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A Discourse Delivered at Providence, August 5, 1836, in commemoration of the first settlement of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations. Being the second centennial anniversary of the Settlement of Providence

John Pitman

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*Very accurate History of
Rhode Island -*

A

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED AT PROVIDENCE, AUGUST 5, 1836,

IN COMMEMORATION OF THE FIRST SETTLEMENT OF RHODE-ISLAND
AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS. BEING THE SECOND
CENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY OF THE

SETTLEMENT OF PROVIDENCE.

BY JOHN PITMAN,

MEMBER OF THE RHODE-ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

PROVIDENCE:
B. CRANSTON & CO.
MDCCCXXXVI.

Providence, August 5th, 1836.

HON. JOHN PITMAN :

SIR—The Committee of Arrangements for the celebration of the Second Centennial Anniversary of the Settlement of Providence, present you their grateful thanks for the Address pronounced on that occasion, and respectfully solicit a copy for the press. They are highly gratified in believing that they express the unanimous wish, not only of the respective bodies which they represent, but of the numerous and respectable audience who were present at its delivery.

We have the honor to be,

Very respectfully, your ob't serv'ts,

THOMAS B. FENNER, } *Committee*
AMHERST EVERETT, } *of the*
JOSEPH CADY, } *City Council.*
W. R. STAPLES, } *Committee of the*
THOMAS H. WEBB, } *Historical Society.*

Providence, August 5th, 1836.

GENTLEMEN :

The Address, a copy of which you have been pleased to request for the press, is at your disposal.

It will afford me sufficient gratification should it, in any manner, contribute to increase our estimation of the great principle which gave being to our State, or kindle those emotions of patriotism which may lead us to promote our highest interests. For yourselves, and those whom you respectively represent, accept, gentlemen, the assurances of my lasting and grateful consideration.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN PITMAN.

To THOMAS B. FENNER, } *Committee*
AMHERST EVERETT, } *of the*
JOSEPH CADY, } *City Council.*
WM. R. STAPLES, } *Committee of the*
THOMAS H. WEBB, } *Historical Society.*

DISCOURSE.

Citizens of Providence, and Citizens of Rhode-Island—

WE are assembled at an interesting period in the history of our City and State. On the narrow isthmus which separates the past from the future, we are at the close of the second, and the commencement of the third century, since the founder of Rhode-Island here erected the standard of religious liberty.

It was in the summer of 1636, that Roger Williams, banished from Massachusetts, and warned by the friendly voice of the Governor of Plymouth, sought an asylum beyond the territories of christian men. Forsaking his plantation at Seekonk, he embarked on the Pawtucket, approaching the western shore, was greeted with the friendly *whatcheer* of the natives, and doubling the southern promontories directed his little bark where a beautiful cove received the waters of the Moshassuck. Here he landed; beneath the forest boughs, and beside a crystal spring, he sought refreshment and repose; here he offered up his thanks to God that, when the hearts of his civilized brethren were alienated, he had found sympathy, protection and sustenance from the rude children of nature, and here, in the thankfulness of his heart for past mercies, and full of pious hope for the future, he fixed his abode and named it *Providence*. The spring remains and sends forth its refreshing waters, the only local memorial of the place of his landing and settlement. The principle remains which brought him hither, unimpaired by time, its truth tested and enforced by the experience of two hundred years, and now constituting, not the reproach of a small, despised, and persecuted colony, but the glory and happiness of millions of freemen.

To commemorate this event, to honor this founder, to dwell on some passages of our history which may help us to appreciate the perils, toils, and sufferings of the Narragansett pilgrims, to discharge a portion of that debt which is due to the memory of our worthy ancestors, to cherish those principles which have made us what we are, and which we hope to transmit as their best inheritance to posterity—for these high purposes we are here assembled.

The dimensions of our State are humble; the politician of the day, in his estimate of relative power, regards us as of small account; but in the history of mind, in the progress of intellectual and moral excellence, what is there, from the dawn of the reformation, unto the present day, of more importance than the principle which gave birth to our State, and has pervaded all our institutions?

We celebrate annually the birth day of our independence, and long may we continue to celebrate it, not because we should delight in the story of wrong and outrage, of battles fought and battles won; but because it tells the price of freedom, and shows how dearly it was purchased. But of what value is independence? Why rejoice that we have broken a foreign yoke, if it should only prepare us for a domestic yoke of greater oppression. Unless our liberty is preserved, the story of the revolution would only cause us to lament that so much blood had been shed, and so much suffering endured in vain. It is liberty which gives to our annual celebrations their greatest charm, their best propriety. It is that true liberty may be well understood, and duly appreciated, that lessons of wisdom may, on this day, be inculcated, that they may be enforced by examples of heroism and patriotism which abounded in those glorious days of our republic—it is for these great ends, that this day should be commemorated, from age to age, by all that can impress the youthful mind, or animate and purify maturer years.

If, then, liberty is the charm which awakens all hearts, shall we forget him who proclaimed, and suffered for proclaiming a principle which is the corner stone of freedom, and who made it the basis of our State? a principle without which perfect civil liberty cannot long exist, and the existence of which will ultimately destroy tyranny in church and state?

Civil liberty may exist to a considerable extent without religious liberty; but where religious liberty exists, her triumph insures the triumph of civil liberty. Destroy the hierarchy and you have re-

moved the firmest support of the throne; if the throne continues, it must be filled, not by an arbitrary monarch, but a constitutional king, who executes the will of the people.

Look at the history of despotism, and you will find a two-fold cord has bound the human race. *Force* has enslaved the body, and *superstition* the mind. What but this has prevented, in our day, the regeneration of Spain and Portugal? And what but this has deformed the history of South-American liberty and independence? The mind, free to act upon religious topics, unawed by councils, popes, or prelates, will not acknowledge the divine, or, in modern phrase, the *legitimate* right of kings. It was for this reason that the reformation accomplished so much for civil liberty, and that the puritans of England were the great reformers in church and state.*

How long would the principles of the reformation have continued if the principle of Roger Williams had not been engrafted upon them? The pope was quite as good a head of the church as Henry the eighth; quite as tolerant as Elizabeth, or James the first. The yoke of the Lords Bishops, of England, was not more intolerable than the dominion of the Lords brethren of Massachusetts.

Take the most liberal sect among us, and give it dominion over all others, make it the religion of the State, give it patronage, and tythes from the property of all, and how long would it be before fit instruments would be found to conspire against our civil liberties, or a people servile enough to wear the chains of imperial and ecclesiastical bondage? Many fear that they behold already, among us, the signs of political degeneracy, in the influence of that patronage which extends to every village of the Union; but if you should add to this a permanent power to feed the bodies, and sway the souls of men, how long, think you, we should celebrate, with the spirit of freemen, the anniversary of our independence, or take any pleasure in perpetuating the evidences of our degeneracy?

I say, then, and without fear of contradiction from those who give it due reflection, that the principle of liberty of conscience which

* "So absolute, indeed, was the authority of the crown, that the precious spark of liberty had been kindled, and was preserved by the puritans alone; and it was to this sect, whose principles appear so frivolous, and habits so ridiculous, that the *English owe the whole freedom of their Constitution.*"—*Hume's England, chap. 40, Elizabeth's reign.*

was first promulgated in Massachusetts by Roger Williams, which he boldly maintained before all their magistrates and ministers, and which, driven from thence, he brought to these shores, and made the inheritance of our children—that this principle is of more consequence to human liberty than *Magna Charta*, and constitutes, of itself, a bill of rights which practically secures the enjoyment of all.

What honors, then, should cluster around his name, who, in an age when the most enlightened failed to perceive the simple and majestic proportions of this great truth, perceived it with a clearness, and illustrated it with a force, to which no succeeding age has added, and which now constitutes so much of the freedom and happiness of our common country. If we cannot compare with our sister States in the empire of matter, we may venture to compare with them in the empire of mind, and challenge them to produce a principle, in their settlement or progress, more vital than this to the perpetuation of our liberties.

And here it may be well to take notice of a question, which has sometimes been agitated, whether Maryland, or Rhode-Island, is entitled to the honor of having first introduced this principle in their settlement?

Maryland was founded before the settlement of Providence, and her Charter, in terms, secured to *Christians* liberty of conscience. Here was an implied exception, by which those who were not Christians were excluded from this liberty. In most cases exceptions do not destroy, but prove the rule. In this case this exception was highly dangerous even to Christians; for it is the peculiar feature of religious bigotry, to cast out, as *unchristian*, those who hold not to the fundamentals of orthodoxy. Sir George Calvert was one of the two Secretaries of State under James I. He was a Protestant; but distracted by the divisions of the various sects, took refuge in the bosom of that church whose infallibility prevents such disorders. He became a Catholic, made an open profession of his conversion, and resigned his office, retaining, however, the favor of his sovereign. He came to Virginia; but the Episcopalian zeal of this colony against Roman Catholics, prevented his settlement there, and his attention was turned to the country on this side the Potomac. He is believed to have penned the Charter of Maryland, which, in consequence of his death, issued for the benefit of his son in June, 1632. The settlement of Maryland, under this Charter, was begun

March 27, 1634. Here, indeed, was an asylum for the Catholic and the Protestant, such as then existed no where else in the Christian world; and, what might excite our special wonder, under the government of Roman Catholics.

It is to be remembered, however, that this colony belonged to a Protestant nation, and could not have existed if there had been no liberty for Protestants. It has been suggested by an able writer* of our country, that a toleration of the Church of England would have satisfied the English government; yet it could not have escaped the sagacity of that observing statesman, Sir George Calvert, that such a toleration would have been the most dangerous for his Catholic colonists. He had experienced, in Virginia, what his colony would have to fear from their Episcopalian neighbors; and if he was compelled to tolerate one sect of Protestants, true policy required that he should give freedom to all, that the Puritans might aid the Catholics in preventing the preponderance and intolerance of those who belonged to the national church. It was, no doubt, in pursuance of this policy, that afterwards, Lord Baltimore invited the Puritans of Massachusetts to emigrate to Maryland, offering them lands, and privileges, and free liberty of religion.

The founder of Rhode-Island, not guided by policy, but pursuing his principle to its legitimate conclusion, confined not his views to the boundaries of Christianity, but denied the right of the magistrate to interfere with the religious conscience of any man. Here the Papist, the Protestant, the Jew, the Turk, might have remained unmolested, so long as they disturbed not the public peace.†

In Maryland, the Statute of 1649, enacted by the Catholics to perpetuate religious freedom in conformity with the Charter, contains exceptions and provisions by which many of those, in our day, who at least believe themselves within the pale of Christianity, so far from being tolerated, might have been punished with death. By

*Mr. Walsh's Appeal, page 428. Note C.

†“It is the will and command of God, that since the coming of his Sonne, (the Lord Jesus,) a permission of the most Paganish, Jewish, Turkish or Antichristian consciences and worships, bee granted to all men in all Nations and Countries: and they are onely to be fought against with that sword which is onely (in Soule matters,) able to conquer, towit, the Sword of God's Spirit, the Word of God.”—Introduction to the “Bloody Tenent.”

this Statute it was made a capital offence to deny the Holy Trinity, or the Godhead of any of the three persons of the Trinity.*

But this great, and, in our country, conservative principle of Roger Williams, dates not, with him, from the foundation of our State; he proclaimed it in Massachusetts three years before the settlement of Maryland, and more than one year before the date of her charter.

Unhappily for Maryland, the enlightened policy of Calvert did not prevail through all the periods of her colonial history. The Catholics, however, were sinned against, not sinning. During the protectorate they were in trouble from the puritans, and, at the accession of the House of Orange, their chartered rights were swept away, and the Church of England became the established religion of the Colony.†

The early history of New-England presents a new scene in the great drama of human life.

The discovery of America had increased the spirit of maritime adventure, opened new sources of commerce, inflamed the cupidity of avarice, destroyed the sympathies of our nature in those who conquered kingdoms, overturned dynasties, and doomed millions of their fellow-creatures to servitude and death in their career of dominion and plunder; so that the philanthropist of the sixteenth century might well have pronounced a wo upon that discovery which gave a new world to the insatiable rapacity of the old, and increased only the catalogue of misery and crime. The next century presents us with another picture. In the northern hemisphere a new principle of colonization commences, a new race of conquerors and adventurers appear:—they have taken the sword, it is “the sword of the spirit;” they are clad in armor, it is “the whole armor of God;” theirs is “the helmet of salvation,” “the breastplate of righteousness;” they are eager for conquest, it is for the conquest of the wilderness, that it may blossom with the rose of Sharon, and bring forth fruit unto holiness. A sound is on the waters, and echoes along the shore; is it the war cry, or notes of martial minstrelsy? Woman’s voice is on the gale, and age and infancy are

* Bancroft’s History of the United States, vol. 1, page 276.

† This act was confirmed among the perpetual laws in 1676.—*Story’s Commentaries on the Constitution*, vol. 1, page 96.

† Walsh’s Appeal, page 50.

there; it is the song of deliverance, it comes from pious hearts, and is full of thanksgiving and prayer.

The twenty-second of December, 1620, is memorable for the landing of the fathers of New-England on the rock of Plymouth; and well has it been, and long will it be commemorated, by painting, and poetry, and eloquence. The success of the Plymouth settlers induced other puritans of England to seek here the same liberty. In 1623, was laid the foundation of the Massachusetts Colony, by the settlement of Salem, and in 1630, the City of Boston was founded.

The fathers of the Plymouth Colony were “*separatists*” from the Church of England, when they took refuge in Holland, twelve years before their pilgrimage to America.

The Massachusetts fathers, and particularly those who came with Governor Winthrop in 1630, though desirous of reforming the exterior worship of the Church of England, retained communion with it; before their departure, on board their fleet, they addressed a farewell letter to their brethren of this church, expressive of their affectionate attachment to it, and of their desires for its prosperity.

In February, 1630, O. S. 1631, new style, Roger Williams arrived in the Massachusetts colony. He had been ordained a minister of the Church of England, but had become a separatist. On his arrival at Boston, he refused to communicate with the church there, unless they would express their repentance for their communion with the Church of England, and then announced the great and most offensive truth that the magistrate had no right to enforce religious duties. He soon went to Salem, where he was more acceptable, and was called by the church to the office of a teacher. This alarmed the Massachusetts Court. They sent a letter to Salem stating his dangerous opinions. “They marvelled they would chose him without advising with the Council,” and desired “that they would forbear to proceed till they had conferred about it.” This was in April, 1631.

We here perceive a feature, in the Massachusetts government, which not only struck at the root of liberty of opinion, but at the independency of churches.

The church of Salem was organized August 6th, 1629, in presence of delegates from the Plymouth church, and so attached were they to the principle of independency, and so jealous of whatever

might infringe upon it, that they "declared that the church in Plymouth should not claim any jurisdiction over the church in Salem, and further that the authority of ordination should not exist in the clergy, but should depend on the *free election* of the members of the church."*

What, then, must have been the surprize of the Salem church at this attempt, of the magistrates, to control their "free election" of a teacher! They treated it as it deserved, and received Mr. Williams (as the historian of Salem† informs us) the same day, as their teacher. But power, whether right or wrong, was not to be thus slighted with impunity. An opposition was raised against Mr. Williams, and to preserve his own peace and that of the church, he removed, in the same year, to Plymouth, and was there well received by the church, and became an assistant to Mr. Ralph Smith, their pastor. At Plymouth Mr. Williams remained about two years. His teaching was there well approved, "for the benefit whereof, (said Governor Bradford,) I shall bless God, and am thankful to him ever for his sharpest admonitions and reproofs so far as they agree with truth."

Mr. Williams returned to Salem, by the invitation of the church there, in August, 1633. He was induced to accept this invitation from his attachment to the Salem church, and from some of his sentiments not agreeing with those of some of the leading men at Plymouth. What these sentiments were we are not particularly informed, but may in part conjecture from the fact that Mr. Brewster, the ruling elder of the Plymouth church, advised those of the church who were unwilling to part with him to let him go, saying "he feared that he would run the same course of rigid separation, and *Ana-baptistry*, which Mr. John Smith, the *Se. baptist* at Amsterdam, had done."

The church of Plymouth, had been favored whilst in England and Holland, with the instructions of the celebrated John Robinson, who, though prevented by various causes, and ultimately by death, from coming to America, may be considered as the father of the Plymouth colony. They could not have forgotten his parting memorable injunctions: "I charge you before God and his blessed

* Rev. Mr. Upham's Dedication Sermon on the Principles of the Reformation—Notespage 52.

† Dr. Bentley.

angels to follow *me* no further than I follow *Christ*, and if God shall reveal any thing to you by any other instrument of his, be as ready to receive it as you were to receive any truth by my ministry, for I am very confident that he has more truth and light yet to break forth out of his holy word, for it is not possible the Christian world should come so lately out of such thick anti-christian darkness, and that full perfection of knowledge should ~~not~~ break forth at once."

Roger Williams had drank deeply of this spirit, and this may have been the reason why several of the Plymouth church were so much attached to him that they followed him to Salem; but the ruling elder beheld with fear the working of the free and searching mind of Williams, and thought it most prudent that he should depart, to be dealt with, to use his own words, "by the abler men of the Bay."*

There was no peace in Salem for Mr. Williams, though beloved by his flock, and approved by Endicott and Skelton. In about four months after his return, "by the advice of some of the most judicious ministers," says Winthrop, he was summoned before the Court to answer for a manuscript which he had written at Plymouth, a copy of which he had delivered to the Governor of Massachusetts, at his request. In this were examined the sins of the patent, and the rights of the natives, and contained some expressions which were seized upon in vindication of the King's majesty. Mr. Williams gave "sufficient satisfaction of his loyalty," and on further consideration the offensive matters appeared "not so evil as at first they seemed," yet there was required of him an oath of allegiance, as if there had been good grounds to question his loyalty.

In August, 1634, on the death of Mr. Skelton, the church ordained him as their pastor, which was deemed a contempt of the authority of the magistrates. The succeeding November, Mr. Williams was called before the Court "for teaching against the king's patent and for terming the churches of England anti-christian"—the next April for teaching that "an oath ought not to be tendered to an unregenerate man." In July, 1635, was preferred against him the great indictment, when he was, for the first time, held to answer for that opinion which had been no doubt the procuring cause of all the other charges against him, as it struck at the root of that au-

* New-England's Memorial, page 151, Judge Davis's edition.

thority which was so dear to magistrates and ministers. The account of the proceedings of the court, at this time, in the words of Winthrop, is as follows:

"Mo. 5, 8. At the General Court, Mr. Williams, of Salem, was summoned and did appear. It was laid to his charge that, being under question before the magistracy and churches for divers dangerous opinions, viz. 1. That the magistrate ought not to punish the breach of the first table otherwise than in such cases as did *disturb the civil peace*. 2. That he ought not to tender an oath to an unregenerate man. 3. That a man ought not to pray with such, though wife, child, &c. 4. That a man ought not to give thanks after sacrament, nor after meat, &c.—and that the other churches were about to write to the church of Salem to admonish him of these errors, notwithstanding the church had since called him to the office of a teacher. Much debate was about these things. The said opinions were adjudged by all magistrates and ministers (who were desired to be present) to be erroneous, and very dangerous, and the calling him to office, at that time, was judged a great contempt of authority. So, in fine, time was given to him and the *Church of Salem* to consider of these things till the next General Court, and then either to give satisfaction to the Court, or else to expect the sentence; it being professedly declared *by the ministers*, (at the request of the Court to give their advice) that he who should obstinately maintain such opinions (whereby a Church might run into *heresy, apostacy or tyranny*, and yet the *civil magistrate could not intermeddle*) were to be removed, and that the *other churches ought to request the magistrates so to do.*"*

This then was the opinion which deserved *removal*, that "the civil magistrate could not intermeddle to prevent heresy, &c. in the churches." The other charges were thrown in, probably, for popular effect, but this was the unpardonable sin.

The Church of Salem is here condemned, though it does not appear they were called upon to answer except in the person of their minister. But what is the doctrine thus promulgated? That the churches ought to request the magistrates to remove a minister of another independent church for his opinions. Let us now go back

* Savage's Winthrop, vol. 1, p. 162.

a little, and behold how consistency, and the liberties of the church were sacrificed for the removal of Mr. Williams.

In November, 1633, Governor Winthrop informs us that "the ministers in the Bay and Saugus did meet, once a fortnight, at one of their houses, by course, where some question of moment was debated. Mr. Skelton, the pastor of Salem, and Mr. Williams, who was removed from Plymouth thither, (but not in any office, though he exercised by way of prophecy,) took some exception against it, as fearing it might grow in time to a presbytery or superintendency, to the prejudice of the churches' liberties. But this fear was without cause; for they were all clear in that point, that *no church or person can have power over another church*; neither did they in their meetings exercise any such jurisdiction, &c."*

"No church or person can have power over another church." Such was the unanimous opinion of the ministers in 1633. In 1635 there is the same unanimity, but the doctrine is: The church in Salem, was guilty of a great contempt of authority, in choosing and ordaining their own minister; that this minister ought to be removed for his opinions, and the other churches have a right to take cognizance of these opinions, and to request the magistrates to remove him. Can we wonder if the clear-sighted Roger Williams beheld here the same spirit of anti-christ which he so much abhorred in England? And is it strange that he should refuse communion with churches that sanctioned such doctrines?

The time allowed Mr. Williams, and the Salem church, to consider of these things, and give satisfaction or expect sentence, was productive only of more difficulty. The town of Salem had petitioned the Court for some land which they claimed on Marblehead Neck, "but, (says Winthrop,) because they had chosen Mr. Williams their teacher, while he stood under question of authority, and so offered contempt to the magistrates, &c.; their petition was refused till, &c." (meaning, no doubt, till they had given the satisfaction required of them.) "Upon this, the church of Salem wrote to the other churches, to admonish the magistrates of this as a heinous sin, and likewise the deputies, for which, at the next General Court, their deputies were not received until they should give satisfaction about the letter."†

* Savage's Winthrop, vol. 1, p. 117.

† Savage's Winthrop, vol. 1, p. 164.

Sad times, indeed, for the liberties and the rights of Salem! They are deprived of the right to choose their minister! For asserting this right they were outlawed and their land withheld from them, and for appealing to the churches in relation to this infringement upon their liberties, they were deprived of their deputies.

Under this complication of tyranny it is not surprising that Mr. Williams, in August, 1635, "being sick, and unable to speak, (as Winthrop informs us,) wrote his church a protestation that he could not communicate with the churches in the Bay; neither could he communicate with them, except they would refuse communion with the rest; but the whole church was grieved herewith."*

The able biographer of Roger Williams condemns this act somewhat unadvisedly, saying, in excuse: "In this conduct he was doubtless wrong, yet who will venture to say, that if he had been placed in the situation of Mr. Williams, he would have maintained a more subdued spirit?"†

Under these circumstances, the spirit of most men would, indeed, have been subdued, and pastor and people made their peace by submission. But such was not the spirit of Roger Williams; though sick, he saw that he must separate himself from his church if they submitted, or himself submit to the tyranny which had been erected over them. He was not prepared for the latter, and his letter was intended to test how far his church would resist such tyranny; it was a trial they were not able to bear, but their weakness could not shake his determination, for he was a man, says Dr. Bentley, "that was not afraid to stand alone for truth against the world." We are therefore prepared to behold him, for the last time, before the magistrates "and all the ministers in the Bay," happy if there had been transmitted to us a portion of that truth and glowing eloquence with which he defended himself on that occasion. It was in November, 1635, and the proceedings are thus narrated by Winthrop.

"At this general assembly, Mr. Williams, the teacher of Salem, was again convented; and *all the ministers in the Bay* being desired to be present, he was charged with the said two letters,—that to the churches complaining of the magistrates for injustice, extreme oppression, &c.; and the other to his own church, to persuade them

* Savage's Winthrop, vol. 1. p. 166.

† Knowles's Memoir of Roger Williams, page 71.

to renounce communion with all the churches in the bay, as full of anti-christian pollution, &c. He justified *both these letters*, and maintained all his opinions; and being offered further conference or disputation, and a month's respite, he chose to dispute presently. So Mr. Hooker was appointed to dispute with him, but could not reduce him from any of his errors. So, the next morning, the court sentenced him to depart out of our jurisdiction within six weeks, all the ministers, *save one*, approving the sentence; and his own church had him under question also, for the same cause; and he, at his return home, refused communion with his own church, who openly disclaimed his errors, and wrote an humble submission to the magistrates, acknowledging their fault in joining with Mr. Williams in that letter to the churches against them, &c.*

Thus triumphed power, and thus was consummated an act of oppression, by an union of church and state, by which a beloved pastor was again separated from his people, and the liberties of the church prostrated, to guard it from "heresy, apostacy and *tyranny!*" Neal says, "when Mr. Williams was banished, the whole town of Salem was in an uproar, for he was esteemed an honest, disinterested man, and of popular talents in the pulpit."

In the account of Winthrop, it might seem that the letters were the principal cause of banishment. It must be remembered, however, that Mr. Williams had given no satisfaction, to the court, in relation to his fundamental heresy, in denying the authority of magistrates in things spiritual, and that the sentence for this was suspended over him when these letters were written, in vindication of his conduct in this respect. The sentence yet remains of record, dated November 3d, 1635, and runs thus: "Whereas Mr. Roger Williams, one of the elders of the church of Salem, hath broached and dyvulged, dyvers *neue* and dangerous opinions against the *authoritie of magistrates*, as also writt Lrs. of defamation, both of the magistrates and churches here, and that before any conviction, and yet maintaineth the same without retraccon; It is therefore ordered, that the said Mr. Williams shall depte out of this jurisdiction within six weekes nowe next ensueinge, which if hee neglect to performe, it shall be lawful for the Govn^r, and two of the Magistrates to send him to some place out of

*Winthrop, vol. 1, page 171.

this jurisdiction, not to returne any more without licence from the Court."

Mr. Williams had liberty granted him to remain at Salem until spring, probably owing to the excitement which was produced there by his sentence of banishment. But, in January, he was driven from his home, into the wilderness, to escape being transported to England, under pretence that he had violated the injunction laid upon him not "to go about to draw others to his opinion," and the fact alleged in proof of this, was, that he entertained company *in his house*, and preached unto them, it was said, on points he had been censured for. But "the reason was," says Winthrop, and it is worthy of our special notice, "because he had drawn about twenty persons to his opinion, and they were intended to erect a plantation about the Narragansett Bay, from whence the infection would easily spread into the churches, (the people being, many of them, much taken with the apprehension of his godliness.) Whereupon a warrant was sent to him to come presently to Boston to be shipped, &c. He returned answer, (and divers of Salem came with it,) that he could not come without hazard of his life, &c. Whereupon a pinnace was sent with commission to Captain Underhill, &c. to apprehend him, and carry him on board the ship, (which then rode at Natuscutt,) but when they came at his house, they found he had been gone three days before; but whither they could not learn."*

Every Englishman considers his house as his castle, and Mr. Williams might have supposed that he had liberty of speech in his own house, without subjecting himself to the charge of *going about* to draw others to his opinion; be this as it may, no opportunity was given him to defend himself against this charge, and, it would seem, it was made a pretence to cover a most tyrannical attempt against his liberty and rights. What right had these magistrates beyond the bounds of their patent? and, if they chose to withdraw the liberty they had granted Mr. Williams, under pretence that he had forfeited it, what right had they to do any thing more than give him notice to depart out of their jurisdiction, agreeably to the sentence? But Mr. Williams had committed a sin which was to be punished by transportation; he was guilty of being beloved by many of the people, and he designed to lead them into the wilderness, and erect a

* 1. Winthrop, p. 177.

plantation where they might enjoy liberty of conscience. To crush such a conspiracy in favor of human rights, and to destroy, in embryo, the Narragansett colony, this act of arbitrary power was resorted to.

This conduct of the magistrates is not to be palliated by referring us to the bigotry of the age. It was an assumption of arbitrary power which thus trampled on the rights of a fellow-subject, and arrogated unto themselves the right to prevent him from colonizing beyond their patent, a right which belonged only to their common sovereign. They may have been good men, and no doubt were so, in other things, but they were not good in this; they were corrupted by, that grand corrupter, power; the love of dominion had taken root, and "grew with what it fed on," and State necessity, "necessity, the tyrant's plea," was ready to justify, what there was light enough, even in that age, to condemn.

Mr. Winthrop was not Governor when Mr. Williams was thus driven from Salem, "though," says Williams, "he were carried with the stream for my banishment, yet he tenderly loved me to his last breath;" and how differently he felt, from his brethren, in relation to the settlement here, we are happy to learn from another letter of Mr. Williams in which he says: "When I was unkindly and unchristianly, as I believe, driven from my house and land and wife and children, (in the midst of a New-England winter, now about thirty-five years past) at Salem, that ever-honored Governor, Mr. Winthrop, privately wrote to me to steer my course to the Narragansett Bay and Indians, for many high and heavenly and public ends, encouraging me from the freeness of the place from any English claims or patents."*

Mr. Williams had now to encounter the perils of the wilderness. He says, "he steered his course from Salem, though in winter snow which he felt yet," (thirty-five years afterwards,) and "was sorely tossed for fourteen weeks, in a bitter winter season, not knowing what bread or bed did mean."

We find him, in the following spring, at Seekonk, on the eastern bank of the Pawtucket river, on land granted to him by Ousamequin, or Massasoit, where he had begun to build and plant. He removed from thence, in consequence of a letter which he received

* Williams' Letter to Major Mason, published in 1st vol. Mass. Hist. Coll. and in Knowles' App. page 393.

from the Governor of Plymouth, the character of which, in justice to both, we give in the words of Roger Williams: "I received a letter from my ancient friend, Mr. Winslow, then Governor of Plymouth, professing his own and others' love and respect to me, yet lovingly advising me, since I was fallen into the edge of their bounds, and they were loth to displease the bay, to remove but to the other side of the water, and then he said I had the country free before me, and might be as free as themselves, and we should be loving neighbors together."*

At what time Roger Williams removed from Seekonk, agreeably to this advice, we cannot ascertain to a day, or a month. We learn from him, incidentally, that his removal occasioned him the loss of a harvest that season, and therefore he could not have come here in season to have planted. He came, therefore, no doubt, in the summer, and after he had negotiated, with the Chief Sachems of Narragansett, for land and a peaceable settlement. The earliest record we have of his being here, is the journal of Governor Winthrop, under date of July 26, old style, when mention is made of information received from him by the Governor of Massachusetts of the murder of Oldham, and the conduct of Miantinomo on that occasion. In this uncertainty, as to the particular time of Roger Williams' arrival here, it has been deemed highly appropriate, in commemoration, not only of our settlement, but of the character of our founder, to set apart this day as the earliest record of the one, and the time when he commenced those essential services to those who banished him, which have done him so much honor.

Roger Williams had early imbibed the spirit of a missionary, in relation to the Indians. "My soul's desire, said he, was to do them good," and he rightly deemed that a knowledge of their language was essential to enable him to conciliate their affections, and preach to them with effect. While he lived in Plymouth and Salem, he says, "God was pleased to give him a painful patient spirit to lodge with them in their filthy smoky holes to gain their tongue." A knowledge of their language, a just notion of their rights, and the means which he employed to gain the affections of the natives, enabled him to procure from Canonicus and Miantinomo, the Chief Sachems of the Narragansetts, the land which first constituted the Providence

* Letter to Major Mason.

colony. In a deed of confirmation of these lands to his associates, dated 20th December, 1661, and now on the Providence records, he says, that he "was by God's merciful assistance the procurer of the purchase, not by monies, nor payment, the natives being so shy and jealous that monies could not do it, but by that language, acquaintance and favor with the natives, and other advantages which it pleased God to give him." In this he means that money alone could not have procured the purchase, but this was also necessary; for in this same deed, he says, that he "bore the charges and venture of all the gratuities which he gave to the great Sachems and natives round about." To enable him to do this he says, in another place, "that he mortgaged his house in Salem, worth some hundreds, for supplies to go through, &c."

The deed from the Chief Sachems to Roger Williams, is dated "at Narragansett, the 24th of the first month, commonly called March, the second year of the plantation, or the planting at Moshassuck, or Providence," being, in fact, in the year 1638, new style.* This deed recites the purchase to have been made, by Roger Williams, two years before, and, after setting forth the bounds of the first purchase, has the following clause: "We also, in consideration of the many kindnesses and services he hath continually done for us, both with our friends of Massachusetts, as also at Connecticut, and Apaum, or Plymouth, we do freely give to him all that land from those rivers,† reaching to Pawtuxet river; as also the grass and meadows upon the said Pawtuxet river." The first purchase made by Roger Williams in 1636, and conveyed by this deed, were the lands and meadows upon the rivers Moshassuck and Wanasquatucket, the bounds of which were established and confirmed by this deed, as follows: "From the river and fields of *Pawtucket*, the great hill of *Notaquoncanot*, on the northwest, and the town of Mashapaug, on the west." The other lands, extending to Pawtuxet river, and the grass and meadows on the same, were conveyed to Roger Williams in 1638, as a gratuity for his kindnesses and services.

In October, 1638, Roger Williams conveyed, in consideration of thirty pounds, expressed, "equal right and power of disposing of the

* See App. A.

† Mentioned in the preceding part of the deed—the *Moshassuck* and *Wanasquatucket*.

same grounds and lands," contained in the first purchase, with himself, to twelve of his associates, and, in the words of the deed, "*such others as the major part of us shall admit into the same fellowship of vote with us.*" The same deed also granted to the twelve an equal right to the Pawtuxet lands with himself. This deed was imperfect, containing only the initials of the twelve, being written, as Williams afterwards alleged, "in a strait of time and haste." In reference to the Pawtuxet lands, however, there was another instrument, executed on the same day, by Roger Williams and the twelve, in which their names are fully expressed, and by which it was agreed between them, that the Pawtuxet lands should be equally divided between them, and that each should pay an equal proportion of twenty pounds, and that those who failed so to do, within eight weeks, from the date thereof, should forfeit their proportion to those of the twelve who should pay the same to Roger Williams. On this agreement is an acknowledgment by Roger Williams, dated December 3d, 1638, that he had received "of the neighbors above said, the full sum of £18 11s. 3d." being twelve-thirteenths of the twenty pounds, the other thirteenth being his own share.* The Pawtuxet lands thus became the property of the thirteen; but in the first purchase, according to the deed, provision was made also for the new comers, the deed being not only to the twelve, but to such others as the major part should admit into their fellowship; there was therefore a good reason why the consideration for the Pawtuxet lands should be paid by the twelve in the manner provided for as above mentioned, but not the same reason in reference to the thirty pounds specified as the consideration for Moshassuck. If these thirty pounds had been paid or secured by the grantees, it is singular that they should have been willing to have received such a deed, and that they had not been as particular in regard to the Moshassuck, as the Pawtuxet lands, the consideration of the former being, in truth, larger than the latter. Why, in reference to the latter, they should have been careful to have had an agreement containing their names in full, and providing that those who paid should have the share of those who neglected to pay, and to have had within the time provided, an acknowledgment endorsed of the stipulated payment—why they should have been so careful with regard to the lesser, and were willing to receive only the initial deed for the greater,

* See App. B.

cannot easily be accounted for if they paid the thirty pounds as well as the twenty. This makes it probable that the twelve were admitted to an equal share in the first purchase *gratuitously*, and that the thirty pounds was to be paid, not by them, but by the new comers, as their portion of land was assigned them, as stated in the above mentioned deed of 1661, sometimes called the historical deed. This deed contains much recital, and was, no doubt, intended by Roger Williams, as well for the purpose of confirming to his associates their title to his first purchase, as to place on record the manner of the purchase, and of his apportionment of the same equally among them. Disputes, growing out of the Pawtuxet lands, and other things, had induced some to call in question what Roger Williams was disposed here to record in perpetual memory. In this deed, after reciting the expences and trouble he had been at in procuring the grant, he says, "it was, therefore, thought fit by some loving friends, that I should receive some loving consideration and gratuity, and it was agreed between us that every person that should be admitted into the fellowship of enjoying land and disposing of the purchase, should pay thirty shillings into the public stock; and first about thirty pounds should be paid unto myself, by thirty shillings a person, as they were admitted; this sum I received, and in love to my friends, and with respect to a town and place of succor for the distressed as aforesaid, I do acknowledge the said sum and payment as full satisfaction."*

Afterwards, on the 22d December, 1666, Roger Williams executed another deed of the first purchase, having the same date as the initial deed, (October 8th, 1638,) and intended to be a copy of the same, in all other respects except the names of the grantees, and rivers, which were written at full length.† The deed of 1661 was full confirmation to them of their title; but this may have been required as a security to intermediate purchasers, or those who had disputed the facts alleged in the historical deed might not be willing to claim under the same. We say *those*, but we know not that there was more than one‡ who was disposed to dispute the recitals of the historical deed.

* See Knowles p. 115, and Backus, Vol. 1, p. 93. See App. C.

† Knowles, p. 112, note. See App. D.

‡ Mr. William Harris. See an Historical account of the settlement of Providence, in the Rhode-Island Register for 1823, by our venerable towns-

The names of the original grantees of Roger Williams, were Stukely Westcott, William Arnold, Thomas James, Robert Cole, John Greene, John Throckmorton, William Harris, William Carpenter, Thomas Olney, Francis Weston, Richard Waterman, and Ezekiel Holliman; five of these, it appears from the Massachusetts records, did not leave Massachusetts until April, 1638, viz.: Olney, Weston, Westcott, Waterman, and Holliman.*

Who came with Roger Williams from Salem to Seekonk, and afterwards to Moshassuck, the antiquarians are not agreed. Gov. Hopkins, in his History of Providence, says: "So great was the love of some of his church for him, that they would not forsake him in this extreme distress, and twelve of them voluntarily went into exile and the solitary wilderness with him;" these twelve he afterwards names, (the same to whom the deed of 8th October, 1638, was given,) as the "twelve poor suffering companions of Roger Williams" in his settlement here. Probably Gov. Hopkins was misled by the names of these persons appearing in this deed, five of whom, as above stated, did not leave the Massachusetts colony until April, 1638.

The biographer of Roger Williams has stated, upon the authority of our ancient fellow-citizen, Moses Brown, that those who accompanied Roger Williams, at his first landing here, were five, viz.: William Harris, John Smith, Joshua Verin, Thomas Angell, and Francis Wickes, and that it "is not certain that any one accompanied him from Salem to Seekonk, though a number of persons were with him a short time afterwards." (Page 100.)

Backus gives a tradition that Roger Williams, with "Thomas Angell, a hired servant, and some others," (whom he does not name,) "went over from Seekonk in a canoe and were saluted by the Indians near the lower ferry by the word *whatcheer!*"—that "they went round till they got to a pleasant spring above the great bridge, where they landed; and near to which both he and Angell lived to old age." (Vol. 1, p. 74, note.)

man, Mr. Moses Brown, in which he takes a different view from Backus and Knowles, in relation to the manner in which the first purchase was communicated to the twelve. We must be careful, however, not to confound the first purchase, with the disputes about the Pawtuxet lands. The verdict of the Jury referred to in page 23, of this account, was in reference to the Pawtuxet lands.

* Backus, vol. 1, page 92, note.

Dr. Ezra Styles informs us, in his Itinerary, that in Nov. 1771, he visited, at Providence, Mr. John Angell, who, among other things, informed him that his grandfather, Thomas Angell, came from Salem to Providence with Roger Williams.

A gentleman, of much antiquarian sagacity and research, is inclined to the opinion, from an ancient paper, now in his possession, that those who first came here with Roger Williams, were John Throckmorton, John Greene, William Harris, Joshua Verin, and William Arnold. This paper, however, furnishes no evidence at variance with the tradition in relation to Thomas Angell, as, on account of his non-age, his name would not appear among the first proprietors.

The records of Providence were in part destroyed by fire, and water, in Philip's war. The oldest record that now remains, is August 20, 1637. An old book, with a parchment cover, has this date on the inside of the cover, and its first record is the following: "We whose names are here under, desirous to inhabit in the town of Providence, do promise to subject ourselves in active and passive obedience to all such orders or agreements as shall be made for public good of the body in an orderly way, by the major consent of the present inhabitants, masters of families incorporated together into a town fellowship, and others whom they shall admit unto them, *only in civil things.*" These few words—"only in civil things,"—are of extensive significance. They distinctly mark the great principle contended for by Roger Williams, that the magistrate should have no authority over religious concerns. This paper is subscribed by Richard Scott, William Renolds, Chad Browne, John Warner, John Field, George Rickard, Edward Cope, Thomas Angell, Thomas Harris, Francis Weeks, Benedict Arnold, Joshua Winsor, and William Wickenden—thirteen, none of whose names are in the subsequent deed of the purchase to the twelve.

It is said this was the engagement signed by the new comers, and it is inferred that the first comers had before signed a similar engagement. This seems highly probable from their names not being to this, and that this speaks of the then inhabitants as incorporated into a town fellowship, which could only have been by their own act.

We behold here a government of perfect freedom; none lording it over God's heritage, and all power *in civil things* depending on the will of the majority.

In a letter which Mr. Williams wrote to the town of Providence, in 1654, after his second return from England, he says: * "I have been charged with folly (no doubt by some of his friends in England) for that freedom and liberty which I have always stood for; I say liberty and equality both in land and government. I have been blamed for parting with Moshassuck, and afterward Pawtuxet, (which were mine as truly as any man's coat on his back,) without reserving unto myself a foot of land or an inch of voice in any matter more than to my servants and strangers."

Such disinterestedness is as rare as praiseworthy, and fully warrants the praise Mr. Callender bestowed nearly a century since:—"Mr. Williams appears, by the whole course and tenor of his life and conduct here, to have been *one of the most disinterested men that ever lived; a most pious and heavenly minded soul.*" †

There seems to have been as great a difference in the political views of Roger Williams, from those of his great opponent, Mr. Cotton, as in their views of religious liberty. The latter, in an address to Lord Say, observed: "Democracy I do not conceive that ever God did ordain as a fit government either for *church, or commonwealth.* As for monarchy, and aristocracy, they are both of them clearly approved and directed in scripture; yet so as referreth the sovereignty to himself, and setteth up theocracy in both, as the best form of government in the commonwealth, as well as in the church." ‡

Such were the free and equal principles in land and government, in religious and civil things, upon which the Providence colony was founded.

"It is most probable (says Governor Hopkins in his History of Providence) the first settlers did not bring their wives and families with them at their first coming, and that they were not removed to Providence until sometime in the year 1637, for we have heard by tradition, and I believe truly, that the first male child born there, was Mr. Williams's eldest son, and whom he for that reason named

* Knowles, p. 266.

† Callender's Century Sermon, p. 17.

‡ Savage's Winthrop, vol. 1, p. 135, note I.

§ Mass. Hist. Coll. second series, vol. 9, p. 173.

Providence; and this child appears by the records to have been born in the month of September, 1638."

The year after the settlement of Providence, occurred the Pequod war. The services of Roger Williams, in preventing a union between the Pequods and Narragansetts, and in attaching the latter to the English, in this war, were of vital importance to the colonies of Massachusetts and Connecticut. What hazards he incurred to accomplish this, are best told in his own words, in his very interesting letter to Major Mason, of Connecticut, the hero of this war, from which we have already had occasion to make several extracts. He says: "When the next year after my banishment, the Lord drew the bow of the Pequod war against the country, in which, sir, the Lord made yourself, with others, a blessed instrument of peace to all New-England, I had my share of service to the whole land in that Pequod business, inferior to very few that acted; for

1. "Upon letters received from the Governor and Council at Boston, requesting me to use my utmost and speediest endeavors to break and hinder the league labored for by the Pequods, against the Mohegans, and Pequods against the English, (excusing the not sending of company and supplies by the haste of the business,) the Lord helped me immediately to put my life into my hand, and, scarce acquainting my wife, to ship myself, all alone, in a poor canoe, and to cut through a stormy wind, with great seas, every minute in hazard of life, to the Sachem's house." (Meaning the Narragansett Sachem, whose residence was near where Wickford now is.)

2. "Three days and nights my business forced me to lodge and mix with the bloody Pequod ambassadors, whose hands and arms, methought, wreaked with the blood of my countrymen, murdered and massacred by them on Connecticut river, and from whom I could not but nightly look for their bloody knives at my own throat also."

3. "When God wondrously preserved me, and helped to break to pieces the Pequods' negotiation and design, and to make and promote, and finish, by many travels and charges, the English league with the Narragansetts and Mohegans against the Pequods, and that the English forces marched up to the Narragansett country against the Pequods, I gladly entertained, at my house in Providence, the General Stoughton and his officers, and used my utmost care that

all his officers and soldiers should be well accommodated with us."

4. "I marched up with them to the Narragansett sachems, and brought my countrymen and the barbarians, sachems and captains, to a mutual confidence and complacence each in other.

5. "Though I was ready to have marched further, yet upon agreement that I should keep at Providence, as an *agent* between the Bay and the army, I returned, and was interpreter and intelligencer, constantly receiving and sending letters to the Governor and Council at Boston, &c. These things, and ten times more, I could relate, to show that I am not a stranger to the Pequod wars and lands, and possibly not far from the merit of a foot of land in either country which I have not."

Massachusetts and Connecticut claimed the Pequod lands by right of conquest, in this war, a portion of these lands were said to be on the east of Paucatuck river, within the boundaries of the Rhode-Island charter; to set in their true light these claims of Massachusetts and Connecticut, and what Rhode-Island had a right to claim in consequence of his services, this letter was written in 1670, to Major Mason, who then was, or had been previously Deputy-Governor of Connecticut.

When it is considered that the victories obtained over the Pequods gave peace to New-England for near forty years, and how different might have been the result if the league had not been broken between them and the Narragansetts, we may perceive the importance of these services of Mr. Williams to New-England. We regret to learn, from this same letter, that, though they were duly appreciated by the worthy Governor Winthrop, that it was not even in *his* power to cause them to be properly acknowledged and rewarded. Mr. Williams states that, on account of these services, Gov. Winthrop "and some other of the Council motioned, and it was debated, whether or no he had not merited, not only to be recalled from banishment, but also to be honored with some remark of favor;" and adds, "It is known who hindered, who never promoted the liberty of other men's consciences." The person, here alluded to, is supposed to be Mr. Dudley, who in 1634 was Governor of Massachusetts. We perceive here another illustration of the sad truth, how much easier it is to do evil than good, and that men are more ready to listen to the counsels of intolerance and fanaticism, than to the voice of liberality and gratitude.

Within a few months after these services were rendered, an order was passed, by the General Court of Massachusetts, by which all the inhabitants of Providence, who came within the Massachusetts jurisdiction, were liable to be arrested and taken before a magistrate, and unless they abjured the charge which was contained in a letter written by their fellow-citizen, John Greene, were to be sent home, not to return within the Massachusetts jurisdiction, on pain of imprisonment. Greene had been imprisoned and fined in Massachusetts, for saying that the magistrates had usurped the power of Christ, and had persecuted Roger Williams. He had been induced to retract this saying to escape the fine and further imprisonment. On his return to Providence he wrote a letter to the magistrates repeating the offence, and it being supposed that the inhabitants of Providence were of the same mind, this order was passed to prevent their ingress into the Massachusetts territory.

The inhabitants of Providence were thus subjected to many inconveniences, being in a great degree dependent, for many of the necessities, and most of the comforts of life, upon their intercourse with Massachusetts.

The banishment of Roger Williams did not secure the peace of the Massachusetts church. In August, 1637, a synod was holden at Newtown, now Cambridge, in which *eighty-two* heretical opinions were condemned, and Mr. Cotton himself was in some danger. He however made his peace with the Church; but some of those who supposed that they were receiving his doctrine were ultimately banished. The dissatisfaction produced, in others, by the proceedings of the synod, and the court, caused the settlement of Aquetneck, afterwards named Rhode-Island. It was proposed by Mr. John Clark, a learned physician of Boston, to some of his friends, in the minority in these disputes, that for peace sake, and to enjoy the freedom of their consciences, they should remove from Massachusetts, and he was requested to seek out a place. In consequence of the heat of the preceding summer they went north, into what is now New-Hampshire; but the coldness of the following winter, induced them to emigrate the next spring to the south, and some of the company, whilst their vessel was passing about Cape Cod, concluded to pass over land, having Long-Island and Delaware Bay in their view, as a place of settlement.

They came to Providence, and by the advice of Mr. Williams, their attention was turned towards Sowames, now a part of Barrington, and Aquetneck, but, as they doubted whether these places were not in the Plymouth jurisdiction, Mr. Williams accompanied Mr. Clark, and two others, to Plymouth, to make inquiry. Sowames was claimed as within the Plymouth patent, "but they were advised to settle at Aquetneck; and promised (by the Plymouth colony,) to be looked on as free, and to be treated and assisted as loving neighbors." Such is the narrative of this matter, substantially, as given by Clark, and nearly in his own words.* They concluded to follow this advice, and made a most fortunate location in regard to soil, climate and situation. By the advice and assistance of Mr. Williams, they obtained a deed of the island from Canonicus and Miantinomo, which was dated on the 24th of March, 1638, new style, and was witnessed by Roger Williams, and Randall Holden. In this deed these Sachems claim the right to sell this island, in the words of the deed, "by virtue of our general command of this bay, as also the particular subjecting of the dead Sachems of Aquetneck and Kitackamuckqut themselves, and land unto us." The island was granted to "Mr. Coddington and his friends united with him," for forty fathoms of white beads.

And here it is but justice to the memory of Roger Williams, and of another distinguished man whom he mentions, to give, in his words, what he calls "the rise and bottom of the planting of Rhode-Island." In a letter, written in 1658, he says, "I have acknowledged (and have and shall endeavor to maintain) the rights and properties of every inhabitant of Rhode-Island in peace; yet, since there is so much sound and noise of purchase and purchasers, I judge it not unseasonable to declare the rise and bottom of the planting of Rhode-Island in the fountain of it. It was not price nor money that could have purchased Rhode-Island. Rhode-Island was obtained by love; by the love and favor which that honorable gentleman, Sir Henry Vane, and myself, had with that great Sachem, Miantinomo, about the league which I procured between the Massachusetts English, &c. and the Narragansetts, in the Pequod war. It is true I advised a gratuity to be presented to the Sachem and the natives; and because Mr. Coddington and the rest of my loving countrymen were to inhabit the place, and to be

* Callender's Century Sermon, pp. 29, 30.

at the charge of the gratuities, I drew up a writing in Mr. Coddington's name, and in the names of such of my loving countrymen as came up with him, and put it into as sure a form as I could at that time, (amongst the Indians,) for the benefit and assurance of the present and future inhabitants of the island. This I mention, that as that truly noble Sir Henry Vane hath been so great an instrument, in the hand of God, for procuring of this island from the barbarians, as also for procuring and confirming of the charter, so it may by all due thankful acknowledgment be remembered and recorded of us and ours, which reap and enjoy the sweet fruits of so great benefits, and such unheard of liberties among us."*

Sir Henry Vane was Governor of Massachusetts, when Mr. Williams procured the league he thus speaks of. Sir Henry Vane, also, was "in the same condemnation," as an Antinomian heretic, with the settlers of this island; though not personally proceeded against, yet on this account he was not re-chosen Governor, and not long afterwards left the colony of Massachusetts; he felt, no doubt, therefore, a strong interest in favor of the emigrants to Rhode-Island.

Sir Henry Vane, in 1643-4, was one of the Commissioners of Plantations, who, with the Earl of Warwick, granted the first charter to our State, by the authority of Parliament; and to the aid which he afforded Mr. Williams in procuring this charter, the latter here alludes. He speaks not only of the procuring, but of the confirming of this charter, of which we shall have occasion to speak.

The colonists of *Aquetneck*, before they obtained this deed from the Narragansett Sachems, but probably not before the promise of the same, formed themselves into a political association by subscribing the following compact, dated March 7, 1637-8. "We whose names are underwritten, do swear solemnly in the presence of Jehovah, to incorporate ourselves into a body politic, and as he shall help us, will submit our persons, lives and estates unto our Lord Jesus Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords, and to all those most perfect and absolute laws of his, given us in his holy word of truth, to be guided and judged thereby." This was signed by William Coddington, John Clarke, and seventeen others.† This form

* Backus, vol. 1, p. 91.

† Those who signed this act of incorporation were, William Coddington, John Clarke, William Hutchinson, John Coggeshall, William Aspinwall,

of a body politic was certainly objectionable, as uniting civil with religious things, and shows that though the settlers of the island came there to enjoy liberty of conscience, that they were not, at this time, so well informed as to the best manner of preserving this liberty as the colony of Roger Williams, whose compact, as we have seen, extended only to *civil things*.

On the same day they elected William Coddington, their chief and sole magistrate, by the title of Judge, which is thus recorded: "We that are freemen incorporate of this bodie politick, do elect and constitute William Coddington, Esq. a Judge amongst us, and do covenant to yield all due honor unto him *according to the lawes of God*, and so far as in us lyes, to maintain the honor and privileges of his place, which shall hereafter be ratified *according unto God*, the Lord helping us so to do;" which is attested by "William Aspinwall, Sec'y." In the official engagement of William Coddington, he covenanted "to do justice and judgment impartially, according to the laws of God, and to maintain the fundamental rights and privileges of this body politic, which shall hereafter be ratified according unto God, the Lord helping me so to do."

This was a dangerous power to place in the hands of one man, with no more definite rule to guide him in reference to offences and their punishment. And it also vested a power in the judge, over all things contained in that book, which is the Christian's rule of faith and practice. It in truth established a theocracy, and delegated to one man that power, which can only, with safety, be trusted to God. In about eleven months afterwards, (Feb. 2, 1639, N. S.) three elders were chosen, viz. Nicholas Easton, John Coggeshall and William Brenton," "to assist the judge in the execution of justice and judgment, for the regulating and ordering of all offences, and offenders, for *drawing up* and *determining* of all such rules and laws as should be *according to God*."

To prevent the improper exercise of this power, there was the following provision: "It is agreed and consented unto, that the judge, with the elders, shall be accountable unto the body once every quarter of the year, (when as the body shall be assembled,) of

Samuel Wilbore, John Porter, Edward Hutchinson, Jr. John Sandford, Thomas Savage, William Dyer, William Freeborne, Philip Sherman, John Walker, Richard Carder, William Baulstone, Edward Hutchinson, Sen. Henry Bull, Randall Holden.

all such cases, actions and rules, which have passed through their hands, by them to be scanned and weighed by the word of Christ; and if by the body, or any of them, the Lord shall be pleased to dispense light to the contrary of what, by the judge and elders, hath been determined formally, that then and there it shall be repealed, as the act of the body; and if it be otherways, that then it shall stand till farther light concerning it, for the present to be according to God and the tender care of indulgent fathers." Here was still the same defect as at first, in not separating civil from religious things, though more care was taken to guard against the abuse of this power, by which the legislative, executive and judicial powers, were, for a time, thus vested in the judge and elders.

On the 16th March, 1641-2, this form of theocracy was laid aside; it was then agreed and declared that this government was "a democracy, or popular government," and that the power to make laws for their government, and to depute ministers to execute them, was "in the body of freemen orderly assembled, or a major part of them." At this time was passed their first law securing the liberty of conscience, in these words: "It is further ordered, by the authority of this present court, that none be accounted a delinquent for doctrine, provided it be not directly repugnant to the government or laws established." And at the next court, 17th Sept. 1642, it was ordered, "that the law of the last court, made concerning liberty of conscience in point of doctrine, be perpetuated."

The north end of the island was first settled, which was then called Pocasset, afterwards Portsmouth. Mr. William Coddington, the chief, and at first, the only magistrate in the colony, came over with Gov. Winthrop in 1630, being then an assistant in the Massachusetts government; he continued to hold this office from that time until 1637, when he became dissatisfied with the proceedings of the general court in relation to Mrs. Hutchinson and her adherents. He belonged, therefore, to the court which passed the sentence of banishment against Mr. Williams, and for aught that appears, approved thereof, and it does not appear, that, in 1637, he denied the power of the magistrates in religious things, though he was dissatisfied with their judgment. It is not probable that he was dissatisfied with the model of the Massachusetts government, and this may account for the fact that the one under which he was thus appointed the only magistrate, so much resembled it in its theocratical features. Cod-

dington is said to have been one of the richest merchants in Boston, and that he built the first brick house there; his wealth and the high station he had held in the Massachusetts government, had, no doubt, their influence in procuring him the power which was granted him by the Rhode-Island colony, and in moulding their first form of government.

John Coggeshall, who was appointed one of the three elders, "was (says the able editor of Winthrop's Journal) a gentleman of high consideration, represented Boston in the first, second, third, sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth courts. He was elected for the twelfth, but with Aspinwall, was dismissed from being a member, for affirming that Wheelwright was innocent, and that he was persecuted for the truth."

William Aspinwall, here mentioned, was the first secretary of the Rhode-Island colony; he was banished by the general court of Massachusetts, but in 1642, returned and made his peace.*

On the 28th April, 1639, five of the original purchasers of the island, and four of the after *comers*, agreed "to propagate a plantation in the midst of the island, or elsewhere." †

They formed their plantation at the southwest end of the island, and on the sixteenth of May following it was called Newport. The first house built there was built by Nicholas Easton and sons.

In March, 1640, the plantation of Pocasset was ordered to be called *Portsmouth*; and then it was ordered that the Chief Mag-

* Winthrop, vol. 2, p. 62. In the proceedings of the judge and elders of the Rhode-Island colony on the 7th of February, 1638-9, is the following record: "Mr. Aspinwall being a suspected person for sedition against the state, it was thought meet that a stay of the *building of his boat* should be made, whereupon the workman was forbidden to proceed any farther."

† The following is a copy of the agreement:

"On the 28th of the second month, 1639,

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"By us whose hands are underwritten, to propagate a plantation in the midst of the island or elsewhere, and do engage ourselves to bear equal charge answerable to our strength and estates in common, and that our determination shall be by major voice of Judges and Elders, the Judge to have a double voice.

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On the 16th March, 1641-2, at the General Court of the freemen, (fifty-eight being present and their names recorded,) it was declared that their government was a democracy, and then was passed the ordinance in favor of liberty of conscience, as has been mentioned.

In September, 1642, a Committee was appointed to consult about the procuring of a patent for the island, and to write to Sir Henry Vane upon the subject.

In March, 1644, it was ordered that the island should be called the isle of Rhodes, or Rhode-Island.

The fourth town, of the Narragansett plantations, in the order of time, is Warwick. This settlement began in January, 1642-3. Its history is intimately connected with Massachusetts, and constitutes some of the most melancholy pages of her history.

About four years after the settlement of Providence, some of the proprietors removed to the lands on the Pawtuxet. To this settlement came Samuel Gorton, from Rhode-Island. All the settlements on the Narragansett Bay, being formed originally by voluntary associations, and their political obligations resting only in mutual covenant, without any authority from the mother country to make laws to punish their violation, doubts arose which rendered it difficult to preserve the peace and to administer justice. When all were disposed to submit to the determination of those who were appointed to administer justice, between man and man, all went well; but it was soon found that a government of more energy was required. Some of the inhabitants of Pawtuxet, in November, 1641, complained to Massachusetts of Samuel Gorton and others, and desired advice and assistance. Massachusetts declined assistance, or advice, unless they would submit themselves to her jurisdiction, or that of Plymouth. This they were then not prepared to do. In 1642, four of them, did so, and then Massachusetts took

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cognizance of their complaints, and sent their orders to Gorton and others. If Massachusetts had not been very desirous of extending her limits to the Narraganset Bay, and perhaps of crushing the settlement which she, originally, endeavored to prevent, she must have seen that she was here exercising most unwarrantable authority. All her authority, over Englishmen, was derived from her patent, and within her territorial jurisdiction. To attempt to go beyond this, was to set herself up as the sovereign of the country; but she herself owed allegiance and subjection to the king of England, and Gorton, and his associates, were, according to the laws of England, within the territory and under the protection of this king, and could not be made subject to her but by the authority of their common sovereign. To attempt therefore to derive this authority from the submission of the four Pawtuxet men, who had no right to subject themselves and their lands, much less to subject Gorton to the Massachusetts jurisdiction, was a pretence which they might have used to blind others, but we can hardly think was sufficient to blind themselves. Governor Winthrop, however, betrays the secret. They had cast their eyes upon their neighbor's vineyard, and though the sin of covetousness was well understood, yet it was easy to hide it under a desire to do justice, if not to root out all heretics from the land. The words of Winthrop are remarkable, and though few, are not the less significant. After narrating the submission of these four men and their lands to Massachusetts, and their receiving them under their government and protection, he adds: "This we did partly to rescue these men from unjust violence and *partly to draw in the rest in those parts*, either under ourselves or Plymouth, who now lived under no government, but grew very offensive, and the *place was likely to be of use to us*, especially if we should have occasion of sending out against any Indians of Narragansett, and likewise for an *outlet into the Narragansett bay*, and seeing it came *without our seeking*, and would be *no charge to us*, we thought it *not wisdom to let it slip.*"* Had they not invited these men to put themselves under their jurisdiction, and refused them their advice, as good neighbors, unless they did so, how then could it be said "*it came without our seeking?*"

* Winthrop, vol. 2, p. 84.

This act of the Pawtuxet men, was in violation of their covenant with Roger Williams and his associates, by which they agreed to submit to the majority of the inhabitants of Providence; upon this condition their lands were granted to them, and they were admitted into the town fellowship. In the second year of the Providence plantation, it was ordained, "that no man sell his field or his lot granted in our liberties, to any person but to an inhabitant, without the consent of the town." The attempt, therefore, to subject their lands to a foreign jurisdiction, was virtually a forfeiture of them, and of course conveyed no legal or equitable right to Massachusetts.

Gorton, and his associates, viewed this order of Massachusetts as unwarrantable, but thought it prudent to remove from the neighborhood of their accusers and further from the growing and grasping colony of Massachusetts. They moved south of the Pawtuxet river, and on the 12th of January, 1642-3, purchased Shawomet of Miantinomo the chief Sachem, Pumham the petty Sachem having signed the deed. The conveyance is from Miantinomo as "chief Sachem of the Narragansett," and says that it "was sold and possession of it given to the persons therein mentioned, with the free and joint consent of the present inhabitants, being natives, as it appears by their hands hereunto annexed." The name of two other natives appear to the deed, besides Pumham's.*

It was not so easy to escape from the power of Massachusetts. Through the instrumentality of those, of Pawtuxet, who had endeavored to subject Gorton and his associates to her authority, Pumham was induced, with Saccononoco, who claimed to be Sachem of Pawtuxet, to go to Boston and submit themselves and their lands to Massachusetts. Pumham alleged that he was compelled by Miantinomo to sign the deed, that he had refused to receive any part of the price, and that he was an independent Sachem and not subject to Miantinomo. Pumham then preferred complaints against Gorton and his associates, upon which they were summoned to answer at Boston, by a warrant dated the 12th September, 1643.

Here we behold a further assumption of power—the right to determine the prerogatives and powers of an independent native prince

* The first purchasers of Warwick were Randall Houlden, John Greene, John Weeks, Francis Weston, Samuel Gorton, Richard Waterman, John Warner, Richard Carder, Samson Shotton, Robert Potter, William Wuddall.

in relation to his lands, and the authority he claimed over inferior Sachems; and the right to determine the facts in relation to this deed, which conferred at least a *prima facie* title in fellow-subjects, so far as the rights of the natives were concerned, who had the same right to buy land of the natives, as Massachusetts had to derive jurisdiction from them.

Massachusetts undertook to decide all these points, and decided them of course *in her own favor*. Upon this decision, founded in usurpation, she claimed the right to summon Gorton and his associates to her bar, and, the summons not being obeyed, to send after them an armed force. That they were not called upon to answer to the mother country, for the murder of her subjects, was not owing to their prudence, or forbearance, but to the merciful interposition of a preserving providence.

We forbear to detail the perfidy by which Gorton, and his company, were made prisoners of war; the destruction of their property; the suffering and dispersion of their families; their imprisonment at Boston for trial; the manner in which the people and magistrates were addressed, previously to their trial, from the pulpit, to induce them to take away their lives, fearing too much lenity might be shown them; the apprehending them on one set of charges, to give color to their arrest, and without trying them for these, charging them with blasphemous and heretical opinions, which they denied; their narrow escape, with their lives, by a majority of *two* votes, being reserved for a punishment in chains and labor, resembling Algerine servitude; and their final discharge and banishment, lest the people should be corrupted by their heresies, with a prohibition not to occupy their lands at Shawomet, under pain of death. Their story has filled a volume,* and is too full of painful emotions to be here dwelt upon. Happily they escaped, and found protectors in England, powerful enough to rescue them from oppression; they returned to their plantation, and, in testimony of their gratitude to the noble earl who had interposed in their behalf, they called it *Warwick*.

Gorton lived down many of the calumnies which had been heaped on him; held several important offices in town and colony; and enjoyed the confidence of his fellow-citizens, at Warwick, until his

* Coll. R. I. Hist. Society, vol. 2.

death, in 1677. What his peculiar religious opinions were, it is now difficult to determine; that they were much misrepresented we must believe, if we credit his denial of many that were imputed to him;* but his religious writings are among the most mystical of those times. Whatever were his opinions, he might have been safely left to enjoy them in the wilderness, and those letters, so offensive to Massachusetts, would never have been written, but for her attempt to extend her power beyond her jurisdiction.

Many of the descendants of those persecuted men now enjoy, under happier auspices, the land of their fathers, and when the blood of Massachusetts was shed at Lexington, and her capital in possession of the enemy, a descendant of one of them,† at the head of his fellow-citizens, hastened to her relief, and in the deadly controversy which ensued, rendered those services, which, in the estimation of his country, were second only to those of Washington.

And here it becomes us to pay a passing tribute to the memory of a native prince, who was the early, and while he lived, the constant friend of this colony. And we are the more required to hold his memory in grateful recollection, as it is most probable this friendship cost him his life. I refer to Miantinomo, the Chief Sachem of the Narragansetts, who, with his uncle Canonicus, granted to Roger Williams his lands, to William Coddington and his friends the beautiful island of Aquetneck, and who granted Shawomet to Gorton and his associates; whom Roger Williams calls his "*kind friend*," and who assured him that "it should not be land he should want." This prince was kind, generous, noble, and of shrewd understanding. Being summoned, in 1642, before the Massachusetts Court, to clear himself from those suspicions of hostility to the English, of which he had been accused by his inveterate enemy, Uncas, his deportment was such as became a prince, and one conscious of innocence. He "would not speak of any business at any time," says Winthrop, "before some of his Counsellors were present, alleging that he would have them present, that they might bear witness with him, at his return home, of all his sayings. In all his answers he was very deliberate, and showed good understanding in the principles of justice, and equity and ingenuity withal. He de-

* See 2d vol. R. I. Hist. Coll. App. No. 11, p. 246.

† Nathaniel Greene.

manded that his accusers might be brought forth, to the end that if they could not make good what they had charged him with, they might suffer what he was worthy of, and must have expected if he had been found guilty, viz.: death." He "offered to meet Uncas at Boston, and prove to his face his treachery against the English." "We spent," says Winthrop, "the better part of two days in treating with him, and in conclusion he did accommodate himself to us to our satisfaction."

The account which Roger Williams gave of the harmony which prevailed in the Narragansett government, shows the character of Miantinomo in a very favorable light.

"Their government, (says Williams, in his Key, chap. 22, p. 120.) is monarchical; yet at present the chiefest government in the country is divided between a younger Sachim, Miantunomoh, and an elder Sachim, Cananonicus, of about fourscore years old, this young man's uncle; and their agreement in the government is remarkable. The old Sachim will not be offended at what the young Sachim doth; and the young Sachim will not do what he conceives will displease his uncle." How few civilized kings and princes, but would suffer from comparison with these. The Turk "bears no brother near the throne," and the ancient history of christian kings, does not abound with instances of more moderated ambition.

In 1643, Miantinomo took up arms in defence of a Sachem of Connecticut, a kinsman of his, with whom Uncas was at war. In an attack upon Uncas he was defeated, and "having on a coat of mail, was easily overtaken; which two of his own captains perceiving, they laid hold on him and carried him to Uncas, hoping to procure their own pardon, who immediately slew them both; and Miantinomo standing mute, (disdaining to beg for his life,) Uncas demanded of him why he would not speak. "If you had taken me," said he, "I would have besought you for my life." Gorton, hearing of the capture of Miantinomo, wrote Uncas to give him his liberty, and threatened him with the power of the English if he did not; "he wrote the letter," says Winthrop, "in the name of the Governor of Massachusetts." "Upon this," says Winthrop, "Uncas carried Miantunomoh to Hartford, to take advice of the magistrates there, and, at Miantunomoh's earnest entreaty, he left him with them, yet as a prisoner. They kept him under guard, but

used him very courteously, and so he continued till the commissioners of the United Colonies met at Boston, who, taking into serious consideration what was safest and best to be done, were *all of opinion* that it would not be safe to set him at liberty, *neither had we sufficient ground for us to put him to death.* In this difficulty we called in five of the elders, (it being in the time of the general assembly of the elders,) and propounding the case to them, *they all agreed that he ought to be put to death.*"* In pursuance of this advice, Miantinomo was delivered to Uncas, with orders to put him to death, *so soon* as he came within his jurisdiction—these orders were faithfully obeyed, "two English being sent" to witness their execution! Such was the advice of those who should have been ministers of peace and mercy! Surely they "knew not what manner of spirit they were of." It has been suggested that this advice would not have been given, but for the late proceedings against Gorton and his associates, who purchased their land of Miantinomo, and who was, no doubt, disposed to aid them against the claims and pretences of Pumham, his inferior sachem. The interference of Gorton, also, in his behalf, was most unfortunate, as it probably produced an appeal to the commissioners, by Uncas, for advice, who might, otherwise, have treated with the Narragansetts for the ransom of their chief, as they said he had done, and received a part of the price.

It was most unfortunate, also, in its tendency to produce the advice which was so fatal to his friends. The coat of mail, it is said, was lent Miantinomo by Gorton, which proved the cause of his captivity—and the letter designed for his deliverance, probably caused his death. What an illustration of the truth of the maxim, *Save us from our friends!* This was no justification for those who ought to have remembered the friendship and services of Miantinomo in the time of their utmost need, when the Pequods were determined on their extermination, and, to induce *Miantinomo* to join them, prophesied, (as proved too true,) that otherwise he would only be *the last to be devoured.* They ought to have remembered the open and ingenuous manner in which, the year before, conscious of his innocence, and relying upon their justice, contrary to the advice of his friends, he trusted himself to their keeping, and

* Winthrop, vol. 2, p. 131.

removed all their suspicions by his wisdom and truth. They ought to have suspected the secret source whence issued those bloody counsels, in opposition to all their original notions of justice; but how could they suspect—*tantæne animis cælestibus iræ?*—How could they suspect that such motives could dwell “*in heavenly minds?*”

We cannot better close this tribute to the memory of this illustrious chief, than in these words of Governor Hopkins, which have that eloquence and truth which come warm from the heart:—“This was the end of Myantonomo, the most potent Indian prince the people of New-England had ever any concern with; and this was the reward he received for assisting them seven years before, in their war with the Pequots. Surely a Rhode-Island man may be permitted to mourn his unhappy fate, and drop a tear on the ashes of Myantonomo, who, with his uncle Canonicus, were the best friends and greatest benefactors the colony ever had. They kindly received, fed, and protected the first settlers of it, when they were in distress, and were strangers and exiles, and all mankind else were their enemies; and by this kindness to them, drew upon themselves the resentment of the neighboring colonies, and hastened the untimely end of the young king.”

Where was the voice of Roger Williams that it was not raised in behalf of his friend? He was not here, and, if he had been, his influence would probably have been exerted in vain. He had sailed for England, on the voyage during which he wrote the *Key to the Indian Language*, and might have been penning the testimony which he therein gives to the harmonious government of Canonicus and Miantinomo, when this tragedy was enacting.

How much English blood was shed, in Philip's war, by the Narragansetts, to atone for the murder of their chief, is known only to Him who knows all hearts; but such conduct, on the part of the United Colonies, was fitted to unite against them those who had “not stained their hands with any English blood, neither in open hostilities nor secret murders, as both Pequods and Long-Islanders did, and Mohegans also, in the Pequod wars,” according to the testimony of Roger Williams, written eleven years after this, to the General Court of Massachusetts. And, in this letter, he says: “The Narragansetts, as they were the first, so they have been long confederates with you; they have been true, in all the Pequod wars, to

you. They occasioned the Mohegans to come in, too, and so occasioned the Pequods downfall.”*

In 1643, the four colonies of Massachusetts, Plymouth, Connecticut, and New-Haven, formed a union, for offence and defence, and mutual assistance and advice; they were called the United Colonies of New-England. Rhode-Island petitioned to be admitted a member of the confederacy, but was refused unless she would submit to the jurisdiction of Plymouth, and cease to be a separate colony.†

In the summer of 1643, Roger Williams sailed for England, to procure a Charter which might unite the Narragansett colonies under one government, protect them from the ambition of their neighbors, and enable them, by the authority of England, to administer justice among themselves. In taking passage for England, he had to go to New-Amsterdam, now New-York, then in possession of the Dutch, being still forbidden the territory of Massachusetts. At New-Amsterdam he was instrumental in negotiating a peace between the Dutch and Long-Island Indians, who were at war, and was the means of blessing others, though subjected himself to inconvenience and danger.

By the aid of Sir Henry Vane, a charter was procured from the Earl of Warwick, Governor-in-Chief, and Lord High Admiral, and from the Earl of Pembroke, and others, Commissioners, by the ordinance of Parliament, of the islands and plantations in America. Sir Henry Vane was one of these Commissioners. This charter is dated the 14th of March, 1643-4.

By this charter the inhabitants of the towns of Providence, Portsmouth, and Newport, were incorporated by the name of “The Incorporation of *Providence Plantations, in the Narragansett Bay, in New-England*, with power to rule themselves, and such others as should thereafter inhabit within any part of the tract of land mentioned therein, by such a form of civil government, as by voluntary consent of all, or the greater part of them, they should find most suitable to their estate and condition.” These were ample powers, and left them at perfect liberty to constitute such a form of government, and make such laws, as a majority saw fit, with but one wholesome restriction, that “said laws, constitutions, and punishments, should be conformable to the laws of England, so far as the nature and constitution of the place would admit.”

* Knowles, p. 276.

† Holmes' Annals, vol. 1, p. 327.

It has been objected that this charter, procured by Roger Williams, contained no clause securing liberty of conscience, as if here-in he had failed to establish and perpetuate his great principle. This objection we think has been made without sufficient consideration. The object of this charter was not to give liberty of conscience to the inhabitants, for they had it already, but to give them an authority for civil government. In his letter to Major Mason, Roger Williams says: "Considering (upon frequent exceptions against Providence men) that we had *no authority for civil government*, I went purposely to England, and upon my report and petition, the Parliament granted us a charter of government for these parts." But there was another reason which, probably, prevented Roger Williams from inserting any thing in this charter respecting liberty of conscience. This liberty, according to his views, was not derived from man, but from God, which no charter or compact or human power could give, or rightfully, take away. To have put such a clause therefore into the charter, would have been admitting, tacitly, that it was derived from thence, and that the power which gives it may, expressly, or impliedly, take it away. This accounts for those very few, but significant words in the engagement signed by the new comers of Providence, by which they agreed to submit themselves to the authority of the majority—"only in civil things." The charter was granted for government only in civil things. The power given was to form a "*civil government*," and "to make and ordain," not such laws and constitutions as they pleased, but "such *civil laws and constitutions, &c.*"* Roger Williams therefore was

* Extract from the Charter of 1643-4.—"In due consideration of the said premises, the said Robert, Earl of Warwick, Governor in Chief, and Lord High Admiral of the said plantations, and the greater number of the said Commissioners, whose names and seals are here under written and subjoined, out of a desire to encourage the good beginnings of the said planters, do, by the authority of the aforesaid ordinance of the Lords and Commons, give, &c. to the aforesaid inhabitants of the towns of Providence, Portsmouth and Newport, a free and absolute charter of incorporation, to be known by the name of *The Incorporation of the Providence Plantations in the Narragansett Bay, in New-England*. Together with full power and authority, to rule themselves, and such others as shall hereafter inhabit within any part of the said tract of land, by such a form of *civil government*, as by voluntary consent of all, or the greater part of them, they shall find most suitable to their estate and condition; and for that end, to make and ordain such *civil laws and con-*

not only true to his great principle, but to the *form* which he deemed originally most proper to secure it.

If there are any who deem these suggestions more ingenious than true, (and, on reflection, I think there will be but few,) to them I would say, that if the powers granted by this charter were not confined to *civil*, in contradistinction to *religious* things, then all power was granted to the people to secure their own liberties, in this respect, as they thought best, and, if any provision was necessary, there was wisdom in allowing it to emanate from themselves, rather than from the mother country.

Mr. Williams returned to America in September, 1644, bringing with him the Charter, and letters to the Massachusetts government, from their friends in England, recommending him to their friendly offices, and regretting the distance there was between them. Mr. Williams was allowed to land at Boston, and pass through the Massachusetts territories; but this letter produced no repeal of the prohibition, forbidding him, and all Providence men free liberty of ingress and regress in her territories. Mr. Williams, on his return, was met at Seekonk, by his Providence friends, and escorted in their canoes, across the Pawtucket, to his home in Providence, in testimony of their joy at his return, and in honor of his services. How pleasing must have been his reflections, as he contrasted the different circumstances under which he had crossed the same waters, in the summer of 1636!

This charter bounded the colony of Providence Plantations northward and northeast by the patent of Massachusetts, east and southeast on Plymouth patent, south on the ocean, and west and northwest by the Pequod river and country. This included the territory Massachusetts had endeavored to obtain by the submission of Pumah, Sacconoco and the four Pawtuxet men, and lessened her hopes of getting a foothold on the Narragansett Bay. She therefore forbid Mr. Williams and his associates from exercising authority under this charter, at Pawtuxet and Warwick. The government of Ply-

stitutions, &c. as they, or the greater part of them shall by free consent agree unto."

The Charter of 1663, gave power to the Governor and Company, "from time to time, to make, ordain, constitute or repeal *such laws, statutes, orders and ordinances, forms and ceremonies of government and magistracy, as to them shall seem meet; not repugnant to the laws of England.*"

mouth, also, sent one of their magistrates to Rhode-Island, forbidding the exercise of any authority there, claiming it to be within their jurisdiction; and efforts were made in England, by the influence of these colonies, to procure the recall of the charter. These measures of their neighbors, had, no doubt, a tendency to prevent the Narragansett colonies from organizing a government immediately, under their charter; it was not until the 19th of May, 1647, that the inhabitants met, at Portsmouth, and agreed on a form of government, and chose their magistrates. Warwick was then admitted into the association with the same privileges as Providence. The chief magistrate was styled President, the first political President, it has been said, in America, and there were four assistants appointed, one from each town. John Coggeshall was chosen President; Roger Williams, Assistant for Providence; John Sanford, Assistant for Portsmouth; William Coddington, Assistant for Newport; and Randall Holden, Assistant for Warwick. At this time a body of laws was agreed upon, and the laws of Oleron adopted for the benefit of the seamen on the island. A form of engagement was adopted, for all the inhabitants to subscribe, by which they pledged themselves to each other to maintain with their "*utmost estates and strength*," the liberties granted them by their charter, and the authority thereof, therein declaring their form of government to be "*democratical*"; that is to say, a government held by the free and voluntary consent of all, or a greater part of the free inhabitants."

They enacted a body of laws; after the preamble to the same, follows, what we should now call, a bill of rights, and some constitutional provisions; but there was no provision in regard to the rights of conscience; then comes the civil and criminal code, and some constitutional provisions; but they contain nothing respecting religion. To the whole is added the following declaration: "These are the laws that concern all men, and these are the penalties for the transgression thereof, which by common consent are ratified and established throughout the whole colony; and otherwise than thus what is herein forbidden, all men may walk as their consciences persuade them, every one in the name of his God. And let the lambs of the Most High walk, in this colony, without molestation, in the name of Jehovah, their God, for ever and ever."

Those who examine this political and civil code, will find abundant reason to respect and admire the wisdom, piety, and liberality

of the fathers of this colony. They left the towns to take care of their particular concerns, exercising over them an executive, judicial and legislative power, very similar to that which our general government exercises over the States. They established a General Court of trials for the whole colony, to be holden by the President and Assistants. The civil jurisdiction of this Court extended to matters of difference between town and town; or between parties dwelling in two towns more remote; to cases of the arrest of a man belonging to a neighbor colony; and to cases of great importance, such as the common-council either of the town or towns should judge too weighty for a more private determining." We perceive, in most of these provisions, a strong analogy, and no doubt for the same reasons, to the Judicial power which by the Constitution is vested in the Courts of the United States.

A system so well adapted to preserve peace, at home and abroad, to prevent collisions among towns, to secure the administration of justice among themselves, and to the satisfaction of their neighbors, ought to have been attended with lasting and happy effects.

The future historian of Rhode-Island will find that her troubles are not yet ended. Massachusetts and Plymouth persevered in their claims of jurisdiction, and the union which had been perfected in so much wisdom, was, in a few years, broken by an act of one of the principal men of the island, in violation of his engagement to maintain the charter, which he must have taken and subscribed, as an inhabitant and as an officer; having been chosen, at the first election, an Assistant under it. We refer to William Coddington, and to what was called Coddington's obstruction. The reasons for this act of his, rest now in conjecture; and those which have been assigned to excuse or justify him, do neither. If trouble and divisions existed in the colony, this was not the way to remedy, but to increase them; and it is not the part of a good citizen, on account of his private grievances, to conspire against the established government, which he has solemnly engaged to support. But whatever were the reasons, the fact cannot be denied, that in the year 1650, this gentleman went to England, and, early in the next year, returned with a Commission, dated April 3d, 1651, appointing him Governor for life* of Rhode-Island, and the islands in the Narragansett Bay, with a Council of six to be appointed by himself. Thus was a monarchy,

* Letter from Roger Williams to Mr. John Winthrop. Knowles, p. 242.

in fact, introduced into this portion of the colony, in place of a democracy, established by the act of the people.

Portsmouth and Newport deemed it their duty to submit to Coddington's government, how willingly will soon appear. Providence and Warwick continued united under the charter.

In October of this year (1651) nearly all the free inhabitants of Newport, and forty-one of Portsmouth, appointed Mr. Clark, their agent, to go to England, to procure the repeal of Mr. Coddington's commission. Mr. Clark sailed for England the next month, with Roger Williams, who had been induced, by the solicitations of Providence and Warwick, to join Mr. Clark, in attempting to remove this obstruction. They sailed from Boston, after Mr. Williams had surmounted the obstructions that were there raised to his passage.

Mr. Williams and Mr. Clark, having safely arrived in England, in the spring of 1652, joined in a petition to the Council of State, praying that Mr. Coddington's Commission might be annulled, which was finally accomplished, after much opposition from various quarters, in October, 1652, and letters from the Council of State, to that effect, were sent to the Colony, and also confirming the Charter, by Mr. William Dyre.

On the arrival of Mr. Dyre, a new difficulty occurred as to whom the letters should be delivered. Providence and Warwick, claiming to be the government, under the charter, required they should be delivered to them. Mr. Dyre thought otherwise, and called, by his own authority, a meeting of the free inhabitants at Portsmouth, declaring that he should deliver the letters to those who should then and there assemble. The freemen of Providence and Warwick did not attend this meeting. It was attended by those of the island, who received the letters and orders of the Council, and organized a government, Providence and Warwick still continuing their government, so that, in fact, there were two governments in the colony claiming under the same charter. Things continued in this state from March, 1652, until August, 1654. In this interval however, viz: in May, 1653, the towns on the island granted commissions to Mr. William Dyre, and Captain John Underhill, to cruise against the Dutch; England and Holland being then at war. This gave great offence to Providence and Warwick, and in June following, they passed an order, that all who owned these commissions should have no liberty to act in the government, until they gave satisfaction to Providence

and Warwick. They sent a remonstrance to Newport and Portsmouth, setting forth at length their objections to their proceedings, and deprecating the consequences of the commissions they had issued, saying "they may set all New-England on fire, the event of war being various and uncertain."

Mr. Williams, hearing of the divisions in the colony, hastened home. He brought with him letters to the colony from Sir Henry Vane, reproving them for their dissensions, and suggesting a mode by which an union might be effected. Mr. Williams also, on his arrival, wrote a letter to Providence for the same purpose. By his influence, and the respect paid to the advice of their noble and constant friend, the mode which Sir Henry Vane advised was adopted, and a meeting of commissioners from all the towns was holden at Warwick, August 31, 1654, when articles of reunion were agreed upon, and the government under the charter, as at first, reorganized, and an election ordered, at which Roger Williams was chosen President.

Mr. Williams, as President of the Colony, wrote a letter to the government of Massachusetts, complaining of the licentiousness and anarchy which prevailed among those in this colony over whom they pretended to have jurisdiction. "The Indians (said he) which pretend your name at Warwick and Pawtuxet, (yet live as barbarously if not more so than any in the whole colony,) please you to know their insolences upon ourselves and cattle are insufferable by English spirits." He adds: "Concerning four families at Pawtuxet, may it please you to remember the two controversies they have long (under your name) maintained with us, to the constant obstructing of all order and authority amongst us. To obey his Highness's authority in this charter, they say they dare not for your sakes, though they live not by your laws, nor by your common charges nor ours, but evade both under color of your authority. Be pleased to consider how unsuitable it is for yourselves to be the obstructors of all orderly proceedings amongst us; for I humbly appeal to your own wisdom and experience, how unlikely it is for a people to be compelled to order and common charges when others, in their bosoms, are by such seeming partiality exempted from both."

We thus see that Massachusetts was one cause of those dissensions and divisions, in this colony, with which she was so ready to

reproach us, and to attribute to the too great liberty of conscience allowed among us. In this letter also there was the following appeal: "I pray your equal and favorable reflection upon that your law which prohibits us to buy of you all means of our necessary defence of our lives and families, (yea in this most bloody and massacring time). We are informed that tickets have rarely been denied to any English of the country, yea, the barbarians (though notorious in lies) if they profess subjection, they are furnished; only ourselves, by former and latter denial, seem to be devoted to the Indian shambles and massacres."*

Mr. Williams having written again to the Governor of Massachusetts, was encouraged by him to come to their Assembly at Boston, which he did, and addressed them in a manner which produced the effect he desired.

Mr. Williams was chosen President again in 1756, and the difficulties with the Pawtuxet men were settled by arbitration, as proposed by Massachusetts, who relinquished all claim to authority over them, and they were admitted as freemen of this colony.

In 1657, the Commissioners of the United Colonies, being informed (as they say) "that divers Quakers had arrived at Rhode-Island, and were entertained there, which they apprehended might prove dangerous to the colonies," wrote to the Governor of this colony, requesting that those that had been received might be removed, and their coming in future prohibited; and to enforce their request, intimated that otherwise they might be compelled, to preserve themselves from the contagion of *such a pest*, to discontinue intercourse and trade with this colony. An answer to this letter was returned by the President, Benedict Arnold, and the four Assistants, in which they say: "And as concerning these Quakers (so called) which are now among us, we have no law among us whereby to punish any for only declaring by words, &c. their minds and understanding concerning the things and ways of God as to salvation and an eternal condition," and then suggest that persecution only tended to increase the sect, and that they delighted to be persecuted by civil powers, that by their patient sufferings they might gain adherents. In regard to their fear of contagion, they suggested there was less reason to apprehend danger, as they sent them out

* Knowles, 286.

of the country as soon as they came among them. They state, however, their determination to lay this matter before the next General Assembly, expressing a desire that all honest and fair commerce with them might be preserved.

This letter from the United Colonies was laid before the General Court of Commissioners for the colony; they wrote, in reply, stating the freedom enjoyed here, as in the letter of the President and Assistants, and gave notice of their intention to write to their agent, in England, that he might present the matter unto the supreme authority, to crave their advice how they should conduct in respect to these people, without infringing on the freedom of conscience.

The letter written to Mr. John Clarke, the agent, from the Court of Commissioners, shows how the threat contained in the letter from the United Colonies, was understood and appreciated. They say: "There is one clause of this letter, which plainly implies a threat, though covertly expressed, as their manner is, which we take to be this, that as themselves (as we conceive) have been much awed in point of their continued subjection to the state of England, lest in case they should decline, England might prohibit all trade with them, both in point of exportation, and importation of any commodities, which were an host sufficiently prevalent to subdue New-England, as not being able to subsist. Even so they seem secretly to threaten us, by cutting us off from all commerce and trade with them, and thereby to disable us of any comfortable subsistence, being that the concourse of shipping, and so of all kinds of commodities, is universally conversant amongst themselves, as also knowing that ourselves are not in a capacity to send out shipping of ourselves," &c. They then request their agent, that, as in their letter to the United Colonies, they stated their intention to ask the advice of his highness and honorable council, that he "would have an eye and ear open" (to use their words) "in case our adversaries should seek to undermine us in our privileges granted unto us, and to plead our case in such sorte as we may not be compelled to exercise any civil power over men's consciences, so long as human orders in point of civility are not corrupted and violated, which our neighbors about us do frequently practice, whereof many of us have large experience, and do judge it to be no less than a point of absolute cruelty."

There is no part of our early history which is more honorable to the fathers of this colony than this. It exhibits their wisdom, libe-

rality and firmness, in strong contrast with the spirit and conduct of the United Colonies. Here was a test of their principles; they were tempted; they were threatened; but, though poor and weak, they resisted the temptation, and, at the hazard of losing the comforts of life, clung to their principles; and for whom? not for those who had become members of their body politic, or for whose doctrines they had any attachment, but for a new sect, that was then every where spoken against! If it should be thought, as has been sometimes suggested, that the liberty of conscience here allowed, proceeded from the circumstances of the colony, rather than from principle, let this correspondence be perused, and such suggestions will be silenced forever.

In looking over the list of Commissioners, six from each town, that formed the Court which gave these instructions to their agent, we find the names of Roger Williams, from Providence, Obadiah Holmes, from Newport, and Samuel Gorton, of Warwick. Well might they say in speaking of the practice of their neighbors, "whereof many of us have large experience." And the agent, to whom they were writing, might have spoken of his own experience in this respect, he having been with Holmes in the same condemnation, fine, and imprisonment, though he was delivered from the cruel scourge by the ability and kindness of his friends.

The restoration of Charles II., in 1660, caused the inhabitants of this colony to fear that those rights which they had obtained from the Parliament, when at war with the father, would not be respected by the son. And they had reason to apprehend that what they had gained so much by the influence of Sir Henry Vane, might be taken from them by a government which brought him to the scaffold. They had reason also to expect, that the same exertions which had been made by their neighbors to produce the recall of their Charter, would now be repeated, and with more success. They therefore adopted all those measures which prudence required, to guard against this calamity, to procure the favor of their new king, and a confirmation of their privileges. The king was proclaimed at Warwick, in October, 1660, where the Assembly sat immediately after the news of the restoration arrived here, and the proclamation was "solemnized" by military parade and festivity, and ordered to be thus solemnized, on the 24th of that month, in the same manner, in every town in the colony. A new commission

was issued to Mr. John Clarke, who was still in England, appointing him their agent for the preservation of their chartered rights and liberties. Three, from each town, were appointed a Committee to draw up an humble petition to his majesty; to correspond with their agent, and to do what seemed to them best to accomplish their wishes in this respect, and the sum of three hundred pounds was raised and placed at their disposal.

This Committee were for Providence, William Field, Roger Williams, and Zach. Roads; for Portsmouth, William Baulston, John Roome, and John Porter; for Newport, William Brenton, Benedict Arnold, and Joseph Torrey; and for Warwick, John Greene, John Weeks, and Samuel Gorton, Senior.

Fortunately for the colony, the new king was disposed, from disposition and policy, to forget past animosities, and unite in himself the affection of all parties. And fortunately, also, about the time when the new Charter was granted, the king, from a desire to serve the Roman Catholics, to whom he was secretly attached, had, with his brother, the Duke of York, formed a plan, on pretence of easing the Protestant dissenters, for introducing a general toleration, that the Catholics might enjoy the free exercise of their religion, at least in private houses.

This plan was defeated by the intolerance of Parliament; but it would naturally render the king well disposed to grant the same toleration in the plantations, where the Catholics might resort, and, no doubt, well disposed him towards this little colony, which had anticipated his wishes, and served to counteract the adverse influence of our neighbors, whose policy was so different.

The new Charter was granted on the 8th July, 1663, and was received in November, 1663, by the Court of Commissioners at Newport, "at a very great meeting and assembly of the freemen of the colony," says the record, and read in presence of all, and held up to the view of all, "with his majesty's royal stampe, and the royal seal." Thanks to the king—thanks to Lord Chancellor Clarendon—and thanks and a gratuity of one hundred pounds to Mr. Clarke, their agent, were unanimously voted; and a gratuity of twenty-five pounds, besides his expenses from Boston, to Captain George Baxter, the bearer of the Charter, and the reader of it to the people on this occasion.

This Charter contained the clause in relation to liberty in religious concerns, which has been so often repeated, and deservedly admired."

The letters of Mr. Clarke which were also read to the people on this occasion, have unfortunately not been preserved. They no doubt contained valuable information in reference to the history of the charter.

This charter remodelled the government; changed the name of the chief magistrate from President to Governor; created a Deputy-Governor; increased the Assistants to ten, and vested the legislative power in these and the deputies from the towns, to be called the General Assembly. The power to initiate laws, or to approve them, when proposed by the Court of Commissioners, was previously vested in the towns, and exercised in their several town-meetings. The number of Deputies, for each town, was also fixed, which now constitutes one of the odious features of this Charter, to those who have found how difficult it is to obtain rights which are derived from a higher authority.

The next day after the Charter was received, the old government surrendered to the new.

The name of the colony was changed by this Charter. Rhode-Island, then containing more than two thirds of the freemen, gave the principal name to the State, and Newport became the capital.

In May, 1664, the General Assembly passed the following resolution: "At present this General Assembly judgeth it their duty to signifye his Majestys gracious pleasure vouchsafed in those words to us verbatim (viz) that no person within the said colonie at any time hereafter shall be any ways molested, punished, disquieted or called in question, for any differences of opinion in matters of religion, and do not actually disturb the civil peace of the sayd colony."

Here was no exception as to Catholics, though Chalmers in his political annals of Rhode-Island, speaking of the acts of the Assembly in 1663, has represented the law regulating the admission of freemen as containing such an exception, and says—"a persecution was immediately commenced against the Roman Catholics, who were deprived of the rights of citizens, and of the liberties of Englishmen, though they might have pleaded their chartered privileges." The falsity of this charge has been made manifest, by a

true son of Rhode-Island,* for a long time our Secretary of State, and with an ability which has caused many regrets that he has not written our history.

At the Assembly in May, 1664, the voting by proxy was authorized, and a plurality of votes rendered sufficient for an election.

The joy that was occasioned in the colony on the reception of the Charter, was soon damped by the proceedings of the King's Commissioners, Nichols, Carr, Cartright, and Maverick, in reference to the Narragansett country. These gentlemen arrived at Boston, in July, 1664, to manage the war against the Dutch at Manhados, and settle the differences in the colonies. Manhados, since called New-York, surrendered in August of that year, and Col. Nichols remained there as Governor. The other Commissioners, in 1665, met at Warwick, to examine the claims of all persons to the Narragansett country. They rejected all claims founded on Indian grants and mortgages, and, in consequence of the submission to the King of the Narragansett Sachems in 1664, to escape from the Massachusetts jurisdiction, and more formally acknowledged in 1663, they decided that the right of jurisdiction and property belonged to the King, saving the rights of the natives, and created it a royal province by the name of King's Province. They constituted the Chief Magistrate and Assistants of Rhode-Island justices of the peace within the province, to do what they thought best for the peace and safety of said province. A portion of their decision was probably more agreeable to Rhode-Island, viz: "That no colony hath any just right to dispose of any lands conquered from the natives, unless both the cause of that conquest *be just*, and the lands lye within those bounds, which the King, by his Charter, hath given it, nor to exercise any authority beyond those bounds."†

In 1665, on motion of Portsmouth and Warwick, it was determined that the Governor, Deputy-Governor and Assistants, should sit apart from the Deputies, and form two legislative branches, with equal and concurrent powers; this was reconsidered in the following year, and they continued to form one branch until 1696, when they were again separated, and have remained as they now are.

* Hon. Samuel Eddy. See App. E.

† Declaration touching the Pequod country, April 4, 1665. Documents from Massachusetts records in manuscript, transcribed for the R. I. Hist. Society. Vol. 1, p. 247.

In 1671, Mr. John Clark was again sent to England, as agent for the colony, to endeavor to terminate the controversy with Connecticut about our western boundary, and the jurisdiction which she claimed within the Narragansett territory. This controversy lasted for more than sixty years from its commencement, and was the source of much trouble to the government and inhabitants of both colonies. It was ultimately decided in 1728, by the King in Council, and the boundaries settled by the commissioners of both colonies.

The greatest calamity which befel the colony in its first century, was Philip's war, which broke out in 1675. From a tradition which descended from those English who lived nearest to Philip, and from those of his tribe who survived the war, it would appear that he was averse to it, and that he wept at the news of the first English that were killed, foreseeing the destruction of his people.*

This war literally set all New-England in a blaze; this colony had no part in its commencement; but it was soon brought to their doors. The women and helpless of Philip's tribe fled to the Narragansetts for shelter and sustenance. They were hospitably received, and when they were demanded by the United Colonies, Canonchet, the son of Miantinomo, exclaimed, inspired equally with indignation and sympathy—"Not a Wampanoag shall be delivered up. No, not the pairing of a Wampanoag's nail." In this determination he was supported by the whole nation, and even by Pumaham, who, on this occasion, became re-united to the confederacy. At this refusal, the troops of the United Colonies poured into Narragansett. In December, 1675, occurred what has been commonly called "the great swamp fight," in which the English fought with so much valor and success, and the Narragansetts were driven from their strong hold, (which contained their women and children, and their provisions for the winter,) their wigwams fired, and seven hundred of their warriors killed, besides women and children. Three hundred more died afterwards of their wounds, and very many perished from cold and hunger.

Canonchet, and some of his warriors, escaped to join their forces with Philip, and to execute vengeance upon all who had English blood in their veins. This great battle caused the destruction of this powerful tribe, whose friendship was so early and constantly

* Callender's Century Sermon, p. 73.

manifested to our fathers, and was so essential to their existence; and who, according to the testimony of Roger Williams in 1655, had been true and faithful from the first, to the English of the United Colonies.

Our settlements had extended far into the Narragansett country, and along the bay, and Westerly and Kingston had been incorporated. The General Assembly determined that the ability of the colony was not sufficient to enable them to maintain garrisons to defend the out plantations, and recommended that the inhabitants should come to Rhode-Island for protection. They stated, that "Newport and Portsmouth inhabitants have taken such care, that those of the colony that comes, and cannot procure land to plant for themselves and families relief, may be supplied with land by the townes. And each family so wanting ability, shall have a cow kept upon the commons." The security of the island was provided for by a marine force, which was constantly on duty. Most of the inhabitants on the main, fled to the island for safety, and their houses were destroyed and plantations laid waste, by the exasperated natives. Many of the inhabitants of Providence sought this asylum, and among the rest the family of Roger Williams. He remained at Providence, relying somewhat upon his influence with the Indians; but, in the last resort, upon his means of defence. We find him as Captain at the head of a train band; and though this has been doubted, on account of his age, the commission by which Captain Arthur Fenner was appointed Commander of the King's Garrison, then first established at Providence, at the request of the inhabitants, sufficiently proves it. This was dated June 10th, 1676, and states that the authority given him as "chief commander of the king's garrison at Providence, and all other private garrison or garrisons there, *not eclipsing Capt. William's power* in the exercise of the *train band* there," &c. And a vote of the Assembly, in the same month, speaks of Indians "sent to this island by Capt. Roger Williams, from Providence." Williams was now 77 years of age.

On the 14th March, 1675-6, every house in Warwick but one was burned; the inhabitants having fled to the Island.

On the 29th of the same month Providence was attacked by the Indians, and twenty-nine houses burned in the north part of the town, being more than one third of the whole number which the

town contained.* One of these contained the town records, which were partly rescued from the flames and thrown into the Moshassuck, from thence they were afterwards taken, and sent to Newport for safe keeping.

There is a tradition that Roger Williams, on the approach of the Indians, walked out, with his staff, to meet them, and remonstrated with the Sachems, and warned them of the English power, but without effect; that they expressed attachment to him, and guarded him, on his return to the garrison, lest he should be injured by their young men.

In this war Smithfield, also, was laid waste. The war ended with the death of Philip, in August, 1676; but nearly sixty years passed away before Providence recovered her former numbers and prosperity. Many of her inhabitants, who had taken shelter on Rhode-Island, remained there, and Newport flourished at the expense of her elder sister.

In 1670 a rate of £300 was assessed on the several towns. Of this sum Newport was assessed £123; Providence £51; Portsmouth £51; Warwick £32. The town of Westerly agreed to pay £65. Compare this with an assessment in 1678, two years after the war. In that year £300 was assessed on the several towns;—on Newport £136; Providence £10; Portsmouth £68; Warwick £8; Westerly £2.

By comparing these different assessments we perceive how much the towns on the main were impoverished by the war, whilst those on the island were increased in their resources. The greatest disparity appears in Westerly, that before the war voluntarily paid 65 out of £300, and in 1678, was assessed £2! But the reduction of Providence from 51 to £10, shows the effect on her of this calamitous war.

The inhabitants of Narragansett, at the close of this war, found their lands claimed by Connecticut. "As the Rhode-Islanders had deserted the country (says Trumbull, in his history of Connecticut) in the war, and had done nothing in defence of it, and as the Connecticut volunteers had driven the enemy entirely from that extensive tract, the legislature determined to plant and govern it, as part of this colony."

* When the war broke out, Providence contained between seventy and eighty houses.

To these pretensions the General Assembly replied in a letter to Connecticut as follows:

"Its well known, that the United Colonies did desert several of their out plantations, and some were by the enemy drove and necessitated so to do, for the safety of their lives. If for that cause only the colonys should loose their charter ritts, and particular persons their lands and privileges it would to them (and to all rational men) appear ridiculous, and without doubt disapproved by his majesty." They add in regard to the Narragansetts: "Neither was there any manifestation of war against us from them, but always the contrary, till by the United Colonys they were forced to war, or such submission as it seems they could not subject to; thereby involving us in such hazards, charges and losses, which hath fallen upon us in our out plantations, that noe colony has received the like considering our number of people."

This letter ably vindicated the rights of the colony, and intimated that such pretensions would be resisted by force, if necessary. Happily the chartered rights of this colony were not to be thus wrested from them; though there was no human tribunal to protect the Indian.

On the 20th April, 1676, died Mr. John Clarke, whose memory should be held by the people of this State in lasting and grateful remembrance. His services to the Rhode-Island colony, in its infancy, and to the Narragansett colonies, after they became united, were great, and exceeded probably by none. He founded the second Baptist Church in the State, at Newport, of which he became the pastor, until his services were required to vindicate the rights of his fellow-citizens in England. Twelve years he remained in England, entrusted with the interests of the colony, which he protected with vigilance and great ability. He had the honor of soliciting and procuring the Charter of 1663, which quieted the fears of his fellow-citizens, enlarged the boundaries of the colony on the east, and contained those provisions for liberty of conscience, which have been so much admired. After his return from England, he was elected three years successively Deputy-Governor. He was a learned man; in his will he bequeathed a Concordance and Lexicon, written by himself, the fruit of several years' study; having no children, he gave a considerable portion of his property to relieve the poor, and to educate the children of the church which he had founded.

8 In 1663, this colony was troubled by the presence of Edward Cranfield, Governor of New-Hampshire, and others, in the Narragansett country, the government whereof he claimed under the king's commission, with authority to him and the others to determine the disputes which existed between this colony and Connecticut. This colony refused to submit to their arbitration, or own his authority; and a report was made by him and his associates in favor of Connecticut. The subsequent troubles of Cranfield, in New-Hampshire, probably prevented this colony from being affected by this report.

In April, 1683, Roger Williams died, aged 83, and was buried with military honors, having held a military commission, and with all the other honors that the town of Providence could bestow. He was buried in his own grounds; but where, alas! who can tell? The man who has given us a *name* and a *place*, has no *place* for his *name* among us; no memorial tells where his ashes repose; no monumental marble proclaims his services and our gratitude! My fellow-citizens, this ought not so to be. If we cannot find the place of his burial, we ought to find a place where we can honor and perpetuate his memory, in a manner that shall tell our children's children how much we appreciated his principles, and how they should appreciate them. He has surrounded our little State with a glory which belongs not to empire; let us manifest that we are worthy to participate in his fame. Let not the distinguished stranger, as he wanders over our City, or as he surveys from our proudest height the bay, the cove, the halls of science, the temples of religion, and the extended line of population, from east to west, and from north to south—let not his eye wander in vain, let him no longer inquire in vain, for the Monument of Roger Williams.

In February, 1685, died Charles II., and James II. was duly proclaimed, at Newport, the succeeding April. The common addresses were presented, intended to propitiate a new king, whose favor was so important to the colony. But we had as little reason as the nation to rejoice in his reign.

In 1685, Massachusetts, New-Hampshire, Maine, and the Narragansett country, were placed under the government of Joseph Dudley, of Massachusetts. This commission arrived at Boston, in May, 1686. In December, of that year, arrived Sir Edmund Andros, with a commission from the king, for the government of all New-

8 England. Previously to this (in June preceding) a writ, of *quo warranto*, was served upon the colony, in consequence of certain articles of misdemeanor which had been exhibited, by Edward Randolph. He was the accuser-general of the colonies, and, in consequence of like proceedings against Massachusetts in 1684, a judgment was rendered in chancery annulling her charter. The people of this colony thought it not prudent to contend with the king, and submitted themselves and their charter to his mercy, petitioning for favor and forgiveness, if through ignorance they had erred.

In December, 1686, Andros dissolved the government of Rhode-Island, broke its seal, and admitted five of its inhabitants into his legislative council, and Rhode-Island formed a county under his government. Andros's government was deemed oppressive by us, but was particularly obnoxious to Massachusetts. Sir Edmund, for the purpose of introducing the church of England into Massachusetts, was ordered to grant universal toleration in religion. This was as offensive to Massachusetts, as the like attempt of Charles II. to the Parliament of England. If he had done nothing worse than this, he would not have deserved to have been transmitted to posterity as a *tyrant*; a character to which he is entitled as Governor of New-England.

His tyranny did not last long. The revolution of 1688, caused the fall of his master; and when tidings reached Massachusetts which rendered this event probable, Sir Edmund was imprisoned, and with difficulty saved from the rage of the people.

The people of Rhode-Island resumed their chartered rights, on the ground that no judgment had been rendered against them. At an assembly of the freemen of the colony at Newport, May 1, 1689, a vote was passed unanimously, confirming the former Governor, Walter Clarke, and the former Deputy-Governor and Assistants, who were in place in 1686, at the coming over of Sir Edmund Andros. Though there was this unanimity at this meeting, there were doubts as to the propriety of this course in the colony. Walter Clarke, who had been one of Andros's council refused to act as Governor, and but six of the former Assistants attended the next meeting of the Assembly. Christopher Almy was elected by the General Assembly, Governor, in place of Clarke, but he also refused to serve, and Mr. Henry Bull was elected Governor. He was one of the first purchasers and settlers of the island; though at this

time advanced in age, he had firmness sufficient to accept of the office to which he was elected, to preserve the government and the chartered rights of the colony. The doubts which at first existed, as to the propriety of proceeding under the charter, after the seal had been broken and the government dissolved by Andros, subsided when it was found that no objection was made by the government of England to the course which had been adopted; and the government under this Charter has continued to the present time.

In 1691, a new Charter was granted to Massachusetts, which included Plymouth under the same government.

The various wars that ensued from this time until the peace of 1763, between England and France, required the colonies to unite their forces with those of the mother country, against the French dominions in North America. This bound the colonies together by interest and sympathy, and Rhode-Island, though, in former days, she was not allowed to enter the confederacy of the New-England colonies, was soon found of sufficient importance to be consulted, and her aid required.

In the General Convention of the Colonies, holden at Albany in 1754, Rhode-Island was represented by Stephen Hopkins. He was one of that Committee which drew up the first plan of union for the colonies.

In 1765, when a convention of the colonies at New-York declared their rights and grievances, in consequence of the Stamp Act, and other acts which taxed the colonists without their consent, Rhode-Island was there. The first forcible act of resistance to these laws was by the men of Providence, in the destruction of the Gaspee. Captain Whipple beat up for volunteers, who flocked to the whale boats; and one* who is now here can tell the sequel—"all of which he saw, and part of which he was."

Nor was Rhode-Island backward in the contest: she was among the foremost to provoke. In May, 1775, she raised three regiments, called an army of observation, and appointed to their command Gen. Nathaniel Greene. They were soon placed at the disposal of Congress.

To the heroic Declaration of Independence, were subscribed the

* Colonel Ephraim Bowen. The enterprise, it is said, was planned in the house of the late Welcome Arnold, Esq. of this town; now the residence of his son.

names of Stephen Hopkins and William Ellery. The hand of Hopkins trembled,* but not his heart; this was as firm as when he wrote "The rights of the colonies examined."†

At Roxbury, Trenton, Princeton, Red Bank, and Yorktown, the sons of Rhode-Island redeemed the pledge her statesmen had given.

And let it never be forgotten, that, in the darkest hour of that eventful contest, when all but a Washington would have despaired, and he but for his trust in Heaven, when our island and the waters of our bay were in possession of the enemy, the troops from this State (whose proportion was one fiftieth) constituted *one seventh* of that little army which held the bridge of Trenton against a numerous foe; which conquered at Princeton, and revived to new energy a desponding people. It was in this hour of danger and suffering, amidst the snows of December, and hunger, and nakedness, that the Rhode-Island troops offered themselves again to their country at the call of patriotism, when their term of service had nearly expired, and they were desirous of defending their own shores. We have also here a living witness who can tell of Colonels Lippitt, Hitchcock and Varnum, and of the sufferings and services of the Rhode-Island regiments.‡

We might speak of Captain Nicholas Cook, who took command of the good ship Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations, when the storm was approaching and her commander had deserted, and brought her in safety around the Cape of *Good Hope*.§ We might tell

"Of moving accidents, by flood and field:
Of hair-breadth 'scapes i' the imminent deadly breach;"

of Hopkins, Talbot, Whipple, Thomas; of Barton, Cornell; of our Greenes and Olneys; and of others, equal in noble daring.

"Whoe'er, amidst the sons
Of reason, valor, liberty and virtue,
Displays distinguish'd merit, is a noble
Of Nature's own creating. Such have risen,
Sprung from the dust, or *where had been our honors?*"

* From a paralytic affection.

† This was printed here by order of the General Assembly, and in England it was reprinted and presented to the King.

‡ John Howland, Esq. President of the Rhode-Island Historical Society.

§ Nicholas Cook, Esq. was elected Governor in place of Governor Wanton, whose principles were adverse to the Revolution.

We could speak of a State in arms, and, for several years, exposed to continual depredation and alarm. Newport has not recovered from her losses,* and the island will never again see her beautiful groves. Many of the inhabitants of Newport removed to Providence, and experienced the same sympathy and kindness which was extended to the inhabitants of Providence, by Newport, in Philip's war.

Rhode-Island history is rich in character and incident, and though I have detained you long, the half has not been told you.

At the return of peace, Rhode-Island was exhausted by the struggle; the State, and many of her citizens, were deeply in debt, with nothing to pay. In this emergency, were adopted those paper money and tender laws, which produced, in their day, so much contention and reproach, but which probably saved us from civil war.

From the dissensions which followed, and the distresses of the State, we refused to grant the impost which Congress had requested. We had no lands to look to, for revenue, but depended on commerce; we wished not to surrender our all, while other States, whose services had been proportionally not so great, were made rich in territory by the result of the contest. This probably prevented Rhode-Island from sending delegates to the Convention which formed the federal Constitution, and caused her to be the last of the thirteen to adopt it. She will now be among the last of the twenty-six to desert it. It is her sheet anchor, and, under God, her best hope. Her early history has taught her the necessity of looking abroad for protection, and, without the protection which the Constitution affords to her commerce and manufacturing industry, she is now sensible she would be as poor as most of her soil, and of no more account than her territorial jurisdiction.

* In 1770, the population of Newport was 9,029. Providence then had but 4,321 inhabitants. Seven years after the revolutionary war, in 1790, Newport had 6,716 inhabitants, and Providence 6,380. In these twenty years, Newport lost 2,493, and Providence gained 2,059 inhabitants.

The population of Newport, in 1830, was 8,010; and that of Providence, 16,832. So that in 1830, Newport had not so many inhabitants as she had five years before the revolutionary war, by one thousand and nineteen. This gives us a view of only a portion of the losses Newport sustained by the revolutionary war. We trust, her delightful climate, and the power of steam, which has already given an impulse to her manufacturing industry, will soon present us with another picture.

The wonder-working power of machinery, so intimately associated with the name of Slater, is among us, and though it cannot enlarge the bounds of the State, it has extended the territory of its citizens, and promises to do for us, in some degree, what it accomplished for our father land, giving to it the ability to subsidize Europe, and contend with Napoleon in arms.

But it is not wealth which constitutes a State—

“No; men, high minded men;
Men, who their duties know,
But know their rights, and knowing dare maintain,
Prevent the long aimed blow,
And crush the tyrant while they rend the chain;
These constitute a State.”

Such have been the men of Rhode-Island, and, if we use our riches to extend the knowledge of these duties and rights, and to counteract the evil tendencies of superfluous wealth, we may hope that such men will continue to inhabit the land of the Narragansett pilgrims.

Men of Providence! did the heart of Roger Williams overflow for the mercies here afforded him in the wilderness, and have we no cause for gratitude? On every side we behold evidences of the successful enterprise of our Merchants, Manufacturers and Mechanics.

This temple,* erected in 1775, bears testimony to the prosperity of the town at that period, and proclaims the architectural skill and taste, as well as the pious munificence of his† descendants who was

* The First Baptist Meeting-House, where the Discourse was pronounced.

† Rev. Chad Brown, one of the earliest of the second comers to Providence. He signed the covenant for “town fellowship” in August 1637, (see ante page 25,) and was ordained Pastor of the First Baptist Church in 1642. His grandson, the Rev. James Brown, was ordained Pastor over this church, October 28, 1732. The four brothers, Nicholas, Joseph, John, and Moses Brown, were grandsons of the Rev. James Brown. Nicholas Brown died in 1791. His surviving children are Nicholas Brown, the munificent patron of Brown University, after whom it was called, and Mrs. Hope Ives, relict of the late Thomas P. Ives. Joseph Brown made the draught agreeably to which the First Baptist Meeting-House was built. He was distinguished for his philosophical attainments, and was Professor of Natural Philosophy in Rhode-Island College. John Brown laid the corner stone of the College in 1770, and was distinguished for his mercantile enterprise and success, and his enlarged and liberal views in relation to the improvement of the town. The first India voyage from this town was made in his ship.

Moses Brown, the youngest of the four brothers, yet survives, having lived

a pastor and one of the founders of the church; and yonder halls of science* shall bear the name to succeeding generations, while they whose riches "perish with the using," or are reserved for heirs they know not who, are

"Unwept, unhonored and unsung."

We are surrounded with numerous memorials of the same piety and liberality which erected this, which have since successively arisen.

Our public schools are numerous, and supported with a wise liberality, sensible as we are, that freedom without morality and intelligence, must end in anarchy.

We have abundant reason to be thankful for the ample provision which is here made for the great interests of religion and learning.

We rejoice that our disputes with our neighbors are nearly ended, and that what remains,† is to be determined by a tribunal, in whose justice and intelligence we have full confidence. We now behold our neighbors on the Roger Williams platform, and congratulate them on the change; and we rejoice that the children of the same puritan fathers are one, and we trust, indivisible.

For civil and religious liberty; for our beautiful shores and unrivalled bay; for peace in our borders, and plenty and health in our dwellings; for the various blessings of civilization and government, we should thank Him who hath *numbered all the hairs of our head*, and without *whose notice not a sparrow falls to the ground*.

Let then our song of joy and gratitude arise to the giver and preserver of all, for his manifold mercies to our fathers, and his rich bounty to us—and may the sound be prolonged, in future centuries, when *our descendants* shall assemble, in memory of *their fathers*, and swell the loud pæan of *their gratitude*.

nearly a century. He will be 98, should he live to the 23d Sept. 1836. He was a liberal patron of the college, and more recently, of the college belonging to the Society of Friends, erected in this town, in 1818. These four brothers were liberal benefactors to Rhode-Island College, and the three first, more particularly, and their descendants, to the First Baptist Society.

For much interesting information relative to the history of Brown University, see Notes, prepared by Professor Goddard, to the Discourse delivered at the dedication of *Manning Hall*, February 4, 1835, by Dr. Wayland, President of Brown University.

* Brown University.

† The question in reference to our northern boundary, now pending before the Supreme Court of the United States, between Rhode-Island and Massachusetts.

APPENDIX.

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Note A—Page 21.

DEED OF THE CHIEF SACHEMS OF NARRAGANSETT TO ROGER WILLIAMS.

"At Narraganset, the 24th of the first month, commonly called March, the second year of the plantation or planting at Moshassuck, or Providence; Memorandum, that we, Canonicus and Miantinomo, the two chief sachems of Narraganset, having two years since sold unto Roger Williams the lands and meadows upon the two fresh rivers, called Moshassuck and Wanasquatucket, do now, by these presents, establish and confirm the bounds of these lands, from the river and fields of Pawtucket, the great hill of Notaquoncanot, on the northwest, and the town of Mashapaug, on the west. We also, in consideration of the many kindnesses and services he hath continually done for us, both with our friends of Massachusetts, as also at Connecticut, and Apaum, or Plymouth, we do freely give unto him all that land from those rivers reaching to Pawtuxet river; as also the grass and meadows upon the said Pawtuxet river. In witness whereof, we have hereunto set our hands.

The mark (a bow) of CANONICUS.
The mark (an arrow) of MIANTINOMO.

In the presence of
The mark of SOHASH.
The mark of ALSOMUNSIT.

"1639. Memorandum. 3d month, 9th day, this was all again confirmed by Miantinomo. He acknowledged, that he also [illegible] and gave up the streams of Pawtucket and Pawtuxet, without limits, we might have for our use of cattle.

Witness hereof,
ROGER WILLIAMS,
BENEDICT ARNOLD."

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Note B—Page 22.

AGREEMENT IN REGARD TO PAWTUXET LANDS.

October 8th, 1638.

"It is agreed, this day abovesaid, that all the meadow grounds at Pawtuxet, bounding upon the fresh river, on both sides, are to be

impropriated unto those thirteen persons, being now incorporated together in our town of Providence, viz: Ezekiel Holliman, Francis Weston, Roger Williams, Thomas Olney, Robert Cole, William Carpenter, William Harris, John Throckmorton, Richard Waterman, John Greene, Thomas James, William Arnold, Stukely Westcott; and to be equally divided among them, and every one to pay an equal proportion to raise up the sum of twenty pounds for the same; and if it shall come to pass, that some, or any one, of these thirteen persons aforesaid, do not pay or give satisfaction of his or their equal proportion of the aforesaid sum of twenty pounds, by this day eight weeks, which will be the 17th day of the 10th month next ensuing, then they or he shall leave their or his proportion of meadow grounds unto the rest of those thirteen persons, to be at their disposing, who shall make up the whole sum of twenty pounds, which is to be paid to Roger Williams."

This money was punctually paid on the 3d of December following, and was acknowledged as follows:—

"According to former agreement, I received of the neighbors abovesaid, the full sum of £18 11s. 3d. Per me,

ROGER WILLIAMS."

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Note C—Page 23.

DEED OF CONFIRMATION FROM ROGER WILLIAMS TO HIS ASSOCIATES,
SOMETIMES CALLED THE HISTORICAL DEED.

"Be it known unto all men by these presents, that I, Roger Williams, of the town of Providence, in the Naraganset Bay, in New-England, having, in the year one thousand six hundred thirty-four, and in the year one thousand six hundred thirty-five, had several treaties with Canonicus and Miantinomo, the two chief sachems of the Narraganset, and in the end purchased of them the lands and meadows upon the two fresh rivers called Moshassuck and Wanasquatucket, the two sachems having, by a deed, under their hands, two years after the sale thereof, established and confirmed the bounds of these lands from the rivers and fields of Pawtucket, the great hill of Notaquoncanot on the northwest, and the town of Mashapaug on the west, notwithstanding I had the frequent promise of Miantinomo, my kind friend, that it should not be land that I should want about these bounds mentioned, provided that I satisfied the Indians there inhabiting. I having made covenant of peaceable neighborhood with all the sachems and natives round about us, and having, of a sense of God's merciful Providence unto me in my distress, called the place Providence, I desired it might be for a shelter

for persons distressed for conscience. I then considering the condition of divers of my distressed countrymen, I communicated my said purchase unto my loving friends, John Throckmorton, William Arnold, William Harris, Stukely Westcott, John Greene, Senior, Thomas Olney, Senior, Richard Waterman, and others, who then desired to take shelter here with me, and in succession unto so many others as we should receive into the fellowship and society of enjoying and disposing of the said purchase; and besides the first that were admitted, our town records declare, that afterwards we received Chad Brown, William Field, Thomas Harris, Senior, William Wickenden, Robert Williams, Gregory Dexter, and others, as our town book declares; and whereas, by God's merciful assistance, I was the procurer of the purchase, not by monies nor payment, the natives being so shy and jealous that monies could not do it, but by that language, acquaintance and favor with the natives, and other advantages, which it pleased God to give me, and also bore the charges and venture of all the gratuities, which I gave to the great sachems and other sachems and natives round about us, and lay engaged for a loving and peaceable neighborhood with them, to my great charge and travel; it was therefore thought fit by some loving friends, that I should receive some loving consideration and gratuity, and it was agreed between us, that every person that should be admitted into the fellowship of enjoying land and disposing of the purchase, should pay thirty shillings unto the public stock; and first, about thirty pounds should be paid unto myself, by thirty shillings a person, as they were admitted; this sum I received, and in love to my friends, and with respect to a town and place of succor for the distressed as aforesaid, I do acknowledge the said sum and payment as full satisfaction; and whereas in the year one thousand six hundred and thirty-seven, so called, I delivered the deed subscribed by the two aforesaid chief sachems, so much thereof as concerneth the aforementioned lands, from myself and from my heirs, unto the whole number of the purchasers, with all my power, right and title therein, reserving only unto myself one single share equal unto any of the rest of that number; I now again, in a more formal way, under my hand and seal, confirm my former resignation of that deed of the lands aforesaid, and bind myself, my heirs, my executors, my administrators and assigns, never to molest any of the said persons already received, or hereafter to be received, into the society of purchasers, as aforesaid; but that they, their heirs, executors, administrators and assigns, shall at all times quietly and peaceably enjoy the premises and every part thereof, and I do further by these presents bind myself, my heirs, my executors, my administrators and assigns, never to lay any claim, nor cause any claim to be laid, to any of the lands aforementioned, or unto any part or parcel thereof, more than unto my own single share, by virtue or pretence of any former bargain, sale or mortgage whatsoever,

or jointures, thirds or entails made by me, the said Roger Williams, or of any other person, either for, by, through or under me. In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and seal, the twentieth day of December, in the present year one thousand six hundred sixty-one.

“ROGER WILLIAMS. (Seal.)

“Signed, sealed and delivered in the presence of us, Thomas Smith, Joseph Carpenter. Memorandum, the words, of the purchase, were interlined before these presents were sealed. I, Mary Williams, wife unto Roger Williams, do assent unto the premises. Witness my hand, this twentieth day of December, in this present year, one thousand six hundred sixty-one.

The mark of (M. W.) MARY WILLIAMS.

“Acknowledged and subscribed before me,

“WILLIAM FIELD, *Assistant.*

“Enrolled, April the 6th, 1662, pr. me,

“THOMAS OLNEY, *Junr., Town Clerk.*”

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Note D—Page 23.

DEED FROM ROGER WILLIAMS TO HIS TWELVE ORIGINAL ASSOCIATES.

“*Providence, 8th of the 8th month, 1638, (so called.)*

“Memorandum, that I, Roger Williams, having formerly purchased of Canonicus and Miantinomo, this our situation, or plantation, of New-Providence, viz. the two fresh rivers, Wanasquatucket and Moshassuck, and the ground and meadows thereupon; in consideration of thirty pounds received from the inhabitants of said place, do freely and fully pass, grant and make over equal right and power of enjoying and disposing of the same grounds and lands unto my loving friends and neighbors, Stukely Westcott, William Arnold, Thomas James, Robert Cole, John Greene, John Throckmorton, William Harris, William Carpenter, Thomas Olney, Francis Weston, Richard Waterman, Ezekiel Holliman, and such others as the major part of us shall admit into the same fellowship of vote with us:—As also I do freely make and pass over equal right and power of enjoying and disposing of the lands and grounds reaching from the aforesaid rivers unto the great river Pawtuxet, with the grass and meadows thereupon, which was so lately given and granted by the aforesaid sachems to me. Witness my hand,

ROGER WILLIAMS.”

Note E—Page 55.

The statement of Mr. Eddy will be found among the notes appended to Walsh's Review, pp. 429 to 435.

The great object of Mr. Eddy was to show that this statement of Chalmers was untrue, and to vindicate the fathers of this State from the aspersion which was thus cast upon their memories, and in this he was eminently successful. Whatever imputation may rest upon the Rhode-Island Legislature from 1719 to 1745, it is very clear that those who established, in Rhode-Island, the great principle of liberty of conscience, were consistent to the last: their sun went down with the same radiance with which it arose.

The manuscript Digest of the Rhode-Island Laws of 1719, contained not the obnoxious exception, nor was it to be found in any of the preceding records of the State. It is found in the printed Digest of 1745, and is there stated as having passed in 1663-4. Mr. Eddy shows how this mistake arose.

But we should be careful (in our anxiety to remove what has been called a blot upon our history, and to show that it rested not upon the fathers of this colony) that we do not, in our sensitiveness, overlook the true character of the act which appears in the Digest of 1745. It will appear that it did not conflict with the liberty of conscience secured by the Charter of 1663-4. This very act provides that all “rights and privileges granted to this colony by his Majesty's Charter, be entirely kept and preserved to all his Majesty's subjects residing in or belonging to the same.” Roman Catholics were not by this law prevented from coming into this colony, or subjected to any penalty or prosecution on account of their religion whilst remaining within it, but had free liberty to enjoy the same without being in “any wise (in the words of the Charter) molested, punished, disquieted, or called in question for any differences in opinion in matters of religion.” They were disqualified simply from electing and being elected to office, and were therefore no more subject to persecution than those who possess not the estate required to be admitted freemen. In Rhode-Island a man may be a free inhabitant, entitled to all the benefits of protection from the laws, and the full enjoyment of life, liberty, property and religion, without being a *freeman*. Before he can have any voice in town affairs, or in the political elections of the State, he must be admitted a *freeman* by a vote of the town wherein he dwells. In February, 1783, an act passed which provided that “*Roman Catholic* citizens being of competent estates, and of civil conversation, and acknowledging and paying obedience to the civil magistrate, might be admitted freemen and have liberty to choose and be chosen civil or military officers.”

The following was omitted in its proper place, and is here inserted as a most interesting fact in our early history. It is one of the earliest acts on record, in American or European history, in mitigation of African Slavery. It was passed May 19, 1652, by the government of Providence and Warwick, whilst separated from Newport and Portsmouth, by Coddington's obstruction. It is in these words :

"Whereas there is a common course practised among Englishmen to bring *Negers*, to the end they may have them for service or slaves forever ; for the preventing of such practices among us let it be ordered, that no *black-mankind*, or white being formed by covenant bond or otherwise, to serve any man or his assigns longer than ten years (until they come to be twenty-four years of age, if they be taken in under fourteen) from the time of their coming within the liberties of this colony ; and at the end or term of ten years to set them free as the manner is with the English servants. And that man that will not let them go free, or shall sell him away elsewhere, to the end that they may be enslaved to others for a longer time, he or they shall forfeit to the colony forty pounds."

The author would here acknowledge the essential aid he received, in preparing the preceding discourse, from the Historical Collections of Henry Bull, Esq. of Newport, which have been, (since January 3d, 1832,) and still continue to be published in the "Rhode-Island Republican," printed at Newport. Mr. Bull is a lineal descendant of Governor Bull, who accepted of the government under the circumstances mentioned in page 61. We hope he will persevere and finish the labors he has begun ; they will be of great service to the future historian of Rhode-Island.

Erratum.—Page 13, line 7th, for "should not break," read "*should break forth at once.*"