

from the feudal age of privilege and force to the age of due submission and obedience, to just and equal offices and laws, 'for our better ordering and preservation'. In this political covenant of the Pilgrim Fathers lies the American Declaration of Independence".

The pilgrims were deliberate about leaving the ship. They wished to make sure of the friendly character of the natives as well as the adaptability of the land for habitation before the whole body ventured on shore. An armed company under Captain Myles Standish was sent to explore the region of Cape Cod, but some weeks elapsed before the pilgrims were persuaded that the land bordering on the little harbour which the famous Captain John Smith had named "Plymouth" some few years before was a desirable place for settlement. Tradition would fain divide the honour of being the first to land on Plymouth Rock between John Alden, whom Longfellow has immortalized, and pretty Mary Chilton, but the exploring party must have surely preceded all others in effecting a landing there. At all events we have Governor Bradford's word for it that it was not until December 16th that the *Mayflower* was brought to anchor in Plymouth Bay, and owing to uncertain weather it was not until Christmas Day, 1620 (O.S.), that goods were landed from the ship and preparations made for the erection of dwellings.

The sufferings of the colonists during the first winter were so great that nearly one-half of them perished—but that is another story. After they had framed and signed their simple constitution in the cabin of the *Mayflower*, the pilgrims proceeded to the election of a governor. The choice fell upon John Carver, who had been one of the keenest promoters of the expedition. Mr. Carver died within six months and was replaced by William Bradford, a man of great force and ability, who held office, with one or two short intermissions of his

own choosing, until his death in 1657. A Council to advise the Governor was also elected.

At first the laws by which they agreed to be governed were passed by the whole company of freemen, in much the same way that laws were made by the Saxon witenagemotes and are still made in the democratic cantons of Switzerland; but when the colony came to embrace two townships other than the original one of Plymouth more convenient machinery was needed for the business of legislation. Delegates were sent from the several townships to a general assembly, consisting of the Governor and his Council together with the delegates themselves, and in this way representative government was set up in the colony. In process of time a bi-cameral legislature was evolved with a governor at its head, forming a paradigm for political institutions such as those obtaining in the older Canadian provinces before 1867. But all this was an indigenous political growth, for the British Government left the Plymouth colony to its own devices for a period of sixty-four years. True, the colonists in 1629 procured a patent from the Plymouth Company in England giving them the privilege of self-government subject to the laws of England, but this was never confirmed by the Crown. Long after popular government had reached a high degree of efficiency in the Plymouth colony, it was united with the colony of Massachusetts under a charter granted to the latter by William and Mary in the year 1691.

We have already said that the puritanism of the Pilgrim Fathers was not of that iron kind that marked the Massachusetts colonists who came after them. Men like Governor Bradford, Myles Standish and Edward Winslow were cast in a broader mould than Governor Winthrop, able as he was. They could be loyal to the king who had harried them out of England. But Winthrop's aim in coming to Massachusetts was to set up a theo-