

THE PILGRIM SHORE

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The Pilgrim shore by Edmund H. Garrett

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PREFACE

"Introduction which may be skipped"

THE EIGLOW PAPERS



EVEN if travel abroad best strengthens our love of country, we should not neglect for it those places, hallowed by their associations or history, that lie at our very doors. And so an occasional reminder of the attractions of our own land may not be amiss, and it is for the purpose of setting forth in a familiar way the charm of a pilgrimage through some of our own towns that this book is now published.

The writer has already recorded in a like manner a journey northward to Cape Ann,¹

¹ Romance and Reality of the Paritan Coast.

and as this volume treats of the South Shore of Massachusetts Bay,—the two books together describe the coast of the Puritans and that of the Pilgrims.

These two regions, like the two peoples themselves, while having much in common, yet present marked contrasts.

The Puritan land is rich, populous, and enterprising. Along its length teeming cities and growing towns are ever reaching toward each other. All day long its air is vexed with the thunder of rolling trains and the shriek of shrill complaining trolleys. Tall factory chimneys vie in height with its steeples and wreath their smoke over its homes, sails of toil and pleasure crowd its harbors. It is active, busy, energetic, laborious, and competent. Its shore is comparatively high, bold, and sternly rockbound.¹

¹ In reality it extends southward to the rocks of Cohasset, for the river that flows through this town marked the boundary between the Plymouth and the Massachusetts Bay colonies. In this book, however, the whole South Shore from Boston to Plymouth is treated of under the general title of the Pilgrim Shore.

The land of the Pilgrims is by contrast less bold and rocky, and it has not kept pace with the other side of the bay, either in population, material prosperity, or enterprise. It has been until quite lately very much more countrified and quiet, and having for many years been less easy of access, it is not so well known as a whole. In spite of this, however, none of the North Shore towns is so famous as Plymouth, whose soil and waters nourished the Forefathers, men whose love of mercy and justice, whose humanity and nobility of character, have hallowed the place of their dwelling, and made their name revered at home and abroad.

“There are places and objects so intimately associated with the world’s greatest men or with mighty deeds,” says Governor Roger Wolcott, “that the soul of him who gazes upon them is lost in a sense of reverent awe, as it listens to the voice that speaks from the past in words like those which came from the burning bush, ‘Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is

holy ground.' On the sloping hillside of Plymouth such a voice is breathed by the brooding genius of the place, and the ear must be dull that fails to catch the whispered words."

Need we wonder then that this old town has become an American shrine, and the ways that lead to it made paths of pilgrimage? Somehow, in spite of the gentle and liberal tendencies of the Pilgrims, one associates them most often with a bleak and wintry shore such as they landed on that stormy December night so long ago. It seems to harmonize well with the stern courage which prompted them to set forth for the New World, and is a fitting background to the hardy, temperate, manly lives of those resolute hearts, self-exiled for conscience' sake. Happily, however, the coast is not always forbidding, nor its beauty awesome; not always does a leaden sky hang low over wan surges, nor the gray sea fling its freezing spray across a pallid shore to black forests buffeted by the icy north wind. Far otherwise is it when summer clothes it in genial



A Pilgrim.