

**SELF-LOVE, 1621; THE FIRST  
SERMON PREACHED IN NEW  
ENGLAND ; AND THE OLDEST  
EXTANT OF ANY DELIVERED IN  
AMERICA**

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Self-love, 1621; The first sermon preached in New England ; and the oldest extant of any delivered in America by Robert Cushman

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**ROBERT CUSHMAN**

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THE ancient Discourse of Robert Cushman, here presented to the public, is the first ever preached in New-England; the oldest now in existence of all the early sermons delivered in America. To the present and succeeding generations it will

be a most interesting relic. It will have a charm for every soul that knows the meaning of Freedom and Religion. This must be the case from the history with which it is connected. "Our reverence has its foundation in the nature of things, and cannot be eradicated."

Some of the Fathers—*fac-similes* \* of whose autographs are given—formed a part of the congregation at Plymouth to whom this discourse was originally addressed. Their interesting representations therefore, may appropriately be introduced as a frontispiece to these pages. It will add greatly to the interest of Mr. Cushman's unpretending words, that they are accompanied by so many of his old friends and "hearers!" Their names are as follows:—Gov. William Bradford, Gov. Edward Winslow, Gov. Thomas Prince, Capt. Miles Standish, William Brewster, Isaac Allerton, Nathaniel Morton, John Bradford, John Winslow, Thomas Cushman, Constant and Thomas Southworth.

\* These have been copied from "Recollections of the Pilgrims," an interesting work by William F. Russell, Esq., who "obtained them expressly for his volume, after much labor among ancient deeds and other documents."

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## PLYMOUTH AND THE PILGRIMS:

*(By the late President Dwight.)*

"PLYMOUTH was the first town built in New England by civilized man; and those by whom it was built were inferior in worth to no body of men, whose names are recorded in history during the last seventeen hundred years. A kind of venerableness, arising from these facts, attaches to this town, which may be termed a prejudice. Still it has its foundation in the nature of man, and will never be eradicated by philosophy or ridicule. No New Englander who is willing to indulge his native feelings, can stand upon the rock where our ancestors set the first foot after their arrival on the American shore, without experiencing emotions very different from those which are excited by any common object of the same nature. No [American] could be willing to have that rock buried and forgotten. Let him reason as coldly and ingeniously as he pleases, he will still regard that spot with emotions wholly different from those which are excited by other places of equal importance. For myself, I cannot wish this trait in the human character obliterated. In a higher state of being, where truth is universally as well as cordially embraced, and virtue controls without a rival, this prejudice, if it must be called by that name, will become useless, and therefore may safely be discarded. But in our present condition, every attachment which is innocent, has its use, and contributes both to fix and soften man." Of our ancestors he says, "But when I call to mind the history of their sufferings on both sides the Atlantic, when I remember



their pre-eminent patience, their unspotted piety, their immovable fortitude, undaunted resolution, their love to each other, their justice and humanity to the savages, and their freedom from all those stains which elsewhere spotted the character even of their companions in affliction, I cannot but view them as illustrious brothers, claiming the veneration and applause of all their posterity. By me the names of Carver, Bradford, Cushman and Standish, will never be forgotten until I lose the power of recollection. \* \* \* The institutions, literary and religious, by which New-England is distinguished on this side the Atlantic, began here. Here the manner of holding lands in free socage now universal in this country, commenced. Here the right of suffrage was imparted to every citizen, to every inhabitant not disqualified by poverty or vice. Here was formed the first establishment of towns, of the local legislature, which is called a town meeting, and of the peculiar executive, styled the selectmen. Here the first parochial school was set up, and the system originated for communicating to every child in the community the knowledge of reading, writing and arithmetic. Here, also, the first building was erected for the worship of God; the first religious assembly gathered; and the first minister called and settled, by the voice of the church and congregation. On these simple foundations has since been erected a structure of good order, peace, liberty, knowledge, morals and religion, with which nothing on this side the Atlantic can bear remote comparison."

## THE PILGRIM FATHERS.

BY REV. J. PIERPONT.

The Pilgrim fathers—where are they ?  
 The waves that brought them o'er  
 Still roll in the bay, and throw their spray,  
 As they break along the shore:  
 Still roll in the bay, as they rolled that day  
 When the Mayflower moored below,  
 When the sea around was black with storms,  
 And white the shore with snow.

The mists, that wrapped the pilgrim's sleep,  
 Still brood upon the tide ;  
 And his rocks yet keep their watch by the deep,  
 To stay its waves of pride ;  
 But the snow-white sail, that he gave to the gale  
 When the heavens looked dark, is gone :—  
 As an angel's wing, through an opening cloud,  
 Is seen, and then withdrawn.

The pilgrim exile—sainted name !  
 The hill, whose icy brow  
 Rejoiced, when he came, in the morning's flame,  
 In the morning's flame burns now.  
 And the moon's cold light as it lay that night  
 On the hill-side and the sea,  
 Still lies where he laid his houseless head ;—  
 But the pilgrim—where is he ?

The pilgrim fathers are at rest :  
When Summer's throned on high,  
And the world's warm breast is in verdure dressed—  
Go, stand on the hill where they lie.  
The earliest ray of the golden day  
On that hallowed spot is cast ;  
And the evening sun, as he leaves the world,  
Looks kindly on that spot last.

The pilgrim SPIRIT has not fled :  
It walks in noon's broad light ;  
And it watches the bed of the glorious dead,  
With the holy stars, by night.  
It watches the bed of the brave who have bled,  
And shall guard this ice-bound shore,  
Till the waves of the bay, where the Mayflower lay,  
Shall foam and freeze no more.