business at this time forbid,) and to make a pilgrimage to the good old town of my nativity, and unite with my poor voice in doing honor to the occasion,—to repeat a hail and a farewell among my old friends—children of the same household, and kindred of those, fondly remembered, who have gone to their long home.

I rejoice that the occasion is to be commemorated. It is right that the birthday of this good old mother of towns, and a numerous family of children spread abroad through all the land, should be remembered, and her praise sounded in speech and verse and joyous song.

She has been a kind mother, and I remember with gratitude the tender care which she has ever manifested in the education of her children. It was while sitting upon the lowest bench, in an humble room, which had formerly been used as a shoe-maker's shop, but now high and holy in its associations, that I received my first impulses towards learning and an earnest life, by listening to words of coun-

sel from the lips of that broad-minded man, and most excellent citizen, David Davenport, in the discharge of his duty as a school committee man. So long as the best and most honored of the town, like him, give their time and their attention to common school education, happy and fortunate will be our fond mother's days, and she can point to such, and say, with the matron of old, "*These are my jewels.*"

It is the virtuous, well-educated children of the rural population that give power and stability to the nation. It was not the needle guns that made empire for Prussia on the now historic field of Sadowa, but the well-schooled, intelligent young men that stood behind them; and the realization of that long-cherished hope of a united Germany, under Prussian rule, is due, not so much to the consummate generalship of the Princes, or to her improved weapons of warfare, as to her liberal and wise system of popular education.

Be pleased to make my acknowledgments to gentlemen, members of the committee, and my regrets at not being able to be present, and say to them, that I join in wishing the prosperity and happiness of the people, throughout the goodly borders of the town, and offer this sentiment:

A wise and liberal education of youth, the pride and the glory of MENDON.

With sentiments of respect and esteem, I remain,

Very truly yours,

SAMUEL P. BATES.

WORCESTER, May 4, 1867.

HON. JOHN G. METCALF,

DEAR SIR:

An official engagement at Webster, on the 15th inst., will deprive me of the satisfaction I should find in being present at the celebration of the 200th birth-day of your town.

What would the inhabitants of ancient Mendon have said, on the day the General Court gave them a town charter, if they had been told that at the close of the second century of their municipal existence, a sheriff's jury would be engaged in assessing damages for land, away beyond Douglas woods, taken to make an *iron road*, upon which *iron horses* would run, drawing long trains of passengers and merchandise, and living upon nothing but wood and water? And how great would have been their astonishment if they could have seen the strange horses, with their marvelous carriages, running into *East* Mendon, and over *South* Mendon, and up the valleys of the Blackstone and the Mumford in *West* Mendon? They could have been forgiven, even in those puritanic times, if they had exclaimed as did the lunatic, looking out of the galleries of the Insane Hospital up-

on the first train of cars that run into Worcester:—"*It must be the Devil upon earth; for no other creature could run so fast with such short legs!*"

Nothing shows the immense change which two centuries of progress have made, in a manner so forcible as the tens of thousands of miles of railroads, that already hold most of the states of the Union in their iron embrace; and are daily reaching forth their forked fingers, like hooks of steel, to grasp the golden shores of California and Oregon, and the silver moonshine of our Russian purchase.

When Uxbridge, and Milford, and Upton, and Northbridge, and Blackstone, gather around the old hearth-stone of Mendon, to celebrate the years of her maternity, something of family pride might be pardoned in her, if in the midst of her deprivations, she should be heard to lament that she had not still other children to give to the Commonwealth.

Very respectfully yours,

J. S. C. Knowlton.

MUNICIPAL OFFICERS FOR 1667.

SELECTMEN.

COL. WILLIAM CROWNE,
GOODMAN BENJAMIN ALBY,
FARDINANDO THAYER,
DANIEL LOVETT,
JOHN THOMPSON, Senior.

REGISTER.

COL. WILLIAM CROWNE.

FENCE VIEWERS.

GOODMAN JOHN WOODLAND,
JOHN ALDERIGE.

MUNICIPAL OFFICERS FOR 1867.

SELECTMEN.

GUSTAVUS B. WILLIAMS, JOHN S. GASKILL,
WILLIAM H. ALDRICH.

TOWN CLERK.

DAVID ADAMS.

TOWN TREASURER.

JOHN G. METCALF.

ASSESSORS.

FRANCIS E. WHEELOCK, JOHN S. GASKILL,
AUSTIN D. DAVENPORT.

OVERSEERS OF THE POOR.

CHRISTOPHER DANIELS, ANDRE SOUTHWICK,
ALBERT W. GASKILL.

COLLECTOR OF TAXES.

CHARLES C. P. HASTINGS.

CONSTABLE.

GEORGE W. THAYER.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE.

GUSTAVUS B. WILLIAMS, DAVID ADAMS,
MICAJAH C. GASKILL.