

Their parting was an affecting scene, with many elements about it of the moral sublime. As the larger number were remaining behind, they claimed that their pastor should remain with them, and hence *John Robinson* was not among the men of the *Mayflower*; but as the seed which hath life in it will germinate if carried to a returnless distance by wing of bird or hand of man, his teaching brought forth fruit so precious in the pilgrim-hearts, that he must be linked with their memory for ever. A broad-souled man in the midst of extreme narrowness; a skilled interpreter of the Divine, and a wise counsellor in the perplexities of the human; in things indifferent, pliant as the young leaf which the zephyr stirs; in things essential, sturdy as the many-wintered oak which storms but root the firmer; with a soul in which the martyr-spirit dwelt abidingly, and yet so gentle that it seemed as if the smile of Christ had burned the carnal out of it, and sweetly blent the hero and the child—Robinson was one of those rare gifts to the race which are needed in stern times, and which God always gives when they are needed. Like Moses, he ruled the people, and made their wilderness wanderings genial by his presence; his heart was in their Exodus, and he braced and cheered them to the very borders of departure; then, like Moses, climbing to the Nebo-crest, he beheld the goodly land which he might not inherit, and gazed into the beautiful future in an ecstasy of faith and hope, until in a brief while the vision transfigured him, and there grew and fastened on his countenance the glory of a fadeless morning.