The basic facts upon which rest all the books which have been written concerning the Pilgrims in England, in Holland, and in America, are found in Bradford’s "History of the Plymouth Plantation." Every American who cares for his country’s history and for his country’s future should have some knowledge of these facts. While it is not possible for me to dwell at length upon them this evening, and not desirable if it were possible, yet it is proper to review them briefly in order to understand the historical significance of the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth three centuries ago.

I. The Pilgrims in England and in Holland.

The Reformation in Europe in the Sixteenth Century was an epoch in human history. The posting by Luther of the ninety-five theses on the door of the church at Wittenberg in 1517 furnishes a convenient starting point of this great movement, in process many years before and carried on to completion in many years following. The names of Luther and Melancthon, of Erasmus and Zwingli, of Calvin and Knox, together with many others only slightly less familiar, are synonomous with the Reformation. No matter what may be the opinion of any individual regarding the movement, or regarding the character and personality of any one of the reformers, the movement itself was a tremendous upheaval in both government, society and church, out of which have come conditions governmental, ecclesiastical, educational and social which prevail today. The leaders in this movement were men of marked individuality, both in intellect and in conviction, and the people who followed these leaders out of the Roman Church to form what has ever since been called the Protestant Church, were men of like intellectual and moral conviction. It was inevitable that there should come not only a Protestant Church, but that

*Address delivered before the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania on December 7, 1920.
the very fidelity to conscience which gave these men their power should also result in a splitting up of the Protestant Church into many opposing and warring denominations. The very thing which made the Reformation possible was the thing also which made denominations inevitable. However much we might wish today that these denominations should now come together to form a united Protestant Church, we recognize the fact that as long as these convictions, which are often-times convictions regarding non-essentials, actually continue, it will be difficult to unite sects and groups into one compact and highly organized Protestant Church.

In England the situation which was general throughout Germany, Switzerland and the Netherlands, was even more pronounced. The new liturgy adopted in England almost necessarily contained much of what had been familiar in the Roman Church. While this was both natural and harmless, it was certain that the intensity with which men accepted the new faith should make them critical of anything which savored of what they called Popery, and therefore, for them, these things became anathema. As always happens, some of the men who objected to these remnants of Catholicism were content to utter their protest within the body of the established church. Others of them felt that they could not continue conscientiously within the church, and separated themselves, therefore, from it. The one party were known as Puritans, and the second party we know as Separatists—and later as Pilgrims.

As we may fix the beginning of the Reformation in 1517, although it actually began long before, so we may fix the beginning of this Puritan movement in the Act of Uniformity, passed by the English Parliament in 1559, one year after the accession of Queen Elizabeth.

Professor Davis S. Schaff, of our Western Theological Seminary, in an interesting article on "The Pilgrims—Their Spiritual Ancestry and Descendants," published in the Presbyterian Banner of November 18, explains quite clearly the significance of this Act of Uniformity, and its effect upon the development of the church in England.

Queen Elizabeth would tolerate no opposition, even though many of the bishops, including her favorites, were against her. Her personal popularity, her intellectual vigor, and the success of her reign enabled her to carry out her
will almost completely. Ministers who refused on the Sabbath to use the exact service prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer were, on the second offense, suspended from the ministry, and on the third, imprisoned for life. Even to speak slightingly of the Book, if persisted in, involved the forfeiture of their goods. It was inevitable, because of the character and highly developed conscience of many of the Protestants, that they should protest vigorously against such high-handed procedure, and a large group of people so protesting became known as the Puritans.

Things moved along until the accession of James VI of Scotland, (James I of England), who not only approved of everything which had been done in the preceding reign, but who heaped ridicule as well as reproaches upon the men in the church who insisted upon thinking for themselves, and upon obeying the dictates of their conscience.

It is unnecessary in this place to follow the streams of dissent. One, Presbyterian, which finally got control in England at the Westminster Assembly, 1643-1648, and the other called Independency in England and known in this country as Congregationalism, both trod a rough and rugged road in England, with the rise of even other denominations, chiefly the Methodists, Baptists, etc., have still to fight for proper recognition in the face of the Established Church.

The little group of Independents, known to us as Pilgrims, had a still more difficult road to travel. Separating themselves from the church as they did, they were subject to every form of espionage, compelled to worship in secret and to endure every form of persecution. The center of these was in that part of England in Lincolnshire, Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire, chiefly in the towns of Gainesboro, Austerfield, Bawtry, Scrooby and Babworth. Governor Bradford was born at Austerfield, only a mile from Bawtry, which is on the Great Northern Railway, 150 miles from London. The Pilgrim church may be said to have been born at Scrooby, a mile south of Austerfield. Its founder was Elder William Brewster. The names of Brewster and Bradford figure largely, not only in the beginning in the region of Scrooby, but also in Holland and in America.

William Bradford, yeoman, withdrew from the Established Church at Austerfield because he could not conscientiously remain. He was baptised by Rev. Henry Fletcher about 1590. He was only 17 when the church decided to
move to Holland. By the law of 1598 such migration was forbidden. Several attempts were made to leave secretly, but were frustrated. In 1608 the attempt was partially successful, though only a part of those ready to embark actually got on board. The rest were dispersed. One by one, however, they followed, until a goodly number had reached the land of refuge.

Rev. Richard Clyfton and Rev. John Smith, both Cambridge men, were in charge of the congregations in England. Mr. Smith became the pastor at Amsterdam, where dissentions broke out, and where we need not follow. The first gathering place was in Amsterdam, but doubtless because of these dissentions, a group of constantly increasing size came to the historic city of Leyden. There they settled; there they established their homes; there they established their church, and there John Robinson ministered to them. These were largely, perhaps almost wholly, Scrooby people.

We need not spend much time in describing the twelve years of the Pilgrims in Holland. There, after some arrests in the beginning at the instance of England, they enjoyed perfect freedom and perfect security. They were industrious, and they added to the industrial wealth of their adopted country. Holland was the one country of Europe at that time in which religious liberty was nearly perfect. If this had been all the Pilgrims desired, doubtless there they would have remained, would have mingled with the Dutch people, and after a while would have been lost in the current of Dutch national life. It was their very fear of this thing, as well as their love for England and her institutions, which made them dissatisfied in Holland, and caused them to think of finding a new home where they would not only have liberty, but where they could plant the institutions of the country they loved. Nevertheless, the generous welcome Holland extended to them, and the fine toleration of opinion which Holland exhibited to them, left its mark upon the Pilgrims, and continued to be an influence with them throughout the rest of their history.

II. The Pilgrims in America.

It was Carver, Cushman, and Brewster, three of the most influential men of the Leyden church, who were sent to England to negotiate for the migration to America. It was necessary to have money, and therefore it was neces-
sary to make the enterprise a commercial one in this aspect of it. These negotiations were finally successful and the time came, in 1620, when a selected group of the Leyden church prepared to sail for England and thence to America. That last day in Leyden on which John Robinson preached the farewell sermon, a day of prayer and a day of tears, must have remained forever a tender memory, both with those who stayed in Leyden and those who went to America. Ardently as John Robinson wished to go it was his duty to remain. What he did for them, however, noble man and faithful pastor that he was, had much to do with the success of the new settlement across the seas.

At Plymouth several attempts were made to sail with the two vessels, the Mayflower and the Speedwell. Always something happened, however, to the Speedwell, doubtless because the Captain, as well as some of the people were fearful of the voyage across the stormy Atlantic. Finally a selection was made, and those who were determined to go because they wanted to go were crowded upon the Mayflower, which finally sailed on the sixth day of September. The vessel landed at Plymouth on the 11th of November. On April 5, 1621, the Mayflower returned to England. What became of the Mayflower, finally, we do not know. The next November the Fortune arrived, with 35 passengers who, by reason of the scarcity of food, were a liability rather than an asset, but with the bettering of conditions new arrivals continued until the Plymouth plantation was firmly established.

The story of the early days is familiar to all readers of American History, and need not here be recapitulated:—the signing of the compact of government on shipboard on November 11; the expeditions into the interior; the meetings with the Indians, their perils and their friendships; the sickness in the cold and distress of the first winter, carrying off practically one-half of the people; the discovery of corn, which enabled them to plant and gather the first harvest; the more abundant harvest in 1623, celebrated in the now historic Thanksgiving, forerunner of the national Thanksgivings of these latter days; the troubles with the parent company in England in the settlement of indebtedness, which was finally accomplished fully and satisfactorily; the difficulty of the communistic state, which seemed necessary because of the bargain made, no man willing to work when it was for the group rather
than for himself, and the quick change to activity and prosperity when the communistic plan was discarded and each man began to toil for himself; the election of Carver as Governor, and on his death in April, 1621, the election of Bradford as his successor—annually elected thereafter until 1657, except '33, '34, '36, '38 and '44.

III. Particular Facts and Incidents of the New Settlement.

Several facts and incidents would be worthy of greater detail if time permitted. The first of these was the signing of the compact of government on shipboard before the landing.

The Plantation had authority from the “President and Council of New England” from whom the Pilgrims had their grant, authorized by royal charter “to make or gain and establish all manner of orders, laws, instructions, directions, forms, and ceremonies of government and magistracy, fit and necessary for and concerning the government of said colony and Plantation.” Moreover, the patent of the Pilgrims, dated June 1, 1621, authorized them “to establish such laws and ordinances as are for their better government and the same by such officer or officers as they shall by most voices elect and choose to put into execution.”

But it must be remembered that their then Patent was from Virginia and not from New England. Their landing, which was intended to be further south, was therefore, out of the jurisdiction of the authority under which they had come. Perhaps a still more potent reason for this compact, was that crossing the stormy sea, mutinous words were often heard spoken on the ship. A government, therefore, was a necessity, even though the population was scarcely more than one hundred people. This compact is as follows:

“In the name of God, Amen. We whose names are underwritten, the loyall subjects of our dread Soveraigne Lord King James by the grace of God, of Great Britaine, France, and Ireland king, defender of the faith, etc. Having undertaken for the glorie of God, and advancement of the christian faith and honour of our king and countrie, a voyage to plant the first colonie in the Northerne parts of Virginia, Doe by these presents solemnly and mutually in the presence of God, and one of another; covenant and
combine ourselves togeather into a civil body politick; for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by virtue hearof to enacte, constitute, and frame shuch just and equal lawes, ordinances, Acts, constitutions, and offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meete and convenient for the general good of the Colonie: Unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In witness whereof we have hereunder subscribed our names at Cap Codd the 11 of November (new style, November 21) in the year of the range of our soueraigne Lord King James of England, France, and Ireland the eighteenth and of Scotland the fiftie-fourth Anno Domini 1620."

The second item of interest is the record of the Plantation, written by Governor Bradford, begun immediately and continued for nearly thirty years. The history of the Plymouth Plantation is, as stated in the beginning, the repository of all the facts known of this first settlement. Covering the period 1620-1648, Bradford began to print this record in 1622, perhaps sending some of the manuscript by the Mayflower on its return, April 5, 1621. Of Bradford's original book only seven copies are known to be extant, one in a private library and the other six in the libraries of Harvard, Yale, New York, Pennsylvania, the Pilgrim Society of Plymouth, and the British Museum. This was the first book ever written in America. While it has been published many times by societies and individuals (1802 by the Massachusetts Historical Society, 1841, by Rev. Alexander Young, 1848, by Rev. Geo. B. Cheever, 1865, by Rev. Harry M. Dexter, 1897, by Edward Arbor) yet the history of the manuscript reads like a romance. It was given by Governor Bradford to his son William; by him to his son, Major John B. Bradford; taken by a Mr. Hutchinson, a Loyalist, to England about 1775; found its way into the library of the Bishop of London at Fullham, where it was discovered in 1855, being recognized by John Wingate Thornton as probably the long-lost manuscript by certain references made by Rev. Samuel Wilberforce, Bishop of Oxford, in 1844. Through the endeavors of the Ambassador to Great Britain, Mr. Bâyard, and others, it was finally delivered to the Governor of Massachusetts on May 26, 1897. It is now in the Massachusetts State Library, kept in a fire-proof safe, but under glass exhibited daily to visitors.
The third item of interest is the people who came over on the Mayflower and their general character. In general, most people know that these people numbered 102. Mostly they know that one-half of these died the first year. My account, in Bradford's History, is 104. Doubtless the discrepancy is accounted for by the babies born on shipboard, who were not listed as leaving England, but who did arrive in America. There were 24 married men and 18 married women, explained in part by the fact that some of the wives remained in England, and one or two were widowers. There were 18 sons and 7 daughters. There were 13 men-servants and 1 maid-servant. There was one young maiden, Disare Menter, who returned the next year. There were two cousins of one family, one small boy and one small girl. There were five children, four boys and one girl, assigned to two families. There were 10 unmarried men. There were five, John Alden, a cooper, free to do as he pleased and he pleased to remain; two hired men, John Allerton and Thomas English, and two other men, William Trevore and _______ Ely, both of whom returned to England after one year. The group was therefore made up of 52 men, 20 women, and 32 children, making a total of 104, including the two babies born on shipboard.

Governor and Mrs. Carver and the wife of Captain Standish were among those who quickly passed away. Elder Brewster lived until he was 80. They were not all saints. Some of them drank whisky and engaged in carousals. Some of them gambled. One, John Billinton, was hung ten years after for killing a man. John Alden, hero of the historic courtship, was married to Priscilla Mollines. Thirty of the original number were still living in 1650, showing that the mortality of the first winter did not continue. Twelve were living in 1679; two in 1690, and one, Mary Cushman, wife of one of the original three who negotiated the expedition, was still living in 1698.

The fourth item of interest concerns the notable number of descendants of the Pilgrim Fathers. A clipping from a recent newspaper indicates the following facts concerning those resident in or near Pittsburgh:

"A partial list includes the following who trace their lineage to one of the 21 surviving members of the noted pilgrimage:

"Miss Florence E. Blake, Bellefield Avenue; Mrs. De-
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wees N. Crawford, Bartlett Street; Mrs. Robert T. Miller, Murray Hill Avenue; Mrs. Charles LeG. Fortescue, North Euclid Avenue; Mrs. Mary C. Walter, North Euclid Avenue; Mrs. William M. Davidson, wife of the superintendent of the Pittsburgh public schools; Frederick L. Weiss, Meadville Theological Seminary; Mrs. John Siggins, Tidioute, Pa.; Howard G. Hodgkins, Butler, Pa., all members of the Massachusetts Society of Mayflower Descendants.

"Others not affiliated with the Massachusetts Society are: S. Jarvis Adams, Marcellin Adams, Miss Alice B. Lothrop, John W. Herron, Ogden Edwards, Mrs. C. D. Armstrong, and many more. Societies with Mayflower descendants on their rolls are The Colonial Dames, The Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution and the Men's Society of Colonial Wars.

"Additional certified Mayflower descendants include these Pittsburghers: Mrs. E. E. Phelps, Ruth Alden Phelps and Martha Seymour Phelps. The descent of these is through the second son of John and Priscilla Alden."

Last week the preacher at the Union Thanksgiving services, Prof. Erdman of Princeton, introduced himself as belonging to the relatively small group in America who do not trace their ancestry to the Mayflower. I wonder whether he ought, if he is not a recent comer to America, to be quite sure of the truth of his statement. In 1650, 30 years after the landing, there were alive 160 descendants of those who landed at Plymouth. If there were 160 in 1650 it is quite reasonable to suppose that the number of those able to trace their lineage back must be very large, indeed. In 1820 the population of our country was about nine millions, of which probably not more than 350,000 in the intervening two centuries had come over in ships. It is obvious that the remaining eight and one-half millions were descendants of the 350,000. If this was the proportion after two centuries the proportion would be tremendously larger after the lapse of another century.

IV. Spirit of Pilgrims and Significance of Pilgrimage.

While the limit of this paper has been reached, yet I wish, without amplification, to say something about the spirit of the Pilgrims and the significance of their advent in America.
In the first place the deep underlying motive in the migration to Holland and to America was religious, manifesting itself in almost absolute obedience to conscience. This intense conviction of right caused them to separate from the Established Church, and consequently, as in the case of Governor Bradford, to separate from family and friends. It was this that practically compelled them to leave England for sanctuary in Holland, and ultimately in America. No cost was counted great enough to justify infidelity to conscience. They were men of heroic mold, the blood of martyrs, and they were willing to march to death rather than to be untrue, but glad to live if they could find a place where they could worship God as free men and women.

In the second place, the migration to America was an act indicative of the intense love for England and loyalty to England's institutions. They were Englishmen. In Leyden they remained Englishmen. Moreover, they were free in Leyden and could worship as they pleased, but it was obvious they could not indefinitely continue to be Englishmen in Leyden, nor could they build up a bit of England anywhere in Holland. Persecuted as they were they never swerved in their loyalty to their own land. They must, wherever they should go, carry England with them. The place offering itself was America. There they desired to establish the Church, to establish the school, to establish free government, which should continue to be England.

In the third place the Pilgrims immediately framed a constitution and established a government which formed the beginnings of our Republic. But for the stupidity and obstinacy of the German king of England, America doubtless would have continued as Canada has continued to be a part of the great Anglo-Saxon Empire. The very compact, the method of carrying it out, the establishment of schools, the adoption of the town meeting, all these, however, guaranteed that whether this new country should continue a part of England or should become independent, the institutions of the new country should be free and that the people should absolutely determine for themselves the ultimate constitution, the form of government, and the enlightened institutions of America.

What America has become is simply the development of what the Pilgrim Fathers initiated in the very beginning.
Two or three of the underlying principles in which the Pilgrims implicitly believed were:

1. The founding of a Commonwealth based upon the fundamental principles of the Word of God. The Bible was their supreme authority, higher than priest and prelate, higher than Church or State, the only authority which commanded their conscience. They wanted a state based upon this authority.

2. They wanted a state in which law should be supreme, a commonwealth of law and not of men. Absolutely as they believed in conscience, absolutely as they believed in personal liberty, absolutely as they were determined upon free institutions, they were determined that law, the law of God and the law of the State, should be final and supreme.

3. They wanted a state in which tolerance should be practiced in the fullest measure. Peculiar ideas exist as to the rigidity, harshness and intolerance of the Pilgrims. Nothing could be farther from the fact than this curious popular belief. He who believes in a providence in human affairs must also believe that the Pilgrims were sent to Holland to learn this very lesson. They saw in Holland almost perfect freedom of worship and opinion, in vivid contrast with the intolerance of both the Church and the State in England. They came to America determined to be true to their own interpretation of Scripture, but determined also that the man who differed from them should also be free to exercise the right of judgment and of conscience. Hundreds and thousands of witches were executed in England and on the Continent, and a few among the Puritans of the Massachusetts colony. In the Plymouth colony neither persecution nor execution, but a quick extermination of all charges against witchery was secured by the treatment accorded the first woman who made such charge. Their own pastor conceived the idea that he would not baptise infants but only adults. They even tolerated him, permitting him to hold to his own opinions, and getting their infants baptised as they could. They carried this same tolerant spirit into their relations with the Indians with excellent results. Toleration, therefore, not intolerance, characterized the Pilgrims.

A still further illustration of this fact is the Pilgrim blood running in the veins of the people of Plymouth today, manifesting itself in a Baptist, a Methodist, a Universalist,
a Unitarian, an Episcopal, a Congregationalist, and doubtless also in the Roman Catholic Church in Plymouth. Trinitarians and Unitarians, Catholics and Protestants, Congregationalists and Presbyterians, dwell together in unity.

Such, in brief, is the story of the rise of the Pilgrims in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, the persecution of them in England, their residence in Holland, the establishment of their settlement in far-off America. What we are today in this land of free institutions we are largely because of the impress made by the Pilgrims upon the life of the nation in its very beginnings. England put the stamp upon America, and while we have had the Dutchman in New York, the Scandanavian in New Jersey, the Quaker, the German, and the Ulster-Scotch in Pennsylvania, the Huguenot and the Scotch-Irish Presbyterian in the South, together with those who have come in more recent times, yet back to the Pilgrim we go for the origin and the explanation of much that we value highest in America.