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FAIRHAVEN

JULY 4, 1918

WE have met on this anniversary of American independence to assess the dimensions of a kind deed. Nearly four score years ago the master of a whaling vessel sailing from this port rescued from a barren rock in the China Sea some Japanese fishermen. Among them was a young boy whom he brought home with him to Fairhaven, where he was given the advantages of New England life and sent to school with the boys and girls of the neighborhood, where he excelled in his studies. But as he grew up he was filled with a longing to see Japan and his aged mother. He knew that the duty of filial piety lay upon him according to the teachings of his race, and he was determined to meet that obligation. I think that is one of the lessons of this day. Here was a

youth who determined to pursue the course which he had been taught was right. He braved the dangers of the voyage and the greater dangers that awaited an absentee from his country under the then existing laws, to perform his duty to his mother and to his native land. In making that return I think we are entitled to say that he was the first Ambassador of America to the Court of Japan, for his extraordinary experience soon brought him into the association of the highest officials of his country, and his presence there prepared the way for the friendly reception which was given to Commodore Perry when he was sent to Japan to open relations between that Government and the Government of America.

And so we see how out of the kind deed of Captain Whitefield, friendly relations which have existed for many years between the people of Japan and the people of America were encouraged and made possible. And it is in recognition of that event that we have

here to-day this great concourse of people, this martial array, and the representative of the Japanese people — a people who have never failed to respond to an act of kindness.

It was with special pleasure that I came here representing the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, to extend an official welcome to His Excellency Viscount Ishii, who comes here to present to the town of Fairhaven a Sumari sword on behalf of the son of that boy who was rescued long ago. This sword was once the emblem of place and caste and arbitrary rank. It has taken on a new significance because Captain Whitefield was true to the call of humanity, because a Japanese boy was true to his call of duty. This emblem will hereafter be a token not only of the friendship that exists between two nations but a token of liberty, of freedom, and of the recognition by the Government of both these nations of the rights of the people. Let it remain here as a

mutual pledge by the giver and the receiver of their determination that the motive which inspired the representatives of each race to do right is to be a motive which is to govern the people of the earth.