

P O E M .

*By Warren Robert Cochrane.*

Who does not feel as year by year departs,  
 As one by one our loved companions fall,  
 That stronger sympathies should bind our hearts,  
 And larger fields our memories recall ?

Who has not felt that age to age should bear  
 Its friendly gifts, its pledges of regard,  
 Wrought in the forms of eloquence and prayer,  
 Traced in the lyrics of the humble bard ?

Who has not felt that the historic pen  
 Had grown too partial to the suns of fame,  
 As though kings could be something more than men ;  
 And humble souls be left without a name ?

Have not the humblest minds, the wisest sages,  
 A like ambition to be linked at last  
 With all of fame that lights the future ages,  
 And all of glory that adorns the past ?

Do we not come to-day with some such feeling,  
 Such hope of blessing, and of being blessed,  
 Here at the altar-place together kneeling,  
 The gray old century our only guest ?

The war-horse is worn when the battle is won,  
 The limbs are weak when the race is run ;  
 And every power of arm or mind  
 By man directed or man designed  
 Is wasted in a single day, —  
 Begins, develops, and dies away,

As philosophical people say.  
 Then can it be strange that a muse like mine,  
 A stranger to the original time,  
 Unwinged by genius, unfired by wine,  
 And uninvoked in a single line,  
 Somewhat weary and weak appears  
 In a backward flight of a hundred years?  
 Can it be thought that the jaded thing  
 Would then be able to charm or sing  
 Without a draft from the nectared spring, —  
 Some needed rest from a flight so far,  
 Where the homes of its lost companions are;  
 In the crumbling halls of the dreamy past  
 Where the joyous shout, or the trumpet-blast,  
 Where the songs of peace or the cannon's roar  
 Are heard no more — are heard no more?

Then let us pause — since pause we will —  
 In the rough old church on the top of the hill,  
 And standing where our fathers trod,  
 Offer, like them, our prayer to God, —  
 Our praise to God that we, to-day,  
 Have a house of prayer and a heart to pray, —  
 Our praise, that He who ever hears  
 Has blest our fathers' prayers and tears  
 Through the changing scenes of a hundred years!  
 Next let us honor them who came,  
 To feed devotion's holy flame,  
 To hear God's voice, and learn his will,  
 In the rough old church on the top of the hill.  
 Hard by the spot where they sung and prayed,  
 One by one have their graves been made,  
 And their names like those of every age,  
 Are fading away on memory's page.  
 But their deeds are written in larger lines,  
 In the towering elms, and the mossy shrines;  
 In the fruitful fields and the "meadows gay,"  
 On the hills where the flocks of their children stray,  
 In the laws they established and we obey;

And the sires are seen in the sons to-day !  
 'Tis a heritage rich to be owned as heirs  
 Of sires like them and lives like theirs ;  
 And a sacred duty here to-day, —  
 And year by year till we pass away, —  
 To name, to love, to honor those  
 Whose prayers in God's first temples rose ;  
 Whose strength these grassy slopes have cleared,  
 Whose hands these ancient piles have reared,  
 Whose places are remembered still  
 In the rough old church on the top of the hill.

The men we praise were godly men,  
 Who lived in Christian honor then,  
 With humble heart and poor array,  
 Walking the strait and narrow way,  
 Content if God his grace bestowed,  
 And hope illumed the stormy road.  
 No shallow pride inspired their breast,  
 No summer dream, no earthly rest ;  
 But, earnest, thoughtful, much in prayer,  
 They toiled as faith directed where.  
 Faith was to them a living power,  
     No tinsel robes to them were known ;  
 They plucked the fruit, and not the flower,  
     They lived for heaven — and heaven alone.  
 Each Sabbath morn the preacher's call,  
 Was heard and answered by them all,  
 With simple garb, and manners grave,  
 As if each had a soul to save.  
 And oh ! if we could come like them, —  
 With none to scoff, evade, condemn, —  
 All eager to the house of prayer,  
 All earnest in devotion there,  
 How quickly would the prospect stir,  
 Each dull and thoughtless worshipper !  
 How gladly would we linger still,  
 In the rough old church on the top of the hill !  
 And a quaint and a queer old church was that,

Where the gray-haired sires of our fathers sat ;  
 With its framework strong, and its fashion old,  
 It was cushionless, carpetless, clean and cold ;  
 While carelessly hung the huge sounding-board,  
 That, when the preacher whispered, roared ;  
 And when he roared, it thundered so,  
 It shook the very walls below !  
 Assisted thus, he could not lose,  
 His hearers in those huge old pews,  
 In which a regiment might snooze,  
 Or Roman holiday be kept,  
 When Rome was all the world, — except  
 The ashes that in Sparta slept.

The men we praise were men of nerve ;  
 They would not bend, or yield, or swerve  
 From duty's narrow path to gain  
 The applauses of the weak and vain.  
 Theirs was a higher, larger plan, —  
 To honor God, to ennoble man ;  
 And mark their lives, whoever would,  
 This double aim was understood.  
 They were a bold and fearless race ;  
 They bearded danger to the face,  
 Thirst, hunger, cold, and beasts of prey,  
 And savage men more fierce than they,  
 And war's grim garments rolled in blood,  
 The fire, the famine, and the flood :  
 Still to their God and country true,  
 They bore the fiery banner through.  
 In every rise and every fall,  
 They owned alike the great and small,  
 Cared for their own and then for all.  
 First to the few, to whom we owe  
 Our highest duty here below,  
 Then to the world was freely given,  
 But first and last and all to Heaven.  
 And so in fortune's smile or frown,  
 In rural haunt or crowded town,

Whate'er we think or feel or do,  
 Still is it best, and still 'tis true,  
 Our noblest work, where'er we roam,  
 Begins, like charity, at home.  
 'Tis true that theirs were humble lives,  
 Secluded homes and godly wives ;  
 Yet humblest, happiest, sterling pleasure  
 Is not gay and gilded treasure ;  
 'Tis a spirit deep and holy,  
 Dwelling with the meek and lowly ;  
 'Tis a calm and quiet feeling,  
 Duty-bought, and love revealing ;  
 'Tis a blessed flame that glows  
 In hearts like theirs and homes like those  
 Where wants are few, where creeds embrace  
 The Bible and the altar place ;  
 And human hearts have never found  
 Serener peace or holier ground.  
 Nor fail we ever to repeat,  
 Religion and retirement sweet,  
 In loving life-long league allied, —  
 With her whom both have sanctified,  
 Make all of home that home endears,  
 And all of earthly hope that cheers,  
 Or human life except its tears.

The gravelled walk all shaded o'er,  
 The chiselled step, the gilded door,  
 The stately hall, the cushioned chair,  
 And flowers nursed in foreign air,  
 And gay and festive music there,  
 Where fortune smiles, and fashion brings  
 Her host of unremembered things,  
 From Afric's sand, or ocean's foam —  
 This is not home, this is not home !  
 But the willing hand and the ready art,  
 A smile when we meet and a tear when we part,  
 From an angel's eye, but a woman's heart, —  
 That soul which stands in human form

'Mid the chills of life's winter serene and warm,  
 Like an island of peace in an ocean of storm,  
 Cheering the way when our prospects die,  
 When the lightnings flash in the darkened sky,  
 Or peacefully, quietly, earnest to share  
 In the daily toil and the evening prayer ; —  
 Kindness and charity, cheerful and free  
 As the soul of a Christian should ever be ;  
 Haste to forgive, and a heart to endure  
 The failings which tenderness cannot cure,  
 Or the fault of a friend, though neglected and poor ; —  
 Joy in receiving what mercy bestowed,  
 Patience in bearing the heaviest load,  
 Though dark be the prospect, though thorny the road,  
 Though faded each dream that a transport gave,  
 When hope wreathed her flowers round our path to the grave —  
 This, — in luxury's gilded dome,  
 Or the poor man's cottage — this is home !

Such homes as this were dotted o'er

    These stately hills of yellow prime ;  
 And added to each humble store  
 Was the open heart and the open door,  
 In the days of the olden time.

    I'm afraid we cling to each little dime

    Of the much which God is giving us now,  
 With a fiercer grasp, though its worth be small,  
 Than they who opened the way to it all ; —

    And I long, like the traveller of wintry brow

    After sixty years, as he comes to climb  
 These hills where his feet were wont to tread  
 With the hopes that are blighted, the friends that are dead,  
 For the cordial welcome that met him of yore,  
 For the open heart and the open door

    Of the days of the olden time !

The men we praise were men of toil ;  
 They chose, they cleared, they tilled the soil ;  
 And on each spot, thus tilled and cleared,

A rough, rude, humble cot was reared,  
 Nestling the towering hills between,  
 Hid under leafy folds of green,  
 Near nature's heart at rest, as though  
 The hand parental left it so,  
 As if in slumber soft and low.  
 From these our stately homes have grown,  
 Homes that we boast to call our own —  
 Fields, orchards, houses, — all that please  
 The lovers of taste, or the lovers of ease.  
 Labor then was lord in the land ;  
 The sun-burned brow and the toil-worn hand  
 Were the freeman's boast and the lover's pride ;  
 The poor man's comfort and hope and guide .  
 Were the strength that was full, and the arm that was tried.  
 And even the women, though women of wealth,  
 For the sake of beauty and vigor and health,  
 For the sake of those who in sadness or mirth  
 Bear the dearest names that are spoken on earth, —  
 By choice or necessity — no matter which —  
 Taking the distaff, or taking the stitch,  
 Spinning all day by the open door,  
 Weaving the very clothes they wore,  
 Riding the horse through the field of corn  
 In the jocund hours of the early morn,  
 Driving at twilight the waiting cows,  
 With the arms full loaded with hemlock boughs  
 To be traced in a broom ere the coming day  
 From its eastern chambers should dance away ;  
 Were always working at useful things,  
 As though time had *value*, as well as wings ;  
 Bright, vigorous, fair, and strong,  
 It is not strange that their lives were long.  
 But oh ! how changed is the modern taste ! —  
 To work in the field is to be disgraced ; —  
 Distaff, spinning-wheel, and loom,  
 Sweeping with a hemlock broom, —  
 Or any at all, — is an awful doom !

Healthy life in the open air,  
 Roaming free as the breezes there,  
 Health-stamped lips by nature minted,  
 Tinted cheeks — by nature tinted —  
 Suit not ladies' taste, they say, —  
 Will not serve the world to-day ;  
*Paint* supplies an easier way !  
 Fashion now bears absolute sway ;  
 First ambition, hope and dream  
 Now is not to *be*, but *seem* ;  
 Dress becomes the chiefest art,  
 Fills the head and fills the heart ; —  
 At home, at church, in every station,  
 'Tis the theme of conversation.  
 Thus many a modern belle, I know,  
 Lives for nothing at all but show,  
 Twenty, thirty years, or so,  
 Half-alive in heated rooms,  
 Carbon acids and perfumes ;  
 Dragging life's journey wearily through,  
 Time hangs heavy on idle hands, —  
 Always longing for something new ;  
 Being happy with nothing to do  
 Is "out of the ring," as the matter stands ;  
 And the pale, weak daughter of fashion and ease,  
 Who presides in the parlor as nice as you please,  
 Who ponders over some love-sick book,  
 While her mother remains in the kitchen to cook, —  
 Whose jewelled hands are as softly white  
 As the dancing foam, or the starry light ;  
 All spiritless, passionless, colorless, frail  
 As the trembling leaf in the maddened gale, —  
 She is not what her mothers were,  
 And they are mysteries to her !  
 But much to be pitied as she may be, —  
 And more to be pitied I think is he  
 Who plods the life-journey with such as she, —  
 Yet she merits not pity or scorn like him  
 Who bears the name that his sires have borne



With the fire at the altar-place grown dim,  
 And the name of its honors shorn.  
 I pity the son of illustrious sires,  
 Too weak, too degraded to bear their proud name,  
 In whom the last spark of their genius expires  
 In the foul breath of luxury, riot, and shame.  
 And while this cannot be spoken of us,  
 I know there is need of unwearying care ;  
 We are all in the way to be ruined thus,  
 And some of us doubtless, are almost there,  
 And if these hills may justly plead  
 Some freedom from the common curse,  
 'Tis of the *sires* and not the *seed*, —  
*Their* honor that we are not worse.  
 Howe'er the unwelcome prospect dims  
 Throughout the land each patriot eye,  
 Its youth are wild with modern whims —  
 They ask not either whence or why,  
 But follow, like shadows, each dreamer that shine,  
 And, shadow-like, grow as their leader declines.  
 They linger at theatres, billiards, and chess,  
 Take pride in soft hands and extravagant dress,  
 Instead of the manly toil which bore  
 The laurel and palm in the days of yore.  
 Too proud to work on their native ground,  
 They must fathom the ocean of sight and sound ;  
 Teach, speculate, peddle, roam, —  
 Anything rather than work at home !  
 And so they are gone to the shop or store,  
 They are digging after the golden ore,  
 They have got into office, and live at ease,  
 They are spreading sails in the distant seas,  
 They are editing papers, or telling lies,  
 In the shape of lawyers, or doctors wise ;  
 They are making candy and cordials and pills,  
 Equally good for a thousand ills ;  
 Pectoral, sarsaparilla, and schnaps,  
 Bitters, and ointment, — and money perhaps, —  
 Anything paying well fits like a charm, —

Anything rather than work on a farm !  
 They, too, bow down at the fashion shrine,  
 In their father's earnings dress and shine ;  
 They play politician and lover and sage,  
 They flirt, sentimentalize, swagger, and rage ; —  
 Equal adorers of Bacchus and Mars,  
 They indulge in choice brandies and puff good cigars,  
 Enveloped in smoke, like a war-ship at bay,  
 While their gloved fingers brush the white ashes away !  
 And so while the money comes free when they say,  
     Each stripling smoker walks forth with delight ;  
 He is surely a pillar of cloud by day,  
     And a pillar of fire by night.  
 He is large, important, conceited, and bold ;  
 Though boyish in years, he is learned and old ;  
 Is charmed to real frenzy while cutting a dash,  
 With scented ringlets and trim moustache,  
 With rings and other observable trash,  
 And runs upon credit when he can't upon cash !  
 The homely virtues, the simple truth  
 Which reigned in the bosom of age and youth  
 In the peerless days of our fathers' prime  
 Are now, they tell us, behind the time.  
 And the young man tickled with jewels of gold,  
 Makes his morals fit to the popular mould ;  
 While with accents smacking of foreign clime,  
 And an eye that whispers of secret crime,  
 He swells along with a sickening pride,  
 Like a Neptune girt in his foamy tide !  
 He adores the menagerie, circus, and race,  
 Thinks less of his *fate* than he does of his face ;  
 Visits each popular place of resort,  
 Learns the pet words of flattery, joke, and retort,  
 Worships fast horses, and talks quite well  
 In the nauseous slang of the drinking cell,  
 Or the oath-burdened dialect spoken in hell !

Oh ! give me the rough, worn palm of the man  
 Who dares to do with his might what he can,

Who shuns *fast* ways and unprincipled friends,  
 And stands like a rock where the current descends!  
 Who strives to live by the good old rules  
 In a day of do-nothings and jockeys and fools ;  
 Who honors the home where his childhood was passed,  
 And clings to the dear old spot to the last !  
 Some turn from their homes as necessity calls them,  
     With a tear in the eye that looks back as it goes ;  
 And some with real rapture as time disentralls them  
     From the bonds which paternal affection bestows.  
 With a smile for the one and a sigh for the other,  
     We bless them, though feeling alone and bereft,  
 Not doubting that each will come back as a brother,  
     And years will make dearer the homes they have left.  
 And we would not detract from the praise that is due them  
     As the tear-drop again fills the eye that returns  
 Where the few that are cherished in memory knew them,  
     And the altar of friendship still faithfully burns !  
 While I honor the man who comes back with his laurel  
     All blooming and fresh on the time-wrinkled brow,  
 From the scenes of debate or of national quarrel,  
     To blend with his kindred who follow the plough,  
 I cherish, I love the true hero who lingers  
     Life-long at the tomb where his fathers lie ;  
 While the time-god is writing with skeleton fingers  
     Each scene on the *heart* as it fades from the *eye*.  
 I love the ambition which hovers the nighest  
     To the fount whence our earliest pleasures flow,  
 Whose flight, like the lark's is the surest and highest,  
     While its home is unseen in the valley below !

Labor then being lord in the land,  
 Everything had to be done by hand —  
 Weaving, knitting, sewing-machines,  
 Planting, reaping, mowing-machines,  
 The engine steaming o'er land and sea  
 Were among the dreams of the things to be.  
 Or perhaps they saw as the patriot sees  
 That luxury thrives on things like these ;

That idleness, indolence, pomp, and ease  
 Are the fruits that follow beyond control  
 As sure as the leaven will work through the whole,  
 Or the needle point to its chosen pole,  
 While the gathered harvest in every clime  
 Is traced in blood from the morn of time.  
 Even church-going then was a work to be done ;  
 Roads there were few and vehicles none ; —  
 Five or six miles over paths like those  
 Where the wild beast roams or the hunter goes,  
 Barefoot all, with shoes in store,  
 Put on ere they entered the sacred door ;  
 Sermons full two hours long,  
 The full proportion of sacred song ;  
 Prayers that asked at a single birth  
 For all of heaven and all of earth ; —  
 Home by the light of the setting sun, —  
 Church-going then was a work to be done.  
 But now if we ride in our dainty sleigh  
 Some two or three miles on the Sabbath day ;  
 If a little heat or cold we bear,  
 If clothes out of fashion we sometimes wear ;  
 If we *sleep* like a pulseless thing of art  
 While a *half-hour* sermon is *read* to the heart,  
 We think we are meriting sovereign grace,  
 And running with patience the Christian race !  
 Women made bare the head like men,  
 As they entered the “ holy of holies ” then, —  
 I would such an era might come again ; —  
 But not if the things which are yet to be,  
 Follow fashion’s late decree,  
 And the delicate gear be ingeniously spread  
 Some feet in the rear of the wearer’s head.  
 How oft have we pitied some spirited miss  
     Who thought she must wear what other folks wore,  
 As she dragged through the wind such a streamer as this,  
     While her head was as bare as they made it of yore !  
 ’Tis amazing, what a wonderful size  
     These objects of woman’s affection attain ;

What wonderful figures for curious eyes, —  
     Airy, feathery, flowery, vain ; —  
 So that not a meeting-house in the land  
     Would hold all the bonnets as now arranged,  
 Were the frail, silky monsters untouched by the hand,  
 And the thing with the nicest precision planned, —  
     And hence the old custom is properly changed.  
 Besides, 'twere the greatest of crimes I know,  
     To have our ornaments out of view,  
 So that pride have nothing at all to show,  
     And fancy nothing to do !  
 The men we praise were men of fun,  
     Fat, laughter-loving, hale, and strong,  
 They loved the angle and the gun,  
     The story and the song.  
 In toil or danger, good or ill,  
 Jocose, facetious, happy still,  
 With humble recompense content,  
 Rejoicing on their way they went.  
 Priest, layman, all agreed to take  
 “ A little wine for the stomach's sake,”  
 And a little more for the sake of that ; —  
 Some hours “ ayont the twal ” they sat,  
 And “ pouzle ” and cider went freely down  
 In the early days of the good old town !  
 And often now is the story told,  
 How the glass went round to the young and old,  
 And the social circles of every craft  
 Grew merry over a stronger draught.  
 But though some tares have flourished with the wheat,  
     Gathered and garnered through each varied year ;  
 Though pride and fashion, folly and deceit  
     Each grown to huge dimensions now appear ;  
 Though simple manners, unpretending dress,  
     The healthful habits and the humble fare  
 Of those whose memory to-day we bless,  
     If lingering yet, are unobserved and rare ;  
 Contrasted still, the present and the past,  
     Some nobler traits continue to arise ;

And while each age seems better than the last,  
 Fame's proudest meed and learning's richest prize,  
 Truth's greatest victories, and freedom's too,  
 And forms of government of old unknown, —  
 Science and art to God and nature true,  
 Brighten all ages, and adorn our own !  
 For the shade of America's latest light, —  
 The era to which we are bidding adieu, —  
 Is better than cycles of Aztec might,  
 Or a thousand years of Peru !  
 Chains that bound the mind are broken,  
 Words that chafed the tyrant spoken,  
 Bright examples wake and nerve us,  
 Powers of nature come and serve us.  
 Full of knowledge and full of skill,  
 Man moves on in his dignity still,  
 Ruling the elements at his will ;  
 Floating far up 'mid the silvery clouds,  
 O'er the moon's white pillow and vapory shrouds ;  
 Bidding the waters turn the wheel  
 Which moves o'er their bosom the iron keel ;  
 Reading the news in his cushioned car,  
 Flying away like a flying star,  
 Leaving a trail of steam-cloud there,  
 Like a comet's tail in the midnight air !  
 Oftentimes as the setting sun  
 Views some deed of glory done,  
 Something new in the busy world,  
 Freightèd ship on the breakers hurled,  
 Rise or fall in the price of gold,  
 Tide of battle backward rolled ;  
 Popular vote in a distant State,  
 Awful accident, trying fate ;  
 Proclamation in every corps,  
 Call for a hundred thousand more,  
 The man of traffic in every grade,  
 Turning away from the haunts of trade,  
 To the rural home where his idols are,  
 Jumps from his seat in the flying car,

Whispers a word to the magic-wire —  
 Victory, glory, murder, fire!  
 Something lost in the hurried way,  
 Business plans for the coming day;  
 Laughs to himself while the lightning goes  
 Telling the news like a thing that knows!  
 Dashes back to his vacant chair,  
 Just in season, nothing to spare,  
 On they go, darting o'er valley and stream,  
 Like the living forms of a summer dream!

Thus are we now; the hunting-grounds  
 The rocks and rivers, woods and mounds,  
 Are changed and changing. Save some spot  
 Where rude tradition says they fought,  
 Save some few names which cling to-day,  
 To hills and falls, to creek and bay,  
 A hundred years have wiped away  
 Each vestige of that kingly race  
 Whose tragic aim and end embrace,  
 In blazing home and bloody vow,  
 All that is written of them now;  
 Whose children, step by step, are pressed,  
 Weak, weary, wasted, to the west.

Here 'mid these hills, thus gorgeously arrayed  
 By patient toil and unremitting care,  
 The forest waved with its unbroken shade,  
 The dark-eyed maiden tossed her jetty hair,  
 The hunter roamed in unoffended pride,  
 The arrow whistled through the quiet air,  
 The wigwam nestled by the river side,  
 The smoke curled heavenward through the narrow  
 glade,  
 The trees grew, flourished, withered, and decayed;  
 And so the red man's children grew and died,  
 Brave, noble, free, untaught and undismayed!

But climb with me to-day you towering height  
 Which first is tinted with the morning light,

Or nearer still where Moor's devoted mind  
 From life-long labors left the world behind ;  
 Or yonder hill where Bradford's classic eye  
 Drank the charmed loveliness of earth and sky,  
 And oh ! what change on every side appears  
 Wrought in this period of a hundred years !  
 See the broad fields in summer verdure dressed,  
 The happy flocks within the shade at rest ;  
 The neat, white cottages along the hills ;  
 The grassy meadows and the busy mills ;  
 The laughter-loving brook and singing bird ;  
 The loud steam-whistle in the distance heard,  
 The modest school-house in each valley seen,  
 With happy children sporting on the green ;  
 The church, our country's shield, preserver, friend,  
 Where Christian people in devotion bend,  
 Its sweet-toned bell whose distant-echoing tongue  
 Rolls where the war-whoop of the savage rung ;  
 The northern peaks in cloudy robe unrent,  
 Southward the scene in distant azure blent ;  
 The setting sun of other climes a guest,  
 In golden glory deck the shining west,  
 While lingering rays in tender sweetness play  
 Round the green summits as they fade away, —  
 And sweetest, tenderest, longest, it is said,  
 O'er the white chambers of our sainted dead !  
 And oh ! when autumn drapes in harvest hues  
 This scene of loveliness which fancy views,  
 And art divine its blended colors weaves,  
 Like rainbows dropped upon the blushing leaves,  
 How sweetly changed is every field of green, —  
 June gray and chastened in September seen,  
 Mild summer lingering in the autumn breath,  
 With all of beauty that is sweet in death !

And is it strange that the old Indian sires,  
     Loving the beautiful much as we,  
 Had here their counsels and their altar-fires,  
     Back in the ages when they wandered free ?  
 Can it be true that such a clime of beauty,



Scenes which outshine the eloquence of art,  
 Have reared no martyrs of reform or duty,  
 No names that thrill the universal heart ?

Shall it be said that no poetic fires,  
 No light of genius ever sparkled here,  
 Where all that pleases, elevates, inspires,  
 Fills the charmed eye and trembles on the ear ?

No — never thus. Though not in golden lines  
 Our names are written, or our glory shines ;  
 Though on each field where many a patriot bled,  
 It was not ours to lead but to be led ;  
 Though from these hills no star of science rose,  
 Shone o'er the world and unabated glows,  
 Still where yon shrine each sacred trust inurns,  
 Where, unmolested, dust to dust returns,  
 Where noble hearts have conquered inward wrong,  
 Where tears of tenderness fall fast and long,  
 Where hope repeats her undissembled prayer, —  
 There are our princes and our heroes there !  
 Pilgrims and warriors may not come to tread  
 With reverent feet above each narrow bed,  
 Nor pride and wealth their dainty watches keep  
 Where the “ rude fathers of our hamlet ” sleep ;  
 But human laurels never did nor could  
 Fix the soul's nature as its highest good ;  
 Fame's coveted rewards are gained too late  
 To make us eloquent or make us great ;  
 Though what we *do* may shine in common eyes,  
 'Tis what we *are* that makes us truly wise.

We know but little of our greatest men,  
 Knights of the sword and masters of the pen ;  
 Uncalled by fate, to milder calls they bow,  
 Perhaps, like Burns, to follow at the plough.  
 Nor worthy less, though in that silent land  
 Where all untitled, unexalted stand,  
 No towering monument or gilded bust  
 Pays its false honors to the nameless dust.

So, while we see by memory's clouded sun  
 The words and deeds of each departed one,  
 No human eye can look within the veil,  
 See where they really stand, or where they fail ;  
 See the true eloquence whose smothered fire  
 Awoke not human praise, or human ire, —  
 The humble Pitt, the unaspiring Pope  
 Whose ashes sleep in yonder grassy slope !  
 But while the past its inspiration stirs,  
 While trembling age to joyous youth recurs,  
 While noble deeds revive the sinking breast, —  
 By hope deserted, or by grief depressed, —  
 Oh ! may we think what heroes suffered thus,  
 What happy homes have been prepared for us,  
 What sacred rights by noble sires we gain, —  
 Ours to enjoy and ours to maintain !  
 Fired by the past, let every soul prepare  
 For noble principles to do or dare, —  
 True, like our sires where'er the conflict be,  
 As justly glorious, and as nobly free !  
 Let patient Hope her triumph ne'er resign,  
 Let constant Faith through constant virtue shine,  
 And sacred Truth her saving power impart  
 To every sentiment and every heart !

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So if dark be our path through the waves we are  
 tossed on,  
 Or honor and peace the reward of our care,  
 We never may blush for the hills of New Boston,  
 Or the homes of our kindred that wait for us there !  
 And so if our pilot should ever be lost on  
 The fathomless ocean of grief and despair,  
 Our hearts will turn back to the hills of New Boston,  
 And the homes of our kindred that wait for us there !  
 And oh ! when Death scatters his chill and his frost on  
 The brow of each son who was nurtured in prayer,  
 May our friends bear us back to the hills of New  
 Boston  
 And the *graves* of our kindred that wait for us there !

## JOSIAH W. FAIRFIELD, ESQ.

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He was the son of John Fairfield, Esq., born August, 1803 ; fitted for college at Andover Academy, Mass., and graduated from Dartmouth College in 1825. He taught an académy at Chesterfield parts of two years, having for his pupil the late Governor Haile. In 1827 he went to Hudson, N. Y., and became principal of the academy in that city, which position he retained five years, studying law meantime with the celebrated Elisha Williams, and began to practice in 1832. Mr. Fairfield has been largely interested in railroad enterprises, holding important positions in them, while the cause of education has always found in him a friend, and all righteous reforms a cordial advocate. He was a member of the last General Assembly (N. S.), and is largely known as a philanthropic, Christian gentleman.

April, 1829, Esquire Fairfield married Laura, the second daughter of Hon. Asa Britton, of Chesterfield, N. H., by whom he has two sons living. The eldest, George B., is with his father, and William B. is a lawyer at St. Charles, Iowa. Both sons are married. Mr. Fairfield buried a daughter in 1852, and, February, 1864, he was called to part with his wife. She was an estimable, Christian lady, and died full of faith, hope, and joy. After giving many precious directions, she bade each of her friends "good-by," then folded her hands across her breast, and said, "Now I am ready, all ready," and expired immediately. The end of a devout Christian is peace.



J.H. Buffum's Lith.

Yours very truly  
J.W. Fairfield



## RESPONSE OF JOSIAH W. FAIRFIELD, ESQ.

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*New Boston.* — Pleasant traditions and memories are cherished by absent sons and daughters.

MR. PRESIDENT: —

No man can relate his recollections and pleasant memories of any place or people, without speaking more or less of himself. He is, as Æneas says of his history, necessarily a part of what he recites. This constant reference to one's self becomes insufferable egotism, unless the hearers perceive the necessity, and throw a broad mantle of charity over the sinning speaker.

That mantle is required on this occasion, and the speaker only hopes it will be long and broad enough to cover a multitude of sins.

We all know that the early settlers of this country were a peculiar people, and none were more so than the Scotch immigrants who found their homes in this town and county. They were Presbyterians of the original Covenanters type, but greatly modified and improved by two transplantings, first from Scotland to Ireland, and then to the forests of the New World. There is no race more tenacious of their original elements of character than the Scotch; and, through all their persecutions, changes, removals, and improvements, they retained their recollection of wrongs, and cherished their likes and dislikes, as an inheritance never to be broken or alienated.

The Puritan was one of their dislikes. Our Presbyterians, on arriving at their new homes, found themselves surrounded by the Puritans, a people equally as fond of liberty, and rigid in their notions as themselves; still they disliked them, and there was a rank jealousy between them. The Independents, under Cromwell, had crushed the fond hopes of supremacy which the Presbyterians had nearly attained in England, and it

the Clarks, the Crombies, the Cochrans, the Campbells, the Dodges, Moors, McNeils, Pattersons, Warrens, and many more, their equals, and, to crown all, that prince of pastors, Rev. Mr. Bradford, standing in the midst of his people, — I am sure that this assemblage would bow in admiration, and, as one man, admit that such a shepherd and such a flock could nowhere else be found on this continent. I have said that they were grand in their religion, and in their moral and social intercourse. In the days I speak of, nearly the whole adult population belonged to the church, and nearly every child was baptized. The divisions of later years had not then broken their solid ranks. In their solemn assemblies, in their social gatherings, in their public and festive turnouts, they acted together, always with dignity and sobriety. Yet they were never bigoted or intolerant. If they had any idol, it was Mr. Bradford, their minister; and no man ever deserved the love and homage of his people more than he. Everybody, young and old, loved him; and he loved everybody, old and young. With such admiration, and such a people, there seemed no difficulty that could not be healed, and no division that could not be closed. They acted together with the same dignity in their public affairs. There seemed no ambition for office, — no electioneering for distinction. Modest merit was ever most likely to be exalted. I remember the first town-meeting that we boys were permitted to attend, probably in March, of 1812 or 1813. The people assembled on that occasion in the old church, and took their pews as orderly and quietly as upon the Sabbath. Mr. Bradford went into the pulpit, and opened the meeting with prayer. The selectmen took the deacons' seat, and called the meeting to business. A moderator was first to be elected, and some one came to our pew, and whispered to my father. He immediately rose up, and said, "Boys, we must go out." We followed him out, with sad hearts, shut out from seeing what we came to see, and we knew not why. We begged for a reason, and he told us that the whisperer had informed him that he was the republican candidate for moderator, and must retire. In due time he was informed of his election, when we returned to the church, and saw the same thing repeated in every balloting of the day. We may smile at the simplicity and modesty of such a people; we may boast of the wondrous progress we have made in advance of

that simplicity ; we may have seen the descendants of that people, electioneering and voting for themselves ; but let us remember that our boasted progress has culminated in the harvest of corruption, treason, and rebellion, which the nation is now reaping.

The patriarchs of the town were peace-makers ; litigation was scarcely known among them ; a resort to legal tribunals was a violation of public opinion ; no lawyer ever resided here, and had one attempted it, he would have starved, if he had leaned on the law for his bread. Lawyers grew fat in all the neighboring towns, but this was the abode of peace, not of litigation. I remember that, in later years, one uneasy, unlucky wight, after resisting all offers of compromise, prosecuted his neighbor, in due form of law, and so great was the excitement, that almost the entire population turned out as defendants. The poor plaintiff was crushed under the pressure of numbers, and the verdict of the community was, "served him right!" There were, undoubtedly, troubles, disputes, and trespasses among neighbors ; and there were, I presume, the usual local magistrates in the town, but I never saw nor heard of a justice court, or a jury trial, until after I had grown to manhood, and had removed to other scenes. Conciliation was first aimed at, and, if that failed, then arbitration or compromise, or the friendly offices of neighbors, uniformly succeeded in healing the worst feuds and most troublesome animosities.

It might be supposed that a population, such as I have described, would repress with a strong hand the natural and ordinary love of social mirth, frolic, and amusement. The disposition to taboo the joyous and mirthful exhibitions of our natures, I suspect, belonged more to the Puritan than to the Scotch character. Be that as it may, I know there was no restraint among this people against any enjoyment, pleasure, or amusement, which innocence might sanction, or virtue approve. We had our dances, and such dances ! none of your new, patent, improved cotillions, quadrilles, and waltzes ; but jigs, and long reels, and short reels, and square reels, and Hie Betty Martin ! and then we had our sleigh-rides, apple-parings, corn-huskings, and all manner of sports, such as were approved and participated in by "the old folks at home." Our mothers always knew that "we were out." We were at home by ten o'clock, sound, hearty, and happy. There is no young life so innocent,



so full of joy, no pleasures so full of vigor and benefit, as the life and pleasures of the young people of a moral and religious farming community. Cultivate and refine us as much as you will, — give us the overflowing cup of the gay, fashionable world to the fill, — still, when we grow old, and look back for a time of unalloyed enjoyment, those only find it who have luxuriated in the untainted social life of the sons and daughters of such a laboring population. The dissipated ballroom, the drinking and gambling saloons, and all kindred resorts for pleasure, leave a sting in the memory that neither time nor eternity can heal.

The old folks, too, were not without their social enjoyments. They had their tea-parties and dinner-parties, their winter evening sociables, with the fruit and wine of their orchards, and the nuts of their forests. The men, especially the younger men, as the custom was, had their social assemblies and social drinks, and sometimes, though rarely, there were complaints of excess and disorder. But, to the praise of our fathers it may be said, that they loved and maintained order and sobriety. It was a deep disgrace to be suspected of intemperance. There was not in the town, what we now call a rum-hole, or gambling-shop. I remember but two men who were called drunkards, and never saw but one of those. All gambling was prohibited by the sternest repression, and many now recollect how thoroughly the one suspected rendezvous was cleansed out by the wise strategy of the town officers. All licentiousness was pursued with deep disgrace, and was scarcely heard of. Judge Lynch once held his court here, and an offending citizen, convicted on sight, was put upon a rail, and carried outside the limits of the town, and warned never to return, under a penalty which he dared not incur. But the crowning evidence in favor of our fathers, was the fact that real poverty was scarcely known in the town. There might have been one or two helpless invalids supported as paupers, but it was the pride of every neighborhood to feed, clothe, and comfort their own poor. How many precious memories cluster around those ministering angels, our mothers and sisters, as we see them, in our backward vision, visiting the sick, comforting the afflicted, supplying the wants of the poor, and giving to the widow and orphan the blessed assurance of being preserved from the deep mortification of becoming town paupers. How

rich the legacy of these recollections! How proud may we be to-day of such a legacy!

But the happiest memories, and most delightful associations, are those suggested by the occasion. We, who have wandered from our native soil, and spent more or less of our lives among strangers, have come home to celebrate the one hundredth birthday of our venerable homestead. We come, not like the prodigal, because we have been starving on husks, nor because we have squandered our patrimony in riotous living, but because our fathers and our brethren have invited us to come, and because the dear recollections of our old home, of the dear companions of our childhood and youth, of the many happy hours, days, and years we have spent here, all combined, have drawn us with cords, laying hold of our hearts, and whose strength neither time nor distance has weakened. And we are met, on our return, not by the older brothers, grumbling and begrudging the fatted calf, but are welcomed by them to a feast of fat things. We rejoice together with you; we gather up the precious memories of the past and hallow them; we call up the many and manly virtues of our fathers, and pay to them the tribute of our most hearty admiration. From the depths of our hearts spring up the bright pictures of the departed dead, whom we seem to hear say to us, "Children, do ye abide in the principles and virtues of your fathers?" What is our answer? Standing here, the representatives of that race; standing here over their graves; standing here upon the birthday of the town, and the birthday of our nation, what do we say? Are we their legitimate children, or do we belie our origin? Shall our fathers, looking down upon the scenes of this noble life, disown us, and our mother cast us off? No! no! A thousand times, no! We are not bastards! We come here to-day to testify our love for our home and our ancestors. If we have erred and strayed, we have come back to confess our wanderings; if we have neglected or forgotten their counsels, we will now recall and adopt them into our lives; if we have dishonored their graves, we will rebuild their sepulchres; if we have forsaken their God, we will destroy our idols, and come back to the altar where they worshipped. We lift up a standard here to-day, and pledge our loyalty to our fathers, to our country, and our God.