

THE BEGINNING OF AMERICA

A

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ON ITS FIFTY-NINTH ANNIVERSARY

TUESDAY NOVEMBER 17 1863

BY

ERASTUS C. BENEDICT

"Look now at American Saxondom ; and at that little fact of the sailing of the Mayflower, two hundred years ago, from Delft Haven, in Holland ! for it was properly the beginning of America : there were straggling settlers in America before, some material as of a body was there, but the soul of it was first this."—CARLYLE,

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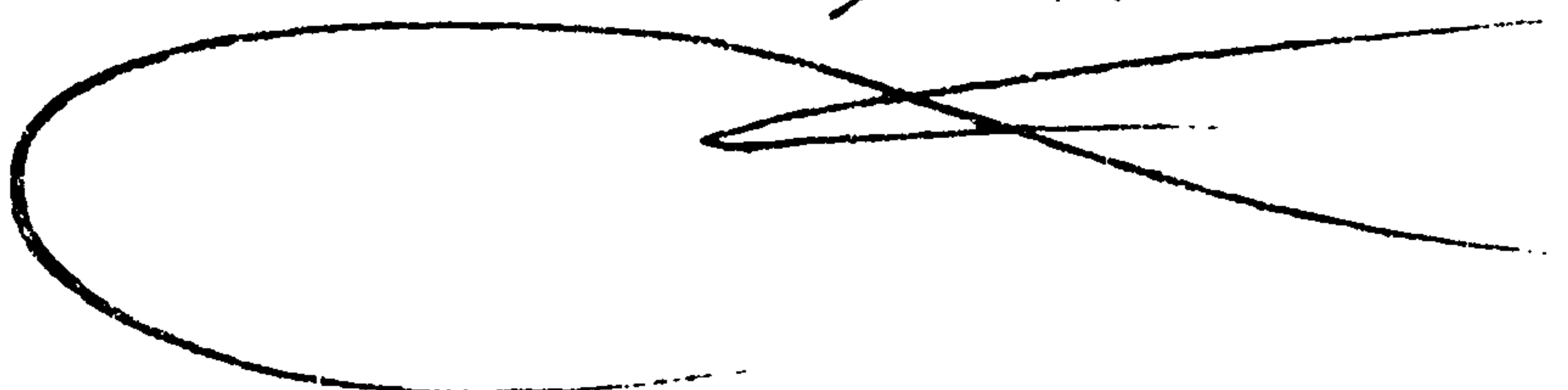
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For the

Mrs. Peter Force,

With the best regards of

Geo. H. Moore



ENTERED, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1864, by
ERASTUS C. BENEDICT.

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, for the Southern
District of New York.

TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY COPIES PRINTED.

DISCOURSE.

“HISTORY is God’s providence in human affairs,” is one of those pregnant remarks of which Mr. Webster has left us so many. Another great man of our day has said, “Whatever there is in the purposes and works of God’s creatures, that coincides with his purposes and works, will be wrought into that structure which God is rearing, and will stand—and what does not coincide with these purposes will not stand. It will be counterworked, will end in disaster and be buried in oblivion.”* History is, then, that chain of events which has a source, a purpose, and a result worthy of God. It has no accidents and no caprices. It is the expression of the forecast, the wisdom, the plans and the power of the infinite God.

This History is to be selected from the apparently confused mass of acts, occurrences, dates and details. The winnowing of history leaves the chaff to be blown away. In the history of the growth of the kingdoms of the earth, as in that of the kingdom of Heaven, it is only some of the seed that falls on good ground and brings forth fruit abundantly. It is that alone, which forms part of the great chain of events which makes true history. The untimely fruit is not worth gathering. Where there has been a worm in the bud—a

* Pres. Hopkins.

fatal insect that stung the embryo fruit—some innate weakness that gave a feeble and useless hold on life—some inherent vice that nurture could not reform—the fruit is left to neglect and decay.

It is my purpose, on this occasion, in the light of these thoughts, to recall some familiar passages of early American history, presenting them mainly in their relation to the national birth and characteristics.

The time is not lost which we devote to reciting over and over again the facts of our birth and growth as a nation. They should be familiar to the universal mind. But to exhibit their real meaning we must embrace long enough ranges of time, to ascertain the true language of God's providence, and to discover the true character of that structure which He is rearing, and to learn which of the purposes of man are inwrought with that structure, and which of them are to be rejected and cast away as rubbish. The mere present, of any period, does not declare its own historical significance, any more than the brick of the simpleton could show the architecture of the house of which it was a part. The drift of events seems often to be in one direction, while they are only moving in a great circle toward the opposite quarter. Seen from the same level and in the same locality, events present the greatest confusion, while seen from a higher elevation, a little distant from the movement, they are discovered to be all moving harmoniously, in one great spiral curve, toward a grand central purpose, to which all are constantly coming nearer and nearer. Moses, a slave baby—thrown among the worms of the Nile—educated as a royal prince—fleeing for his life—for forty years an exile—was in all these strong contrasts only working out that great history as a poet, a historian, a leader and a lawgiver, which was illuminated

in the burning bush, and in the sublime scenes of Sinai, and ended mysteriously on Nebo. It sometimes takes a thousand years to do the work of a day, and a day sometimes discloses the work of a thousand years. Epochs and revolutions have their periods of gestation, of birth, and of growth, so various that we cannot predict the end from the beginning, but when the end arrives, we see clearly its relation to the beginning, and the way by which it came.

We speak of the seven years following July 4, 1776, as the American revolution, as though that period embraced the whole of that mighty change. But in the events of one hundred and fifty years before the Declaration of Independence, we can now see that all the members of the new nation were curiously written, while yet there was none of them. The Declaration of Independence and the peace of 1783, were but intermediate events, preceded by Congresses and confederations, which were also preceded by the infant and struggling colonies that found the continent a wilderness—and they were all to be followed by the more important constitution of 1788, which first formed a Government of the United States, and by the terrible rebellion of 1860, which was to exhibit, to test and to strengthen its powers. The American Revolution began in the oppressions of James I., not of George III. Under both these monarchs, while our fathers were obedient and loyal, they were practically teaching, in the synagogues of the old Dispensation, the doctrines of the new.

In the Pilgrim settlement at Plymouth, were first laid the permanent foundations of the great American nation. But those settlers were not sent forth to their great destiny, without a previous education and preparation of suffering—the fagot and the stake, the

prison and the flight—nor without an apprenticeship of freedom, of popular government, and of religious liberty. Members of the established church of England, which they never ceased to look upon with reverence and affection,* they were not allowed to remain at home in peace, and they were not permitted to escape. Parents and children, husbands and wives, in different directions, in terror and in stealth, sought to find life and peace and freedom, by fleeing from persecution—persecution not by the people, nor by the church, but by the king, aided by a few obsequious men, who sought to enjoy his favor and to wield his power.†

The fugitives sought an asylum. Providence sent them to a school. They sought the nearest Protestant nation, and they were hospitably received in Holland. The Dutch had rescued and secured, not a wilderness from savages, but a country from the shifting sands of the ocean, and day and night they watched their dykes and their gates to prevent being suddenly overwhelmed. They were a watchful people. They had also, as a people, just passed through trials and persecutions almost worse than the martyrdoms of the early Christians. They had borne those sufferings with a faith in God that never failed, and they were delivered from them, as they believed, by a signal and direct intervention of divine Providence in their favor. They were, politically, a free people and a confederate people; personally, a cultivated and an educated people—the first to establish public schools for the people;‡ religiously, a devout people, but not an intolerant people. The sufferings, the faith, the cosmopolitan and commercial character of the Hollanders, had taught them Christian rights, Christian charity, Christian toleration,

* *Vide* note 1, p. 51. † *Vide* note 2, p. 51. ‡ *Vide* note 3, p. 52.

and Christian equality. In such an example and such a history—in such a school—the English pilgrims could not fail to learn similar virtues, while, by their own experience, they were inured to poverty and toil. “They were well weaned from the delicate milk of their mother country and inured to the difficulties of a strange and hard land, till it was not with them, as with other men, whom small things could discourage, or small discontentments cause to wish themselves home again.”*

It was in the autumn of 1607, that Mr. Robinson’s church, in the north of England, being extremely harassed—some cast into prison, some beset in their houses, some forced to leave their farms and families—began to fly over to Holland for *purity of worship* and *liberty of conscience*.† Others subsequently joined them there, and they settled finally in Leyden.

In 1609, Henry Hudson, an Englishman, in the service of the Dutch, while seeking a northwest passage, discovered the river which bears his name. During this and the few next subsequent years, other ships had been sent to Hudson’s river to trade, and from them, as well as from Hudson himself and his ship’s company, the most glowing accounts of the new country had been spread abroad, and nothing was more natural than that the discovery of Hudson, an Englishman, should be almost as interesting to the English in Leyden, as it was to the Dutch themselves. As they were beginning to think of removing to America, they could not fail to have their attention turned to that region, so glowingly described. They therefore entered upon negotiations to secure a place in America. These negotiations appear to have been pending,

* Brad. Hist. 32, 33. Prince, 51, 52.

† Prince, 23. Mort. Mem. 11, 12. Brad. Hist. 10.

at the same time, with the Dutch and the English company. So long as it seemed impossible to secure liberty of religion under the English, they were willing to go under the Dutch; and the Directors of the New Netherland company applied to the Dutch government for that protection which the Leyden English made a condition of their going thither.* The Dutch government, however, seem easily to have perceived, that it would not be for their interest to permit the territory, which they intended to hold adversely against the English, and which had been discovered by an Englishman, and which that petition represented Great Britain as disposed to seize, to be also colonized by English settlers, and they denied the application.

The application to King James for freedom of religion was then pressed more and more. Many of the council were quite sure the king could be induced to grant so reasonable a request, and to guaranty it under the broad seal of the throne; many, including the Secretary of State, labored with the king to obtain it, but all in vain. The king, however, said he would connive at them, but to tolerate them, by his public authority, under his seal, would not be granted.† They finally concluded to trust to that assurance, and with their wives and children they sailed for a place in South Virginia, for which they had a patent, intending to settle, under English protection, in the neighborhood of Hudson River, which, however, it was not their destiny to reach.

Of their sufferings, delays, disappointments and discouragements, it is not necessary to speak, further

* "Upon their talk of removing sundry of note among the Dutch would have them go under them, and make them large offers." Prince, 49-50. *Vide* the Petition. 1 Brod. Doc. 22.

† Brad. Hist. 29. Prince, 57.

than to say, that by persons of less faith in their duty and their destiny, they could hardly be looked upon as other than providential discouragements. To crown the whole, when, after a long and perilous voyage, they made land about Cape Cod, which was not within the jurisdiction of their patent, they found that some of their company, who had joined them at London after leaving Holland, began to talk of being now independent and not subject to restraint, and the little company were thrown upon their instinctive rights.*

There are those who think that when the written powers of government fail to reach an unforeseen emergency of political necessity, the power fails. This comes from a fallacious view of the rights and duties of man as a gregarious animal. Blackstone lays it down as an elementary and almost axiomatic truth, that no practical systems of law are so perfect as to point out, beforehand, those executive remedies which national emergencies will dictate and justify. Like the right of self-defence in the individual, the fundamental and paramount law of every government is that it has all the powers necessary to defend the national existence in unexpected emergencies of national peril. It is implied in the word Government. Notwithstanding the pilgrims had no charter—in the strict sense, had no legal corporate, national existence—they had the right, and devoutly looked to Heaven for aid to maintain the right, of exercising all the powers of government which were necessary to their position; and they immediately took upon themselves the form of a nation, and assumed and exercised its various functions, with a dignity, a propriety, and a solemnity

* “Being thus beside their intention brought to the New England coast, where their patent gave them no right or power, they were in a sort reduced to a state of Nature.” Prince, 84.

which is worthy of all admiration. They were the first to do this in New England; the first actually to found and establish a colony which was to be wrought into the history of the country.

We sometimes say that, in society, we give up a portion of our rights to secure the rest, in conformity to a so-called social contract. This is a fallacy. Government and society are an instinct of the human race. To be at the same time the source and the subject of civil authority, is a human instinct, like the constructive instinct of the beaver and the bee. That man should have a government that may regulate his conduct, punish his crimes, protect his rights, and compel his personal and pecuniary aid to the common defence, is as much his nature as it is to speak, or to walk erect. What shall be the form of that government, is the work of reason, deliberation and consultation, not contract. This consultation the pilgrims held as soon as they found themselves without charter, or patent, and they instituted a government. All provisional governments spring from the same source. They did this before a man was allowed to step ashore, and founded the first colony and established the first government in New England, in the following emphatic and significant language :

“ We whose names are underwritten . . . ”—the people —“ having undertaken for the glory of God and advancement of the Christian faith . . . —a voyage to plant the *first colony* in the northern parts of Virginia, do by these presents, solemnly and mutually covenant and combine ourselves together, into a civil body politick, for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid, and, by virtue hereof, to enact, constitute, and frame such just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitution and offices, from

time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the colony unto which we promise all due submission and obedience."

Although this government was, at the time, the result of a political necessity, yet, from the first, it was their purpose, under their patent, to form a government and to exercise its powers—their well-known purpose, before they left Holland. "Lastly," says Mr. Robinson in his masterly letter of advice to them, when they were about to leave—"Lastly, whereas you are to become *a body politic using among yourselves civil government*, and are not furnished with any persons of special eminence above the rest, to be chosen by you into office of government, let your wisdom and godliness appear, not only in choosing such persons as do entirely love and will diligently promote the common good, but also in yielding unto them all, due honor and obedience, in their lawful administration . . . and this duty, you both may the more willingly, and ought the more conscientiously, to perform, because you are, at least for the present, to have only them for your governors, which you yourselves shall make choice of for that work." It is not possible more simply, beautifully and transparently to state the great fundamental rights, duty and privilege of American citizens than in those two documents—the one, the last utterance in Holland, the other, the first utterance in America.

On those elementary principles of American popular government, during the whole seventy years that the Plymouth Government existed, annual elections by the whole people kept its machinery in safe, easy and harmonious action.

The effect of this prompt organization, was seen in the good order which prevailed under it, for, notwithstanding the threatened disorders, on the part of evil-

minded persons, unexpectedly joined with them, there was no offence committed till the 24th of March, 1621. Then the company, with equal promptness, assumed and exercised the power to punish and to pardon—two of the highest powers of national prerogative. The first offence was contempt of the captain's lawful command, with opprobrious speech—under the circumstances, an offence of the gravest character. The offender was summoned before the whole company, tried and convicted and sentenced to a painful, humiliating, but not a dangerous punishment. He, however, humbled himself and craved pardon, and, it being the first offence, he was pardoned. The second offence was duelling—some three months later—both parties being wounded. They were sentenced to the same humiliating punishment—without meat or drink for twenty four hours. A petition for their release was presented, and the governor, as an act of executive clemency, pardoned them. Three years after this, by a legislative act, they established courts of justice and trial by jury, and when a murder was committed, the guilty party is said to have expected that, either for want of power to execute for capital offences or for need of his labor, his life would be spared.* He was, however, arraigned, and both by grand and petit jury found guilty of wilful murder, and was executed, and as the simple history says, “the land was purged of blood.”

When this government was formed, there were only one hundred and one persons in the colony. In three months forty-four died, reducing their numbers to fifty-seven, men, women, children and servants—and of these fifty-seven, fifty were sick, leaving but seven to defend the post—to take care of themselves—to

minister to all the wants of the sick and the dying—to perform all the duties of officers, civil and military of soldiers, of domestics and nurses, of physicians and servants and undertakers, for this universal hospital. They buried their dead on a small hill between their houses and the bay. How the little hillocks of death multiplied in their little God's-acre! They buried sometimes three a day. No civilized coffin—no funeral procession—no mourning weeds—no solemn ceremony! Some of them who were strong enough, carried the dead to their resting place, and then hurried back to the sick. What a revelation was that little graveyard, with its forty-four fresh graves! Every straggling savage, by his simple arithmetic, could easily learn the weakness of the living by the number of the dead. What an affecting, but thoughtful military precaution they resorted to, to conceal it. They levelled every grave and sowed the ground with seed, that the growing herb might hide the number of the dead.* And all the while the ship was still riding in the bay, but not one of these people ever thought of leaving this new and sorrowful home, or doubted that they were the agents of Divine Providence in a great work.

The first thing to be considered by them, was the temper of the surrounding savages. Some time before their arrival, one Captain Hunt had betrayed twenty-four of the natives on board his ship and sold them into slavery. This had incensed the natives, and soon after the arrival of the pilgrims, the Indians of the region, in a dark and dismal swamp, had held one of their wild and frightful incantations to curse these new settlers. The state of feeling among some of the largest and most warlike tribes, was of a very alarm-

* 1 Holmes Ann. 168, note 3.

ing character. Their fortifications were strong and numerous, with palisades and stockades, sometimes forty feet high, with scaffolds and bridges and deep trenches and gates. It was among such a people, that these pilgrims had ventured, in the winter time, feeble, sick and ill provided. From the hill tops they could always see the smoke of the Indian fires, rising above the trees. It was a great work to obtain the mastery over these powerful enemies, that they might live in safety among them, and, much more, to pave the way for the future generations that were to enter in and possess the land. How wonderful that they should have undertaken it! They could never have accomplished it, except by a boldness which never hesitated, a firmness that never trembled, and a watchfulness that never slept, and their solemnity and feeling of responsibility seemed to show that the destiny of a coming nation rested upon them.

In March, in the midst of the great sickness, came word that the imperial governor Massasoit, whose dominions were larger than England and Scotland, with his brother, a powerful chief, and their company, was hard by. And soon the king, with sixty warriors, made his appearance on a neighboring hill overlooking the settlement. Mr. Winslow was sent to ask what the king desired, and to say that the colony desired peace. The king's brother held Mr. Winslow as a hostage, and came forward with twenty men, leaving their bows and arrows behind them. Captain Standish, with a company of musketeers as an escort, met the king at the brook, and, after a salute, conducted him to a house, and placed for him a green rug and three or four cushions. Then came Governor Carver with drums, trumpets and musketeers. After salutation, the Governor kissing his hand and the king

kissing him, they sat down. The Governor entertained him with refreshments, and then they made a league of friendship, offensive and defensive, and with parting salutations and embraces, they separated. This was the first treaty and the most important one. Just and equal in all its provisions, it lasted more than half a century, and formed a cordon round the colony, protecting the pilgrims and their successors through the gristle of their infant government.

It was a short two weeks after this treaty, that on one of those days of unseasonable warmth which sometimes occur in April, and are so oppressive, the governor, who had been much oppressed with the cares of the colony, came out of the field, sick. He became speechless in a few hours and died within a few days. His death was much lamented and caused great heaviness in the colony. Then came his funeral. It was in the early opening of the spring, when the mortality was beginning to abate. Of course there were a few who were in health, while most of the people showed the paleness and feebleness of their long illness. They buried him with solemnity and sorrow. What could be more solemn than to see that mournful procession of all who were strong enough to join it, moving down the gentle slope, bearing the remains of one so dear and so honored to be consigned to the earth! As a fitting official honor, they fired over his grave volleys of musketry, from all who were able to bear arms, and with the multiplying echoes dying among the hills, the obsequies of their first chief magistrate closed.

The colony immediately elected, as his successor, Mr. William Bradford, a young man of thirty-two, who was continued in that office, with rare exceptions of one year each, till 1657, a period of thirty-six years.

A few weeks after Governor Bradford assumed the functions of chief magistrate, it was determined to send an embassy to their new savage ally with whom the treaty had been made. This was done, ostensibly, to show him honor and to bind him more strongly to them by presents, but, really, to get a view of his country, see how and where he lived, and to learn his strength. Mr. Winslow and Mr. Hopkins, two principal citizens, were sent as ambassadors, to visit the savage monarch, at his residence, about forty miles distant. The expedition continued about four days. Prepared with a speech, or message of peace and friendship, a present of a horseman's coat, made of red cotton and trimmed with lace, for the king himself, and strings of beads for the women, they set out, and, after two days, arrived at his seat of government. They met Massasoit with firing a military salute. He welcomed them in royal style, took them into his house, and made them sit by his side. They delivered their message and presents, put the coat on his back, and a copper chain round his neck. He was not a little proud to behold himself—and his men also to see their king—so bravely attired. He gave them then his official welcome and pledge of peace and friendship. This being done, his men gathered about him, and he turned himself to them and made a great speech, they sometimes interposing and responding, confirming and applauding. "Am not I," said he, "Massasoit, commander of the country about you? Is not such and such and such a town mine, and the people of it?" to which they answered, they were his, and would be at peace with us. After this manner he named at least thirty places, for each of which was an answer of assent, friendship and peace. "It was delightful but tedious," says the historian of the expedition.

The next day the sachems and governors, bringing with them many of their men, came to see the ambassadors and pay their respects to them, and entertained them with the sports and games of their savage holiday life.

After arranging that the copper chain should be a passport for any one from Massasoit to the Plymouth government, and a sure guaranty of peace, favor and protection, Mr. Winslow and Mr. Hopkins returned to Plymouth. This expedition was soon followed by the friendly adhesion to the Plymouth government of a large number of sachems and kings.*

Notwithstanding the alliance, offensive and defensive with the neighboring tribes, other tribes more numerous and formidable, at a greater distance, were the cause of anxiety. These very alliances excited their hostility, inasmuch as they strengthened the many inferior tribes and threatened the supremacy of those larger nations.

The Narragansetts were the most powerful nation of Indians, able, it was said, to call into the field 5,000 fighting men. During the first summer, they had desired and obtained a peace with the pilgrim government. They however determined to threaten open war, and it was the common talk among the Indians round, that preparations were going on for an attack. At length, with savage bravado, they sent to Plymouth a declaration of war, in the form of a bundle of arrows tied in a snake's skin, indicative of their modes and means of warfare, as well as of their policy. Governor Bradford called his council together, and,

* "Sept. 13, 1621, nine sachems subscribe an instrument of submission to King James, viz. : Ohquamehud, Cawnacome, Obbatinnua, Nattawahunt, Caunbatant, Chikkatabak, Quadaquina, Huttamoiden and Apannow. Prince, Annals, 111; Morton's Memorial, 46.

after consultation, returned an answer that if they preferred war to peace, they could have it and begin when they chose—that he had not injured them and was not afraid of them, and would be found ready for them, and, in return for their snake-skin and arrows, he sent them their snake-skin filled with powder and ball. They refused to accept it, and sent it back. This was at best an equivocal return, and set the colony to active intrenchment and fortification. They enclosed their houses with good strong pales. They made flankers in convenient places, with gates to shut, which were every night locked, and kept with a careful watch, and, when needed, there was a watch stationed in the day time. They empaled the whole town, taking in the top of the hill under which the town was seated, and a garden for every family. They made four bulwarks or jetties, whence they could defend the whole town. The Governor and captain also divided the company into four squadrons, with each a commander, and every one his quarter assigned, to repair to in case of alarm. They had also their fire company and fire police, in case of fire. The report of a musket was to be the signal for all to come and rally to their posts. This was in the second winter.

The next summer, a passing fishing vessel informed them of the great Indian massacre of four hundred colonists in South Virginia. This alarming news, and their still doubtful relations with the Narragansetts, and rumors that other tribes were threatening, induced them to tax to the utmost their feeble resources, to fortify themselves still more. They built a strong and beautiful timber fort, or blockhouse, with flat roof and battlements, on which cannon were mounted and a watch kept. It was a large square house made of thick planks stayed with oak beams, upon the top of

which were planted six cannon, four and six pounders, commanding the surrounding country. The lower part was used as a church, where they worshipped on Sundays and the usual holidays. I do not know where can be found a more interesting spectacle than Plymouth presented on Sundays at that time. At the usual time for morning service, the silence of that little settlement in the wilderness was broken by the roll of the drum. They had no bell. The men then issued from their houses, with their cloaks on, and their arms in their hands. They are soon all arranged in military order, three abreast. A sergeant takes command. After they are thus assembled, there is not another tap on the drum—being unnecessary, it would profane the sacred day. They march to the Governor's house, to escort him to church. He follows them in a long robe, on his right is the preacher, with his cloak on, on his left is the captain, with his cloak and side arms and with a small cane in his hand, and thus they march to church, and enter under the guns of the fort. Each takes his seat, with his arms near him, and the preacher ascends the pulpit to pray for and instruct the people. Thus, from week to week, they strengthen their faith in God and their faith in themselves and in each other. That blockhouse and those cannon and those prayers and that faith, saved them. They were never attacked.

Their diplomacy and their constant preparation and watchfulness, prevented any serious hostilities for many years, but their style of warfare may well be shown by a hostile expedition or two. A few months after the treaty with Massasoit, a report came to Plymouth that he had been driven from his country by the Narragansetts; that Corbitant, a petty sachem, was stirring others against the colony, and had killed

their confidential Indian friend, Squanto. The Governor immediately called a council, and all agreed that the matter must not be submitted to, nor overlooked, for if they should permit their friends and allies to be thus ill treated, they should have no friends, and be themselves inevitably cut off. They therefore determined to send Captain Standish with a detachment of soldiers, to seize their foes in the night, and, if Squanto was killed, to cut off Corbitant's head, and seize another sachem as a hostage for Massasoit. They made the attack, and severely wounded three savages, but Corbitant had fled, and Squanto was safe. They then brought the three wounded savages to Plymouth, fed and cured them, and sent them home. At another time they were informed by a private message from Massasoit of a conspiracy to destroy Mr. Weston's settlement at Wessagusset and then to destroy Plymouth. The captain was ordered to take what force was necessary and fall upon the conspirators. He took only eight men, lest his movements should excite suspicion, and immediately set sail so as to arrive there openly, which he did. His presence, however, even with that small force excited suspicion, and he was insulted and threatened by the conspirators, especially by Wetawomet, a notorious insulting and bloody savage chief, a bitter and scornful enemy, who had already dipped his hands in English blood and openly derided the weakness of the colony. The captain had orders to secure him at all hazards; so, watching his opportunity, he met the four leading chiefs in a room, and fastening the door, with three or four of his men fell upon them, killed three with their own knives, which they wore suspended from their necks,* hanged the

* "The struggle was awful, but without noise."—Thatcher, 56.

fourth, hurried on to another place and fell upon another party, killed a number and routed the rest. His triumph was complete. He returned to Plymouth bringing the head of Wetawomet, which he set up on the fort as a warning to all conspirators. This dashing and successful enterprise struck the natives with such amazement that they left their houses and fled panic-stricken and cowed.

A characteristic of our early arms must not be omitted. The captain released the Indian women, although their value as hostages cannot be over stated, nor would he take their beaver coats, desirable as the spoil was, nor would he suffer the least discourtesy to be offered them. During an expedition to Massachusetts, Tisquantum, their Indian guide, advised them to take the furs and other valuables of the Indian women, declaring that they were bad people and their enemies; but he was assured by the captain, that were they ever so bad, he would not wrong them, nor give them any just occasion to complain of injustice. At another time, when the captain went to strike a great and decisive blow to avenge the supposed murder of the Indian guide, they threatened the men with death, but would not hurt the women. So striking was their kind treatment of the women, that the boys, when panic-stricken, would cry out, for safety, "I am a woman." So early was exhibited, even to these poor savages, that characteristic trait which has caused travellers to declare that America is the paradise of woman.

One Morton, who had been a kind of pettifogger at Furnival's Inn, gave them much trouble. He had come over with Captain Wollaston in 1625, and settled with him at Mount Wollaston, subsequently called Braintree, and after Wollaston had gone to

Virginia, leaving one to represent him, Morton induced the people to join him in turning out Captain Wollaston's agent. Morton and his companions then fell into great licentiousness and led a dissolute life. Having made something by trading with the Indians, they spent it as vainly in drinking to great excess. They also set up a May pole; Morton composed scandalous, calumnious and lascivious verses, which he affixed to the May pole, and danced about it with naked Indian women, and worse practices of a sensual and demoralizing character. He also sold arms and powder to the Indians, and taught them to use them, which was of the most dangerous consequence. When remonstrated with, he was abusive and fortified himself in his house and defied the authorities. Captain Standish, by military authority and with much difficulty arrested him and brought him to Plymouth, whence he was sent to England for trial and some exemplary punishment. He soon returned, however, without even a reprimand, to the great surprise and chagrin of the pilgrims. Probably they had complained of his May pole orgies, which demoralized the savage women, and might produce terrible revenges. They may not have known that while they were in Holland, King James had issued his proclamation—issued on the Sabbath day, to give it more effect—requiring that those who attended church should not be disturbed or discouraged from dancing, archery, leaping, vaulting, May games, morris dances, and setting up May poles on Sunday, after divine service. They certainly had a poor chance to punish Morton for exercising, in the American wilderness, the civilization and Christianity of England, where May poles and morris dances were by royal proclamation made fitting amusements for the holy Sabbath.

Another instance of the exercise of executive remedies, which national emergencies dictate and justify, was the case of Lyford and Oldham. They had come from England with professions of the warmest sympathy, political, social and religious. Lyford was a clergyman, and became their minister. After a while, however, suspicions were excited that they were not what they professed to be, and were really secretly plotting the injury of the colony. A ship was about to sail for England, and Lyford was observed to write many letters. He also let fall some words to his intimates, which awaked fresh suspicion. The Governor betrayed no suspicion till the ship went to sea. She sailed toward evening, and the Governor and some friends, knowing how injurious their letters might be, took a shallop and went out with the ship a league or two to sea, and boarded her, and demanded all Lyford's and Oldham's letters. There were twenty of them, including one from one of their confederates, full of slanders and false accusations, tending to the ruin and subversion of the government of the colony. They kept copies of some, sending forward the originals, and of some of the worst they kept the originals for testimony by which, if denied, the truth might be established. The shallop came back in the night with the Governor, but nothing was said till the plot might ripen, and the extent of the conspiracy be known. It soon burst forth. Oldham, when his turn came to stand guard, refused, and called Captain Standish a rascal, a beggarly rascal, and drew his knife on him, and when the Governor interfered with him he was more like a furious beast than a man. He was sobered by being summarily imprisoned a while, perhaps in the fort, and soon both Lyford and Oldham were summoned

before a court in presence of the whole company and charged with their guilt, which they stoutly denied and called for proof. Their letters were then produced and some of them read, at which Lyford was struck mute, but Oldham began to rage furiously, because they had intercepted and opened his letters, threatening in very high language in a most audacious and mutinous manner. He stood up and appealed to the people. "Where are your hearts? show your courage; now is the time! I will stand by you;" but not a man took his part, and the Governor showed the people that he did it as a magistrate, and was bound to it by his office, to prevent the mischief and ruin that this plot and conspiracy of theirs would bring on the colony—and the whole ended in the complete popular triumph of the Governor not only in Plymouth but in England.

The Christian character of these pilgrims was most reverent, devout and consistent. It was also generous and tolerant. They declared openly, "To the confession of faith, published in the name of the Church of England, and to every article thereof, we do with the reformed churches where we live and also elsewhere, assent wholly. As we do acknowledge the doctrines and faith there taught, so do we the fruits and effects of the same doctrine to the begetting of saving faith in thousands in the land, conformists and reformists, as they are called, with whom also, as with our brethren, we do desire to keep spiritual communion in peace,"—a declaration of generous Christian union. They declared that they were willing and desirous that any honest men might live with them—that they had many with them who were not of the separation, and that they liked them well and were glad of their com-

pany, and should be of any such like, that should come amongst them.*

A striking illustration of their generous spirit is found in the case of the Rev. Mr. Morell, an episcopal clergyman, who came over with Robert Gorges, in 1623, with a commission from the ecclesiastical court in England, to exercise a sort of religious supervision over all the churches which were or might be established, and prevent the spread of puritanism.† Captain Gorges himself had a political supervision, as Governor General of the whole country. Mr. Morell stayed in the country about two years, spending most of his time at Plymouth, making inquiries and observations, and devoting a portion of his time to writing a poem in Latin, descriptive of the country, and translating it into English verse. In that poem, he gives a glowing description of the country, its actual condition, soil, productions, inhabitants and possibilities. During all this time, so far as appears, he lived with the pilgrims on such terms as kind treatment could not fail to promote. He saw nothing at Plymouth to call for the exercise of his ecclesiastical commission, and he never even mentioned its existence, till just as he was about to set sail, as he did, from Plymouth. Nothing seems to have disturbed their religious intercourse or fellowship. The tone and spirit of his poem, and of all accounts of his stay there, lead us to believe that to Elder Brewster and Governor Bradford, he was indebted for much of his information, as he was for his kind entertainment. I seem now to see him taking an affectionate farewell of them as he goes on board the ship, and saying: "I came here to be your religious superior, but my commission has slept unopened ;

* Brad. Hist. 177.

† Folsom's Discourse, 45.

we have walked together over the graves of these benighted savages—we have taken sweet counsel together—we have gone to the House of God in company—God bless you and keep you.

“To see here built I trust,
An English kingdom from this Indian dust.”

These were the closing lines of his poem.

In 1621, came out in the *Fortune*, Mr. Cushman, one of the pillars of the Colony, with thirty-five persons to join the Colony, which greatly rejoiced them. These men, whose coming so greatly rejoiced them, seem to have been churchmen, from a circumstance mentioned by Governor Bradford, as a matter of mirth.* On Christmas day, the Governor called the people, as usual, to go to their work, but the most of the new company excused themselves, and said it went against their consciences to work on that day. So the Governor told them if they made it a matter of conscience, he would excuse them, till they were better informed. But when the people came in at noon from their work, he found these new comers at play, openly, in athletic sports—some pitching the bar, some at stool-ball and such like sports. So he went to them and took away their implements, and told them that was against his conscience, that they should play and others work. If they chose to keep the day religiously they might do so, but there should be no gaming or reveling in the streets. These people, healthy young men, many of them wild enough, came over in November, unexpected and perfectly unprovided; and after the ship was despatched on her return voyage, the Governor placed them into several families, who took the

* Brad. Hist. 112.

kindest care of them for the whole winter, and to enable them to do this, the whole settlement had to be put on half allowance for six months.

Governor Bradford says, Roger Williams, who came there from Massachusetts, was a man godly and zealous, having many precious parts, but very unsettled in judgment. He came to Plymouth, and exercised his gifts among us; was admitted a member of the Church, and his teaching was well approved, "for the benefit whereof," says the Governor, "I bless God and am thankful to him even for his sharpest admonitions and reproofs. But he began to fall into strange opinions, and from opinions to practice. He asked for a dismissal from the church to the Salem Church, which they gave him. He is to be pitied and prayed for, that the Lord would give him a settled judgment and constancy in the same, for I hope he belongs to the Lord, and that he will show him mercy." Instead of intolerance and persecution, this seems like a beautiful exhibition of forbearance and charity.

Mr. Weston was a great enemy, at the last, of the Plymouth Colony. He had been originally of their party, but having injured them, was, of course, hostile to them. He finally sent over fifty or sixty men to settle a plantation, on his own account, in Massachusetts Bay. They, however, landed at Plymouth, when they were hospitably entertained, being many of them sick. Their stay was exceedingly burdensome. They were rude, profane and unprincipled fellows, remaining there long, secretly reviling the inhabitants, and wasting and stealing their provisions. They finally departed, leaving their sick and lame still a burden upon Plymouth. At their own place they were vicious and unruly. They offended the Indians by stealing from them and by other abuses, and in the

first autumn came entirely to want. They could not buy, nor beg, nor borrow, of the Indians. The Plymouth people supplied them without a penny's charge. Mr. Weston arrived at his settlement; was plundered by the Indians to absolute nakedness, and after borrowing some clothes, came to Plymouth; and in consideration of his necessity, the council, notwithstanding the straitened circumstances of the Colony, let him have one hundred and seventy odd pounds of beaver as a capital with which to begin the world again, for which they received no other compensation than a new and more bitter hostility. Notwithstanding his reviling them and saying all manner of evil against them, falsely, they forgave him, and did him good.

Several years after this, the Rev. Mr. Chauncey was their clergyman for about three years, he all the while differing with them on the cardinal subject of baptism. He held to total immersion, and maintained that sprinkling was unlawful. The Church held immersion to be lawful, but, in this cold climate, not so convenient, and they could not yield to him that sprinkling was unlawful. They proposed that the matter should be compromised, for the time, by allowing him to immerse such as preferred that mode, provided that he would permit another clergyman to sprinkle such as were to be baptized in that manner, but he would not yield. A call from another parish, relieved both parties from the embarrassment of a conscientious difference of opinion. No spirit of intolerance or unkindness was excited by the controversy.

I have dwelt longer on this topic, that I might say, that in the whole history of those pilgrims who came from Holland, there is not an instance of religious persecution or intolerance. That purity of worship and freedom of conscience which they sought when they

began their pilgrimage, they accorded to others in their new home, while in other colonies religionists of almost every creed and form of worship sometimes violated the rights of conscience and worship.*

The Plymouth colony, thus formed and governed, was, from its earliest day, well known to the nations of Europe. Its histories, with the greatest detail, were published from time to time, commencing in 1622. A constant and voluminous correspondence was kept up with London and Leyden by every opportunity. Their sufferings and their success were spoken of with admiration in England and Holland, and created and sharpened the desire to enter upon similar enterprises, which were thus proved to be feasible, thus enabled to profit by example, and thus fortified by a friendly power already established on the coast, so that very soon came the vigorous Dutch colony to the Hudson river, and a little later, the larger and equally vigorous English colony, to Massachusetts Bay, and other colonies were soon established in other places.† The people of all sorts flocked hither, and the changed and mixed character of the people brought new perils. These perils prompted from time to time mutual calls for aid, when danger threatened, and, the danger once gone, the temporary alliance subsided into mere friendship. A generation almost passed away with only this casual consultation and confederation. The first real attempt at anything like combined nationality, was in 1643, when all the existing English colonies united in Articles of Confederation, under the name of "The United Colonies of New England," for a firm and perpetual league, for offence and defence, and

* *Vide* note 4, p. 52.

† *Vide* note 5, p. 54.

mutual advice and succor.* I have already remarked that history cannot fail to see that these articles of confederation, descended in the direct line from the similar articles on which were founded the Dutch Republic only forty-four years before.† This confederation strengthened every colony. Still greater emergencies called for new modes of concerted action, through the medium of conventions, or congresses—one of the most important of which was the stamp-act convention of 1765, called to speak the voice of the people to the throne. The Congress of 1774 was only a more emphatic utterance of the same united voice. The language and the voice were national, although there was no real national organization. The Congress of 1775 was still more important. It raised an army and emitted bills of credit. We were then a nation, without even independence or articles of confederation. In 1776, in the Declaration of Independence, they first took the step of independent nationality, but with no constitution or articles, except that declaration, and no bond of cohesion, except the common purposes and perils of warfare. After two years, were formed the Articles of Confederation, the striking similarity of which to those of 1643 suggests clearly their consanguinity. These were articles of perpetual union, sufficient for those times of excitement, peril and fraternity, but they did not organize a government. We were still a nation without a government. We were all Americans—our actions were called continental. We were one nation—independent, but without a government. When the war was over, the cohesion was gone, and disintegration and ruin seemed

* See the articles at length, Brad. Hist. 416.

† Motley Dutch Repub. III. 411–15.

inevitable till the Constitution of 1788 was formed, then for the first time creating "the Government of the United States," under which we now live.

Mr. President, I have thus, more in the order of subjects than in the order of time, given a sketch of some of the characteristic public acts of this great colony—great in the order of God's Providence, great in its effect upon the history of this continent, and indeed of the world; but I have said nothing of their ecclesiastical peculiarities. This has been because I do not consider them as of any importance in a historical point of view. If there be anything which our history teaches on this subject, it is that, while religion is everything, outward sectarian peculiarities are nothing. All rejoice in the blessing and favor of God.* When Constantine saw the sign of the Son of Man in Heaven, it may have been an illusion of religious phrensy, but who can say that it was not really a voice from heaven declaring that, not to any form of ecclesiasticism, not to any stripe of denominational order or ritualistic observance (there were none of these in the vision), but to the simple cross, all the faithful must look for the real triumphs of religion. This Labarum should be the banner of us all.

I should not have thought it necessary to present, on this occasion, these familiar passages of our early history, had not this Society, within the last few years, been unwittingly made a seeming though not a real party to an endeavor to reverse the judgment of two hun-

* The Pilgrims and the Puritans to New England, the Episcopalians to Virginia, the Dutch to New York, the Quakers to Pennsylvania, the Catholics to Maryland, seem to have been sent by Divine Providence to teach here religious liberty and equality, freedom of conscience, and mutual forbearance and respect in the great coming nation, of which all were to form a part.

dred and fifty years—listening silently to assertions that, as a political event, the pilgrim settlement was not of the slightest importance,—that the Pilgrims had no idea of forming a colony,—that their governor was not a governor, and had no civil authority whatever,—that to Sir Ferdinando Gorges belonged the glory of American colonization, and that “the narrow and illiterate Bradford” was incapable of doing justice to his motives or his conduct.*

In a historical aspect, nothing is more extraordinary than the attempt to transfer to Gorges and George Popham, or Chief-Justice Popham, the glory which the voice of true history has given to the little band that landed at Plymouth. Gorges, in his old age, declared what had been till then the unsuccessful aim of his life. About 1645—he is supposed to have died about 1647—he says: “Being now seized of what I had travailed for above forty years, together with the expenses of many thousand pounds and the best time of my age,” he had already passed threescore and ten, “laden with troubles and vexations from all parts, I will now give you an account in what order I have settled my affairs in that my province of Maine”—referring to the then recent grant to him of a tract of land extending from the midst of the Merrimack to the great river of Sagadahock, being sixty miles, and so up into the mainland one hundred and twenty miles, which he calls his province of Maine, and to a plan of government which he had projected for it, but which was never carried into effect. What was it that he was now seized of, and had labored above forty years to secure? It was a principality. To secure for himself a principality in America—“a

* *Vide* note 6, p. 55.

Province"—he had expended those sums of money and worn away his long life in troubles and vexations from all parts, after multiplied, protracted, and, till then, fruitless attempts. It makes one sad, in reading his narrative, to hear him so often speak of his "evil fortunes and hindrances," the "objection of his (my) example," "all those failings in his (my) attempts," his "failings and disasters." His personal character and history are fully and correctly sketched by Mr. Folsom, in his anniversary discourse at Brunswick in 1846, to which I am much indebted. Our sympathy will not let us criticise the uniform rose-color, which his kind disposition and gentle pen have shed over his subject. It is due to his careful study of history to say, that he did not think of thrusting away the Pilgrims to make room for Gorges and Popham. While he thought that justice had not been fully done to Gorges in leaving him in obscurity, he seems fully to concede that nothing but justice had been done to the Pilgrims in the proud record of their heroic sufferings and success, which on the page of history has been growing brighter and brighter as the ages have rolled away.*

History justifies us in saying, that Gorges was respectable in abilities, amiable and estimable in personal character, persevering and hopeful in constitution in a remarkable degree, ambitious of personal power and aggrandizement, and imperfect in judgment to the destruction of all his plans. If there has ever been a man of pretension, a favorite and a parasite of a powerful monarch, who was always unsuccessful, that man was Sir Ferdinando Gorges. Whatever he touched failed. It is not too much, now, to say that he failed

* Folsom's Discourse, p. 31.

because under the dominant influence of his times, he sought to introduce into this part of America a political and religious system, which, by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, was never to succeed. It seems now to have been the purpose of Divine Providence to devote this northern America to free institutions, as well in the Church as in the State.* The Monroe doctrine has a higher and more ancient paternity than that of the respectable, upright and far-seeing statesman whose name it bears.

Royalty, aristocracy, and a union of church and state of a most intolerant character, was what Gorges sought to fasten upon New England,—not in his mind an evil, for doubtless he thought that New England should be the daughter of Old England, and like her venerable mother under the Stuarts, only more so. But all his plans came to confusion, all his schemes failed—everything was disappointment and disaster. He expended large sums of money, but to no good purpose. He sent ships to fish and trade; he made attempts at plantation, but all to no good purpose. He is, however, certainly entitled to the credit of being early convinced, and always insisting that great profits might be realized in America by trade, fishing and mines. But neither he nor any of his associates was first in anything, or successful in anything.†

Soon after this continent was discovered, enterprising persons, in Europe, turned their attention to America. Their schemes and efforts were of several classes. *First*: The voyages of discovery one hundred years before Gorges. *Second*: The voyages to fish on the coast. Hundreds of fishing vessels had thronged

* Bancroft, I. 344.

† See Thornton's Colonial Schemes of Popham and Gorges, pp. 9, 10, notes C and D.

the coasts, having fishing stations on the shore, and sometimes spending the winter there — all along through fifty years before Gorges. *Third*: Voyages to trade with the Indians. The early traders named the islands and rivers, and made maps of the country, long before the time of Gorges. *Fourth*: Settlers who came here to reside, seeking a new home in the wilderness,—Gorges was not one of these. He was never here. *Fifth*: Those who, uniting the purposes of all the other classes, came here to form political governments, who brought with them their families and their household gods, and industrial pursuits and useful arts. These were properly colonies—incipient states. Gorges had never established a colony.

The first two that can be called colonies—permanent colonies—are justly to be considered the pioneers of New England civilization and government. In a historical sense they had a common origin and a most intimate relation of political consanguinity—I mean the colony of New Plymouth and the colony of New Amsterdam. It is hardly too much to say, that, in a broad historical sense, they were one colony—starting from the same place and for the same place, with a very short intervening time—accident alone prevented their settling at the same place. Co-religionists—friends and neighbors in Europe and in America—courteous, respectful, and affectionate in their fraternity in both hemispheres—they were but temporarily divided by different flags.

In 1620, New England, by royal charter, extended from the Bay of Chaleurs on the north, to about the latitude of Philadelphia on the south, from 40° to 48° N. latitude, and embraced all of New York, and most of New Jersey and Pennsylvania. No person can claim any priority of the thought of colonizing this

portion of the country. Colonization was in the universal thought of Europe. Fruitless schemes and attempts were also proposed and made. Those who first succeeded, are the first in honor and in history.* In 1602 Gosnold made his well-known attempt; selected his place, and, with his settlers, built a storehouse and a fort; but, after a brief period, they all abandoned their settlement, and returned to England. Had they remained and successfully and permanently established a colony, it would have been the first. The next similar design of a plantation, or unsuccessful attempt, was that of Captain Popham in 1607. He also landed with settlers and built houses and a fort. Doubtless they intended a permanent settlement, but after a brief period, they too gave up their enterprise, and returned to England.

This is the enterprise to which it has been attempted to transfer the glory which two hundred and fifty years have awarded to the Pilgrims, and I must ask your attention to it, as compared with the Plymouth colony.

There came hither, sent by Chief-Justice Popham, one hundred men, besides their leaders. Captain Popham came out as their president. The men are said to have been compelled by force to emigrate—reluctant to come, and, of course, reluctant to stay. We have an account of their incipient steps, and of two sermons being preached there by Mr. Seymour, a minister who came with them apparently as their chaplain. The form in which this fact is stated has suggested a doubt whether Mr. Seymour was of the established Church. But of this there can be no reasonable doubt, for this enterprise was under the

* See Thornton's Colonial Schemes of Popham and Gorges, p. 9, note C.

special favor of King James, being set on foot, or at least favored, by his Chief-Justice and Gorges, one of his favorites; and it was only three years after the king had declared at Hampton Court, "I will have one doctrine and one discipline, one religion in substance and ceremony," and it was more than ten years after that, before the most powerful persuasion could induce the king to only connive at religious dissent or non-conformity, even in America. The question is, however, fully set at rest, by the code of regulations under which they were ordered by the King to conduct their affairs, and which was read to the settlers on the day of their organization. It contained the significant requirement, that all should conform to the faith, doctrine and rites of the established church, and that no one should be permitted to withdraw any one therefrom under the penalty of being apprehended, arrested, and imprisoned until he should thoroughly reform himself, or should be sent to England to receive condign punishment.*

We have no right to assert, but it is not improbable, that it may have been these stringent provisions, read to those men when they landed, which induced sixty-five of them—perhaps all who were free to do so—to flee from them and return to England, and trust to the presence of kindred and friends for that protection which they might not find in this wilderness of savages. Who can wonder that the settlement failed? When the curtain was lifted, and these men saw to what rules they were to be brought, it would not be strange that they should shrink back, and that a majority of them should withdraw from the prospect, and that as soon as death withered the hand of power—

* *Vide* note 7, p. 56.

when Captain Popham died—all the rest should spring up and seize the first means of escape. They are said to have been criminals and paupers, compelled to emigrate, and their abandoned character is shown by the fact, that they went back with their mouths full of lies and bitterness and curses against the country.* They returned to do more injury to the cause of colonization than all the good that Gorges and Popham and Gilbert intended to do, could counterbalance. All writers assert, and none more emphatically than Gorges himself, that the cause of colonization was injured and betrayed, and almost entirely destroyed, by that ill-conceived, worse appointed and conducted, God-forsaken enterprise. How it calumniates law and learning and the Church, to say, that to those thin-skinned and faint-hearted men, armed with the scourge of religious oppression, and leading a band of convicts, New England is indebted for English laws and learning and the Church of Christ. That settlement was ephemeral, and was never a founded colony. It was only a preparation for a colony—never planted, nor established. It was a few men—no women, no children, no household gods, no home, no family circle nor family ties, nor family altar—no conjugal, parental, or filial love, that three-fold cord, without which there can be on earth no binding together of church, or state, or society—no community, no common hopes, and fears, and joys, and sorrows—a few men, many of them escaping from the law, came to a place which cannot now be ascertained precisely, or certainly, and made a landing too late to plant anything—many of them, by the first white frost, looked back to the country they had left, and on the 15th day of December—

* Thornton's Colonial Schemes of Popham, &c., p. 16, note K.

only four months here—all but forty-five returned to England in the same ships that brought them out. The winter soon came, with a severity of which those men had no expectation, and on the first opportunity, on the death of Captain Popham, they hurried into a ship,* and left forever, to carry to England a report of the country so libellous that it prevented any further attempt to found a colony there. There was no more speech of settling any other plantation in these parts for a long time after. “All our former hopes,” says Gorges, “were frozen to death.” Cold-hearted and selfish, instead of promoting colonization, they, of all the world, hindered it. Theirs was a scheme for trading and fishing and seeking for mines; and Popham and Gorges endeavored to keep it up by sending vessels on their individual account, in the hope of better fortune, but found it fruitless. By these vessels and kidnapped natives, hopes of future profit were kept up, and Gorges was assured that in time he should not want settlers, although as yet he had been forced to hire men, at extreme wages, to stay through the winter, so great was the fear of the savages and the plague.

The plans of Gorges were all suggested to him by his seizing upon three native Indians, who had been brought from Penobscot to England by Captain Weymouth. This he says, forty years afterward, in 1645, must be acknowledged, under God, the means of putting on foot and giving life to all their plantations.† He kept them three years, and from them he got his information. They laid out the country in maps, showing the rivers and the tribes. Other Indians

* The ship had just arrived with supplies.

† Brief Narration, p. 17.

were kidnapped in 1611 and 1614, and taken to England, "but of plantations there were no more speaking." In truth, disappointment and failure met them at every turn, and defeated every enterprise. But these enterprises were never colonies. They were attempts at plantations. Captain Challons was sent out with some of the kidnapped Indians on board, but he was captured and taken into Spain. Captain Prim was sent by Chief-Justice Popham also with some of the kidnapped natives on board, but they made no attempt at settlement. Then came the enterprise of Chief-Justice Popham, with natives on board, which ended in such signal disappointment. These kidnapped savages, instead of being the means of giving life to all their plantations, were in truth the destruction of them all. The stealing them had spread all along the coast indignation and revenge in the savage mind.* The simple record of one of the earliest expeditions from Plymouth says: "One thing was very grievous to us in this place; there was an old woman whom we judged to be no less than a hundred years old, which came to see us because she never saw English, yet could not behold us without breaking forth into great passion, weeping and crying excessively. We demanding the reason of it, they told us she had three sons who went aboard a ship to trade with the captain, and he carried them away captive, by which means she was deprived of the comfort of her children in her old age."† Weymouth, in 1605—Harlie and Hobson, in 1611—Hunt, in 1614—and others, had thus kidnapped savages, and this had raised such an enmity against the English as made further attempts at commerce with them very dangerous. The young

* *Vide* note 8, p. 58.

† Mourt, 78.

redskins that Gorges seized and kept for several years, perceived, with their native cunning, that for some sinister purpose they were made much of, and being desirous of being sent back, put on aristocratic airs, and claimed to be of the nobility of the wilderness, and familiar with the topography of the country and the mines of the El Dorado of those early days of ignorance. This was peculiarly true of young Epinowe, the pet Indian, whose intelligence induced Gorges to send out a ship in 1614, to search for mines, and to fish and trade with the Indians. They believed him when he told them of mines of great richness, but they did not fully believe him, when he promised to guide them to the lands of his tribe, and to disclose to them the secret treasures of the country, for he had himself assured them that when he should arrive at home, and should go on shore, he would have his brains knocked out for thus revealing the mines, which he had promised to disclose. This was only the more effectually to deceive Gorges, and sharpen his appetite for hid treasures, for Epinowe was resolved to escape as soon as he should arrive among his people.

Gorges sent three of his own kindred to watch Epinowe and to prevent his escape. They were directed to be always with him, and they clothed him with long garments, that they might seize and hold him, should he attempt to escape. The young savage understood it all. On arriving at the home of his tribe, some of his friends went on board and spoke with him, and it took little time to arrange for his rescue. His friends appeared in force, with twenty canoes, lying within fair bow-shot range, with their bows ready. The captain, standing on the forecastle, called them to come on board. Had they done so, he might have easily seized enough for hostages for the

safety of Epinowe. But they failed to come. The captain called Epinowe, who was standing in the waist of the vessel, between his keepers, to come to him. Epinowe sprang from his guard before they could seize him by his long clothing, ran to the fore-castle, called to them to come on board, in English which they did not understand, and instantly slipped himself overboard, and escaped under cover of a cloud of arrows and a rush of canoes to the rescue, in one of which he was soon safe from pursuit, and could join in the triumph of his tribe for his deliverance. "And thus," says Gorges, "were my hopes of that particular made void and frustrate." The whole enterprise turned upon this kidnapped cunning savage and his promise to reveal rich mines, of which there were none.*

But what was the atmosphere which Gorges breathed at home? What the tone of the institutions to which he was attached, and which he sought to transfer to this country? In 1581 and 1590, James VI., of Scotland, had subscribed and sworn to the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, and in 1590, in their General Assembly, he solemnly praised God that he was born to be king of such a Church, the purest in the world, and he declared that the service of the Church of England was an ill-said mass in English. On the 24th March, 1603, he came to the English throne, and in January he declared that those oaths were false, and those praises hypocritical; that although he had lived among the Puritans, he had always disliked their opinions, and that there was nothing he disliked in them more than their rejection of the usages of the Romish Church. He said that a Scottish Presbytery agreed as well with

* Gorges' Brief Nar. 17-27.

monarchy, as God and the devil, and after hearing some of the reasons of the Non-Conformists, he declared, if this be all they have to say, I shall make them conform, or I will harry them out of the land, or do worse. If after things are well ordered, there be any who will not be quiet and show their obedience, the Church were better without them, and they are worthy to be hanged. Most of his Majesty's council were present, and one of the lords said he was fully persuaded his Majesty spake by the instinct of the Spirit of God. They stood amazed at his Majesty's wise discourse. Whitgift said undoubtedly his Majesty spoke by the special assistance of God's Spirit. Another upon his knees protested that his heart melted with joy, and made haste to acknowledge to Almighty God the singular mercy received at his hands, in giving such a king, as since Christ's time the like, he thought, had not been, whereunto the lords, with one voice, did yield a very affectionate acclamation. The king declared to his first parliament that the Puritans were a sect unable to be suffered in any well-ordered commonwealth.*

He then commenced to harry them out of the land, by a variety of persecutions, throwing them into prison, confining them to their houses, driving them away from their farms and their families, till they were glad to escape, and many of them fled to Holland, where they could enjoy purity of worship and liberty of conscience. Those that remained were subject to be tried by a high commission court, established by him, which was really a modified Inquisition under a new name. The case of Thomas Lad, a merchant, and others and their counsel, furnishes an instance of

* Prince, pp. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.

the proceedings of this court. Mr. Lad and others had been long imprisoned by the court for such charges as being concerned in a conventicle and joining in a petition to the House of Commons, and their right to bail was denied. Mr. Nicholas Fuller, an honest man, and an eminent lawyer, had them brought up on a *habeas corpus*, and he argued that they were illegally imprisoned. For thus pleading for his clients, this learned counsellor was cast into prison. This was in 1607, the year of the Popham expedition. Many were his fruitless petitions to the king for his liberty, during the two years that he lay in prison. His *habeas corpus* was finally heard in the Court of Death. He died in prison in 1609.*

In 1611, Bartholomew Legate was convicted of Arianism. The king issued his writ to burn him, and he was burned at the stake at Smithfield in a vast concourse of spectators. Three weeks afterward Edward Wightman was burned in the same place. These executions raised the compassion of the people, and the king determined that heretics should no more be burned, but should waste away their lives in prison where the people should not see their sufferings. I have not mentioned these characteristic persecutions to injure the fame of this king, such as since Christ's time the like had not been, but to show that it was the king and his favorites, and not the people nor the Church that were so bloody minded, and to show the atmosphere which those breathed who sent out the Sagadahoc expedition, and to show what was the character of the arrest, imprisonment, and condign punishment, which the king enjoined upon Captain Popham. It was of this king that Gorges and Popham were

* Prince, 22-29.

favorites, and it was according to his plans, and to harmonize with his policy, that at the very moment when the terrified Pilgrims were escaping to Holland, and while counsellor Fuller was being thrust into prison, the Popham adventurers were fitting out their expedition to Sagadahoc.

Gorges, notwithstanding his ill success, still labored for his principality in America. The great patent, or charter, which he sought from the king and procured by favoritism, making many of his council and his favorites interested in the patent, was attacked in parliament as a national grievance, a great land monopoly, which, under the color of colonization, had other ends, and would really hinder colonization, which was true. It was, however, finally carried, the king having cast into the Tower and other prisons the principal liberal speakers in parliament, which took away all hope from the liberal party. It was, however, still impracticable to accomplish anything under that patent, and it was voluntarily surrendered in 1635, and the territory embraced within it was divided between the patentees, and Gorges took Maine, and in 1637 he received his commission of Governor-General of New England. He now had his separate patent for the whole province of Maine, where he hoped to establish his own peculiar lordly government on a most extended and complex plan, while as Governor-general he should exercise unlimited sway over New England. He drew his plan, which was afterward published by his grandson.* It was never carried into effect. Gorges was now between seventy and eighty years of age.

The view of his character and plans would be

* Gorges' Brief Nar. Book 2, c. 4.

incomplete, did it not exhibit the tone and spirit of his personal action.

In 1634, before the surrender of the grand patent, he submitted to the king his plan for dividing New England, then occupied by many prosperous colonies under popular local governments, into several provinces, and to assign a governor, &c., to each, and that persons of distinction should be appointed to that office, under the title of lord governor, or lord lieutenant. The proposition finally took the shape of a governor-general for all New England, which office Gorges was to fill, and he urged the repudiation and immediate repeal of the patents of those already planted in Massachusetts, that when he should arrive in those parts, his authority might be undisputed, and he suggested that inasmuch as a number of discontented persons had got into the best portions of the country (referring doubtless to Plymouth, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island and New Hampshire), who were gradually drawing thither their supporters, whether it would not be policy for the king to lay a restraint upon this, until licence be obtained, that those who go over be conformable to the rites and ceremonies of the Established Church, with the power to prevent insolence to officers. The commission of Gorges prohibited all migrating to New England, except by his permission. The king also issued his proclamation against migration, except on burdensome conditions. It was that which prevented Cromwell from accomplishing his purpose of migrating to New England, and kept him in England to compass the overthrow of the author of that proclamation. The reason of the king's restraint was the fact that numbers of people, of all sorts, flocked over in heaps, and complaints came out of those parts of divers sects

and schisms that were amongst them, all contemning the public government of the ecclesiastical state, and it was doubted that they would, in short time, shake off the royal jurisdiction of the sovereign magistrate.*

It was in this crowning day of his hopes of title and place and power—when, after forty years of disappointment, he was putting forth his hand to take them—that his manifest destiny again appeared, and they eluded his grasp forever. The civil war broke out. Gorges followed the king, and is said to have been at the siege of Bristol in 1646, when he vanished out of sight. He never organized his government; he never came to America. It is still left to future times to discover where, and when, and how he died. He was never heard of more.

Governor Bradford, after administering, with singular ability, the government of New Plymouth for thirty-six years, clothed with the highest colonial civil authority all that time, died at Plymouth May 9th, 1657, in the 69th year of his age, lamented by all the colonies of New England as a common father of them all. He was interred with the greatest solemnities. Deep sighs, amid loud volleys of musketry, declared that the people were no less sensible of their own loss, than mindful of the worth and honor of the deceased. A heavy heart was disclosed in the mournful countenance of every sober-minded and considerate man. His talents and his cultivation, as well as his personal virtues, fully justified that honorable sorrow. The Dutch language was like the English to him. The French he could manage. The Latin and Greek he had mastered, but the Hebrew was his favorite study, because, as he said, he could see with his own eyes the

* *Vide* note 9, p. 60.

ancient oracles of God in their native beauty. His writings, including a voluminous history of the colony, are respectable in merit. During his time, no man or party of men, no matter what was their religion or character, when in want or distress—no shipwrecked mariner—no wounded savage, who had sought to kill them—no ungrateful colonist, who had sinned over and over again—no persecuted religionist failed to be received and cared for with kindness by the people and the government of New Plymouth. Over his grave, on the brow of Burial Hill, his monument overlooks the town and the Bay of Plymouth, and is annually visited by a grateful posterity. Such was the man whom we heard blasphemed with the appellation of “the narrow and illiterate Bradford.” *

The story of the life of Gorges is summed up by himself, when more than seventy years of age, in two short sentences. He says: “But hearing that it is objected by many, if there be such hopes of honor, profit and content in those parts, how comes it to pass that yourself have not tasted thereof in all this time, having employed so many of your own servants, and yet nothing returned?” He gives some reason for his failures, but finally, he who had looked for a principality great enough for an empire, and vice-regal state, and labored forty years to obtain it, adds with a cheerfulness and child-like simplicity which, in one of such a life, are inimitable and eloquent of the truth and beauty and hopefulness of his nature, “And yet I have not sped so ill (I thank my God for it), but I have a house there (in America), and some necessary means of profit by my saw mills and my corn mills, besides some annual receipts sufficient to lay a founda-

* *Vide* note 10, p. 61.

tion for greater profits." * A saw mill and contentment in 1645, instead of a principality and royal state—when Plymouth, and Massachusetts, and Connecticut, and New Haven, and the plantations in combination therewith, had already become prosperous and powerful colonies, and had formed the "Articles of Confederation of the United Colonies," in which are reflected from the past, the articles of confederation of the United Provinces—the first organic law of the Dutch Republic—and shadowed forward into the future the articles of confederation of the United States—the first organic law of the American Republic.

We cannot help feeling a kindly sympathy for Gorges, but we are compelled to say that Popham and Gorges had one plan for colonizing in America, and God had another. They failed, but God succeeded. Their early footsteps cannot be discovered. There is indeed a fresh memorial stone at the mouth of the Kennebec, but its inscription seems to have more of the characteristic freedom of the epitaph than of the severity of historical truth.* We cannot find any evidence that the plans of Gorges and Popham were ever adopted by God or wrought into his plans, while of the Pilgrims, "the line has gone out through the whole earth, and their words to the end of the world." Go from Eastport to the Rio Grande—from the Straits of Fuca to the Florida capes—from the golden gate of the Pacific to the Atlantic shores—sixty degrees of longitude and twenty-four degrees of latitude—and you cannot find the palace of a lord governor or a lord lieutenant; but wherever you find civilization and thrift, you will see the footprints of the Pilgrims—and there, over the "Indian dust," you will find more

* Brier Nar. 58.

† *Vide* note 11, p. 62.

than forty thousand public temples and altars for the worship of the true God, and every denomination of worshippers enjoying, everywhere, the purity of worship and freedom of conscience which the Pilgrims sought in Holland and brought to Plymouth. And from the buzz of the factory—from the yellow harvests of the farm, and the golden heaps in the granaries—from the city's great museum of arts and entrepôts of boundless commerce—there comes up a voice, which says, in the last words of Mr. Robinson in Holland, “We have only them for our ordinary governors, which ourselves make choice of for that work.”

“History is the providence of God in human affairs.”

NOTES.

NOTE 1, PAGE 6.

"They were of the National Church, both ministers and laity. There was much in the existing ecclesiastical system which they would have reformed, but their parish churches were their religious homes. They had been baptized within those walls. There they had been married. There they had buried their dead. There they expected in their turn to sleep their own long sleep. Their ministers were all University men. Their laity embraced persons of all ranks. In that age, puritan and orthodox were terms denoting parties who differed from each other in thought and sympathies, but who were of the same social status." *Vaughan, Revolutions in English History*, vol. 3.

And see the "Seven Articles which the Leyden Church sent to the Council," &c., in 1618.

1. "To the confession of faith published in the name of the Church of England, and to every article thereof we do, with the reformed churches where we live, and also elsewhere, assent wholly."

2. "As we do acknowledge the doctrine of faith there taught, so do we the fruits and effects of the same doctrine to the begetting of saving faith in thousands in the land (conformists and reformists, as they are called), with whom also, as with our brethren, we do desire to keep spiritual communion in peace."

See also "The humble request of his Majesty's loyal subjects the Governor and the company, late gone for New England to the rest of their brethren in and of the Church of England." 1 *Hutchinson*, 487, *App.*

NOTE 2, PAGE 6.

It was not ecclesiastical jurisdiction or censure, through the regular ecclesiastical courts, which persecuted the Pilgrims. It was the king's high commission court, the king's letters patent, the king's proclamation, the king's writ, the king's order, the king's letter,—high-prerogative tyranny, by which he sought to make "one doctrine and one discipline, one religion in substance and ceremony," while a few favorites and parasites flattered him by declarations that he was inspired by the Holy Spirit in his work of barbarous intolerance. He seems to have supposed that

he could make the English Church a means by which he could, in some sort, reconcile the English, Scotch and Romish Churches.

"He tells the Lord Bishops he had lived among such sort of men as the Puritans ever since he was ten years old, but might say of himself as Christ: Though I lived among them, I was never of them, nor did anything make me more to detest their courses, than that they disallowed of all things which had been used in Popery." (*Prince*, 9.)

"He declares the Puritans to be a sect unable to be suffered in any well-governed commonwealth; acknowledges the Roman Church to be our Mother Church, although defiled with some infirmities and corruptions; professes he would be content to meet her in the midway; and that since his coming, he has been so far from increasing the burdens of the Papists, that he had, as much as either time, occasion, or law could permit, lightened them." (*Ibid.*, 12.)

NOTE 3, PAGE 6.

We boast of our public schools. They are not however of English origin. Free schools were established and maintained by the Dutch in the Netherlands nearly three hundred years ago. "1585. Neither the perils of war, nor the busy pursuit of gain, nor the excitement of political strife, ever caused them to neglect the duty of educating their offspring. Schools were everywhere provided at the public expense with good schoolmasters to instruct the children of all classes in the several branches of education." (*Brodheul, Hist.*, i. 462.) "The schools were excellent and cheap. It was difficult to find a child of sufficient age who could not read, write, and speak at least two languages. The sons of the wealthier citizens completed their education at Louvain, Douay, Paris and Padua." (*Motley, Dutch Rep.*, i. 84.) "Of their ships the Hollanders make houses; of their houses, schools." (*Ibid.*, ii. 325.) The reward of Leyden's heroic devotion and suffering was, at her own request, "a free public school and university." (*Ibid.*, ii. 580.) In New Amsterdam, free schools were established and were maintained by the Dutch colonial government up to the time of the capture by Colonel Nichols, and the free school established by the Dutch in this city, in 1633, under Adam Roelandsen—the first teacher sent from Holland—and kept up and supported by the government till the conquest, has been kept up as a free school by the Dutch Church to this day, and is now a prosperous free school of two hundred pupils.

NOTE 4, PAGE 29.

"The Pilgrims carried with them to the New World the moderation which they had professed in their dealings with the court." (*Bancroft.*)

A wide experience had emancipated them from bigotry, and they were never betrayed into the excesses of religious persecution. (*Ibid.* 322).

"The Pilgrim Fathers were men of simple and earnest piety, pre-eminent in their time for their love of freedom, *their Christian charity*, and their zeal for the extension of vital Christianity." (*Waddington*, 29.)

Another principle adopted by the Church at Plymouth, was that ec-

clesiastical censures are wholly spiritual, and not to be accompanied with temporal penalties. (*Knowles, Life of R. Williams*, 39.)

The history of the Plymouth colony is honorably distinguished by a tolerant spirit, which contributed not less to her peace and prosperity than to her true fame. (*Ibid.*, 39.)

“The protest in favor of freedom was given with a distinctness and force, in Plymouth, that startled the abettors of intolerance.” (*Waddington*, 28.)

“Cudworth and Hatherly were enlightened on the subject of religious toleration. They received their illumination in this matter from the writings of the Pilgrim Fathers; and it is very interesting to observe that, in conjunction with Isaac Robinson, they relinquished the magistracy rather than enforce persecuting laws.” (*Ibid.*, 28-9.)

After the death of Bradford and most of the first generation of Pilgrims, some Quakers were driven from the colony—not as a matter of persecution, but of police. As Roger Williams says, “a due and moderate restraint and punishing of these incivilities (though pretending conscience) is as far from persecution properly so called as that it is a duty and command of God unto all mankind, first in families, and thence unto all mankind in societies.” (*Knowles, Life of R. Williams*, 384.)

Persecution was characteristic of the age—an age of radical reform—and a natural outgrowth of heated personal discussion on points of faith and their influence upon conduct, and on forms and ceremonies and their influence upon human destiny. In all such discussions, men seemed to each other to be unreasonable, and therefore insincere and wicked. It is only remarkable that the Pilgrims were so free from it.

The Quakers—not then, as now, a peaceable, charitable, non-resisting, quiet people—were themselves justly chargeable with the guilt of persecution; and though often cruelly persecuted, some of their sufferings—often called persecution—were really a just punishment for the most unjustifiable violations of decency. They followed Richard Baxter into his congregation, where it was his right to preach undisturbed, and cried out against him as a deceiver of the people. They followed him home, crying out in the streets, “The day of the Lord is coming, when thou shalt perish as a deceiver.” They pursued him to the market place, and stood under his window year after year, annoying and persecuting him with such cries. Women and maidens, stark naked, walked into worshipping congregations and through the streets, to give offence to those whose religion they did not like. This was admitted and justified by George Fox himself. It was a cruel persecution and a shocking offence against good morals. Not to permit such offenders against common right and decency to come to or to remain in a community, was a proper matter of police, and a duty. They should, by banishment or imprisonment, be deprived of the power to repeat such offences. (*Knowles*, 382-3-4-5.)

Roger Williams himself, so often justly put forward as a champion of free thought and free speech, was also justly chargeable with persecu-

ting those whose conduct and teaching he did not like. His tongue was sharper than a dagger against the Quakers and others whose religious principles or conduct he did not like, and he pursued them with vituperation and invective of the most annoying and persecuting character. (*Knowles, Life of R. Williams*, 382-3-4-5.) Fox and Burnyeat, in their "New England Fire-brand Quenched," fill twenty-four pages with quotations of what they call his false, malicious, railing and unchristian-like accusations.

NOTE 5.

"Let it not be grievous unto you that you have been instruments to break the ice for others who came after with less difficulty: the honor shall be yours to the world's end." (*General Letter to the Pilgrims from England*, 1623. *Bradford*, 145.)

Hereupon my son Robert Gorges . . . was speedily sent away into the said Bay of Massechewset, where he arrived about the beginning of August following, anno 1623. . . . When landing his provisions and building his storehouses, he sent to *them of New Plymouth (who by his commission were authorized to be his assistants)* to come unto him, who willingly obeyed his orders, and as carefully discharged their duties, *by whose experience he suddenly understood what was to be done with the poor means he had.*" (*Sir Ferd. Gorges, Brief Rel.*, 43.)

"William Bradford was the father of English colonies. His life should be written with the clearness and freshness that should make it a household book in England and America, and secure for it a place in the cabin of every emigrant ship, as well as in the log hut of every new settlement." (*Waddington*, 29.)

"The example of the Pilgrims emboldened the Puritans to follow them to New England." (*Ibid.*, 25.)

"Mr. Cotton's charge at Hampton was that they should take advice of them at Plymouth." (*Ibid.*, 26.)

"They who suffered were not discouraged; but bearing God's corrections with humility and trusting in his mercies, and considering how, after a greater ebb, he had raised up our neighbors at Plymouth, we began again in December to consult about a fit place to build a town upon." (*Ibid.*, 26.)

"The growth of old Rome and New England had the like foundation, both sanctuaries *ad quæ turba omnis ex finitimis gentibus novarum rerum cupida confluit*, as Livy telleth us of the one—resorted to by such of the neighboring nations as longed for innovations in church and state. New Plymouth, seated in a capacious bay, at the first building, anno 1620, consisting of nineteen families only; but in short time improved to an handsome town, which, as it was the first town, so it was the first church which was settled there." (*Heylin, Cosmographie*, 95.)

"The settlement of Plymouth occasioned the settlement of Massachusetts, which was the source of all the other colonies of New England. Virginia was in a dying state, and seemed to revive and flourish from the

example of New England. I am not preserving the names of heroes whose chief merit is the overthrow of cities, provinces and empires, but the names of the founders of a flourishing town and colony, if not of the whole British empire in America." (*Hutch.*, ii. 412.)

"He [Gorges] probably would have been discouraged if the church at Leyden had not formed a settlement at New Plymouth; but this gave a new animation to his spirits and strengthened him in his schemes." (*Elliott, Biog. Dict.*, word *Gorges Sir F.*)

"The consequences of that day [the landing of the Pilgrims] are constantly unfolding themselves as time advances. It was the origin of New England. It was the planting of New England institutions." (*Banc. Hist.*, i. 313.) "Through scenes of gloom and misery the Pilgrims showed the way to an asylum for those who would go to the wilderness for the purity of religion or the liberty of conscience." (*Ibid.*, 322.)

NOTE 6, PAGE 32.

In October, 1859, at one of the usual monthly meetings of the New York Historical Society, Mr. John A. Poor, of Portland, Me., read a paper on English colonization in America, in which he controverted the received facts of the early history of New England. The paper was long, and left no time for discussion. After the reading, the usual vote of thanks and request of a copy for the archives was passed, with a reference of it to the executive committee. The copy of the paper was not furnished to the Society nor the committee, and no further action on the subject was taken in the Society or the committee. I however immediately, in part prepared a paper on the subject, to be read before the Society, which I was not able to complete for want of the paper of Mr. Poor to refer to. On being invited by the Society, in 1863, to deliver the discourse on its anniversary, finding that Mr. Poor had published his paper as an address delivered before the New York Historical Society, accompanied by the vote of the Society to which reference has been made, which to those unacquainted with the circumstances might, perhaps unintentionally, convey the erroneous impression that the statements of the paper were approved by the Society, and that it had been published by their authority or request, I determined to resume my paper and make it the topic of my discourse, which I was the more willing to do, inasmuch as the fundamental character of the Pilgrim government had never been presented to the Society.

I take pleasure in acknowledging my indebtedness to John Wingate Thornton, Esq., of whose *Colonial Schemes of Popham and Gorges*, brought to my notice while writing my discourse, I have made free use, and I refer to his copious and learned notes, instead of making direct reference to the authorities cited by him.

Speaking of Mr. Webster's oration at Plymouth, Mr. Poor says:

"As an epic poem, Mr. Webster's speech stands in the same relation to history as the *Iliad* of Homer or the *Æneid* of Virgil. The war of the gods on Olympus and the flight of Anchises are just as real and true

“ to history as Mr. Webster’s description of the landing of the Pilgrims. (P. 70.)

“ The sentimental Mrs. Hemans, under the spell of Mr. Webster’s genius, has thrown the charms of her poetic fancy around the rude homes of the early settlers. All this is a pure myth; the war of the gods on Olympus, and the mythic tales of the love of Sappho, are just as real.” (P. 77.)

Now the facts of Mrs. Hemans’s stirring lyric—the breaking waves, the rocks, the woods, the dark night, the stormy sky, the bleak shore, the rocking pines, the eagles, the worship in the wilderness, the lofty cheer, the faith’s pure shrine, and the freedom to worship God, are taken with surprising exactness from the histories written by the actors, and published at the time.

He also says:—

“ Regarded as a political event, the Pilgrim settlement was not of the slightest consequence or importance.” (P. 72.)

“ The Pilgrims had, at the outset, no idea of founding a colony. The idea may have been suggested to them by the language of the charter of 1621.” (P. 72.)

Now, that charter was not made in England till months after the colony was organized in New Plymouth, and had buried one governor and elected another. And the charter itself recited that the colonists had “ undertaken to build churches, schools, hospitals, town houses and bridges, as also for the maintaining of magistrates and other inferior offices ” !!

“ It is true they dignified their head officer with the title of *governor*, a term formerly applied to the head of any family or company. He had no civil authority whatever ” !! (P. 72.)

“ Oratory, painting and poetry have brought their richest gifts to the Pilgrim altar and raised this feeble band of unlettered men to the rank of statesmen and heroes. The genius of Webster, the oratory of Everett, the industry of Bancroft and the zeal of Palfrey have not failed to offer incense to the pride of Massachusetts. (P. 74.) It seems strange that the Pilgrims should have been advanced to the condition of heroes, while the services of Gorges, in a long and illustrious life of duty, should have been overlooked and forgotten.” (P. 75.)

“ Gorges, loaded with reproach by all the Pilgrim and Puritan writers of his time, his only crime was that he never countenanced persecution. The narrow and illiterate Bradford, the arrogant and bigoted Winthrop, the leading cotemporary writers of the time of Gorges, were incapable of doing justice to his motives or his conduct.” (P. 88.)

Carver, and Bradford, and Brewster, and Standish, and Winslow, and Prince, and Willett, and Cushman, and Allerton, “ feeble and unlettered men ! ” “ narrow and illiterate ! ” And Gorges “ illustrious ! ! ”

Mr. Poor seems to think that Mr. Webster, a poetic dreamer, invented the Pilgrim history,—“ the work of his creative mind,”—and that “ Mr. Everett, on the authority of Mr. Webster ” and other “ modern historians of the Massachusetts school,” Bancroft and Palfrey have taken these

flights of poetic fancy for historic verities. Simple and ignorant men, how fortunate that they have lived to learn the truth from Mr. Poor!

NOTE 7, PAGE 87.

Mr. Poor, in his Address at the Popham celebration, quotes as from the Constituent Code of Laws of King James, two remarkable paragraphs, in whose "ever memorable words," he says, were proclaimed, beneath the waving flag of the fatherland, August 19th, o. s., 1607, "for the first time, the political principles which lie at the foundation of free government." He calls it a "charter of liberties." "This charter of liberties," says he, "was never revoked. It was a decree of universal emancipation, "and every man, of any color, from any clime, was, by this act of King "James, redeemed, regenerated, disenthralled, the moment he touched "the soil of America, between the 34th and 45th degrees of north lati- "tude, and he at once became entitled to all the rights of citizenship, "one hundred and fifty years before the decree of Lord Mansfield struck "off the chains and fetters from the African in England. This ordinance "also established the right of the people to self-government, subject only "to the paramount authority of the crown and laws of England." (*Mem. Vol., pp. 94, 95.*) In the Constituent Code of Laws of King James, I have not been able to find anything to justify these magniloquent words, and I have sought in vain for the two paragraphs put forward by Mr. Poor as quotations to justify his assertions. Can it be that so accurate a historian as Mr. Poor has a "creative mind," and indulges in "flights of poetic fancy"?

The first charter of Virginia constituted two companies called colonies, first colony and second colony, and provided that each of them should have a council which should govern it according to laws, ordinances and instructions given and signed by the king under his privy seal, and also one general council for both colonies, to reside in England, to have the superior management of both colonies and to give directions to the councils of the several colonies, apparently to secure uniformity in administration. Of the one superior council Gorges was a member.

The king's articles, instructions and orders of 1606-7, under the privy seal, were set down and established for the government of the two several colonies and plantations to be made "by our loving subjects in the country commonly called Virginia, between 34° and 45° of N. latitude," and they provided "that the true word and service of God and Christian faith be preached, planted and used, not only within every of the said several colonies and plantations, but also, as much as they may, amongst the savage people. . . . according to the doctrine, rites and religion now professed and established within our realms of England," and provided, as penalty for withdrawing any of the people from their religion or allegiance, that the guilty party "be apprehended, arrested and imprisoned until he shall fully and thoroughly reform himself, or otherwise, when the cause so requireth, be with

all convenient speed sent into our realm of England, here to receive condign punishment for his or their offences." (*Constituent Code of Laws. Poor's English Colonization in America. App., 134.*)

The two colonies were established by the same charter, were to be governed by the same instructions, and they sailed at about the same time. The Popham colony perished in its birth, and we know its laws only from those in force in the other colony which have come down to us. From that brief and significant Code may be inferred the characteristic attributes of both enterprises.

"Not an element of popular liberty was introduced into the form of government. Religion was specially enjoined to be established according to the doctrine and rites of the Church of England, and no emigrant might withdraw his allegiance from King James or avow dissent from the royal creed." (*Bancroft, Hist., i. 123.*)

A body of "Laws, divine, moral and martial," was provided for Virginia, then including New England. They were published in London in 1612. A few extracts from them will show their tone and character.

"Every man and woman duly twice a day, upon the first tolling of the bell, shall, upon the working days, repair unto the church to hear divine service, upon pain of losing his or her day's allowance for the first omission, for the second to be whipt, for the third to be condemned to the galleys for six months. * * * And also every man and woman shall repair in the morning to the divine service and sermons preached upon the Sabbath day, and in the afternoon to divine service and catechising, upon pain for the first fault to lose their provision and allowance for the whole week following, for the second to lose the said allowance and also to be whipped, and also for the third to suffer death." (*Ibid., 22-6.*)

"There is not one man nor woman in this colony now present or hereafter to arrive but shall give up an account of his and their faith and religion, and repair unto the minister, that, by his conference with them, he may understand and gather whether heretofore they have been sufficiently instructed and catechised in the principles and grounds of religion. * * * And if they shall refuse so to repair unto him, and he, the minister, give notice thereof to the governor or that chief officer of that town or fort where he or she the parties so offending shall remain, the governor shall cause the offender, for the first time of refusal, to be whipt, for the second time to be whipt twice and to acknowledge his fault upon the Sabbath day in the assembly of the congregation, and for the third time to be whipt every day until he had made the same acknowledgment and asked forgiveness of the same, and shall repair unto the minister to be further instructed as aforesaid, and upon the Sabbath, when the minister shall catechise and of him demand any question concerning his faith and knowledge, he shall not refuse to make answer upon the same peril." (*Ibid., 27.*)

NOTE 8, PAGE 40.

"In 1602, the captains Gilbert and Gosnold sailed from Plymouth to that part of Virginia called New England, and built a fort on a little island

the reference on page

It should be Hawks'
make the correction.

which they named Elizabeth, *but quarelled with the Indians*, and it proved only a trading voyage, the profits of which defrayed the expenses of the undertaking. Another enterprise of a like nature was set on foot by Mr. Hackluyt, prebendary of Bristol, which met with the like success. In 1605, the Lords Southampton and Arundel sent a ship to Hudson's River, under Capt. Weymouth; but his men *kidnapping some of the Americans*, the intent of the voyage to plant colonies was frustrated." (*Wynne's Hist. of British Empire in America*, i. 31.)

"There happened to come into the harbor, July 1605, one Capt. Weymouth, that had been employed for the discovery of the Northwest passage and had been into a river on the coast of America (Penobscot), from whence he *brought five of the natives*, three of whom I seized upon. This accident must be acknowledged the means under God of putting on foot and giving life to all our plantations." (*Sir Ferd. Gorges' Brief Nar.*)

"1607. For you know that the journey hath been no small charge to us that first sent to the coast, and *had for our return but the five salvages, whereof two of the principal you had with you.*" (*Sir F. Gorges' Letter to Mr. Challenge, Folsom's Catalogue*, 1.)

"1611. This year, Mr. Edward Harlie and Nicholas Hobson sent to North Virginia * * * to discover an isle supposed about Cape Cod; but falling with Manahiggou, *they detained three savages*, viz.: Pechmo, Monopet and Pehenimne. But Pechmo leaped overboard and got away. Not far thence, they had three men sorely wounded with arrows, and anchoring at the island of Nohono, *the savages in their canoes assault the ship* till the English guns make them retire. *Yet here they take Sakaweston, and at Capawe they take Conecomam and Epinow.* But at Agawam the natives use them more kindly, and *so with five savages they return to England.* But of plantations there are no more speeches."—(*Prince*, 33.)

"1614, March 5th. Capt. John Smith, with two ships and forty-five men and boys, sails from the Downes for North Virginia, to make trial of a mine of gold and copper, and if these fail, then to fish and trade, carrying Tantom, an Indian, with him. * * * He sails to Accomack, where he also fights and *kills seven Indians.* Thence to Cape Cod, where he sets Tantom ashore. * * * Leaves the ship under Thomas Hunt, master, to fit for Spain. * * * After Smith left New England, Hunt *gets twenty Indians* aboard him at Patuxit * * * and *seven more* at Nausit, and carries them to Malaga, and *sells them for slaves* at twenty pounds a man, which raises such an enmity in the savages against our nation as makes further attempts of commerce with them very dangerous." (*Prince*, 39–40.)

"This [Hunt's kidnapping] being known by our two savages (Epinow and Manawet) formerly spoken of, they presently contracted such a hatred against our whole nation as they immediately studied how to be revenged." (*Brief Relation of the President and Council of New England*, p. 6.)

"1614, June. Some of the Plymouth company, viz.: Sir F. Gorges, with the Earl of Southampton, send Capt. Henry Harley and Capt. Hob-

son for the isle of Capawich, carrying two Indians, Epinow and Manawet, in search of a gold mine which Epinow told them of, with a design only to get home. But arriving at the harbor where Epinow was to make good his undertaking, a little after Hunt had carried the Indians away, Manawet dies, and Epinow jumps overboard and gets ashore, while the Indians, in twenty canoes, attack them and wound the master of the ship and many of his company. Upon which the English return without doing anything further, and at this the Western men are discouraged." (*Prince*, 41.)

With these tales of treachery and violence contrast the following significant record of the Pilgrims:

"We have found the Indians very faithful in their covenant of peace with us, very loving and ready to pleasure us. We often go to them and they come to us. Some of us have been fifty miles by land in the country with them. . . . Yea, it hath pleased God so to possess the Indians with a fear of us and love unto us, that not only the greatest king amongst them, called Massasoit, but also all the princes and peoples round about us have either made suit unto us, or been glad of any occasion to make peace with us, so that seven of them at once have sent their messengers to us to that end. . . . So that there is now great peace among the Indians themselves, which was not formerly, neither would have been but for us, and we, for our part, walk as peaceably and safely in the wood as in the highways of England. We entertain them familiarly in our houses, and they, as friendly, bestowing their venison on us." (*Winslow's Letter of Dec. 11th, 1621, in Mourt., London, 1622, p. 96.*) "And all this by friendly usage, love and peace, just and honest carriage, good counsel, &c." (*Prince*, 112.)

NOTE 9, PAGE 47.

["In 1623, Capt. Robert Gorges, son of Sir Ferdinand, was appointed governor general of New England, and came over to enter upon the government. He was attended by Morell, an Episcopal clergyman, who was provided with a commission for the superintendence of ecclesiastical affairs. Instead of establishing a hierarchy, Morell, remaining in New England about a year, wrote a description of the country in verse, while the civil dignity of Robert Gorges ended in a short-lived dispute with Weston. They came to plant a hierarchy and a general government, and they produced only a fruitless quarrel and a dull poem." (*Bancroft*, i. 326. —*See Brad. Hist.*, 149–154.)

The governor and some that depended on him returned for England, having scarcely saluted the country or his government,—not finding the state of things here to answer his quality and condition. (*Brad.*, 154.)

Several years afterward, the plan of Sir Ferdinand appears to have been to secure uniformity in church and state in the colonies, by abolishing the existing colonial governments, repudiating and repealing existing patents, redividing the country into lordships or principalities, and, fail-

ing in this, to have the whole placed under a governor general, with plenary powers, himself to fill that office unembarrassed by previous grants to others.

“1634, May 12. A paper signed by Gorges, urging the utility of dividing New England into several provinces, to assign a governor, &c., to each,—that some person of distinction be elected under the title of lord governor or lord lieutenant to represent his Majesty,—that there be other officers appointed to assist him, such as one lord bishop, a chancellor, &c.” (*Folsom's Catalogue*, p. 5.)

The appointment of a governor general and the extraordinary powers conferred upon him were attributed to “the many inconsistencies and mischiefs arising and to arise by nature of the several opinions, differing humors and many other differences, which could not be corrected except by immediate power and authority of the king, whose duty it was not to suffer the people to run to ruin, and so religious and good interests to languish.” (*Commission to Gorges as governor general*.)

According to Gorges, the toleration of religious or ecclesiastical freedom would, in a short time, overthrow the civil authority of the king. “In a very short time, numbers of people of all sects flocked thither in heaps, that at last it was specially ordered by the king's command that none should be suffered to go without license first had and obtained. . . . The reason of that restraint was grounded upon the several complaints that came out of those parts of the divers sects and schisms that were amongst them, all contemning the public government of the ecclesiastical state, and it was doubted that they would, in short time, wholly shake off the royal jurisdiction of the sovereign magistrate.” (*Gorges, Br. Narr.*, 51.)

“As a number of discontented persons are got into the best parts of the country, who are gradually drawing thither their supporters, whether it would not be policy to lay a restraint upon this until license be obtained, that those who go over be bound to be conformable to the rites and ceremonies of the Church.” (*Folsom's Catalogue*, 7.)

“I humbly desire their lordships (privy council) will be pleased to give order for expedition to be used in repealing of the patents of those already in the Bay of the Massachusetts, that there be no just cause left of contention by reason thereof, when I shall arrive in those parts. (*Letter of Gorges to Windebank*, March 21st, 1634.—*Folsom's Catalogue*, 8.)

“When the council of Plymouth resigned their charter in 1635, the resignation was accompanied by a petition to the king for the establishment of a general government in New England, and Sir Ferdinando, then about three score years of age, was nominated to be the general governor. The design received the approbation of Charles and his privy council, by whom an order was issued establishing the new government and appointing Gorges to the office of governor over New England; but the troubles at home, both in England and Scotland, prevented the completion of the scheme, which had excited the fears of the Puritan colonists to a most intense degree.” (*Folsom's Discourse*, 53-4.)

Morton, of Merry Mount, wrote to New England:—"The commission (for a general governor) is passed the privy seal. I saw it. . . . and I now stay to return with the governor, so that now Jonas, being set ashore, may safely cry:—Repent ye, cruel schismatics, repent, there are yet but forty days. If Jove vouchsafe to thunder, the charter and the kingdom of the separatists will fall asunder." (*Hutch.*, i, 31.)

NOTE 10, PAGE 48.

"He was revered as the prop and glory of the colony. He conducted the affairs of the colony, for the great part of the time as chief, and two or three years as second magistrate, with consummate prudence and ability." "In the transactions with the Indians, he was strictly just." "His mingled system of mildness and energy conciliated their affections and extorted their respect. When necessary, he alarmed their fears." "His sagacity in detecting and his energy in overcoming the designs of the factionists, were on every occasion most happily displayed." "He applied himself with great diligence to the study of the ancient languages, both Greek and Latin. Of the Hebrew his knowledge was intimate, and the French and Dutch he spoke with ease. He read much of subjects of history and philosophy. In theology he was deeply versed, and few there were who could contend with him successfully in a polemical dispute." "His faith endured to the last, and he died full of hope." (*Thatcher, Hist. Plym.*, 106-7.)

NOTE 11.

Religion was the spur of the Pilgrims in their enterprise—gain that of Popham and Gorges. The Pilgrims looked to God, whom they loved, worshipped, obeyed and prayed to, to open and direct their way,—the others to ignorant savages, whom they had kidnapped and sought to make the means of robbing the tribes from which they had been stolen, and to the "scum of the people, wicked and condemned men out of all the jails in England."

Strachey, the only historian of the enterprise, speaks of Mr. Seymour as "their minister," and I hence infer that he was their chaplain. His brief statement that two sermons were preached by Mr. Seymour, and public prayers were had, is all the evidence we have of their religious character. It is quite apparent that the enterprise lacked the support of devout religious zeal.

"The enterprise failed. Death and the stars seemed against it, and "there were no more speeches of settling any other plantation in those "parts for a long time after. They were in search of gain, and found it "not in peopling a rude continent. It was essentially a commercial company. The principle that moved it was adverse to generous action. It "required another sentiment, the religious element, to give patient endurance, indomitable resolution and final success, as was signally vindicated "in the renowned colony of the Pilgrims." (*Speech of Mr. Willis, Pres. Maine Hist. Soc. at the Popham celebration*, 44.)

“How superior was the spirit exhibited twelve years after by the Pilgrim emigrants at Plymouth, nearly half of whose number perished within four months after their landing; yet animated by a settled religious purpose, no one of the survivors entertained a thought of relinquishing their design. Had the tithe of their energy and resolute spirit animated the Kennebec colonists, whose resources were so much superior, a more grateful task might have awaited the pen that should relate the story of their enterprise.” (*Folsom's Address*, 31.)

The Pilgrims gave as a crowning reason for their coming to America:

“From an inward zeal and great hope of laying some foundation, or at least to make some way thereunto, for the propagating and advancing the gospel of the kingdom of Christ in these remote parts of the world, though they should be but even as stepping stones unto others for the performing so great a work.” (*Brad. Hist.*, 24.)

The landing of the Popham company at Sagadahock was an event of which the anniversary might properly be celebrated by the people of the vicinity. We are all glad to see the increasing evidence that the desire and the duty of commemoration is becoming more and more characteristic of our people. The fruitless enterprises of the various patentees of the New World,—of Sir Humphrey Gilbert in 1583,—of Sir W. Raleigh in 1585, 1586, 1587,—of Gosnold in 1602,—of Popham in 1607,—the colony of Roanoak under Ralph Lane in 1585,—the second colony of Roanoak, 1586,—the colony of Hatarask under John White, 1587,—the baptism of the first savage Manteo, August 13th, 1587,—the birth of the first English child, Virginia Dare, August 18th, 1587,—the landing on Cape Cod and naming it, May 15th, 1602, by Gosnold,—the discovery and naming of Martha's Vineyard by him, May 22d,—his landing on the main, May 31st,—landing his company and commencing the fort on Elizabeth Island, June 1st, 1602, as much as the attempt under Popham at Sagadahock, may with propriety be remembered and celebrated, as early, prominent, honest, but unfortunate, unsuccessful and fruitless efforts by English enterprise to derive pecuniary profit from this continent. It would, however, be unworthy the high and serious purpose of history, to attempt to transfer to any or all of these schemes the glory which really belongs to those who planted the fruitful seed and bent the thrifty twig that, in such a wonderful growth, has overshadowed the continent with the most remarkable nation of history, considered as well in its religious and economical as its political aspects. And I cannot withhold the opinion that it was without sufficient consideration that the great names of our heroes and statesmen were passed by, to give the name of an adventurer, who did nothing for the country, to a national fortress at the mouth of the Kennebec, and to build into its walls an inscription which, with too much consideration, Mr. Thornton calls by the gentle name of “a historical infelicity.” (*Colonial Schemes of Popham and Gorges*, 18, note.) *Ibid.*, 16, note L.

George Popham was not the *founder*. It was not a *colony*, but an *attempt at plantation*. It was not *the first*. It was not *founded*, but

failed. He did not bring English laws and learning to New England. He was not the only one who died there—Strachy (p. 246) says he and *some others* died. No one knows where he landed, when he died, or where he was buried ; and the Church may well be grateful to her divine Head that her American infancy was not intrusted to such nursing (*vide* note 7), but that she was permitted to begin her history here, after the death of those persecuting tyrants who were willing to stain her sacred vestments with the blood of saints and martyrs.