

An address delivered by Waldo G. Morse, Toastmaster, in New York, December 4, 1885, on the occasion of the annual meeting and dinner of The Morse Society.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:—

The privilege of which first I would avail myself upon this most happy evening is that of acknowledging a great honor and expressing the rare pleasure which has come to me through your kind good pleasure at the election just held. To be chosen President of The Morse Society is to receive a token of good will and confidence to make any man proud and which the present grateful recipient of your trust receives with a resolve to be faithful in his endeavors, proportionate in its firmness to his vast store of personal knowledge bearing upon the unreasonableness of the choice. But this is all between ourselves—all in the family—and there is no danger that I shall mention it outside or even consume an evening stating the heads of the topic. May one custom ever prevail in The Morse Society: may the office seek the man. So shall office continue an honor and our association preserve a great distinction in the land.

But enough of personalities—and when a speaker says “enough” he is usually something late and mild in expressing the sentiment of his auditors. We have gathered here to celebrate the deeds and call to mind the virtues of “Our Puritan Ancestors.” Before me is an image of the rude log cabin, the scanty furniture, the few treasured books, the broad open hearth and the glorious manhood and womanhood of 1635 and the following years; character more precious than rubies, more treasured than gold, which through all the attacks from without and shocks within has permeated the life of a continent and kept our blessed land the fairest in this fair world. The old Puritan blood, asking and giving no quarter where principal is at stake, standing for the individual right and personal righteousness and the thousand forces of good which make men glorious, is fighting a horde of foes, the old forces of tyranny, officialism, socialism, combination, communism, nepotism, crime and vice which have overwhelmed