

open like fountains to pour for them the refreshing water in the desert? But, once across the Jordan, all this ceased; thenceforth they ate their bread by the sweat of their brows. They had passed from being carried to being conquerors. That is what these stones, standing gray and silent, day and night before the Jewish people, meant. They meant that the children were to hold and preserve what the fathers had bequeathed to them. And when, today, we are asked "What means this stone of Plymouth?" what means this one day that juts into the run of days as Plymouth Rock into the crash of the sea, let this same answer be ours; it means that we, the descendants of those who dared all for political and personal religious liberty, are to hold and preserve what they held dear, what they deposited upon these western shores, that bleak, December day, cold and cheerless, the waters of Plymouth bay, dark and angry, snarling with the white teeth of the foaming waves about their vessel, on all sides the unbroken forest, gloomy and unknown, containing incredible hidden dangers, the cold wind among the pines moaning a threatening warning and a sad lament anticipatory of the sufferings to be borne. To them, what to a coward would have been a refusal, was God's invitation. They accepted it reverently, gratefully, trustingly. Soon the block house rose; around it the log houses were built; and, like the ever spreading ripple on the water into which a stone has been cast, that little circle of Puritan life spread out from the rough bay into which God dropped it that long ago 21st of December, till, with resistless power it holds the world within its circumference today.

What did they deposit here? As we this morning look back, oh, so proudly to the Puritans, we can not fail, I think, to be impressed with this indubitable fact—they made the spiritual life first. Temporal prosperity was no consideration whatever with those men and women of the Mayflower. This does not mean they were mere idealists; this does not mean they were visionary enthusiasts; this does not mean they were regardless of the needs of themselves or others. They were practical men; they were men of affairs, far sighted, keen, wise. The oft ridiculed but none the less coveted by those who do not have it "Yankee shrewdness" can be traced directly to those grand telling qualities of the men and women who reared the first Christian homes on these shores. But the spiritual was first; the spiritual was always regnant with them. To the spiritual they made business, education, government, everything, subservient. They were organized in that "mean town of Scrooby" that they might worship and serve God truly; for that they went to Holland; for that they braved the ocean; for that they came, knocking with untrembling and imperious hands at the fast locked door of the new world. Well has Mrs. Hemans sung,

"What sought they thus afar?
Bright jewels of the mine?
The wealth of seas, the spoils of war?
They sought a faith's pure shrine."

I know it was their devotion to the spiritual that later hung Mary Dyer in Massachusetts; that advertised for sale in Salem Cassandra Southwick; that begot the Quaker legislation of 1658. But the pure gold is always enveloped with worthless ore; there is no rose without its cruel briars; and when the gold or rose is in the realm of mind and soul, shall it not be accompanied there too by the envying excrescences of the humanity that holds it. Admitting all their faults, there can be no doubt that the moving and controlling power of the Puritans was their devotion to the supremacy, the unchallenged supremacy of the spiritual; and that from this flowed all the wondrous power which has permeated American life and institutions; to that subserviency of the material to the spiritual all these can be traced, as the rivers are traced to their mountain streams and springs.

What means this stone? What means this one day of the year? It means a recollection of the founders of the nation. But it means more than that. It means a review of the principles as well as the persons on which our national life was founded. And it means even more than this. It means that the descendants of the fathers shall preserve the national principles the fathers gave. It means that this must still be a people whose God is not money, not power, not supremacy among the nations of the world, not pleasure or sensuous ease. Not the potent machinations, or superficial, loud insistency of dominant classes, but the one eternal God. It means

that the spiritual must still reign supreme in the life of the American people.

Starting with this great foundation fact, the fathers advanced to that memorable compact in the cabin of the Mayflower; a compact, says one, which "contains in its few brief phrases the germ of all written constitutions." That compact laid down under all American life this great principle;—the fortunes of life and the opinions of individual men must be held in obedience to common interests and to the common good; that order was not only heaven's first law but the law of society; that obedience to law—the will of the majority properly expressed—was to be the measure of all individual right and all individual privilege.

Against this rock principle of American life and institutions, the fierce waves have hurled themselves, from time to time, with destructive menace, as the waves of the angry sea against the Mayflower. The disregard for social compact, the disregard for law, the subserviency of law to class interests, the domination of political life by organizations of men with class interests at stake, and many other fierce waves, beat against this foundation of American life as the wild waters of Plymouth bay rocked the compact in the cabin when those brave men put their signatures to it. Is it not well then for us to gather, for similar companies of people to gather in cathedrals, in churches, in the meeting house in country villages from north to south, from east to west and ask "What means this day?" Is it not well to be told, "it means that the vital principles of American life shall be remembered, crowned with reverence, and valiantly preserved against all that threatens them."

Revert once more, for just a moment, to the scene with which we started,—the Jewish children around the pile of twelve gray stones. When they asked "What mean these stones?" they would not fail, I am sure, to carry away with them one supreme, inspiring meaning. Could any one tell them of the past of their nation, could any one warn them in their present and not lay upon their hearts that this God, so wonderful in His deliverance, His providing, His guiding, His sentinelling the nation through all its history, was still the God of Israel? I can feel the joy that would impart to them; I can share the pride that would inspire; I can thrill as they thrilled to hear that although the fathers had passed, their principles remained as these stones remained; that the God who inspired them, who opened the way, was still with His people. And I can feel it all, because that is what this day means to me; means or should mean—I pray you let it mean this—to you. Those stones from Jordan were potent reminders that God ruled; that the world belongs by God given right to righteousness. When the Hebrews entered the land beyond the Jordan they entered a land that belonged to them. It seemed to belong to the wicked, the ignorant, the vicious who held it; these thought it was theirs by right of possession. But God had it, long before the wicked held it, and God's possessions belong to His heirs, the children of God. Sometimes evil seems so regnant that we think true what the Devil said to Christ in the temptation, "if Thou wilt worship me, all shall be thine, for that is delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will I give it." But it is the Devil that says that, not God. The word of God is "the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof." And just as God drove out ignorance and sin before His people centuries ago, so God will do, is doing today. It is not always easy in the smoke and noise of battle to tell how the battle is going; so it may be difficult to see in the contentions so apparent to us here or there, that God is still our God. But it is true. As resistlessly as the earth swings its God marked path through the myriads of stars, does the will of God go its resistless way through all the strife and struggle about it.

As you go away this morning, turn your eyes to that great shaft, peerless for simple dignity and majesty, towering day and night into the sky, be the sky golden with sunlight or dark with clouds; be the air a gentle zephyr or a howling tempest. It may sway a fraction under the pressure, it may yield a very little to the heat or cold; but there always, each state woven in stone into its grand unity, the monument to the father of his country stands, silent, strong, unchanging, rooted deep into earth, its head among the stars, pointing to heaven. And as you see it this Thanksgiving morning say to yourself, "What mean those stones?" And from the far past some voice will speak the eternal meanings of God to your soul.

The New War Taxes

The emergency war tax bill, passed by congress October 22, went into full effect December 1. The purpose of the measure was to provide an additional revenue of \$105,000,000 with which to make up the estimated deficiency that would likely follow the shrinkage of revenues on imports due to the European war. The tax will be in effect thirteen months, until December 31, 1915.

Three classes of stamps are provided by the government for the payment of the new taxes. One class will be for use only on proprietary articles, another for wines, the third for documents. The law provides heavy penalties for failure to comply with the provisions of the act. For the information and convenience of its readers The Commoner reproduces the following schedule from the Philadelphia Public Ledger, showing the kind and denomination of stamps which must be used and on what they must be placed:

SPECIAL TAXES

The special taxes which, though reckoned from November 1, with payment extended as late as December 10, are as follows:

Brokers	\$30
Pawnbrokers	50
Commercial brokers	20
Custom House brokers	10
Commission merchants	20
Proprietors of theatres, museums and concert halls where an admission is charged to be taxed as follows:	
Where the seating capacity is not more than 250	\$25
Seating capacity not more than 500	50
Seating capacity not more than 800	75
Seating capacity of more than 800	100
Proprietors of circuses	100
Proprietors or agents of all other public exhibitions or shows not heretofore enumerated	10
Lecture lyceums (Chautauquas), agricultural or industrial fairs or exhibitions under the auspices of religious or charitable associations are exempt from this tax.	
Bowling alleys and billiard rooms, for each alley or table	\$5

TOBACCO TAXES

Tobacco dealers, 50,000 pounds annually	\$6
One hundred thousand pounds annually	12
Over 100,000 pounds annually	24
Other tobacco dealers doing business of \$200 a year, a shop	\$4.80
Tobacco manufacturers, 50,000 pounds a year	\$6
One hundred thousand pounds a year	12
Two hundred thousand pounds a year	18
Four hundred thousand pounds a year	24
One million pounds a year	60
Five million pounds a year	300
Ten million pounds a year	600
Twenty million pounds a year	1200
Over 20,000,000 pounds a year	2496
Cigar manufacturers, 100,000 cigars a year	3
Two hundred thousand cigars a year	12
One million cigars a year	50
Five million cigars a year	150
Twenty million cigars a year	600
Forty million cigars a year	1200
Over 40,000,000 cigars a year	2496
Cigarette manufacturers, 1,000,000 cigarettes a year	12
Two million cigarettes a year	24
Five million cigarettes a year	60
Ten million cigarettes a year	120
Fifty million cigarettes a year	600
One hundred million cigarettes a year	1200
Over 100,000,000 cigarettes a year	2496

STAMP TAXES

The war stamps, whose use is compulsory beginning December 1, will be seen on a wide variety of articles. The stamp taxes follow:

Bonds, debentures, certificates of indebtedness by any association, company or corporation, new issues, \$100 par value. Each	5c.
Sales or agreements to sell stock, \$100 par value. Each	2c.
Agreements of sale of products or merchandise or exchanges, each \$100	1c.
Promissory notes, except bank notes for circulation and renewal, each \$100	2c.
Bundles shipped by freight and express	1c.
Telegraph and telephone companies, on each message over 15c	1c.
Certificates of profits of corporations, etc.,	