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HEREDITY AND
EARLY ENVIRONMENT OF
JOHN WILLIAMS

"THE REDEEMED CAPTIVE"

GEORGE SHELDON

John
(Williams)
- AN Sheldon



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Half Century at the Bay

1636-1686

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AND
EARLY ENVIRONMENT
OF
JOHN WILLIAMS

“The Redeemed Captive”

BY
GEORGE SHELDON



W. B. CLARKE CO.
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1905

DEDICATION.

To one who is my strong right hand, one in full sympathy with my aims, and an inspiration to execution; whose unceasing tenderness and devotion fills my years with passing peace, this little work is lovingly dedicated.

DEERFIELD, July 29, 1905.

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Deerfield
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HEREDITY AND EARLY ENVIRONMENT OF JOHN WILLIAMS,

“THE REDEEMED CAPTIVE.”

CHAPTER I.

ROBERT WILLIAMS.—EMIGRATION.—THE “ROSE OF YARMOUTH.”—THE EXILES.—ANTICIPATION.—REMINISCENCE.—NORWICH.—LAUD.—BISHOP WREN.—GENEALOGY.

ROBERT WILLIAMS of Norwich, County Norfolk, England, came over in the “Rose of Yarmouth” in 1637, with his wife Elizabeth and children, with neighbors and friends. They embarked in April, and arrived in Boston June 20. There were about one hundred and twenty people in this company. It is a question whether part of them did not come on the “John and Dorothy,” but it is generally assumed that they all came on the “Rose.” There were seventeen married couples, with fifty-two children, one single man, two widows, and three single women. There were besides fourteen men-servants or apprentices and eight maid-servants. These soon married, and became the heads of families, with no special class distinctions. We are surprised to find that only five of the emigrants were farmers. There were five weavers, all from Norwich, two carpenters, two shoe-

makers, one locksmith, one mariner, and one grocer. His occupation, according to the old meaning of the term, was an importer of foreign fruits, spices, etc. These all left England by "vertu of a commission granted to Mr. Thomas Mayhew, gentleman," whatever that may mean.

From Norwich there came, besides Robert and Elizabeth Williams and four children, John and Elizabeth Baker and three children; Nicholas and Bridget Busbie and four children; Michael and Sarah Metcalf and nine children; John and Elizabeth Pers (Pierce) with four children; William and Elizabeth Ludkin and one child; Francis and Lidida Lawes and one child; William and Anne Nickerson and four children; Samuel and Joane Dix and two children. Here was a colony of sixty-three people from one town, leaving their native land for an indeterminate home in a new and unknown country. The average age of the adults was forty-one years,—an age when people with families are supposed to be deeply rooted in the soil. If we ask, what force could have torn them from the banks of the swiftly flowing Wensum, the famous flower gardens and chalky cliffs of the fine old city of Norwich, we get scant personal information. In the case of one of the passengers, Michael Metcalf, we learn that after enduring the religious tyranny of the Church of England until it became intolerable, and despairing of getting out of Norwich with his family, he had in 1636 escaped alone to London, where he embarked for New England. Fortunately for him, however, the vessel, after buffeting the stormy waves of the Atlantic for two months, turned homeward again; for the next spring he had a license to sail with his whole family.

It is not difficult to picture the sturdy mechanics of Norwich gathering in groups on the deck of the "Rose,"

as with prow turned westward she furrowed the smooth summer sea, while they discuss the situation and the outlook. There must have been sadness and regret at the enforced breaking of old associations and old ties, notwithstanding the goodly number in company; but a note of exultation ran through all at the new sense of freedom and expansion of their minds as they looked out at the boundless untrammelled space about them. Here was room to breathe at will, and to safely express their satisfaction that Bishop Wren and his oppressions were each hour farther and farther behind. As to what lay before them, they had no fears; the hand that was leading them out of bondage would provide.

The clusters of mothers, with an eye upon their toddling children, are in earnest conference upon what they have left behind and what was before them. What of their household goods? Had they brought on board or left behind those which would be of the most advantage to them in their new homes? What would their new homes be like? In any event, their most precious possessions were secure,—their children and the right to think for themselves. With what awe would Samuel Williams, Thomas Metcalf, and the older boys watch with bated breath the agile sailors in the dizzy rigging, as they swung upon the halyards or balanced upon the yard arms, or, standing by the low bulwarks, they watched the waves and the denizens of the sea, calling their mothers to see the sights, and plying with questions those as ignorant as themselves of the wonders of the deep!

How the heart of Elizabeth Williams would have swelled with pride and thankfulness, could she have foreseen that she was to be the fountain-head of an endless flow of gospel ministers, who were to occupy a prominent

place in the history of a New England to which they were speeding, one of whom was to be for forty years the leading figure of the old historic town of Deerfield! Curiously enough, there were others on board the "Rose" who became connected with the same town. Tommy Metcalf, the playfellow of Sammy Williams, was in due time to be one of her earliest land holders; Ephraim Ropes, son of John, the emigrant, gave his life for his country in the defence of Deerfield during Philip's War; and Edward, the son of John Towne, was a soldier under the ill-fated Captain Thomas Lothrop in 1675, and was laid to his last rest in Deerfield soil with the flower of Essex. Sad indeed would have been the heart of Alice Roper, had she the foreknowledge that both her twin sons, Benjamin and Ephraim, would fall in Indian combat on the banks of old Pocumtuck. Thomas, a grandson of John Baker the grocer, who settled in Roxbury, was a playmate of John Williams, and but four weeks younger. He must have been of heroic blood, for at the age of eleven years he was in the Great Swamp Fight, December 19, 1675, and was killed with Captain Wadsworth in the fatal ambush at Sudbury the next year. Thomas Lincoln, who came out from Norwich as a servant, settled in Hingham, and became the ancestor of two New England governors.

Could we have overheard the talk of the leading exiles grouped at the stern of the "Rose" on one of those calm June days, as they were discussing their grievous condition at home, or, in later years, the same subject recalled among those gathered in the shoe shop of Robert Williams at Roxbury, where young John Williams was an earnest listener, we should have learned the reasons which caused them to leave the prosperous city for the deso-

late wilderness,—learned that it was to breathe an air untainted by oppression, not to benefit their financial condition.

While William Laud was Archbishop of Canterbury, in 1635, he had found, as he said, something in Norwich “much out of order”; and he appointed Matthew Wren as Bishop in the district covering that town, and directed him “to take care of it.” Wren did this so effectually that, says Laud, “in 2½ years he roused the Puritans to a dangerous pitch of religious fury.” He had so “passionately and furiously proceeded against them,” says Clarendon, “that many left the kingdom, to the lessening of the wealthy manufacture.” Of these were the Norwich exiled passengers, now comparing notes of the past and planning for the future on the deck of the “Rose.” At the confabs to be held in later years in the shoe shop of his grandfather, young Williams could hear that which we could not learn from the talk on the “Rose,”—that, when the fates willed, the wheel turned; and Archbishop Laud lost his head upon the block, while the impetuous Wren languished for some two score years in the Tower.

John Williams, it will be seen, did not fail to take in useful lessons from the reminiscences of Grandfather Robert and his cronies. He saw that it was the intolerance of the Church of England which forced these men and women to pay the price of expatriation for the opportunity of worshipping the Deity according to the prompting of the conscience. Their forefathers had blindly bowed to authority, but for them there was at least a rift in the cloud of superstition, and for them a new day was beginning to dawn. He saw that, despite the efforts of the mother church, old things were passing away. It is true that the change was gradual, but the rift in the cloud never entirely closed again.

Little can be learned about Robert Williams, the immigrant. He settled in Roxbury in 1637, and seems to have pursued the even tenor of his way, working at his trade of shoemaking. He and his wife are both enrolled as members of the church of Eliot, the apostle. There is one incident in this connection worth noting. It is a matter of record that for some service to the town Mr. Williams was "granted two acres of land." He subsequently petitioned the town to take it back, as it occasioned him "too much worldly care." The presumption is that he was relieved of this care, and left to peg away at his bench, and meditate upon things spiritual. He died September 1, 1693. His wife, Elizabeth Stalham, died July 28, 1674. He married, November 3, 1675, a second wife, Widow Margaret Fearing, of Hingham. She died December 22, 1690. He married, third, Widow Martha Parke, who died in 1708. His children were:—

Elizabeth, b. in England; m., 1644, Richard Robinson.

Deborah, b. in England; m., 1648, John Turner.

John, b. in England, died *s. p.* October 6, 1668.

Samuel, b. in England, 1632.

Isaac, b. in Roxbury, September 1, 1638.

Stephen, b. in Roxbury, November 8, 1640; m. Sarah Wise, sister of Rev. John Wise.

Samuel, the fourth child, born in England, 1632, came over, as I have said, with his father in 1637. He settled in Roxbury; and, like his father, was a shoemaker. He became a large land holder, and was prominent in the affairs of the town. He joined the church at the age of fifteen, was elected deacon, and in 1677 was made Ruling Elder. He died September 28, 1698. He married, March 2, 1653-4, Theoda, daughter of Deacon William and Martha Parke. Their children were:—

Elizabeth, b. February 1, 1654-5; d. March 10, 1654-5.

Samuel, b. April 27, 1656, bapt. the same day; m. Sarah May, of Roxbury, and, second, Sarah Adams, of Medfield.

Martha, b. April 28, 1657; d. March 6, 1660-1.

Elizabeth, b. February 11, 1659-60; m. Stephen Paine, of Rehoboth.

Theoda, July 27, 1662; d. of small-pox March 8, 1678-9.

John, b. December 10, 1664, "The Redeemed Captive."

Ebenezer, b. December 6, 1666; m. Mary Wheeler, of Stonington, Conn., second, Sarah Hammond, of Newton.

Deborah, b. November 20, 1668; m. Joseph Warren, of Boston, and so became ancestor of General Joseph Warren, of Bunker Hill fame.

Martha, b. May 19, 1671; m. Jonathan Hunt, of Northampton and Deerfield.

Abigail, b. July 12, 1674; m., May 26, 1698, Experience Porter, of Hadley, and Mansfield, Conn.; was ancestor of the celebrated Storrs family. She died April 29, 1765.

Parke, b. January 11, 1677; m. Priscilla Payson, of Dorchester.

Two children born and died, 1681-1683.

It was in this circle that John Williams was nurtured until fate cast his lot in the far off valley of the Pocumtuck.

CHAPTER II.

TRANSFORMATION.—PERSONAL.—THE NEW ENGLAND PURITAN.—LEADING TOWARDS THE LIGHT.—THE PURITAN IN THE VAN.—PERSECUTION.—DUDLEY'S EPITAPH.—RELIGIOUS WARS.—WITCHCRAFT.—THE REACTION.

WHOSOEVER studies the early history of Deerfield, or gives it even a casual glance, will find one figure which always stands out clearly in the foreground, always appealing to the heart and to the imagination, always inciting to further research. This figure is the Reverend John Williams, well known in all New England history to-day as "The Redeemed Captive." Old Deerfield and John Williams seem to be one and inseparable. It is difficult to think of him in any light which disconnects him from the scene of his labors, trials, and disasters; hard to realize that he ever lived anywhere else, ever had a childhood or boyhood in a far-away village; hard to realize that, when, in his mature years, he travelled to the Bay, he was visiting the place of his birth, the environment of his youth and early manhood; that, when upon occasion he preached in Roxbury, or in Boston before the governor and council, he was confronting in the congregation the faces of his early companions and the gray hair of those to whom he had looked up with reverence since, as a trembling lad, he first stood in their august presence,—men, we may note, who have filled a large space in our colonial history, and who were well known beyond the seas. Even now, after all the study given to my theme, it is only by a wrench of the imagination that I can bring before me John Williams, the boy, living in

Roxbury, and growing up to know personally so many of the leading characters in the story of early New England; the very men who moulded the minds and guided the actions of the times, and who were largely instrumental in making New England what it is,—men who, in fact, shaped the policy of Church and State,—Dudley, Eliot, Willard, Danforth, Sewall, Wise, Shepard, Leverett, Weld, Mather, and a host of their compeers. Such a boy seems to me hardly more than a myth. But, as we go on, he will become more and more a flesh-and-blood reality.

It is not alone because John Williams was born and nurtured in Roxbury that my personal interest in that settlement is strong and abiding. Four of my own ancestors were familiar with her primeval forests, her pebbled rocks, her sparkling springs, her ebbing and flowing waters; and there another first saw the light. A daughter of the latter was the pride of the "Old Indian House" after her advent there as a bride in 1703. She was no doubt warmly welcomed by John Williams, the young minister, who lived almost next door. Many incidents or events turning up in a study of Deerfield history, lead directly or indirectly back to old Roxbury. Robert and his son Samuel were both shoemakers by trade, and both lived until John, the grandson and son, went to Deerfield. Martha Williams, a sister of John, married Jonathan Hunt, of Deerfield; Abigail, another sister, married Experience Porter, of Hadley. As William Williams, his cousin and classmate, settled in the ministry at Hatfield, John in his western home did not lack for kindred and friends from his native Roxbury.

In Johnson's "Wonder-working Providences," published in 1654, we may read a description of "Rocksbury,"

which, he says, "is filled with a very laborious people, whose labors the Lord hath so blest that in roome of dismall Swamps and tearing Bushes they have goodly Fruit trees, fruitful Fields and gardens, their Heard of Cowes, Oxen and other young Cattle of that kind about 350, and dwelling-houses neere 120. Their streetes are large, and some fayer Houses, yet they built their House for Church Assembly destitute and unbeautified, with other buildings. The Church of Christ here is increased to about 120 persons, their first Teaching Elder called to Office is Mr. Eliot a young man, at his coming thither of a Cheerful Spirit, walking unblamable, of a Godly conversation, apt to teach both with his own flock, and the poor Indians doth appear, whose language he learned purposely to help them to the knowledge of God in Christ, frequently Preaching in their Wigwams, and catechizing their children."

The hamlet of "Rocksbury" was located at the outlet of the Boston Neck, and for a new settlement it was compactly built. In giving the acts of the ministers and the church, the acts and the character of the people of the town are given. Church and State, abjured at home in England, are practically one here.

The first meetinghouse of Roxbury was in character like those of the other settlements of contemporary times, a low, barn shaped structure, without spire or other ornament, the walls rough boarded, the roof covered with thatch. There was no ceiling or plastering, no seats but rude benches; oiled paper and wooden shutters instead of glass and sash windows; no fireplace or other means of warming. This house, built at an early date, was repaired from time to time, as needs befell; but in outward appearance it was essentially the same when on one

day in cold December, 1664, an infant was carried into it, and baptized by the name of John Williams. This style of building was in accordance with the Puritanic idea: both were to expand very slowly.

It is a trite but a true and well-accepted saying that the child is the father of the man. It is no less true that the child is the offspring of environment, and that environment, in its broadest sense, is the mind of the people, whether written on parchment as laws, or permeating the atmosphere at a given time and place as custom. Heredity must, indeed, in the lapse of time, count as a large factor; but it must always take a subordinate place. The boy of the fifteenth century must of necessity have had a widely divergent environment from one who first opened his eyes on the seventeenth century. Consequently, each must have a different development, and should be judged by a different standard, and neither from our own twentieth-century point of observation. Only so can justice be done, and our conclusions have weight and value. As the Puritanic spirit was a potent factor in the environment of John Williams, this will be considered at some length.

The Puritan of New England has been set up by many a writer as a standard example of superstition and bigotry, and as such subjected to reproach or ridicule, according to the animus of the critics, not all of whom have lived on American soil. But whence came the men so stigmatized! It is well to bear in mind that the leaders among them, the men who framed the laws and ordinances, those who built the obnoxious platforms of the Church, who persecuted Ann Hutchinson and Roger Williams, and banished the Quakers,—the Puritans *par excellence*,—were all born and grew up to manhood in

Old England. These men received their education and training in England. They were made what they were by their environment, being the blood-and-bone sons of Old England. Many of them were graduated from the highest educational institutions in England. They were in no sense the product of New England soil, and any shaft aimed at them as such must miss its mark by three thousand miles. It was Governor Thomas Dudley, born in England, in 1576, and not his son, Governor Joseph, born in New England, in 1640, who wrote his own epitaph, from which I quote:—

“Dimme eyes, deafe eares, cold stomach shew
 My dissolution is in view.
 Eleven times seven years lived have I,
 And now God calls, I willing dye. . . .
 Fare well, dear wife, children and friends.
Hate Heresy. Make blessed ends.
 Bear Poverty. Live with good men.
 So shall we meet with joy agen.
 Let men of God in courts and churches watch
 O'er such as do a *toleration* hatch,
 Lest y^e ill egg bring forth a cockatrice,
 To pay you all with heresy and vice,
 If men be left and otherwise combine
 Mine epitaph 's I died *no libertine.*”

“Libertine” meant Familist. Heresy meant what it always means to him using the word,—a doctrine not agreeing with his own.

No one will deny that the founders of New England were persecutors, or that in this practice they were actuated by an earnest desire to glorify God and to secure their own eternal salvation. It seems strange at first thought that these men, who were driven from the mother

land by persecution, should "set up the same trade" here; but a deeper consideration shows us that they were, after all, but the heirs of all the ages; and that they only pursued the policy indoctrinated by both heredity and environment. They had, indeed, a glimpse of the dawning light of free thought, but the sunrise was not for them.

One lesson taught by the study of history is, that in every age the progressive men—those first to discover and proclaim any new light in religion or in science—are the men to be persecuted. By this standard the Puritans were the advanced element in Old England, to say nothing of other evidence. We also read from the records of the past that those people who suffered martyrdom for the glory of God and their own salvation, when raised to power, became themselves persecutors to the same end,—the glory of God, and their own salvation. Those who unflinchingly gave up their lives in the fires of Smithfield in testimony of their faith, and those who applied the torch were both equally seeking the honor and glory of the Deity, and striving to secure His favor personally. Both were petitioners for a happy hereafter. Was there any real difference in the pious zeal to promote pure religion between those who instigated the red massacre of Saint Bartholomew, and those who returned retaliatory strokes of vengeance, while following the white plume of Henry of Navarre! Was not that human brute called the Duke of Alva seeking the glory of God and his own salvation, as well as the ill-fated William the Silent! Were not the fortitude of the heretic on the rack, and the hardness of the wretch who turned the screw, both born of the same desire and the same hope! Was not the Crusader, whose stout battle-axe cleft the turban of the Saracen, and the Paynim, whose keen seymetar found its way through the

joints in the armor of the invader, both actuated by the same motive,—to glorify their God and to secure each his own salvation!

The so-called religious wars have been exceeded by no others in real barbarity. In these, hundreds of towns and cities have been given over to fire and sword; millions of men, women, and children have been indiscriminately slaughtered,—all in the name of God and for His honor. And, when the greed for plunder, rapine, and murder, had been satiated, then from cathedral or conventicle, as the case might be, went up with varying pomp and ceremony thanksgiving and praise to that God in whose name the victory had been won and whose foes had been destroyed.

This is a black picture. But see it we must. It is the background against which we must watch the march of the centuries. Very slowly, but in time, the background grows lighter. But the question is, and our lesson is, how, except in degree, does this aspect of the past differ from the present?

With such a background, such an heredity, and such an environment, can any one consider it a strange or unexpected thing that our Puritan forbears kept up the rôle of thinking that whosoever differed from them in the forms of religious belief, be it ever so little, must be counted and treated as heretics; that their suppression would be glorifying God, which was the “chief end of man”? On the contrary, would not its omission be the strange and marvellous thing?—the advance in a day, which ten succeeding generations have not yet fully achieved. Instead of condemnation for intolerance is it not a cause for congratulation and a ground of respect for the Puritan that the more violent forms of persecution so soon gave way to more tolerant conditions, and that

their seed has eventually led the world towards the emancipation of the human mind from the bonds of superstition. Was not this progress inaugurated by their being cut off from the old English environment and finding themselves nearer to nature and nature's God! Instead of censuring the imported Puritan, let us give him credit for blazing the path which led to brighter fields than had been his inheritance.

Yes, it is true that the New England Puritan in the second generation banished Quakers and hanged witches; and it becomes us to follow the example of brave old Samuel Sewall. When that hideous epidemic craze had passed, the misguided judge stood up with bowed head before the whole congregation in the Old South Meetinghouse, and confessed with shame, sorrow, and repentance, the sins of his actions during the fleeting witchcraft madness. So let us, before the whole world, acknowledge these sad stains on the escutcheon of the Puritan. At the same time we have the right to point out the fact, that in the Old World, from which their fathers came, hundreds of so-called witches were hanged or burned or drowned, to one who suffered in New England; and the practice continued for a hundred years after the last case on record here. Furthermore, there is another point to be considered in making up the case on the matter of witchcraft. It does not appear that in England there was ever any public acknowledgment of error or any public restitution, unless modified laws be so considered; while in the Old Bay Colony there was public recantation of the Judicial and Legislative action during that horrible dream, and, so far as possible, restitution was made to the survivors in the families of the victims by the removal of attainders, and by the bestowal of largess.

Trivial as this action may appear in comparison with the offence, yet in the compass of two decades, it was an advance in lifting the burden of superstition unparalleled probably in the history of any country or any community; and the lifted curtain never again darkened the land. Have the defamers of the Puritans ever given them due credit for this advanced position in the history of the world? If so, I have so far failed to discover the evidence.

It was during this period of reaction that the first ordained minister of the Deerfield church attained his manhood; and, although born under lowering skies, we shall see the effect of this movement on his character.

CHAPTER III.

THEOLOGY.—APOSTLE ELIOT.—SIGNS AND WONDERS.—
ARMY WORM.—SYNOD.—ANABAPTISTS.—TIDINGS FROM
CONNECTICUT.—CAUSE AND EFFECT.—ELECTION.—
A POPULAR HYMN.—IDEA OF THE DEITY.

JOHN WILLIAMS was born in Roxbury, and was baptized by Saint John, the Apostle Eliot, December 18, 1664. At that time the opinions and the spirit brought from England by the emigrants still held the people fast. The dominant element in the heart of their religion, in theory and practice, was literally the fear of God. Its active demonstration was in the seeking and following ways to placate His wrath, and turn away His manifest resentment. They believed with all their souls that the sins or shortcomings of individuals were punished by the infliction of calamities on the whole people: it might be a flood or a drought, a season of cold or remarkable heat, a wasting epidemic, a conflagration, or an earthquake; a blight on growing grain or a visitation of worms or grasshoppers. Whichever it might be, the remedial measure was the same. It was in ordering a day of public humiliation, fasting, and prayer. The service was in abstaining from food from sunrise to sunset, and supplication for forgiveness of their earthliness and transgressions, and for a change in the mind of the Deity; in fact, a readjustment of the laws of nature for their especial benefit. This seemed to Eliot and our fathers to be the only known way to appease the anger of God and bring Him into a more merciful frame of mind. Apparently, this change was sometimes brought about.

Then all the people rejoiced, and were exceeding glad; and the Elders made a note of it on the records of the Church. Extracts from the Church Records of Roxbury will show the conditions I have indicated better than any summary I can make. As an instance of cause and effect I quote: "1645. . . . this yeare we had sundry strange & prodigious signes, a storme of haile at Boston w^r the stones were as big or bigger than muskett bullets and fell terribly.

The week after the like was at Dedham, w^r some were in fashion like cross barr cannon shott, oth^{rs} like musket bullets, there was also a fierce hirricane at Brantree soone after." This was a warning of trouble. "The Narragansets resolved a warr y^s yeare, but through mercy a peace was made."

"1646. This yeare about the end of the 5^t month we had a very strang hand of God vpon vs, y^t vpon a suddaine, innumerable armys of Catterpillers filled the Country all over all the English plantations, w^{ch} devoured some whole meadows of grasse, & greatly devoured barly, being the most greene, & tender corne, eating off all the blades & beards, but left the Corne, only many ears they quite eat of by byting the greene straw asunder below the ear so y^t barly was generally halfe spoyled, likewise they much hurt wheat by eating the blads off, but wheate had the lesse hurt because it was a little forwarder than barly & so harder, & dryer, & they the lesse medled wth it. As for rie, it was so hard and neere ripe y^t they touched it not, but above all graines they devoured Syllly oats. And in some places they fell upon Indian Corne & quite devoured it, in other places they touched it not; they would goe crosse highways by 1000. Much prayer there was made to God about it, wth fasting in divers places; & the Lord heard, & on a suddaine tooke y^m all away againe

in all p^{ts} of the country, to the wonderment of all men; it was of the Lord, for it was done suddainely.”

This is an exact description of the Army Worm. If this was the first appearance of this pest, no modern farmer who has had to cope with it will wonder at the pious conclusions of Eliot; for, notwithstanding all the deductions of science, it would seem that nothing less than omnipotent power could cause such sudden disappearance.

In 1661 the Pastors and Elders of the New England churches were troubling themselves seriously about the rite of baptism. The question was, which is the most pleasing to the Deity, immersion or sprinkling. A solution of this important matter was sought by calling together a Synod composed of the Ministers and Ruling Elders of the churches about the Bay. This body was to decide and declare the will of the Lord in this matter.

The Synod met March 11, 1662, and sat until the 21st, when it adjourned to June 10. As might have been expected, things did not go on altogether without friction; and some people declared that the Lord was not satisfied with the proceedings of the Synod so far, and had manifested His displeasure by withholding the usual spring rains. But these interpreters of God's will appear to have been mistaken. Let us hear Rev. Samuel Danforth, colleague of Mr. Eliot:—

“1662. It pleased the L^d this spring to exercise y^e country wth a very severe drought w^{ch} some were so rash as to impute to the sitting of y^e Synod; but he was pleased to bear witness ags^t y^r rashness; For no sooner was y^e Synod mett June 10 but they agreed to set y^e nex^t day apart to seek his favourable presence & to ask raine, & y^e day following G^d sent showers from heaven & from that day following visited y^e Land wth seasonable showers of rain week after week vnto y^e harvest.”

This shower of June 11 was considered a direct answer to the action of the Synod the day before, a prompt recognition of its status and approval of its work. At the session held in September, after the abundant sprinkling of the summer, the Synod found no difficulty in deciding and proclaiming, that sprinkling was the form of baptism most pleasing to the Most High. Those who opposed this method, by word or deed, were enemies of God, inimical to the State, and disturbers of the peace in the Church, and must be dealt with accordingly. It shows the influence of the clergy, that laws backing this revelation were soon placed upon the statute book.

Something went wrong again. In June, 1665, Mr. Danforth makes record: "This moneth y^e lord smot our wheat both winter & summer w^t Mildew." June 22, there was "a Public Fast." As we find no note made of the effect of this observance, may we not conclude that the "Mildew" did not abate in consequence of it. But neither do we find any appearance of a lack of faith in the proposed remedy.

In July the disasters multiplied. Records are made of a fatal powder explosion, fatal strokes of lightning in several places, a whirlwind and water spout: a "storm of Haile some as big as an egge, some long & flatt, some Cornered, some neer as big as a man's fist." "July & August. A great Drought w^{ch} burnt up y^e pastures & threatned the Indian Corn." Mr. Danforth continued, as apparent cause and effect:—

"The Anabaptists gathered y^ms into a church, prophesied one by one, & some one amongst y^m administred y^e Lords supper, after he was regularly excommunicated by y^e ch. at Charlestown. They also set up a lecture at Drinkers house, once a fortnight." For these rank

heretical proceedings "they were admonished by y^o Court of Assistants." But even this did not have the desired effect upon the Lord, and an earthquake was sent, and another "great Storm of Winde." The Churches now took up the matter. They made it hot for the heretics at home, and in December "y^o Churches in y^e Bay set upon a Course of Fasting and prayer." April 5, 1666, "All the churches in this Jurisdiction kept a solemn day of fasting & Prayer." But the Baptists were not yet squelched, and—

"It pleased God this Summer to arm y^o Caterpillers aga^t vs w^{ch} did much damage in our Orchards, and to exercise y^o Bay with a severe drought." The general April fast was an evident failure, and an individual campaign was inaugurated.

"The Churches in y^o Bay sought y^o L^d by Fasting & Prayer, our Church of Roxbury began y^o 19th of the 4^m [June 19, 1666]. The L^d gave rain y^o next day. The rest of y^o Churches in like manner besought y^o Lord 21st of 4^m. And it pleased God send rain more plentifully on y^o 23d day following." Possibly this matter was overdone in their estimation, for "It pleased God that our wheat was Mildewed & blasted this year also." The wrath of God was still unappeased. Dreadful fires, distempers, death of eminent men, threatened invasion by the French and the Dutch, hurricanes, an earthquake, and finally a visitation of the small-pox are recorded, "which greatly Encreased in the Winter & proved very afflictive & mortal vnto many."

"11.12^m 66 [Feb. 11, 1666-7]. Tidings came to vs from Connecticut, how that on y^o 15th of 10^m 66 Sergeant Heart y^o son of Deacon Heart and his wife & six children, were all burnt in their House at Farmington, no man know-

ing how the fire was kindled, neither did any of y^o Neighbors see y^o fire till it was past remedy. The Church there had kept a Fast at this mans house 2 dayes before." Two other fires with loss of life are noted in the next items.

It is not easy to understand the spirit in which the accounts of the two events at Farmington, the terrible disaster following so closely on the pious fast, should be spread on the records of the Roxbury church. Certainly there was nothing to encourage the practice of fasting. It may be that these disastrous events were held up by the pastor as proofs of Divine displeasure, and to incite his people to a more earnest observance of religious duties and more fervency in giving Him praise and glory; and possibly more active measures against the heretics. If the latter, Captain Turner and his fellow Baptists had the full benefit of the exhortation.

March 26, 1668, there was "a publick Fast throughout y^o Jurisdiction appointed by y^o Council." A week later this was followed by an earthquake, and something more must be done. So,

April 14, "A publick Disputation by order of y^o Council for y^o Conviction of" certain Quakers to show the public, which had much sympathy for them, "that their practice is not justifiable by y^o word of God, nor to be allowed by y^o government of this Jurisdiction." This "Disputation" turned out to be an *ex parte* broadside from the pulpit upon the heads of the schismatics; and June 29 they were banished by an edict of the General Court. Strange as it may seem, the Lord was not yet appeased. May 16, "There were many prodigies seen in y^o heaven in y^o night before y^o Lords day by 500 people in this form †. This spring was a time of much infirmity & sickness, many were visited with feavers & some

dyed." This record was supposedly made as showing cause and effect.

The righteousness of any calamity "it pleased God" to inflict on the individual or the community, in spite of all the fasting and prayer, was accepted as altogether just and well deserved. There was no murmuring or complaint. This trust in the Most High never faltered, and it was to the Puritans their staff and stay.

In 1668 an event occurred in Roxbury which must have moved the people deeply. John Eliot, Jr., the son of their sainted pastor, a young man of rare talent and of high promise, born and bred among them, now the first minister of Newton, had fallen by the wayside, leaving a young widow with two babes. What will be the record of this deplorable and untimely loss? This and nothing more, in the handwriting of Samuel Danforth, the colleague of John Eliot, the father: "13th 8^m 68. Mr. John Eliot jun. Pastor to y^e Church at Cambridge village rested from his labors."

In sickness the minister was called before the doctor. Prayer was more relied upon than medical skill. Did the patient die, it was God's will. Did the sick one recover, God was given new glory and honor before the congregation for His great mercy.

With the deeper thought of to-day, it is hard to understand that such a belief could give our fathers strength and comfort in the hour of trial. Baldly, but truly stated, their God was an all powerful, all seeing, capricious despot. They read that man was made in His own image. They conceived of God as a mighty, invisible being, with the attributes of man, and moved by the same emotions, delighting in nothing so much as public ascriptions of honor and glory and power. They had been taught

that the chief end of man was to glorify God, that the more they magnified His name and offices the better He was pleased, and the more favors He would grant. They believed that nothing would more surely arouse His wrath than the neglect of public worship. Hence His anger, manifested by sickness, blight, or earthquake, might be provoked by the ways of the ungodly only; while the punishment would fall alike on all. And hence the zeal of the more pious to seek out and punish all who would not walk in the ways laid out by the Synod, after that body had discovered and proclaimed what thoughts and what actions were pleasing to the Deity. With these ideas, the united voice of the ministers was the voice of the Almighty. The logical conclusion of it all was reflected in the laws. Self-preservation required the punishment of all offenders against the creed, and the Sunday worship. He that would not sit in the pew, must sit in the stocks. He who would doubt the doctrine of the creed, should have leisure to solve his doubts behind the prison bars.

The wonder of it all is, how could a community ever *live* under such a condition of things as that confronting our ancestors, mentally and morally; letting alone the physical hardships and privations incident to a home in the wilderness from out of which they must wrench the very means of existence! They were still under the stress of many a superstition originating in the haunts of savagery before the dawn of civilization. They honestly believed in the infamous doctrine of Election. The creed proclaimed that "God, out of his mere Good Pleasure, from all eternity called some to everlasting Life" in celestial bliss; and all that the most pious and devout could even hope for under any circumstances was, that perchance it might turn out that their names were on the roll of the

Elect. In such way only could they in any wise escape the doom of those "under the wrath and curse of God," and so be liable to all the inflictions in this life and to the certainty of the "everlasting Pit and the Undying Worm."

Wigglesworth's "Day of Doom" was a popular book which appeared in many editions, and therefore it may be accepted as voicing the times and the religious ideas of those who read its pages. A few representative lines will be given. They are from a colloquy between God and Man:—

"Will you demand Grace at my hand,
and chalenge what is Mine?
Will you teach me whom to set free
and thus my Grace confine?
You sinners are, and such a share
as sinners may expect;
Such you shall have, for I do save
none but my own Elect."

In the following stanza a crumb of comfort is offered to the bereaved parents whose babies died young. Addressing infants, He continues:—

"Yet to compare your sin with their's
who lived a longer time
I do confess yours is much less
though every sin's a crime.
A crime it is, therefore in bliss
you may not hope to dwell;
But unto you I shall allow
the easiest room in Hell."

The theology of the day certainly did not offer a cheerful outlook for the present or the future. Doomed from birth to "God's wrath and curse," through the "Original Sin" of Adam and Eve, however that might be interpreted;

in constant fear of present afflictions through the misdeeds of others; bowed down by the chains of superstition, their only weapon of defence seasons of fastings and supplication and stilted praise, their only hope that of so softening the heart of an offended Deity that His hand might be stayed; and the end of it all a faint chance for a lucky ticket in the lottery of Election. Their minds were narrowed and shrunken by lack of mental stimulus; the reading of the generality restricted to the Bible and catechism, they easily ran to trivial personalities, petty gossip, and petty quarrels.

How faint the light, and how dark the clouds about their pathway! The ever-haunting fear of God's impending wrath must have saturated their minds by day and crowded their dreams by night. In such a life it is hard to conceive of any elements of peace, harmony, contentment, or happiness; but we all have been accustomed to think and to say that our forefathers and foremothers were "sustained alone by faith." Faith in what! Must it not have been the belief that God was just, whatever befell; that, however sorely burdened in mind or body, somehow these afflictions had been earned; if not by their own actions, then by their first parents or their fellowmen. They believed that punishments were due, and that the infliction of penalties, somehow all redounded to the glory of God, which was man's chief concern.

Is it possible in the light of the science and the philosophy of to-day to analyze correctly the abstract idea of the Deity as held by our ancestors? Broadly speaking, they held, in common with all peoples in all times, that the soul was immortal; that its future state was one of bliss or misery, according to the will of a power higher than man; that this power was adverse to men, but could be

so placated by propitiatory acts as to bring a favorable issue. As I have said, the question of the Puritans, as of all the ages, was, How can this result be best accomplished? Many thousands of sects and schools have each proclaimed its discovery, and such has been their philanthropic zeal that millions of "heretics" have been slaughtered in pious efforts to save souls. In this work the Puritans in their way heartily engaged. Their ministers had pointed out a way which none could gainsay. In this path each for his own good must be made to walk.

The God of the Puritans seems to have been a mixed and uncertain quantity, a righteous despot, watchful to punish, jealous, placable, and responsive to the right touch. He was a power to be reckoned with in all the affairs of man. He had no fixed laws. His acts were in accord with His feelings towards particular men at particular times. He was open to appeal for favors, which were bestowed according to the condition and strength of the prayer. Some men had more influence with Him than others; however, combined prayer outweighed any individual prayer. No one doubts the Puritan was honest; but was he profound? He must be judged, I repeat, in the light in which he lived, not that of the present day.

We have looked upon our forefathers as they appear in the first half of the seventeenth century. Let us also look upon them as they appear in the procession of the ages. There we are compelled to say that the emigrants who went out from England to the New World were the advance guard in the slow march towards light and liberty, and as such they should be held in reverence and honor. To be sure, they groped in darkness, but they planted the seed of civil and religious progress bet-

ter than they knew. Ripe fruit from the former has long blessed this land, and its seed in turn has been scattered broadcast in every civilized country. The ploughshare of free thought is turning peaceful furrows on the ruins of the battlements and the towers of despotism.

Religious tolerance, however, is a plant of slower growth. Many of the grosser bonds of the old superstitions have been broken. Altars no longer run with blood in honor of God. The baleful Inquisition, the horrors of Saint Bartholomew, the fires of Smithfield, the nightmare of witchcraft, the dungeon for unbelievers, no longer bind and sicken humanity.

But, alas! the spirit of persecution is not yet extinct. If we do not burn heretics at the stake, we roast them in the Ecclesiastical Council. In place of banishment may be seen the cold shoulder of the self-righteous in social circles; and the malignant gossip of the church parlor charged with venom, however much it may be sugar-coated with fine phrasing.

CHAPTER IV.

BIRTH AND BAPTISM.—CHILDHOOD.—ENVIRONMENT.—
SAMUEL DANFORTH.—INCREASE MATHER.—ELIOT.—
THOMAS DUDLEY.—OTHER MEN OF NOTE.—WILLIAM
WILLIAMS.—SPORTS.

IT was into the atmosphere and environment of gross superstition and the unquestioning faith which I have described as characteristic of Roxbury people, that John Williams was born on Saturday, December 10, 1664, o.s. Let us be thankful that this mite of humanity was not taken to the fireless meetinghouse the next day to be baptized, as was the custom, and let us also hope that when so taken upon the eighth day of its age, it was not obliged to remain through the weary length of the service; but of this we can have no assurance.

No record is found concerning directly the childhood of John Williams. We have good reasons to believe that in one respect his environment was a fortunate one, and that he was spared, as he grew up, the usual superstitious fear in case of unusual astronomical phenomena. The comet and the meteor were no Divine Messengers of vengeance. A few rods from the house of Deacon Samuel Williams lived Rev. Samuel Danforth, colleague with Pastor Eliot. He was a firm believer in the direct interposition of the Deity in answer to the prayers of men, but he was also a man of scientific attainments in the line of astronomy, as must needs be a maker of almanacs. He had also a touch of poesy in his make-up. In accordance with the custom of the times, Mr. Danforth made notes on the Church Records of the appearance of comets,

but in no spirit of superstition. It was merely a scientific account for permanent preservation, of its appearance and its location in certain constellations.

Mr. Danforth and Mr. Williams each had large families. From 1654 to 1674 twenty-five boys and girls came to brighten the two households, and, alas! to bring sorrow also. In 1659 Mr. Danforth makes this record:—

“9m & 10 m. The Lord sent a general visitation of Children by coughs & colds, of w^{oh} my 3 children Sarah Mary & Elizabeth Danforth died, all of y^m within y^e space of a fortnight.” In fact, it was within the space of ten days, December 5 to December 15. Not long after died a little daughter of Deacon Williams, and within five weeks his daughter Elizabeth was born. Six others of these households died young. These two families were bound together by their mutual joys and sorrows, as well as by neighborhood and ecclesiastical ties. Samuel Danforth, born in 1666, and John Williams grew up together as close friends. Side by side their physical and mental fibres were toughened in the dilapidated school-house and by the ragged Latin grammar. They were graduated at Harvard in the same class, and entered the ministry about the same time.

It so happened that comets were conveniently common during the youthful days of these boys, and doubtless their appearance was fully explained to the wondering children of both families by the astronomer Danforth. At this period, and much later, comets were generally considered omens of ill and objects of terror, as tokens of Divine wrath. We find in the Mathers and their compeers constant references to the supernatural nature of unusual astronomical appearances, but in the life of John Williams we find no taint of superstition in con-

nection with such phenomena in nature. The torch of science in the hand of Mr. Danforth had lighted up the heavens for young John Williams, and emancipated him, once and for all, from a burden of fear and superstition. Although he was but ten years old when his mentor died, may we not surely trace his scientific writings upon the planets in his later years directly to this early intercourse with Mr. Danforth. Most adults have seen comets. Most of us have seen the bright meteor flashing athwart the sky, seen and gone in a twinkling, and so the end of it. Not so with the commonalty of the time under consideration. Not so with the generality of the ministers. Rev. Increase Mather, probably the leading minister of his day, writes in his private note book in 1676:—

“May 15. At Lieut. Howland’s Garrison in Plym was seen in the air an Indian bow pointing from East to West.”

“July 30. This Evening being the Sabbath between 8 & 9 o’clock there appeared a stream of fire.”

“A comet appeared in November in the morning & in Dec^r in the even^g wearing a formidable aspect.”

“1681. The year began awfully. The latter end of last year was attended with a fearful blazing star whereby the whole earth hath been alarmed. Now we have rumors as if some prodigies observed in Connecticut Colony. Tis reported that at Wallingford an Indian appeared in the star. Guns & drums heard at Middletown & Guilford. Rumors & great fears, lest N.E. should be involved in another War with the Indians.”

[August, 1682.] “Mr. Bond’s coming to Boston was attended with a blazing star.”

As Increase Mather was a representative minister, and as John Williams in his formative years often came

in contact with him and his sons, a little more note will be taken concerning his religious thought. He has been called "a cold self-conceited Bigot." Let each be the judge. His prayers were often in the form of an argument with the Lord. April 9, 1675, when two of his children were sick, he says:—

"I have not bin thankfull & humble as I should have bin & therefore God is righteous in afflicting me. I have noth. to say but to ly down abased bef. him, & let him doe with me & mine as seemeth him Good." He says he is "in prayer not altogether without Hope." "As for Sam . . . Several Arg'ts came into my Mind, w^{ch} caused me to Hope y^t God wld spare his life; (& I pleaded y^m bef y^e L^d) one was, y^t I had called his Name Samuel ovt of obedience to y^e will of God who requireth me to endeavour to keep up y^e Name & Memory of my deceased brother. I thought y^e Lord w^{ld} in him show respect in y^e Name of his blessed vncl. Also, in y^t I had given him to God y^e first day y^t Hee came into y^e world. Also I had prayed (wth Tears e [and] some Faith) bef y^s day, for him, y^t God would give of y^t spirit to y^s child w^{ch} did sometimes rest vpon his blessed vncl."

This brother Samuel was a distinguished minister who preached in England, Scotland, and Ireland, and who died three years before the birth of the sick boy, his namesake. Another curious but ingenious argument to move the Deity followed: "His Mother e his Brother Cotton were with me in my study . . . wⁿ I thus prayed for y^e child, all of vs weeping for him. Now I thought it might be some discourdg^t to Cotton in case Hee s^{ld} see y^t his poor sinfull Fathers prayrs were not heard; y^o I humbly pleaded y^t with God." His son Cotton was about to enter Harvard College, and was destined for

the ministry. As for another sick child, who had been baptized in infancy, the distressed father brings another argument to bear upon his case:—

“As for Nathaniel . . . I gave him vp to y^e Lord agn, pleading, Lord Hee is yⁱ child. Hee is not onely my child but through yⁱ wonderfull grace, Hee is yⁱ child, wilt not thou shew mercy, to him, y^b is become yⁱ child? I put him into y^e Lords hands y^t Hee w^{ld} blesse him both now & forever. So I hoped for mercy & was inwardly satisfied in my owne spirit.”

The agonized father had done his best. If such an appeal would not avail, what hope for any lesser effort. Though the details of the long weeks of the boy's sickness are given, we find no hint of medical attendance. The sole dependence seems to have been prayer offered by the father and his ministerial friends,—and the children all recovered.

June 29, 1676, Dr. Mather writes: “Nathaniel & Samuel were both sick in y^e spring, but God hath recovered y^m. Samuel was near to death again about a fortnight ago. I Fasted and prayed for his life and God hath heard me. Let his Name alone have prayse and glory.”

Increase Mather was born June 21, 1639; was graduated at Harvard in 1656, at the age of seventeen. His brother Eleazar was first, and he second, on the roll of the class, which shows the standing of the Mather family in Boston. Eleazar settled in the ministry at Northampton, and his daughter Eunice became the ill-fated wife of John Williams. Warham Mather, her brother, and Nathaniel, son of Increase, were fellow-students with John Williams at Harvard.

Increase was the son of Richard Mather, a distinguished clergyman of England and of Dorchester. He was a

leading minister at Boston for sixty years, and for sixteen years practically at the head of Harvard College. During Philip's War he preached a sermon on the necessity of reforms in the community. The General Court was then in session, and three days later a Committee was sent by the Court to meet him and "consider about Reformation of those evils w^{ch} provoke the Lord agst N.E." It is evident that Mather posed as one having the ear of the Lord, and the General Court was disposed to make him available so far as possible. These things throw light upon the times we are considering, and to that end Mather's Diary will be further drawn upon.

Mr. Mather is sure all along that Philip's War was sent in consequence of God's anger against New England; and he was constantly urging, in public and private, reformation, fasting, and prayer, that this anger might be softened. Many days of fasting and prayer were held, although there was no let up in military activity. Their faith in Divine help did not go so far as to omit earthly means. September 1, 1675, a Fast was appointed in Mr. Mather's church; but the Magistrates, instead of attending the service, continued the usual Court business, whereat, according to Mr. Mather, God was so offended that he promptly visited his wrath upon far off Deerfield. Why Deerfield should suffer for the shortcomings of the Magistrates in Boston does not appear, but we read in Mr. Mather's Diary:—

"Sept. 1, [1675]. A day of humiliation in our Congregation, because of trouble on acc^o of Indians. The magistrates kept Court this day, (when the Ld did so visibly call them & all the Country to fasting & mourning) wherby many kept from attending that service & much of the solemnity of the day lost. I was troubled

with this & expected to hear more sad news, w^{ch} soon happened accordingly. For this week news comes that on Sept^r 1, the very day when we were thus fasting & others sh^d have been so, but would not, the Indians burnt 17 houses & killed one man at Deerfield, which I have the more reason to take notice of in that my nephew Sam^l Mather is Pastor there. This day Amalek prevailed over Israel! for Moses' hands were not held up, as should have been!" Or, in other words, Mather admits that he alone could not move the Lord to mercy. Had the Magistrates fasted and joined their supplication to his, the solemnities of the day would have been preserved. "Moses' hands" would have been held up, and the Lord duly impressed. Amalek would have been restrained, and all would have gone well at Deerfield. But God's anger towards the recalcitrant Magistrates overbore all considerations for his faithful coworker, Mather. The Indians were let loose to strike a blow at Israel through the unoffending Deerfield. This punishment was prompt, probably before the offence; for the attack on Deerfield was in the morning, before the hour of meeting for either the Magistrates or for the Fast.

"Oct. 19, 1675. The conclusions of the Committee (viz. of both houses, assisted by y^e Elders), respecting Reformation were signed & delivered into the Gen^l Court, who voted acceptance & appointed another Committee to draw up laws in order to the establishm^t &c. . . . that day when the vote was past, the Lord gave success to our forces at Hatfield."

The Reformation Bill was passed by the Deputies November 9, but it dragged in the Council. In consequence, according to Mr. Mather, "a sore rebuke" fell upon Captain Henschman's expedition, when the

Indians "killed his Lieut & another, & were mightily animated. . . . Alas that Reformation should stick at the head!" January 10, 1675-6, the small-pox broke out at the Swan tavern, and on this Mather comments: "It is observable that this disease begins at an alehouse, to testify God's displeasure ag^t the sin of drunkenness & y^t of multiplying alehouses."

February 21, 1676, Mather complains that the weather favors the Indians, "so that the Lord [after all] seems to be against us still & to take part with our adversaries." Had not the winter of 1675-6 been uncommonly mild, many Indians, driven from their homes and storehouses, would no doubt have been starved in the wilderness.

In spite of this attitude of the Lord, favoring the Indians as against the English, Mather felt that his personal relations with the Most High had not changed; and he would on occasion offer advice as to the conduct of affairs. On hearing bad news from Europe, he tells how he urged his view, saying, "Lord, pour out a vial upon the house of Austria." Again, when a fire was raging in Boston, in which his own meetinghouse was burned, instead of lending a hand to the bucket brigade, Mather says, "I was alone crying to the Lord to stay his hand." Doubtless the good man thought that, but for his appeal, the whole of Boston might have been laid in ashes.

Mr. Mather was a leader among the churches of Boston; but, lest it should seem to appear that he was exceptional in his dealings with Deity, Rev. John Eliot, of Roxbury, the Apostle to the Indians, will be introduced. Entries in the Roxbury Church Records will show his bent of mind in relation to the affairs of God and man. We must bear in mind that John Williams was growing up under his watchful eye. Mr. Eliot was not an ignorant

man; he was educated at Cambridge College, England. He arrived at Boston in the "Lion," November 2, 1631, being twenty-seven years of age. He married October, 1632, Ann Mumford, who had followed him from England. The next month he was ordained Teacher of the Church at Roxbury. The Church Records are still extant, and from its pages much of the material for this paper has been drawn. Passages are taken here and there as bearing upon the topic in hand. These entries are usually of the briefest, but much can be read between the lines. It is usual to look upon ignorance and superstition as twins, or as cause and effect. But Mr. Eliot, from the highest educational centre in England, was burdened with a load of superstition hard to be conceived of at this day. In one respect Mr. Eliot was fortunate. Mr. Samuel Danforth, his colleague, although born in England, was educated in New England when free thought was striving to escape the stifling influence of the old home. Although this work was hard, the odds great, the progress slow, there was at least a promise of dawn. Mr. Danforth was a graduate from Harvard in 1643. As we have seen, he became interested in natural science, and was a close student of astronomy. He had thereby been relieved from the large burden of superstition connected with astronomical exhibitions. The effect of his familiar intercourse with his colleague is seen in the later years of Mr. Eliot's life. In 1645 Mr. Eliot says, "This yeare we had sundry strange & prodigious signes, a storme of haile fell terribly, at Dedham w^r some were in fashion like cross barr cannon shott, oth^r^a like musket bullets. The Narragansets resolved a warr y^t yeare, but through mercy a peace was made." On another page Eliot gives "a dreadful example of Gods

displeasure against obstinate servants." It is the story of two men who went out to an oyster bank against the orders of their master, and carelessly let their boat drift away on the rising tide, and were drowned. The moral was, "Servants, obey your masters."

In reference to a devastating epidemic raging in the colony, Eliot says, "Gods rods are teaching o^r epidemical sicknesse of colds, doth rightly by a divine hand tell the churches what o^r epidemical spr^l disease is;" that "to have such colds in the height of the heat of summer has a special meaning. . . . This visitation of God was exceeding strange; it was suddaine & generall: as if the Lord had immediately sent forth an angel, not wth a sword to kill, but wth a rod to chastise; & he smot all, good & bad, old & young. . . . And this is remarkable, y^t though few dyed, yet some did; and generally those y^t dyed were of o^r choycest flowers."

His record of a visit of the army worm and other events extracted from the church history as subjects of religious concern at this period have already been given, and need not be repeated.

Although Mr. Danforth was free from the fear of comets, eclipses, electrical storms, and earthquakes, as tokens of God's anger, yet he was not above the belief in signs and omens, portending or threatening evil. "Feb. 1668," he says, "strange noises were heard in y^e air like guns, drums, vollies of g^t shot at Waymouth, Hingham &c." Under date of May 16, 1668, he says: "There were prodigies seen in y^e heavens in y^e night before y^e Lords day by 500 p'le, in this forme +. This spring was a time of much infirmity & sickness. Many were visited with feavers & some dyed." February 28, 1673, we find, "News from New York of a sad prodigie, y^e raining of blood, but

some thought it might be y^o muting of Birds." Not so thought Mr. Danforth, or the event would not have been recorded on the church book.

No doubt these and other like events were talked over by Eliot, Danforth, and Deacon Williams in the shop where the deacon, by the feeble light of the bayberry candle, was pegging and hammering away on his bench; were dwelt upon and wondered over as to what the import might be; and doubtless the Williams boys and the Danforth boys listened in the dim background with wide open eyes and mouth, and with susceptible minds,—fertile fields in which the seeds of superstition could be sown with the full assurance of an abundant crop. We shall see some of the fruitage at harvest time.

Boy life in Roxbury did not, I suppose, differ essentially from that of other towns of the period, although Roxbury was said to be the richest town in the Bay settlement, and notable men lived there. Besides the Apostle Eliot, there was Thomas Dudley, Assistant several years, Deputy Governor sixteen years, Governor four years, dying in office in 1653. Of his daughters, Ann became wife of Governor Bradstreet, and was the noted poet; Patience married Major-general Dennison, and Sarah married Major Benjamin Keayne, both prominent Boston men. His son Joseph, born 1647, was chaplain in Philip's War, member of General Court, Assistant ten years, President of Harvard College, Judge, Deputy Governor of Isle of Wight eight years, Councilor under Andros, and Governor of Massachusetts thirteen years. He was seventeen when John Williams was born. They were near neighbors; and, as we shall see, their lines of life often crossed, and they were fast friends to the last. Paul, another son of Governor Thomas, married Mary, daughter

of Governor Leverett. Paul, son of Governor Joseph, a man of distinction, was Chief Justice of the Province, and was also a trusted friend of John Williams. It was among men and women of large calibre that John Williams was born and reared.

William Williams was a cousin germain to John, son of his uncle Isaac, who had settled in Newton. He was brought up from the age of three by their common grandparents, William and Martha Parke, of Roxbury. The mothers of John and William were sisters,—Theoda and Martha, daughters of Deacon William Parke. Under these circumstances it was natural that John and William should grow up in intimate relations. It was then no uncommon thing for children to be brought up by others than their parents. In this case the grammar school at Roxbury may have been a dominating factor. John Danforth was the son of the minister. From an early age these three boys were destined to walk the same road,—that leading to the pulpit. Together they endured the tedious and, to them generally, meaningless catechism; together they conned the tattered Latin grammar in the cheerless school-house, and tested the mental pabulum furnished by Anne Moseley; and together they digested, as best they could, the “theological discipline” which the teacher by the terms of his contract was bound to inflict personally.

In these earlier years the three boys doubtless engaged in all the sports of boyhood available, angling for trout in Rocky Brook, catching eels in Muddy River, and cunners and rock cod in the East and West Bays. These bays on either side the Neck must have been convenient places for boating, bathing, and fishing. Of course, like all boys, they engaged in hunting. Small game was plenty

on the hills of Roxbury and Dorchester. The rabbit, the raccoon, the partridge, the squirrel, the woodchuck, were more often taken by trap and snare than by gun-shot; for the hunting firelock was not common, and the matchlock was wholly unfit for use in the woods. Of the games so common to-day they had none. Cards and dice led straight to the stocks. Shovelboard and tenpins were among the deadly sins. Stool ball and cricket were devices of the Devil for wasting time. A walk with one's sweetheart of an evening, might bring up in the watch-house, and end by an interview with the Magistrate the next morning.

With the growing years came the more ambitious sport of hunting wolves. Towards Dorchester there stood a dense forest, which was a common resort and breeding place of these pests. At one time wolves were ranked with Indians as common enemies, as we may judge from the law imposing a fine of fifty-five shillings upon any one who should fire a gun "except at an Indian or a wolf." There was a bounty laid upon the head of the wolf, and the Dorchester woods was a favorite place for their trapping. The visits to these traps in the early dawn must have been exciting incidents in the life of the boys; and, when a victim was found entrapped, what putting together of heads to determine how the bounty money should be spent or divided!

Probably the lives of our three boys differed in no wise from that of their fellows, save, as they spent more time in school, they had so much less time for hard manual work. Fortunately, their young minds were not weighted with a foreknowledge of the parts they were to play in the history of the colony, or clouded by the ill days in store for them with their ripening years.

CHAPTER V.

MEETINGHOUSE.—PINNACLES.—BOY AND TITHINGMAN.—
SUNDAY SCHOOL.—CHURCH.—EARTHQUAKE.—ALARM.
—THE DUTCH.

As has been said, the barn-like house of worship changed but slowly. At length, however, it became congested; and possibly some sickness had been traced to the long Sabbath day exposure, and remedial measures were found necessary.

From the town records we read:—

January 12, 1658. It was agreed "that the meeting-house be repayred for the warmth and comfort of the people; namely, that the howse is to be shingled and also two galleries built, with three seats in a gallery, one at the one end of the howse and the other at the other end. Also the howse to be plastered within side with plaster and haire." So much for enlargement and comfort. "Also for the setting out of the howse,—that some pinakle or other ornament be set upon each end of the howse; . . . the charge to be borne by the several inhabittance by way of a rate. For which worke Lieut. John Remington is to have twenty-two pounds; more if the worke deserveth more; lesse, if the worke deserveth lesse. Always provided, before this be done y^e timbers of y^e howse be well searched that, if there be such defects as some think, our labor be not in vaine."

This action seems proper and fitting in a growing and prospering village, more comfort and more room being natural steps in progress. The clause about the "pinakle" shows a natural and pardonable pride. Does it not also show a departure from the more severe idea, and

a leaning towards more "worldly" ways? It may have been purely in honor of God that this pathetic attempt to distinguish the building was made. However rough the structure, it was the house of God. Who can say that these incongruous "pinakles," so constantly before the eyes of young John Williams, may not have so impressed him that in days to come he recommended to Ensign John Sheldon similar ones for the roof of the Old Indian House, when that building was going up under his eyes. At any rate, similar ornaments were "set upon each end of the house." I have met them nowhere else in the Connecticut Valley.

The genus "Boy" was in evidence in Roxbury, as everywhere, and it seems that part or all of the new galleries was set apart for his use. Here this element could be herded under the eye and rod of the tithingman and within eye shot of the preacher. With all this, however, trouble was brewing. Before long several people complained that they could not "sit in the meetinghouse to their edification by reason of the disturbance the boys made in the galleries." This complaint reached the town meeting; and the selectmen were directed to consult with the Elders about removing the boys, and cooping them up in some place to be built expressly for this purpose, or doing "anything to remedy this evil." Exactly what steps were taken to remove the boys and the evil so gravely confronting the town is not known, but when John Williams was eight years old a new meetinghouse was built. In this structure provision was made for the boys on some part of the main floor. Some years later a vote was passed for "pueing the meetinghouse," and the people were given "liberty to build pues around the meeting house except where the boys do sit." By this

action it would appear that the boy question had been satisfactorily solved by corralling that element in some nook or angle which was now entrenched against the invasion of pews.

It appears in various quarters that our Puritan fathers had a hard time in trying to keep their children in the strait jacket. Probably the thing was overdone, the lace-strings too tightly strained. There was in the new land plenty of opportunity for the expansion of the muscle; but the windows of the mind were shuttered and barred, so far as the Elders could bring it about. I have elsewhere spoken of the broadening and brightening influence which residence in the New World had upon the emigrant from England. Of this Rev. Ezekiel Rogers encountered a practical illustration to vex his peace. He found even the sluggish blood of Yorkshire was affected by emigration. He says:—

“I find the greatest trouble and grief about the rising generation. . . . Much ado have I with my own family; hard to get a servant that is glad of catichising or family duties. . . . I had a rare blessing of servants in Yorkshire, and those that I brought over were a blessing; but the young brood do much affect me, even the children of the godly here and elsewhere make a woeful proof.”

It could hardly be that the movement noted below was intended to let in a single ray of natural life. If the shutters were to be opened by the least crack, the light admitted was to be strained through the dense medium of creed and catechism. Perhaps the whole movement was part of the scheme for curing the “boy evil” that was upon them.

October 24, 1658, it was voted that children whose parents were church members “are members of y^e church, and y^e church ought to take care that they be duly in-

structed in the grounds of religion." This action was in token of a settlement of a much mooted question.

"Dec. 6, 1674. This day we restored o^r primitive practice for the training up o^r youth, first o^r male youth in fitting season stay every sab: after the evening exercise, in the pub: Meeting house, where the Elders will examine their remembrance y^t day, & any fit poynt of catechise. Secondly y^t o^r female youth should meet in one place, where the Elders may examine y^m of their remembrance yesterday, & about catichise, or what else may be convenient."

Whether this test of the "remembrance" of a four hours' Sunday service by the boys and girls was satisfactory or otherwise, we are left with small information. We know the Elders must have had a hard and trying task in this ungrateful office, and, taking things by and large, our sympathy goes out to the Elders. If there was anything like "hustling" in those days, it must have been in the direction of religious training rather than in secular business.

The people of Roxbury were anxious to act in accordance with the will of God. The Bible was their guiding star. But the Bible appeared to some uncertain, if not contradictory; and how could they be certain that they were in the safe road. After much tribulation a conclusion was reached. God's will was proclaimed in five propositions. All who would not believe and accept these dicta as the final word of the Deity were considered as heretical and to be treated as such. To doubt was to be damned. "Upon many agitations among ourselves, upon much advice and counsel . . . after more than ten years time of consideration about these points in hand, wee the Church of Roxbury are at last come up to the

resolution, that wee judge in our consciences, y^t those 5 propositions are agreeable to y^e truth of God and rules which we are to walk by." These vital matters being finally settled, the pious Puritan could persecute with a clear conscience. Deacon Samuel Williams had been a member of the Church during these ten years of doubt and question, and his wife seven of them, so that in 1664 their son John was born into an heritage of undoubted faith. He grew up burdened by their accepted theology and superstitions. A lasting impression was made on his young mind by the lesson that an earthquake was an exhibition of the anger of God, and these lessons were uncommonly common in his boyhood. Five were noted on the church record within as many years. Each of these events must have occasioned long and troublous discourse among the Ministers and the Deacon, much of it doubtless in the shop where the latter was hammering on his lapstone to harden the soles of his customers' shoes. Meanwhile Eliot and his colleagues were explaining how God was pounding the solid earth until it trembled, as a warning to the hardened souls of the customers themselves, that by repentance they may escape impending wrath. The young listeners in the background had personal knowledge of the earthquakes, and they had faith in the interpretation of the Elders. That these early impressions clung to one of them to the last is shown by Rev. Thomas Prince, who says of John Williams that, while he was preaching the Convention Sermon to the ministers at Boston in May, 1728, "he expressed his joy in the great advantage we at that time had above the preceding ministers, in the *general awakenings* through the land, by the great earthquake in October foregoing." The effect being, I suppose, to

arouse the superstitious fears of the people, and make them more responsive to the appeals from the pulpit.

August 1, 1673, the Roxbury people had news that the Dutch had taken a dozen English vessels at Virginia. Two days later tidings came that the Dutch had attacked the town of New York, which they had surrendered to the English nine years before. If New York fell, New England would soon be in the hands of the Dutchmen, it was felt, and a lively panic followed the reception of the news. As usual, when trouble befell or threatened the Puritans, they now called upon the Lord for help, and backed their call by ordering a day of fasting and prayer. Experience, however, had taught them not to feel too sure of a favorable response, so, besides "seeking the face of God," they also "put y^m selves in a posture of war," and "prepare fortifications." Although nothing more serious came of this scare, wars and rumors of wars became an early experience of John Williams, preparing him for events to come.

CHAPTER VI.

GRAMMAR SCHOOL.—JOHN PRUDDEN.—SCHOOLHOUSE.—
 THOMAS WELD.—LATIN GRAMMAR.—NO EDUCATION
 FOR GIRLS.—COSTUMES.—LONG HAIR.—TRAINING DAY.
 —THREE COUNTY TROOP.—SAMUEL DANFORTH, JR.—
 “SQUIRREL’S DELIGHT.”—TAN YARD.—BRICK-KILN.

A PROMINENT institution in Roxbury was the Grammar School. It was founded in 1644-5 by a legacy from Samuel Hugburne, supplemented by a voluntary subscription binding the subscribers to pay forever a certain amount annually, which was secured on real estate. A self-perpetuating board of trustees was elected, who were to erect a schoolhouse, and expend twenty pounds a year for the salary of a schoolmaster. Additions to this fund by donation and bequest came in slowly, but continued until finally a very large fund had accumulated. It is now, I suppose, one of the most richly endowed institutions of its kind. Robert Williams and William Parke were both original subscribers, and both were later elected to the Board of Trustees. The object of the Free School is declared thus:—

“Wheras the inhabitants of Roxburie, out of their religious care of posteritie, have taken into consideration how necessarie the education of their children in literature will be to fitt them for publicke service bothe in Church and Commonwealthe in succeeding ages, They, therefore unanimously have concented and agreed to erect a free schoole in the said Town of Roxburie.”

The Roxbury Grammar School, with its endowment, and with wise and judicious trustees, became at an early

period a school of high order, and had a permanent influence on the inhabitants from an educational point of view. Rev. Increase Mather said that "Roxbury had afforded more scholars, first for the college and then for the public, than any other town of its bigness, or, if I mistake not of twice its bigness, in all New England."

John Prudden, who was graduated from Harvard in 1668, at the age of twenty-three, began at once teaching in Roxbury, where he continued for several years. He was the first schoolmaster of John Williams, and it was a fortunate thing for the boy to have at the beginning an educated man to point out the way of letters, and guide him along the path. It may have been due to Prudden that this way led him through the gates of Harvard, and thereby to the wilds of Deerfield. It is too much to expect that this teacher and guide should have been exempt from the prevailing superstition of the age, as his father was a Puritan minister and himself was on the highway leading to the pulpit.

The schoolhouse of 1668 was quite different from the palatial structure of 1905, it had been publicly denounced two years before as too dilapidated for occupancy, but the complaints had been unheeded. The boys must be inured to cold and hardship, and it seems to have been a test of the survival of the fittest. Perhaps it was here, in this miserable shanty, that John Williams laid the foundations for the constitution which carried him through that terrible ordeal,—the winter march to Canada in 1704. Of this nursery of the intellect for the boys of Roxbury a subsequent teacher gives the following graphic description:—

"Of inconveniences I shall instance no other, but that of the school house, the confused and shattered and nastie

posture that it is in, not fitting for to reside in, the glass broken and thereupon very raw and cold, the floor very much broken and torn up to kindle fires, the hearth spoiled, the seats some burnt and others out of kilter, that one had as well nigh as good keep school in a hog stie as in it." As John Williams graduated from this wreck a short time before, let us hope that, in the interest of a long-needed reform, he did his full share in this vandalism. However this may be, it was in this building that he received the rudiments of education, and here he was fitted for college.

John Howe, whom I do not identify, was the second teacher of John Williams. He served but a short time. The third was another graduate of Harvard, Thomas Weld, of the class of 1671. In the same class were Judge Samuel Sewall, the Annalist, Rev. Edward Taylor, of Westfield, and Rev. William Adams, of Dedham, who are more or less connected with the story we are writing. Thomas Weld remained the teacher until John Williams went to college. He was intimate in the Williams family, and Samuel Williams, brother of John, subsequently married his sister.

Of the books used in this school before 1674 we know nothing. In that year a new book was introduced, bearing the following title, a book long popular in the colonies:—

SCHOLAE
 WINTONIENSIS
 PHRASES LATINA

THE
 LATINE PHRASES
 OF
 WINCHESTER SCHOOLE

Corrected, and much Augmented with Poeticals added,
 and these Four Tracts

- viz. { I Of Words not to be used by Elegant Latinists.
 II The difference of many words like one another,
 in sound or signification.
 III Some Words governing a Subjunctive Mood,
 not mentioned in Lillies Grammar.
 IV Concerning Xgeia Fvwui for entring Children
 upon making of Themes.

By H ROBINSON D.D.

The fifth edition; with many Additions.

Published for the common Use and Benefit of the
 Grammar Schools

LONDON.

PRINTED FOR ANNE MOSELEY, 1667.

It is to be hoped that Mistress Anne had boys of her own, that she might know how to furnish them proper nutriment, for this book was to be henceforth the daily companion of John and his cousin William. Latin was the fundamental basis of all literary attainment. This language was in daily use among the learned, and our young students must have been used to hearing it from the lips of Mr. Eliot and his son, Mr. Danforth, the Dudleys, Sewall, and the Mathers. Doubtless the earlier books were the Bible, Catechism, and the Horn-book. There was a large dictionary resting upon a stand expressly made for it, and to which it may have been fastened by an iron chain. It was probably the ponderous Latin folio of Cooper; London, 1584; or it may have been the English-Latin folio of Somnar, a new work from Oxford, 1659.

When John Prudden was engaged as schoolmaster in 1668, he agreed to teach "both by precept and example, to instruct in all Scholasticall, Morall, and Theological discipline, the children,—all A. B. Cdarians excepted." For the use of the latter class there was probably Hulet's Latin Abecedarian of 1652. The schoolmaster's salary was "paid, $\frac{3}{4}$ in Indian Corn or peas, & $\frac{1}{4}$ in Barley," so that it was no new thing to John Williams when he received the same specie in payment of his salary at Deerfield. No mention of girls is found at the Roxbury school. Indeed, it was a long time before any education was thought necessary for the "female youth," not to be found in the Catechism.

We shall assume that John Williams was a fairly studious and well behaved boy, so that he had only the average elevation to the dunce block and whacks from the cane of the teacher. A local poet writes of one mode of instruction in the Roxbury school:—

“There Learning’s Alter flamed with genial birch,
And tingling ribs proclaimed how keen its Search;
There wit and wisdom found their shortest track
Up to the brain by travelling through the back.”

At the age of fourteen John had absorbed enough Latin and Greek to be admitted to Harvard. The standard of scholarship at that time could not have been of the highest; but it served. That John Williams may seem more clearly a living personality, he should appear in his every-day clothes. A writer on the costumes of that period says: “The men wore long coats, having large pocket folds, and cuffs, and without collars, the buttons, either plated or silver, about an inch and a quarter in diameter; vests all without collars, but very long, having graceful, pendulous lappet pockets; shirts with bosom and wrist ruffles, and with gold or silver buckles at the wrist, united by a link; the neckcloth or scarf of fine linen or figured stuff, or embroidered, the ends hanging loosely. The small-clothes reaching below the knees, where they were ornamented with silver buckles of liberal size; the legs were covered with gray stockings, and the feet with shoes, ornamented with straps and silver buckles.” This was a Sunday suit, which lasted the wearer a lifetime. The same general make-up, but less ornate, was the ordinary wear of Deacon Samuel Williams and other well-to-do men of Roxbury. Reduce this costume in size, and we have the costume of the old-looking youngster, as he ran about the woods or loitered slowly along to school. When John Williams became a man, and had boys of his own, we know the silver shirt buttons were continued; for his son Stephen, when a captive of 1704, tells how the Indians robbed him of “silver buttons and

buckles w^{ch} I had on my shirt." This, of course, was the one in which he was sleeping on the eventful night of his capture. This loss was a grievous one to the ten-year-old boy, and was the chief cause of complaint against the Indians which appears in his journal, on the march to Canada. The shoes of the period could hardly have corresponded with the gold and silver buckles and the fine linen ruffles. They were stout brogans, doubtless of thick cowhide. There is a pair of the same material, with pegged soles, in the Museum at Deerfield, made more than a century ago for the tender feet of a two-year-old baby. The cut of the hair for young or old was after the style of Cromwell's Roundheads. A basin or bowl of suitable size inverted over the head might give the outline for the barber. Long hair and wigs, both recalling, if not imitating, the flowing locks of the Cavaliers in the days of Charles I., which were slowly creeping into fashion in Boston, were held in utter abomination in Roxbury. In 1672 a warning was sent from that town to Harvard College, protesting against the wearing of long hair and the students being "brought up in pride ill fitting youth destined for the Magistracy or the Ministry." This paper was signed by the father and grandfather of John, among other leading dignitaries of the town. So we cannot think of our boy with the "curly locks of youth," but with a stiff shock of straight hair cut after the bowl pattern.

This movement against long hair was, no doubt, under the lead of Eliot and Danforth, who were both Overseers of the College. They noted with alarm the decrease in the number of students. None were graduated that year, and there were only four for 1673. What was the cause of the falling off? They were confident that the

Deity liked best their style of barbering, and may have feared that His displeasure at the creeping in of the obnoxious fashion they denounced, was the cause of the shortage of students.

We assume that young John Williams was not an exceptional boy, but that he assisted the rest in the disturbance in the meetinghouse, and lent a helping hand in the mutilation of the schoolhouse; that he suffered with the others in the infliction of the Catechism and the rigid rules of the Lord's Day; that he was called upon to do the usual household chores and errands, to weed the garden,—a task shirked when possible by boys in all generations. Doubtless he joined in the games and sports and entertainments incident to the life of a boy in the country. Perhaps the most attractive event was the frequent training day. The Training Field was located between the houses of Mr. Eliot and Deacon Williams. At one period the Roxbury Militia trained every Saturday afternoon, the event coinciding with the school's half-holiday; and no doubt the boys made the most of the occasion. They did not, like the young Americans of to-day, lead the march, and swarm around the drummer and the fifer,—as far as the antipodes from that. They followed at a respectful distance, formed on the outskirts of the Field, and marched in Indian file. They were armed with sticks cut from the woods, uniformed with a narrow belt of red flannel and the graceful tail-feather of a rooster nodding from their hats, while they imitated, as best they could, the evolutions of the soldiers. It was a grand gala-day when the Boston Infantry marched out over the Neck and the Three County Troop paraded at Roxbury under Captain Thomas Prentice. The latter company marched under a gay silk banner, upon which was painted in high relief,

a mailed hand grasping a sword, reaching out from a thunder-bolt. This flag is still preserved. The military officers were grave men, well on in years, often Elders of the Church. They were held amenable to church discipline, as well as to military and civil authority in the conduct of their office. Training day was no holiday to these men. They had a realizing sense of the importance of their duties. The exercises of the day were opened and closed with prayer, led by the captain, if he was authorized to perform this public function, or by the chaplain, Joseph Dudley, or a minister. Regardless of the solemnities, the boys had their fun out of the training day, as boys will always and everywhere.

There can be little risk in saying that the most intimate friends of John Williams were Samuel Danforth, son of the minister, and his double cousin, William Williams. These three pursued together the classical course in the hog-sty schoolhouse, and together passed the examination and entered Harvard College: the only members of the class of 1683.

As youngsters, this trio no doubt hunted and fished together, gathered nuts and berries on the Dorchester hills, dug clams on the sands of the East and West Bays, bagged game in the "Squirrel's Delight" on the Connecticut road, drew the wriggling eels from the Muddy River and the gay cunners and cod from the deeper waters, nor did they fail to witness the great moral lesson on hanging days. Doubtless they were welcome visitors at the tannery of Uncle Stephen Williams, an attractive place for boys who might in turn be allowed to ride the patient, plodding horse on his slow rounds in the bark-mill. But, judging from personal experience, even this could not rival in drawing power the visit of

an autumn evening to the glowing brick-kiln on the Dorchester road. Did anything ever delight the palate of the boy like apples or green corn roasted on the end of long flexible sticks before the mouths of the low brick arches, where roared the fierce and lurid flame! Then the uncanniness and fearsomeness of it all! The intense blackness of the surroundings increased by the fountain of sparks and the jets of flame, as the fuel was replenished in the blazing arches. The dimly seen figures of the firemen brought out in glaring relief while pushing the dry wood into the jaws of the devouring flame, bending like beavers to their work, with their fantastic shadows in the background reminding the boys of nothing so much as the lurid pictures of souls in torment heard from the pulpit,—altogether a scene of fascinating and delightful terror.

The Neck, also, so far as the Boston town gate, was an attractive place for the boys of Roxbury. There was plenty of room for any games, and a fine chance for an impromptu straight-away foot race. As they grew older, and were able to command a light fowling-piece, the marshes on either side afforded an abundant supply of water-fowl. If our three boys could muster one firelock between them, the fun and excitement would be the same, as they carried it in turn, however lean might be their common game-bag.

CHAPTER VII.

THE TOWN'S END.—THE NECK AND ITS LESSONS.—PUBLIC EXECUTIONS.—THE GIBBET.—A FATHER'S UNIQUE REMEDY.—HANGING DAY.—AFTER THURSDAY LECTURE.—MORAL LESSONS.—MOSES BRETT.—CAPTAIN TOM.—FIELD DAY.—SITTING ON THE GALLOWS.—WHIPPING AT THE CART-TAIL.—MATHER'S COMPLAINT.

HOWEVER common was the Neck as a place of resort for the games and sports of the boys, it must be by daylight. With the nightfall and the gathering darkness the common gallows and gibbet loomed higher and seemed more and more uncanny against the deepening gloom of the horizon. Add to this the dismal creaking of the chains swinging in the wind, with the rattling bones of executed criminals whose flesh had gone to decay long ago, and the grinning skulls set upon poles at the edge of the marsh, some upright and some leaning to their fall! These were sights and sounds better encountered in the glare of sunlight. These were the relics of barbarism brought over from England by our Puritan ancestors. They were sights and sounds familiar to the eye and ear of John Williams from early childhood. For on the narrow stretch of land between Boston and Roxbury at "the Town's End" was established the stage, on which was frequently enacted the great moral show of the period.—the lesson that the way of the transgressor is hard. This was the place fixed upon for public execution of the condemned criminal. But the educational effects must not always end with the tragedy of the day. The bodies of certain malefactors were "hung in chains,"

waiting the action of time for their dissolution,—a constant reminder and warning to evil doers. We have in hand a practical application by a father whose children one day got into a little scrimmage. To put a final end to all squabbling, he took them to see a body hanging on a gibbet. After commenting at length on the spectacle, he knelt and prayed. This was “to show them something which I think they will remember as long as they live, that they may love each other with perfect and heavenly love.” It is to be hoped that the offering laid before this strange altar of reconciliation proved effective.

It was doubtless more for the benefit of the congregation than the criminals that, for the two Sundays between the sentence and the execution, the prisoner was allowed to leave jail and attend public worship in some meeting-house. We may be sure that on such occasions the lurid future of the condemned man was clearly mapped out by the preacher for the benefit of all.

Before the days of Cattle Shows, and of the General Muster, hanging day was made a day of public entertainment. It was on “Lecture Day” at the close of the service. In Boston this was a day of leisure, and people gathered from far and near. After the long prayers and longer sermon were over, the congregation marched or swarmed out to the Neck to witness the final ceremony of the day. October, 1670, a Roxbury Indian was executed for killing his wife by throwing her out of a chamber window. Was little five-year-old Johnny taken down to see this affair? Perhaps not, the victim being only an Indian; but on a Lecture Day in April, 1674, another Roxbury man was hanged on the Neck. John was then nine years old. Such an opportunity to impress the youthful mind would not be lost. We may be sure he was a

spectator, clinging to his mother's hand and sharing that privilege with his brother Ebenezer, two years younger.

The season for 1675 opened March 18, when a Scotsman and a Frenchman were hanged for the murder of a Robert Williams, their master. For a side-show a woman stood one hour on the gallows, and was after that tied to a cart-tail, and whipped through the streets back to the jail.

After Lecture, Thursday, July 1, 1675, occurred an event of more general interest, and the crowd was consequently larger, when four pirates were hung up in a row. They had been tried and convicted by the Court of Assistants two weeks before. In September, "Little John," an Indian, was the attraction. October 16 there was another "plain and common kind of" execution. But these entertainments were by no means confined to capital offenders; frequently they were more prolonged, if less exciting. It was common to punish a certain class of offenders by obliging them to sit for a prescribed time upon the gallows, often with a placard on the breast in large letters announcing their crime. All this might be followed by a whipping at the cart-tail.

On one occasion, when two men were hanged, a negro woman, doubtless a too valuable piece of property for such a summary disposition, although convicted of child murder, was sentenced "to stand on the Gallowes wth a Roape fastened about her Necke to the Gallowes for one hour, and thence to be tyed to & whipt at Carts Tayle to the prison wth thirty stripes & so committed to the prison there to lye for one moneth and then to be Conveyed by the Marshall General to Charlestowne & there on the Lecture Day to be alike tyed to & whipt wth thirty stripes & then on her m^{ts} [master] paying the charges of the tryall & prison she is discharged."

There was small show for pettifogging in the courts of those days, or for breaking down the proceeding on technical grounds. Nice points of law were less regarded than plain facts, and justice was meted out to the offender accordingly. November 19, 1675, Maurice Brett was indicted and tried for a capital offence. The jury found him "not legally guilty." But the evidence left no doubt in their minds of the man's guilt, and he was not to get off scot-free. He was sentenced by the court "to goe from hence to y^e prison & thence to be carried to the Gallows & there wth a Roape about his Necke to stand half an hower & thence tjed to the carts tajle & whipt seuerely wth thirty nine stripes and that he be banished this jurisdiction & kept in prison till he be sent away paying the prison charges."

There were some unusual features attending the infliction of this sentence which may be worthy of note. It will probably appear more strange to us than it did to John Williams to see the convicted felon go up the gallows ladder in a tall, wide-brimmed hat and a wide-flowing cloak, both arms free, and with a knife in his pocket. But certainly there must have been a new element of excitement, one not on the bill, when Brett drew his knife and defied the Marshal General and the four guards. We can easily fancy the sensation amongst the spectators, the pushing and craning of necks for a better view of the dramatic exhibition, when Brett cut the halter; the struggle on the ladder, and the most unexpected dénouement. We may be sure the boys had crept or wriggled their way to the front rank where our to-be minister took lessons for future application. December 16, 1675, Simon Messenger, John Taylor, Samuel Davis, Jr., and William Prichard, Jr., testify that:—

“Brett went up the ladder with his hat & cloak, the Marshall bid the executioner to go up and take off his hat and put on the halter about his neck, the said Brett refused that itt should be done and drew his knife out of his pocket and threatened any person that should come up to take off his hat or put on the halter; but put over halter himself and asked whether that would satisfie, itt was said yes, then presently with his knife cut the halter and threw it down and said take it for your paines: Then said Brett was commanded to come down off the ladder but would not, so we forced him to come down and took away his knife & he being refractory we pinioned him and he was again commanded by the Marshall to goe up the ladder againe but he would not, so that we by force [obscure] him up the ladder with a part of the halter about his neck. Then he said Lord have mercy upon me & said I will throw myself down; and imediately cast himself off the ladder.”

The following naturally connects itself with the foregoing: “In the Case of maurice Brett for his Contemptuous Carriage confronting the sentenc of this Court was sentenct to stand in the pillory on y^o morrow at one of y^o clock his eare nayld to y^o pillory & after an howrs standing there to be cut of & to pay twenty shillings for his swearing or be whipt wth ten stripes.” This was apparently more than Brett looked for, and he came off his high horse.

“In ans^r to the Humble petition Maurice Brett Humbly beseeching y^o Courts favor & the Court Remitted y^t part of y^o sentenc of nayling & cutting of his Eare.”

During the year 1676 the gallows tree bore an abundant harvest. Philip’s War broke out the year before, and the last account of many an Indian was settled this year

on the Boston and Roxbury Neck, adding largely to the regular entertainments. As the gallows was erected almost, if not quite, in sight of the house of Deacon Samuel Williams, the scenes enacted there must be reckoned with as among the formative influences on the character of John Williams. No note will be taken of the pillory; that being near the centre of Boston. Doubtless our three friends went over there when extra attractions were on the programme.

In June, 1676, Mr. Eliot, the Elders, and the Governor and Court were disturbed by divided councils. There had been victories of late over the Indians at Turners Falls, Hatfield, and Hadley. Captain Henschman had captured a large party of the enemy, and Major Talcott a larger one; and on this account the civil authorities wanted a day of Thanksgiving appointed. Mr. Eliot and others wanted it to be a day set apart for fasting and prayer. A compromise was finally effected. A day for general Thanksgiving was proclaimed for Thursday, June 29, while Wednesday, June 21, was set apart for "fasting and prayere" in "particlure Churches." On that day Mr. Eliot joined with Mr. Mather in a service at the North Church, where, says Eliot, "we saw a mighty presenc & assistanc of the spirit of Grace," and where in "prayre & sermon were sad prophesys to sick, sick New England."

The next day, Thursday, June 22, after the regular Lecture, there was a notable execution on the Neck. Captain Tom, of Natick, a convert of Mr. Eliot, and before the war his right hand man, failed at the crucial moment and joined the hostile Indians. Only three months before he had been at Deerfield at the head of two hundred "praying Indians,"—renegade converts of Eliot. June 12

he had given himself up, declaring his innocence of any hostile act. On the 19th he was tried, and declared guilty. Mr. Eliot had faith in his word, and was active and earnest in efforts for his release. Governor Leverett refused to interfere, and "did expresse how bad a man Tom was." Mr. Eliot was with him to the last. He says of him, "when the ladder was turned he lifted up his hands to heaven prayere wise & so held y^m till strength failed & yⁿ by degrees y^a sunk down."

Captain Tom, as a close friend of Mr. Eliot, must have been well known to John Williams. Had the future been unrolled, the latter would have had an added interest in this event by the knowledge that his lot in life would be cast on the very spot where Captain Tom had made his headquarters while the war was at its flood. In Sewall's Diary we find this affair thus disposed of: "June 22 Two Indians, Capt. Tom and another, executed after Lecture." Increase Mather, who seems to have been a regular attendant on executions, makes not even an allusion to this event in his Diary, saying, "June 22 A.M. Studied sermon. After Lecture with Elders & at Mr. Thatchers." Mather had little sympathy with Eliot on the Indian Question.

Tuesday, July 11, Mattoonas, another Nipmuck Sachem, was brought into Boston and shot. Historian Hubbard calls him that "Old Malicious Villian who was the first that did any mischief within the Massachusetts Colony." This was his attack on Mendon, July 14, 1675. It was thought this attack was made on account of a grudge against the English, who condemned his son for murder four years before. If Mattoonas was shot at the usual place of execution, it may be that the last object his eyes rested upon was the skull of his son, which was

“still standing upon a Pole near the Gibbet where he was hanged up.”

September, 1676, was a busy month in the line of horrors. On the 13th eight Indians were shot on Windmill Hill, Boston Common, by order of the General Court. They had been engaged in the late “rebellion” against the English.

On the 14th a man and woman stood “on the gallows wth a Roape about their Neckes one hower & tyed to the Gallows, and then at the carts tayle, to be severely whipt, not exceeding thirty nine stripes, to the prison, & there to lye till the next Lecture Day, at Charles Towne & carried then thither & be there alike severely whipt not exceeding thirty nine stripes.” The man was of Boston, the woman of Charlestown; hence both places had the benefit of the exhibition.

Thursday, September 21, 1676, was Field Day on Boston Neck. It was announced that after Lecture two white men and three Indians were to be executed, and two men and two women were to spend an hour on the gallows with ropes about their necks. But a disappointment awaited the assembled spectators. One of the white men was missing. It was explained that he was too sick to attend the function that day, but would appear at a later date. Mr. Mather, who had prepared a sermon adapted to the full programme, appears disturbed, and says, with a tone of seeming complaint, “The like not known y^t a man should die or be sick on the day appointed for his execution. A sad thing also that English & Indians should be executed together.” This is a curious and very Matherish exhibition. The English Christians were condemned for murdering Indian women and children, whom Mather usually called “the children

of the Devil." Mather could offer nothing against the conviction of the white murderers, but it was sad to have the added disgrace of being suspended on the gallows beside children of the Evil One. Aside from the absence of the sick man, the programme was carried out; and the disappointment occasioned by his non-appearance must have been more than offset by the incident described below. Judge Sewall, who, I suppose, was present, says: "Stephen Goble of Concord, was executed for murder of Indians; & three Indians for firing Eames his house, and murder, the wether was cloudy and rawly cold, though little or no rain. Mr. Mighil prayed: four others sate on the Gallows, two men and two impudent Women, one of which, at least, Laughed on the Gallows, as several testified." The moral effect upon the offenders so exhibited, and upon the attending crowd, must be left to the imagination.

After the two or three hours spent on that "rawly cold" afternoon by our three twelve-year-old boys, gazing at the spectacle on the gallows, when there were eight persons in a row with ropes about their necks, what was the physical and moral effect? Four of the halters were taut, with struggling weights at the end. At the ends of the four which were slack were men and women growing more and more hardened and shameless. When the taut ropes were relieved of their burdens, which were laid in the ground beneath, when the four bearing the slack rope were led down, and with naked backs were tied to the cart-tail, did the crowd of men, women, and children follow the smarting wretches down the road to the jail before they turned homeward? After the chores and supper, after the Bible reading and prayers were over, did the family sit down and discourse upon the incidents of the great

moral drama? Had they become so hardened and brutalized that, instead of the night being haunted with horrible spectres, their sleep was undisturbed and their dreams cheerful? But these occasions had a practical value not laid down in the code. Neither the penny-post nor the rural delivery had then been established. Letters were forwarded by private hands, and delivered as occasion offered. Here, then, was an opportunity. Many friends would doubtless attend the execution from the surrounding towns; and Mather, as was the custom, had written a batch of letters to be forwarded to their destination. Opportunity also was offered for social chit-chat and news mongering. Of course, it was half-holiday with the schools.

September 26 the open-eyed boys were again entertained by another exhibition at the old stand, in which there was no disappointment as on the 21st; but a new element of brutality gave an added zest to the moral lesson. Daniel Goble, the man unable to appear on the 21st, had so improved in health that he was able to be "drawn in a Cart upon bed cloaths to Execution." Here arises a horrible suspicion. Had he improved! This was Tuesday. He was reported as dying on the 21st. Did the officers fear that, if they waited until Thursday, the regular hanging day, death would steal the victim and defraud the public? I fail to see any other reason for a Tuesday's execution.

Goble, Sagamore Sam and One Eyed John, Nipmuck Sachems, and Old Jethro, were to be turned off together; but, when lined up, there was one halter missing. Mather says, "A mad woman got away the rope which should have hanged the Englishman, wherefore he was hanged with the very same rope which had hanged one of the

Indians just before." Five days before Parson Mather had lamented the "sad thing that English & Indians should be executed together"; and may it not be suspected that Mather himself was responsible for the act of the "mad woman"? We find no other note of this incident beside that in Mather's Diary. If Mather managed to have his own way, as is altogether likely, the parties to the first part of the exhibit were taken down before the second act was presented. The delay occasioned by the stolen halter could hardly have been tedious, considering that the Indians, to whom the other halters were fitted, were noted leaders in Philip's War; but, had it been so, the spectacle of the second part would repay, having novel and exciting features. The audience must have held its breath when the dying Goble was carried up the ladder, and held upright while the executioner adjusted the halter, warm from an Indian's neck.

What could have been the influence on the young mind of this frequent repetition of such brutal scenes? What chance for a finer feeling to prevail over the boy's natural instinct and inclination towards savagery?

CHAPTER VIII.

PHILIP'S WAR.—JOHN WILLIAMS AND THE INDIANS.—ELIOT'S CONVERTS.—OPENING OF THE WAR.—CAPTAIN DANIEL HENCHMAN.—CAPTAIN THOMAS PRENTICE.—CAPTAIN SAMUEL MOSELEY.—MAJOR THOMAS SAVAGE.—CAPTAIN NICHOLAS PAIGE.—CAPTAIN ISAAC JOHNSON.—INDIANS REJECTED.—CAPTAIN WILLIAM TURNER.—NO BAPTISTS WANTED.—JOHN DRUCE.—OLD MATTOONAS.—BROOKFIELD DISASTER.—ROXBURY SOLDIERS.—REV. SAMUEL MATHER.—ATTACK ON DEERFIELD SEPTEMBER 1.—NO ATTACK ON HADLEY.—SWAMP FIGHT.—CAPTAIN SAMUEL WADSWORTH.—FULL SEA WITH PHILIP.—DISTRESS AT THE BAY.—BAPTISTS TO THE RESCUE.—WAR IN THE CONNECTICUT VALLEY.—TURNERS FALLS FIGHT.—FORTY YEARS LATER.

JOHN WILLIAMS must have been in touch with native Indians from his earliest years. These were often employed on the farms as well as in domestic service. There must have been many squaws about the village with the products of their own handiwork to barter for the coveted wares of civilization. He must have been often in company with Job Nesutan, who was the interpreter and teacher of the Indian language to Mr. Eliot and an inmate of his family; and the converts of Mr. Eliot were doubtless constantly coming and going to the house of their counsellor and friend in the days of their great trials. It was no doubt a result of all this opportunity that we find the John Williams of after years in familiar conversation with his Indian masters,—a great advantage in his captivity. He was ten years old when Philip's War broke out. No doubt he had heard much sad and serious

conversation between his father and Mr. Eliot. The latter was most grievously tried by the defection of many of his Natick and Nipmuck converts,—“praying Indians,” they were called; and he incurred the deep resentment of the unreasoning populace for maintaining that many of this class were faithful to the English, and could be trusted in arms for their defence. He was abused and persecuted, and had good reason to believe that an attempt was made upon his life.

John Williams may have been too young to take in the import of all this, or to realize what was meant by an impending Indian war. But when as a man, engaged in his chosen life work in Deerfield, the accession of William and Mary to the throne of England brought about a war with France, and precipitated the struggle between their colonies in America, he had nothing to learn about the character and methods of the savages who again came to the front. He knew their language, knew their best and their worst traits. Roxbury had been the whirling centre of the Indian Question, and he had the wisdom of experience, and became a safe counsellor. When, after long months of disaster to the colony, the counsels of Mr. Eliot were heeded and acted upon, the tide turned, and his policy was vindicated. How far Mr. Eliot's own flock sustained him in this trial does not clearly appear, but there is an evident note of personal grief and despair in the following entry on the Church Records:—

“Soone after the warr wth the Indians brake forth, the history w'off I cannot, I may not relate, the prophane Indians p've a sharp rod to the English, & the English p've a very sharp rod to the praying Indian.” After Rev. William Hubbard's “Narrative of the Indian Wars”

was published, Mr. Eliot shows his dissatisfaction with the author's account of the part played in it by the Praying Indians. He says:—

“The Indian war now about to finish, wherein the praying Indians had so eminent an interest in the recording wheroff I thought not my selfe so fitting. I desisted from this work of recording p'ticular matters, & knowing y^t it was committed to oth^rs I declined it, but now on 2d thought I blame my selfe for it, Lord p'don all my many omissions, the successe of o^r Indians was highly accepted wth the souldiers, & y^{ei} now welcomed where ev^{ry} y^{ei} met y^m y^{ei} had y^m to the ordinarys, made y^m drink, & bred y^r by such an habit to love strong drink, it p'ved an horrible snare unto us. y^m learned so to love strong drink y^t y^{ei} would spend all y^r wages & pawne any they had for rumb or any strong drink: so drunkenesse increased & quarreling fighting were the sad effects of strong drink. Praying to God was quenched, the younger generation being debauched by it, and the good old generation of the first beginners gathered home by death. So y^t Satan imp'ved y^s op'tunity to defile, debase, & bring into contempt the whole work of praying to God.” So between the backsliding of the converts in the war, and the demoralization at its close, Eliot's labors seem to have come to naught. We do not in after years find any intimation that John Williams was engaged in missionary work among the Indians. Was this lack of zeal the result of his own observations when a boy?

Beside the opportunity that John Williams had for seeing the inside of the Indian Question, he was so situated that the realities of Philip's War came near to him. No Indian raids were made on the village where he lived, but Roxbury men did their full share in the field, and bore their full share in the consequent losses of life.

In the vital records in the church book there is a gap of three years after October 6, 1675. There it is written, "Here is a great empty space w^r in we had no buryals at home but we had many slaine in the warr, no towne for bigness lost more, if any towne so many."

Roxbury had in 1770 a population of 1,462. That of 1675 can only be guessed at. There were probably only six or seven hundred souls, but of this small number I have gathered from various sources, notably Bodge's "Soldiers in King Philip's War," the names of sixty-nine Roxbury men who served in that war, of whom twenty were killed and two wounded. There is no likelihood that this chance list is by any means complete. It is, however, full enough to show the severity of the draft on the little community, and the valley of the shadow of death in which it walked.

When the two messengers sent by the Governor and Council towards Mount Hope to confer with Philip came galloping back through Roxbury, June 24, 1675, with the news that Philip was already on the war path, and had murdered several people at Swansea, the excitement knew no bounds. Orders were instantly issued for sending soldiers to the scene of the outbreak, and the Council adjourned to meet the next day "at Roxbury." The members probably met at the house of the late Governor Dudley; but why was the meeting at Roxbury? That day Daniel Henchman received his commission as captain, with orders to march at once with one hundred foot soldiers mounted as dragoons, and doubtless that afternoon saw this force with Captain Thomas Prentice and fifty men from the Three County Troop march out of Roxbury toward Swansea. On the 27th Captain Samuel Moseley followed with a company which he had enlisted

in the mean time at Boston. Among them were several condemned pirates released from prison for the purpose. All these were seen, and followed, and watched out of sight by the excited boys of Roxbury. Within a day or two Major Thomas Savage, with Captain Nicholas Paige and another troop, marched through the town. I suppose they all marched right by the door of Deacon Samuel Williams, and our John then got a sight of real war. July 6 Captain Isaac Johnson was sent out with seven men to escort a party of fifty-two friendly Indians to the front. But this kind of support was not acceptable to the English, and they were soon sent back. It was doubtless upon this hinge that swung the door opening upon many disasters during the coming year.

It was in a similar spirit that a few days later a second offer of aid from another quarter was also rejected. William Turner of Boston, a Baptist, by reason of his independent thinking and acting, had been accused before authority of being disloyal to his country, and stigmatized as a social disturber. He was persecuted and imprisoned; yet in spite of all this, when Philip's War broke out, he raised a company of soldiers which he offered to lead against the foe. But because it was largely and perhaps wholly made up of Baptists, his offer was summarily refused. No Baptist could smite the heathen in a manner acceptable to the Lord.

Not long before the freemen of Cambridge had addressed a lengthy memorial to the General Court, in which they say: . . . "Many are refusing to obey them that have the rule over them in the Lord, as is more especially the practice of the Quakers, Anabaptists, and Familists that are of late risen up among us, and in these wicked practices do they continue notwithstanding all the means

that have been used for their conviction, and wholesome laws of this jurisdiction prohibiting them therein." Thanks are given for the laws made for the repression of these "highhanded and presumptuous sinners," and they pray "that the laws here established against the wicked practices of those obstinate offenders may be fully executed. . . . We being well assured that the tolerating of them will add to the catalogue of those things that he whose eyes are as a flaming fire in the midst of his churches, will soon espy and be offended with us for, as is by himself affirmed; but on the contrary it is well pleasing when his people do hate those things that his soul doth hate."

The Massachusetts forces united with those from Plymouth, it was supposed, would overawe the Indians, and at once put an end to the uprising. Roxbury had sent her full share of men in this emergency, who had marched with light hearts and sure faith, with never a thought of disaster. The town was soon rudely awakened. News came that John Druce, a trooper under Captain Paige, was mortally wounded a few hours after bidding good-bye to his family. He died on July 2d. Now his young wife was a widow and their three babes fatherless. Small comfort was it to her that her brave husband "acquitted himself valiantly" in the fight; but it was greatly comforting to hear that he was cared for in his extremity by his honored townsman, Joseph Dudley, chaplain to Major Savage, who, as it appears by the record, received and proved his nuncupative will. We shall find this chaplain and Parson John Williams closely associated in the years to come, when the latter was in dire need, and Joseph was again to be the comforter.

While mothers, wives, and sisters hastened to sympa-

thize with the stricken widow, Mary Druce, each was bearing in her own heart a sad burden of dread and fear. Who would be the next one on whom a similar blow might fall? The wife of Deacon Williams was of this number; for Samuel, her first born, had marched to fill the place left vacant by the death of John Druce. Samuel came back unharmed to his mother; but later, when the ranks of the Roxbury men had been sadly thinned, her husband, Deacon Samuel, and "his man" went out into the fateful service, and also a grandson, John Turner. These all returned, but so nearly did this Indian War come home to young John Williams.

The ever open shoe shop of Deacon Williams was a natural centre for those returned from the field to gather and talk over the events and experiences of the war, and here the boys would be eager and excited listeners. The novelty and curiosity attending the early movements of soldiers from or through Roxbury had given way to a serious alarm, as it was found that the Indians were making steady headway against the English. News came of an outbreak near home. Old Mattoonas had attacked Mendon, and killed five or six people. Mendon had been bought of the Nipmuck Indians, and Deacon Parke, the father of Deacon Williams's wife, was one of the commissioners for settling the place, while Mr. Eliot had been forward in founding a church there. July 15 Captain Johnson was despatched to relieve Mendon. Presumably, this company was from his own town or vicinity. July 16 Captain Edward Hutchinson, the envoy, with a troop under Captain Thomas Wheeler as guard, marched through Roxbury to the fatal ambush at Brookfield five days later. There were few days on which soldiers, going out or coming in, did not pass the house of Deacon Williams.

As the summer wore on, the hostile Indians were driven westward; and on the 25th of August at the foot of We-quamps occurred the "First Encounter" in the Connecticut Valley. Here the blood shed by James Levens was another link in the chain binding together Roxbury and Deerfield. September 4 Ephraim Child was killed and Robert Pepper wounded, higher up the valley at Northfield; both men were from Roxbury. The news of the burning of Deerfield, September 1, 1675, as I have said, was noted by Increase Mather in Boston, mainly as a fulfilling of his own prophecy. In Roxbury the excitement was intense and personal. Mr. Samuel Mather, then preaching at Deerfield, was born in Dorchester, and was well known as a graduate of the Roxbury Grammar School. He was also a classmate of Parson Danforth at Harvard. This, too, was a new phase of the war. It was the first attack on any town in the Connecticut Valley.

It may not be amiss to note here one fact concerning another alleged event occurring in that valley. The news of the Indian assault on Deerfield, September 1, 1675, had been brought to Boston before September 7. The messenger bringing it must have passed through Hadley, as no other route was open at that date. September 7 Mr. Mather makes record of the event in his Diary. His account gives more details of the loss to the inhabitants than can be found anywhere else, but there is not a word or hint of any trouble at Hadley. Yet it is on this same September 1, that historians would have us believe there was a terrible onslaught on Hadley, in which the inhabitants were only saved from destruction by the appearance on the scene of the Regicide General Goffe, in the guise of an angel. Two years later, Mather

published a History of Philip's War, and doubtless he was at the time in question gathering materials; but the news of the Hadley attack had not then reached him, for there is not a word of the affair on its pages. The only explanation of this omission is the fact that the romantic myth of Hadley's deliverance by Goffe was not invented until a century later. Of course, John Williams never heard of it, but probably the eleven-year-old boy got his first knowledge of Deerfield from the current talk of the town about this time, never dreaming of an event ten years later, when he should succeed Mather, which would forever after link his name and fate with the now desolate plantation.

September 21, 1675, was a busy and anxious day to Mr. Eliot and those in sympathy with him. Captain Samuel Moseley with his rough riders had brought to Boston three weeks before eleven of Eliot's praying Indians from Marlboro, charged with killing eight persons at Lancaster. On that day they were tried before the Court of Assistants. But, although they were "vehemently suspected to have a hand in y^e Murder," not enough evidence was adduced for their conviction. They were returned to prison under guard, and then forwarded to Natick, and delivered to Waban, the ruling Indian. It is by no means a modern dictum that "there is no good Indian but a dead Indian"; and, innocent or guilty, it was a narrow escape for these men, as the populace was in an exasperated state of mind and clamoring for vengeance. It is not improbable that, had the news from Deerfield arrived one day sooner, it would have raised a riot, and been the cause of their destruction. September 22 a despatch was received by the Governor, relating a more terrible disaster at Deerfield. On the 18th Cap-

tain Thomas Lothrop and his command from Essex County had been overwhelmed by the Indians at Bloody Brook; and the next day Captain Lothrop, with sixty-three men, had been "buried in one dreadful grave."

War was declared against the Narragansets November 2, and Roxbury was to receive a still heavier blow. December 10 Captain Isaac Johnson, one of her foremost men, joined with his company the army under Winslow, which destroyed the enemy's stronghold December 19. How many of his townsmen marched under Captain Johnson is not determined. The names of twenty have been ascertained. Among them was his grandson Henry Bowen, just past his sixteenth birthday, the oldest of nine children, serving as ensign. Another was Thomas Baker, twelve years old, and still other mere boys. When the remains of the shattered army returned February 5, there were more desolate homes and hearts in Roxbury. Captain Johnson fell while leading in the desperate assault on the Narraganset fort at the "Great Swamp Fight." I have not again heard of his grandson, and he was probably lost in this battle. This was by no means the last sacrifice the town was called upon to make, as we shall see.

In the winter of 1675-6 it became evident to the authorities that the wrath of God was still burning against the colony. January 20 Mather writes his views of the situation: "Strange warm weather, like April, whereby the snow exceedingly wasted, & it is to be feared, that the Indians will have great advantage thereby, to scatter & do mischief, so that the Lord seems to be against us still & to take part with our adversaries." Hubbard writes, "It was now full sea with Philip his affairs," and again, "It was Ebbing water with New England at

this time." One Eyed John had boastingly said he burned Medfield and Lancaster, and would burn Groton, Chelmsford, Concord, Watertown, Cambridge, Charlestown, and lastly Roxbury and Boston. Mather writes of "y^e doleful state of y^e Country y^e great desolations lately come upon 2 Plantations. . . . Famine & other Judg^{ts} seem near at hand"; and at a General Fast he prays that God would "Rebuke y^e Heathen" and "preserve Boston from desolating Judg^{mts}. Amen! O Lord, Amen!" "In our horizon dark Clouds gather apace, and the Heavens are covered over with blackness." The only hope is to "Pray, Pray, Pray, never more need than now."

To show further the condition of feeling at this time, we again quote Mather, writing after the crisis was over. He says:—

"Prayer is of Wonderful Prevalancy since our own Eyes have seen it! New England may now say if the Lord (even the prayer hearing God) had not been on our Side when men rose up against us, they had Swallowed us up; then the proud Waters had gone over our Souls. We cannot but acknowledge, and Posterity must know, that we were in *Appearance* a gone and ruined People, and had been so ere this Day if the Lord had not been a God that heareth Prayer."

Is it possible that in this state of alarm and confusion, while seeking the cause of God's evident displeasure, it may have occurred to the less bigoted to consider whether the relentless persecution of the Baptists might not be a factor. At any rate a halt was called, and it was decided to hedge on that subject. After fasting and prayer and humiliating themselves before God, the Governor and Council, humiliating themselves before man, begged

Captain Turner and his Baptist followers to take the field against the exultant enemy. After some demurring because his company had been broken up and scattered, and he himself weakened by imprisonment, this true, long-suffering patriot gave himself to the service of his bleeding country. The result will be noted later.

It was another exciting event in Roxbury when early in the morning of April 20 Captain Samuel Wadsworth marched through the town, bound for the relief of beleaguered Marlboro. Under him were eighteen men of Roxbury, whose names we have ascertained. Ten of these we know fell with their captain the next day in the fatal ambush at Sudbury. Four others are lost to sight, and may have shared their fate. Only four of the number returned to make glad the eyes of a few of the anxious and distressed watchers. In how many homes the light went out in the shadow of death! The lost husbands, sons, or brothers, were of the very best blood of Roxbury,—blood second to none in the colony. These men and boys were all known to John Williams. Several older brothers of his playmates were in the sacrifice. Did he yearn for strength to go out and avenge their loss? We shall never know. The dead were buried on the field where they fell, and the mourners went about the streets. In later years an enduring memorial has been reared to mark the scene of the great disaster.

There was no invasion of Roxbury by the Indians during the war, but her men were everywhere at the front, and their blood moistened the soil in every considerable encounter.

Mr. Eliot's statement was more than fulfilled in which he said, "The prophane Indians p've a sharp rod to the English." His personal loss was a sister's son, who left

a widow and seven children, one yet unborn. Mr. Eliot had all along believed that the disasters in the war were mainly sent in consequence of the treatment bestowed upon his Nipmuck converts. November 27, 1676, he says: "So soone as we condescended to impr'ue o^r praying Indians in the warr, from y^t day forward we allwayes p'sp'd untill God pleased to teare the rod in peeces, p'ly by conquest, p^{ty} by their sicknesse & death, & hath brought us peace, praised be his name." But later, when the war broke out at the eastward, he finds that God is not yet fully appeased, and thinks our "chiefe wrath p'voking sins, as pride, covetousnesse, animositys, p'sonal neglecte of gospelizing o^r youth, & of gospelizing of the Indians &c. drinking houses multiplied, not lessened, quakers openly tolerated." In spite of all this the good man finds small signs of reformation. It was while our three boys were growing up that the persecution of the Baptists, to which allusion has been often made, culminated; and they must have been impressed by Mr. Eliot and Deacon Williams with the wickedness of Captain William Turner and Lieutenant Drinkwater and their compeers, who persisted in thinking their own thoughts instead of meekly absorbing those enunciated from the pulpit. These men were denounced as disturbers of the peace, opposers of civil law and religious decree. They were anathematized as Anabaptists, excommunicated, imprisoned, banished. And rightly, too, the boys thought, if they thought at all; for could they, with their environment, think otherwise? When the Baptists fell under the ban of the civil law, as well as that of the church, and the doors of their meetinghouse were nailed up, the boys no doubt heard the Elders discussing how far the anger of God had been mollified, and considering

whether His pleasure would be manifested by removing the plague of worms, by giving them fructifying weather, and abundant crops. Did these occur, God was pleased, they said; and the persecutions were increased. Did frost or blight appear instead, the persecution increased; for God was not yet satisfied. In either case the poor heretics got the worst of it. Free thought must be stamped out. God and man, gospel and law, must all be combined to bring it about. To the generality the imprisonment of Captain Turner meant no more than the punishment of one who had stolen wood from the scanty pile of the widow, or one who had violated the ordinances by walking in the fields of a Sabbath morning. It may be doubted if any thought of persecution, dawned upon them at all. If, perchance, any voice were heard in behalf of the Separatists, the boys would naturally look through the eyes and hear with the ears of the Elders, and would see and hear only another, perhaps a worse, offender against the true order of things and the will of the Almighty, as declared by Eliot, Mather, and others. When Captain Turner, enfeebled by confinement, but borne up by patriotism, led his devoted followers through Roxbury, destined to finish his checkered career in the Connecticut Valley, there is no reason to suppose these boys had any idea that something unusual was occurring. How did this display differ from others they had watched in the passing weeks? The auroral crown that brightened the brow of Captain Turner was unseen. How should they know, as we know, that Turner was sent out as a forlorn hope? The plans of the authorities and their relations with Turner were not proclaimed from the housetops. Captain Turner marched out of Roxbury with sixty-three men, February 21, 1676. At Marlboro,

the 29th, he received from Captain Reynolds and Captain Wadsworth sixty-three more. Among the latter were seven Roxbury men. February 24 a Fast was held at the meetinghouse of Mr. Mather. Mr. Eliot preached. The burden of the prayers was for God's help in the war "in this day of calamity." The next Thursday, March 2, was another day set apart for Fasting and Prayer. It may be safely believed that few of the prayers were for the safety of Captain Turner personally. Even now the spirit of intolerance was not dead or sleeping, though veiled for the emergency. Mather wrote in his Diary, March 13, 1676: "This day the Indians set upon Groton &c. In the pursuit after the Indians Turner the Anabaptist . . . he who had dipped others . . . had liked to have been drowned. This seems to me an observable Providence." To make even this irrelevant and malicious fling, the diarist was obliged to falsify his facts. On that day Turner was with his command sixty miles away. The affairs of the colony in consequence of the war were in no better condition in the west than at the Bay. There Hutchinson, Wheeler, Lothrop, and Beers had fallen. A large army of Indians had gathered about Deerfield. Captain Turner was in reality sent to the Connecticut Valley to bear the brunt as best he could. He reached Northampton just in time to save that town from destruction by a horde of Indians from the camp of Philip at Northfield, who made an assault upon it March 14, 1676.

Major Thomas Savage, of Boston, was then the commander in the Valley; but about the 1st of April he, with his principal force, was called away to protect Boston and the other Bay towns, leaving Turner in command with a mere handful of men to hold the Valley. The Gover-

nor and Council had sent orders to desert the towns west of the Connecticut, and leave them to the enemy. They say it "is no less than tempting divine providence" to attempt to hold that region. Turner, however, was of a different mould; he took the responsibility, and surprised the government by the result. His great achievement was at the "Falls above Deerfield," where on the 19th of May he surprised the headquarters of the enemy, killed or scattered their great assembly, and broke up the camp. But his "weakness of body," caused by his long imprisonment, cost him his life.

Forty years later John Williams, then the minister of Deerfield, the "Redeemed Captive," visited the scene of Turner's battle in company with his guest, Judge Samuel Sewall, Mehuman Hinsdale, the first white man born in the settlement, and Captain Jonathan Wells, who had on that eventful day earned the title of "Boy Hero of the Connecticut Valley." Leaving the Old Street on horseback, September 3, 1716, the four men took the road through North Meadows, passed Pine Hill, and crossed the Pocumtuck River at Cheapside. Here they turned aside to visit on Petty's Plain, the place where the Macqua Chief, and possibly others who fell in the attack on Deerfield, February 29, 1704, were buried: then they picked their way over the old Northfield road to the Falls. Here they traversed the field of slaughter, while the features of special interest were pointed out by Captain Wells, then in the prime of manhood. Leaving the battle-ground, the party followed the route by which Turner led his forces to the Falls on the night of May 18, 1676. They saw the place where the commander fell on the retreat, and they doubtless lingered around the lone grave where he was laid to rest. Following on the line of march, they reached

the Neck, where two of the party could locate the scene of the ambush laid by De Rouville for the pursuing English Feb. 29, 1703-4.

The day before this trip in the trail of Turner, Mr. Williams had preached in his own pulpit on the text, "This their way is their folly." In view of the fact that Mr. Williams knew he was to have the distinguished Chief Justice Sewall among his hearers, it would be interesting to know what application was made of this text on that occasion. But all our information is negative. Did the Judge like the sermon? His short—very shorthand—report is this, "Sat with Mrs. Williams in her Pue." "Sing well at Deerfield." Parson Williams was doubtless busy with his sermon Saturday, and so his deacon, Samuel Childs, was sent to meet Sewall at Sugar Loaf, and to show him the field of the Lothrop Massacre. He was escorted to this same spot on his return by Mr. Williams and Captain Wells.

It would be intensely interesting could we know the thoughts and feelings of the minister as he discoursed with Judge Sewall on the events culminating here in the service and sacrifice of Captain Turner. Did Parson Williams, in his prime, blush with shame for the home of his boyhood, for her part in the intolerant and bitter persecutions of Captain Turner? and did they recall how it was only by the stress of adverse war that he was allowed to face the enemy, to serve and to die for his country, when that country appeared on the verge of ruin? These things were personally known to these two men, although not written large on the pages of history.

We find, in studying the life of John Williams, that, while a large part of the superstition with which he was surrounded in youth clung to him through life, not the

slightest trace is found of intolerance against any creed, always saving that constant nightmare, the Church of Rome. Was there any lesson impressed upon him by the case of William Turner, the Anabaptist, Christian, patriot, and soldier?

Not long after the close of Philip's War three ministers, each of whom had intimate personal knowledge of Captain Turner and his career, wrote books professing to give full narratives of the events of the war. But so bigoted are these writers that neither of them names Turner as the commander at the Falls Fight, or gives him any credit whatever for the result. There is not a syllable of his persecution, the rejection of his first offer of service, or hint of the circumstances attending his raising a second company, or of his march from Boston,—not a word relating to his invaluable service in the Valley. His "great bodily weakness" is indeed mentioned, but only to his discredit. Increase Mather, one of these authors, says: "Some of the Indians have confessed that at the Falls Fight, May 19, 1676, that they lost no less than three hundred and thirty of their Councillors, which put them into an absolute confusion, that they were like men confused ever after." We have seen that all successes in this campaign were given by the Lord in answer to prayer. To these authors the brave and patriotic Turner was nothing more than a "pestilent heritick." But, so long as the Connecticut River flows to the sea, so long will the name of William Turner be held in honor, and "Turners Falls" testify to the place where his judgment and his valor snapped the chain with which a triumphant foe had bound fast the colony. The links were never again united.

CHAPTER IX.

FUNERALS.—NO RELIGIOUS SERVICE.—NEIGHBORLY KINDNESS.—HIGHEST HONORS.—MORTALITY.—HANNAH HOPKINS.—YOUNG LIFE.—NEW MEETINGHOUSE.—DANFORTH.—A COINCIDENCE.—EUSTIS STREET GRAVEYARD.—DEBORAH WARREN.—SAMUEL WILLIAMS.—MONUMENT.

FUNERALS occurred in sad frequency in Roxbury during the young years of John Williams, in consequence of fatal epidemics. In their methods and accompaniments, funerals were usually somewhat akin to hangings as moral lessons; but such were not needed by the dwellers near Boston and Roxbury Neck, and the Roxbury funerals were probably more like those described by Alice Morse Earle in her "Child Life in Colonial Days." She says: "New England children were instilled with a familiarity with death in another way than through talking and reading of it. Their presence at funerals was universal. A funeral in those days had an entirely different status as a ceremony from to-day. It was a social function as well as a solemn one; it was a reunion of friends and kinsfolk, a ceremonial of much expense and pomp, a scene of much feasting and drinking." Doubtless the children of Roxbury were more impressed by the feasting than by the lessons of mortality after the more highly seasoned spectacles on the Neck, with which they had been entertained by the Civil Courts. These, however, might sometimes have been rivalled in case of persons of note, where there were "ceremonials of much expense and pomp."

The religious service at funerals in these days was entirely wanting. The whole community gathered at the house of mourning, with hands to aid and hearts full of sympathy generously offered and thankfully received. The bereaved family were clad in garments of the deepest black, made or loaned for the occasion by willing neighbors. After the customary social glass, the corpse was placed upon a bier and borne to the graveyard by relays of the leading men of the place, with pall-bearers of due rank and age. The procession which followed was led by the sorrowing family and relatives, punctiliously arranged two and two, according to degree of kin; then the inhabitants, according to rank in like order, closed the train. When the graveyard was reached, the bier was placed near the open grave, the family gathered around, and then, as the highest mark of respect which could be rendered, the most distinguished man present lifted the head of the coffin and assisted in lowering the body to its last restingplace. The grave was filled; and, after a few words of thanks for the assistance rendered by a representative of the mourners, the procession was re-formed, and marched back to the home of the bereaved. There all joined in the funeral feast which had been prepared, and was served by the kindly hands of the neighbors. Afterward those most interested were gathered by themselves in the best room, where, if the deceased was testate, the will was read and discussed, and, as in later days, and for similar reasons, lasting heart-burns were often engendered.

The mortality in the little hamlet of Roxbury about this period was frightful. Old and young were swept away by putrid fever, small-pox, and other epidemics. The fever visited the family of the minister, Mr. Danforth,

taking away Mr. Danforth, and again, three of his children within ten days. Samuel, the close friend of John Williams, escaped the scourge. When John was fourteen, the small-pox swept over the town and over Boston. From September, 1678, to July, 1679, Mather notes the death of ninety-one persons which came within his ken, and says that in his own meetinghouse 674 sick persons "were prayed for" on Sundays. He says nothing of any other service, on some of these occasions.

In Roxbury, from November 17, 1678, to October 27, 1679, there are thirty-four deaths recorded. If the ratio of mortality to cases be about the same as that indicated by the figures given by Mather at Boston, probably not more than one-half of the population escaped the contagion. John Williams may have had it; his sister Theoda, two years older, and Mary Hopkins, a companion of the same age, died of it, and were buried February 8, 1679. On the 14th, Margaret, daughter of Joseph Wild, a neighbor, died, and her mother followed three days later. The mother of Mary Hopkins had been taken January 5. It may be of interest to notice one episode in her history, whether brought about by fear of God, or jealousy, or by inborn malice, each may determine. In either case it is a sad exhibition of the time. Some twenty-five or thirty years before, Hannah Hopkins had made a runaway match, and gone to Rhode Island to be married under conditions quite common at the period. This offence was now raked up, and a month before her death she was called before the church, censured, confessed, and was absolved. Yet God's anger was not softened. The small-pox did not abate. Mistress Hannah Hopkins had long been a respected matron, a good and faithful wife and mother. She had sent two sturdy sons out to

serve in Philip's War, one of whom would never return to gladden the eyes of his mother.

Before the days when this great distress fell upon the Williams and Hopkins families, we can easily picture the boys and girls eagerly listening to the stories of their brothers while they related their adventures in the war. William Hopkins had been with Captain Turner in his last campaign in the far off wilderness of the Connecticut Valley, and had traversed the desolated Street of the Dedham settlement. How vividly must John Williams have called all this to mind when he made that Street his home!

The young life of John Williams in Roxbury was not all sadness and gloom. It could not well be when so many boys and girls were growing up in such a compact community. Grief is apt to sit lightly upon young life, and sorrow to flit hastily. Life is then more of the body than of the mind or heart. Let us be thankful that youth is a period of easy adjustment of all the sad realities. John was ten years old when his grandmother died. Such a loss was far from what it would be to-day, when grandchildren are petted even more than children. The children were then, and indeed for a century and a half later, relegated to the background. The writer was older than John when his two grandmothers died, but he does not recall being fondled by either, or of receiving from either kind or familiar words save when medicine was to be given. Probably the death of Parson Danforth, four months later, made the more lasting impression upon the boy. This was indeed an impressive event. A minister in his prime and in the height of his usefulness was carried off by a loathsome epidemic after a sickness of only seven days. There must have been a deep

and anxious search for the cause of God's anger, so manifest in striking down such a godly man whose life had been solemnly dedicated to His especial service.

By the persistent efforts of Mr. Eliot and Mr. Danforth a new meetinghouse had replaced the old "unbeautified" one, but the latter was not to occupy it. Mr. Eliot says, November 15, 1674, "We first met & worshiped God in o^r new meeting house, but the P^d touched o^r thigh because yesterday my bro. Danforth fell sick." On the 19th he wrote, "My bro. Danforth dyed in the Lord, it pleased the Lord to brighten his passage to glory." On the 22d he says, "A good sab: & sac: blessed by the Lord, but sorrowfull, because o^r resp^d Pasto^r was dead." "He greatly increased in the pow^r of his ministry, especially y^o last summer, he cordially joynd wth me in maintaining the peace of the Church. Wee consulted about the beautifying the house of God wth ruling elders, and to order the Congregation into the primitive way of Collections." By the tenor of the current Church Records it seems as if the people had rather crowded a little upon the ministry, and that the two ministers had this year joined in a determined effort to restore the old order of things. It was at this time when the practice, before referred to, of a Sunday examination of the male and female youth was resumed.

November 23 the funeral of Mr. Danforth "was celebrated wth a great Confluence." The expense of the funeral was doubtless in proportion to the worth of the departed, and the burden of it was taken by the Church. "Dec. 8 this sab. day o^r Church had a pub. collection for o^r Sister Danforth p^{tly} to pay the charges of the funeral, the rest to be given the widdow."

No doubt this imposing event, the men of note in at-

tendance, the familiar forms and faces of the Danforth children, now shrouded in black, the profuse display of scarfs and gloves, the final solemn feast, must have deeply impressed John Williams. But how much more impressive, could he have foreseen the time when he himself should finish his work, in his own home, in sight of his own new meetinghouse, which he was never to occupy! There was one present who became a witness to this curious coincidence in the history of Samuel Danforth and John Williams. Fifty-five years later William Williams would most vividly recall the events of this day, as in sadness and sorrow he saw laid to rest his lifelong companion and friend, stricken down in the prime of his manhood, almost in touch with the not yet finished meetinghouse.

The Eustis Street burying ground was first used by Roxbury people in 1633, and is one of the oldest graveyards in Massachusetts. It is located near the centre of the first settlement, and here lie successive generations of the dead of Roxbury. All the original settlers of the town, who crossed the stormy seas under the stress of persecution, cast anchor, one after another, in this final haven of rest,—John Eliot, the Apostle, Rev. Samuel Danforth, Governor Thomas Dudley, Deacon William Parke, Robert Williams, Robert Calef, Thomas Weld, Thomas Lamb, William Dennison, William Curtis, Griffith Crafts, Benjamin Childs, Edward Dennison, Robert Seaver, George Holmes, Humphry Johnson, Joseph Wise, Isaac Heath, George Alcock, John and Robert Pierpont, Martin Stebbins, Deacon Samuel Williams, and generally their wives and many of their children; among the latter Chief Justice Paul Dudley, Governor Joseph Dudley, a fast friend of John Will-

iams, the Captive; his son, Colonel William Dudley, also a fellow-worker for the redemption of captives, who was with Ensign John Sheldon in Canada; Joseph Warren and his wife Deborah Williams sister of John, who were the grandparents of General Warren of Bunker Hill and eternal fame.

Roxbury contained many well-to-do people, and elaborate monuments were early erected in their memory. This graveyard was near the house of Deacon Samuel Williams, and doubtless young John spent many an hour with his playmates tracing out with his little fingers the grotesque carvings, and spelling out the inscriptions on the headstones, as clear to-day as then; for the ground is still held in honor and well cared for. To this place John followed the body of his grandmother Williams in July, 1674, and his aunt Martha Williams, the sister of his mother and the mother of his friend William, in October of the same year. Here were laid six of his brothers and sisters. Here on the highest spot within the enclosure rises, four square to the heavens, the Parish Tomb, where the body of the Apostle Eliot was placed in 1690, and in succession those of the later ministers. Hard by is the dust of Deacon Samuel Williams. His grave is covered by a horizontal slab of sandstone, six feet long by two and one-half feet wide and four inches thick; an ornamental moulding runs around the edge with a trefoil device at each corner. The inscription was deeply cut, and it can still be clearly read:—

HERE LYETH y^e Body of DEACON Samuel Williams Aged 65 years Departed This Life September y^e 28 1698.

There is little probability that John Williams was at his father's funeral. In 1698 there was no harnessed

lightning to notify the son of the death of his father, or imprisoned steam to carry him as on the wings of the wind to the scene of the last rites. It may be that the news did not reach him for weeks. But in after years his hand must have many a time rested reverently on this very stone and his eye as often scanned this inscription. To walk in this sacred enclosure where John Williams had seen so many of his relatives and neighbors deposit their dead in tears and anguish; to stand upon the identical spot where as a man he stood while reading the legend over his father's grave, brought me very near to him,—a sense of nearness not to be obtained on the now bustling streets where he played, or the pastures and beaches where he hunted, now overgrown with dwellings and halls and warehouses. On this spot the footsteps of time have trod lightly. Here the hand of "improvement"—that modern demon of destruction—has been stayed. Here, girt lovingly about by strong arms of stone, unmindful of the surging crowds, the roar and rattle of traffic, this God's Acre, with its silent emblems of mortality, rises and swells as in the far off days of yore,—days when John gazed with curiosity and awe into the open grave of his grandmother, days when Mr. Walter prayed over the newly made mound above his mother.

Theoda Parke, the mother of John Williams, laid down the burden of her earthly cares on her birthday, August 26, 1718, at the age of eighty-one, and three days later was here buried. Rev. Nehemiah Walter, who had been ordained colleague of John Eliot October 17, 1688, the very same day that John Williams was ordained at Deerfield, officiated at the funeral. Mr. Walter may have been assisted by his son Thomas, who was soon to be installed as his colleague, or by Samuel Danforth,

classmate of John Williams. There were also present at the funeral his friend Mary Danforth, and her husband, Councillor Edward Bromfield, Judge Samuel Sewall, and his son Rev. Joseph Sewall, long friends of the family, and other people of note.

CHAPTER X.

WILLIAM BARTHOLOMEW.—LOOKING FORWARD.—BACK TO THE NECK.—SIEGE OF BOSTON.—MRS. ROWLANDSON SOLD INTO SLAVERY.—CONTRIBUTIONS FROM IRELAND.—GREAT FIRE.—VAIN FASTING.—SUNDAY AT MARBLEHEAD.—ATTACK ON HATFIELD.

AMONG the playfellows of John Williams were the six sons and three daughters of William Bartholomew. How far from any possibility was the thought that the hand of fate should ever take them all to the valley of the Connecticut, and settle them on Deerfield Street; that two of them should be forced through the frozen wilderness to Canada as helpless prisoners in the hands of savage Indians. Truly kind is the mist which obscures the future. In 1678 William Bartholomew, with others of "Deerfield's poor Inhabitants," sends a despairing cry to the General Court for help in some agrarian matters. This was after Philip's War. They say: "Our Estates have been wasted . . . the ablest of our inhabitants killed. . . . Our Plantation has become a wilderness, a dwelling place for owls and a pasture for flocks & we that are left are separated into several townes. Also our Reverend & Esteemed Minister Mr. Samuel Mather hath been invited from us & great danger ther is of our loosing him . . . o^r designe . . . is to go when such a number of Inhabitants as . . . may be able to afford matter for a church . . . of men pious and discreet that wd enter Into y^o plantation with him to build up a church in y^o place." This was not to be. Mr. Mather, a friend of Deacon Samuel Williams, does not return, but goes to another

field. When a church is gathered in that now desolate place, John Williams, then a stripling in the Latin School, will be its first settled minister.

Having followed Mr. Bartholomew far afield by a short step and a brief peep into futurity, we will now take a longer step in the same direction, which will span a century, and bring us back to the scene of our story, Boston and Roxbury Neck. Could we take with us John Williams, and give him a bird's-eye view of his childhood's home and haunts, showing the changes wrought by a hundred years, what an amazing transformation would appear to his bewildered eyes! Where of old he saw fields of corn and flax and oats and barley growing luxuriantly, or the herds and flocks pasturing on the rough hillside in peace, drinking from the live brook, or lying in groups under shelter of the broad-armed oak; the orchards bending with rich burdens of fruit; the gallows-tree looming up against the sky, and throwing its baleful shadow across the sedgy marsh; the sacred enclosure wherein the fathers of the hamlet slept; their rude dwellings and plain meeting-house,—what in the place of all these would he now see? Legions of armed men in buff and blue uniforms or in none; the green meadows and the swelling hillsides now ploughed into huge furrows by the hand of war,—furrows in which the blood of patriots was sown to ripen in due time into a harvest of liberty. The bending orchards are transformed into bristling *chevaux-de-frise*, blazing batteries *in barbette*, are sending deadly messengers over the barricaded Neck, populous with the Red coats of General Gage. Cannon balls and chain shot in return are cross furrowing the fields and hillsides; shattering the walls of his ancestral home,—the old graveyard with his buried sires lying in full range of their fire. He

would be looking upon yawning cellars, where had stood houses familiar to his young eyes,—houses demolished by the order of Washington as a military necessity. While he gazes, the scene changes. On the hills of Dorchester, where he had hunted squirrels and trapped wolves, he now sees formidable batteries frowning upon beleaguered Boston. Looking down the harbor, he sees an uncounted number of vessels flying the Union Jack of England, all bound for the open sea; and never again was the red ensign of Saint George to float over these waters, save when on errands of peace.

As the vision and the vessels disappear, the days and the years of a century roll back. March 17, 1676, the Governor and Council are in session. There another phase of tragic war was being presented, where John Williams may see in person a forecast of his own bitter experience. Rev. Joseph Rowlandson was standing before them, begging help, that his wife and children might be redeemed from the Indians. They had been captured just five weeks before; but Mr. Rowlandson did not know, as we do, that his wife, the first lady in Lancaster, was then roaming the woods alone with the savages, being bought and sold as merchandise. He did not know, as we do, that on that very day she was a slave, serving as lady's maid to Weetemo, the Queen of Pocasset. Nor did any one know, as we know, that on that very day, such was Mrs. Rowlandson's distressed condition, she was lamenting sadly the failure of a plan under which she was to have been taken through the woods to Albany, to be exchanged for powder. With the minister's wife were taken three children about the age of our three Roxbury boys. Young and old were

greatly shocked by the event. Mr. Eliot, Mr. Mather, and the other ministers urged the authorities to action. A correspondence was soon opened between the Governor and the Sachems, and great was the rejoicing when John Hoar, of Concord, brought Mrs. Rowlandson into Boston, May 2. Not long after her two surviving children were in the arms of their parents. With the success of these efforts to redeem these captives there must have been planted in the bosom of John Williams seeds of hope which in due time in his Canadian captivity must have sprung up to cheer and sustain him. Never for a moment in later years did he give up hope and expectation that Eunice, the last of his flock, would be restored to him from Indian bondage.

There was, also, no doubt, great rejoicing in Boston when some of the captive Indians, "women and children," were brought in and shipped to be sold as slaves, and by so much weakening the enemy, as also when Captain Tom and his company were tried and convicted. When the news came that Philip, that arch-fiend, had fallen, it was thought that sweet Peace would spread her wings over the troubled land. Woe and want, however, are always camp followers of war; and there was general thanksgiving when, on November 25, 1676, a vessel sailed into Boston Harbor with a cargo of supplies for the needy sufferers from the war, sent by sympathizing friends from Dublin, Ireland. This generous contribution was the more timely as two days later occurred the "Great Boston Fire," when "so much p'visions was consumed, & so many pore aded to such as were made pore by the war, y^t (though the gift was only dispensed according as it was given, to such as w^{ro} made pore by the warr) yet the seasonableness of their charity was very much

magnified, and a crowne of beauty was set upon the head of their charity thereby." October 3, 1676, was a day of humiliation, fasting, and prayer, when Mr. Mather assisted Mr. Eliot in the service at Roxbury. John Williams and his friends were, doubtless, present. October 11 was another day of fasting.

October 17 was also set apart for the same purpose. There was still another "Day of Public Humiliation," December 7, by Mr. Mather's church. This was partly on account of the great fire and partly on account of the war on the coast of Maine. Although the death of Philip, August 12, 1676, had virtually closed the war, alarms had been constant, and they increased when the next year brought news of the great losses of the English at the eastward. "July 5, [1677]. Day of public humiliation. The next day y^e Indians killed 7 persons in new Salisbury. Presently upon notice of the fast day a sore blasting observed upon the wheat & barley in divers Towns." So nothing was gained by the Fast. July 10 notice was received of outrages on people of Salem. It was probably on the 17th that the affair recorded below occurred.

"2 Indians were bro't to Marblehead. the Women there in a boisterous rage set upon & killed them. This done upon y^e Sabbath day [*blank*] coming out of the meeting house." This is the brief notice of this shocking event, given in the Diary of Parson Mather. There is not a word of comment, not a note indicating that this was any other than a simple item of news. If this was the common, and not merely the Matherian, view of the affair, it must give one a queer idea of our forbears.

The tide of war was now swelling at the east, and the raid of Ashpelon in the west seemed to indicate a return-

ing flood. We now know that this raid was an unrelated, independent attack. Not so then. Excitement increased. There was imminent fear of another general war.

September 22, 1677, Mr. Mather makes this record: "Sad tidings from Hatfield, y^t the 19th inst 12 persons were killed & 20 taken captive. The Indians about Chelmsford withdrawn themselves." News soon followed that five persons had been taken at Deerfield the same day. The assailants were a party of Indians from Canada under Ashpelon. As these "sad tidings" passed from mouth to mouth, John and William joined in the general sympathy for the sufferers in the Connecticut Valley, made more personal in that Mr. Mather, the minister of Deerfield, was well known among them. But the blood of John and William would have quickened, had they the prescience that within a short time they would be settled ministers in those two towns, and be in daily contact with the surviving friends of those lost in that tragic day. How eagerly would they have read the account of Increase Mather and the narrative of Quintin Stockwell!

CHAPTER XI.

WITCHCRAFT.—ELIZABETH MORSE.—THE MATHERS.—MARY PARSONS.—MARY HALE.—PLAYING WITCHCRAFT.—MARY WEBSTER.—GOVERNOR BRADSTREET.—PHILIP SMITH.

THE emigrants from England were of the thinking portion of the people, and they left behind more of its gross superstitions than they brought away. While the belief in witchcraft continued unquestioned and rampant there, little evidence of it was seen here in the first half of the century. A few sporadic cases there had been before 1680. Probably the first case to come under the observation of John Williams was the charge against Anna Edwards, probably of Lynn, of being a witch. The case was heard before the Court of Assistants. Anna was discharged, and her accuser was made to pay the costs of the prosecution. The charge apparently grew out of some trouble between neighbors. The result seems to have put a wet blanket for a time on that method of trying to get even with adversaries. In England this was a common practice in all classes, from fishwife squabbles up to royalty itself; and an aggregate of untold tragedy and misery followed in its train.

The next note here came from the Connecticut Valley. Mary Parsons, wife of one of the prominent men of Northampton, was the accused. The charge of witchcraft appears to have been the work of envy and spite. Mrs. Parsons was brought before the grand jury at Boston, March 2, 1674-5. She was indicted on "Suspicion of witchcraft" May 18. She was tried before the Court

of Assistants, and acquitted. Major John Pynchon, of Springfield, was Assistant at that time, and probably brought his hard common sense to bear upon the case.

Another accusation will be considered more at length as illustrating the growth of the witchcraft delusion and pointing to members of one family whom I consider largely responsible for its strength. In the year 1679 John and William Williams entered Harvard. Rev. Increase Mather was then a Fellow and Tutor of the College, and soon after was made President. Cotton Mather, son of the President, in the Life of his father, quotes him as saying, "As long as these Principal Magistrates and *Justices* favor and express Piety, and abhor and punish *Witchcraft* 'tis to be hoped that Religion will be kept in the Heart." However far the class of 1683 may have been indoctrinated in the belief of witchcraft, when the great and horrible delusion of ten years later broke out, we find no trace of it in their ministerial labors. For this great credit should be awarded them.

Parson Mather in his Diary writes, May, 1680: "This General Court a Woman (a member of the Church in Newbery) tryed & condemned on y^e account of Witchcraft." The Diary contains not another word on this matter. Mather was doubtless displeased with the final outcome. This trial and condemnation caused great commotion, and the heart of New England was stirred to its depths. There was one curious and unaccountable phase in trials for witchcraft in this colony, and for aught I know everywhere. The Court received as conclusive evidence every bit of hearsay, every bit of gossip, the most frivolous, childish, unrelated events which ingenuity or malice could distort and make appear against the accused.

No testimony in rebuttal was allowed any weight. There was no impeachment of witnesses: all such effort was considered the work of the devil in defence of his own. No record of a pure and upright life had the weight of a straw so far as the Court was concerned. In this kind of defence the only hope of friends was that a doubt might be raised in the minds of the Governor or some members of the Council who might be in advance of the general sentiment, and cause delay until more sane counsels prevailed; and such was the result of the case under observation.

In May, 1680, Elizabeth, wife of William Morse of Newbury, was accused of familiarity with the devil. After being haled before the church at Newbury, of which she had long been a respected member, where any who would had their say against her, the testimony of seventeen witnesses was put in writing. This testimony was laid before the grand jury, and she was indicted. She was tried before the Court of Assistants, and condemned as a witch. May 27, after Lecture, the Governor pronounced a sentence of death by hanging. For some reason, and by some action which is not shown on the record, the condemned woman was reprieved; and again the second time. This would appear to be through some influence in high places; but this action did not meet popular approval. At the meeting of the General Court in November, 1680, the lower branch complained of it, and demanded of the Magistrates why the sentence of the Court of Assistants had not been carried out. They say, "A second reprieval seems to us beyond what the law will allow and doe therefore judge meate to declare ourselves against it, with refference to the concurrence of our honored Magistrates heron." The upper branch

did not concur, and the popular demand for an exciting entertainment was unheeded; and Mrs. Morse remained in prison.

In June, 1681, William Morse, husband of the condemned woman, petitioned the Court of Assistants in her behalf. He had prepared a statement in which he took up the testimony of each of the seventeen witnesses, and commented upon the absurdity and worthlessness of it all. If the testimony of these witnesses had not been preserved, nobody to-day could be made to believe that such utter trumpery could ever have been soberly heard in a court of justice, or with patience anywhere else. Several of the witnesses certified to single, trivial, commonplace occurrences of ten to sixteen years before, to which they now gave a new and childish interpretation. This paper, together with influences already at work, effected an order that Mrs. Morse be "repleved to the end of the next session in October"; and in the mean time she was allowed to leave prison and return home with her husband to Newbury, "Provided she goe not above sixteen Rods from her Owne house & land, at any time except to the Meeting house in Newbery, nor remove from the place Appointed her by the Minister & Selectmen to sit in whilst there." This was all that those men of more advanced ideas were able to accomplish against the confirmed bigotry of the times. And this was the material from which the fatal witchcraft craze of a few years later was evolved. A judicial murder was prevented; but to the poor woman, disgraced and set apart from her fellows as a moral leper, even in the house of God, the gift of such a life was one for which she could hardly be thankful. In two years a kindly death brought her relief.

The same year Mary Hale, of Boston, was accused of killing Michael Smith by witchcraft. She was tried by the Court of Assistants, and discharged.

In 1683, the year of John Williams's graduation, there seems to have been another witchcraft flurry; this time in the Valley of the Connecticut. In March, 1683, James Fuller, of Springfield, was indicted for having familiarity with the devil. It seems to have appeared on trial that Fuller had set himself up for a witch, and admitted his intercourse with the devil. This may have been to increase his own importance, to make himself feared, or out of sheer love of fun and mischief. But, when he found himself in Boston jail, with a halter dangling before him, the joke took on a new aspect. When before the Court, he convinced them that he had only been playing witch; and he was adjudged "not guilty according to the indictment." But the end was not yet.

"The Court Considering of his wicked & pernicious wilful lying & Continnanc in it till now, putting the Country to so great a charge sentenct the sajd James Fuller to be seuerely whipt wth thirty stripes seuerely lajd on & that he pay fise pounds mony to the Trespser of the Country to discharg the chardges of his triall, paying fees of Court."

This disastrous result of Fuller's performance put a stop to this kind of fun. No later cases of self-accusation are heard from. The fever, however, which affected Fuller was in the air of the valley.

The same year Mary Webster, of Hadley, was accused of being a witch. After an examination before the County Court she was sent to Boston as a prisoner to be tried by the Court of Assistants. The clerk of the County Court had been directed "to gather up all the evidences and

fit them to be sent down" to the Governor of Boston. No trace of these depositions has been found. But they were laid before the grand jury, and Mary Webster was indicted as a witch on such evidence as the clerk had gathered. The same influence which had saved the life of Elizabeth Morse was evidently at work, and the trial was delayed until the September sitting of the Court, and then she was acquitted. Peter Tilton, of Hadley, who as a Justice first arrested Mary Webster, was sitting as Assistant at this trial. I suspect that Governor Simon Bradstreet was the source of the common sense influence which prevailed; but doubtless John Woodbridge, of Newbury, who married a daughter of Governor Dudley, and so was a brother-in-law of Governor Bradstreet, was a good helper. Probably Elizabeth Morse and Mary Webster owed their lives to Bradstreet and Woodbridge. Of course the Mathers were dissatisfied with the result in these two cases. About January 1, 1684-5, Lieutenant Philip Smith, a leading man in Hadley, was taken sick and died. January 10 Cotton Mather gives a long and nonsensical account of events in his sickness, all through the malignant power of Mary Webster, and says that Smith was "murdered with an hideous witchcraft that filled all those parts of New England with astonishment." It was indeed a bold man who denounced witchcraft in those days. The belief in diabolical agency was well nigh universal. The doubter was confidently referred to the Bible, where proof of the fact was abundant, and could not be called in question. The doubter was himself a man to be watched. John Williams was in Deerfield and William Williams in Hatfield in 1692. We find no action in the premises, but this fact remains: there was no public disturbance from witches in either

town after their settlement, and none in Roxbury, where they were bred. Indeed, it was from Roxbury that came the trumpet notes of Robert Calef, which did so much to shake down the tower of superstition and crumble the power of the delusion.

CHAPTER XII.

HARVARD COLLEGE.—INTERNAL TROUBLE.—THE CAMBRIDGE PLATFORM.—THOMAS SARGEANT.—LATIN UNDER A PENALTY.—FAGGING.—HATS OFF.—FINES.—OLD NOTE BOOK.—INCREASE MATHER, PRESIDENT.—GRADUATION OF JOHN WILLIAMS, 1683.

IN 1679 three boys left their homes in Roxbury for Harvard College, and these three comprised the class of 1683. In those days, and long after, the rank of students in the college was graduated, not according to attainments, but to their social standing in the community. In the class of 1683 Samuel Danforth, born in 1666, was the youngest, but he stood first. He was the son of the minister of Roxbury. John Williams, born 1664, stood the second. His father was a Deacon and Ruling Elder. William Williams was born 1665. His father had no ecclesiastic honors, and was only a militia captain, and so William stood third in rank.

There is small opportunity of comparing the Harvard of early days with the Harvard of 1905. Little can be learned of the daily life of the students. A few scattered facts which can be gleaned must represent the atmosphere of the institution when it was breathed by our Roxbury boys. Foremost of all Harvard was practically a theological school. The first churches had been supplied with ministers educated in the universities of England, and thinking people were in dread of "an illiterate ministry in our churches when our present Ministers shall lie in the Dust." It was with this pressing need in view that by the most strenuous efforts Harvard College was es-

tablished. A second declared object was the fitting of men to serve as magistrates and for secular guardians of the College. In all, vital piety and an upright life were the main things aimed at. It was a ruling precept that the students "Lay Christ in the bottom, as the only foundation of all sound knowledge and learning."

The ministers graduated at Harvard were expected to expound and preach the doctrines, to enjoy which the emigrant left the English Church and settled in the wilderness. To be sure, a diversity of opinion had been developed on minor observances, but all were united in opposition to the mother Church. To be sure, these minor points of difference were often magnified, and in time overshadowed and overrode the main question. Often personal friendships were sacrificed and churches rent asunder. Even in the infant College there were bickerings and feuds over mere trifles, as we look at them now, and of no discernible consequence even then. Parties were formed and intrigues were carried on for deposing incumbents or promoting men to the chair of the President,—all, as they thought, for the love of God and the purity of his worship. Men differed in their mental make-up as in their physical, and each strongly maintained that his particular by-path was the main road to salvation.

President Urian Oakes in an Election Sermon, May 7, 1663, says:—

"To divide what God hath conjoined,—*viz.*, civil and ecclesiastical liberties, to deliver up civil and yet hope to keep spiritual liberties, is folly in its exaltation." "The loud outcry of some is for liberty of conscience, that they may hold and practice what they will in religion. This is the Diana of some men, and great is the Diana of the Libertines of this age. . . . Such is that liberty of conscience,

even a liberty of perdition, that some men are so unconscionably clamorous for . . . I look upon an unbounded toleration as the first born of all abominations. If this should be once born, . . . this would be not only to open the wicket, but to fling open the great gate for the ready admission and reception of all abominable heresies.”

At length it was seen by the wiser that the object of their coming over the seas would be lost unless these troubles could be settled. A council of ministers was called to decide and proclaim what was the will of God in regard to the whole matter in dispute. After many days of discussion and wrangling, the council realized that by these differences they were encouraging irreligion, that the ministers were losing their hold on the people, and perforce they must unite and fortify on some common ground. After many more days of tribulation and strife, proclamation was made that by striking right and left they had discovered and routed out eighty-two distinct errors of doctrine or practice which they now condemned. Doubtless each member of the majority agreed to throw overboard some pet dogma of his own, and make possible a union of clerical strength which should rule the land. So they agreed upon what was the will of God, and all were enjoined to bow down to the creed thus promulgated. Whoso could not be convinced by argument must be constrained by force. Young children could easily be guided into this well fenced and well guarded highway, and none could turn aside without heroic struggle with the keen scented watch dogs of heresy. So it was that in 1679 the will of God had been proclaimed, and the road to heaven had been established; and our three students had small chance for stumbling or going amiss. It was five years before they were en-

rolled in the College that the incident occurred which is described below. There is no reason to suppose that the rule under which the event happened was changed for generations after. The following is found in Sewall's Diary:—

“Thomas Sargeant was examined by the Corporation: finally, the advice of Mr. [Samuel] Danforth, Mr. [William] Stoughton, Mr. [Peter] Thatcher, Mr. [Increase] Mather (then present) was taken. This was his sentence.

“That being convicted of speaking blasphemous words concerning the H. G. he should be therefore publicly whipped before all the Scholars. 2. That he should be suspended as to taking his degree of Bachelor (this sentence read before him twice at the Pr^{ts} before the committee, and in the library 1 up before execution.) 3. Sit alone by him self in the Hall uncovered at meals, during the pleasure of the President and Fellows, and be in all things obedient, doing what exercise was appointed him by the President, or else be finally expelled from Colledge. The first was presently put in execution in the Library (Mr. Danforth, Jr. being present) before the Scholars. He kneeled down and the instrument Goodman Hely attended the President's word as to the performance of his part in the work. Prayer was had before and after by the President” [Leonard Hoar].

Judge Sewall makes no comments, as if this was in any way an unusual occurrence. Had this not been the simple record of an eye witness, no one in these days would have dared to imagine that such a brutal and degrading punishment could have been inflicted within the walls of “Fair Harvard.” It was an act of refined cruelty worthy of the palmy days of the Inquisition. Was his young life blasted by it? One other incident, and he disappears

forever. Although his college course was finished in 1674, "taking his degree" was "suspended" as part of his sentence. For this he made petition:—

"Dec. 21. On occasion of his [Thomas Sargeant] going to sea, the President did then invest him with the degree of Bachelor of Arts." It is not unlikely that this "going to sea" was a condition precedent to the granting of the petition.

Latin was the language of the scholar in those days. Much erudition was stowed away in the big Latin tomes where the student was obliged to mine for his daily meat. To facilitate the acquisition of the language in conversation, so as to mine more successfully in the pages of the heavy Fathers, it was a rule of the College that "Freshmen could speak no other language but Latin unless required to do so in their public exercises." Let us imagine the gay and festive boy talk in their "chambers" or on the College Green after the labor of the day was over, all in stumbling Latin, and under a penalty if a word of the vernacular was heard by the ever watchful tutor. However, our three boys had been in training for this at the home grammar school, and doubtless had the lingo well in hand for their own fellowship, and, being the whole class, must have fared better than the general run.

The terms of admission were, "Whoever shall be able to read Cicero, or any other like Classical Author at sight, and make and speak true Latin in verse and prose." Such could pass the ordeal. There were some other similar requirements, but nothing in English. It is said that the classical standard was higher than it is to-day.

There were many and strict "Rules and Precepts" to govern and guide the students. It would be well for the present generation, had more of them remained in

force. Each student was required to write out a copy of these Rules for himself. In 1681 Samuel Sewall was made the Public Printer. In 1683 he offered to print these College Laws and have them stitched up in marble paper, that each scholar could have a copy to keep. One of the rules was that "The students shall honor their parents, the Magistrates, Elders, tutors, and others older than themselves, 'as reason requires,' by being silent in their presence except when called upon to speak not contradicting but showing all those marks of honor and reverence which are in praiseworthy use, such as saluting with a bow, standing uncovered and the like."

There was another wholesome regulation. "Unruly college boys" were turned over to the civil authorities, and there was no desire expressed that they should fare "better or otherwise than similar offenders outside Parnassus."

If any transgress the laws of God, or the school, after being admonished, he shall, if a minor, be chastised; but, if an adult, his name shall be given up to the Overseers of the College, "that he may be admonished at the public monthly admonishment."

By the statute law the college authorities were authorized to inflict fine or whipping in the Hall at their own will, only that the penalty should not exceed ten shillings or ten stripes for each offense.

By one of the regulations imported with the English graduates, "All freshmen shall be obliged to go on errands for seniors, graduates, or undergraduates," out of study hours. This rule remained in force until 1700, but its abuse was punished.

In 1682, while John Williams was a Junior, a civil officer was called in to expel a bumptious "schollar within

24 hours." His offence was "his abusive carriage in requiring some of the freshmen to go upon his private errands and in striking the said freshmen." The College probably had no football team which could be called upon to tackle the bully.

Another rule was, "No freshman shall speak to a senior with his hat on, or have it on in a senior's chamber, or in his own if a senior be there . . . No freshman shall wear his hat in the College yard unless it rains, hails or snows, provided he on foot and have both hands full." The "schollars" were all "placed" in chapel, recitations, or Commons according to social rank. We hear no complaint of this custom; it was a part of the times, and not outgrown for a century.

All students must eat at the Commons. "Sunday evening, one of the students in course was called upon to repeat the sermon preached at the Cambridge meeting house" that day.

On Wednesdays, according to the curriculum, the students had "Practice in Poesy." Specimens of the result of this practice may be found in "The Redeemed Captive" of John Williams. This would never be mistaken for Browning or even for Walt Whitman, and it does small credit to Harvard culture.

Students were not allowed to stock up with goodies, and things detrimental to digestion at their will. No student could buy or sell anything, without the permission of the tutor or of parent or guardian. At one time plum cake became a favorite with the students; but the eating was overdone, and plum cake was forbidden and banished, under a penalty of twenty shillings and the confiscation of the cake.

Some of the penalties for violating the rules were: buy-

ing or selling, 1/6 (one shilling and sixpence); being out of town, 1/6; lying, 1/6; disturbance, 1/6; rudeness at meals, 1/; going out skating, 1/6; frequenting taverns, 1/6; swearing, 2/6; Sabbath-breaking, 3/; playing cards, 5/; refusing to give evidence, 3/; keeping guns, 1/6. I do not find any restrictions upon boating or fishing.

As a preparation for the Sunday evening requisition before referred to, the students took notes in their places of the weekly sermons, which they were all obliged to hear. One of these note books of three hundred and sixty pages, eight by four inches, is in Memorial Hall at Deerfield. It was written by William Williams, the classmate of John. It is his third volume, dated August 31, 1681, and runs to September 30, 1683. The paper is yellow and brittle, the ink so faded that many pages are illegible, the lines are close together, the letters blurred, the words often indicated by signs and home made abbreviations; little can be read, save by an expert, and he would have a hard time of it. Much was expected from this note book in revealing college life of the time, and a lively hope was entertained that things personal to John Williams might be revealed. But, alas! a few hours' study brought out the fact that every page was devoted to abstracts of sermons,—hundreds of them,—apparently taken down from the lips of the preacher on Sundays, Fast Days, and other occasions. The preachers were the leading men of the colony, and vain attempts were made to copy some of these abstracts. Nothing of value could be made out. Some of the preachers were: the Apostle Eliot and his son Benjamin; William Hubbard, the historian; Increase and Cotton Mather; John Cotton; Daniel Gookin; Samuel Willard; John Rogers; and William Moody.

The Presidents, during the sojourn of John Williams,

were: Leonard Hoar, Urian Oakes, and John Rogers. The Fellows, who were also tutors, were: Samuel Andrews, John Cotton, Nehemiah Hobart, John Leverett, Increase Mather, John Sherman, and Isaac Foster. The Overseers, who were the active ruling power, were: the Governor and Lieutenant Governor, the Magistrates, and the teaching Elders of Cambridge, Watertown, Charlestown, Boston, Roxbury, and Dorchester,—all *ex-officio* members.

As has been said, there is almost nothing to be found about student life during the collegiate day of our three Roxbury boys. Sewall's Diary, that great source of knowledge concerning the passing events, fails us in this crucial period. The original is lost from March, 1679, to February, 1685,—more's the pity, as in later years we find Judge Sewall much interested in John Williams.

During this period the influence of Increase Mather seems to have been the controlling element in the churches. His religion was not of the meek and humble kind, but strenuous, belligerent. He had small toleration for those daring to think for themselves. Judging from his own words, Mr. Mather was superstitious beyond his fellows. He felt sure he stood high in the counsels of God. "I have told the people in thy name, . . . but they will not believe me, Lord, who hath believed *our* report." In these words the man stands revealed. At the opening of the year 1681 Mather writes: "This year begins awfully. The latter end of last year was attended with a fearful blazing star, whereby the whole earth hath been alarmed. Now we hear rumors as if some prodigies observed in Connecticut Colony. . . . A very dry season until Aug^t 8 & 9 when God sent a plentiful rain." But two weeks later, more rain was wanted; and—

“Aug. 24. The Overseers of the College met at Cambridge, spending the day in Prayer. One special request was to entreat for more rain from heaven. The beginning of the next week God sent a plentiful rain.” Although the rain was delayed a week or more, it was received as in answer to their prayers, and record thereof was made to the glory of God.

John Williams, we may naturally suppose, attended this service, and was doubtless duly impressed by the result. All his life he was a firm believer in the doctrine then inculcated,—that God gives a direct answer to devout prayer.

It was in such a condition of society and under such influences that John Williams and his classmates were graduated from Harvard, Wednesday, July 7, 1683. Commencement Day was then, as now, a great occasion. It was attended by the Governor in state; with his body-guard of two score and ten troopers, followed by the Magistrates and other prominent men. Their line of march was over the Neck, through Roxbury, and our three student boys had on many occasions to anticipate the glory of the day when they should be the centre of interest in such a pageant. The 7th of July, 1683, must stand out above all others in the minor annals of Old Roxbury. Three of her sons, an entire class, graduating from Harvard, was a distinguished mark of honor to the town. The Danforths, the Parkes, the Williamses, walked with high heads, the observed of all observers. Roxbury people doubtless turned out in full force for the Commencement exercises and the premonitory parade. How many stood on tiptoe listening for the first blare of the trumpet and the first sight of the Governor's body-guard, fifty mounted troopers in gorgeous array; the marshal with

his staff, bearing the insignia of office; the spirited, impatient horses, and the elegant equipages of Governor Bradstreet and the Magistrates, followed by others in a long line, arranged according to civic or social rank! An annual display, but how full of new meaning was this one now before them!

The three principals of the occasion are already on the scene of chief interest, and we cannot suppose their immediate relatives could await the tardy motions of the procession. They doubtless are also there in well placed positions. Cheek by jowl the three proud and happy mothers, patient, expectant, waiting the supreme moment. More dignified sit the fathers and grandfathers. The twenty brothers and sisters are mostly in an excited and wriggling mass, with shining faces and eyes of welcome for the Three. Among them Deborah, sister of John Williams, unwitting of the time when on the overlooking hill shall rise a tower of granite to keep ever fresh the fame of her grandson, General Joseph Warren. Other sisters are: Martha, later of Deerfield, and Abigail, of Hadley, whose blood will course through the veins of many of the gods of the valley. Five of the family of Williams are to marry into the family of Hyde, and populate the Bay.

Among those upon the platform sat Eliot, glowing with enthusiasm, and looking with high hope upon the three nurslings of his flock. The venerable John Wilson was smiling encouragingly upon his grandson, John Danforth. Increase Mather, Peter Thatcher, and the pastors of all the surrounding churches saw with satisfaction an added strength to the ministry. That lovable gossip, Judge Sewall, took especial note of John Williams, whom he early and late befriended.

How much of the orations in Hebrew and Greek and the sermons in Latin the graduates or the spectators were expected to understand does not appear; but the coveted "sheepskins"; and the distinguishing mark of A.B. were secured, and the young men launched on the sea of life with flattering chances, swelling sails, and good prospects of success.

John and William had been baptized in infancy by the Apostle Eliot, but neither had been admitted to the church. Mr. Eliot records that January 6, 1683-4:—

"John Williams & William Williams two hopeful young scholars both of y^m tooke hold on the Covenant wth good acceptance." "June 22 John Williams confessed Christ & was received to full communion." June 29, "William Williams confessed Christ & was received by covenant to full communion." I confess ignorance as to how the two ceremonies differ in effect.

There seems to have been at this time a general awakening in church matters in Roxbury. Within six months after John and William "tooke hold on the Covenant," one hundred others did the same, and forty-three were admitted to full communion. I do not find that our three graduates went through any subsequent course in theological training. So far as it appears, they were fitted or authorized to look around for a field of labor in the ministry, for which they had been destined when sent to Harvard. Cotton Mather said, "The Youth of this Country are very sharp, and early Ripe in their Capacities." And so these three boys of seventeen, eighteen, and nineteen were let loose on the community as candidates for the pulpit, and began scanning the horizon, watching for the finger of Providence to point out the field in which they should be planted for life. The seed-time was near, but the field was far away.

CHAPTER XIII.

LITERATURE.—ANN BRADSTREET.—JUDGE SEWALL.—LONG PRAYERS.—TREATMENT OF THE SICK.—ELIAKIM MATHER.—WILLIAM PARKE.—THOMAS SHEPARD'S FUNERAL.—FIRST MENTION OF A HEARSE.—VERSES ON HEARSE.—AMOS ADAMS.—FIRST RELIGIOUS SERVICE AT FUNERALS.—EDWARD TAYLOR.—COTTON MATHER ORDAINED.

AMONG the formative influences in the atmosphere of Roxbury, that of Mistress Ann Bradstreet cannot be omitted. She was the daughter of its foremost citizen, Governor Thomas Dudley. Although her life was largely spent elsewhere, she must be accorded a prominent place in the social and literary life of the town. The daughter of a governor of the colony, later the wife of another governor, and the sister of a third, the high rank of her social standing is apparent. But it was her literary work which made her known and read of all men. She is noted as the first American woman whose writings were published in print. A volume of her poems was issued in London in 1650. This book must, of course, have been well known in Roxbury; and, as its author continued to write so long as she lived, many of her later productions were no doubt—as was the fashion until long after her death—copied and circulated in manuscript among the people. Her poems and essays must have been an agreeable change, among her contemporaries, from the ever present Bible and Catechism and the Latin tomes, which were about all the available literature. John Williams had a way of dropping into poetry in the stress of later years

which may have been inspired by Ann Bradstreet, but she would not have been proud to see his name enrolled among her disciples.

William Williams had added reason for keeping green the memory of Ann Bradstreet, since he married one of her grand-daughters. Although surrounded by all Puritanic influences, Mrs. Bradstreet remained so far loyal to the Stuarts that she denounced the Cromwellians for the beheading of Charles I. This defiance of popular opinion shows her to be a woman of independent mind and uncommon force of character. Can it be that it was a strain of her blood that fixed sturdy Colonel Israel Williams, and many others of her Connecticut Valley descendants, in the ranks of the Loyalists of the Revolutionary days? Who can say? The ways of Blood are past finding out. On the death of Mrs. Bradstreet many memorial sermons were preached and many eulogies written. John Rogers, President of Harvard when our three boys graduated, wrote on that occasion a long poem in the stilted style of the day. In one passage, addressing the "Nymphs of Helicon," he says:—

"Then viel your bonnets Poetasters all,
Strike lower amain, and at them humbly fall,
And deem yourselves advanc'd to be her pedestal."

Another notice was by her pastor, "the Simple Cobbler of Agawam," who knew her well. He scents a coming danger to his sex, and sounds a warning note. "Let men look to 't lest women wear the spurs." Rev. John Norton calls her "Pattern and Patron of Virtue, the truly pious, peerless, matchless Gentlewoman." Cotton Mather says, "Thomas Dudley had a daughter, to be a crown unto him," and prays that room may be given among the

Poets of the Earth "unto Madam Bradstreet, the daughter of our Governor Dudley, whose poems divers times printed" would be "a monument for her Memory beyond the stateliest Marble." It is generally believed, although not historically established, that the dust of Ann Bradstreet has long ago mingled with that of her father in his enduring tomb, in the old graveyard where sleep many of the honored dead connected with our story.

Judge Samuel Sewall, who held innumerable offices of trust and honor, was one of the most prominent men of his generation. He was often in touch with John Williams, and it may not be out of place to give some brief notice of him as an important factor of the environment. He was graduated from Harvard in 1671, was librarian, a tutor, Fellow, and Overseer. For some time he was in doubt whether to enter the ministry or engage in a life of business. It was during this period that he was invited to take the place of an absent preacher. On this occasion he was pretty long-winded. He says he "stood two hours and a half,"—very good, no doubt, for a youngster. On one occasion, in 1685, a private fast was held at the house of Mr. Sewall, where the Magistrates were invited, and the "Ministers of the Town are desired to Pray and Preach." The wives of all were also invited. The service began at half-past nine. "Mr. Eliot prayed; Mr. Willard preached. . . . Mr. Allen prayed; cessation half an hour. Mr. Cotton Mather prayed; Mr. [Increase] Mather preached. . . . Mr. Moody prayed about an hour and a half; Sung the 79th Psalm from the 8th to the End; distributed some Biskets and Beer, Cider, Wine. The Lord hear in Heaven his dwelling place." This must have taken until sundown, solid ten hours' work.

Speaking of college days, Sewall says of Peter Thatcher,

a classmate, he "commonplac'd . . . he had a solid good piece, stood above an hour, and yet brake of before he came to any use." Something prevented the young man from getting in an hour or two more in fitting the application. A congregation of those days did not feel that they had received their just dues unless the sermon and the long prayer each covered from an hour and a half to two hours and a half. I have spoken at length in regard to the belief in prayer as a remedy for all kinds of trouble, mental and physical; but one more instance should be given.

Henry, son of Judge Sewall, was born December 7, 1685, which was Monday. Sunday, the 13th, he was taken to the cold meetinghouse for baptism. "Nurse Hill came in before the Psalm was Sung, and yet the Child was fine and quiet. . . Mr. Willard preached the first sermon my little son hath been present at." So spoke the fond father of the long, cold hours spent in the freezing meetinghouse by this tender speck of humanity. This first sermon was his last. It is easy to believe that this chilly reception loosened his little hold on the new life. The Diary continues:—

"Dec. 17. Henry is very restless."

"Dec. 19. Mr. Willard prays with my little Henry being very ill." (As the baby was no better on the morrow.)

"Dec. 20. Sabbath-day Send Notes to Mr. Willard and Mr. Moody to pray for my Child Henry."

"Dec. 21. Monday about four in the Morn the faint and moaning noise of my child forces me up to pray for it. Monday even, Mr. Moody calls. I get him to go up and Pray with my extream sick Son."

"Dec. 22. Tuesday Morn, Child makes no noise save

by a kind of snoring as it breathed, and as it were slept. Read the 16th of the first Chron. in the family. Having read to my Wife and Nurse out of John; the fourteenth Chapter fell now in course, which I read and went to Prayer; By that time had done, could hear little Breathing, and so about Sunrise, or a little after, he fell asleep, I hope in Jesus, and that a Mansion was ready for him in the Father's House. Died in Nurse Hill's lap."

Aside from the abundant doses of prayer, Sewall gives no word or hint of other treatment of the suffering baby. And it is evident that even in the extremity, nothing was allowed to interfere with the programme of the regular morning worship.

It is hard to believe that no remedial measures were taken in behalf of the sick child. Sewall may have considered all other efforts for its relief of such comparatively small importance as not to be mentioned on the same page with his prime remedy. Sewall takes pride in naming the prominent people attending the funeral on the next Thursday after Lecture. "We follow Little Henry to his Grave: Governor and Magistrates of the County all here 8 in all, beside my Self, Eight Ministers, and Several Persons of note. Mr. Phillips of Rowley here. I led Sam, then Cous. Savage led Mother, and Cousin Dummer led Cousin Quinsey's wife, he not well. Midwife Weeden and Nurse Hill carried the Corps by turns, and so by Men in its Chestnut Coffin 'twas set into a Grave (The Tomb full of water) between 4 and 5. . . . The Lord humble me kindly in respect of all my Enmity against Him and let his breaking my Image in my Son be a means of it. Considerable snow this night. At night little Hull had a sore Convulsion Fit."

"Friday—Morn Dec. 25 had another. Wave upon

Wave. Mr. Phillips Prayes with Hulleie." The prayer cure was faithfully applied, but all in vain; for this child soon followed little Henry.

Eliakim Mather, son of Rev. Eleazer Mather, of Northampton, was now living in the family of Judge Sewall. We may suppose that the fatherless boy was thus provided for through the influence of an older cousin, Rev. Samuel Mather, who was a classmate of Sewall at Harvard. Eliakim was then about fifteen, and he grew up to manhood in the employ of Sewall. As the brother of Eunice Mather, he became an important link connecting John Williams in the years to come with the family of Judge Sewall.

May 10, 1685, Deacon William Parke was called to his reward. He was grandfather to both John and William Williams. In Deacon Parke they had good ancestral blood. He was a man of note in the Roxbury of his day. Johnson, in his "Wonderworking Providences," called him "a man of pregnant understanding." He was freeman in 1631; many years a Deacon; representative to the General Court thirty-two years; a member of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery. No account of his funeral is found; but it was doubtless attended with pomp and parade, in which the artillery company was largely in evidence, with the usual distribution of scarfs, gloves, and mourning rings, and no doubt his head was laid on his last pillow by the man who ranked highest of those present. There was as yet no prayer or other religious service at funerals.

The first mention of a "herse" which I have found was at the funeral of Rev. Thomas Shepard, of Charlestown, June 9, 1685. Speaking of this funeral, Sewall observes, "It seems there were some Verses; but none pinned on the

Herse." This may refer to a custom at funerals not before noticed by me. Mr. Shepard is spoken of as being "corpulent," and this may perhaps account for the use of a hearse. In the next funeral I notice, the corpse was carried to the grave by relays of bearers.

August 17, 1685, Rev. William Adams, of Dedham, died. Mr. Adams was a classmate of Judge Sewall, who writes, "Aug. 19, I ride to the Funeral of the Reverend Mr. W^m. Adams [at Dedham] from Roxbury, in the Company of Mr. Hutchinson, Sergeant, and their wives. Magistrates there, Dept. Governor, Mr. Stoughton, Dudley, Richards, Cook: Four of our Class, viz: Mr. Thatcher, Bowls, Norton, Self. I took one Spell at carrying him. Is laid in Mr. Usher's Tomb. Mr. Wilson prayed with the company before they went to the grave."

This is the earliest mention I have found of any religious ceremony at a funeral. John Williams was doubtless present at this funeral, and this new feature must have struck him as peculiarly appropriate. Indeed, the wonder is that its coming was so long delayed.

Class fellowship, I suppose, was as strong then as now, and in connection with the funeral of Mr. Adams there appears a case of peculiar sadness. August 20 Sewall says, "Mr. Edward Taylor lodges here this night, he hastened to Town against Lecture-day, that so might see Mr. Adams among the Ministers after Lecture but coming, found me gone to His Funeral." This man was Rev. Edward Taylor, also of the class of 1671, and at the end of a journey of one hundred and twenty miles, by so narrow a chance of a few hours, did he miss the sad satisfaction of looking for the last time on the face of his dead classmate. Instead of the anticipated hours of fraternal greeting after the Lecture, the whole day was

turned into one of double sadness and mourning for his lost friend. Mr. Adams and Mr. Taylor were married about the same time, and within a few weeks we find the two couples sharing their happiness with Judge Sewall as his guests in his own home.

Intimate relations continued between the Adams and Taylor families; and in due time the widow of Adams, who was the daughter of Governor Bradford, of Plymouth, married Major James Fitch, of Norwich, Conn., a brother of Taylor's wife. Taylor was the minister at Westfield; and, while John Williams was at Deerfield, and William at Hatfield, the three were for forty-four years associate ministers in the same county. John Williams died June 12, and Taylor June 22, 1729. Before the close of the century, a grandson of Taylor occupied the pulpit of John Williams at Deerfield.

May 13, 1685, an event occurred in Boston of deep interest to our three young ministers to be. Cotton Mather at the age of twenty-two was ordained as colleague to his father over the Second Church. The Right Hand of Fellowship was given by the venerable Apostle Eliot; his own son and colleague, Benjamin, was present. Benjamin appears to have been more or less a recluse. Sewall, who was a delegate, went to Roxbury to attempt "to persuade Mr. Benjamin to go to the Ordination." He succeeded, to the great delight of the grateful father, who says, "He hath not been in town for many years."

Judge Sewall was often in Roxbury. May 11 we find him at the house of Governor Dudley, where they conferred with some Nipmuck Sachems on matters of business. May 19 he attended a lecture at Roxbury, and there invited Mr. Eliot and his son Benjamin to a gathering at

his house on the 22d, to meet the Ministers and the Magistrates with their wives. At these frequent social and religious meetings of the Magistrates and the Clergy we may be sure the future of these three Roxbury candidates for the pulpit was often on the minds and lips of these leaders of the people; and we shall see the fruits of their deliberations.

CHAPTER XIV.

CONNECTICUT VALLEY AND THE BAY.—JOHN RUSSELL AT HADLEY.—GOFFE AND WHALLEY.—SOLOMON STODDARD.—ELEAZER MATHER.—HOPE ATHERTON.—THE JOURNEY.—COMMENCEMENT, 1685.—JOHN WISE.—MINISTERIAL.

IN 1685 the Connecticut Valley was not so isolated from the Bay as one might naturally suppose. The ministers of the towns there had intimate relations with the leading men at the metropolis, and the conditions of the valley were well known in Boston. At Westfield was Rev. Edward Taylor, intimate friend of Sewall and a frequent visitor at his house. At one time, when residence was not a necessary condition of eligibility, Sewall was chosen a representative to the General Court from Westfield.

Mr. John Russell was still the minister at Hadley. He had been long on intimate terms with Governor Bellingham, Governor Leverett, and others ranking high at the Bay. Governor Bellingham died in 1672. In his will he names Mr. Russell as one of four Trustees of a Fund left for pious uses. These Trustees must meet at least twice a year in Boston. Here was an opportunity for the country minister to visit his old home, and come in direct contact with the Bay people twice a year free of expense. Mr. Russell says he should gladly attend "so good a worke, yet the consideration of my [blank] habitation in [blank] with that speciall worke where-with I stand charged, do bespeake a providentiall countermand to my casting in of my small mite in the

attendance therof, and necessitate me to a non acceptance of the same." One in the secret, reading between the lines, can see that Mr. Russell, who was daily risking his life for his friends, had a valid reason for declining this honorable and tempting trust. So long as Goffe and Whalley were sheltered in his house, he could not be long absent. Governor Bellingham was doubtless one of those contributing to the support of the Regicides at Hadley, and one clause in his will seems to point directly to a continuance of that aid by his Trustees who could interpret his wishes. Governor Leverett was in the secret of their hiding place, and so of course were Captains Lothrop, Beers, and Appleton from the Bay, who had their commands in Hadley during Philip's War. It could not be left to chance who of the soldiers should be billeted on Mr. Russell. In 1685 Whalley was dead and Goffe had disappeared. This year Mr. Russell came down to Cambridge for Commencement, and preached at the Thursday Lecture in Boston, June 25.

Hatfield was also in close relations with the Bay. Hope Atherton, born in Dorchester, was her first minister. He was a graduate of Harvard in 1665. His sufferings in the Falls Fight and consequent death, June 8, 1677, were familiar to old and young. His successor, Nathaniel Chauncey, was a Tutor at Harvard when Atherton was graduated. His death on November 4, 1685, was to open a field for one of our Roxbury boys.

Solomon Stoddard, minister at Northampton, was intimate with Boston people. He was a relative of the Winthrop and Bradstreet families; was of Harvard, 1662; and in 1666 was a fellow tutor with Mr. Chauncey, of Hatfield. He became one of the most eminent of New England's divines. An earlier minister of Northampton,

Eleazer Mather, brother to President Increase Mather, had died in 1669, leaving a widow and three children,—Eunice, five; Warham, three; and Eliakim, one. Mr. Stoddard succeeded not only to the pulpit of Eleazer Mather, but to the vacancy as head of the family, and became husband and father to the bereaved ones. The children had now grown up. Warham was to be graduated at Harvard this year, Eliakim had been for some time living in the family of Judge Sewall, Eunice was still to be provided for. Young John Williams was also to be provided for. June 1, 1685, was Artillery Election, a holiday. Eliakim Mather spent it in journeying towards Northampton on a visit to his mother and sister Eunice. He returned June 18. As his father Stoddard preached in Boston on the 21st, and Mr. Russell, of Hadley, on the 25th, we may naturally suppose that the three took the one hundred mile horseback ride through the wilderness in company. There is some reason to suppose that Eunice Mather availed herself of the occasion to visit her uncle, President Mather, her cousin Cotton Mather the new minister, and attend the coming graduation of her brother Warham and cousin Nathaniel. The vacant pulpit at Deerfield might well claim the attention of Stoddard and Russell on their journey, especially as Samuel, the son of the latter, had been one of the first preachers, if not the earliest, after the Permanent Settlement. Possibly Eliakim had some sly words with his sister on the same subject. It is not improbable that yet another may have joined this cavalcade,—a link in the chain connecting Deerfield with the events under consideration,—Rev. Samuel Mather, the minister, who was driven from that town in Philip's War, was nephew of President Mather, and cousin to Eunice Mather, to Cotton

Mather, to Warham and Nathaniel, two of the coming graduates, while his wife was akin to another graduate, John Whiting. He was born at Dorchester, and could visit the friends of his youth, his Alma Mater, and attend the Commencement. He was then living at Windsor, Conn., but a few miles from the Bay Path. We find Sewall closely associated with him in connection with another classmate, Taylor, of Westfield.

The Commencement exercises for 1684, if any were held, must have been shrouded in sadness and gloom. President Rogers had been lying upon his death-bed, and on that very day he laid down his burden. But the Commencement of 1685, was a day to be marked with a white stone in the career of our young graduates. They were no longer Jack, Bill, and Sam. They joined their fellows in the parade and ceremonies of the day, and were addressed by high and low as Mr. Williams, and Mr. Danforth, a title of respect and honor at that time.

The graduating class of 1685 was notable for its material, and must have drawn a host of distinguished men personally interested in its members. To our Roxbury boys it must have seemed in some respects a sort of family party, so intimate were the relations held, or to be formed, with the graduates. In the first place, the class contained four young men of Roxbury, their playmates and companions. One of these, Thomas Dudley, stood at the head of the list by virtue of his social rank. He was the grandson and namesake of the first Governor Dudley.

The second in rank was Warham Mather, a nephew of President Mather, son of Rev. Eleazer Mather, of Northampton, and brother of Eunice and Eliakim. Nathaniel Dummer, a cousin and guest of Judge Sewall,

who that morning arrived by ship, was present under the guidance of Eliakim Mather, Sewall himself being in the train of Governor Bradstreet with the Magistrates.

The next on the list was Nathaniel Mather, son of the President and cousin-germain to Warham. Fourth in rank stood Rowland Cotton, son of the Rev. John, of Plymouth, and grandson of John Cotton, the famous divine who was pastor of the First Church in Boston. His father was doubtless present, as we find him, in company with Rev. Solomon Stoddard, of Northampton, dining with Judge Sewall a few days before. His uncle, Rev. Seaborn Cotton, with his blooming daughter Elizabeth, we may be sure was there. She also was cousin to Warham and Nathaniel Mather, and to Thomas Dudley, being a grand-daughter of Governor Bradstreet and the celebrated Ann Dudley. Within a year Elizabeth will be the bride of our William Williams. In company with Elizabeth was Margaret Rogers, daughter of President Rogers, who died one year before. The next year she was to become the wife of Thomas Berry, the sixth of the graduating class.

The venerable John Eliot, now in his eighty-third year, had a prominent place on the platform. Sixty-seven years before he had been graduated at the English Cambridge. He had witnessed the graduation of four sons from Harvard; now of this class was a grandson and namesake, John Eliot, Jr. Major General Daniel Gookin was here, another grandfather of this youth. He had been an earnest coworker of the Apostle Eliot, living near him in Roxbury, and sharing his unpopularity during Philip's War, through their humanity to the Praying Indians. Now they were receiving together the rewards and honors due to honest and far seeing servants of the people.

Among the young men of Roxbury was John Wise. He was twelve years older than John Williams, who must have looked up to him as he successively passed through the Latin School and Harvard College. He was ordained into the ministry in 1674, and was settled at Ipswich, 1682. John Wise had younger brothers, also nephews and nieces, about the age of John Williams; and his sister, Sarah Wise, married Stephen Williams, an uncle of John and William. Later the name of John Wise was in everybody's mouth as one of the foremost men, who for the love of freedom, and for claiming the rights of an Englishman, bearded the arbitrary Andros in his den. For this he lay in prison so long as Andros was in power. When John Wise came out of prison, he became a leader of men who dared. Who can doubt that the hand of Wise may be seen in the bold but shrewd movements of John Williams and his compeers at Deerfield, in their action on the revolt against Andros, when he could no longer be endured? Who can estimate the influence of such a man on the rising generation of Roxbury? Why is not his name seen on the muster-roll of Captain Johnson in 1675, when, as it has been said, so many of the young men and boys of Roxbury volunteered in the crisis? There is an excellent reason. He had been called in 1674 to preach in the town of Branford, Conn. However, a man with the temperament of John Wise could not remain quietly at home when the country was in danger. Two months after the Great Swamp Fight we find him in the field as Chaplain under Major Robert Treat, on the expedition for the relief of Providence, R.I. His brother Jeremiah was a trooper, and had been serving in the Nipmuck country under Captain Henschman. The ministerial lines of John Wise, John Williams, Sam-

uel Mather, and William Williams, were interwoven in a curiously zigzag pattern. Samuel Mather was the first preacher in Deerfield, where John Williams settled for life. The first call of John Wise to the pulpit was at Branford, Conn., where Samuel Mather settled after preaching awhile in Hatfield. The second call of John Wise was to Hatfield, where he preached two years in the life long field of William Williams. It is easy to see how the ardent and restless John Wise may have been the controlling agency through which the three others were installed in their respective fields of labor.

CHAPTER XV.

VACATION OF CHARTER.—COTTON MATHER.—GOVERNOR DUDLEY.—PREPARING FOR WAR.—LOSS OF MINISTERS.—CALL OF JOHN WILLIAMS TO DEERFIELD.—RETURNS FOR COUNSEL.—DINES WITH GOVERNOR DANFORTH.—GOOD-BYE TO HOME.—AT NORTHAMPTON.—AT HATFIELD.—SETTLEMENT.—MARRIAGE.—THE FOREST PRIMEVAL.—HOUSE BUILDING.—HOME.

WHILE John Williams was in college, and during the years in Roxbury before going to Deerfield, the public mind was strongly agitated by many questions of religion and State. To weather all these, the wisdom of the colonies was taxed to the uttermost. John was in the very thick of it, and here was an opportunity for an all round training in statecraft, which was not wasted by the young man.

The vacating of the Charter by James II., and the steps leading up to it during this period, caused deep trouble and great excitement in all circles, disputes and factions among the Magistrates, and the breaking of many ties of friendship. One party was determined to resist the king's new mandates to the last, regardless of consequences: another party, with more policy, thought it wise to submit to the inevitable with the best grace possible, and try to save all they could of the old ways and methods. This party was by the first, charged with favoring the tyrannical policy of Andros, whom all detested and heartily hated. I give the following as a taste of the time and place. Cotton Mather was one of the extremists, and he was firing at the conservatives and their action. Of the Andros dynasty he says:—

“It was as arbitrary as the Grand Turk. It would make a Long and Black Story to Tell a Tenth Part of the *Vile Things* done by that Scandalous Crew which then did what they would, in the Administration of the Government.” The Council he calls “Finished Villians,” “Crocodiles,” “Wild Beasts of the Earth,” “Hungry Witches who had Cast off all Sense and all *Face of Honesty*.”

The factions were as strong in Church as State. Increase Mather was minister of the Second Church, and the son was now his colleague. The latter says his “father was in bodily danger.” We know that on a trumped up charge he was in danger of arrest by the opposition. His church, says Cotton, were unanimous in consenting to his absence. Cotton continues mildly, “They Feard that what would quickly be done by *Bloody* and *Crafty Men* if he did not in this Honorable way get some Distance from them.” By some hocus-pocussing Increase got off on a ship bound to England, where he hoped to gain the favor of the government.

While Increase was in England, James II. was driven from the throne, and after four years Mather returned in triumph with a new Charter from William and Mary. Mather, true to his belief in the efficacy of prayer, had told the king that for his favors “the very Prayers of that People will be of some service to your Majesty. They are a good and Praying People.”

As Joseph Dudley reached the highest seat under the new order of things, it may be supposed that his Roxbury friends took the prudent course, and quietly submitted to the changed order of things; but our young ministers must have been incited to a deep study of colonial history by the heated discussions of the day.

September 9, 1685, news was received from the Maine coast that the people were fearing an Indian outbreak. The same day Sachem Wanalonset the faithful, brings news that a large body of Indians were gathered near Albany, and says he "mistrusts of their mischievous Design." This conjecture was by good authority, and had due effect. September 12 a mill was burned at Medfield; and Sunday, September 13, there was an alarm at Dedham, upon which there was a general turn out in arms. Under this condition of affairs the General Court made preparations for war. All the men were furnished with arms and ammunition. The military companies were called out for practice. On one occasion the artillery of Boston marched out to Charlestown, and were joined with the Charlestown artillery, Captain Jonathan Wade, of Ipswich, with the Three County Troop, and Major General Gookin with his guard. The exercises opened by forming a hollow square, where "Mr. Cotton Mather prayed with us in the morn and at the braking up." During the day there was a sham battle "on the hill, in prospect of the Harbour," the attack being made by the artillery from Boston, thus anticipating by ninety years the real battle of Bunker Hill.

Monday, October 19, was another training day. Six Boston companies were out, and there was another sham fight. The Fort at Boston was captured by those under the white colors, and was retaken later in the day by the red-flag men. Then there were volleys on the Common to salute Governor Bradstreet. The General Court had adjourned from Saturday, the 17th, to Tuesday, "partly because of the designed training." In one of the sham fights we find a touch of the realistic, "a ten pound horse" was fatally stabbed. It was paid for by

the public. There was, probably, something more ardent than patriotism mixed up in that skirmish.

Another Indian war, with its attendant horrors, now appeared on the horizon; but our young ministers set their faces steadfastly toward the west, where the blow would be sure to fall, not ignorantly or heedlessly, for both had realized all its tragedies, during Philip's War.

The year 1685 was one of great mortality among the ministers in the Bay, and there were many vacant pulpits; but John and William could not expect to be called to such places as Charlestown, Dedham, or Ipswich: they must take up with positions of less importance at the outposts on the frontiers.

November 4, 1685, Rev. Nathaniel Chauncey, of Hatfield, passed to his rest. He was the son of Charles, the President of Harvard, 1654-72, and one of the three brothers graduated in 1661; three other brothers had been graduated earlier. The pulpit thus vacated was occupied the next year by William Williams. The exact date of settlement is not found. He was then twenty-one years old, and was married, July 8, 1686, to Elizabeth, daughter of Rev. Seaborn Cotton. Something of her history has already been given. They were then settled in Hatfield for life, where they became the head of a distinguished family. Elizabeth, the wife, died in 1698, and William married (2), August 9, 1699, Christian, a daughter of Rev. Solomon Stoddard. Ten years later, William, Jr., his oldest son, married Hannah Stoddard, a sister of Christian, and so became brother-in-law to his father. These wives were half-sisters to Eunice (Mather) Williams.

John and William Williams doubtless travelled to the Connecticut Valley in company in the spring of 1686.

John probably assisted in the settlement of his cousin at Hatfield, and in May or June he is found in Deerfield, the scene of his trials and triumphs. He made such a good impression upon the people of the town that, September 21, 1686, he was invited to become their pastor.

This was the recorded action of the town:—

“The Inhabitants of Deerfield to Encourage Mr. John Williams to settle amongst them to dispense the blessed word of Truth unto them have made propositions unto him as followeth:—

“That they will give him 16 cow commons of meadow land with a home lott that lieth on the Meetinghouse Hill.

That they will build him a hous: 42 foot long, 20 foot wide, with a lentoo on the back side of the house & finish s^d house: to fence his home lott, and within three yeares after this agreement, to build him a barn, and to break up his plowing land. For yearly salary to give him 60 pounds a year for the first and 4 or 5 years after this agreement, to add to this his sallary and make it eighty pounds.”

Upon his receiving this invitation it is evident that John Williams went home to take counsel with his family and friends. On the 13th of October he is found in a goodly assembly of distinguished divines and civilians at the Cambridge Lecture. After the service the late Deputy Governor Danforth invited the youthful minister to dine with him in company with such leading men as Judge Sewall, Governor Leverett, and Mr. Russell; and eight others are named, whom I take to be of the moderate party. One was John Baily, who had been ordained at Watertown one week before. Samuel Lee, a noted English divine, he who had preached at the Lecture, was present, and “craved a Blessing and returned Thanks.” Mr. Lee had only recently come to New England. He

had preached for Increase Mather, and had been a guest of Sewall. Among those attending the Lecture, and probably the dinner, was Madam Usher, formerly the widow of Leonard Hoar, once President of Harvard. She was the daughter of John Lisle, the Regicide, who had been assassinated in Switzerland, and Lady Alicia, his wife, who eleven months before had been beheaded at Winchester by the infamous James II; she was convicted of giving shelter to two hunted enemies of the crown. Bridget Hoar, daughter of Mrs. Hoar Usher, and granddaughter of the unfortunate Lady Alicia, rode over on horseback behind Judge Sewall. John Williams did not know, as he looked in sympathy and pity upon the bereaved women, that his fellow-minister at Hadley, Mr. John Russell, and others of heroic blood with whom he was touching elbows that day, were liable to the same penalty for a like offence. The hiding of the Regicides at Hadley by Mr. Russell was still a secret; it is not likely that Williams ever knew. We may be sure that Mr. Edward Taylor, of Westfield, was also at this Lecture, as we find that he preached in Boston the next Sunday.

We can only imagine the parting scenes when John Williams bade a final farewell to the home of his youth for the far off land where his lot had now been cast,—the fervent prayers of Eliot in the meetinghouse the Sunday before, for the safe guidance of God through the dark paths of the wilderness, and for His supporting hand in the sacred office for which he was destined; the God-speed of those who had known him from babyhood; the moist eyes of the girls and boys as they realized that hereafter his face would be missed from their old haunts and homes. The solemn scenes of home parting are also behind the veil. We cannot hear the beseeching suppli-

cations of his father for his safety and success; nor can we see the struggles in the heart of the mother between her sorrow at parting, and her pride that her son was now called to be a minister, one of the Elect of the land, and bound for the field of labor appointed of God; nor the trembling hand of his aged grandfather laid with blessing upon his head, and the tender farewell of his grandmother. They are comforted by thoughts of the success of their own departure from their native land. With a heart strained with conflicting emotions, John Williams at length slowly mounted his horse, with a portmanteau containing all his worldly possessions firmly strapped to the saddle, and, after the last demonstrations of his brothers and sisters, and the last words of congratulation and advice from Eliot, set out on his life's journey. He had cut the cable of his best bower, and was now embarked on the great sea of humanity, bound to a new port, to find a new home and a new environment.

It will be safe to assume that John Williams made the trip to the Connecticut Valley with Mr. Taylor, of Westfield. They would part company at Springfield. On the journey up the Valley John would naturally call upon Rev. Solomon Stoddard, at Northampton, to advise with him concerning his official duties and responsibilities at Deerfield. Perhaps the same subject, in a different aspect, might be considered in council with Eunice Mather, the step-daughter of Mr. Stoddard. It may have been conceded by Mrs. Stoddard that Eunice, the oldest of her sixteen children, might be spared from the family. But there is also a thin veil over this affair. All particulars are indistinct. Of course, John called and spent a day in Hatfield with William Williams and his bride. All the messages from their kindred and friends at the Bay

were delivered. John's account of his day at the Charlestown Lecture and the Danforth dinner was eagerly listened to. The general news of Boston, Roxbury, and Dorchester, and the last word from Governor Andros were reported and discussed. Then the more personal ministerial concerns were considered between the friends, and rejoicings that their fields of labor were contiguous and their lines of life were to be near and parallel. The blazing logs in the best room fireplace gave a genial touch to the autumn air of the evening; and at a late hour the swelling, puffy feather beds received their happy occupants.

On his return to Deerfield John Williams reported that the "Incouragement" offered him to settle among them was satisfactory, and that he had returned to cast his lot with them for weal or woe. This declaration was received by the people with a satisfaction which was manifested shortly after by a grant of more land. "At a meeting of the Inhabitants of Deerfield Friday, Dec. 17, 1686, there was granted to Mr. John Williams a certaine piece of land Lying within the Meadow fence; beginning att Joseph Selden's North line, and so runs to Deerfield river North or North east; the owners of the common fence, maintaining it as it is now att the day of the grant." This was later "made sure to him and heirs forever." The salary was, by agreement, to be paid "in wheat, peas, indian corn and pork, in equal proportion, at y^o prices stated. viz, wheat at 3 shillings 3 pence p^r bushel; pease at 2 shillings, 6 pence p^r bushel; indian corn at 2 shillings p^r bushel; fatted pork at 2 pence half penny p^r pound."

And so John Williams settled down to the work and responsibilities of manhood. But such responsibilities

must be shared, and July 21 of the next year he brought to his side Eunice Mather, the foretold. Both John and William Williams became allied by marriage to some of the most eminent statesmen and divines in the land, and their posterity has been no less distinguished in the civil and religious life of the country.

Now comes the building of the promised house for the minister as part of the "Incouragement," to be "42 foot long and 20 foot wide with a lentoo on the back side." This was a large house and a large undertaking for the little community, but it was to be a labor of love and duty: heart and hand were one. This work must be done under the direction of the Selectmen, John Sheldon, William Smead, Joshua Pomroy, Benoni Stebbins, Benjamin Hastings, and Thomas French, the first and last being also Deacons. What a stir and excitement among the people when the preparation for this enterprise began! Before the dawn on the day set, the smoke from every chimney was climbing the still frosty air, showing that all were astir. Breakfast by the light of the blazing pine knots, and a prompt gathering on the common. With what zeal and energy John Stebbins and John Hawks, the carpenters, lead the woodmen with axes on their shoulders up the steep side of the East Mountain, and point out the trees which after careful search they had selected and marked for sacrifice! The biggest and tallest pines that seem to be pillars supporting the sky, are to be sawed into boards, the straightest and cleanest to be cut into bolts for clapboards and shingles. What a brave show will all these make when spread about or stacked up on the training-field to season! With what care will the boards be culled over, that no hiding knot may peep out to mar the wide panels! What a harbinger all this of things to be!

Again, the mighty oaks for sills and plates and summer trees. They had wrestled with the stormy winds of centuries, and at each encounter struck their roots more deeply into the earth; they had gathered sap from the soil formed by countless generations of trees, which had sprung up and been nourished upon the ashes of countless generations before them. The strength of the ages had now been garnered in their ponderous trunks and gnarled branches. In proud and stately grandeur they had sheltered horde after horde of wild animals, had seen come and go countless numbers of untutored savages, heard their war-cries, and seen their death grapple, unwitting of the time when the hand of civilization was to lay them low. However, the rich harvest of the past was now to be gathered, that the young disciple of a new age with the crown of his life at his side, should have a shelter of their own which they could call by the blessed name of home.

But we again forerun the day. Many and willing hands make light and merry work, and soon the lively echoes were sending from the heights to the valley the mingled sounds of varied activities,—the sharp-speaking axe eating its way little by little to the heart of the victims, the shock and groans of the monarchs as they jarred the solid ground in their fall, the irrepressible shouts of the young teamsters while urging the patient oxen to and fro with heavy loads through devious ways with uncertain footing, they wondering the while what the commotion was all about.

The pine logs, after being squared with the broad-axe, are drawn to the saw-pit, where, by the persistent hands and guiding eye of the top sawyer and the steady pull of the pit man, they will be cut into boards or plank. The

oak timbers are scored and hewn where they are felled, and then dragged over the snow to the site selected for the house on Meetinghouse Hill. Here Hawks and Stebbins, with rule and compasses in hand, mark off the length and lay out the mortises and tenons. These will be closely followed by their helpers, who will soon be scattered about, busy with saw and augur, chisel and mallet, developing the deep mortise or the stout tenon which must be fitted by try rule, each to its mate.

Our work is done.

John and Eunice Williams have bid good-bye to the careless life of youth and left the scene of early environment. They have nestled down in their House Beautiful, and taken up the burdens of a life devoted to public service. They have reached the height of an ambitious aim. Their sky is filled with sunshine. Happily, they have no misgivings of the future, no forebodings of the tragic end to be developed from the mists of time.

The centuries have passed. Moss grown stones mark the spot where side by side the bodies of John and Eunice Williams mingled with mother earth. Their span of life was brief, but their names are eternally impressed upon the history of Old Deerfield.

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