

We have indeed brought with us, as a precious heirloom, those principles and habits of English liberty and English law, and that reformed Christian faith, for which our fathers paid so great a price. We do not wrench ourselves away suddenly, violently, and utterly from the roots whence we have sprung: we do not turn our backs upon the mother that bore us. Yet it is a very patent fact, that, in leaving the old soil, coming to a new country, and casting in our lot among the "mingled people" that flow together here, we have passed into a new state of existence, and set our faces towards another future. We are both losers and gainers by the change.

It is, however, a noble work which the Providence that "sets the bounds of our habitations" has assigned us,—the founding of a Christian State in this northern part of North America. If we are not so much influenced by the past, we can ourselves so much the more have influence upon the future. In the expressive language of Isaiah (lviii. 12), we are "*raising up the foundations of many generations.*"

This broad land,—we are speaking now of its whole expanse, from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from the lakes to the frozen sea,—though it be now so sparsely populated, and overrun for many a million of its acres by wild animals and wilder men, will one day teem with industrious and peaceful inhabitants. The pioneers of settlement are rapidly filling up the waste places near home. Enterprising discoverers are exploring the heart of the continent. Our population is already counted by millions, and we might as well attempt to stay the current of our great river as to arrest—even if we would—its onward and accelerating march.

Now we, of this early "generation," are appointed of God to lay "the foundations of many" that are to follow, and very much to determine in what form, of what strength, and with what materials, they shall carry up the superstructure. Travellers often have pointed out to them, when crossing some mountainous region, the line of "the watershed," where two drops of rain, falling at the same moment within a few inches of each other, will turn, one this way and the other that, so as to take their seaward course in diametrically opposite directions, and will at length reach the ocean thousands of miles apart—the one towards the Equator, the other towards the Pole. In such a position do we stand, in reference to the future of this country. From this point it will turn to the right hand or to the left—to freedom or to bondage—to light or to darkness—to order or to anarchy—to greatness or to ruin! A father once asked his boy how he supposed a tree, which they were looking at, became crooked. "I suppose," said the thoughtful child, "*some one trod upon it when it was young.*" British America is young. There are feet that would fain tread upon it and bend it to their evil will. If they succeed, they will give it a twist which it will never outgrow. If we can prevent them, it will spring up into a fair and fruitful tree. It is a solemn responsibility, to have the infancy of a mighty nation committed to our charge. We are on a probation