

# THE NORTH CAROLINA BOOKLET

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# ROANOKE ISLAND\*

Standing on the Aventine hill, by the banks of the Tiber, we can still behold the cradle of the great Roman people, the beginning of that imperial race which for centuries held in its control the entire civilized world of their day and whose laws, whose feat of arms, whose thought, have profoundly impressed all succeeding ages.

HERE BEGAN THE GREATEST MOVEMENT OF THE AGES.

Standing here we see the spot where first began on this continent the great race which in the New World in three hundred years has far surpassed in extent of dominion, in population and power the greatest race known to the Old. Farther than the imperial eagles ever flew, over more men than its dominion ever swayed, with wealth which dwarfs its boasted treasures, and intelligence and capacity unknown to its rulers, this new race in three centuries has covored a continent, crossed great rivers, built great cities, tunneled mountains, traversed great plains, scaled mountain ranges and halting but for a moment on the shores of a vaster ocean, has already annexed a thousand islands and faces the shores of a Western continent so distant that we call it the East.

We do well to come here to visit the spot where this great movement began. It was one of the great epochs of all history. Here, 36 years before the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth Rock; here, 23 years before John Smith and Jamestown, in the year 1584, the first English keel grated

\*Address of Judge Walter Clark at meeting inaugurated by the State Literary and Historical Association, Manteo, N. C., 24 July, 1902.

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small collection of barbarous tribes, and Germany and Italy, not yet nations, were mere geographical expressions. Contrast that with the Europe of today. The change is barely less startling there than on this side of the water.

The change has been greatly due to the reflex action from this side. Civilization has been and is on the steady increase in the betterment of the masses. The leaders of thought, Shakespeare, Bacon, Michael Angelo, Dante, Petrarch, the painters, the sculptors, the statesmen, were as great then as since. The difference is in the masses. Then they were degraded, disregarded, beaten with many stripes, dying like animals after living like brutes; today they have a voice in every government and are beginning more fully to perceive that they have unlimited power which they can use for their own advancement and the betterment of their material surroundings.

The change started here when a new race began, without feudal burdens and amid the breadth and freedom of untrammeled nature. With new paths to tread, new roads to make, new rivers to travel, new cities to build, men began to think new thoughts and to add to the freedom of nature the liberty of speech and of action.

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Well do we come here to visit the spot where the shackles of the ages were broken, precedents forgotten and where man first began to stand upright in the likeness in which God had made him.

Naught tells more forcibly the depression in which the minds of the men of that day were held than the fact that the hardy English mariners, the descendants of the Vikings of old, delayed nearly a century after Columbus had discovered the New World before the foot of an Anglo-Saxon had trod the shores of North America. From the discovery

# WHERE THE SHACKLES OF THE AGES WERE BROKEN.

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in 1492 to the first landing here in 1584 and the first permanent but feeble settlement at Jamestown in 1607 was a long time. Could another new continent such as this be discovered in 3,000 miles of London today, not as many hours would elapse as our ancestors of three centuries ago permitted years to pass, before the English race would land on its shores. In 1520 Cortez led the Spaniards to the Plateau of Mexico and subverted an empire. Yet 65 years more passed before Amidas and Barlowe led the first English expedition to land on this continent.

Not only were men's minds enthralled by governments which existed solely for the benefit of the few, but the condition of the upper classes was only in degree better than that of the poorer. Coffee, sugar, tobacco, potatoes and other articles of common use by the poorest today were unknown. Queen Elizabeth herself lived on beer and beef, and forks being unknown that haughty lady ate with her fingers, as did Shakespeare, Raleigh and Bacon. Articles of the commonest use and necessity in the dwellings of the poorest now, were then not to be obtained in the palaces of kings. Carpets were absent in the proudest palaces and on the fresh strewn rushes beneath their tables princes and kings threw the bones and broken meats from their feasts. Religion was to most a gross superstition, law was a jargon and barbarous, and medicine the vilest quackery. Just in proportion as the masses have been educated, as freedom has been won by them, as their rights have been considered, the world has advanced in civilization and in material well being.

Unlike the founding of Rome, where the seat of Empire abode by its cradle, no great cities arose here at Roanoke Island, at Jamestown nor at Plymouth. The new movement begun here was not for empire but for the people, and it has advanced and spread in all directions.

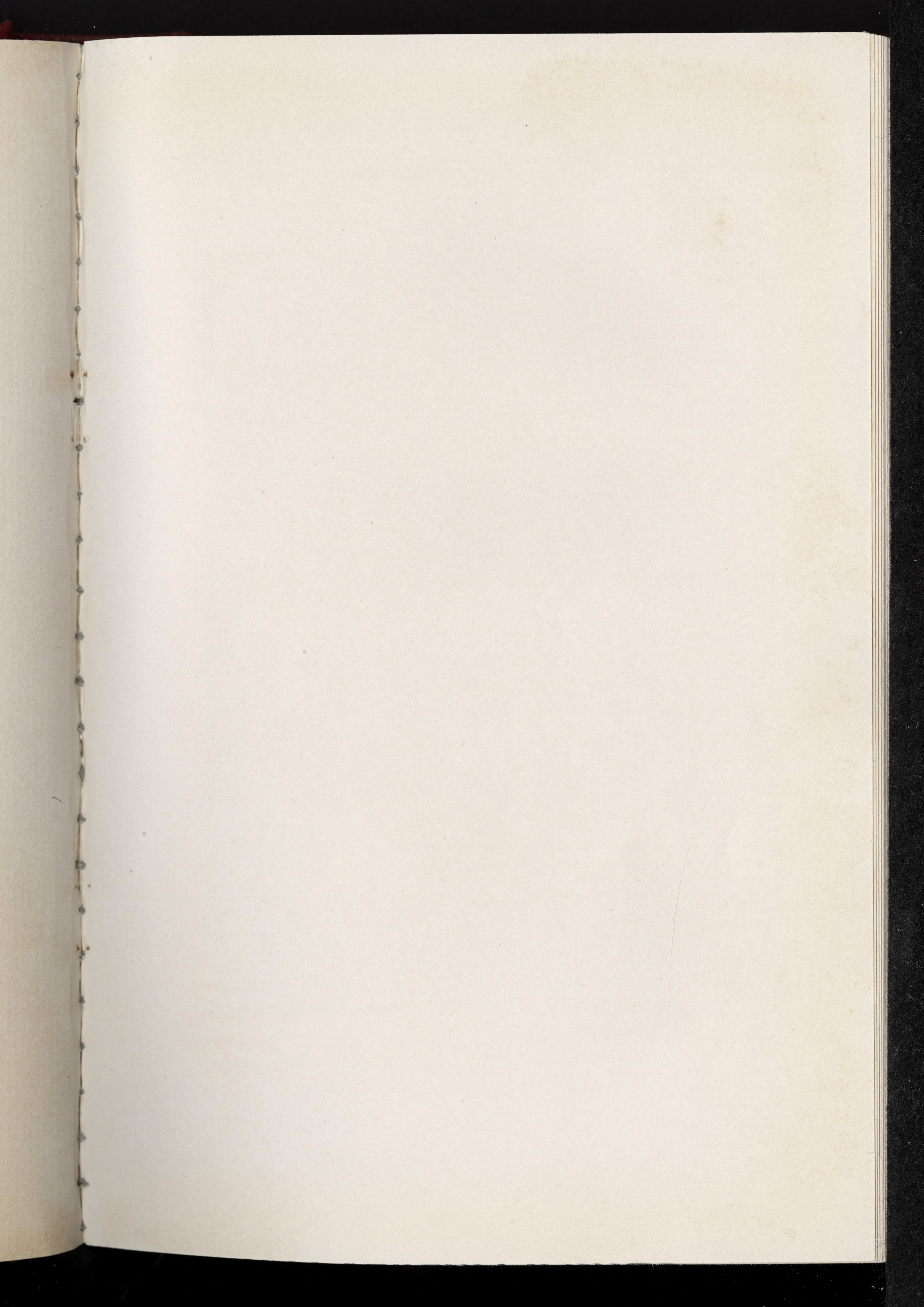
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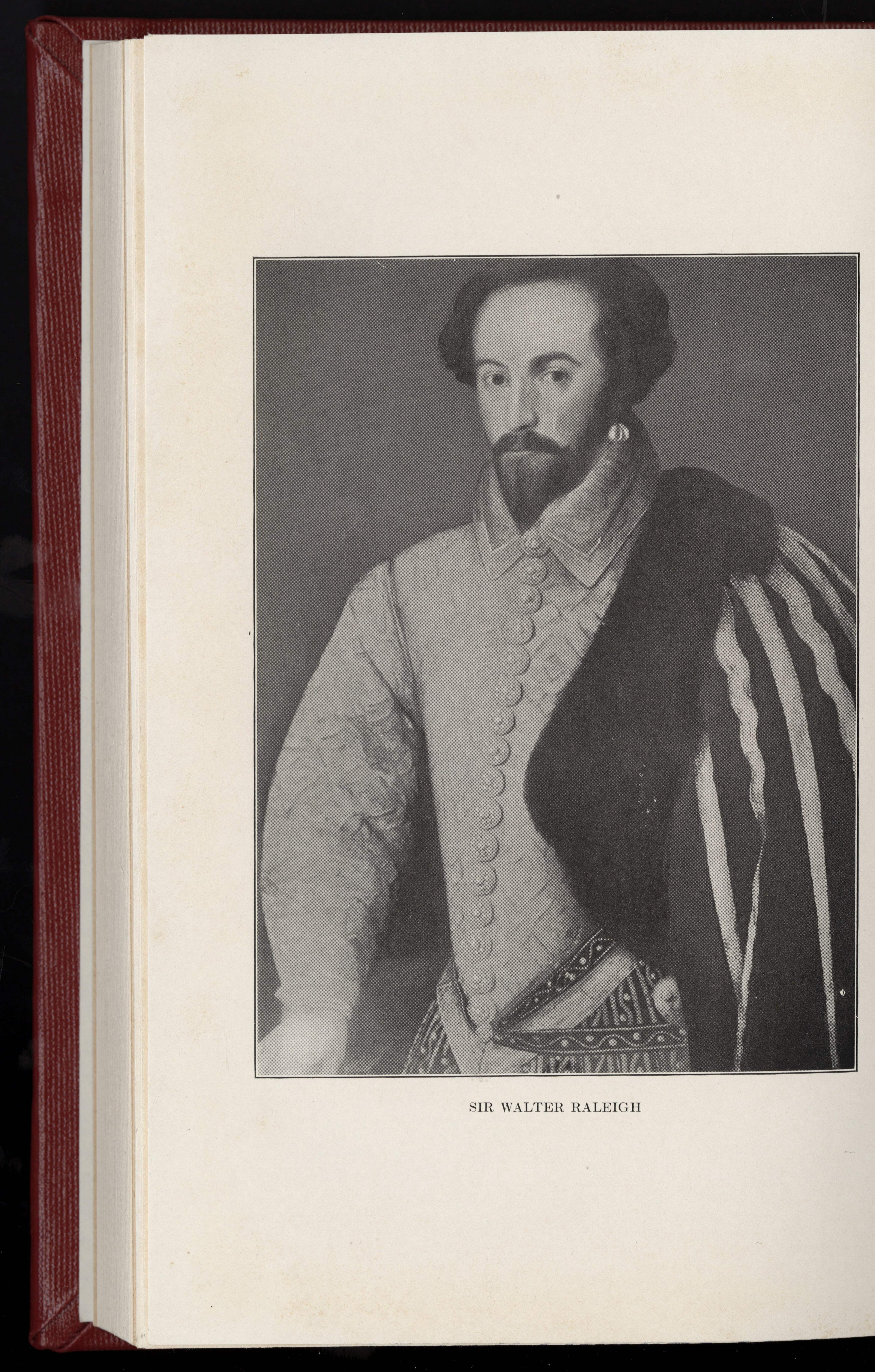
In 1820 Daniel Webster delivered a memorable oration at the anniversary of the landing at Plymouth Rock. In that speech he prophesied that our free government could stand only so long as there was a tolerable equality in the division of property. What would he say could he stand here today and count over the names of those possessed of \$20,000,000, of \$50,000,000, of \$100,000,000, even of more than \$200,000,000 and name over the great trusts and corporations who levy taxes and contributions at their own will, greater than those exacted for all the purposes of government? He instances that when the great monasteries and other church corporations under the Tudors threatened English prosperity the eighth Henry confiscated their property (as has been done in our day by Mexico and other Latin countries) and redistributed their accumulations. He might have added that when the new commercial monopolies under his daughter Elizabeth bade fair to take the place of the suppressed ecclesiastical foundations in recreating inequality, the Commons called on her to pause and that haughty, unbending sovereign had the common sense to save her throne by yielding.

Mr. Webster also utilized the occasion to point to the fact that in France by her exemption of nobles and priests from taxation, property had gravitated into their hands till the wild orgy of revolution had retransferred it to the people and he prophesied that the new law in that country which by restricting the right to will property had prevented its accumulation into a few hands would inevitably destroy the restored monarchy and rebuild the republic. His prophecy has come true.

The great expounder of the constitution was right. Power goes with those who own the property of the country. When

#### THE GREAT DANGER TODAY.





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property is widely distributed and a fair share of the comforts of life are equally in the reach of all, a country will remain a republic. When property, by whatever agency, becomes concentrated in a few hands, a change is impending. Either the few holders will bring in, as he stated, an army that will change the government to a monarchy, or revolution will force a redistribution as in England and France. That has been the lesson of history.

In this day, of wider intelligence and general education, let us hope and believe that there is a third way, hitherto unknown in practice, and that by the operation of just and wiser laws enacted by the sovereignty of the people, a more just and equal distribution of wealth will follow and the enjoyment of material well being will be more generally diffused among the masses. All power is derived from and belongs to the people and should be used solely for their good. This is the fundamental teaching of the institutions which begin their record from the landing of the Anglo-Saxon race on these shores, a landing which was first made at this spot. Had I the ability of Mr. Webster, could I speak with his authority, I might point out as he did the great danger of the accumulation of wealth in a few hands, and might foresee and foretell the remedies which a great, a wise and an all-powerful people will apply. But I shall not follow in the

path which he has trod, haud passibus equis.

Let us not forget on this occasion that to this island belongs the distinguished honor of being the birthplace of the first American girl. It is the Eden from which she sprung. She had no predecessor and remains without a model and without a rival. In that first Eden man was the first arrival and the garden was a failure. Here the girl was the first arrival and the boys have followed her ever since. Appropriately she bore the name of Dare, and daring, delightful, her successors have been ever since. We do well, were

we to come here solely to do honor to the memory of the first American girl, this finished, superlative product of her sex and of these later ages.

When the first expedition landed here there were, it is estimated, in the bounds of the present State of North Carolina, 20,000 Indians, earning a precarious living by fishing and hunting and spending their miserable lives in slaying and torturing one another. Today we have near 2,000,000 of the foremost race of all the world, living in peace and order. Could I, like Mr. Webster in his Plymouth Rock oration, prophesy as to the future—100 years hence—I should predict a still greater change. I should say that with the same rate of increase North Carolina will then have 6,000,000 of people and that cities of 100,000 inhabitants will be numbered by the score; that every village will be connected with its neighbor by electric roads, for steam will have ceased to be a motive power; that education will be universal and poverty unknown; that every swamp will have been drained to become the seat of happy homes; that every river will be deepened and straightened; that public works operated for the benefit of the people and not for the enrichment of a few, will bring comforts and conveniences, now unknown, to the most distant fireside; that the hours of labor will be shortened; that the toil of agriculture will be done by machinery and that irrigation will have banished droughts; that the advance of medicine, already the most progressive science among us, will have practically abolished all diseases save that of old age; that simpler laws and an elevated and all powerful public opinion will have minimized crime and reduced the volume of litigation; that religion less sectarian and disputatious about creeds and forms will be a practical exemplification of that love of fellow man

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which was typified by its divine founder; that every toiler with brains or with hand will prosper and that under juster laws the only inequality in wealth or condition will be that due to the difference in the energy, efforts and natural gifts of each possessor.

This is but the first of many successive celebrations of the landing here and if these feeble, fugitive words shall be preserved to that distant day the speaker who shall read them to a vast audience gathered here will either justify the prophecy or at least he will say, "In the interest of the happiness of the human race, they ought to have come true."

