

THE HISTORY
OF THE
SOCIETY OF FRIENDS
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CHAPTER XII.

William Leddra's imprisonment and sufferings at Boston—His examination before the Court—Is sentenced to be executed—His conduct at the place of execution—Letter of a spectator respecting it—The character of William Leddra—His epistle to Friends, written the day previous to his martyrdom—The examination and banishment of Edward Wharton—The return of Wenlock Christison after banishment—His Christian boldness before the rulers; examination and sentence—His address to the Court—The restoration of the monarchy in England—The rulers at Boston are agitated on hearing it, and release W. Christison and twenty-seven Friends from prison—The law for banishing on pain of death superseded by a law for banishing on penalty of being whipped from town to town out of the colony—The sufferings of Friends under this new law—Nicholas Phelps and Josiah Southwick return from banishment—The cruel scourging of the latter—George Rofe, of Essex, visits New England—His letter relative to the service—The first General Meeting of Friends in America held on Rhode Island.

IN the previous chapters, much has been recorded that sullies the historic pages of Puritan New England. We have seen that its religious zealots, under cover of high spirituality, had consummated their persecutions in the murder of three individuals of unspotted lives and conversation, and of whom it may be justly said, "The world was not worthy." Injustice and cruelty in any form afford a humiliating exhibition of the depravity of man; but when presented to us under the mask of superior sanctity, the mind is wont to turn with feelings of deepened abhorrence from such a desecration of the name of religion. In every religious profession, conscientious feelings should be respected, but the persecutions in Massachusetts violated even the plainest laws of humanity. The rulers of this province, in justification of their wicked acts, represented Friends as moving under extreme delusion; but what greater or more shocking delusion can there be, than to slay our fellow-creatures and to believe that we are thereby

promoting the sacred cause of religion. Of all the acts to which the grand adversary influences man, this we conceive to be the most flagrant violation of the Divine law.

We have used the term murder, and used it advisedly ; for the martyrdom of the three Friends on Boston Common had been perpetrated contrary to the laws of the realm. The charter of Massachusetts in no degree empowered the local authorities to enact laws contrary to the fundamental principles of English jurisprudence and English liberty. In pursuing their despotic course, they did so likewise with the consciousness that it was repulsive to the feelings of the community. Towards the close of 1660, this was so intelligibly manifested, that for a time they deemed it prudent to suspend the operation of the law for executing Friends, and thus the life of Joseph Nicholson was saved.

It has been stated in the preceding chapter, that among those imprisoned at Boston in the Tenth Month, 1660, was William Leddra, who had returned to the city, after having been exiled on pain of death. This faithful man appears to have been in no ordinary degree the object of Puritan displeasure. During his former imprisonment at Boston, the sufferings to which he was subjected had been so extreme that his life was endangered. On the present occasion, he was fettered to a log of wood, being chained night and day in an open prison ; and that, also, during the severities of a New England winter. His persecutors would probably have been glad, had these inhumanities put an end to his existence ; but it pleased Divine Providence to support him through them.

On the 9th of the First Month, 1661, he was again brought before the Court of Assistants. Thus arraigned, with the chains about him, and still bound to the log, he was told that having returned after sentence of banishment, he had incurred the penalty of death. On hearing this, the sufferer asked what evil he had done ? The Court replied, he had owned those that were put to death ; had refused to put off his hat in court, and said thee and thou. He then asked them if they would put him to death for speaking English, and for not putting off his clothes ? To this, one of the magistrates made the absurd reply, “ A man may

“speak treason in English.” William Leddra then inquired if “it was treason to say thee and thou to a single person.”* Broadstreet, a violent persecuting magistrate, now undertook to question the prisoner, and asked him “If he would go to England.” He replied that he had no business in England. Then, said Broadstreet, significantly pointing to Boston Common, “You shall go that way.” “What,” replied William Leddra, “will you put me to death for breathing in the air of your jurisdiction? What have you against me? I appeal to the laws of England for my trial. If by them I am found guilty, I refuse not to die.”† The arbitrary Court, however, overruled his appeal; and then, like some other persecutors of old, endeavoured to persuade him to recant, and conform to their own religion. The wretched attempt was at once rejected, and rejected, too, with magnanimity and disdain. “What! join with such murderers as you are,” said William Leddra; “then let every man that meets me say, Lo, this is the man that hath forsaken the God of his salvation.”‡

The Court, finding their victim unshaken in his religious convictions, passed the sentence of death upon him, and appointed the 14th of the month for its execution. On this day it was also arranged that a morning lecture should be given; and now, as on the former occasions, the officiating minister exerted his eloquence, to urge the magistracy onward in their dreadful work. “Priests and Papists,” writes a contemporary, “served to whet them on.”§ The lecture, or, as a modern writer terms it, “this shocking preamble to the execution,”|| being concluded, the governor, with a guard of soldiers, proceeded to the prison. Here the irons that had long hung on William Leddra were knocked off, and, taking a solemn farewell of his imprisoned companions, he “went forth to the slaughter in the meekness of the spirit of Jesus.”¶ On leaving the prison walls, he was immediately surrounded by the soldiery, with a view to prevent

* New England Judged, p. 316.

† Ibid, p. 317.

‡ Ibid, 318.

§ Ibid, 326.

|| Tuke's Biographical Notices, p. 55.

¶ New England Judged, p. 327.

him from speaking to his friends. Edward Wharton, observing the manœuvre, exclaimed that it was worse than the conduct of Bonner's men. "What," said he, "will you not let me come near my suffering friend before you kill him." One of the company replied that "it would be his turn next;" and an officer threatened to stop his mouth, if he spoke another word.

The procession was similar in character to those before-mentioned; and having reached the place of execution, William Leddra exhorted his friend, Edward Wharton, to faithfulness, and bade him a final farewell, saying, "All that will be Christ's disciples must take up his cross." While standing on the ladder, some one having called out, "William, have you anything to say to the people?" he replied, "For bearing my testimony for the Lord against the deceivers and deceived, am I brought here to suffer." These expressions, together with the heavenly mindedness which he manifested at this awful period, awakened the tender feelings of many of the spectators, in a manner that conveyed keen reproof to the instigators of the revolting scene. The ministers observed the manifestation of this feeling with uneasiness; and Allen, who was one of them, with a view to check the current of sympathy, said, loudly, "People, I would not have you think it strange to see a man so willing to die, for it is no new thing; you may read how the apostle saith, that some shall be given up to many delusions, and even dare to die for it." Truly, the apostle said that many should be given up to delusions; but the persecuting priest committed a great error, when he quoted the apostle as saying that such should dare to die for them.

The executioner now proceeded to complete his work. Whilst the halter was being adjusted, the martyr meekly and resignedly said, "I commend my righteous cause unto thee, O God." His last expressions being, as the ladder was turning, "Lord, Jesus! receive my spirit."* The body, on being cut down, was allowed to be removed by his friends for interment; this, however, would not have been granted, but for the outcry of the people against

* New England Jugged, p. 329.

the barbarous indecencies exhibited to the remains of the former victims.

Before the execution, it was currently reported that William Leddra had liberty to leave the prison, and to save his life. This was a gross falsehood, propagated, doubtless, with a view to lessen the odiousness of the wicked proceedings. There was present a stranger, who was much affected on witnessing the scene. A letter addressed by him to a friend at Barbadoes, alluding to this report, and describing the execution, has been preserved, and will be read with interest.

Boston, *March 26, 1661.*

“ On the 14th of this instant, one William Leddra was put to death here. The people of the town told me, he might go away if he would ; but when I made further inquiry, I heard the marshal say that he was chained in prison, from the time he was condemned, to the day of his execution. I am not of his opinion : but yet, truly, methought the Lord did mightily appear in the man. I went to one of the magistrates of Cambridge, who had been of the jury that condemned him, as he told me himself ; and I asked him by what rule he did it ? He answered me, that he was a rogue, a very rogue. But what is this to the question, said I ; where is your rule ? He said, he had abused authority. Then I went after the man, and asked him, whether he did not look on it as a breach of rule to slight and undervalue authority ? And I said that Paul gave Festus the title of honour, though he was a heathen. (I do not mean to say these magistrates are heathens.) When the man was on the ladder, he looked on me and called me friend, and said, ‘ know that this day I am willing to offer up my life for the witness of Jesus.’ Then I desired leave of the officers to speak, and said, ‘ gentlemen, I am a stranger both to your persons and country, yet a friend of both :’ and I cried aloud, for the Lord’s sake, take not away the man’s life ; but remember Gamaliel’s counsel to the Jews—‘ If it be of man, it will come to nought ; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it : but be careful ye be not found fighters against God.’ And

the captain said, why had you not come to the prison? The reason was, because I heard the man might go if he would; and therefore I called him down from the tree, and said, come down, William, you may go away if you will. Then Captain Oliver said it was no such matter; and asked me what I had to do with it; and bade me begone: and I told them I was willing, for I could not endure to see this. And when I was in the town, some did seem to sympathize with me in my grief. I told them, they had no warrant from the word of God, nor precedent from our country, nor power from his Majesty, to hang the man.

“ I rest your friend,

“ THOMAS WILKIE.”

“ To Mr. George Lad, master of the *America*,
of Dartmouth, now at Barbadoes.”*

Of the history of William Leddra previous to his joining in religious fellowship with Friends, but very little is known. His home was in Barbadoes, but he is said to have been by birth a Cornishman;† and his occupation, it appears, was that of a clothier.‡ We find him engaged very early in visiting the West Indies as a minister, and in 1657 he proceeded in that character to New England. The particulars of the sufferings he underwent in pursuing this labour of love have already been set forth. Christian constancy, and patient endurance under extreme sufferings for the cause of his Lord, remarkably distinguished William Leddra. Addressing his friends of New England, from Boston prison, a few weeks before his death, he says—“ I testify in the fear of the Lord God, and witness with a pen of trembling, that the noise of the whip on my back, all the imprisonments, and banishing upon pain of death, and after returning, the loud threatening of a halter from their mouths, did no more affright me, through the strength of the power of God, than if they had threatened to have bound a spider’s web to my finger; which makes me to say with unfeigned lips—“ Wait upon the Lord, O

* Sewel’s History, p. 269.

† Whiting’s Catalogue, p. 61.

‡ New England Persecutors Mauled, by Thomas Philathes, p. 45.

my soul, for ever. I do not seek to withdraw my cheek from the smiter, nor to turn aside my feet from the footsteps of the flock, as witness this chain and this log at my leg ; but I desire, as far as the Lord draws me, to follow my forefathers and brethren, in suffering and in joy ; wherefore my spirit waits and worships at the feet of Immanuel, unto whom I commit my cause.”*

The state of William Leddra’s mind, in anticipation of his death, may be truly called a triumphant one. The heavenly enjoyments which he was permitted to experience, and the foretaste he had of a glorious immortality, were such as are rarely vouchsafed to humanity. On the day preceding his execution, he wrote the following :—

“ TO THE SOCIETY OF THE LITTLE FLOCK OF CHRIST.

“ Grace and Peace be multiplied.

“ MOST DEAR AND INWARDLY BELOVED !

“ The sweet influences of the morning star, like a flood, distilling into my habitation, have so filled me with the joy of the Lord in the beauty of holiness, that my spirit is as if it did not inhabit a tabernacle of clay, but is wholly swallowed up in the bosom of eternity, from whence it had its being.

“ Alas ! Alas ! what can the wrath and spirit of man that lusteth to envy, aggravated by the heat and strength of the king of the locusts which came out of the pit, do unto one that is hid in the secrets of the Almighty, or unto them that are gathered under the healing wings of the Prince of Peace ? under whose armour of light they shall be able to stand in the day of trial ; having on the breastplate of righteousness and the sword of the Spirit, which is their weapon of war against spiritual wickedness, principalities and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world, both within and without.

“ Oh, my beloved ! I have waited like a dove at the windows of the ark ; and have stood still in that watch, which the Master, without whom I could do nothing, did at his coming reward with

* New England Judged, p. 297.

the fulness of his love ; wherein my heart did rejoice, that I might, in the love and life of God, speak a few words to you, sealed with the spirit of promise ; that the taste thereof might be a savour of life to your life, and a testimony in you of my innocent death. And if I had been altogether silent, and the Lord had not opened my mouth unto you, yet he would have opened your hearts, and there have sealed my innocence with the streams of life, by which we are all baptized into that body which is of God, with whom and in whose presence there is life ; in which as you abide, you stand upon the pillar and ground of truth. For the life being the truth and the way, go not one step without it, lest you should compass a mountain in the wilderness ; for to everything there is a season.

“ As the flowing of the ocean doth fill every creek and branch thereof, and [as it] then retires again towards its own being and fulness, and leaves a savour behind it ; so doth the life and virtue of God flow into every one of your hearts, whom He hath made partakers of his Divine nature ; and when it withdraws but a little, it leaves a sweet savour behind it, that many can say they are made clean through the word that He hath spoken to them ; in which innocent condition you may see what you are in the presence of God, and what you are without Him.

“ Your brother,

“ WILLIAM LEDDRA.”

*Boston Gaol, the 13th of the
First Month, 1661.*

Thus died this devoted Christian, in the full assurance of a blessed resurrection unto eternal life, and doubtless he now forms one of that innumerable company, who “ have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”

During the sitting of the General Court at which William Leddra was condemned, Edward Wharton, who had been a prisoner in Boston for nearly a year, was brought up for judgment. Being a man of great Christian courage, he spoke

boldly against these persecutions, and, consequently, he was very obnoxious to the ecclesiastics and rulers. When brought forward, he asked the governor what he had to lay to his charge? Endicott answered by referring to his not having taken off his hat, and hypocritically observed that he was sorry to see him so deluded.

Edward Wharton. "Wearing my hat is no just cause for persecuting me,—the truth deluded no man, and by the grace of God I am made willing to suffer for His name's sake, which grace I witness in my measure."

Endicott, scoffingly. "In my measure? This is right the Quakers' words. Hast thou grace?"

E. Wharton. "Yes."

Endicott. "How dost thou know thou hast grace?"

E. Wharton. "He that believeth on the Son of God, needs not go to others, for he hath the witness in himself, as said John, and this witness is the Spirit."

Endicott having ordered the gaoler to be sent for, Edward Wharton, desirous of knowing the ground of his committal, thus addressed him. "Since thou hast warrant, and caused the constable to take me out of my house, and to lead me through the country, from town to town, like an evil-doer, I would know what thou hast to lay to my charge?" To this Endicott replied, "Nay, you shall know that afterwards." The gaoler was then directed to reconduct him to prison, where he was kept day and night closely confined with William Leddra, "in a very little room, little larger than a saw-pit."*

On his being soon brought back to the Court, Edward Wharton repeated his former question—"Wherefore have I been fetched from my habitation, where I was following my honest calling, and here laid up as an evil-doer?"

The Court. "Your hair is too long, and you have disobeyed that commandment which saith, 'Honour thy father and mother.'"

E. Wharton. "Wherein?"

* Besse, vol. ii. p. 220.

The Court. "In that you will not put off your hat to magistrates."

E. Wharton. "I love and own all magistrates and rulers, who are for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well."

Rawson. "Edward Wharton, come to the bar."

E. Wharton. "Yea, and to the bench too, for thou hast no evil justly to lay to our charge."

Rawson. "Hold up your hand."

E. Wharton. "I will not. Thou hast no evil to charge me with."

Rawson. "Hear your sentence of banishment."

E. Wharton. "Have a care what you do, for if you murder me, my blood will lie heavy upon you."

Rawson. "Edward Wharton, attend to your sentence of banishment. You are, upon pain of death, to depart this jurisdiction, it being the eleventh of this instant, March, by the one-and-twentieth of the same, on the pain of death."

E. Wharton. "Friends, I am a single man, and I have dealings with some people; it were good I had time to make clear with all, and then if you have power to murder me, you may."

Endicott, after consulting with Rawson. "If we should give him an hundred days, it is all one."

E. Wharton. "Nay, I shall not go away; therefore be careful what you do."*

The prisoner then addressed the numerous assembly, on the injustice of the proceedings; "They have nothing to charge me withal," said he, "but my hat and my hair." Rawson now calling the attention of the Court, read the record he had made—"that, contrary to law, the prisoner had travelled up and down, with William Robinson and Marmaduke Stevenson." Edward Wharton replied, "What readest thou that for?" and alluding to the whipping he underwent in 1659, said, "Have ye not ploughed furrows on my back for that already, although ye had no law for it?" The reply having silenced Rawson, Bellingham,

* Besse, vol. ii. p. 221.

the deputy governor, interfered, with a threat to send him back to prison, and to have him whipped. He was, however, released, and commanded immediately to depart the colony; but, undaunted by their threats or their law, he attended the execution of his friend William Leddra, at which he bore an unflinching testimony against such atrocities, and then returned to his home at Salem.*

The case of Edward Wharton was an unpalatable one to Endicott and his fellow-magistrates; but they were still more perplexed by that of Wenlock Christison, than whom none distinguished himself more by Christian constancy and firmness, in the time of these cruelties. In the previous chapter, he is stated to have been banished under penalty of death; and on proceeding to the adjacent colony of Plymouth, to have been driven also from that territory. Wenlock Christison, not counting his life dear unto him for the truth's sake, believed it required of him to return to Boston, although in the expectation that ere long he should be added to the list of martyrs. He came back boldly, and entered the general court to face his persecutors, at the very moment they were passing sentence of death on William Leddra. The magistrates, on seeing him enter, were struck with consternation. The unexpected event so petrified them, that for some time it produced an entire silence. Their extreme surprise, however, soon gave place to other feelings, and one of the Court cried out, "Here is another, fetch him to the bar."†

Rawson. "Is not your name Wenlock Christison?"

Wenlock. "Yes."

Endicott. "Wast thou not banished upon pain of death?"

Wenlock. "Yea, I was."

Endicott. "What dost thou here, then?"

Wenlock. "I am come to warn you, that you shed no more innocent blood; for the blood that you have shed already cries to the Lord for vengeance."

Being handed over to the custody of the gaoler, he was then taken to prison. On the same day on which William Leddra

* New England Judged, p. 342.

† Sewell, p. 226.

was put to death, he was again placed at the bar, the magistrates presuming that the circumstance of his companion's execution would terrify him into submission ; but, as will be seen, they greatly mistook the character of their prisoner. On this occasion, both Endicott and Bellingham endeavoured to shake his Christian firmness. Except he would renounce his religion, they said he should surely die. But undismayed by their menaces, he replied, " Nay, I shall not change my religion, nor seek to save my life ; neither do I intend to deny my Master ; but if I lose my life for Christ's sake, and the preaching of the gospel, I shall save it."* The prisoner's reply touched the hearts of some of the magistrates, and being divided in sentiment about putting him to death, they ordered him to be remanded until the next General Court. Endicott, it appears, was so disconcerted with the conduct of those on the bench who took the more humane view, that for two days he refused to preside again.†

The time having arrived, Wenlock Christison was brought from his prison-house, and being placed at the bar, the Governor asked him what he had to say for himself, why he should not die ?

Wenlock. " I have done nothing worthy of death : if I had, I refuse not to die."

Endicott. " Thou art come in amongst us in rebellion, which is as the sin of witchcraft, and ought to be punished."

Wenlock. " I came not in among you in rebellion, but in obedience to the God of heaven ; not in contempt to any one of you, but in love to your souls and bodies ; and *that* you shall know one day, when you and all men must give an account of the deeds done in the body. Take heed, for you cannot escape the righteous judgments of God."

Major-General Adderton. " You pronounce woes and judgments, and those that are gone before you pronounced woes and judgments ; but the judgments of the Lord are not come upon us yet."

Wenlock. " Be not proud, neither let your spirits be lifted

* New England Judged, p. 335.

† Ibid, p. 335.

up ; God doth but wait till the measure of your iniquity be filled up, and you have run your ungodly race ; then will the wrath of God come upon you to the uttermost. And as for thy part, it hangs over thy head, and is near to be poured down upon thee, and shall come as a thief in the night suddenly, when thou thinkest not of it.* By what law will you put me to death ?”

Court. “ We have a law, and by our law, you are to die.”

Wenlock. “ So said the Jews of Christ, we have a law, and by our law he ought to die. Who empowered you to make that law ?”

Court. “ We have a patent and are patentees ; judge whether we have not power to make laws ?”

Wenlock. “ How ! have you power to make laws repugnant to the laws of England ?”

Endicott. “ Nay.”

Wenlock. “ Then you are gone beyond your bounds, and have forfeited your patent, and this is more than you can answer. Are you subjects to the king, yea or nay ?”

Rawson. “ What will you infer from that, what good will that do you ?”

Wenlock. “ If you are, say so : for in your petition to the king, you desire that he will protect you, and that you may be worthy to kneel among his loyal subjects ?”

Court. “ Yes.”

Wenlock. “ So am I, and for any thing I know, am as good as you, if not better ; for if the king did but know your hearts, as God knows them, he would see that your hearts are as rotten towards him as they are towards God. Therefore seeing that you

* Events seemed to indicate that Wenlock Christison, in speaking thus prophetically to Adderton, did so under the influence of that wisdom which is from above. Some time after, this daring and hardened persecutor was suddenly cut off in a very remarkable manner. Returning home one day, after he had been exercising the soldiery, his horse took fright, and threw him with such violence as to cause instant death. His lifeless corpse presented a shocking spectacle, his eyes being forced out of his head, and his brains out of his nose, whilst the blood flowed in profusion from his ears.—Vide *Besse's Sufferings*, vol. ii. p. 270.

and I are subjects to the king, I demand to be tried by the laws of my own nation."

Court. "You shall be tried by a bench and jury."

Wenlock. "That is not the law, but the manner of it: for if you will be as good as your word, you must set me at liberty, for I never heard or read of any law that was in England to hang Quakers."

Endicott. "There is a law to hang Jesuits."

Wenlock. "If you put me to death, it is not because I go under the name of a Jesuit, but a Quaker; therefore I appeal to the laws of my own nation."

Court. "You are in our hands, and have broken our laws, and we will try you."

Wenlock. "Your will is your law, and what you have power to do, *that* you will do; and seeing that the jury must go forth on my life, this I have to say to you in the fear of the living God: 'Jury, take heed what you do, for you swear by the living God, that you will true trial make, and just verdict give, according to the evidence; What have I done to deserve death? Keep your hands out of innocent blood.'"

A Juryman. "It is good counsel."

The jury retired, but not before "they had received their lesson." They soon returned, and either from a fear of offending the Court, or from a prejudice against Quakers, brought the prisoner in guilty.

Wenlock. "I deny all guilt, for my conscience is clear in the sight of God."

Endicott. "The jury hath condemned thee."

Wenlock. "The Lord doth justify me, who art thou that condemnest?"

The Court then proceeded to vote on the sentence of death; there were, however, several who were opposed to this extreme measure; for the innocency and Christian magnanimity of the prisoner, had produced a counter feeling in their minds. Endicott, vexed, and disappointed at this want of unanimity, passionately throwing something down on the table, told the Court that he "could find it in his heart to go home."

Wenlock replied, "It were better for thee to be at home than here, for thou art about a bloody piece of work."

Endicott. "You that will not consent record it. I thank God, I am not afraid to give judgment. Wenlock Christison, hearken to your sentence: You must return to the place from whence you came, and from thence to the place of execution, and there you must be hanged until you be dead, dead, dead, upon the thirteenth day of June, being the fifth day of the week."

Wenlock. "The will of the Lord be done: In whose will I came amongst you, and in whose counsel I stand, feeling his eternal power, that will uphold me to the last gasp, I do not question it. Known be it unto you all, that if you have power to take my life from me, my soul shall enter into everlasting rest and peace with God, where you yourselves shall never come: and if you have power to take my life from me, the which I question, I believe, you shall never more take Quakers lives from them. Note my words: Do not think to weary out the living God by taking away the lives of his servants. What do you gain by it? For the last man you put to death here are five come in his room.* And if you have power "to take my life from me, God can raise up the same principle of life in ten of his servants, and send them among you in my room, that you may have torment upon torment, which is your portion: for there is no peace to the wicked, saith my God."

Endicott. "Take him away."†

Wenlock Christison was reconducted to his cell, where in "sweet peace" and pious resignation of soul he waited the arrival of the day, when he should be called upon to offer up his life for the sake of his dear Redeemer. The circumstances, however, which followed, evince that in his concluding address to the Court, he spoke under that holy influence which is profitable to direct, and which verifies the Scripture declaration, that "there is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding."

* The five were, Elizabeth Hooton, Joane Brocksoppe, Mary Mallins, Katharine Chattam, and John Burstow.

† New England Judged, p. 336.

The day drew near on which it was determined to enact on the person of Wenlock Christison, another of the dreadful scenes on Boston Common. But whilst the infatuated rulers of the colony were thus pursuing their barbarous career, not only had the news of their cruelties reached the shores of Old England, but an echo of the indignation excited there was now heard in Massachusetts. The fall of the Puritan government in the mother country, and the accession of Charles II. were circumstances which the bigoted governors of the province heard about this time with much anxiety. They were conscious that, independently of their Quaker persecutions, they had violated the laws of the realm, and had assumed powers which the charter did not confer upon them. The sympathy existing between the Puritans of New England and the government at home had, during the times of the Protectorate, quieted any feelings of uneasiness and calmed all apprehension. But the case was now changed. The royalists were again in power, and instead of having in the British government, powerful partisans of their cause, they had to deal with authorities who watched them with a jealous eye, and from whom they could expect at least no favour. They, therefore, naturally felt that their situation was a critical one, and that no time should be lost in endeavouring to redeem their character, as good colonial subjects. The life of Wenlock Christison was saved, and not only so, but, on the day preceding that fixed for his execution, an order was issued for his liberation, and for that of twenty-seven other Friends then in Boston prison.*

The fear which actuated the zealots of New England to abandon their murderous course towards the unresisting sufferers, had the effect, not of inducing them to relinquish religious persecution altogether, but to render it less manifestly illegal. As a substitute for the law of banishment on pain of death, they passed

* The names of most of those who were liberated on this occasion were John Chamberlain, John and Margaret Smith, Mary Trask, Judith Brown, Peter Pearson, George Wilson, John Burstow, Elizabeth Hooton, Mary Mallins, Joane Brocksoppe, Katherine Chattam, Mary Wright, Hannah Wright, Sarah Burden, Sarah Coleman and three or four of her children, Ralph Allen, William Allen and Richard Kirby.

a new one for banishment on pain of a whipping from town to town out of the province. When the officers came to open the prison doors to Wenlock Christison and his companions, they informed them that their liberation was in consequence of the passing of the new law. On hearing this Wenlock said, "What means this?—You have deceived the people,—they thought the gallows had been your last weapon; your magistrates said your law was a good and wholesome law, made for your peace and the safeguard of your country. What! are your hands now become weak? The power of God is over you all."*

Peter Pearson and Judith Brown, two of those who were released, were, however, first whipped through Boston streets, both having been stripped to the waist, and fastened to the tail of a cart in preparation for the inhuman punishment. These Friends were strangers in the colony, and the cause of their being thus singled out for the application of the whip, we presume, was that they had been previously banished.

That the new enactment might appear to have the authority of English law, those that suffered under it were wrongly stigmatized as vagabonds. Great were the severities to which its provisions still subjected Friends, as will appear in the ensuing pages. Indeed it was not until those who had been foremost in instigating these persecutions, had been summoned by the angel of death to stand before a higher tribunal, that such inhumanities ceased in that highly professing country.

The faithful messengers of the Lord, who were thus unexpectedly released from bondage, were concerned almost immediately on leaving the gaol, to preach to the inhabitants those truths for which they had suffered. The magistrates, already at their wits end, in fruitlessly endeavouring to arrest the spread of Quaker principles, being impatient at this fresh manifestation of devotedness, ordered a guard of soldiers to drive all the Friends out of their territory into the wilderness; an order which was speedily executed. John Chamberlain an inhabitant of Boston, and George Wilson, were among those who were thus forcibly

* New England Judged, p. 341.

expelled; but, undismayed by the new law for the application of the whip, they returned at once to their homes. There they were quickly apprehended, and were sentenced to undergo a flogging through three towns and to be put out of the limits of the colony. The executioner, desirous of lending his ingenuity to increase the severity of the sentence, provided himself with a singularly constructed whip, or as it is called a "cruel instrument," with which he "miserably tore" the bodies of the two sufferers. Such was the new and barbarous character of the weapon used on this occasion, that Friends endeavoured, though unsuccessfully, to obtain it, in order to send it to England, as another proof of the malignant cruelty which actuated the rulers of Massachusetts towards the new Society.

At the conclusion of the whipping at Boston, George Wilson, in the midst of his persecutors, knelt in solemn supplication to the Most High. John Chamberlain became convinced of the principles of Friends, by witnessing the triumphant end of William Robinson and Marmaduke Stevenson. In common, however, with others in Boston, who embraced these views, it was his lot to suffer severely for his conscientious convictions. Within two years from the time of his conviction, he was not only imprisoned and banished, but subjected to cruel whippings through three towns, of Massachusetts: yet, observes a contemporary, "so far from beating him *from* the truth, it rather drove him nearer to it."* Through all his sufferings he appears to have been supported in much christian cheerfulness.

Josiah Southwick and Nicholas Phelps, who, on their banishment, in 1659, proceeded to England, together with Samuel Shattock, to obtain redress for their grievances, having been unsuccessful in their endeavours, by reason of the favouritism still shewn to the province of New England, returned to their homes about the time that the new law for whipping was passed. Nicholas Phelps, whose constitution was much weakened, died soon after. Josiah Southwick, desirous that the rulers might know that he had returned, proceeded to Boston, and appeared

* New England Judged, p. 353.

boldly before them. He was soon placed under arrest, and after an imprisonment of nine weeks, was brought before the court of assistants in the Seventh Month, 1661. The governor told him that he would have been tried for his life, had not their new law been passed, and then pronounced on him the sentence of whipping. Josiah, with arms outstretched, and in a spirit which rose superior to their cruelty, said "Here is my body; if you want a further testimony to the truth I profess, take it and tear it in pieces; it is freely given up; and for your sentence I matter it not. It is no more terrifying to me, than if ye had taken a feather and blown it up in the air." "Tongue cannot express," said he, "nor declare the goodness and love of God to his suffering people."*

The sentence was executed, as usual, with great severity, but the faithful sufferer was so divinely supported, that during its infliction he broke forth in praises to the Lord. "They that know God to be their strength," he said, "cannot fear what man can do." On the First-day he was whipped through Boston and Roxbury, and the next morning at Dedham, from whence he was carried fifteen miles into the wilderness. Disregarding, however, the threats, and unmoved by the cruel conduct of the magistrates, he immediately returned to his home at Salem, which he reached on the following morning.

While these scenes were passing in Massachusetts, the truth was steadily gaining ground in the more charitable territory of Rhode Island. George Rofe of Halstead, in Essex, one of the earliest ministers in the Society, having travelled much in his own land, and on the continent of Europe, visited the latter colony and some parts adjacent in 1661. Afterwards being in Barbadoes, he wrote to Richard Hubberthorne; and as his letter contains some interesting particulars of his religious engagements in America, it is subjoined.

* New England Judged, p. 356.

FROM GEORGE ROFE TO RICHARD HUBBERTHORNE.

Barbadoes [date not discoverable.]

“ DEAR BROTHER R. H.

“ The last winter, I wintered in Maryland and Virginia, in great service for the establishing of many, and bringing others into the truth ; many Friends are in those parts in whom the precious life is. From thence I sailed in a small boat, with only two Friends, to New Netherlands and so to New England, having good service among both Dutch and English ; for I was in the chief city of the Dutch and gave a good sound, but they forced me away ; so we got meetings through the islands in good service, and came in at Rhode Island, and we appointed a general meeting for all Friends in those parts, which was a very great meeting and very precious, and continued four days together, and the Lord was with his people and blessed them, and all departed in peace : there is a good seed in that people, but the enemy keeps some under through their cruel persecution, yet their honesty preserves them, and the seed will arise, as way is made for the visitation of the power of good to have free liberty amongst them. From thence I came about four months ago to this island, where the truth hath good dominion, and Friends are very precious, and grow in the feeling and sensibleness of the power of God : Farewell, I am in great haste at present,

“ Thy truly loving brother,



A circumstance mentioned in this letter deserves our particular notice. George Rofe refers to a General Meeting held on Rhode Island, “for all Friends in those parts.” Several meetings of this character had already been convened in England. The first of which we have any account took place at Swanington in Leicestershire in 1654.* One was held at Edge Hill in the

* Sewel, p. 93.

same county in 1656 ;* another in that year at Balby in Yorkshire ;† and in 1658 a very memorable one was convened at the house of John Crook in Bedfordshire.‡ That referred to, however, by George Rofe appears to have been the first of the kind held on the continent of America. Bishop alludes to this meeting and says, under date of 1661, “about this time the General Meeting at Rhode Island was set up.”§ The numbers who attended it were so considerable that at Boston, the enemies of the Society raised “an alarm that the Quakers were gathering together to kill the people.|| It is to be regretted that no further account of this “very great meeting” has been preserved, for doubtless, though it was probably for the most part a meeting for worship, the transactions during the four days which it occupied, would have presented to our notice many points of interest.

* G. Fox's Journal, vol. i. p. 383, and Life of W. Caton.

† Rules of Discipline, 3rd Edition, Introduction.

‡ Sewel, p. 172.

§ New England Judged, p. 351.

|| Ibid, p. 351.

CHAPTER XIII.

The authorities of Massachusetts address Charles II.—Their misrepresentations of Friends therein—Edward Burrough writes to the king and confutes the statements—The New England persecutions attract the notice of the king—The news of Leddra's death reach England—Edward Burrough has an interview with the king, and obtains a mandamus to stop these atrocities—Edward Burrough has another interview with the king—Samuel Shattock, an exiled colonist, is appointed by the king to convey the mandamus to New England—His arrival there—The delivery of the mandamus to Endicott and his deputy—A meeting held by Friends at Boston—The character of the mandamus—The liberation of Friends from Boston gaol—The forebodings of the rulers of Massachusetts—They send deputies to England to palliate their conduct—The proceedings of the deputies, and failure of their mission—Their fear of being indicted for murder, and hasty return home—Their cool reception by the colonists—Some notice of the attempts made to justify the conduct of the Pilgrim Fathers towards the Society of Friends.

THE rulers of Massachusetts, soon after the restoration of the monarchy under Charles II., sent an address to the king, expressive of their loyalty to his person and government. In this address they alluded to the fact of their having put to death some Friends at Boston, which, they were aware, excited much notice in Britain. And with a view to justify their conduct in this respect, they represented Friends of New England as a people of the most odious and audacious description. "Open blasphemers, open seducers from the glorious Trinity, the Lord's Christ, the blessed gospel, and from the holy Scriptures as the rule of life; open enemies to the Government itself, as established in the hand of any but men of their own principles; malignant promoters of doctrines directly tending to subvert both our Church and State."* With this strain and these

* Burrough's Works, p. 758.

epithets they sought to villify before the king the objects of their malice.

The presentation of the address was watched with considerable interest by Friends in England. Edward Burrough entered deeply into the case of his suffering brethren in America, and in order to undeceive the king, sent him "some considerations" on the address in question. "Oh King," he commences, "this my occasion to present thee with these considerations is very urgent, and of great necessity, even in the behalf of innocent blood, because of a paper presented to thee, called 'The humble petition and address of the General Court at Boston, in New England;' in which are contained divers calumnies, unjust reproaches, palpable untruths, and malicious slanders against an innocent people. It is hard to relate the cruelties that have been committed against this people by these petitioners: they have spoiled their goods, imprisoned many of their persons, whipped them, cut off their ears, burned them, yea, banished and murdered them: and all this I aver and affirm before thee, O King, wholly unjustly and unrighteously, and without the breach of any just law of God or man; but only for and because of *difference in judgment and practice concerning spiritual things.*"* After refuting the charges of blasphemy, &c., Edward Burrough refers to another, in which they are represented as persons of "impetuous and desperate turbulency to the State, civil and ecclesiastical." "Let it be considered," he says, "what their dangerous and desperate turbulency was to States, civil and ecclesiastical. Did ever these poor people, whom they condemned and put to shameful death, lift up a hand against them, or appear in any turbulent gesture towards them? Were they ever found with any carnal weapon about them? or, what was their crime, saving *that they warned sinners to repent, and the ungodly to turn from his way?* We appeal to the God of heaven on their behalf, whom they have martyred for the name of Christ, that they had no other offence to charge upon them, saving *their conversations, doctrines, and [religious] practices.*

* Burrough's Works, p. 758.

It is fully believed by us, that these sufferers did not go into New England in their own cause, but in God's cause, and in the movings of his Holy Spirit, and in good conscience towards him. They did rather suffer the loss of their own lives for their obedience towards God, than to disobey him to keep the commandments of men. The blood of our brethren lieth upon the heads of the magistrates of New England. They are guilty of their cruel death ; for they put them to death, not for any evil doing between man and man, but for their obedience to God, and for good conscience sake towards him."*

Edward Burrough continues thus :—“ Again, these petitioners fawn and flatter in these words—‘ Let not the king hear men's words ; your servants are true men, fearers of God and the king, and not given to change ; zealous of government and order. We are not seditious to the interest of Cæsar, &c.’ In answer to this, many things are to be considered ; why should the petitioners seem to exhort the king not to hear men's words ? Shall the innocent be accused before him, and not heard in their lawful defence ? Must not the king hear the accused as well as the accusers, and in as much justice ? I hope God hath given him more nobility of understanding, than to receive or put in practice such admouition ; and I desire it may be far from the king ever to condemn any person or people upon the accusation of others, without full hearing of the accused, as well as their enemies, for it is justice and equity so to do, and thereby shall his judgment be the more just.”† “ Thus,” he concludes, “ these considerations are presented to the king, in vindication of that innocent people called Quakers, whom these petitioners have accused as guilty of heinous crimes, that themselves might appear innocent of the cruelty, and injustice, and shedding of the blood of just men, without cause. But let the king rightly consider of the case between us and them, and let him not hide his face from hearing the cry of innocent blood. For a further testimony of the wickedness and enormity of these petitioners, and to demonstrate how far they had proceeded contrary to the good laws and authority of England,

* Burrough's Works, p. 760.

† Ibid, p. 762.

and contrary to their own patent, hereunto is annexed, and presented to the king, a brief of their unjust dealings towards the Quakers."*

Edw. Burrough

What effect this appeal of Edward Burrough had on the mind of Charles II. has not been stated, but there is good reason to believe that it was the means of opening the eyes of that monarch to the intolerant disposition of his subjects in Massachusetts. In the early part of 1661, George Bishop of Bristol, published his "New England Judged," a work to which we have made frequent allusion, and wherein is set forth a very circumstantial account of the sufferings of Friends in that Province. A copy of the work soon found its way to the palace. The king, evidently interested with the book, was much struck with that part of it, wherein Denison, an active persecutor, is stated to have said, in contempt of the authorities at home, to a Friend who appealed to the laws of England, against his cruel and illegal course. "This year ye will go and complain to the Parliament; and the next year they will send to see how it is; and the third year the government is changed."† The language of Denison forcibly impressed the king with the idea, that the loyalty of his subjects in that colony, was not that which they had professed towards him in their recent address. He paused in his reading, and calling his courtiers about him, directed their attention to the passage, and very significantly remarked, "Lo, these are my good subjects of New England, but I will put a stop to them."‡

Friends in England had not been unmindful of their persecuted brethren in America, throughout their sufferings, but in the apprehension that the law for banishing them on pain of death had been suspended, the anxiety before felt was considerably relieved. This was the state of feeling on the subject, until the summer of 1661, when news arrived, that another

* Burrough's Works, p. 763. † p. 66. ‡ Sewell, p. 272.

Friend, viz. William Leddra, had been brought to the gallows at Boston.

On hearing the affecting intelligence, and also that others were sentenced to suffer in like manner, Friends in England saw the necessity of making immediate and strenuous efforts to stay the martyring hand in Massachusetts. Edward Burrough, who was a courageous and powerful advocate on behalf of the persecuted Society, determined at once to seek an interview, and to plead in person with the king on the subject. It was also now pretty well known, that Charles II. looked with a suspicious eye on the professed loyalty of his New England subjects. Puritan ascendancy had brought his father to the scaffold, and Puritan power and influence had long deprived him of his legitimate accession to the throne. The remembrance of these things, and his knowledge of the recent unconstitutional proceedings of the colonists, in not permitting appeals to England, according to the express condition of their charter, were likely to produce a jealous feeling in the mind of the king. The application of Burrough met with a hearty response, and the monarch readily listened to the charges against the authorities at Boston.

On being admitted to the presence of the king, Edward Burrough informed him, "that there was a vein of innocent blood opened in his dominions, which, if it were not stopped, would overrun all." His anxiety for the jeopardied lives of his brethren was soon relieved. The king replied decisively, "but I will stop that vein." "Then do it speedily," rejoined Edward Burrough, "for we know not how many may soon be put to death." "As speedily as ye will," answered the king; and turning to his attendants he said, "call the Secretary and I will do it presently." The Secretary having arrived, the following mandamus was immediately granted:—

“ CHARLES R.

“ Trusty and well-beloved, we greet you well, Having been informed, that several of our subjects among you, called Quakers, have been and are imprisoned by you, whereof some have been executed, and others (as hath been represented unto us) are in

danger to undergo the like ; we have thought fit to signify our pleasure in that behalf for the future ; and do hereby require, that if there be any of those people called Quakers, amongst you, now already condemned to suffer death, or other corporal punishment ; or that are imprisoned, and obnoxious to the like condemnation, you are to forbear to proceed any further therein ; but that you forthwith send the said persons (whether condemned or imprisoned) over into their own kingdom of England, together with their respective crimes or offences laid to their charge ; to the end such course may be taken with them here, as shall be agreeable to our laws and their demerits. And for so doing, these our letters shall be your sufficient warrant and discharge.

“ Given at our Court, at Whitehall, the 9th day of September, 1661, in the 13th year of our reign.

“ To our trusty and well-beloved John Endicott, Esq., and to all and every other the governor or governors of our plantations of New England, and of all the colonies thereunto belonging, that now are, or hereafter shall be ; and to all and every the ministers and officers of our plantations and colonies whatsoever, within the continent of New England.

“ By his Majesty’s command,

“ WILLIAM MORRIS.”*

That much more passed between the king and Edward Burrough, on this interesting occasion cannot be doubted. The brief relation we have given, is however, all that history has handed down respecting the interview.

The mandamus having been granted, Friends were anxious for its speedy transmission to Boston. The indefatigable Burrough, fully alive to the importance of preventing any unnecessary delay in a matter wherein the lives of his friends were concerned, a day or two after sought another audience of the king. As in the former instance, the interview was readily granted. Edward Burrough having expressed his desire for dispatch in the business, the king replied that “ he had no occasion at present to send a ship to New England ; but if they (meaning Friends) would send

* Sewel, p. 272.

one, they might do it as soon as they could.”* The king, with a view to facilitate the object, having thus proposed to depart from the usual mode of conveying official despatches, Edward Burrough was encouraged to ask him, “If he would grant his deputation, to carry the mandamus to New England, to a Quaker.” The king replied, “Yes, to whom you will.”† This favourable answer led Edward Burrough to propose to the king the name of the banished Samuel Shattock. The proposal undoubtedly was a bold one. Samuel Shattock was the only remaining exile from Massachusetts, then in England, and the penetrating mind of Edward Burrough quickly perceived that to entrust the mandamus to an individual so circumstanced, would be a most effective and significant mode to adopt, in the Sovereign manifesting his indignation at the cruel and illegal transactions of his New England subjects. The king approved of the suggestion, and the persecuted Shattock was forthwith authorized to proceed to New England, as the king’s messenger with the mandamus.

The attention of Friends was next directed to the most speedy mode of conveying Samuel Shattock to Boston. The subject was of so urgent a character, that expense was felt to be a secondary consideration. An agreement was soon made with Ralph Goldsmith, a Friend, the master of a “good ship,” to sail “goods or no goods,” in ten days for Boston, for the sum of three hundred pounds. The master immediately prepared for sailing. The voyage was a prosperous one, and in about six weeks, the vessel anchored in Boston harbour; the day of their arrival being on First-day. A ship with English colours having entered the harbour, some of the citizens anxious to have the letters, and also to learn the news which she might bring from the old country, soon went on board. It had been previously arranged by Samuel Shattock and the master, that the object of their coming should be kept strictly private until after their interview with Endicott the governor. The citizens who came on board, were told that no letters would be delivered on the First day. They returned and reported that a ship-load of

* Sewel, p. 272.

† Ibid. p. 272.

Quakers had arrived, and among them the banished Shattock. The report, whilst it was calculated to produce consternation among the authorities, must also have singularly impressed the inhabitants at large.

In pursuance of the plan agreed on, none of the ship's company were permitted to land on the day of their arrival. On the following morning Samuel Shattock, bearing with him the official document, and accompanied by the Captain, went on shore. The boatmen having been ordered to return to the ship, the two Friends immediately proceeded to the residence of the governor. Here the porter desired to know their business. "Our business," they replied, "is from the king of England." And having desired him to inform his master "that they would deliver their message to none but the governor himself,"* they were forthwith ushered into his presence. Endicott observing Samuel Shattock enter with his hat on, ordered it to be taken off. Shattock now produced the mandamus and his credentials as the king's messenger. Endicott was amazed and confounded. The despised Quaker colonist, whom he had driven from his country and his home, stood before him as the representative of his Sovereign, bearing with him a crushing token of the royal anger. Endicott however did not forget the requisitions of court etiquette. The hat of the banished Quaker was ordered to be handed to him, and as a recognition of the presence of the king's deputy, he immediately took off his own. Having read the papers, and withdrawn for a short time, the governor returned and requested the two Friends to accompany him to the house of Bellingham, the deputy governor. At this place the two authorities conferred together on the new position in which the colony was placed, by virtue of the mandamus, and then briefly said to Shattock and his companion, "We shall obey his Majesty's commands."†

After these interviews, Captain Goldsmith returned to his ship, and landed the passengers, who speedily held a religious meeting with their friends of the town, to return thanksgiving to the Father of all their sure mercies, for so signal a manifestation of

* Sewel, p. 274.

† Ibid. p. 274.

his providence, in delivering them from the oppression of bigoted and cruel men.

The purport of the royal mandamus, together with the fact of a banished Quaker being sent as its official bearer, as might be imagined, greatly disconcerted the rulers of Massachusetts. The royal instructions took all power of adjudicating the case of any Friend then in prison, out of the hands of the colonial authorities. They were "to forbear to proceed any further therein," but immediately to send all under condemnation or imprisonment to England. Endicott and his fellow rulers saw that the effect of sending their Quaker prisoners to England, in the manner authorised by the mandamus, would be to furnish the king with potent witnesses against themselves. To avoid so dangerous a dilemma was therefore important. To effect this, however, but one safe course was open to them, and that was, to have no such prisoners to send; and, acting upon this conclusion, all the Friends then in the gaol were quickly liberated by the following order.

"To WILLIAM SALTER, keeper of the prison at Boston.

"You are required, by authority and order of the General Court, to release and discharge the Quakers, who at present are in your custody. See that you do not neglect this.

"By order of the Court,

"EDWARD RAWSON, *Sec.*"*

"*Boston, 9th December, 1661.*"

A day of reckoning for the despotic and illegal course which the zealots of New England had pursued, appeared now to be hastening upon them, and conscious of their guilt, they exerted themselves to avert the dreaded result of their misrule. Immediately on the liberation of Friends from Boston prison, they deemed it advisable to dispatch a special messenger to the king, to inform him of their ready compliance with his royal will; and soon after to send a deputation to England to palliate their unlicensed severities, and to watch proceedings in connexion with the business. The parties chosen for this unenviable

* Sewel, p. 274.

task were, Norton, a minister of Boston, who had been conspicuous in promoting these cruelties, and Simon Broadstreet, a persecuting magistrate. The deputies having arrived in England, proceeded to London, where, remarks Sewel, "they endeavoured to clear themselves as much as possible, but especially priest Norton, who bowed no less reverently before the archbishop, than before the king."*

During the stay of Norton and Broadstreet in London, Friends had several interviews with them, on the object of their mission. It was notorious that they had themselves been deeply concerned in the New England barbarities; Norton, however, fearing the consequence of admitting the fact, denied all participation in the extreme proceedings at Boston. This departure from truthfulness failed to protect him, for John Copeland, who had had an ear cut off, happening to be in London at the time, came forward and confronted his statement. Broadstreet, less equivocating, did not deny that he was one of the magistrates who had given his voice for the execution of Friends, and openly attempted to justify his conduct.

George Fox being present at one of these interviews, remonstrated strongly with them on their horrible proceedings, and asked them whether they would acknowledge themselves to be subject to the laws of England. Broadstreet replied, "They were subjects to the laws of England, and they had put his friends to death by the same law as the Jesuits were put to death in England."

George Fox. "Do ye believe that those Friends whom ye have put to death were Jesuits, or jesuitically inclined?"

Deputies. "No."

George Fox. "Then you have murdered them, for since ye put them to death by the law that Jesuits are put to death here, and yet confess they were no Jesuits; it plainly appears ye have put them to death in your own wills, without any law."

Broadstreet finding himself and his companion ensnared by their own words, asked, if he came "to catch them?"

George Fox. "Ye have caught yourselves, and may be justly

* Sewel, p. 279.

questioned for your lives ;” and added that if the father of William Robinson were in town, it was probable he would question them, and bring their lives into jeopardy.*

The deputies alarmed at their perilous situation, began, says George Fox, “to excuse themselves, saying ‘there was no persecution now amongst them ;’ but, the next morning we had letters from New England, giving us account that our friends were persecuted afresh. Thereupon we went to them again, and showed them our letters, which put them both to silence and to shame.”†

Norton and Broadstreet thus confronted, were perplexed and in great fear lest they should be indicted for murder. Broadstreet became particularly uneasy, because he had openly confessed himself a party to the executions, though subsequently he attempted to dispute it. Some of the old Royalists, who had no sympathy with Puritan dissent, earnestly endeavoured to prevail upon Friends to commence a prosecution ; but George Fox and his friends declined, saying, that “They left them to the Lord, to whom vengeance belongeth, and he would repay.”‡

The father of William Robinson who was not a Friend, being unwilling to let the murder of his son pass so quietly by, proceeded to London§ with a view to institute an inquiry and to interrogate the deputies respecting his death. Norton and Broadstreet, dreading the consequences of his investigation, and feeling there was no safety for their lives whilst in England, prudently determined to return home, and thus a meeting between them and Robinson was avoided.||

This mission to England was a complete failure. The colonists, indeed, were so sensible of this, that the two deputies on their return to Massachusetts, met with a cool reception. “Whether,”

* Journal of George Fox, Leeds Ed. vol. i. 549 ; and Sewel’s History, p. 280.

† Ibid, vol. i. p. 549.

‡ Sewel, p. 280.

§ By an observation in a letter written by Alexander Parker about this time, there is reason to believe that William Robinson’s father lived in Cumberland.

|| See Coddington’s Demonstration, p. 8.

remarks the historian Neal," they flattered the Court too much, or promised more for their country than they ought, is uncertain; but when Norton came home, his friends were shy of him, and some of the people told him to his face that he had laid the foundation of the ruin of their liberties; which struck him to the heart, and brought him into such a melancholy habit of body, as hastened his death."

Before we pass on to other subjects, it may be well to notice the attempts which have been made, to explain and justify the cruelties exercised by the Pilgrim Fathers to the Society of Friends in New England. The attempted vindications, from that time down to the present day, have greatly misrepresented the motives and the conduct of the early Friends in that country, and charges have been preferred against them wholly unfounded. It was natural to expect that the Puritan writers would endeavour, to the utmost, to defend the character of their brethren from the stigma which their persecuting policy had so justly fixed upon them, and thus we find Cotton Mather, the favourite historian of New England, reiterating the charges of "heresy," "blasphemy," "undermining civil government," &c., which the colonial authorities made to Charles II. "I appeal," says this partial writer, "to all the reasonable part of mankind, whether the infant colony of New England, had not cause to guard themselves against these dangerous villains."* The strictures which Edward Burrough presented to the king, on the charges in question, and to which allusion has already been made, render it unnecessary for us to expose their injustice. Mather, however, notwithstanding his extreme partiality on the subject, was conscious that his co-religionists had violated the laws of humanity and justice, a feeling which the following language plainly exhibits. "A great clamour," he observes, "hath been raised against New England, for their persecution of the Quakers; and if any man will appear in the vindication of it, let him do as he please; for my part I will not."†

* Cotton Mather's *Magnalia Christi*. Book 7. Chap. 4.

† *Ibid.* Book 7. Chap. 4.

But it is not so much to the early apologists of the New England persecutors, as to the mis-statements of their modern defenders, that we wish more particularly to direct our remarks. It was asserted a few years since in the *North American Review*, that Mary Fisher and Anne Austin were banished from Boston, for interrupting ministers in their places of worship. The same assertion was made in a discourse lately delivered in Philadelphia, on the anniversary of the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers, with the additional statement that they went naked into the place of worship. The truth, however, is, that Mary Fisher and Anne Austin, before they had set foot on American ground, were arrested in the vessel in which they came, and taken directly to Boston gaol, where they remained until banished by the colonial authorities. So far, therefore, from going at all into the public religious assemblies of the town, as has been represented, the only building which they entered in New England was the place of their incarceration. The parties who made these unfounded statements did not probably know them to be false; but charges of this grave description, asserted without proper authority against innocent persons, for the purpose of vindicating the conduct of their persecutors, betray not only a culpable ignorance of the real facts, but also too eager a disposition to excuse wrong or justify oppression at the expense of truth.

Other recent publications characterise our early sufferers in that land, as "turbulent spirits, who disturbed the worship, and outraged the decent customs of the pious pilgrims;"* as a sect "not rising up on the soil of New England and claiming simply the right of separate worship;" but as "invaders, who came from Old England, for the sole and declared purpose of disturbance and revolution;" whose principles "struck at all order and of society itself." They are represented as "outraging peace and order; openly cursing and reviling," the magistrates and ministers, and the worship of the "Fathers," and interrupting the sermon "with outcries of contradiction and cursing;" "outraging natural

* Vide *The Knickerbocker*, an American periodical of Sixth Month, 1843.

decency itself," by "one of their women preachers," going unclothed through the streets of Salem, and "in other instances coming in the same plight into the public religious assemblies."*

The authors of this language, in their admiration of the general character of the Pilgrims of Massachusetts, and their descendants, and in the desire to extenuate, if not to justify, their cruel conduct towards Friends, have not only accepted as undeniably true, the refuted aspersions of the persecutors themselves, but have so blended these with erroneous statements of their own, and with transactions of a later period, as to give their readers the impression, that the Friends who were executed at Boston, were wild ungovernable fanatics. We may well exclaim with an early writer on this subject, "What will not envy misrepresent?"†

The assertion that the Early Friends in New England were a sect "not rising up on its soil," but "coming as invaders from Old England, for the *sole* and *declared* purpose of disturbance and revolution," is as wide a departure from truth, as it is calumnious in its character. Of the four who were executed at Boston, two it is true were from Old England, another came from Barbadoes; but the fourth, Mary Dyer, was one of the early settlers in the province. Almost the first indeed, who suffered under the law of banishment on pain of death, were inhabitants of Salem, and that too for "claiming simply the right of separate worship." No one conversant with the early history of New England, can be ignorant that a large amount of the sufferings of Friends in that province, was for merely absenting themselves from the authorized worship. Neal, partial as he was, admits that "several persons and families" were entirely ruined by the excessive fines and imprisonments imposed on this account.‡ The magistrate, in his eager pursuit after the victims of his bigotry, no longer recognised the ancient principle of English law, that every man's house is his asylum and castle. The sanctuary of home was violently

* Vide *Thirteen Historical Discourses on the completion of the two hundred years, from the beginning of the first church in New Haven*, by Leonard Bacon. New Haven, printed, 1839.

† Whiting's answer to Mather, p. 78.

‡ Neale's History of New England, vol. i. p. 304.

invaded by the authorities, to drag to church the lukewarm and disaffected.* Had some of the modern writers on these excesses, sufficiently borne in mind what were the views of the Pilgrims of Massachusetts on the subject of religious toleration, they would probably have felt less anxious to darken the characters of the early Friends, in order to shew that they merited their severities. "It is said," remarked a clergyman of Ipswich in Massachusetts, in 1645, "that men ought to have liberty of conscience, and that it is persecution to debar them of it. I can rather stand amazed than reply to this. It is an astonishment, that the brains of a man should be parboiled in such impious ignorance."† President Oakes said in 1673, that he looked "upon toleration as the first born of all abominations."‡ To the prevalence of sentiments such as these, among the rulers and ecclesiastics of New England, and the practical application of them by the State, and not from any misconduct of our Friends, may be traced the cause of all their sufferings in that land; a view which we find thus ably expressed in one of the recent publications of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. "We contemplate with horror the fires of Smithfield; the dungeons and auto da fes of the Inquisition; the massacre of St. Bartholomew, and the penalties of the Star Chamber. But the un pitying and remorseless sentence of Endicott the governor, who, on one occasion, told his prisoner, 'renounce your religion or die,' and the sanguinary denunciations of the General Court, fill us with equal dismay. That they who had preached such purity of life and conduct to mankind; that they who had been exposed to the terrors of persecution and fled from it; that they, forgetful of their own precepts, and the lessons of their own sad experience, should pursue to banishment and death, almost every species of nonconformity; displays to us recesses in the human mind, which point to a dark and unexplored labyrinth in its devious and impenetrable depths."§

* Felt's Annals, p. 257.

† Ward in Belknap.

‡ Belknap's History of New Hampshire, vol. i. p. 71.

§ Vide Discourse on the Colonial History of the Eastern and some of the Southern States, vol. iv. part 2.

Much that is untrue has been written of Friends for venturing into the public places of worship in Massachusetts. They are said on these occasions, to have "thrust themselves into worshipping assemblies, and interrupted the worship or the sermon, with outcries of contradiction and cursing."* In New England, as in Old England, some of our early ministers believed it required of them to enter the public places of worship, but in no one instance do we find, as has been alleged, that they interrupted the minister in his sermon. The few occasions on which they presented themselves before the congregations in New England, they did not attempt to address the assembly until the minister had concluded; and then they were stopped, violently assailed and dragged to prison. Excepting Marmaduke Stevenson, however, the four Friends who were put to death at Boston, do not appear to have apprehended that this service was required of them; the plea, therefore, of disturbing religious assemblies does not apply in the most extreme cases of Puritan cruelty. These suffered martyrdom for the mere profession and promulgation of their religious views.

It has been adduced as evidence of the grave misconduct of the early Friends in New England, and as palliating circumstances for the severities to which they were subjected, that natural decency was outraged by two women Friends going unclothed, one into the public place of worship in a small town, and the other through the streets of Salem. On investigation, however, it will be found that these extraordinary circumstances will not avail the apologists of the Fathers. When Deborah Wilson and Lydia Wardell went partially unclothed, in the manner described, a particular explanation of which will appear in the following chapter, it was not until nine years after the commencement of the New England cruelties of Friends, and four years after the last case of martyrdom, and when the persecution had very much subsided. This is a fact which the modern defenders of the Pilgrims have omitted to state, and by the absence of which, their readers are led to believe, that it was in consequence of these and other acts of misconduct, that the

* L. Bacon's Thirteen Discourses.

rulers of Massachusetts adopted their extreme measures towards Friends.

In justification of the policy of the Pilgrim Fathers, it has been alleged that the motive which led them to emigrate to Massachusetts, was in order that they might enjoy their religion to the exclusion of all others, and that to guard it from danger, defensive laws became needful. If this was their original design, they practised a deception on the parent state. Not only had they no warrant in their charters for such conduct, but their professions before obtaining them were opposed to such intentions. The miserable plea of necessity was but a plea for the adoption of ecclesiastical tyranny; a principle which, if admitted, at once justifies the Popish atrocities of Queen Mary's reign, and the Star Chamber and High Commission Court of her Protestant successors. The Jews and Roman Pagans, because their religion was in danger, persecuted the early Christians. On the same principle, the Roman Catholic Church persecuted the Protestants, and the Protestants the Puritans. If we excuse the heartless legislation of New England on this ground, we admit the plea in defence of cruelty and despotism from time immemorial.

Again, it has been said, that the political policy of the age was one of religious intolerance. This apology, however, is not a strictly true one. The Puritans in England, and the Huguenots in France, we know, tasted the bitter fruits of a dominant hierarchy; but in Holland, religious liberty was fully recognized by the State, and, indeed, the Puritans themselves lived there in perfect freedom. The same may be said of the dominions of the enlightened Gustavus of Sweden. Lord Baltimore, in the settlement of Maryland, pursued no restrictive legislation; and Roger Williams, in the settlement of Providence, and William Coddington and his Antinomian brethren, in founding the colony of Rhode Island, also adopted an universal toleration as the basis of their system. A few years later, the same liberal policy was recognized in the colonies of New York, Carolina, the Jerseys, and Pennsylvania. The colonial policy of New England, in the unrelenting treatment of dissidents to the religion of the Fathers, and the persecuting power of the church in its connection with

the State, fearfully invaded the rights of the subject, and which, in fact, were better secured in Britain during the times of Laud, than in New England in the days of Endicott. The severities endured by the Puritans in England were "lenient and indulgent, in comparison of the sufferings which they inflicted on those they termed heretics."* "In your heart," says Isaac Pennington, "ye have mistaken and dealt more injuriously with others, than ye yourselves were ever dealt with."†

* Vide *European Settlements in America*. vol. ii. p. 144.

† *Works*, Ed. 1681, p. 223.

CHAPTER XIV.

The persecution of Friends revived in Massachusetts—The travels and sufferings of Mary Tomkins, Alice Ambrose, and Ann Coleman—Elizabeth Hooton and Joane Brocksoppe visit New England and are expelled from Boston—Letter of J. Brocksoppe to Margaret Fell—Elizabeth Hooton again visits New England—her travels and sufferings there—Some account of the life of Elizabeth Hooton—Katherine Chattam visits New England—The travels and sufferings of Joseph Nicholson, John Liddal, Jane Millard and Ann Coleman—Letter of Ann Coleman to George Fox—The sufferings and services of Thomas Newhouse—Letter of Joseph Nicholson to George Fox—Further sufferings and travels of Mary Tomkins and Alice Ambrose—Ann Richardson's gospel labours in New England—Visit of John Tysoe to Boston—Brief biographical notices—The persecution and gospel services of Edward Wharton—The sufferings of Friends of Salem and Hampton—Further sufferings of Wenlock Christison—The sufferings of Friends in New England begin to subside—Remarks on the constancy of Friends under persecution.

THE fear which had prompted the rulers at Boston to release Friends from prison on receiving the mandamus of their sovereign, and which also induced them to send Norton and Broadstreet to England, soon began to subside, when they saw that no further act followed, expressive of the king's displeasure towards them. The danger to which the colonial charter had been exposed by these zealots, and the critical situation of the lives of some of them, for abetting the executions on Boston Common, did not teach them a lasting lesson of wise forbearance, or convince them of the error of their cruel legislation. The narrow bigotry, that had already urged them to expatriate every sect that dared to dissent from their own religious opinions, was not corrected by these circumstances. It is true, that after the restoration of

the monarchy, they no longer banished settlers on account of their faith, or executed persons for professing the doctrines of Friends. Prudential motives alone dictated the policy of discontinuing these excesses. But the authorities of Massachusetts adhered with extraordinary tenacity to their exclusive system, in their zealous support of which, as our narrative will shew, they acted with great cruelty.

The first who suffered under the revival of persecution in New England in 1662, were Mary Tomkins, Alice Ambrose and Ann Coleman, three Friends from England who had come on a gospel mission to that country. We first meet with Mary Tomkins and Alice Ambrose on their way to Dover, a town on the river Piscataway in the northern part of Massachusetts, in company with Edward Wharton and George Preston of Salem. At Dover none had yet been convinced of our principles, and the four ministers took up their quarters at an inn. Soon after their arrival they were visited by many persons, who desired to know on what foundation Friends rested their faith and hope of salvation. With these inquirers they "had a good opportunity," and "some of them confessed to the truth."* The priest of Dover, being much disturbed by the preaching of the strangers among his people, accused them of "denying magistrates, ministers, the churches of Christ, and the three persons in the Trinity." These allegations were first replied to by Mary Tomkins, who after some dispute with the priest, said, "Take notice, people, this man falsely accuseth us; for godly magistrates, and the ministers of Christ, we own, and the churches of Christ we own, and that there are three that bear record in heaven, which three are the Father, Word, and Spirit, that we own." The priest then entered on a dispute with George Preston; but failing to maintain his argument, he became much excited, and "in a rage" left the company. The doctrines of the gospel were then unfolded to the people "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power;" a great and good meeting was held, and many were convinced of the truth.†

* New England Judged, p. 361.

† Ibid, p. 363.

From Dover the four Friends travelled into the province of Maine, where Major Shapley, a magistrate, who is described as "an inquiring man after truth," invited them to his house. Being desirous of promoting the cause of religion, he had for some time employed a priest to officiate at meetings which were held under his own roof, and with the same desire, he suggested that the priest and Friends should have some discussion. The priest, however, who was not so inclined, precluded an opportunity for it by going to a distant part. A meeting was soon held with the inhabitants, to whom the truth was declared. Major Shapley and his wife were convinced, and not only ceased to employ the priest, but permitted the meetings of Friends to be held in their house. The four gospel messengers after labouring in the province of Maine, where it is said, "they had very good service for the truth," proceeded to the western parts of New England.*

In the Tenth Month, 1662, Alice Ambrose and Mary Tomkins, visited in the love of the gospel, the individuals newly convinced on the Piscataway, in which service they were joined by Ann Coleman. The success that attended the gospel labours of Friends on the former visit, had greatly disconcerted the priest of Dover; and on the occasion of the visit of these three ministers, he instigated the authorities to persecute them. They were accordingly apprehended and taken before a magistrate. This functionary, as a prelude to the sentence he was about to impose, told them of the law that had been passed for whipping Friends out of the Colony. Mary Tomkins replied, "So there was a law that Daniel should not pray to his God." "Yes," rejoined the magistrate, "and Daniel suffered, and so shall you." The following warrant, drawn up by the priest, who acted as the magistrate's clerk on the occasion, was then issued.

"To the Constables of Dover, Hampton, Salisbury, Newbury, Rowley, Ipswich, Wenham, Lynn, Boston, Roxbury, Dedham, and until these vagabond Quakers are carried out of this jurisdiction.

"You and every of you are required, in the king's majesty's

* New England Judged, p. 364.

name, to take these vagabond Quakers, Ann Coleman, Mary Tomkins, and Alice Ambrose, and make them fast to the cart's tail, and driving the cart through your several towns, to whip them on their backs, not exceeding ten stripes a-piece on each of them, in each town, and so convey them from constable to constable, till they come out of this jurisdiction, as you will answer it at your peril : and this shall be your warrant.

“ Per me,

“ RICHARD WALDEN.”

“ *At Dover, dated Dec. 22nd, 1662.*”

An order thus to expose and torture three innocent women through eleven towns, extending over a distance of nearly eighty miles, under the inclemencies of a wintry season, was little, if any thing short of an order to persecute them to death. The cruel sentence was inflicted upon them at Dover, and the priest, to whom the revolting scene seems to have been attractive, “laughed,” as he watched the lacerating effects of the knotted scourge on the naked bodies of his victims. The unfeeling conduct of this ecclesiastic called forth a reproof from two of the spectators ; but the magistrates, urged on by him, ordered them both to be placed in the stocks for this manifestation of sympathy. From Dover the sufferers were conveyed to Hampton, and from thence to Salisbury, at which places the lash was severely applied. In this season of extremity, the persecuted Friends were remarkably sustained by the Divine Arm, and the comforting presence of their Lord was so abundantly vouchsafed, “that they sang in the midst of their sufferings, to the astonishment of their enemies.”*

The condition of the prisoners as they passed through Salisbury, fastened with ropes to the cart's tail with their “torn bodies and weary steps,” excited the commiseration of the spectators ; and one of the inhabitants, after persuading the constable to pass the prisoners and the warrant into his hands as deputy, immediately gave them their liberty. The three Friends, being still impressed with the belief that it was required of them to return to Dover and its

* New England Judged, p. 367.

vicinity, on leaving Salisbury proceeded to the hospitable residence of their friend Major Shapley. Near his house they had a meeting, to which the minister of the place came. At the conclusion, hoping to confound the Friends before the people, he stood up and said, "Good women, ye have spoken well, and prayed well; pray what is your rule." "The Spirit of God," they replied, "is our rule, and it ought to be thine, and all men's to walk by."* Except that he denied the Spirit to be his guide, the priest, it appears, was not inclined to proceed further in the discussion.

Leaving Maine, the three gospel labourers returned to Dover. On the First-day of the week they assembled with their friends of this place for the solemn duty of worship, during which two constables entered; and whilst Alice Ambrose was engaged in prayer, they violently seized her, and in the most inhuman manner, dragged her through deep snow and over "stumps and trees for the distance of one mile."† Mary Tomkins was also taken and subjected to the same barbarous treatment. On the following morning, the constables, at the instigation of a "ruling Elder," informed the two Friends and Ann Coleman, that they should take them to the mouth of the harbour, where they should "put them in and so do with them that they should no more be troubled with them."‡ Their lives being thus atrociously threatened, the Friends objected to go to the harbour; the constables, however, impetuous in their wicked work, immediately seized Mary Tomkins, and dragged her on her back with such violence over the snow and stumps of trees, that she frequently fainted. Alice Ambrose shared no better; having been brought to the river, she was forcibly immersed to the imminent peril of her life. Ann Coleman was also unmercifully treated, so as greatly to endanger her life. The constables, whilst thus pursuing their abominable work, and encouraged it would appear by the approving presence of the Puritan "Elder," were providentially stopped from persisting in their wicked career, by the sudden rising of a "great tempest," which drove them to seek

* Sewel, p. 325.

† New England Jugged, p. 371.

‡ Ibid, p. 371.

refuge in the house where their victims had been placed on the previous night. The three Friends were also taken back to the house, and at midnight, thrust forth to find such shelter as the woods might afford during the rigours of a wintry season. The preservation indeed, of the lives of these devoted women under such accumulated sufferings, must be attributed to a higher power than that of man.

Continuing their gospel labours in the northern parts of Massachusetts, Mary Tomkins and Alice Ambrose felt called, on a First-day, to go to the public place of worship at Hampton; at the instance of the minister, however, they were not allowed to remain; but they, nevertheless, found an opportunity to "declare the truth among the people." The enunciation of views differing from those of the ruling church "much tormented," some of the strict and formal professors of this town, more particularly a persecuting magistrate, who caused Mary Tomkins to be beaten, and Alice Ambrose to be placed in the stocks. Feeling that they had accomplished the service required of them in New England, the two Friends left it, and proceeded on a visit to other parts of America.

It has been already noticed that in the summer of 1661, Elizabeth Hooton and Joane Brocksoppe, two ministers from England, were prisoners at Boston, and that on their liberation they were forthwith driven from the colony into the wilderness; through which, "amidst many dangers," they travelled until they arrived at Rhode Island. From this colony they went on a visit to the West Indies; but believing that it was required of them to revisit New England, and testify against the spirit of persecution, they soon after returned to Boston. The authorities, however, being bent on their expulsion, caused them to be arrested and conveyed back to the ship in which they came. In this they returned to Virginia, and soon after to their native land.*

* The following letter, written by Joane Brocksoppe to Margaret Fell, after her first banishment from Boston, is still preserved among the Swarthmore MSS. Joane Brocksoppe was from Derbyshire in England.

" Barbadoes, this 9th of the Sixth Month, 1661.

" M. F.,

" Dear in the unchangeable love and life of my heavenly Father, do I

Elizabeth Hooton had not been long at home, before the duty of returning to New England, more particularly to Massachusetts, revived with increased weight and clearness. In making a third attempt to visit this persecuting colony, she deemed it advisable, in order to prevent banishment, to obtain if possible, a license from the king to settle in any of the colonies of Britain, and "to buy a house for herself to live in, Friends to meet in, and ground to bury their dead in."* She was in very sufficient circumstances, and the king, on being informed of her repeated expulsions from Massachusetts, readily granted the license. Thus authorized, she set sail in a ship bound for Boston, accompanied by her daughter Elizabeth. The captain of the vessel was not ignorant that those who should land Friends in that colony were liable to a heavy fine; but as his passenger was fortified with a royal permission, he felt secure against such an imposition. On their arrival at Boston, the authorities attempted to enforce a fine

dearly salute thee, who, in his everlasting love, hath called me to bear his testimony for his Name's sake, in which love and life I embrace thee, and have oft been refreshed in the remembrance of thee. Dear heart pray for me, that I may be kept in it for evermore; and as thou hast freedom and opportunity, remember my love to George Fox and R. W.; and my dear love is to all thy children, who am one of the least.

"Dear heart, I shall not make mention much of passages, because I expect other Friends have given large information; only this, by order of the Court at Boston, I and twenty-seven more Friends were set out of prison and driven out from constable to constable, till we were out of their jurisdiction. I am not yet clear of that country, but do expect to return thither again in some short time. I came at land here on this island, about a week since, where I found dear A. C. [Ann Cleaton] with Josiah Cole, whose dear love is remembered to thee. Several other Friends I found here also, by whom I was much refreshed, so fare thee well.

"Thy dear,

Joan Brostoff

"Elizabeth Hooton my companion dearly salutes thee."

* New England Jugged, p. 411.

of one hundred pounds upon the captain, and they were only deterred from seizing his goods for the amount by the license in question.

Desirous of speedily accomplishing the object for which she came, Elizabeth Hooton made efforts to obtain a dwelling for herself and for the entertainment of her friends. The rulers, who had hitherto expelled every English Quaker preacher that had ventured within their limits, resolved that Elizabeth Hooton should not settle amongst them ; and, in contempt of the royal order, peremptorily refused to recognise her right to purchase land in the territory. After repeated but ineffectual solicitations to the authorities at Boston on this subject, she proceeded on her gospel mission to the northern parts of Massachusetts, in the course of which she was subjected to much cruel suffering. At Hampton she was imprisoned for testifying against the rapacity of a priest in seizing the goods of a Friend. At Dover, during very cold weather, she was placed in the stocks, and imprisoned for four days. Passing through Cambridge on her return, she felt called to exhort the inhabitants to repentance, an act of dedication for which she suffered still greater severities. At the instance of the magistracy, she was arrested, and for two days and two nights confined in a "noisome dungeon," without food, and without any thing to lie down or even to sit upon. It may be difficult to estimate the actual amount of physical hardship endured by one under such painful circumstances, but it will be readily imagined, that with the damp floor of a pestilential dungeon as the only resting-place of an aged female for forty-eight hours, in cold weather and without sustenance, her sufferings must have been exceedingly great. Whilst in this distressed condition, a Friend, touched with sympathy for her, brought her a little milk ; but for this act of Christian kindness, the authorities of Cambridge arbitrarily fined him five pounds, and committed him to prison. On the third day of her imprisonment, Elizabeth Hooton being brought before the Court, was sentenced to be whipped through three towns and expelled the colony. The sentence was executed with great rigour ; at Cambridge she was tied to the whipping-post, and received ten lashes ; at Watertown

she was beaten with ten strokes from willow rods ; and at Dedham ten lashes more “ laid on with exceeding cruelty at a cart’s tail.” Miserably torn and bruised by these severities, the aged sufferer was now placed on horseback and carried into the wilderness, where she was left towards night in a defenceless condition to the inclemencies of winter. According to all human probability, her life would be sacrificed under such aggravated circumstances, and this, it seems, her inhuman persecutors had in view ; they hoped as they said, on leaving her in the forest wild, never to see her more. Their wicked design was, however, frustrated. She was remarkably cared for by her divine Master, and through “ dismal deserts,” and “ deep waters,” she was favoured at length to reach the town of Rehoboth, from whence she proceeded to her friends on Rhode Island, praising and magnifying Him who had so signally supported her under these grievous cruelties, and who had counted her worthy to suffer for his great Name.

Elizabeth Hooton, on her banishment from Cambridge, had not been permitted to take away her clothes and some other articles ; after staying, therefore, on Rhode Island, until she was “ refreshed,” she returned, in company with her daughter, to claim her property. Having obtained her object, and being on the way back to Rhode Island, with her daughter, and with Sarah Coleman an aged Friend of Scituate who happened to meet them in the woods, she was arrested and taken again to Cambridge, where they were all three immediately imprisoned. The authorities, in unison with their previous conduct, ordered the prisoners to be whipped in three towns, and to be sent out of their jurisdiction ; on the following morning, therefore, they received the usual number of ten stripes at Cambridge, and the same number in each of two other towns lying in the direction of Rhode Island.

Notwithstanding the cruelties to which Elizabeth Hooton had thus been repeatedly exposed, for entering Massachusetts, when she believed it was required of her by her Divine Master, she did not hesitate again to visit that colony. Before the close of the year in which she had been twice so cruelly expelled from its limits, she proceeded a third time to Boston, to preach, as it is

expressed, "repentance to the people;" but her message was received with scorn, and her warnings were unheeded. Here, as at Cambridge, she was committed to prison, and received the usual sentence of "vagabond Quakers." Pursuant to the cruel order, she suffered at the whipping-post in Boston, and at the cart's tail in the towns of Roxbury and Dedham, and was afterwards during the night, in her lacerated state, carried into the wilderness; she was however, enabled, though with great difficulty, to reach Rhode Island on the following day. Soon again she was impressed with the belief that it was required of her to return to Boston, and without "conferring with flesh and blood" this persecuted minister of Christ was faithful to the divine call. This act of dedication, however, was again followed with severe suffering. She was whipped from the prison in Boston, "to the end of the town," and afterwards in other towns and out of the jurisdiction; the threat being added, that "if ever she came thither again, they would either put her to death, or brand her on the shoulder."*

It does not appear how long Elizabeth Hooton remained in New England on the occasion of this visit; the grievous sufferings, however, to which she had been subjected, did not cause her to shrink from again visiting that land, when religious duty called her. At the time of Endicott's death, in the First Month, 1665, we find her again at Boston; and as she was imprisoned for attending the funeral of this notorious bigot, the probability is that she attempted to exhort the company against persecution, and to call their attention to the judgment of the Most High upon the deceased, as evinced in the miserable condition in which he died.† Twice afterwards she was imprisoned at Boston, once

* Besse, vol. ii. p. 231.

† "He was visited," says Besse, "with a filthy and loathsome disease, so that he stunk alive, and died with rotteness." It is a remarkable fact that many of those who were foremost in the persecution of Friends in New England, were either suddenly cut off, or ended their days miserably. Bellingham died distracted—Adderton, it has already been stated was thrown from his horse and died instantly—Norton, minister of Boston died suddenly, his last words being "the hand" or "judg-

at Braintree, and once at Salem ; at the latter place her horse was also taken away, which obliged her, in order to get to Rhode Island, to travel seventy miles on foot. Through all her trials and afflictions in this country, she was greatly comforted with the presence of her Saviour, in the precious enjoyment of which, she felt willing to endure much more for his sake, and for that of her fellow-creatures. "Yea," she observed, "the love that I bear to the souls of men, makes me willing to undergo whatsoever can be inflicted on me."*

ELIZABETH HOOTON.

As we shall not have occasion, in this division of the work, to refer again to Elizabeth Hooton, and as some brief sketch of her life will be expected, it may be suitably given in this place. She was born, it appears, at Nottingham, about the year 1600. Respecting her early life, but very few particulars can be collected. She was married to Samuel Hooton, of Skegby, in Nottinghamshire, who occupied a respectable position in society.

In 1647, she formed one of a company of serious persons, who occasionally met together ; and at this date George Fox mentions her as being "a very tender woman."† For three years subsequently, little is known of her life ; "the meetings and discourses," however, that she had with George Fox, appear to have

ment of the Lord is upon me."—Danfort, Captain of the Castle, was struck dead by lightning.—Webb, who led Mary Dyer to execution, was drowned.—Captain Johnson who led William Leddra to execution, became insane.—Dalton, a persecutor of Hampton, was killed by the falling of a tree—Marshall Brown of Ipswich, another persecutor, died "in great horror of mind."—Norris, minister of Salem, whilst vindicating in his pulpit the cruelties towards Friends, was struck dumb, and died soon after. "Many other particular persons," says Besse, "who had been noted instruments in carrying on the work of persecution, were afterwards observed to fall under several calamitous disasters and casualties, which were esteemed by those who knew them as tokens of the Divine displeasure manifested against them, by reason of the particular share of guilt which their personal concern in shedding innocent blood had brought upon them."—*Besse's Sufferings*, vol. ii. p. 270.

* New England Judged, p. 420. † G. Fox's Journal. vol. i. p. 90.

been the means of convincing her of the spiritual views of Friends. Sewel says that in 1650, "from a true experience of the Lord's work in man, she felt herself moved publicly to preach the way of salvation to others."* George Fox had hitherto been the only one who publicly preached our doctrines; she was, therefore, not only the first of her sex, but the second individual who appeared in this character in our religious Society. The preaching of women at this period was not considered singular. Several were known to be thus engaged among the various religious sects then in England. Elizabeth Hooton had not long followed her Lord in this high vocation, before her sincerity and faithfulness were tested by persecution. In 1651, she was imprisoned at Derby for reproving a priest; in the following year, while travelling in Yorkshire, she was apprehended at Rotherham for addressing the congregation at the close of public worship, and taken to York Castle, where, with her friend Mary Fisher, she was confined for sixteen months. In 1654, whilst on a gospel mission in Lincolnshire, she was imprisoned for five months at Beckingham, "for declaring the truth in the place of public worship." In the following year, she suffered three months imprisonment in the same county, "for exhorting the people to repentance." In the course of her early travels in the work of the ministry, she was also subjected to other kinds of suffering.

The extreme cruelties to which Friends in New England had been exposed, excited deep sympathy among their fellow-members at home: in this feeling, Elizabeth Hooton largely participated; and, though conscious that suffering was almost sure to await her, she left her home in 1661, under an apprehension of a religious call to this persecuting province. This transatlantic visit, and another which quickly followed it, occupied her for several years.

As a gospel minister, she appears to have stood high in the estimation of her friends; and although far advanced in age, when George Fox visited the West India islands and America in 1671, she was among those who accompanied him in this

* Sewel's History, p. 35.

capacity. They proceeded first to Barbadoes ; and after labouring there in word and doctrine, they sailed for Jamaica, where they arrived in the Eleventh Month. About a week after they landed on this island, Elizabeth Hooton was suddenly taken ill, and on the following day she died, being then about seventy years of age, having been a minister twenty-one years. In allusion to her death, George Fox makes this brief remark :— “ She departed in peace, like a lamb, bearing testimony to truth at her departure.”* Her call from time to eternity was sudden ; but, like the wise virgins in the parable, she was prepared, when the midnight cry was heard, to meet the Bridegroom at his coming, with her lamp trimmed and her light burning ; and is now, without doubt, participating in the full fruition of everlasting joy.

Annexed is a fac-simile of her signature :

Elizabeth Hooton

Another of those who, in 1661, were driven from Boston into the wilds of New England, was Katherine Chattam, of London. Soon after her arrival at Boston, she submitted, under a deep sense of religious duty, to the humiliating exposure of going among the people clothed in sackcloth, as a sign of the indignation of the Lord against the highly professing and cruel oppressors of that place. An imprisonment in the city gaol followed this act of dedication ; and at the time of her banishment, referred to in a previous chapter, she was also cruelly whipped at Dedham. These sufferings, however, did not deter her from again visiting Massachusetts ; and in the following year she proceeded a second time to Boston, to plead with its intolerant rulers. On this occasion, she was again arrested and imprisoned “ for a long time ; her life being greatly endangered by the hardships to which she was subjected during the winter season. She was afterwards married to John Chamberlain, a Friend of Boston, who has already been mentioned as a sufferer for the truth, and thus she became a settled inhabitant of that persecuting city.

* G. Fox's Journal, vol. ii. p. 154.

Some of the travels and sufferings of Ann Coleman in New England, during the year 1662, have already been noticed. Early in the following year, she was engaged in the work of her divine Master, on Rhode Island, together with Joseph Nicholson, John Liddal, and Jane Millard, all of whom had recently come from England. In the summer of 1663, they believed it required of them to go on a gospel mission to the northern and eastern parts of New England. Passing northward, they visited Salem, where, at the instance of Hathorn, a persecuting magistrate, they were arrested; and, together with Thomas Newhouse, another gospel messenger to those parts, sentenced to be whipped as vagabonds in three towns, and expelled from the jurisdiction. The sentence was executed with such severity, and the thongs of the whip so lacerated the body of Ann Coleman, that for some time it was feared she would not survive the barbarous treatment.*

* A short time previous to her leaving Rhode Island on this visit, Ann Coleman addressed the following letter to George Fox:—

ANN COLEMAN TO GEORGE FOX.

“DEAR GEORGE FOX,

“Dear friend, the love of the Lord constraineth me to write to thee; Oh, the love of the Lord, who hath kept his handmaid that put her trust in Him. Dear George, if I should write all the cruelty that hath been acted to me, it would be much; five times I have been a prisoner; in their towns I have been whipped, beside stonings, and kickings, and stockings; but oh the power of the Lord which hath supported me. Dear George, good is the Lord, whose presence is with me; for this I can truly say, my life is over the enemies who rise up against the lambs of my Father's fold, who taketh them in His arms: Oh what shall I say unto thee of the love of my Father. And now I have seen the travail of my soul, and dwell in peace, and none can make me afraid: glory, glory unto the Lord saith my soul. Much service for the Lord in this land, and it hath not been in vain, and so my dear friend, let thy prayers be unto the Lord for me. Dear Jane Millard is in New England; Friends are much refreshed in her, and we both are bound in spirit to the East of New England, where there is a people newly raised; much service for the Lord I have had amongst them; it is in my heart to visit them. Jane Millard's dear love is to thee. Joseph Nicholson and John Liddal are at Rhode Island, where we have had some meetings

Subsequently these Friends proceeded to Dover. Here Joseph Nicholson was exposed to some cruel abuse, whilst his four companions were imprisoned for two weeks. They next journeyed to Hampton, where they were violently assaulted. Whilst at a meeting with their friends, "the constables with a rude company," actually destroyed a part of the building in which they were met, and then took them to prison.

Thomas Newhouse, on leaving this part of Massachusetts, went southward. At Boston, he attended the public place of worship, and on attempting to address the assembly, he was immediately taken before the magistrates, who sentenced him to be whipped there, at Roxbury and at Dedham, and then to be carried into the wilderness. Not feeling at liberty to leave this colony, after the infliction of this severity, he proceeded to Medfield, which at that time was one of the most inland towns of the province. He entered this place on a First-day, and finding it difficult to obtain a meeting with the inhabitants, he endeavoured to address them on their coming out of their meeting-house. In this attempt he received from some of the company "several sore blows;" he was also placed in the stocks at Medfield, and on the following day was whipped both there and at Dedham, and again driven into the wilds of the interior. While confined in the stocks, the interest excited caused the people to visit him, and he had, he observes, "good service for the Lord."*

The four other Friends, soon after their visit to Massachusetts, left New England for Barbadoes, from which place Joseph Nicholson addressed the following letter to George Fox, "The young man," who he says, "came with him from England," was doubtless

which have much refreshed us. Elizabeth Hooton is here, and their dear love is to thee. It is pretty well with Friends here. Dear friend, in that life and love that is unchangeable art thou near me. I cannot but say again, pray for me. I should be much refreshed to hear from thee, and so I rest thy dear friend and sister in the truth.

"ANN COLEMAN."

"*Rhode Island, this 6th day of the
Fifth Month, 1663.*"

* New England Judged, p. 471.

John Liddal, and the "little maid that came out of Kent," was Ann Coleman :—

JOSEPH NICHOLSON TO GEORGE FOX.

" Barbadoes, the 10th day of the last Month, 1663.

" G. F.,

" Dearly and well-beloved in the Lord, my love is to thee. I should be glad to hear from thee if it might be. I received a letter from thee in New England, written to Christopher Holder and me, wherein I was refreshed. I wrote to thee from Virginia about the last First Month, and since then I have been in New England about eight months. I passed through most parts of the English inhabitants, and also the Dutch. I sounded the mighty day of the Lord which is coming upon them, through most towns, and also was at many of their public worship houses. I was prisoner one night amongst the Dutch, at New Amsterdam ; I have been prisoner several times at Boston, but it was not long, but [I was] whipt away. I have received eighty stripes at Boston, and some other of the towns ; their cruelty was very great towards me, and others ; but over all we were carried with courage and boldness ; thanks be to God ! We gave our backs to the smiter, and walked after the cart with boldness, and were glad in our hearts in their greatest rage. Here is a young man that came with me from England ; he hath been with me for the most part ; since which we have had several meetings where never any were before, and many people were made to confess to the truth ; but the wicked rulers still keep the people much under by their cruelty. We had good service up and down amongst them while we stayed. I came to this island about twenty days ago from Rhode Island, and the young man with me ; and Jane Millard, and a little maid that came out of Kent, came with us ; they also suffered in New England, and did very good service indeed. The little maid hath thoughts to go to Nevis ; their dear love is to thee, and the young man's also. The power of God hath accompanied us all along ; to His name be the praise for evermore, who hath kept us faithful in all our trials. We hope thou will not forget us, and so I rest thy friend."

Joseph Nicholson

It has been stated that Mary Tomkins and Alice Ambrose on leaving New England in 1662, proceeded on a visit to Maryland and Virginia. Early in 1664, they both returned to Boston, when Mary Tomkins was taken so dangerously ill, that it was doubtful whether she would survive the attack. Her illness having become known to Friends of Salem, Edward Wharton and Wenlock Christison went to see her. While the sick stranger was lying in this critical state, two constables, who had watched the Salem Friends to her lodgings, entered the house, and in a most brutal manner took her and her companions before Endicott. The shock was so great to the invalid, that on her way to the house of the governor, she fell down in an apparently lifeless condition ; but so hardened had the constables become in pursuing the reckless work of persecution, that instead of conveying Mary Tomkins to her lodgings, they waited until she had a little revived, and then hurried her before the Court. Endicott evinced, on this occasion, that his malice towards Friends had in no degree abated ; and he actually sentenced the almost dying Friend and her companions, to be whipped in three towns and banished. The sentence, however, was regarded as such an outrage on humanity, and so great a fear was entertained that the sick woman would not survive its infliction, that at the intercession of Colonel Temple, it was not enforced, except on Edward Wharton.

Another gospel labourer who visited New England about this period was Ann Richardson, formerly Ann Burden, who had been banished from Boston with Mary Dyer in 1657. In the Tenth Month, 1663, we find her addressing George Fox from "Kittery Eastward in New England."* Subsequently she appears to have laboured in Maine and the northern parts of Massachusetts for several months, and for a time, to have been joined in her religious service by Elizabeth Hooton and Jane Nicholson. Early in 1665, she was engaged on Rhode Island.

John Tysoe, a tradesman of London, prepared soon after to leave his home on a gospel errand to Massachusetts. He arrived in Boston harbour early in 1667. Bellingham, who had succeeded Endicott as governor, hearing that a Quaker preacher had

* Swarthmore, MSS., vol. iii.

arrived from England, forthwith dispatched a constable to arrest him, and before John Tysoe had an opportunity of landing, he was seized and brought before the authorities. The governor, after venting his displeasure, questioned him as to his object in coming, and the intended duration of his visit. John Tysoe replied, that he "did not know how long he should stay, or whither he should go;" but that he "stood in the will of the Lord." After some conversation, introduced by Bellingham, on the subject of freedom from sin, which was disputed by Mather, a priest of Boston, but sustained by John Tysoe, they committed him to prison, and also fined the captain of the ship in which he came £100, unless he removed his passenger from their jurisdiction on "the first opportunity." In the Fourth Month, 1667, whilst in Boston prison, he wrote a remonstrance to the governor on their persecuting conduct. The address was couched in language of much Christian boldness. "Oh ye wretched men," he says, "God will plead with you! Was ever the flock of Christ Jesus found in your practices? Did ever the lambs kill wolves?" Alluding to their restrictive laws, he says, "and it seems in prison I must lie, till by your law I am forced to another land; but unto your cruel laws herein I dare not bow; for I may come again to this town, and honest men, who fear the Lord, may live here when your laws are vanished as smoke. In vain do ye strive, ye mortal men, the fruit of your doings will fall on your own heads, a weight too heavy for you to bear."* How long John Tysoe's imprisonment lasted does not appear. At this period he was in the 42nd year of his age. He died in 1700, aged 74, having been a minister for more than forty years. He suffered many imprisonments for his religion, one of these lasted nearly three years, and he was one of the Friends who, under sentence of banishment, were placed on board the vessel at Gravesend, in 1665, for transportation to Jamaica.

Respecting the lives of several of the gospel ministers mentioned in this chapter, but little information has been obtained. MARY TOMKINS and ALICE AMBROSE, before they crossed the Atlantic, appear to have been companions in the work of the ministry. It is recorded that in 1660 they were both imprisoned

* A Glass for the People of New England, by S. G., p. 35, 39.

at Lancaster for reproving a priest. JOHN LIDDAL, it is believed, was of Cumberland. Whilst travelling in Lancashire, in 1665, he was much abused on account of his religious profession. JOANE BROCKSOPPE, was the wife of Thomas Brocksoppe, of Little Normanton, in Derbyshire; she died in 1680. ANN COLEMAN, soon after her visit to New England, went on a visit to Bermuda, where, writes George Fox, "she died in the truth." Of JANE MILLARD, KATHERINE CHATTAM, and JOHN BURSTOW, we have no particulars further than what have been related in the previous pages. PETER PEARSON was of Greysouthen, in Cumberland; his death is recorded to have taken place in 1713. MARY MALLINS was of Bandon Bridge, in Ireland, and in 1656, she was imprisoned for preaching in the steeple house at that place. GEORGE PRESTON appears to have been a resident of York, where in 1659 he was much abused by the soldiery whilst attempting to enter a meeting of Friends, and in the following year he was committed to Ousebridge prison in that city for refusing to swear. His decease took place in 1666, and he was interred in Friends' burial-ground at York. JOSEPH NICHOLSON was of Cumberland. He professed with Friends as early as 1653, in which year George Fox, whilst on a visit to that county, was entertained at his house. From this period, to the time of his first visit to New England in 1659, no incidents of his religious course have been met with. In 1660 he returned to England, but in 1663 he proceeded on a second gospel mission to America, which occupied him for several years. After his return from this visit, he removed to Settle, in Yorkshire, and as late as 1704 we find him a member of that meeting. No record of his death has been found; he must, however, at this period have been considerably advanced in years. JANE NICHOLSON, his wife, died at Settle, in 1712.

Having thus far noticed the travels and sufferings of Friends from Great Britain, we now proceed to relate some further hardships, which were endured by those who were residents in New England. Edward Wharton, after receiving the sentence of banishment at Boston, in 1661, returned quietly to his home at Salem, from whence he addressed the rulers at Boston, informing them of his continuance in the colony, and remonstrating with

them for their wickedness in attempting his exile.* In the following year he travelled on a gospel mission with George Preston, Mary Tomkins, and Alice Ambrose, to Dover and the province of Maine, some particulars of which have been given in the early part of this chapter. From this locality Edward Wharton proceeded to Rhode Island. How long he remained within the limits of this colony does not appear, but on leaving it he went to the adjacent town of Taunton. No Friends resided in this place, and he took up his quarters at an inn. The puritan minister having heard of his arrival, and fearing lest his hearers should imbibe the "Quaker heresy," evinced no little anxiety for the departure of Edward Wharton, and a deacon was immediately sent to him to request it. "Friend," said Edward Wharton, "what hast thou to lay to my charge? Whose ox have I stolen? or whose ass have I taken away? or whom have I wronged? And as for my being in town, I purpose to stay here until I have accomplished my business wherefore I came." The message being unheeded, a constable was next sent, with the threat that unless it was attended to he should be whipped out of the colony, in conformity with their law. "As for thy law," replied Edward Wharton, "thou mayst execute it if thou wilt, but thou hadst best take heed what thou dost; for the king hath lately sent over to the rulers in New England a charge that they inflict no more sufferings upon such as I am."† When the constable came to Edward Wharton he was "engaged" with the people, but his answer having quieted the official, he was left to proceed without interruption.

Leaving Taunton, Edward Wharton felt a religious call to visit the settlers in the most northern parts of New England, whom some self-righteous professors regarded as "outcasts" from church and state. Having passed through several towns and "escaped the danger of being apprehended," he reached Saco in the district of Maine. The people received him kindly, and he proceeded on the coast as far north as Casco Bay. The "outcasts" of this region were not insensible to the touches of Divine love, and they heard the ministry of the exiled Friend "with gladness." There

* New England Judged, p. 342.

† Ibid, 395.

were "tender people" among them, who wept at parting when they understood that, at the risk of his life, Edward Wharton intended to return to Boston. Turning southward, he visited the settlers at Black Point, and on Cape Porpoise, and at Wells; from thence proceeding by way of the river Piscattaway, Greenland, and Hampton, to his home at Salem.

In 1663 or soon after, he was engaged in gospel service with some English Friends in the vicinity of Newbury. In the Fifth Month he again visited Piscattaway, and on hearing of the cruel treatment which some of his friends had received from the magistrates at Dover, he was "pressed in spirit" to go and remonstrate with them. His language to these authorities was that of warning; it was however not only unheeded but even resented. They immediately had him placed in the stocks, and issued a warrant to scourge him in the three towns of Dover, Hampton, and Newbury.

As usual, the sentence was executed with much severity; but under it, Edward Wharton was preserved in patience and resignation, and rejoiced "that he was counted worthy to suffer for righteousness sake." Soon after being thus forcibly brought to Salem, he was again subjected to the cruelties of the lash, for "testifying" against the barbarous usage which some Friends of that town had received. Early in 1664 he went to Rhode Island on secular business, and, whilst there, met with George Preston, and with Wenlock Christison his fellow-townsmen, who had just returned from a gospel visit to Virginia. These Friends believed it required of them to proceed to Boston, a service in which Edward Wharton felt it right to join. On reaching this place, they held a meeting with their brethren, "wherein," says G. Bishop, "their hearts were made glad by the living power and presence of God,—and their souls rejoiced in His salvation." The intolerant Rawson, on hearing of their arrival and of the meeting referred to, proceeded thither. At the time he entered, Edward Wharton was preaching, and many of the citizens, anxious to hear him, had collected about the house. Rawson was much disturbed on witnessing the assemblage, and was not sparing in his threats and epithets of anger to those who com-

posed it. With a view to suppress these meetings, he immediately issued the following order:—

“ TO THE CONSTABLE OF BOSTON.

“ You are hereby required, in his Majesty’s name, forthwith to repair to Edward Wanton’s house, where a stranger, and a Quaker, with several others there, the said stranger publicly amongst many, endeavouring to seduce his Majesty’s good subjects and people to his cursed opinions, by his preaching amongst them: you are to carry the said strangers before the honoured Governor, to be proceeded with as the law directs, and return the names of such as are their hearers.

“ EDWARD RAWSON, *Commissioner.*”

Dated at Boston, the 4th of May, 1664.

The “stranger” referred to in the warrant was Edward Wharton, who was soon apprehended and sentenced to the degrading severity of the lash, as a vagabond, through Boston and Lynn, and then to be taken to his home at Salem. The authorities of Boston were evidently very anxious to prevent Edward Wharton from visiting their city, and hoping to effect their object by a show of lenity, they told him that, “if he would promise the governor to come no more to the Quaker’s meeting at Boston,” they would forego the execution of the sentence and liberate him. But these persecuting zealots had mistaken the character of their prisoner; “Not for all the world,” was his unflinching reply; “I have a back to lend to the smiter, and I have felt your cruel whippings, and the Lord hath made me able to bear them, and as I abide in his fear, I need not fear what you shall be suffered to do unto me.” “But surely,” he continued, “The Lord will visit you for the blood of the innocent, and your day is coming, as it is coming upon many, who but as yesterday were higher in power than ever you were, or are likely to be, but now are made the lowest of many, and truly my soul laments for you.”* In pur-

* New England Judged, p. 438.

suance of the cruel order, on the day following he was whipped through Boston for nearly a mile, and passed on to Lynn. At this place, the constable, who knew that the prisoner was an inhabitant of Salem, and that the order was, therefore, an illegal one, refused to recognise it, and set him at liberty. At the conclusion of his punishment at Boston, his persecutors told him, that every time he entered their city, he should be subjected to a similar treatment. The threat, however, was unavailing; Edward Wharton with his wonted courage replied, "I think I shall be here again to-morrow;" an intimation which was realised. He knew that the rulers, in treating him as a vagabond, had acted illegally; and with Christian boldness he determined to assert his rights. His undaunted conduct proved more than a match for the intention of his persecutors; and when, on this occasion, he appeared openly before them, they hesitated to commit him. Observing this, Edward Wharton asked them, "How it could be that he should be a vagrant yesterday and not to-day." His Christian firmness had been blessed with success, and in peace he returned to his home at Salem. In the course of the following year he again visited Boston, where he met with several English Friends. An order for their arrest was quickly issued, and Edward Wharton, for the alleged offence of standing in the Court with his hat on, whilst Bellingham was at prayer, was sentenced to receive fifteen lashes, and to be imprisoned for one month.*

Among the sufferings of Friends of New England, the case of Eliakim and Lydia Wardel, of Hampton, deserves particular notice. On one occasion, Eliakim Wardel had a horse worth fourteen pounds taken from him, for merely receiving the banished Wenlock Christison into his house. He was also frequently fined for absenting himself from the Puritan worship; and to satisfy these unjust demands, nearly the whole of his property was carried off. The case of Lydia, his wife, was a very peculiar one. Having become convinced of the principles of Friends, and consequently ceasing to attend the Puritan worship, she was several times requested to attend the congrega-

* New England Judged, p. 461.

gation, and give a reason for the change of her opinion and practice. She at last went, but under circumstances which were extraordinary and humiliating. She had been deeply impressed with the want of true religion among many of the high professors and rulers of New England, and with their unblushing violation of the plainest doctrines of Christ in the persecution of Friends; but more especially with the immodest and revolting manner in which females had been publicly stripped and scourged. Although stated to have been a "chaste and tender woman," and of "exemplary modesty," she believed it required of her to appear similarly unclothed* in the congregation at Newbury, as a token of the miserable state of their spiritual condition, and as a testimony against the frequent practice of publicly whipping females in the manner referred to. It was to be expected that the appearance of Lydia Wardel under such circumstances, would be resented by those for whom the sign was intended. She was immediately arrested, and hurried before the authorities of the neighbouring town of Ipswich, where she was barbarously scourged; her husband was also severely whipped for countenancing this apprehended act of duty on the part of his wife. The transaction appears to have taken place in the year 1665.†

About the same time, Deborah Wilson, who is described as "a young woman of a very modest and retired life, and sober conversation,"‡ under an impression of religious duty, went in a similar state through the streets of Salem, as a sign against the "cruelty and immodesty" of the authorities, "in stripping and whipping" females. The punishment to which Lydia Wardel had been exposed was soon inflicted on Deborah Wilson.

The sufferings of Friends of Hampton and Salem, for absenting themselves from the Puritan worship, were very severe about this time. John Hussey and his wife, of Hampton, were grievously plundered of their property for fines on this account.

* Vide "A New-England Fire-brand Quenched," by G. Fox and J. Burnycat, p. 224.

† Besse's Sufferings, vol. ii. p. 235.

‡ New England Judged, p. 583.

John Small, of Salem, had his best yoke of oxen taken from him during the ploughing season, when he most required them. Samuel Shattock was fined five pounds. John Kitching had his horse taken from him under circumstances which were peculiarly aggravating. Philip Verrin, for expressing his abhorrence of the martyrdom of his friends at Boston, underwent a cruel scourging. Several other Friends in the colony of Massachusetts, also received great severity from the hands of its persecuting zealots.

Wenlock Christison, of Salem, before spoken of, was still a sufferer for the cause of truth about this period. On visiting Boston in the early part of 1664, he was apprehended, with some other Friends, and brought before the Court. Bellingham, who then presided, told him that he should be whipped under their law against vagabonds. After proving to the Court that he was not a vagabond, he said to them—"At this bar, time was, that sentence of death was passed upon me; yet, by the help of God, I continue unto this day, standing over the heads of you all, bearing a faithful witness for the truth of the living God. Some of your associates are gone, and the Lord hath laid their glory in the dust, and yours is a fading flower."* He was soon committed to prison, and on the following day was sentenced to be whipped with ten stripes in each of the towns of Boston, Roxbury, and Dedham, and then to be expelled from the colony. Conscious that they were violating the laws of the realm, he appealed against their decision; but his request was unheeded. "If thou hadst been hanged," said one of the magistrates, "it had been well." "You had not power," he rejoined, "to take away my life, but my blood is upon you, for you murdered me in your hearts." Pursuant to the order, he was whipped in the towns named, and with some others, driven into the wilderness of the interior; "but," writes a contemporary, "the Lord was with them, and the Angel of his presence saved them, who had none in Heaven beside God, nor in the earth in comparison of Him."†

It was now about ten years since Friends first landed in

* New England Judged, p. 458.

† Ibid, p. 459.

Massachusetts, and during nearly the whole of that period they had been exposed to a cruel and relentless persecution. The authors and abettors were urged on in their ungodly career by feelings of extreme sectarian bigotry, by the powerful influence of which sect after sect had been suppressed. Not only the Episcopalians, but Roger Williams and his party, as well as the Antinomians and the Baptists, had severally suffered themselves to be driven as exiles from the country. The anti-christian legislation of the ruling sect had triumphed over all opposition, and it was not until it joined issue with Quakerism, that it had to contend with principles more potent than its own. On the Society of Friends devolved the noble work of contending successfully against the exclusive principle of sectarian legislation in New England, and of ecclesiastical tyranny in North America. The struggle truly was a severe one—more severe doubtless than we in this day can rightly estimate. We may point to the memorial which is furnished by the scenes exhibited on Boston Common, and talk of the sufferings of William Brend and his companions ;—of the revolting barbarities practised towards unoffending females ;—of whippings, of banishments, and of ruinous dis-traints ; but the aggregate sufferings of Friends in New England, in their faithful and unflinching support of the truth, is known only to Him who seeth and knoweth all things. With ancient Israel, they could feelingly say, “If it had not been the Lord, who was on our side, when men rose up against us, then had they swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us : then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul.—Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given us a prey to their teeth.”

For this faithful stand no praise is due to man ; it belongs alone to Him, whose work we reverently believe it was ; and who, in the wise economy of his divine purposes, qualifies and strengthens his devoted servants for every emergency and every trial. Those of our early Friends who were foremost in this fearful conflict were, under the divine anointing, given clearly to see, that on the passing of the law for exiling on pain of death, nothing short of the sacrifice of some of their lives would be called for,

to break down the barrier which the self-righteous professors of New England, in their determination to enforce their own sectarian views on the community, had raised against the progress of true religion. William Robinson, before ever he entered Massachusetts, was impressed with this belief. "The word of the Lord," he says, "came expressly unto me and commanded me to pass to the town of Boston *my life to lay down.*" "To which heavenly voice," he continues, "I presently yielded obedience, not questioning the Lord, who filled me with living strength and power from his heavenly presence, which at that time did mightily overshadow me: and my life said Amen to what the Lord required of me."* The feeling under which William Robinson went to Boston, also pervaded the minds of his fellow-martyrs. When the reprieve came for Mary Dyer, just in time to save her life, she told the authorities, that "unless they would annul their wicked law, she was there willing to suffer as her brethren had." They were strengthened with might in the inner man, thus willingly to surrender their lives, and He who called them to the sacrifice also upheld their brethren under other suffering. Thus, Wenlock Christison and Edward Wharton, were enabled to display a degree of christian courage and firmness that was altogether extraordinary. Conscious of the truthfulness and righteousness of their cause, and upheld by the Spirit of their God, they wearied out injustice and cruelty. The religious constancy of Friends confounded and subdued the priests and rulers of Massachusetts, and not only led to the spread of those spiritual views which distinguished them from others of the christian name, but also materially assisted in the emancipation of North America from the miseries of priestly tyranny and oppression.

The relation of acts of intolerance and oppression exercised by one section of the christian name towards another, must ever be felt a humiliating task to the right-minded historian and could he consistently do so, he would gladly consign to merited oblivion, transactions so much at variance with true religion. But, when, in pursuance of his work, he has to detail instances of cruelty and

* New England Judged, p. 95.

injustice by a people so enlightened, and in many respects too, a people so much in advance of most of their day, as were the Puritans of New England, the task is rendered additionally painful. In recording the persecution of Friends in New England, we wish to impress on the mind of the reader, a circumstance which, in perusing the foregoing pages, has probably attracted his notice; that to the rulers and ecclesiastics, and not to the people at large, belongs the disgrace of these anti-christian proceedings. In support of this view it may be further remarked, that throughout the sufferings of Friends in New England, there is scarcely a single instance on record, in which the public evinced a spirit of persecution. Had this disposition been manifested by the people, and had the truths which Friends proclaimed been rejected by them with indignation and contempt, the ministers of Massachusetts would have nothing to fear from the presence of Quakers. But it was because in New England, as in Old England, many who were piously disposed, were willing to hearken to their gospel declarations, and because they laboured to turn the attention of the people from outward teachers, and a dependence upon man in the things of God, to Christ their inward teacher, and to the efficacy of his free grace, that the ecclesiastics of that day resorted to persecution to maintain their unholy dominion amongst men.

The ultimate prevalence of religious toleration in the western world, through the constancy and faithfulness of Friends, is a subject calculated to furnish much profitable reflection. Had they given way to fear, and shrunk from suffering, it is impossible to say to what extent religious freedom might have been checked in its emancipation from the trammels of ecclesiastical rule. The doctrines and practice of our early Friends were, however, such only as the New Testament recognizes; and these, it may be fearlessly asserted, when made the rule of our conduct, will ever lead us to condemn all interference with the inalienable rights of conscience.

CHAPTER XV.

Persecution of Friends in New England stayed—John Taylor visits the province—John Burnyeat's travels and services in New England. He attends the Yearly Meeting on Rhode Island in 1671—Some account of the establishment of Yearly Meetings—George Fox and twelve other ministers embark for America—Six of them are present at Rhode Island Yearly Meeting in 1671—George Fox's account of the Yearly Meeting—His services in that colony—The travels of Robert Widders, John Burnyeat, George Pattison, and John Cartwright, in New England—John Stubbs, Solomon Eccles, and others, imprisoned at Boston—William Edmundson's visit to America—Disputation between Friends and Roger Williams—W. Edmundson's second visit to New England—William and Alice Curwen's travels and sufferings—Margaret Brewster visits Boston—A law passed at Boston prohibiting the erection of Meeting-houses—The travels of John Boweter, Joan Vokins and others.

IN commencing another chapter, it is with feelings of satisfaction that we are enabled to turn the attention of the reader, from scenes of persecution, to events connected with religion, under a civil and political condition of society more consistent with the laws of truth and righteousness.

The rigid professors of Massachusetts having, in the progress of their restrictive legislation, excluded Episcopalians, as well as Friends, from their territory, received from the throne four years after the restoration of Charles II., an emphatic injunction, "To permit such as desire it to use the Book of Common Prayer, without incurring any penalty, reproach, or disadvantage; it being very scandalous," continues the admonition, "that any person should be debarred the exercise of their religion, according to the laws and customs of England, by those who were indulged with the liberty of being of what profession or religion they pleased."* About a year after, a similar monition was addressed to the

* Hutchinson's Hist. of Massachusetts, vol. i. p. 219.

government of Connecticut that, "All persons of civil lives might freely enjoy the liberty of their consciences, and the worship of God in that way which they think best."*

By these and other concurrent circumstances, religious persecution in New England received at length an effectual check, and henceforward there will be but few instances to record, wherein the liberties of the subject were outraged, or the rights of conscience invaded. Not but that heart-burnings existed for a time, but by degrees, the clouds that had long obscured the religious horizon of this province were gradually dispelled, and its thrifty and energetic population began to enjoy in mutual confidence and goodwill, the sunshine of religious freedom. An eloquent writer, referring to the causes by which the fury of sectarian bigotry was thus stayed, remarks, "Charles was restored—Endicott died, and when the sun seemed to be turning into darkness and the moon into blood, the wheels of the car of destiny appeared suddenly to roll backward, and a glimmer of humanity began to dawn."†

The first individual who appears to have visited Massachusetts under the new and more favourable state of things was John Taylor, who had travelled in New England about seven years previously. He arrived at Boston, on this occasion, in the Third Month, 1666. The vessel in which he came was bound for Barbadoes, but being short of provisions the captain put in at this port for fresh supplies. He stayed three weeks at Boston, and during that period, Ann Coleman and others also arrived there. From thence, John Taylor sailed to Rhode Island, where he remarks, "Friends received me very kindly." Here he remained for about six months, "having good service for the Lord, and in the country thereabouts."‡

The next gospel minister who is recorded to have visited New England, was John Burnyeat of Cumberland. He reached Rhode Island early in 1666; and, after "a comfortable service" among Friends of that island, he travelled to Sandwich in the adjacent colony of Plymouth. From thence he proceeded by way of

* Massachusetts Hist. Coll., 2nd Series, vol. viii. p. 76.

† Vide "The Churchman, vol. v. p. 857. May 2nd, 1835."

‡ Journal of J. Taylor, p. 29.

Duxbury, Marshfield, and Scituate, to Boston," visiting Friends and having meetings" as he went. After going to Salem, and northward as far as Piscataway, he returned to Plymouth and Sandwich, travelling through the woods, until he arrived at Ponigansit, from whence he crossed over to Rhode Island. Having spent "some time" in declaring the gospel message to the inhabitants of this favoured locality, he passed to Long Island. In the winter, however, he returned again to Rhode Island, where he was engaged until the First Month, 1667.

In the year 1669, we find that Joseph and Jane Nicholson were again labouring in New England in the cause of their Redeemer, and during that summer they appear to have visited Boston.*

The care of the churches in America, rested with much weight on the mind of John Burnyeat; and in 1670, he again visited that country. Proceeding by way of Barbadoes, he landed at New York, in the Second Month, 1671, and after some gospel service, he reached Rhode Island in the Fourth Month following, in time to attend the Yearly Meeting. There is good reason to believe, that the Yearly Meetings of Rhode Island had been regularly held from 1661, the year in which Bishop says, "it was set up."† No minutes of its proceedings prior to 1683, have, however, been preserved; the records for several years after its origin having been, it is supposed, destroyed by fire, by the burning of the dwelling-house where they were deposited.‡ "It begins," says John Burnyeat, "in the ninth of the Fourth Month every year; and continues for much of a week, and is a general meeting once a year for all Friends in New England.§ The first Yearly Meeting in Great Britain was in Yorkshire in the year 1658, where it was held successively for three years. "In 1661," says George Fox, "it was removed to London, where it hath been kept ever since."|| Excepting, therefore, that of London, New

* Letter of Jos. Nicholson, 1669, in Swarthmore MSS.

† New England Judged, p. 351.

‡ Vide "Brief Account of the Meetings of Friends in New England," p. 7.

§ Journal of John Burnyeat.

|| Letters of Early Friends. p. 313.

England Yearly Meeting is clearly the most ancient in the Society. The circumstance, that at this early period, it “continued for much of a week,” shews that it was of considerable importance. It was not, indeed, a Yearly Meeting for New England only, but for “the other colonies adjacent,”* including doubtless Friends of the Half-year’s Meeting of Long Island, those resident in the Jerseys, and probably as far south as Virginia and Maryland.

From Rhode Island John Burnyeat passed to Massachusetts, and held meetings at Sandwich, Duxbury, Marshfield, Scituate, and Boston, thence to Salem, Hampton, and as far north again as Piscataway, returning by the same route to Rhode Island. Speaking of this journey, he says, “I had many precious meetings, and the Lord was with us, and his power was over all.” After visiting Friends at Providence, he sailed in the Seventh Month, 1671, to the colonies in the south, accompanied by Daniel Gould.

The year 1671 was another memorable period in the history of our religious Society in the western world. We have seen that, on several occasions, many of the gospel ministers who visited that land proceeded to it in companies; it was, however, during this year, that the largest number embarked from England at one time on religious service, in that direction,—a circumstance which is rendered additionally interesting from the fact that George Fox formed one of the party, consisting altogether of thirteen Friends. It was now about twenty-eight years since George Fox had entered upon the important work, to which he had been called by the Great Head of the Church. He had within that period travelled in almost every part of England and Wales, had also visited Scotland and Ireland; and notwithstanding the torrent of persecution which had assailed the new Society from the rulers and ecclesiastics of the land, he had seen it gradually enlarging until it had extended itself throughout the three kingdoms, in some parts of the European Continent, in the West India Islands, and in North America. The welfare of the religious community which he was the chief instrument in gathering, was peculiarly

* Journal of George Fox, vol. ii. p. 160.

dear to him everywhere ; but in no part was it more so than in the western world. Almost as soon as companies of his fellow professors were collected in this hemisphere, he endeavoured by frequent epistolary communications to encourage them in the path they had chosen, and in the faith they had embraced.

Those who accompanied George Fox on this occasion were William Edmundson, John Stubbs, Thomas Briggs, John Rous, Solomon Eccles, James Lancaster, John Cartwright, Robert Widders, George Pattison, John Hull, Elizabeth Hooton, and Elizabeth Miers, who were all well known to him, and whose faithful labours in the gospel had clearly indicated their love for the truth, and their desires for the salvation of their fellow-men. They embarked at London in the Sixth Month, 1671, for Barbadoes. From this island George Fox and several of the company passed to Jamaica, and from thence to Maryland, where they met with John Burnyeat. From this part James Lancaster and John Cartwright went by sea to New England, whilst George Fox, John Burnyeat, Robert Widders, and George Pattison proceeded thither by land, and arrived at Rhode Island in the Third Month, 1672. They were gladly received by Friends, and all of them became the welcome guests of Nicholas Easton, the governor of the colony. On the First day, following their arrival, they had a large meeting, and the deputy governor and several justices who attended “were mightily affected with the truth.”*

The usual time for holding the Yearly Meeting on Rhode Island was in the following week, and before that time James Lancaster and John Cartwright had arrived, and also John Stubbs, from Barbadoes. There were, therefore, at this Yearly Meeting, at least seven ministers from England, and it appears to have been a memorable occasion. Friends came to it “from most places in New England,” and also from “the other colonies adjacent.” The transactions were important, and are thus described by George Fox :—“This meeting lasted six days, the first four days were general public meetings for worship, to which abundance of other people came ; for they had no priest in the island, and so

* Journal of George Fox, vol. ii. p. 106.

no restriction to any particular way of worship ; and both the governor and deputy governor, with several justices of the peace, daily frequented the meetings. This so encouraged the people that they flocked in from all parts of the island. Very good service we had amongst them, and truth had a good reception. I have rarely observed people, in the state wherein they stood, hear with more attention, diligence, and affection, than generally they did, during the four days together. After these public meetings were over, the men's meeting began, which was large, precious, and weighty ; and the day following was the women's meeting, which also was large and very solemn. These two meetings being for ordering the affairs of the church, many weighty things were opened and communicated to them, by way of advice, information, and instruction in the services relating thereunto ; that all might be kept clean, sweet, and savoury amongst them. In these two meetings several men's and women's meetings for other parts were agreed and settled, to take care of the poor, and other affairs of the church ; and to see that all who profess truth walk according to the glorious gospel of God. When this great general meeting in Rhode Island was ended, it was somewhat hard for Friends to part ; for the glorious power of the Lord, which was over all, and his blessed truth and life flowing amongst them, had so knit and united them together, that they spent two days in taking leave one of another, and of the Friends of the island ; and then, being mightily filled with the presence and power of the Lord, they went away with joyful hearts to their habitations, in the several colonies where they lived."*

At the conclusion of the Yearly Meeting, George Fox and Robert Widders, remained "for some time" on Rhode Island, where, "through the great openness of the people," they had "many large and serviceable meetings."† Passing from this locality, accompanied by Nicholas Easton, the governor, they directed their course to Providence. Here they had a large and memorable meeting, which, in order to accommodate the people,

* Journal of George Fox, vol. ii. p. 161.

† Ibid.

was held in a "great barn." "The glorious power of the Lord," observes George Fox, "shined over all."* They next proceeded to the Narragansett country, where a meeting was held at the house of a Justice; and notice having been previously circulated, the settlers from the surrounding country, and even from the adjacent colony of Connecticut, flocked together, and it "was very large." "Most of these," writes George Fox, "were such as had never heard Friends before, and they were mightily affected with the meeting."† From hence the Friends returned to Rhode Island,

The other European Friends were travelling, at the same time in gospel service, in Massachusetts. John Burnyeat, John Cartwright, and George Pattison, on leaving Rhode Island, took their course eastward to Sandwich, where, observes John Burnyeat, "we had a blessed meeting, and were comforted and richly refreshed. The blessed presence of the Lord's holy power was with us, and opened and enlarged our hearts."‡ They then proceeded northward, passing through Plymouth, Duxbury, Marshfield, and Scituate, to Boston. The meeting at this place is mentioned as a "blessed season," where "the truth was cleared of those scandals which the priests and others had cast upon it, and the people greatly satisfied."§ This meeting appears to have made a deep impression on the minds of many of the citizens of Boston; and the visit of the Friends, to the great annoyance of the priests, became the subject of general conversation. One of the ministers, displeased to hear his flock speak favourably of Friends and their preaching, on the following First-day, prostituted the sanctity of his office, and his pulpit, in exciting the magistracy against the strangers. His unholy efforts were successful; the authorities, urged on by the malicious declarations of their minister, causing several Friends to be arrested on the same day, while assembled for divine worship. A few days after, John Stubbs and James Lancaster arrived at Boston; they were, however, immediately seized, imprisoned,

* Journal of George Fox, vol. ii. p. 162.

† Ibid.

‡ Journal of John Burnyeat.

§ Ibid.

and summarily banished the colony. John Raunce, Thomas Eaton, and Robert Hornden, who are spoken of as "strangers," were imprisoned on this occasion;* and about the same period Solomon Eccles, of London, and Nicholas Alexander, a justice of Jamaica, who came on a religious visit to New England, were also imprisoned and banished.† "Thus their old fruits," as John Burnyeat remarks, in reference to the priests and rulers, "were brought forth again."

From Boston, John Burnyeat and his two companions passed on to Salem and Hampton. The meeting held at the latter town was attended by many of the inhabitants, including some elders of the Puritan Church, who were very favourably impressed with what they heard on the occasion, and "gave a good report of the truth." The minister of Hampton, disturbed and "offended" at the favour which the people evinced towards Friends, assembled the heads of his church, with a view to induce them to pass a resolution "that no member, nor members' children, go to a Quakers' meeting." The illiberal feelings of the minister, however, were not responded to by his flock, and they declined to sanction his proposal. The travellers next visited Piscattaway, and had a meeting with the most influential Friends respecting the settlement of meetings for discipline for both men and women. "Friends," remarks John Burnyeat, "were very open, and all things were settled in sweet unity."

At Salem, some Friends had imbibed the notion of John Perrot, of not putting off the hat in time of prayer, under the delusive idea that it was a form to be testified against. This was cause of anxiety to John Burnyeat and his two fellow-travellers; and with a view to show the Friends of Salem the evil tendency of such opinions and practices, a meeting on the subject took place on their return. The occasion was blessed to the church of that place; some of them saw their error, and condemned the unseemly practice. "Blessed be the Lord,"

* New England Judged, p. 459.

† Journal of John Burnyeat.

writes John Burnyeat, "who shows mercy, and restores out of the snares of Satan."*

Having completed their religious engagements in Massachusetts, the three Friends returned to Rhode Island, where they met with George Fox and Robert Widders, who had just come from the Narragansett country. This was in the Sixth Month 1672, and after they had been engaged about two months in New England. From Rhode Island, George Fox, Robert Widders, James Lancaster, and George Pattison, passed to Shelter Island; whilst John Burnyeat and John Stubbs proceeded to Providence and Warwick, returning again to Rhode Island. On their return, they met John Cartwright, who had parted from them at Piscattaway, to extend his journey northward into Maine.

It was at this period, that Roger Williams, of Providence, made his proposal for a public disputation with Friends. Williams, though one who had nobly advocated religious liberty, was yet strongly opposed to some of the doctrinal views of Friends; and being very confident of the rectitude of his own opinions, he sent a challenge to maintain fourteen propositions against Friends; seven of which were to be argued at Newport, and seven at Providence. At this juncture, William Edmundson, who had been travelling in the south, arrived at Rhode Island, and joined with his brethren in accepting the challenge in question. The circumstance was one that excited considerable interest among the settlers, and "a great concourse of people of all sorts" assembled to hear the disputation. The discussion of the seven propositions at Newport, says William Edmundson, occupied no less than three days. "They were all but slanders and accusations against Friends, and were turned back upon himself." The remaining seven propositions were discussed at Providence; and on the part of Friends, were opposed by William Edmundson and John Stubbs alone; John Burnyeat and John Cartwright having left for Narragansett and Connecticut. The disputation at Providence occupied a day; and, as at New-

* Journal of John Burnyeat.

port, there "was a very great gathering of the people." The remaining propositions were similar in character to the former ones; "but," observes William Edmundson, "we answered all his charges, and disproved them."* At the conclusion, he continues, "we had a seasonable opportunity to open many things to the people, appertaining to the kingdom of God, and way of eternal life and salvation. Prayer was made to Almighty God, and the people went away satisfied and loving."†

But a short time previous to this disputation, the government of Rhode Island had been placed, by the suffrages of the people, in the hands of Friends; the governor, deputy governor, and magistrates, having been all chosen from among them.‡ This was a circumstance not at all congenial to the mind of Roger Williams. He was the founder of the plantation of Providence, and after it had been incorporated under one charter with Rhode Island, for several years he had filled the office of governor, though opposed by William Coddington and those who were now the rulers of the colony. Twenty years before, there had, indeed, been a strong rivalry between Williams and Coddington for the post of governor: the latter, in 1651, obtained from the government at home, a commission, constituting him governor of Rhode Island for life. This appointment gave great discontent to Roger Williams and to the settlers in and about Providence, and he and another were sent to England for the purpose of obtaining a repeal of Coddington's commission. After much difficulty this was effected in 1652, and in 1654, after Williams had returned, he was elected governor.§ Roger Williams was also in religious profession a very decided Baptist; a body from among whom the Society of Friends in Rhode Island obtained many converts. This, doubtless, was another circumstance that disturbed his equanimity, and under the excitement it produced, together with the transfer of the civil power to Friends, he was led to make charges against them, which he was unable to sustain.

On leaving Providence, William Edmundson and John Stubbs,

* Journal of William Edmundson, 3d edit., p. 95. † Ibid.

‡ Bancroft's United States.

§ The Early History of Rhode Island, by Romeo Elton, p. 268.

proceeded to Warwick, a few miles distant. The meeting held there was a very large one, being attended by most of those who had been present at the disputation at Providence. "The Lord's power and presence," observes William Edmundson, "were largely manifested, and the people were very loving—like Friends."* From this place John Stubbs went to Narragansett to join John Burnyeat, whilst William Edmundson took boat for Rhode Island. After some meetings with Friends on this Island, he travelled eastward to Sandwich and Scituate, and from thence to Boston; where, feeling that the service required of him in America was accomplished, he embarked in a ship bound for Ireland.

In the year 1675, William Edmundson, under the constraining influence of heavenly love, again left home on a gospel visit to his transatlantic brethren. He sailed from Cork in a vessel bound for Barbadoes, from whence, after labouring among his friends for about five months, he was taken to Rhode Island in a yacht belonging to a Friend. At this period New England was engaged in a disastrous war with the Indians, who, headed by their bold and ingenious king Philip, evinced their savage revenge for conceived wrongs in murderous onsets upon the settlers. The sudden inroads of these exasperated Algonquins made it exceedingly dangerous to travel; but William Edmundson, trusting in the unfailling succour of the Most High, pursued his gospel errand in faith. "I travelled," he writes, "as with my life in my hand, leaving all to the Lord, who rules in heaven and earth." After having some meetings on Rhode Island, he proceeded to Sandwich, "one Friend," he remarks, "having ventured to go with me, to guide me through the woods."† At Sandwich, "Friends were glad of his coming." "There was an honest tender people there, that loved the Lord and His truth." He had two meetings with them, and, he writes, "we were well refreshed in the Lord, and one in another."‡ From this town he travelled by way of Scituate, Boston, and Salem, as far north as Piscataway; holding meetings at these towns and in "several other places." His

* Journal of W. Edmundson, p. 96.

† Ibid. p. 104.

‡ Ibid, p. 105.

mode of travelling through this new country was on horseback ; on reaching Piscattaway, however, he left his horse and took boat for Dover. At this place, Nicholas Shapley, who had been convinced about fifteen years before, still resided. He continued to fill the office of a magistrate, and "was a man of note in that country."* At and near Dover there were many who had embraced the principles of Friends, and the meeting held there having been attended by settlers who "came from far to it," was not only "a precious one," but "a very large one" also. Before leaving this part, they had "a men's meeting about church affairs."

William Edmundson, on his return from Dover, hearing that some "tender people" resided at Reading, felt attracted in the love of the gospel towards them, and with some other Friends proceeded on a visit to the place. The settlers, to protect themselves against the incursions of the Indians, were living in a garrisoned house, and at the time when Friends arrived they were assembled for religious worship. William Edmundson, under an apprehension of duty, mentioned his desire to address the company. The request was readily acceded to, "And," he writes, "my heart being full of the word of life, I spoke of the mysteries of God's kingdom, in the demonstration of the spirit and power of the Lord ; so that their consciences were awakened, and the witness of God in them answered to the truth of the testimony : they were broken into tears, and when I was clear in declaration, I concluded the meeting with fervent prayer."† The settler at whose house the company were assembled, and who is described as "an ancient man," was deeply affected on the occasion. "We had heard," said he, "that Quakers denied the Scriptures, and denied Christ, who died for us : which was the cause of that great difference between their ministers and us : but he understood this day that we owned both Christ and the Scriptures ; therefore he would know the reason of the difference between their ministers and us ?" "Their ministers," replied William Edmundson, "were satisfied with the talk of Christ, and the Scriptures ; but we could not be satisfied without the sure, inward,

* Journal of W. Edmundson, p. 105.

† Ibid, p. 107.

divine knowledge of God and Christ, and the enjoyment of those comforts the Scriptures declared of, which true believers enjoyed in the primitive times."* The old man, affected to tears, replied, "that those were the things he wanted."

At Boston, and in the parts adjacent, William Edmundson had several meetings, and laboured to reclaim some, who, though professing with Friends, were lax in their practice, and brought dishonour on the truth.

From Massachusetts, he returned to Rhode Island, in a little vessel belonging to Edward Wharton. His presence there just at this period, was a source of much comfort to Friends; who, in consequence of the Indian war, were placed in circumstances of some difficulty. The government was in the hands of Friends, who had a testimony to bear against all wars and fightings, as opposed to the clear and unequivocal doctrines of Christ; consequently, they refused to join in the colonial compact of New England for a campaign against the natives. The forbearing conduct of the government was much opposed by the people at large, many of whom "were outrageous to fight."† Under these circumstances of trial, William Edmundson was enabled to strengthen his brethren; and was favoured to have "many blessed and heavenly meetings."

Leaving Rhode Island, this faithful minister proceeded westward, to the towns of New London and Hartford, in Connecticut. The rulers and ecclesiastics of this colony regarded Friends with great aversion, in consequence of which, when John Burnyeat visited it four years previously, he found it very difficult to hold meetings among the inhabitants. On the present occasion, however, the authorities were strongly disposed to evince their hatred to Quakerism in a more decided manner, and at a meeting which William Edmundson held at New London, "the constable and other officers came with armed men and forcibly broke it up." In this persecuting spirit the inhabitants generally did not participate, and when the "armed men" were "haling and abusing" Friends, "the sober people were much offended."‡ At Hartford,

* Journal of William Edmundson, p. 107. † Ibid, p. 108.

‡ Ibid, p. 112.

he felt it required of him to attend the places of public worship. In the first that he entered, the congregation listened quietly to his ministry, and offered no molestation. In the afternoon of the same day he attended another, where for a considerable time he was enabled "to declare the way of salvation." The doctrine preached offended the priest of this congregation, and, at his persuasion, the officers "haled him out," and took him off to the guard-house. His detention, however, was but short, and he soon proceeded to Long Island. The religious labours of William Edmundson, at Hartford, excited much enquiry among the people respecting divine things, and he was afterwards told that he "had set all the town a talking of religion."

The spirit of oppression, which in former years had been so notoriously displayed at Boston, although in great measure kept down by the Government at home, occasionally gave very decided manifestations that it was not wholly extinguished. The regular holding of a Friends' meeting there, and the visits of ministers from Britain, caused much uneasiness to the bigoted rulers of Boston, who, again outstepping the bounds of their authority, in 1675, passed a law that every person found at a Quakers' meeting should be apprehended, *ex-officio*, by the constable, by a warrant from a magistrate be committed to prison, "have the discipline of the house applied, and be kept to work on bread and water for three days;" or otherwise should pay a fine of five pounds. It also included a provision that their old law "against the importation of Quakers," should be more rigidly enforced; and that the penalty, which originally was £100, should in no case be mitigated to a sum less than £20.*

The first individuals, at least from Britain, against whom this law was enforced, were William and Alice Curwen, of Lancashire. Alice Curwen had for some years been under the apprehension that it would be required of her to go on a gospel mission to America, and that it would be laid upon her husband to accompany her, when he should be released from an imprisonment for tithes. They accordingly left England for Rhode Island in

* "Cain against Abel," by George Fox, p. 11.

1676, from whence they travelled to Boston, and northward as far as Dover. "The power of the Lord," they remark, "was with us, and was our support, for which we cannot but bless his name."* The law against Friends' meetings, although passed in the previous year, had not yet been proclaimed. Probably its bigoted promoters were half ashamed that this proof of their persecuting disposition should be publicly announced to their fellow-citizens. But the visit of the Curwens seems to have given a fresh impulse to the intolerant feelings of the rulers; and whilst they were absent on their journey to Dover, the restrictive law was proclaimed. In returning from the north, they again visited Boston, and while assembled with their brethren for divine worship, were seized by the constabulary and taken to prison. This outbreak of violence gave rise to no little commotion in the city; and in the excitement which prevailed, numbers flocked to the prison. "Many people," remarks Alice Curwen, "both rich and poor, came to look upon us." The circumstance was over-ruled to the promotion of the truth, and afforded the prisoners a favourable opportunity for declaring the things of God to the people. "The Lord was with us," she says, "our service was great, and some were convinced."† The authorities, vexed at witnessing results so opposite to their wishes, determined to revive the old practice of whipping; and on the third day the two Friends were publicly subjected to this degrading punishment; "but," remark the sufferers, "the presence of the Lord was manifested there also, which gave us dominion over all their cruelty, and we could not but magnify the name of the Lord, and declare his wonderful works." On the following day they were released, but, undismayed by the cruelty that had been inflicted upon them, these faithful Friends again assembled with their brethren, and after a good meeting, left them and proceeded to visit other meetings on their way to Rhode Island, from whence they sailed to the colonies in the south.

In 1677, a circumstance which caused considerable excitement took place at Boston. Margaret Brewster, a Friend of Barbadoes,

* A Relation of the Labours, &c., of Alice Curwen, p. 5. † Ibid.

whilst on a gospel mission in New England, having a foresight given her of the afflictive visitation called the "black pox," believed it was required of her to enter one of the public places of worship in Boston, clothed in sackcloth and ashes, with her face blackened, as a prophetic warning of the event; the realization of which quickly followed. This unusual manifestation greatly offended the authorities, and she was immediately apprehended, together with four others who accompanied her. On her examination she told the court, that for three years this service had been required of her by her divine Master, and that it was not until she had been visited with sickness which brought her near the gates of death, that she "could give up to bear a living testimony for the God of her life, and to go as a sign among them;" and that "if they were suffered to take away her life, she was contented."* Whatever might be the opinion of the Puritans of Massachusetts respecting prophetic manifestations, the rulers of Boston were not prepared to recognize the service of Margaret Brewster as of divine origin. For this act of dedication, she was sentenced "to be stripped to the waist," and to receive twenty lashes.

The case of Margaret Brewster appears to have served as a pretext to the rulers of Boston for a revival of acts of cruelty; and in forgetfulness of the claims of either justice or humanity, within a few days after she had been scourged, no less than twenty-two of her fellow-professors were subjected to the same punishment, simply for attending their own meetings for the worship of the most High.† This sudden fit of persecution, so far from promoting the object of its authors, tended greatly to augment the excitement that prevailed; and when Friends on the following day assembled at their meeting, so many of the citizens attended, as to cause no inconsiderable degree of alarm to the bigoted ecclesiastics and rulers of the city. The news of this fresh outbreak of violence having reached London, William Penn, William Mead, and some other Friends, had interviews with the authorities

* Besse, vol. ii. p. 262.

† Letter of W. Coddington in Besse, vol. ii. p. 261.

respecting it.* The voice of public disapprobation in the colony, was also raised against these proceedings, and from that period, the rulers of New England never resorted to the lash in their endeavours to stem the progress of Quakerism.

For the first ten or fifteen years of the Society's existence in New England, its meetings had been mostly held in the dwellings of its members, but as their numbers increased, meeting houses were built for their better accommodation, and we find that Friends of Scituate erected one as early as 1672. The mere profession of a religious belief differing from that held by the prevailing sect of Massachusetts, had been sufficient in former years to draw down the resentment of the civil power, and the holding of religious meetings of the same character met with their uncompromising opposition; it was not, therefore, to be expected that the rulers, when they began to see other edifices than their own provided for the purposes of divine worship, should remain quiet spectators of the innovation. Notwithstanding the progress of dissent, they had fondly hoped, that at least the only buildings in Massachusetts set apart for the worship of the most High, would be those indicated by their favourite spires; and they were not willing to see this hope extinguished without a decided struggle. In 1679, therefore, the general Court at Boston, with a view to meet the apprehended evil, passed a law to prevent the erection of meeting-houses without leave of the "freemen of the town" and of the county court; and in the event of any transgression of the law, such houses were to be forfeited "to the use of the country." The evil thus proscribed, is set forth in the preamble as "attempts made by some persons, to erect meeting-houses on pretence of the public worship of God on the Lord's day, thereby laying a foundation (if not for schisms and sedition, for error and heresy) for perpetuating divisions, and weakening such places where they dwell, in the comfortable support of the ministry orderly settled amongst them." The restrictive enactment, however, was never enforced, but this must be ascribed to the intimations of displeasure from Whitehall, rather than to any change of sentiment on the part of the colonial authorities.

* Minutes of the Meeting for Sufferings, vol. i.

During 1678, and a few years subsequently, several Friends from Europe visited New England. Of these are mentioned John Boweter, John Haydock, Benjamin Brown, John Hayton and Joan Vokins from England, and Jacob Tilmor from Ireland. We have no particulars of the services of these Friends, excepting John Boweter and Joan Vokins. The former was of Worcestershire, and his visit took place in 1678; his travels extending from Rhode Island eastward to Scituate, and northward as far as Salem. Joan Vokins was of Reading in Berkshire. She arrived at Rhode Island in 1680 in time to attend the Yearly Meeting, which, she remarks, lasted four days. She had "good service" amongst her friends, and during their important deliberations, she writes that "God's eternal, heart-tendering power, was over all."* Accompanied by Mary Wright of Oyster Bay, she next proceeded on a visit to Boston, where she held several meetings without any interference from the magistracy. On these occasions the baptising power of the Lord appears to have been strikingly manifested, and the hearts of the people were much tendered under her ministry. She says, "There were hardly any that I saw but shed tears."† This dedicated servant of Christ was one who had a very low estimate of her qualifications as a gospel minister, describing herself to be "the poorest and most helpless that ever I did see concerned in such a service: but it was the more to the honour of the power of my God, that so wonderfully wrought in my poor, weak, and helpless vessel. Honoured and renowned be it for ever, saith my soul; for its manifestation made the hearts of the people glad."‡

* Vokins' God's Mighty Power Magnified, p. 35.

† Ibid, p. 36.

‡ Ibid, p. 36.

CHAPTER XVI.

The progress of Friends in New England—Their increase on Rhode Island, and influence with the local authorities—Friends are elected as the rulers of the colony of Rhode Island—Their adoption of the principles of peace in its government—The sentiments of the Society of Friends on war—Peace a distinguishing feature of the religion of Christ—This principle recognized during the first three centuries of the Christian era—The circumstances under which it was abandoned by professing Christendom—The principle maintained by the Cathari of Germany, Wickliffe, Erasmus, and by the Society of Friends.

FROM the time when Mary Fisher and Ann Austin first landed in New England to the concluding date of the foregoing chapter, rather more than a quarter of a century had passed away; and during the whole of that period the principles of the Society of Friends had been gradually gaining ground in the country. Of their numbers it is difficult to speak with any degree of exactness; five Monthly Meetings, however, appear to have been established, and there were regularly settled meetings for worship, extending over the country from Rhode Island to Maine. The population of the colonies of Plymouth, Massachusetts and Maine about 1682 did not number 40,000, and that of Rhode Island was under 6,000. The progress of the Society was steady in the eastern and northern parts of New England, but in Rhode Island it more especially flourished. Very soon after Friends visited that district, the most influential of its inhabitants embraced their doctrines, among whom may be mentioned William Codrington, Nicholas Easton, and Henry Bull, each of whom filled the office of Governor. The increase of Friends in this colony by convincements was rapid; as early as 1666 they were sufficiently numerous and influential to cause the General Assembly to refuse the proposition of the royal commissioners for enforcing the oath of allegiance, and in the following year an engagement

of even milder form was repealed to satisfy the conscientious scruples of members of the Society.

The government of Rhode Island about 1667, though considerably influenced by Friends, was not under their absolute control. In 1672, however, the governor, deputy governor, and magistrates were all chosen from among them, and the affairs of the colony came under their entire management. This circumstance was an extraordinary one, and formed not only a new era in the history of the enlightened inhabitants of that territory, but a new era also in the history of this religious Society, and indeed, it may be said, in the history of the Christian world. The principles of the Society of Friends not only struck at the foundation of all hierarchical systems, and the intervention of a human priesthood between man and his Maker in the things of eternal life, but tended also to exemplify the excellency of the primitive doctrines of Christianity in their application to the civil affairs of mankind. Since the commencement of the Christian era, nearly seventeen centuries had elapsed, but that peculiar characteristic of the Gospel which is opposed to war, had not been reduced to practice in the government of any state; the non-resisting principles of Friends, however, led to its adoption in the colony of Rhode Island through their being chosen as its rulers.

It is not intended in this history to enlarge on those religious views which distinguish Friends from others of the Christian name, but so incalculably does the subject of war affect the present and eternal well-being of man, and to such an extent has this evil been sanctioned by the professors of Christianity, producing an amount of misery and ruin which it is frightful to contemplate, that we are inclined to offer some observations on a matter which thus so largely involves the happiness of our species.

From its rise, the Society of Friends has always borne a decided testimony against war, as being altogether incompatible with the glorious dispensation of the Gospel, displayed in the conduct and precepts of Christ, and of his Apostles and immediate followers. They believe that the religion of Jesus was to be distinguished pre-eminently by the law of love and peace, and that as mankind come under His government, they will, in unison with the lan-

guage of prophecy, "beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."*

Wars and fightings are emphatically the bitterest fruits of our fallen nature. They have their origin in the degenerate and unrenewed nature of man. "Come they not hence," says an Apostle, "even of your lusts which war in your members."† But Christ came to destroy the works of the devil, and to bring in everlasting righteousness; He was to be the remedy for the spiritual disease which, through the disobedience of our first parents, had found entrance into the world; and by and through Him, mankind were to be brought into that renewed condition, in which those corrupt passions from whence wars have their rise should be subdued.

In the inscrutable wisdom of the Most High, wars, under the Mosaic dispensation were, in some special cases commanded, but this gives no sanction to wars under the Gospel. Christianity also forbids many things which, in condescension to the weakness of man, were in that age of the world allowed to the Israelites. It was so regarding oaths and the law of marriage. The Law, however, for "the weakness and unprofitableness thereof," gave place to the more spiritual dispensation of Christ, and the law of retaliation and revenge was annulled. "Ye have heard," said our Lord, in reference to the law of Moses, "that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven."‡ The Apostle Paul, in addressing the converts at Rome, surrounded as they were with trophies of military glory, was anxious that they should be guarded against these pernicious influences, and be fully impressed with the non-resisting religion of Jesus. "Avenge not yourselves; if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink. Recompense no man evil for evil—overcome evil

* Isaiah ii. 4, 5.

† James iv. 1, 2.

‡ Matthew v. 38—45.

with good.”* This was the language of the great Apostle of the Gentile world. “They who defend war,” says Erasmus, “must defend the dispositions which lead to war.” But here we see that such are entirely forbidden.

The character of Him who was our great pattern was entirely opposed to war. He was pre-eminently distinguished by a meek, non-resisting, and forgiving spirit. “Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also,” was his own language; and that of the Apostle Paul to the primitive believers was, “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.”† His holy religion was designed for the renovation of man; and as its benign influence prevails, warfare and bloodshed must certainly cease. There is scarcely a divine truth that is more clearly set forth in the Holy Scriptures than this. The prophet Isaiah, in describing the glorious results of the gospel of Christ, thus speaks, in reference to its peaceable character—“The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid: and the calf and the young lion, and the fatling together: and a little child shall lead them, &c.”‡ When we turn from this delightful picture of the reign of Messiah in the hearts of the children of men, to the wars which have afflicted mankind; the awful destruction of human life, and the devastation and ruin which have followed in their train; when we compare the harmony and love which should ever characterise the followers of Christ, with the scenes which contending armies present in their mutual fiend-like struggles, how are we led with the Apostle to exclaim, “What communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial?”§

That the views which the Society of Friends take concerning war harmonize with divine truth, is abundantly confirmed by the practice of the early Christians. Both in the time of the Apostles, and for about two centuries after the Christian era, the primitive believers bore a decided testimony to the peaceable nature of the kingdom of their Redeemer. Those of them who lived in the time of our Lord and his immediate followers—a time, it should

* Romans xii. 19, 20.

† Phil. ii. 5.

‡ Isaiah xi. 6.

§ 2 Cor. vi. 14, 15.

be remembered, when the rulers of the world were Pagans, whose religion fostered that spirit which seeks distinction and honour in military conquests—could not well fail to understand this doctrine aright ; and with the unquestionable evidence before us that they condemned war, it is surprising that there should be found among Christians of the present day, those who plead for its consistency with the principles of their holy religion. But however unfaithful its professors may be, Christianity is unchangeable, for its Founder is “ the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.” Ages of error can give no prescriptive sanction for a departure from so distinguishing a feature of the religion of Jesus ; and the widespread defection in Christendom on this subject, affords no plea to the awakened soul, for the guilt of upholding this violation of the divine law.

It is not within the scope of this history to give a treatise on the melancholy declension of professing Christians in regard to war ; but as the conduct of the Society of Friends, in their faithful adherence to the principles of peace, bears a striking analogy to that of the primitive believers ; and as it is important to understand under what circumstances this genuine doctrine of the gospel was abandoned by Christians, we may not inappropriately follow the subject a little further.

Notwithstanding the opposition which Christianity had to encounter from both Jew and Pagan, its progress among mankind was rapid ; and at the time when, about forty years after the crucifixion, the Roman legions encamped before the walls of Jerusalem for the purposes of siege, there were thousands in that city who had embraced its faith. The calamities of that memorable siege, it is well known, exceed anything before recorded in history ; but these followers of the Prince of Peace, having no part or lot in these carnal struggles, under a divine intimation, left the land of Judea and resorted to a village lying beyond Jordan. Here, under the unfailing protection of the Almighty arm, they dwelt in perfect safety ; and amidst all the carnage which attended the destruction of Jerusalem, it does not appear that a single Christian perished.*

* Eusebius Ecc. Hist., Bk. iii. c. 5.

In the second century the maintenance of the peace principles among christians, is spoken of by several of the fathers of that period. Justin Martyr, about A.D. 140, in alluding to the prophecy of Isaiah, which declared that the swords should be turned into ploughshares, and the spears into pruning-hooks, remarks that it was fulfilled in his time, for "we who were once slayers of one another do not now fight against our enemies."* Ireneus, thirty years later, in speaking of the same prophecy, makes a similar observation. "The Christians," he says, "have changed their swords and their lances into instruments of peace, and they know not how to fight."† Tatian who was a disciple of Justin Martyr, in his oration to the Greeks, declares war as unlawful, and Clemens of Alexandria, his contemporary, uses expressions which affirm the same doctrine; he calls Christians "followers of peace," and says that they "used none of the implements of war."‡

There cannot be more conclusive evidence adduced of the practice of Christians in the second century in this respect, than from the attacks of Celsus, their bitter opponent. One of his charges against them was, "that they refused in his times to bear arms for the Emperor, even in case of necessity." "If," he added, "the rest of the Empire were of their opinion, it would soon be overrun by the barbarians."§ The testimony of Origen, a talented and learned writer, is also important on this subject. He was born A.D. 183, and became a pupil of Clemens of Alexandria. Nearly the whole of a long life was spent by him in writing, teaching, and expounding the scriptures; and Jerome calls him "the greatest teacher since the apostles." He wrote largely for the promotion of true religion, and replied to the attacks of Celsus. On the subject of war, however, we find Origen freely admitting the facts advanced by Celsus, but vindicating the conduct of his brethren, on the principle that wars were forbidden.

Tertullian, whose father was a centurion at Carthage, was a contemporary with Origen, and became a convert to Christianity. Before he renounced heathenism he was a distinguished rhetorician or advocate. He also wrote much in support of his religion,

* Clarkson's Essay on the Practice, &c., of the Early Christians on War, p. 7. † Ibid, p. 6. ‡ Ibid, p. 6. § Ibid, p. 7.

repeatedly making the avowal that any participation in war was unlawful for a Christian, because Christ "had forbidden the use of the sword and the revenge of injuries." He also informs us that "many soldiers, who had been converted to Christianity, quitted military pursuits in consequence of their conversion."*

Towards the close of the third century, under the reign of Dioclesian, a large number of Christians refused to serve in the army, and many of them suffered martyrdom for their faithful adherence to this doctrine of Christ. Maximilian was one of these. Having been brought before the tribunal to be enrolled as a soldier, he boldly declared his opinions. "I cannot fight," said he, "for any earthly consideration. I am now a Christian."† Lactantius, one of the most learned and eloquent of the Latin Fathers, and who wrote about this period, makes the explicit declaration that "to engage in war cannot be lawful for the righteous man, whose warfare is that of righteousness itself."‡

In the purest age of the Church, and for at least two centuries from the dawn of Christianity, so universally was war held to be unlawful by its professors, that there does not appear to have been a single writer among them during this period, who notices the subject, except with this view. "It is as easy," remarks a learned writer, "to obscure the sun at mid-day, as to deny that the primitive Christians renounced all revenge and war."§ In the third century some declensions were apparent, and among them that of some entering the army. In the fourth century, under the Emperor Constantine, this defection from primitive principle and practice made woeful progress. Constantine was a convert from paganism; but not so entirely a convert as to adopt the peace principle and disband his legions. The countenance thus given to war by the first Christian Emperor, had the effect of inducing a large number of Christians to enter the army; and on the other hand many of the heathen, finding that the profession of Christianity did not subject them to a renunciation of arms, out of compliment to the Emperor imitated his example, and embraced the new religion.||

* Gurney on War.

† Clarkson's Essay, p. 12.

‡ Gurney on War.

§ Barelay's Apology, prop. xv.

|| Vide Mosheim's Ecc. Hist., vol. i. p. 304; also Clarkson's Essay, p. 20.

The Most High, as though to fix a mark of reprobation for the violation of his gospel, appears to have hid his face in anger ; for his erring children, being left to their own unaided capacities in the things of God, departed widely from his law. It is a remarkable fact that during the century in which Christians relaxed their principles respecting peace, most of the evils in the Church were introduced, and by a strange infusion of heathen practices, christianity became gradually metamorphosed into what is now understood by Romanism. Ceremonies were greatly multiplied ; Pagan rites were imitated ; and a desire for pompous display in religion, manifested itself to an enormous extent. Transubstantiation, or something analogous to it, was maintained ; the ceremony of the elevation used in the celebration of the eucharist was introduced ; pilgrimages were performed ; their places of worship were held to be sacred ; saints were invoked ; relics were adored ; images used and the cross worshipped ; monasteries were founded ; magnificent public processions in imitation of those which the Pagans used to appease their gods, frequently took place ; and the clerical orders were augmented by archbishops, archdeacons, and other ecclesiastical dignitaries.

The religion of the Greeks and Romans differed, indeed, very little in externals, from that now adopted by Christians. Both were distinguished by a most imposing and splendid ritual. In the churches of both were to be seen pictures, images, gold and silver vases, wax tapers, gorgeous robes, mitres, tiaras, crosiers, &c. In imitation of the temples of the heathen deities, magnificent buildings were erected, which bore also a resemblance to them, in their outward form as well as their inward decorations. As among the Pagans, so also among the Christians, priestly power and influence had gained a dominion over the minds of the people ; fraud and artifice were resorted to in the most unblushing manner to impose on their credulity.

These declensions sprang up under the auspices of the half-converted and warlike Constantine and his immediate successors ; and were among the means employed in their day, to allure the Pagan nations to embrace Christianity ; and these truly, as an eminent ecclesiastical historian has observed, “ All contributed to

establish the reign of superstition upon the ruins of Christianity.”*

That amidst all these corruptions, among a people who had been conspicuous for their love of arms; and obscured as genuine Christianity was by so much of Paganism, the distinguishing feature of the religion of Him who was emphatically called “the Prince of Peace,” which proclaims against all wars and fightings, should be no longer recognised, can excite no surprise; neither are we unprepared, amidst these desecrations, to hear that armies were employed to promote ecclesiastical rule, and that uncivilized nations were forced into the profession of Christianity under the terror of the sword. The most important doctrines of Christ being discarded, we now see the Church torn with strife and divisions; and the secular arm for a long period was resorted to in support of the views of the contending parties, in a manner which not only disgraces religion but outrages humanity itself.†

Although professing Christendom from the time when it first sanctioned the use of the sword, down to the present hour, has more or less given sad proof of its defection, yet God has not been without his witnesses for this precious principle of the gospel. Towards the close of the fourth century, there were those who suffered for faithfully objecting to all war. The church itself, indeed, even in its declension, did not at once forget the practice of its brighter day, and there was yet a lingering reverence for the doctrine of peace. At the Council of Nice, A.D. 325, under Constantine, a penalty of excommunication for a lengthened period was imposed on those who, after having renounced a military life, should again return to the army. Two hundred years later, Pope Leo declared it to be “contrary to the rules of the church, that persons after the action of penance should revert to the warfare of the world.”‡ It may also be noticed, as a remarkable fact, that the Goths who, in the third century, had been converted to Christianity, in the next, whilst having the

* Moshier's Ecclesiastical History, vol. i. p. 327. Ed. 1826.

† In the Arian controversy, eighty ecclesiastics, who were opposed to its views, were placed in a ship, which was set on fire when it had cleared the coast.—Vide Moshier's Ecc. Hist. ‡ Gurney on War.

bible translated into their language, proposed the rejection of the books of Kings and Chronicles, lest the recital of the wars between the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, should awaken those feelings of military ardour which had been subdued under the benign influence of the gospel.* In the tenth century the Paterines, a numerous sect, scattered throughout Italy and France, maintained the non-resisting principle,† in which, during the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries, they were joined by the Cathari, or Puritans, of Germany, who held that it was not lawful to bear arms or to kill mankind. In the fourteenth century, Wickliffe, the first English reformer, proclaimed the same views. In the fifteenth century, the United Brethren of Bohemia,‡ and during the Reformation the great Erasmus, also bore an uncompromising testimony against all war; in the century following, this doctrine was more conspicuously revived by the Society of Friends.

Recognizing the principle of peace as the genuine fruit of the everlasting gospel, it will be interesting to mark the conduct of the Society under their new circumstances in the government of Rhode Island. From the foundation of the colony to the time when it came under the government of Friends, was comprehended a period of about thirty-four years, during which the settlers had been involved in conflicts with the Indians; “garrisoned houses were appointed;” “armed boats were fitted out;”§ troops were raised; and lives were lost, in their war with the aborigines. In 1652, during the hostilities between the English and Dutch, the “colony and island were put to considerable expense to put and keep themselves in a posture of defence.” We see, then, that in Rhode Island, in common with other governments of the time, warlike preparations had been resorted to, and the aid of the sword was sought in deciding disputes.

Within a few years after Friends became the rulers of Rhode Island, no circumstance arose to test the practical application of their non-resisting principle, and no active measures appear to

* Hoyland's Epitome of the History of the World, p. 367, and compare Moshem's Ecclesiastical History, vol. i. p. 304.

† Jones's Hist. of the Waldenses, vol. i. p. 427.

‡ Crantz's Hist., vol. i. p. 200. § Callender's Hist. Discourse, p. 125.

have been taken by them in which this doctrine was involved, except in the passing of an act which provided for the entire right of those colonists who had a conscientious scruple against war, to refuse a participation in military operations without being liable to any penalty for such refusal ; this exemption was, nevertheless, clearly defined not to extend to services of a purely civil character. Respecting the latter, the law in question was as follows : “ Provided, nevertheless, that such said persons who cannot fight nor destroy men, it being against their conscience, and not against their conscience to do and perform civil services to the colony, though not martial services, and to preserve, so far as in them lies, lives, goods, and cattle, &c., that when any enemy shall approach or assault the colony, or any place thereof, that then it shall be lawful for the civil officer for the time being, as civil officer, and not as martial or military, to require such said persons as are of sufficient able body and of strength, though exempt from training and fighting, to conduct, or to convey out of the danger of the enemy weak, aged, and impotent persons, women and children, goods and cattle, by which the common weal may be better maintained, and works of mercy manifested to distressed, weak persons ; and shall be required to watch to inform of danger (but without arms in martial manner or matter), and to perform any other civil service by order of the civil officers, for the good of the colony and inhabitants thereof.”*

In 1675, the peace principles of the government of Rhode Island were severely tested, in consequence of a formidable confederacy among the Indian tribes, to exterminate the settlers in New England by falling upon them “ everywhere at once.” With a view to provide against this fearful combination, it was proposed for the several colonies of New England to unite in military preparations. To this proposal, however, the government of Rhode Island could not conscientiously accede, and in dependence on the protecting care of Him who hath the hearts of all men at his disposal, they refrained from engaging in the war. This was a course which involved Friends in considerable trial, for although the governors, and most of the inhabitants of the island were dis-

* Colonial Records, 1673. At an extra session held in consequence of an apprehended attack from the Dutch whilst at war with the English.

posed to peace, yet in that part of the colony which lay on "the main," the majority of the settlers held different views, being "outrageous to fight," and loud in their declamations against the rulers for refusing to give, as was said by a Friend, "commissions to kill and destroy men."* The government at home were apprized, in the language of complaint, of this novel policy. It was said that "the colony would never yield any joint assistance against the common enemy, no, not so much as in their own towns;" and that they refused "to garrison" the towns of Providence and Warwick, which lay much exposed to incursions from the revengeful natives. The war was carried on by the Indians with great determination, and though it resulted in their defeat, its cost was terrible to the colonists. Twelve towns were destroyed, six hundred men fell in the conflict, and no less than six hundred houses were burnt. Of the able-bodied men in the province of New England, one in twenty had perished, and one family in every twenty had been burnt out; altogether, the cost of this Indian war amounted to half a million sterling. Amidst the dreadful scenes which characterised this conflict, and whilst so many towns on the main were either wholly or partially destroyed, it is remarkable that the habitations of the peace-loving settlers on Rhode Island itself remained safe, and not a settler thereon received personal injury.

It has been remarked by some that Friends did not wholly abstain from taking means to protect their territory from the ravages of the Indians, and that boats were employed to ply around the island and keep them off. No account, however, appears, of any attempt on the part of the natives to land, or at least to do so in any forcible or aggressive manner. It is very easy to imagine that precautions might be taken for the protection of life and property under such circumstances, without violating in the slightest degree the doctrine which holds in abhorrence the slaying of our fellow-creatures; precautions, indeed, which, if omitted, would imply culpable neglect. The settlers on the island entertained the opinion that the Indians had in many respects been wronged by the whites, and of this opinion the

* Journal of W. Edmundson, p. 108.

Indians doubtless were not ignorant.* Friends, also, had evinced considerable interest in the welfare of the natives. In the year following the election of some of their body to the government of the colony, a Committee of the Assembly was appointed to "treat with the Indian Sachems, to prevent drunkenness among them."† Important civil rights were also granted to them under the administration of Friends; natives were allowed to serve on juries in cases affecting themselves, and their testimony was received in the courts as evidence.‡ The Indians, also, were unquestionably aware that the governors of Rhode Island were guided by principles of peace, and were not parties in the combination against them. They had, therefore, no incitement to kill and ravage the country of those who befriended them, and we find that they acted accordingly.

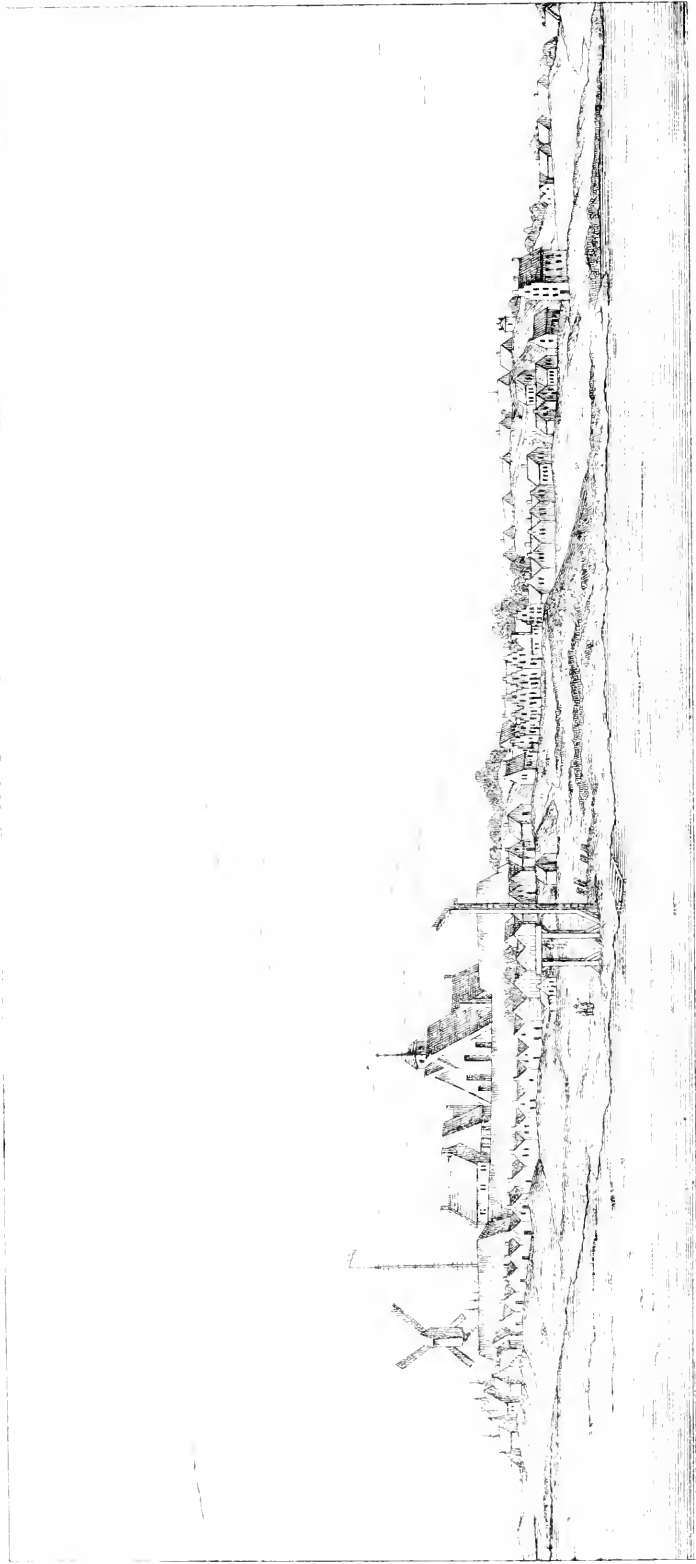
The rise and progress of the Society in New England down to about the year 1682 has now been related, and every year of its history to this period evinces that its planting was of the Lord. The early Friends of this province were deeply sensible of this, and their hearts were often lifted up in praise for this manifestation of divine goodness. "Blessed," they said, "were the feet of them that were sent to visit us, and brought the glad tidings of peace and the message of salvation." The Lord did indeed largely bless this portion of his visible church with the energy of his life-giving presence and power, and caused it to increase and flourish, and to rejoice in Him as the Rock of their salvation. "God is good to his spiritual Israel," they wrote; "many are grown and growing to that state to tell others what he hath done for their souls, and are instruments to draw and persuade many to taste and see how good He is." "We enjoy our meetings peaceably," was their language on another occasion, "and the Lord's presence and powerful word of life doth often fill our assemblies. Glory to His name for ever, who feeds his faithful ones with the finest of the wheat, and gives them honey out of the rock."

* Collection of Rhode Island Hist. Society, vol. iii. p. 93

† Ibid, p. 80.

‡ Ibid, p. 80.

NEW AMSTERDAM
and Eastern Manhattans.



NEW AMSTERDAM, NOW NEW YORK.

Taken from a Dutch Map of 1656.

Lithographed by Thomas Wells, 35, Bowchurch Lane, London.

CHAPTER XVII.

The rise of the Society in New York—Richard Smith, of Long Island, the first who joins Friends in that part—Some notice of him—Robert Hodgson, Richard Doudney, Mary Weatherhead, Dorothy Waugh, and Sarah Gibbons, land at New Amsterdam—Robert Hodgson and Robert Fowler visit the Governor—Mary Weatherhead and Dorothy Waugh preach in the streets of New Amsterdam—They are seized and placed in a dungeon—The labours of Robert Hodgson, Richard Doudney, and Sarah Gibbons, on Long Island—Robert Hodgson is arrested and taken to New Amsterdam—He is placed in a dungeon and undergoes much cruel persecution—Several of those who had joined Friends on Long Island suffer for their religious profession—The Dutch pass a law for the suppression of Friends—A remonstrance of the inhabitants of Long Island against the law—Persecution is continued with greater severity—Josiah Cole and Thomas Thurston visit New Netherlands—John Taylor and Mary Dyer visit Long Island—George Rofe visits the colony—John Bowne unites with Friends, and is subjected to much suffering—He is banished to Holland—The sentence of banishment reversed by the rulers of Holland—Their letter to the Governor of New Amsterdam on the subject—John Bowne returns to Long Island.

COEVAL with the rise of the Society of Friends within the province of New England, was its origin in that of New York, then termed New Amsterdam. The first individual of this part who professed our religious views was Richard Smith, of Long Island. He had come to Great Britain on some particular object, which is not explained; and whilst in this country became convinced of the principles of Friends, which he steadily maintained in after life. In the summer of 1656, he arrived at Boston with eight Friends from London, and together with them was in a summary manner banished from the shores of Massachusetts. The English Friends were obliged to return in the vessel in which they came, but Richard Smith was taken to Long Island.

Though under the jurisdiction of the Dutch authorities of New Netherlands, at least as far eastward as Oyster Bay,* Long Island was colonized chiefly by English, who had "fled" from Puritan New England to enjoy, under Dutch legislation, that religious liberty and civil protection which had been denied them by their own countrymen. Richard Smith was one of this class. In 1641, he "purchased of the Sachems a tract of land in the Narragansett country, remote from English settlements, where he erected a house of trade, and gave free entertainment to all travellers."† Callender, in his "Historical Discourse," states that about 1643 there were two trading houses set up in the Narragansett country, one of which belonged to Roger Williams and another party, the other to Richard Smith.‡ His land lay in the vicinity of the present town of Warwick; and the probability is, that on the breaking out of the war between the Narragansett Indians and the United Colonies of New England, Richard Smith left it for the more peaceful territory of Long Island. Subsequently, however, he returned to Narragansett; and John Burnyeat, who visited that part in 1672, mentions having a meeting at his house.§ Roger Williams, who was intimately acquainted with him, says he was of a very respectable family. In a testimony which he gave, relative to Richard Smith's title to some land, he thus speaks: "Mr. Richard Smith, for his conscience to God, left faire possessions in Gloucestershire, and adventured with his relations and estate to New England; he was a most acceptable inhabitant, and prime leading man in Taunton, in Plymouth colony. For his conscience sake (many differences arising) he left Taunton and came to y^e Narragansett country, where, by God's mercy and y^e favour of y^e Sachems, he broke the ice (at his great charge and

* By a treaty made in 1654 with the colonies of New England, it was agreed that the Dutch territory should extend on Long Island as far east as Oyster Bay.

† See Holmes' Annals, and Massachusetts Historical Society Transactions, vol. v.

‡ Callender's Historical Discourse, published by Romeo Elton, p. 92.

§ Journal of John Burnyeat, Barclay's Series, p. 212.

hazards), and put up in y^e thickest of y^e barbarians, y^e first English house amongst them." "There," he continues, "in his owne hous^e, with much serenity of soule, and comfort, he yielded up his spirit to God, y^e Father of spirits, in peace."*

The gospel messengers who crossed the Atlantic in Robert Fowler's vessel in 1657, were the first, of whom we have any account, that visited New Netherlands. Of the eleven who reached the shores of the new world on that occasion, five, viz., Robert Hodgson, Richard Doudney, Mary Weatherhead, Dorothy Waugh, and Sarah Gibbons, landed at New Amsterdam on the first of the Sixth Month, 1657. On the day following, being First-day, Robert Fowler and Robert Hodgson paid a religious visit to Stuyvesant, the governor. "He was moderate," remarks Robert Fowler, "both in words and actions." The friendly disposition which he evinced towards Friends on their landing, was, however, but of short duration. The change is attributed to the influence of some Puritans, more particularly of Captain Willet, a persecuting magistrate of Plymouth, who was then at New Amsterdam, and who laboured successfully to embitter the mind of the governor against the strangers, inducing him to adopt the exiling policy pursued in Massachusetts. The persecuting course adopted by the governor, and which directly contravened the express directions of the Colonial Proprietaries for the toleration of all religious classes, seems unaccountable; but it is partly explained by the fact, that a short time previous to the arrival of the Friends, a dispute had arisen between Stuyvesant and the authorities of New England, on the question of boundary; when the former, feeling himself the weaker of the two, was anxious to conciliate the New Englanders, to avoid an appeal to arms.

On the day following the visit of Robert Fowler and Robert Hodgson to the governor, Mary Weatherhead and Dorothy Waugh, under a feeling of religious duty, went into the streets of New Amsterdam and publicly exhorted the people. The scene was new to the Dutch citizens; and the magistrates, angry at such public ministrations, caused the two Friends to be arrested,

* Collections of the Rhode Island Hist. Society, vol. iii.

and committed them to noisome and filthy dungeons apart from each other. So unhealthful, indeed, were these places, that it was thought by some that the prisoners would not survive their incarceration.* After a confinement of eight days in these wretched abodes, they were brought out, and, having their hands bound behind them, were led to a boat about to sail for Rhode Island, and taken thither. The unsectarian soil of this colony, which the Puritans designated the "Island of error," was, in the apprehension of Stuyvesant, the most fitting abode for "Quaker heretics."

In the meantime, their fellow-labourers in the ministry, Robert Hodgson, Richard Doudney, and Sarah Gibbons, proceeded to visit the settlers on Long Island, who were mostly English. Among them were many sincere seekers after heavenly riches, who were prepared to appreciate those spiritual views of religion which these gospel messengers had to declare. They proceeded first to Gravesend, where their "testimony was received;" and from thence passed to Jamaica, "where they were received with gladness;"† and next to Hampstead, where also they met with settlers who welcomed them to their homes, and rejoiced in the spread of those living truths which were preached among them. Richard Doudney and Sarah Gibbons left their companions at Hampstead, and travelled, it is believed, to the eastern division of Long Island, then part of the colony of New Haven, from whence they crossed to Rhode Island.

On the First-day after Robert Hodgson arrived at Hampstead, he appointed a meeting to be held in an orchard, to which the inhabitants were invited. There lived in the town an Englishman, who was a magistrate under the Dutch government, and who having heard of the intended meeting, sent a constable to arrest Robert Hodgson. The officer arrived at the place of meeting before the appointed time, where he found his victim alone, pacing the orchard in quiet meditation. Robert Hodgson was immediately seized and carried before the magistrate, "who," he observes, "kept me a prisoner in his house," but

* Secret Works, p. 12.

† Howgill's Popish Inquisition, p. 6.

while he went to his worship in the fore-part of the day, many staid and heard the truth declared." The magistrate on his return finding that his house had answered the purpose of a chapel, and that his prisoner had had so favourable an opportunity for gospel labour, wrote a mittimus for his removal to another house. The change, however, did not prevent the people from visiting him. "In the latter part of the day," he remarks, "many came to me, and those that had been mine enemies, after they had heard truth, confessed to it."*

There resided at Hampstead another magistrate, who disapproved of the course adopted by his colleague towards the stranger, a feeling in which most of the respectable inhabitants of the town also participated. But the persecuting magistrate, "taking counsel of the baser sort,"† committed R. Hodgson to prison, and then set off for New Amsterdam to inform the governor of what had taken place. The proceedings met with the approval of Stuyvesant, who, determining to proceed with vigour in the suppression of the "Quaker heresy," forthwith despatched the sheriff and gaoler, with a guard of twelve musketeers, to bring the prisoner and those who had entertained him to new Amsterdam. On the arrival of these at Hampstead, Robert Hodgson was searched, and his bible, papers, and some other articles, being taken from him, he was pinioned in a barbarous manner and so kept until the following day. During this interval, the officers were busy in searching "for those who had entertained" the stranger, and on this ground two hospitable women were arrested. On the following day preparations were made for conveying the arrested parties to New Amsterdam. The two females were placed in a cart, to the hinder part of which they fastened Robert Hodgson in his pinioned condition. The distance they had to travel was nearly thirty miles, over bad roads, and through the woods. The journey, which was performed mostly during the night, was a very painful one to the prisoners, especially to R. Hodgson, who was much bruised and torn.

Having reached their destination, the two women were im-

* Howgill's Popish Inquisition, p. 7.

† Norton's Ensign, p. 15.

prisoned, but the period of their detention was short. The punishment of R. Hodgson, however, was one of great severity. Being loosed from the cart, he was led by the gaoler to one of the dungeons of the city, a place "full of vermin," says the prisoner, and "so odious, for wet and dirt, as I never saw."* On the following day, he was brought before the Court for examination, an English captain officiating as interpreter, but of the nature of the examination, or what passed on the occasion, we are uninformed. He was brought up the next day, when the sentence of the Court was read to him in their own language, and afterwards thus interpreted to him,—“It is the General’s pleasure, seeing you have behaved yourself thus, that you are to work two years at a wheelbarrow with a negro, or pay or cause to be paid 600 guilders.”† Robert Hodgson, conscious of his innocency, and that he had committed no breach of the laws of Holland, attempted to make his defence against the cruel decision. Stuyvesant, however, would not suffer him to speak, but remanded him to the wretched dungeon, with orders that none of his countrymen should be allowed to visit him. In a few days, he was again brought out, when a paper in the Dutch language was read to him. Of the nature of its contents he was ignorant, but the Dutch people who heard it “shook their heads” in token of disapprobation, and sympathized with the sufferer.

After a further incarceration of several days, he was brought out, and having been chained to a wheelbarrow, was commanded to work on some repairs of the city walls, which were then going forward. He felt restrained from recognising the dictation of his persecutors, and declined to obey. Excited at the unexpected refusal, the authorities, in order to reduce him to submission, directed “a lusty crabbed negro slave,”‡ to beat him with a tarred rope. The negro, obedient to the order of his masters, commenced the cruel task, and continued it until Robert Hodgson, faint from suffering, fell to the ground. The beating, severe as it had been, was not severe enough to satisfy the sheriff who superintended the affair. At his bidding the sufferer was raised,

* Howgill’s Popish Inquisition, p. 7. † Norton’s Ensign, p. 16.

‡ Gerard Croese’s History of Friends, part ii., p. 156.

and the negro commanded to renew his work. After an infliction of about one hundred blows, the prisoner fainted a second time. Having failed in their attempts to force him to work, the officers conducted him to the governor to complain of his obstinacy. The governor resided at the fort, and here Robert Hodgson was left the whole of the day. Towards noon the heat of the sun became oppressive, when, being unsheltered from its rays, and having for some time had but little food, oppressed also with his lacerated condition, he again fainted. On the following day he was again commanded to work, but steadfast to his convictions, he still refused. During these sufferings, his mind, he observes, "was staid upon the Lord," and he was sweetly refreshed and strengthened by His living power.

Having been closely confined in the dungeon for about a week, Robert Hodgson had to endure sufferings of a still more barbarous description. The hard-hearted Stuyvesant, by some of the settlers in milder tone called "hard headed," unrelenting towards the victim of his displeasure, now ordered him to be stripped to the waist, to be hung up by the hands with weights attached to his feet, and, thus suspended, to be beaten severely with rods. The sentence was executed with great cruelty, after which he was again led to his miserable abode, and for two days and nights kept without food. "Afterwards," remarks the sufferer, "they took me forth again, and asked me if I would pay the fine; but I told them I could not." The command to work was then repeated, and continuing to refuse, he was a second time suspended by the hands, and cruelly beaten.

Being greatly exhausted by his sufferings, Robert Hodgson solicited that some of the English inhabitants of the city might be allowed to visit him. His request having been granted, he was soon visited by a feeling woman, who gave the needful attention to his wounds, and administered to his wants; but his body was so torn, and his strength so reduced, that she expected death in another day, would terminate all his sufferings. The tender-hearted woman on her return home, informed her husband of Robert Hodgson's critical state. It excited his commiseration, and in his anxiety for the recovery of the sufferer, he immediately

offered the authorities "a fat ox" to be allowed to remove him from the dungeon to his own dwelling, where he might receive proper attention, and have those comforts of which his miserable abode was destitute. The offer of the humane settler being communicated to Stuyvesant, this mercenary governor refused to allow the removal of the prisoner, unless the fine were paid of six hundred guilders. The sufferings of Robert Hodgson had excited the sympathy of many others in New Amsterdam, "both Dutch and English," and on the refusal of the governor to accept the ransom, a number of them came forward and offered to raise the amount requisite to obtain his release. He, however, did not feel easy to accept his liberation on this principle, and in a belief that the Lord would heal him, and that strength would be given him to labour for his sustenance during his imprisonment, he declined the kind offer of the citizens. He now rapidly recovered, and in a few days was sufficiently strong to work, "not being free," he observed "to partake of the coarse prison diet, without labouring for it."

The cruelties to which Robert Hodgson had been subjected, caused no small degree of excitement among the settlers in New Netherlands. The colony had been famed for its religious toleration, and emigrants from different regions had sought it as a land where freedom of conscience was especially recognised. It soon became known that the persecution of Friends was mainly attributable to the malevolent whispers of Captain Willett, of Massachusetts, who received very intelligible intimations from the colonists of their dissatisfaction with his conduct. Willett, anxious to regain the esteem which he had so justly forfeited, now petitioned the governor for Robert Hodgson's release. A sister of Stuyvesant, whose sympathies were enlisted on behalf of the sufferer, also exerted her influence for his liberation. The aversion of the colonists to religious persecution, together with the entreaties of Willett and the governor's sister, obtained the object, and thus, without paying any portion of the fine, Robert Hodgson was again at liberty to pursue his gospel labours. His discharge took place about the middle of the Seventh Month, 1657, soon after which he proceeded to Rhode Island.

Persecution within the limits of New Netherlands, was not confined to the gospel labourers who visited it from England. Several of the inhabitants of Long Island, who had embraced the principles of Friends, were also subjected to suffering for their religion, among the earliest of whom were John Tilton, Joane Chatterton, Henry Townsend, Tobias Feak or Fecco, and Edward Hart. In the Seventh Month, 1657, Henry Townsend, who resided at Jamaica, was fined eight pounds for having assisted Robert Hodgson in holding a meeting. Stuyvesant, imitating the intolerant legislation of Massachusetts, enacted a law which provided that if any of the settlers should receive a Friend into their houses, but for a night, they should be fined fifty pounds; one-third of which was to be paid to the informer, whose name, in order to promote the operation of the law, was to be kept secret. Another provision was, that if any Friends should be brought into that jurisdiction, the vessel in which they came should be forfeited, with all its goods.*

The law which Stuyvesant had passed for the suppression of Quakerism, being a new feature in the government of the colony, produced considerable dissatisfaction among the settlers on Long Island, particularly among those residing at Flushing. Tobias Fecco, the sheriff, and Edward Hart, the town clerk of that place, were prominent in the expression of this feeling; and the latter, having drawn up a remonstrance to the governor on the subject, convened a meeting of the inhabitants of Flushing and its vicinity, in order that the document might receive their sanction. The document was approved by the meeting, signed, and committed to the care of the sheriff, to be forwarded to the governor.

The protest was presented to the governor and council on the twenty-ninth of the Tenth Month. Stuyvesant was highly indignant at its presentation. The spirit of independence which it breathed, was construed to be "mutinous;" and orders were immediately issued for the arrest of the sheriff as the bearer of it. The fact that two of the magistrates of Flushing, and Edward Hart, the town clerk, had attached their names to the document,

* New England Jugged, p. 218.

attracted the special attention of the governor and council, and warrants were forthwith dispatched to Long Island, requiring their personal appearance. In three days, Edward Farrington and William Noble, the two magistrates, were arraigned before the council, and in a summary manner committed to prison. These arbitrary proceedings were, in the opinion of the two enlightened magistrates, altogether unconstitutional, and at variance with that liberty of conscience which the proprietors designed should be recognised in the province, and after a week's imprisonment they concluded to represent their views to the authorities, and addressed a letter to them on the subject. "Our patent," they said, "we call our charter; we have heard it read, and do conceive it grants liberty of conscience without modification, either of brevet or benefice." Their construction of the liberal meaning of the patent was clearly the correct one, but they wished to avoid the appearance of self-confidence. "If we are in the dark therein," they continued, "we desire your honours to direct us." Stuyvesant, however, was inflexible. Anxious to escape from their miserable abode, the prisoners on the following day, addressed a short petition to the court, praying for pardon; this met with a more favourable reception, and Farrington and Noble were released from gaol, but with the restriction to "remain on the Manhattan, under promise to appear at the first summons." Edward Hart appeared before the court on the 3rd of the Eleventh Month, and having been charged with the authorship of the protest, was sent to gaol to wait their further orders.

The council of New Amsterdam, following up their intolerant proceedings, issued a summons in a few days, for the appearance of Henry Townsend. The complaint preferred against him was for having entertained and corresponded with Friends. In about a week he obeyed the summons, when, "as an example for other transgressors and contumelious offenders," he was condemned "in an amende of three hundred guilders, to be applied as it ought to be, and that he shall remain arrested till the said amende shall be paid, besides the costs and mises of justice."

John Tilton of Gravesend was another victim of Stuyvesant's hatred to Friends. A warrant having been issued for his appre-

hension, for receiving and entertaining a banished woman Friend, he forwarded to the Court a defence of his case, in which he stated, that the Friend came to his house during his absence ; his statement, however, was unavailing, and on the 10th of the Eleventh Month he was sentenced to pay “an amende of £12. Flanders, with costs and mises of justice.” His offence is thus set forth in the records of the council: “Whereas, John Tilton, residing at South Gravesend, now under arrest, has dared to provide a Quaker woman with lodging, who was banished out of the province of New Netherlands ; so, too, some other persons of the adherents, belonging to the abominable sect of the Quakers, which is directly contrary to the orders and placards of the director-general and council of New Netherlands, and therefore, as an example to others, ought to be severely punished.”

The day on which John Tilton received his sentence, John Townsend was brought before the Court. He was one of those who had signed the protest at Flushing, and there were circumstances which led the authorities to suspect that he was otherwise favourably disposed towards Friends. He was therefore committed to prison, while the attorney-general made enquiry if he had in any manner contravened the orders of the governor.

Whether any others of those who signed the protest adopted at the meeting at Flushing, were proceeded against, it does not appear. The Flushing remonstrance, however, was a subject of grave deliberation with the governor and council, and with a view to discourage such expressions of opinion in future, in the First Month, 1658, a minute in council was drawn up, from which the following is extracted :—

“ We, director-general and council in New Netherlands, having maturely considered the mutinous orders and resolutions adopted by the sheriff, clerk, magistrates, and the majority of the inhabitants of the village Vlessingen, signed on the 27th of December, 1657, and delivered a few days after to the director-general by the sheriff, Tobias Fecco, by which resolution they not only contemn, infringe, and oppose the aforesaid order of the director-general and council against the Quakers, and other sectarians, daring to

express themselves in so many words, that they cannot stretch out their arms against them, to punish, banish, or persecute them by imprisonment; that they, so as God shall move their consciences, will admit each sectarian in their houses and villages, and permit them to leave these again, which, as said before, is contrary to the orders and placards of the director-general and council, and directly in opposition of these; a case, indeed, of the worst and most dangerous tendency, as treading, absolutely, the authority of the director-general and council under their feet, and, therefore, well deserved to be corrected and punished, for an example to others, with the total annihilation of the privileges and exemptions which were granted from time to time to the aforesaid village; and besides this, with a corporal punishment and banishment of each one who signed the aforesaid mutinous resolution. But the director-general and council, in the hope of greater prudence in future, are actuated towards their subjects more by mercy than by the extremes of rigorous justice; more so, as they were inclined by several circumstances to believe that many, yea, the majority, were encouraged by the previous signatures of the sheriff, clerk, and some of the magistrates. Wherefore, the director-general and council pardon, remit, and forgive this transgression against the authority of the director-general and council." The minute then refers to the appointment of a magistrate for Flushing more versed in the Dutch language, and provides "that in future no similar meetings shall be convoked or holden, except for highly interesting or pregnant reasons, which shall previously be communicated to the director-general and council by the sheriff, &c.;" and it concludes by commanding the inhabitants of Flushing "to look out for a good, pious, and orthodox minister," and that such an one should be "encouraged," by their providing for him "a decent maintenance."

About one year after the landing at New Netherlands of the Friends who came in the "Woodhouse," Josiah Cole and Thomas Thurston arrived in the province. They had travelled inland from Virginia, and had religious service among the Indians, who received them kindly and heard them with attention, but soon after they

had entered the territory of the Dutch, they were arrested, imprisoned for a few hours, and then carried under an escort of soldiery, to an adjacent island, supposed to be Staten Island. A few Dutch families had settled at this place; special orders, however, were given that none of them should entertain the strangers, or assist them to leave the island. The sufferers, after remaining there for two days, met with some kindly disposed Indians, who conveyed them to Long Island, "where," observes Josiah Cole, "we found some Friends in the Truth, by whom we were much refreshed."* Soon after their arrival in Long Island, Josiah Cole left his companion, "he not being of ability," he remarks, "to travel on so fast as it lay upon me." Having travelled about one hundred and fifty miles on Long Island, he crossed over to New England.

The inhabitants of Long Island were settled chiefly on that part of it which lay contiguous to the continent. At its eastern extremity, however, and in the small Islands adjacent, there were those who had embraced the principles of Friends, among whom the name of Nathaniel Silvester deserves notice. He was the sole proprietor of Shelter Island,† which lies in an inlet of the sea near the eastern point of Long Island, measuring in extent about five miles from east to west, and about seven miles from north to south. Of the period when he became possessed of this interesting little domain, or when he joined in religious profession with Friends, we are uninformed, but as early as the Third Month, 1659, he is referred to as one who had adopted our principles. It was in that year, that Laurence and Cassandra Southwick, on being driven from their home in Massachusetts, sought and found an asylum in the territory of this island; there is, indeed, good reason to believe, that its name is derived from the refuge which it afforded to the victims of intolerance. William Robinson, writing to George Fox about this time, speaks of its owner as "a fine noble man." The liberality and kindness of Nathaniel Silvester became known to Friends in

* Letter of Josiah Cole to G. Bishop, 1658.

† Journal of John Taylor, p. 5; and Letter of W. Robinson to George Fox, 1659.

England, and John Taylor of York, when he visited America in 1659, first landed on the shores of Shelter Island,* and was, he says, "very kindly received." Except this island, and the colony of Rhode Island, there was not at this time a nook in the colonies of North America, on which a Friend could land, without exposing himself to severe suffering, and the ship-master to a heavy penalty. The possession, therefore, of the island in question, by one who loved the truth, was a providential circumstance, peculiarly favourable to Friends at this juncture, and not to be viewed as one of mere chance.

John Taylor next passed to Long Island, "to seek," as he remarks "the lost." In its villages and towns, he found "many sober people that feared God, and were convinced of the blessed Truth;" and who, he continues, "received me and my testimony readily with gladness, and many meetings of the people were settled under the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ, our Free Teacher, at Gravesend, Scatancott, Oyster Bay, Hemstead and other places." In the "woods and wilderness" on Long Island, he adds, "we also had meetings." While thus pursuing his gospel labours, he was joined in the winter of 1659, by Mary Dyer; "several brave meetings," he writes, "we had together, and the Lord's power and presence was with us gloriously."†

The next gospel minister who appears to have visited New Netherlands, was George Rofe. After labouring in Virginia and Maryland, he reached the Dutch province in 1661, "having sailed in a small boat with only two Friends." I had good service, "he writes," among both Dutch and English. I was in the chief city of the Dutch, and gave a good sound, but they forced me away; and so we had meetings through the islands in good service."‡

Among the convinced who resided at Gravesend on Long Island, Croese the Dutch historian mentions the "Countess of Mordee" who had previously professed with the Puritans, and whom he terms "a noble lady." The meetings of Friends at

* Journal of J. Taylor, p. 5.

† Ibid, 8.

‡ Letter of G. Rofe, to R. Hubberthorne, 1661.

Gravesend were held in her house: "but," says Croese, "she managed it with that prudence and observance of time and place, as gave no offence to any stranger, or person of another religion, and so she and her people remained free from all molestation and disturbance."* At Flushing, however, things were different; and, unprotected by the influence of the rich, Friends were driven to hold their meetings in the adjacent woods. These were occasionally attended by other professors, among whom was Hannah Bowne, who soon united with the persecuted community. Her husband John Bowne, desirous to ascertain more particulars of the sect to which his wife had now become united, went on one occasion to see Friends during the time of their meeting in the woods. The beauty and simplicity of their worship, made a deep and lasting impression on his mind, and having his heart expanded in love towards the hunted little company, he generously invited them for the future to hold their meetings at his house, an offer which, it appears, was readily accepted. Dwelling near the fountain of all true knowledge and wisdom, John Bowne was soon given to see that the principles which his wife had embraced, harmonized with the doctrines of Christ his Saviour, and under this conviction, he also openly professed with the united, small, persecuted flock.

The conscientious course pursued by John Bowne drew down the displeasure of the authorities of New Amsterdam, and in the Sixth Month, 1662, a complaint was preferred against him for permitting the meetings of Friends to be held at his house.† He was accordingly arrested, sentenced to pay a fine of £25. Flemish, together with the court charges, and expressly admonished to discontinue the meetings under the penalty of banishment. Having refused to pay the unjust imposition, he was committed to a noisome dungeon at New Amsterdam, where, says Bishop, "he was kept very long, and well nigh famished to death."‡ The governor, finding that this punishment was ineffectual to reduce the prisoner to submission, determined to enforce the threat of banishment. Having been taken to the

* Albany Records. † Croese Hist. of Friends, part II. p. 157.

‡ New England Judged, p. 422.

Stadthouse, where his wife and friends were permitted to see him, J. Bowne was informed that it was resolved he should pay the fine within three months, or be exiled from the country. The cruel edict, however, did not induce him to deny his Lord, and continuing steadfast, he was in the Tenth Month, placed on board a Dutch vessel, and conveyed to Holland. The banishment of a settler on account of religion, from the dominions of the Dutch, was a circumstance so extraordinary, that the colonial authorities at New Amsterdam deemed it prudent to forward a despatch to the directors of the West India Company, by the ship which bore John Bowne into exile, in which the nature of his offence was explained. The following is a copy of the despatch.

“Honourable, right respectable Gentlemen,—We omitted in our general letter the troubles and difficulties which we, and many of our good inhabitants, have since some time met with ; and which are daily renewed, by the sect called Quakers, chiefly in the country, and principally in the English villages, establishing forbidden conventicles, and frequenting those against our published placards ; and disturbing, in a manner, the public peace ; in so far, that several of our magistrates and well-affectioned subjects remonstrated and complained to us, from time to time, of their insufferable obstinacy, unwilling to obey our orders or judgment.

“Among others, one of their principal leaders, John Bowne, who, for his transgression, was, in conformity to the placards, condemned in an amende of 150 guilders ; who has been now under arrest more than three months, for his unwillingness to pay, obstinately persisting in his refusal, in which he still continues, we at last resolved, or were rather compelled to transport him in this ship from this province, in the hope that others might by it be discouraged. If, nevertheless, by these means, no more salutary impression is made upon others, we shall, though against our inclinations, be compelled to prosecute such persons in a more severe manner. On which we previously solicit to be favoured with your honours’ wise and foreseeing judgment, &c.

“*Fort Amsterdam, New Netherlands, Jan. 9th, 1663.*”

John Bowne arrived in Holland in the Second Month, 1663, and feeling that the cause for which he suffered was a just and righteous one, and that his political rights had been outraged, he naturally sought redress for his wrongs. Benjamin Furly and William Caton, who were at that time in Holland, assisted him ; and in company with them he obtained several interviews with the Directors of the West India Company. These were men of enlightened consciences, who prized religious freedom as one of the greatest blessings of their land. They could not, therefore, sanction the illiberal and persecuting policy of the colonial legislature, and in a few weeks after John Bowne had landed in Holland, the directors reversed his sentence, and returned the following enlightened reply to the rulers at New Amsterdam :—

“ Amsterdam, 16th April, 1663.

“ We finally did see, from your last letter, that you had exiled and transported hither a certain Quaker, named John Bowne, and although it is our cordial desire that similar and other sectarians might not be found there, yet as the contrary seems to be the fact, we doubt very much if vigorous proceedings against them ought not to be discontinued, except you intend to check and destroy your population ; which, however, in the youth of your existence, ought rather to be encouraged by all possible means : Wherefore, it is our opinion, that some connivance would be useful ; that the consciences of men, at least, ought ever to remain free and unshackled. Let every one be unmolested, as long as he is modest ; as long as his conduct in a political sense is irreproachable ; as long as he does not disturb others, or oppose the government. This maxim of moderation has always been the guide of the magistrates of this city, and the consequence has been that, from every land, people have flocked to this asylum. Tread thus in their steps, and, we doubt not, you will be blessed.


“ ABRAHAM WILMENDONK.

“ DAVID VAN BAERLE.”

Having received full permission from the directors of the West

India Company to return to his home, with a guarantee of protection and of entire religious liberty, John Bowne, after visiting some of his relatives and friends in England, and also the island of Barbadoes, reached Flushing again in the early part of 1664. From this period full toleration was enjoyed by the Society of Friends in the Dutch possessions of North America. It is said that Stuyvesant on meeting John Bowne, soon after his return from banishment, expressed his regret for the course he had pursued, and assured him that neither he nor his friends would be molested for the future. The letter of the directors, doubtless, under the divine blessing, produced this change in the conduct of the governor. His opportunity, however, of exhibiting a different policy was but short; preparations were then making by the English for the war by which, before the conclusion of the same year, New Netherlands was wrested from the Dutch, and became a British colony under the name of New York.

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