

A DISCOURSE

DESIGNED TO COMMEMORATE

THE DISCOVERY OF NEW-YORK

BY

HENRY HUDSON;

DELIVERED BEFORE

THE NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY,

SEPTEMBER 4, 1809;

BEING

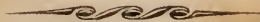
THE COMPLETION OF THE SECOND CENTURY

SINCE THAT EVENT.



BY SAMUEL MILLER, D. D.

One of the Pastors of the First Presbyterian Church in the City of New-York,
and Member of the Historical Society.



NEW-YORK:

Printed and Published by I. Riley.

1810.

Ex Libris

SEYMOUR DURST

NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

SEPTEMBER 4th, 1809.

RESOLVED, *that the thanks of this Society be presented to the Reverend Doctor MILLER, for his Discourse delivered this day, commemorative of the discovery of this part of America by HUDSON, on the 4th of September, 1609; and that he be requested to furnish a copy for publication.*

Extract from the minutes,

JOHN PINTARD,

Recording Secretary.

A DISCOURSE, &c.

Gentlemen of the Historical Society,

TO trace the progress of discovery and migration, is one of the most curious researches in the history of the human mind. When the successive steps of this progress are contemplated in general views, and at distant periods, they afford high gratification both to the philanthropist and the philosopher. But when they are considered in connection with memorable times, places, or persons; when we are enabled to say, on *this day*, or, on *this spot*, some great discovery, or some signal achievement, was accomplished, we experience a new and more impressive emotion. And above all, when events, in their own nature important, stand in close connection with persons or places particularly related or endeared to ourselves, they acquire an interest of the highest kind.

The event which we are assembled to commemorate is of this character. It is, in itself, one of the most important that occur in the early history of our country. But it is peculiarly interesting to AMERICANS; and especially so to every citizen of our OUR OWN STATE. The SECOND CENTURY IS THIS DAY completed, since the date of what deserves to be styled the DISCOVERY OF NEW-YORK. When we recollect this; when we look back upon the scenes which have since been exhibited upon this territory; and when we look around us, and contemplate the situa-

tion and prospects which, under the smiles of a benignant Providence, we have attained ;—the occasion is surely calculated to swell the mind with various and deep emotions.

In resolving to celebrate this day, the HISTORICAL SOCIETY has adopted a measure which was due to the Occasion and to itself. And happy shall I be, if, in discharging that part of the duty which devolves on me, I shall be able to contribute, in the smallest degree, either to the suitable celebration of the Anniversary, or to the entertainment of this audience.

In undertaking the task, Gentlemen, with which you have been pleased to honour me, I have supposed that the plan of discourse most likely to fulfil your wishes, most conformable with the design of our institution, and certainly most commensurate with my own powers, and most agreeable to my own taste, would be that of a *plain historical memoir*. Instead, therefore, of attempting to entertain you with philosophical disquisition, or with rhetorical addresses to the imagination, I shall confine myself to a simple account of the DISCOVERY which we celebrate, together with some of the circumstances which preceded and followed that event. And if the plainness of unadorned narrative should exercise your patience, I trust the recollection, that you are listening to a recital of *well authenticated facts*, which took place two centuries ago, and some of them at a still more remote period, near the spot where we now stand, will guard you against excessive weariness.

One of the most signal proofs of the low state of the art of navigation, and of the extremely narrow limits of human intercourse, in the sixteenth century, is to be found in the fact, that, for more than a hundred years after the discovery of the American continent, scarcely any thing was known of *North America*, even by the most enlightened and enterprising nations of the earth. But these are not the only reasons to be

assigned for the slow progress of discovery and of settlement, in this portion of the new world. The circumstances in which the principal nations of *Europe* were placed, during the greater part of the century in question, were peculiarly unfavourable both to the formation and execution of great plans, for the advancement of human knowledge, and the promotion of human happiness. *England*,* through the whole of this period, was either agitated and weakened by intestine broils, or exhausted by an unwise interference in foreign wars. And that immense navy, which has since enabled her to give law to the ocean, and which forms a new wonder of the world, had, then, scarcely reached even the infancy of its existence.† During the same period, the strength and resources of *France* were so much wasted by the fruitless expeditions of her monarchs into Italy, by an unequal contest with the power and policy of *Charles V.* and by the civil wars by which she was desolated for near half the century, that she could neither bestow much attention upon objects of commercial enterprise, nor engage with spirit in plans of distant discovery. *Spain*, although then in possession of a navy which was the terror of *Europe*, was either so much occupied with European wars, or so intent on prosecuting her discoveries and conquests in *South America*, that she had neither leisure nor inducement to think of directing her attention to this part of our continent. The *precious metals* have ever formed one of the most attractive objects of human

* See *Robertson's Historical Disquisition concerning Ancient India*, sect. 4. p. 154. &c.

† “*Henry VII.* expended 14,000*l.* sterling in building one ship, called the *Great Harry*. This was, properly speaking, the *first ship* in the English navy. Before this period, when the prince wanted a fleet, he had no other expedient than *hiring* or *pressing* ships from the merchants.” *Hume*, vol. 3. chap. 26.

cupidity. Soon after the discovery of *America*, the Spaniards began to cherish the confident hope of finding in their southern possessions immense treasures of silver and gold. These hopes were abundantly realized by the discovery of the mines of *Potosi*, in 1545, and those of *Mexico* shortly afterwards. From that period every object appeared insignificant which was not connected with a similar allurements. The *United Provinces of Holland*, recently formed into an independent nation, and struggling with many difficulties, were not, as yet, in a situation to seek important objects abroad. And *Portugal*, then in the zenith of her power, was exclusively devoted to the lucrative trade of *India*, which she was permitted by the surrounding nations almost entirely to monopolize, for near a century after the famous discovery of a passage to that country by *Vasco de Gama*. The trade of *India* displayed attractions greatly beyond any thing that this portion of *North America* offered to the eye of the adventurer. The spices, the precious stones, and all the elegant manufactures of the east, were justly considered as more certain and abundant sources of wealth than almost any other part of the globe could promise.

No wonder, then, when it seems to have been early understood, that *North America* could by no means vie with the southern part of our continent in the precious metals, nor with *India* in her various elegant and luxurious productions; no wonder that the chief ardour of discovery, conquest and settlement was directed to countries of richer promise, and of milder climate than these latitudes had to offer.

The first account which we have of this part of *America* having been visited by European navigators, is found in the voyage of *John and Sebastian Cabot*, natives of *Venice*, but residing in *England*; who, in the year 1497, in the service of *Henry VII.* and in pursuit of a north-west passage, are said to have sailed along the coast of *North America* from the 67th to

the 26th degree of north latitude. But although the discovery of *Columbus* had excited much interest and conversation in the court of *Henry*, and among the merchants of *England*; although the new world was considered as holding out the grandest objects to human enterprise, both on account of its own riches, and its supposed connection with a new and short passage to the *East Indies*; and although the *Cabots* were undoubtedly navigators of enlarged views and of uncommon skill; yet their voyage does not appear to have resulted in any distinct or satisfactory knowledge, even of the *coast* along which they sailed. They do not appear to have landed any where during this extensive run, nor to have made any observations worthy of being recorded. It is not certain that they even *saw* at a distance any part of the coast which is now *New-York*. They certainly, however, sailed by it, and probably saw it. But still intent on the long sought passage to *India*, and meeting with nothing but what they considered as an obstacle to the attainment of their wishes, they returned to *England* without ascertaining any thing more than the existence of a western continent.

The next enterprise worthy of notice was that of *John de Verrazzano*, a Florentine, in the service of *Francis I.* of *France*. *Verrazzano* had been, for some time, entrusted with the command of four ships, in cruising against the Spaniards. These vessels being separated in a storm, the commander resolved, with one of them, the *Dauphin*, to undertake a voyage for the purpose of discovering new countries. Accordingly, on the 17th day of January, in the year 1524, he sailed from the uninhabited rocks which lie to the east of *Madeira*, and which are called by the English the *Deserters*, and steered a westerly course. About the middle of March he arrived on the American coast, in latitude 34° north; of consequence, near that part of *North Carolina* on which *Wilmington* now stands. From that point of the coast he pro-

ceeded further south, until he came to the region of *palm trees*, which shows that he sailed at least as far in that direction as the southern part of what is now the state of *Georgia*, to the north of which the *palm tree* is not found. He then turned and directed his course northward, until he came to about the latitude of 41° north, where he entered a harbour which, from his description, has been thought to be that of *New-York*.

The principal information which we have concerning this voyage, is contained in a letter, addressed by *Verrazzano* himself, to his master, *Francis I.* on his return to *Europe*. This letter has been happily preserved entire by *Hakluyt*,* whose character for accuracy and fidelity stands too high to admit of suspicion as to the authenticity of the document. *Verrazzano* describes the harbour in the following manner. "This land is situated in the paralele of *Rome*, in forty-one degrees and two terces; but somewhat more colde by accidentall causes. The mouth of the haven lieth open to the south, halfe a league broad, and being entred within it, betweene the east and the north, it stretcheth twelve leagues, where it wareth broader and broader, and maketh a gulfe about twenty leagues in compasse, wherein are five small islands, very fruitful and pleasant, full of hie and broad trees, among the which islandes any great navie may ride safe, without any feare of tempest or other danger."†

If we suppose *Staten* island, and *Manhattan* island to be included in the number *five* of which he speaks, and also the whole of the waters in which these islands are embosomed, to belong to the "gulph," which he represents as "twenty leagues in compass,"

* *Voyages, Navigations, &c. collected by Richard Hakluyt, Preacher, and sometime Student of Christ Church, in Oxford.* Vol. 3. p. 95. folio, 1600.

† *Hakluyt*, p. 300.

the description will be found a tolerably accurate one, and to apply with more probability to the harbour of *New-York* than to any other.*

In this harbour *Verrazzano* appears, from his own account, to have staid about fifteen days. He and his men frequently went on shore, to obtain supplies, and to see the country. He says expressly, "Sometimes our men stayed two or three daies on a little island neere the ship, for divers necessaries." And again, "we were oftentimes within the land five or six leagues, which we found as pleasant as is possible to declare, very apt for any kind of husbandry, of corne, wine, and oyle. We entered afterwards into the woods, which we found so great and thicke, that any army, were it never so great, might have hid itselfe therein; the trees whereof are okes, cypresse-trees, and other sortes unknowen in *Europe*."

These were, probably, *the first European feet* that ever trod on any part of the territory now included within the State of *New-York*. I say *probably*, because, after all that has been discovered and said of *ancient fortifications*, and other supposed monuments of more than savage skill and cultivation, found in our own State and elsewhere, I consider the evidence which they furnish as by far too obscure and doubtful to warrant us in assigning to them, with any degree of confidence, a *European* origin.

Verrazzano appears to have had much intercourse with the natives of the country. They came on

* Dr. *Belknap* says, that the harbour which *Verrazzano* entered, "by his description, must be that of *New-York*." *Biography*, I. p. 33. Others have considered the whole account as agreeing better with the harbour of *Newport*, in *Rhode-Island*. The truth is, there are some difficulties to be surmounted in applying *Verrazzano's* description to either. His *letter*, however, will be published entire in the volume of which this discourse forms a part; and every reader who feels an interest in the inquiry, will, of course, examine and judge for himself.

board of his ship frequently and without reserve ; traded with him freely for such articles as he needed ; and generally attended his men, in greater or smaller numbers, whenever they went on shore. He describes their persons, dress and customs, in a manner remarkably similar to that of *Hudson*, near a century afterwards. The most curious circumstance concerning them is, that they had, among other ornaments, plates of wrought *copper*.* How these were obtained by the savages at that early period, is a question which the antiquarian may find some difficulty in solving. It is possible that they might have been procured from some preceding visitors of the country from *Europe*. It is certain, however, that copper instruments, of various kinds, were in use, not only among the *Mexicans*, but also among the natives of *Florida*, before the discovery of the country by Europeans.†

From the harbour of *New-York*, *Verrazzano* sailed on the fifth of May, and directed his course east and north-east, until he reached the 56th degree of north latitude, or about the coast of *Labrador*. Thence he sailed towards *France*, where he arrived in the month of July, on the eighth day of which month, at the port of *Dieppe*, he dated his letter to the king, giving an account of his voyage. He gave to the whole country, the coast of which he had visited, and partly explored, the name of *New France*. But his discovery (if it can be called by that name) does not appear to have excited the least attention, nor to have served as a guide to any succeeding navigator. The truth is, his voyage having neither produced nor promised any addition to the revenues of *France*, all

* “ Among whom we saw many plates of wrought copper, which they esteeme more than gold, which, for the colour, they make no account of.” *Hakluyt*, 298.

† *Pinkerton's Geography*, vol. 2. p. 401. *Philad. edit.*

further attempts to pursue his discovery were laid aside, and the very memory of it almost permitted to perish. It is distressing to add, that, according to some writers, *Verrazzano*, in a subsequent voyage, was cut to pieces and devoured by the savages.*

After the voyage of *Verrazzano*, nearly a century elapsed before the least addition was made to the knowledge of this part of the American continent. On the discoveries of the English in *Virginia*, and of the French in *Canada*, there is not now time to dwell. In the year 1609, occurred that important event, which we this day commemorate; and which, considered in all its circumstances, deserves to be styled the DISCOVERY of what is now called *New York*.

The author of this discovery was HENRY HUDSON, a native of *Great Britain*. It is to be lamented that nothing is known concerning the birth, the education, or the early history of this celebrated navigator. It is fairly to be presumed, however, from the magnitude and difficulty of the enterprises entrusted to his management, not only in his own country, but elsewhere, that he was highly esteemed; and that he had given indubitable proofs of his intrepidity, skill, and maritime experience.

* *Belknap's American Biography*, vol. 1. p. 159. *Charlevoix*, however, considers this story as not resting on sufficient evidence. He says that *Verrazzano*, "a short time after his arrival in *France*, fitted out another expedition, with the design of establishing a colony in *America*. All that we know of this enterprise is, that, having embarked, he was never seen more, and that it never has been ascertained what became of him." *Hist. Nouv. France*, 1. 7. On the other hand, *Ramusio* very positively asserts, that when *Verrazzano* landed, he and the people who went ashore with him, were cut to pieces and devoured by the savages, in the sight of the rest of the crew, who had remained on board the ship, and were unable to rescue their companions. *Dr. Forster* quotes this account with approbation. *Northern Voyages*, 436.

The question, whether *Hudson* was probably acquainted with the voyage of *Verrazzano*, will naturally arise. It is certain that *Hakluyt's* volume, which contains the account of that voyage, was published in *England* about *nine years* before the date of *Hudson's* discovery. But there is no other circumstance, now known, which gives the least reason to suppose that he was acquainted with the publication, or which at all impairs his claim to the character of an original discoverer.

Hudson is known to have performed two voyages, of great importance, prior to that in which he discovered our *harbour*, and the *river* which has been since called by his name. Notwithstanding all the fruitless attempts which had been made to find a passage to *India* by the north, the hope of still being able to find such a passage was by no means abandoned. Among those who considered such a discovery as practicable, and as worthy of a spirited attempt, was an association of wealthy and enterprising merchants of the city of *London*. Having, with great liberality, raised funds for the purpose, they fitted out a ship, and gave the command of the expedition to *Hudson*. He sailed from *Gravesend*, on the first day of *May*, in the year 1607. In this voyage, he explored the eastern coast of *Greenland*, to a greater extent than any preceding navigator, and discovered the island of *Spitzbergen*. But failing of his principal object, he returned to *England*, where he arrived on the 15th day of *September*, in the same year.

It is highly gratifying to know, that, in our inquiries concerning the voyages and discoveries of *Hudson*, we are not left to be guided by conjecture or fable. The journals of *four* of his voyages are extant in *Purchas's Pilgrim*.* Of these, the *third* is

* *Purchas's Pilgrim*, vol. 3. p. 567. 597. Fol. 1625.

that in which we are more particularly interested.* From this authentic source, the principal facts which I am to lay before you are derived.

Hudson, having sought in vain the long wished for passage, by sailing directly north, the same association in whose service he had made the first voyage, resolved to make another attempt, the object of which was to find a passage by the north-east. Accordingly, the next year they fitted out another ship; and were so well satisfied with the fidelity and skill displayed by *Hudson*, that they entrusted him with the command of the second expedition. He sailed from *England* on the 22d of April, 1608: but failing in his object, as before, he returned to his native country, after spending on this second enterprise about four months.

Hudson, after accomplishing his second voyage, went over to *Holland*, and, for what reason is now unknown, engaged in the service of the Dutch. Their famous *East-India Company* had been incorporated about seven years before, with a capital of six millions and a half of florins, and with powers more extensive than were ever before granted to a trading corporation. This company determined to fit out a ship for discovery, and to entrust *Hudson* with the command of the expedition. The ship which they engaged for this purpose was a small one. Dr. *Forster* calls it a *yacht*.† It was named the *Half Moon*; and is said to have been navigated by twenty men, Dutch and English. In this vessel, *Hudson* left *Amsterdam* on the 4th, and the *Texel* on the 6th of April, in the year 1609.

* The journal of this voyage was kept, apparently, with great fidelity and accuracy, by *Robert Juet*, the mate of the ship. Vol. 3. p. 581. 595.

† *History of Voyages and Discoveries made in the North*, 421.

The original design of *Hudson* in this voyage, was not to visit *America*. He was still intent on discovering a passage to *India*, and hoped to succeed by sailing to the north-west: Having attempted this, without success, he formed the resolution of visiting the New World. He arrived on the American coast, on the 18th of July, in latitude 44 degrees north, at or near the place where *Portland*, in the district of *Maine*, now stands. Here he found a harbour, landed, and remained about six days, for the purpose of replacing a foremast, which he had lost in a storm several weeks before. The natives at this place, appear to have received and treated *Hudson* with great inoffensiveness, and even with hospitality; in return for which, he and his men, without the least provocation, shamefully plundered their property, and violently drove them from their habitations.* This conduct speedily brought on a state of warfare, which obliged him to weigh anchor and put to sea. The natives whom he found in this latitude, were evidently in the habit of trading with the French. They not only asserted themselves that this was the case; but many articles of French manufacture were actually found among them; and some of them had a smattering of the French language.

Pursuing his course southward, *Hudson* came to *Cape Cod* about the 3d of August, and landed there. After this, he continued to sail to the southward and

* The account which the journal gives of this transaction, though short, is sufficiently pointed and comprehensive to justify all the language I have used. Without any preceding record of ill treatment received from the Indians, but the contrary, it states—"The five and twentieth day of July, very faire weather, and hot; in the morning we well manned our scute with foure muskets, and sixe men, and took one of their shallops, and brought it aboard. Then we manned our boat and scute with twelve men and muskets, and two stone pieces or murderers, and drave the salvages from their houses, and took the spoyle of them, as they would have done of us."

westward for one and twenty days, "making remarks on the soundings and currents," until he came to the entrance of *Chesapeake Bay*, about the 24th of August. This was the furthest point of his progress southward. On his return along the coast, on the 28th of August, he discovered the bay now called *Delaware*, into the mouth of which he entered, examining the soundings and currents, and marking the appearance of the country; but does not appear to have landed.

During the six following days, *Hudson* pursued his northerly course, until, on the 3d day of September, he anchored within *Sandy Hook*, which his journal, with almost entire accuracy, states to be in $40^{\circ} 30'$ north latitude. The next day, the 4th of September, he sent a boat on shore for the purpose of fishing. The tradition is, that his men first landed on *Coney* island, which lies near to *Long* island, and now makes a part of *King's* county. On the same day the natives came on board of his ship, as she lay at anchor, conducting themselves with great apparent friendliness, and discovering a strong disposition to barter the produce of their country for knives, beads, clothes, and other articles of a similar kind. The next day, the 5th of September, *Hudson* again sent his boat on shore, for the purpose, as appears from the journal, of exploring and sounding the waters lying to the south, within *Sandy Hook*, and forming what is now called the *Horse-Shoe*. Here the boat's crew landed, and penetrated some distance into the woods, in what is now *Monmouth* county, in *New-Jersey*. They were well received by the natives, who presented them very kindly with, what the journal calls "green tobacco," and also with "dried currants,"*

* These were probably *whortleberries*, or some other wild berries, of a similar kind, which the Indians were accustomed to dry.

which are represented as having been found in great plenty, and of a very excellent quality.

On the 6th of September, *Hudson* sent a boat, manned with five hands, to explore what appeared to be the mouth of a river, at the distance of about four leagues from the ship. This was, no doubt, the strait between *Long* and *Staten* islands, generally called the *Narrows*. Here the writer of the journal observes, "a good depth of water was found," and, within, a large opening, and a narrow river to the west, in which it is evident he refers to what is now called *the Kills*, or the channel between *Bergen-Neck* and *Staten* island. In exploring the bay, and the adjacent waters, the boat's crew spent the whole day. On their way in returning to the ship, towards night, they were attacked by the natives in two canoes; the one carrying fourteen men, the other twelve. A skirmish ensued, in which one of *Hudson's* men, named *John Colman*, was killed, by an arrow, which struck him in the throat, and two more wounded. The next day, the remains of *Colman* were interred on a point of land not far from the ship, which, from that circumstance, received the name of *Colman's Point*; and which was probably the same that is now called *Sandy Hook*.

On the eighth, ninth and tenth days of September, *Hudson* still cautiously rode at anchor without the *Narrows*, and seems to have been chiefly employed in trading with the natives, and in guarding against any insidious attacks which might have been meditated by them, and which he evidently feared. On the eleventh, he sailed through the *Narrows*, and found, as the writer of the journal expresses it, "a very good harbour for all winds." On the twelfth, he first entered the River which bears his name, and sailed up about two leagues. On these two days, the ship was visited by great numbers of the natives, who brought *Indian corn, tobacco, beans* and *oysters* in abundance, and exchanged them for such trifles as

the ship's company were disposed to barter. They had pipes of "*yellow copper*,"* in which they smoked. They had also various ornaments of *copper*; and *earthen pots*, in which they dressed their meat. But, although they were "civil," as the writer of the journal tells us, and "made shew of love," *Hudson* did not think proper to trust them; and would by no means suffer any of them to remain on board during the night.

From the twelfth to the twenty-second of September, *Hudson* was employed in ascending the river. The journal represents it in general, as about a mile wide, and of a good depth; abounding with fish, among which were "great store of *salmons*."† As he advanced, he found the lands on both sides growing higher, until it became "very mountainous." This high land, it is observed, "had many points; the channel was narrow; and there were many eddy winds." In his passage up the river the natives frequently came on board of his ship, and sometimes in considerable numbers, but always in an amicable manner.‡

* The journal, in another place, says their pipes were of "*red copper*."

† See *Appendix*, note A.

‡ The Indians on the eastern side of the river were called *Mahiccans*; or, as the Dutch styled them, *Mohickanders*. These are the people of whom *De Laet* speaks, under the name of *Mankikani*, and whom he represents as inhabiting the eastern banks of the north river. In his map of "*Nova Anglia, Novum Belgium, et Virginia*," he calls them *Mahicani*. See his *Novus Orbis, seu Descriptionis Indiæ Occidentalis*, p. 73. folio, 1633. Of the *Mahiccans* but a small number remain. The greater part of these are settled at *Oneida* in the state of *New-York*. See *Barton's New Views of the Origin of the Tribes and Nations of America*, 8vo. 1798, 2d edit. *Preliminary Discourse*, p. 31, 32. The Indians inhabiting the *western* bank of the river, from its mouth to the *Kaat's-Kill* mountains, went under

Hudson appears to have sailed up the river a little above where the city of *Hudson* now stands; and beyond that point he himself never ascended. Not considering it as safe to proceed further with his ship, he sent a boat, with five hands, (the mate, who had the command of the expedition, being one,) to explore, and sound the river higher up. The boat proceeded eight or nine leagues beyond where the ship lay at anchor; but finding the soundings extremely irregular, and the depth, in some places, not more than seven feet, it was judged unadvisable to attempt any further progress. It is evident, from the whole account, that the boat went as far as where the city of *Albany* now stands.

It is worthy of notice, that the further they went up the river, the more friendly and hospitable the natives appeared. After they had passed the highlands, the writer of the journal observes, "There we found a very loving people, and very old men; and were well used." On the eighteenth of September, when the ship was lying about twenty-five or thirty miles below the present situation of *Albany*,* "the mate," it is further observed, "went on shore with an old savage, a governor of the country, who took him to his house, and made him good cheer." At this place the savages flocked on board the ship in considerable numbers, bringing with them corn, tobacco, pumpkins and grapes, and some of them beaver and otter skins, which they exchanged for hatchets, knives, beads, and other trifles. On the twentieth of September, *Hudson* and his crew, for the purpose

the general name of the *Sankikani*. *De Laet* speaks of these Indians as the "*infensissimi hostes*" of the *Manhattæ*, or *Manathanes*, a fierce tribe, who inhabited the eastern bank of the river, near its mouth. *Novus Orbis*, p. 72.

* The *Indian* name of the spot on which *Albany* now stands, was *Skenectadæa*. See *Appendix*, note B.

of making an experiment on the temper of the Indians, attempted to make a number of their principal men drunk. But, though they "were all merry," as the journalist expresses it, only one of them appears to have been completely intoxicated. This phenomenon excited great surprise and alarm among his companions. They knew not what to make of it. And it was not until the next day, when he had completely recovered, that they became composed and satisfied. This, so far as we know, was the first instance of intoxication by *ardent spirits*, among the Indians, on this part of the American continent. It is very remarkable, that among the *six nations*, there is a tradition still very distinctly preserved, of a scene of intoxication which occurred with a company of the natives when the first ship arrived. Alas! that scenes of this nature should have since become so fatally familiar and common among their miserable posterity! How large, and how melancholy a chapter the effects of this poison have since formed in the history of the debasement and destruction of these tribes, I need not remind this audience.

On the twenty-second of the month, confidence on the part of the natives being restored, a number of their chiefs came on board the ship as she lay at anchor. This interview the writer of the journal describes in the following manner: "At three o'clock in the afternoon, they came on board, and brought tobacco and beans, and gave them to our master, and made an oration, and shewed him all the country round about. Then they sent one of their company on land, who presently returned, and brought a great platter full of venison, dressed by themselves; and they caused him to eat with them. Then they made him reverence, and departed."

On the twenty-third of September, *Hudson* began to descend the river. On his way down, his men frequently went on shore and had several very friendly interviews with the natives; who expressed a desire

that they might reside among them ; and made them an offer of lands for that purpose. But when the ship came below the highlands, the savages appeared to be of a different character, and were extremely troublesome ; especially those who inhabited the western side of the river. They attempted to rob the ship ; and repeatedly shot at the crew, with bows and arrows, from several points of land. *Hudson's* men discharged a number of muskets at them, and killed ten or twelve of them. In these conflicts, which were frequently renewed during the first and second days of October, none of the ship's crew appear to have been injured. The land on the eastern side of the river, near its mouth, was called by the natives "*Manna-hata.*"

On the fourth day of October, (just one month from the day on which he first landed within *Sandy-Hook*,) *Hudson* came out of the river which bears his name ; and, without anchoring in the bay, immediately stood out to sea. By twelve o'clock, at noon of that day, he was entirely clear of land. He steered directly for *Europe* ; and on the seventh of November following, he "arrived," as the writer of the journal expresses it, "in the range of *Dartmouth*, in *Devonshire.*" Here the journal ends.

Whether *Hudson* immediately landed in *England*, or, from the coast of *Devonshire*, directed his course to *Holland* ; whether he sold the country which he had discovered, or at least his right to it, to the Dutch government, or to the *East-India* Company, as some have asserted ; or whether the company considered its discovery by a man in their service as vesting in them a sufficient title ; are questions which it is impossible now to answer, as the journal gives no information concerning the transactions between him and his Dutch employers. *Dr. Forster* asserts, that he offered to undertake another voyage in their service, but that they declined it ; upon which he returned

to *England*, and again entered into the service of the company which had before employed him.

It is natural to feel some curiosity respecting the subsequent life and fortunes of the discoverer of *New-York*. Like his predecessor *Verrazzano*, he came to a miserable end. But while *Verrazzano* is said to have perished by the hands of savages, *Hudson* fell a sacrifice to the more than savage cruelty of his own countrymen and companions. The next year after his departure from our harbour, he undertook a fourth voyage, still in quest of a passage to *India* by the north-west. This voyage was, throughout, an unfortunate one. He left *England* in April, 1610, and reached the American coast early in the summer. He soon discovered the great northern Bay which bears his name. There, after an unwise delay, he was compelled to pass a distressing and dangerous winter. In the spring, in addition to all his other misfortunes, he found a spirit of dissatisfaction and mutiny growing among his crew, and, at length, manifesting itself in open violence. This proceeded so far, that on the twenty-second of June, 1611, a majority of the crew rose, took the command of the ship, put *Hudson*, his son, and seven others, most of whom were sick or lame, into a boat, turned them adrift in the ocean, and abandoned them to their fate. They never were heard of more.

Hudson did not give his own name to the river which he discovered. The *Iroquois* Indians called it *Cahohàtateà*. The *Mahiccans*, *Mahakanèghtuc*, and sometimes *Shatemuck*.* *Hudson* styled it, emphatically, the "*Great River*," or the "*Great River of the Mountains*,"† no doubt from the extraordinary circumstance of such a body of water flowing through the mountains without a cataract. The name of its

* See Appendix, Note B.

† This name is said by some to have been of *Spanish* origin.

Discoverer, however, was early attached to it. I find it familiarly called *Hudson's* River* in some of the public documents of the Dutch colonial government ; but more frequently the *North River*, to distinguish it from the *Delaware*, which was discovered by the same navigator, and which, being within the territory claimed by the Dutch, was called by them the *South River*.

The Dutch immediately began to avail themselves of the advantage which the discovery of *Hudson* presented to their view. In the year 1610, it appears that at least one ship was sent hither by the *East-India* Company, for the purpose of trading in furs, which, it is well known, continued, for a number of years, to be the principal object of commercial attraction to this part of the new world. In 1614, a fort and trading house were erected near the spot on which *Albany* now stands, and called *Fort Orange* ; † and, about the same time, another fort and trading house were established on the south-west point of *Manhattan* island, and called *New-Amsterdam*. The whole colony received the name of *New-Netherlands*.

* There is reason to believe, that this name, though soon adopted by the Dutch, was first applied by the English ; probably as a part of their system for assuming the discovery and the property of the country to themselves.

† Some of the early Dutch writers inform us, that the *Manhattan* Indians were, at first, so full of suspicion, and so decidedly hostile to the Dutch traders who came hither, that the latter were unable to purchase any land on *Manhattan* island, and were discouraged from attempting a settlement. For this reason, it is said, the first *fort and trading house* were erected on a small island in the river, about half a mile below where the city of *Albany* now stands. This little settlement appears to have been made in 1614. Towards the latter part of the same year, or in the course of the next, it seems that ground was obtained, and a small trading house and fort erected on *Manhattan* island.

To dwell longer, at present, on the circumstances attending the early settlement of this colony, would be an unseasonable trespass on your time and patience, especially as I trust this task will be more successfully performed, hereafter, by my successors in the anniversary task which we have this day commenced. To trace the gradual advances of the colony, from small beginnings, to wealth, power, and universal improvement—To mark the circumstances which attended its commencement and progress, and thence to deduce the causes of any peculiar features which may appear in our national character—To exhibit, in contrast, a territory, two hundred years ago occupied by a few wandering, uncultivated tribes, with the same territory, now filled with a civilized population of more than EIGHT HUNDRED THOUSAND SOULS—To contemplate a RIVER, whose waters, before the ascent of *Hudson*, had never borne on their majestic surface any other vessels than the canoes of savages, now annually wafting many thousand rich cargoes, and pouring into our Capital the wealth of kingdoms—To mark the growth of our CITY, from a few miserable trading huts, which, for a number of years after the discovery, formed but a single street, of small extent, until it has become the *fourth*, if not the *third*, trading town in the world—In a word, to describe the progress of a feeble colony, contending with unsubdued forests, with ferocious beasts, with savage men, and with all the hardships of a dreary wilderness, until they rose to a great, powerful, and independent State, enriched with an immense property, adorned with the elegant arts, and, above all, blessed with the inestimable privileges of the Religion of Jesus Christ:—These are the splendid subjects which lie before our future annual orators; and in the discussion of which we may anticipate equal instruction and delight.

I have only to add, Gentlemen, my fervent wishes for the prosperity and success of our Society. That the objects of our association are both laudable and

important, none who are acquainted with them can doubt. Those, especially, who have any knowledge of the difficulty attending the collection of historical documents by unassisted individuals, instead of undervaluing our plan, will rather be disposed to regret that a similar institution had not been formed a century ago. That our fellow-citizens, when our design shall become better known, will do us the justice to notice, encourage, and aid our exertions, I cherish the most entire confidence. And that we shall endeavour to deserve and attract their fostering regard, by exhibiting, from time to time, the fruits of our labours, I cannot permit myself for a moment to question. May every successive return of our Anniversary find us more active and useful; our CITY more flourishing; and our STATE more enlightened, prosperous and happy!

APPENDIX.

The following communications from Dr. Mitchill, to the writer of the preceding discourse are too instructive and interesting to be withheld from its readers :

(Note A.)

Albany, March 4, 1810.

Reverend and learned sir,

Concerning the frequency of salmon in the river Cahohàtatèa or Mahaganeghtuc, when first visited by the navigator Hudson, I have my doubts as to its correctness. That fish has, indeed, been taken in this river, and even in the vicinity of Albany. But this is a rare occurrence; and the individuals of this kind that have been caught are solitary, and not the gregarious salmons swimming in shoals. I have conversed with several persons here, who have seen a few of these lonesome and straggling fishes, from time to time, as they have been brought to market.

I cannot learn that there is any record or tradition, of their having ever frequented our river, after the manner of the Connecticut, the Kennebeck, and the other streams on this continent. Salmon love clear and limpid water, as do all the species of the trout family, to which they belong; and I should question much whether the ooze and mud of the Cahohàtatèa was so agreeable to them, as the sandy bottoms of the more precipitous and rapid rivers. Besides, you well know, that our river is properly but an estuary as far as the outlet of the Mohock; and the strata of schistic rocks which cross it above the junction of that river, are generally more shallow, than, perhaps, the salmon would like. And, further, the Dutch word 'salm' or 'salmpie,' commonly in use to signify *salmon*, means also, in ordinary and loose conversation and composition, *trout*.

There are, still, other considerations unfavourable to the abundance of salmon in our river, as you quote from Hudson's journal. They are those which relate to the HERRING, the SHAD, and the STURGEON, the annual visitants of this stream, at Albany and higher. Whatever may be the opinion of speculative men, as to the governing principle of these creatures, whether it be instinct or reason, the fact nevertheless is, that they select very proper places to deposit their spawn, and perpetuate their race. In our river, these three species of fish, had each an appropriate place for the great work of multiplication.

The grand rendezvous of the herrings, was the Saratoga lake; into which they entered by its outlet, yet called fish-creek. The obstruction of this passage by dams and artificial impediments, has turned the herrings from their favourite haunt. The inhabitants of the neighbouring region have, thereby, been deprived of their yearly treat of herrings. But, more than this, the herrings thus dispossessed and discouraged, have become more rare in the river, and are deserting it in proportion to the want of accommodation it affords them. It is reported, that the course of the herrings was more especially on the west side of the river.

The *shad* travelled along the eastern shore. Their chief place of resort was the basin at the foot of Fort Edward falls.

“ No particular path in the river was selected by the *sturgeons*. They seem to have swam at large, as they do at present. But they assembled for the propagation of their kind at the bottom of the Cahoes, or great falls of the Mohock. The roes or eggs of the sturgeon, are exceedingly numerous, amounting to a large mass of spawn. You recollect that the Russian caviar is made of them. Other fishes are fond of feeding on them; they eat it with remarkable voracity. It is one of the most alluring baits that anglers can use. The abundance of this exquisite food at the breeding season, is supposed to be a principal inducement for the *basse* or *rockfish*, to fol-

low the sturgeons to their place of deposit. The disturbance the sturgeons have experienced in the progress of settlement, has diminished their numbers exceedingly; and the basse has become proportionally rare.

Now, with all this information relative to the several sorts of fish, that have frequented the Hudson, since the possession of its banks by European emigrants, there are no regular notices of *salmon*. Neither a swimming-course, nor a breeding-place has been detected. It is, therefore, a fair presumption, that these fishes never found within its waters sufficient inducement to visit them in great numbers, or at regular times, and that those which have been taken are merely strays and wanderers. I beg you to accept my friendly salutations.

SAML. L. MITCHILL.

Rev. Dr. MILLER.

(Note B.)

Albany, March 3, 1810.

My dear Friend,

The names of the rivers Mohock and Hudson, as they are extant among the Iroquois, have engaged my attention, since the receipt of your late letter, prompting me to make inquiry concerning them. My opportunities have been very favourable. Mr. John Bleecker, the ancient indian interpreter, now in the seventy-ninth year of his age, was well enough to receive a visit from me this morning, and in possession of his full recollection as to what I asked of him. On seeing me, he instantly, and without hesitation, pronounced my name, with a remembrance that he had been acquainted with me at Fort Schuyler, in 1788, when the five nations sold their lands to the state of New-York. I have also seen colonel Louis, the distinguished Indian warrior, who is now in Albany, and have sought information from him. Jacob Dochstetter, the present Oneida interpreter, likewise gave me all the opportunity I wished of conversing with him, while he was attending with his

countrymen, a treaty with the commissioners appointed on the part of the state.

From these several persons I have obtained the following words, which I immediately committed to writing, and corrected as well as I could, by many repetitions from the mouths of the speakers. Though, I ought to observe, that there are a few sounds which the letters of our alphabet are incapable of expressing.

Canneogahakalononitade—the Mohock river.

Skenectadèa—the city of Albany.

Ohnowalagàntle—the town of Schenectady.

Cahohàtatèa—the North or Hudson River.

Skenectadèa, Cahohàtatèa—the North River, spoken of in relation to Albany or Albany River.

Tioghsàhronde—the place or places at which streams empty themselves.

Tioghsàhronde, Cahohàtatèa—the North River spoken of in relation to the Mohock, the water-vliet-kill, the norman's kill, and the other streams which discharge into it.

The name for our North River, in the tongue of the Iroquois, strikes my ear very agreeably; CAHOHATATEA.

You may contrast this with the Mohegan name for the same river, given me this day by John Taylor, Esq. a gentleman long conversant in the Indian affairs of New-York; MAHAKANEHTUC.

What their etymologies are, I have not been able to ascertain, except as to Skenectadèa, Albany; which signifies the place the natives of the Iroquois arrived at, by travelling through the pine-trees.

Truly and affectionately yours,

SAML. L. MITCHILL.

Rev. SAMUEL MILLER, D. D. &c.



The information, that SHATEMUCK was one of the *Mahiccan* names of the river HUDSON, was received from the Hon. EGBERT BENSON, Esq.