

bition of the present state and prospects of our country, or the vision accomplished. In these three able and timely discourses you have had presented the leading historic facts connected with the day we celebrate. But the subject is a large one, on which we may profitably linger. In full view, therefore, of your previous addresses I would to-day, without making any attempt at oratorical display, direct your attention to some of the leading traits of the Pilgrims and other early New England Colonists. I am encouraged to do this from the position I hold as your Chaplain, and from the conviction that some of these traits are greatly needed at the present time. Another reason I find in the fact, that grave popular misapprehensions exist on this subject. History is not read so generally, nor are its statements so clearly apprehended as we might expect them to be in this boasted nineteenth century. All admit the early New England Colonists to have been great and good men, worthy of our reverence; yet there is a wide-spread feeling that there was much in their principles that was stern, much in their character that was unlovely, and many things in their practice which need to be excused. This feeling, unworthy of us and dishonoring to the Fathers, originates in an imperfect knowledge of the men and of the facts in their history.

The *sixteenth* century was an age calculated to form and develop characters of the most wonderful combinations. The art of printing, then only in its infancy, had begun to exert its marvellous power over the world's intellect. Mind was aroused from its long torpor, and an insatiable thirst for knowledge awakened. The spirit of investigation was abroad as never before. Men called in question everything—being desirous of understanding the foundations of every civil, moral, and religious claim. The vigorous attacks of the Lion hearted Reformers upon the Roman Catholic system, and their zealous proclamation of the long forgotten truths of the glorious Gospel of Christ, greatly aided in producing and fostering this free spirit of independent enquiry. It was an age of keen and often of bitter controversy—one party demanding the fullest submission of heart