

Massachusetts people celebrated, probably at Salem, over the arrival during the season of about a dozen vessels with nearly a thousand persons to enlarge the colony, already stretching from Salem through Lynn, Charlestown, Boston, Dorchester and Watertown to Roxbury. A second Thanksgiving came Feb. 22nd. — a prophetic day in American history, — 1631, the season had been bad for short crops, and the colonists were very destitute, food even of the cheapest and meanest kinds was scarce. Shell fish, clams, etc., served for meat; acorns and ground nuts as could be gathered, for bread. A day of fasting and prayer had been proclaimed throughout the colony, when only one day before the set day for fasting, a ship laden with supplies from home came to port and the day was changed to one of thanksgiving. Having learned during the summer of 1632 of the victories of good King Adolphus, of Sweden, culminating later at Lutzen — a prophecy for English Puritanism at Marston, Moor and Nasby — they made June 13th a day of thanksgiving therefor, as well as for the arrival of several ships with immigrants.

Again in 1633, Oct. 16th., they celebrated the arrival of more colonists, many of whom were, like Winthrop and others, of "quality," the first instance in the life of Boston of the self-assertion of her social preeminence, a trait of character which remaineth unto this day. Similar festivals were held, according to the old records, Oct. 8, 1638, and Nov. 28, 1639, and of course at other times, chiefly for bountiful harvests.

When the news reached Plymouth that Cromwel had utterly routed the enemy at Worcester, with his valiant parliamentary forces, Sept. 3, 1651, they appointed a day of public thanksgiving therefor March 2, 1652. When over a century later, Thomas Hutchinson was governor of Massachusetts, a servile tool of King George the Third, in 1771 issued his customary thanksgiving proclamation, he complained bitterly that the clergy of Boston treated it with contempt, for of some twenty congregations in that city, it was read in but one, and even there, most of the

congregation left the church when the pastor began reading it. Rev. Mr. Cook, an uncle of Governor John Hancock, of striking autograph fame, took for his text Nehemiah 9, 36 and 37, very striking verses under the circumstances.

In New England an annual Thanksgiving has been a regular institution the last Thursday in November, in one state the session of legislature seems timed to open so as to close its six weeks duration on the morn of Thanksgiving day. The gubernatorial proclamations are read in the pulpits of all the churches the Sunday before the festal day. They are printed on large sheets of heavy paper in coarse type and sent to every pastor in the commonwealth. It is now a national festival.

The most famous proclamation, we ever saw or read, was that of the late Gov. John A. Andrew, of Massachusetts in 1861. It was long, but full of scripture quotations, used with apt and telling force; no minister could surpass it. It thrilled every congregation in the commonwealth from Cape Cod to Greylock. It seemed like a cry of some of the old prophets, and rang all through the north as a bugle call to duty. It was on very heavy paper about 24x36 inches and closed with these memorable words, "God Save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts."

UNCLE DAVID'S FUNERAL.

David Ordway lived up on the "Twenty Mile Stream," a little branch of the Black river whose fountain springs were far up on the heavily timbered hills of Reading. It was so named because where "Uncle David's" mill stood was the first supply depot or station on the old military road from the New Hampshire granites to New York. The forests of Reading had been cleared off and the stream so thoroughly reduced that Uncle David's mill had gone to decay, and he had taken the "upper" of his run of stone and placed it at the head of the graves for himself and wife and on that mill-stone set up a white plinth or shaft, on which was engraved one of the most original and unique epitaphs we ever read. It set at defiance all laws of rhetoric and orthography in a most ludicrous manner. For some years he had the coffins for himself and wife made and ready for use in one of his chambers,

and then that no grass or flowers or weeds should grow on their graves, he spent weeks, if not months, in breaking up into small pieces like split peas, two barrels of the waste white marble from a yard in the neighboring village, and when his wife did die, one barrel of this was used as the top filling of her grave.

By and by, in 1881, while we were supplying a church in a village, a few miles from Mr. Ordway's, his young farmer called and asked if we ever preached a man's funeral sermon for him before he died. Somewhat surprised we said "no," it was hard enough to do that for some men after they were dead. But why did he ask.

"Well" said he, "the fact is, Uncle David is a little suspicious of the ministers and he don't quite want to trust them after he is dead and so he has decided to have his funeral while he is alive and well, and then when he dies, as his coffin is ready, all they will need to do will be to put his body into it and bury him without any fuss or public demonstration." I confessed the force of Uncle David's argument, as I knew the man, but said I wanted a week or two to think it over.

In a day or two I was called away and was absent from town for two or three weeks. Uncle David could not wait, so he secured a Universalist minister who had known him all his life, and who was spending the summer in Ludlow. The funeral came off one Sunday afternoon, so all the churches could attend, and of course the meeting house was full. The minister preached, and when he came to speak of the personal qualities of the non-deceased, Uncle David arose and stood during that and the brief address to the mourners.

I was assured that if my funeral discourse should prove satisfactory to Uncle David, I might look for a handsome fee, a V or an X, were the instructions. I never knew what the officiating clergyman did receive, but his young farmer, who interviewed me, told me the old man was not pleased with the minister's estimate of his character and worth, not eulogistic enough. He died after I came west, and had the usual funeral, and his grave has been for years a curiosity for visitors from all that region.

The "Inheritance Tax Law" having been declared valid by the courts, Judge Jones has appointed James G. Smith appraiser, and estates of all who have died since 1895 will be appraised to determine how much the heirs will have to pay the state. — Waukegan Daily Sun.