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By Charles Francis Adams.

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MASSACHUSETTS
ITS HISTORIANS AND ITS HISTORY

AN OBJECT LESSON

BY

CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
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1898

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PREFACE.

Quincy, *September* 29, 1893.

My dear Professor Channing:—

While occupied last winter on historical work in connection with a forthcoming publication of the Prince Society on Antinomianism in the Colony of Massachusetts Bay, 1636–1638, I found myself led into an investigation the results of which were, in character, generally radical and somewhat iconoclastic. As I went on I became curious to see how those results would impress a class of students just entering upon history as a study.

You were kind enough to offer me, being an Overseer of the College, one of your classes to experiment on; and, as you remember, in April I occupied your desk for two morning hours. What I wished to say had to be greatly compressed to get it within the allotted time; but my audience, I thought, took rather kindly to views, general and particular, which would hardly have been encouraged in the Cambridge of forty years ago.

The four lectures, then condensed into two, I now publish entire; and ask for them your consideration, as well as that of the members of the class I addressed.

Believe me, etc.,
Charles Francis Adams.

Prof. Edward Channing, Cambridge, Mass.

MASSACHUSETTS:

ITS HISTORIANS AND ITS HISTORY.

I.

On corresponding panels of the inner front of the Water-Gate at the Chicago World's Fair are these two inscriptions, prepared by President Eliot of Harvard, — at the left, as one faces to the east, "Civil Liberty The Means of Building up Personal and National Character;" at the right, "Toleration in Religion The Best Fruit of the last Four Centuries." Obviously, the last is the stronger, much the more comprehensive legend. But, in fact, the causes were, and are, equal as well as inseparable; and it is the struggle for them — for Freedom of Conscience on the one hand, and the Equality of Man before the Law on the other — which constitutes the theme of modern history. Nor does it make much difference where or when or how or by whom the course of that struggle is studied, — though it cannot be studied in too many phases or under too varied conditions, — it is an aspect, and the last great aspect, of human development. One writer of books of history, and one such writer only, so far as I know, has addressed himself to the subject in a comprehensive spirit; and he fell by the way, even as he crossed the threshold. Henry Thomas Buckle died more than thirty years ago, at the age of forty-one, leaving behind him the "Introduction" only of a great historical conception.

We are now drawing towards the close of the nineteenth century, and the struggle, or rather the phase of development to which I have referred, is just four hundred years old; nor is it yet ended. It may be said to have begun with the discovery of America; and before it ends it will witness the settlement of innermost Africa. During all that period it has been one long stage of warfare, — a warfare carried on in many countries, and under conditions leading to different results, but always to one end; just as it is said all roads lead to Rome, so the story of that warfare, though told in a polyglot of many parts, is only one long refrain. We of the Anglo-Saxon race are most familiar with the circumstances and incidents of the struggle as it took place in England; though, as I shall presently show, we do now and again get glimpses of other phases and episodes of the great epic as it worked its slow way along in Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Holland, and finally here in America; and, as we get those glimpses, we note that the underlying thesis is always the same, though the historians have seemed to have but a dim conception of the fact, — no matter where, or in what mood or language they wrote, they were but engaged in developing some scene, or at most some act, in the one great drama, — the Emancipation of Man from Superstition and Caste.

I have said that it does not make much difference where the phases of this drama are studied, whether in England, or Scotland, or the Netherlands, or Germany, or France, or Spain; so now I propose to study them in our own home history, that of New England and more especially of Massachusetts, — I might almost say of Cambridge, — for here, on Cambridge Common on the 27th of May, 1637, and again in the first meeting-house which stood on Mt. Auburn Street, in November of that same year, and yet again under the Washington Elm one hundred and thirty-eight years later, events occurred, the influence of which on the great struggle were world-wide, and lasted and will yet last through centuries.

Approached in any other than this wide spirit, history is little more than what Macaulay termed it in one of his spirited metrical pieces, — "a nurse's tale;" — the stories of the separate epochs, eras and countries, told for themselves and by themselves, become so many narratives more or less dull or interesting according to the author's skill in dealing with the incidents or characters which may chance to come in his way; and of little more philosophical and resulting value than so many romances or poems. But if any phase of the subject is approached in the broad, catholic spirit, the result cannot fail to work in the end into the great whole. The underlying plot, let me repeat, is always the same, — it is merely a question of scene and rôle. Referring only to some of those using our own language, it is now Froude who tells a part of the story from the English point of view; and Henry VIII., Mary of Scotland and Elizabeth are the actors, while Philip II. stands in the background and the great Armada moves across the stage: — then Gardiner takes the same story up an act later on, and Charles II., Strafford and Cromwell, — the Cavaliers and the Roundheads, — play their parts: finally Macaulay opens the next act with that revolution of 1688 which proved to be the crisis in the English phase of the drama. Or, if we go to the continent of Europe, we can study the wholly different aspect and outcome of the Spanish side of the evolution in the pages of Robertson, Buckle and Prescott, with Ferdinand the Catholic and Isabella of Castille, the Emperor Charles and Philip II., — Columbus, Torquemada and Alva, — holding the leading parts. But the play and the plot are the same, — the scene only is shifted. Carlyle gives us two other scenes, — one in Germany, known as the wars of Silesia, and the other the final climax of the third Act in the catastrophe of the French Revolution, with its Rights of Man and Worship of Reason. Then, if we go back for a couple of centuries, and once more shift the scene, we can study the development of the plot in Holland through the pages of Motley, while the great figure of William the Silent looms up before us.

But the drama was not confined to Europe. Scenes, and not unimportant nor uninteresting scenes in it, were laid here in America, in New England, in Massachusetts, and these scenes are my present subject, — only let it be always remembered they were scenes, — and to this fact they owe their whole value in history, — they were scenes in the world-drama.

So far as Emancipation from Caste, or the Equality of Man before the Law, is concerned, this much must be said of it as compared with Religious Toleration, — it is exclusively and wholly an outcome of the last four centuries, — their offspring; whereas Religious Toleration is, in a way, only a revival. For, though it may sound like a paradox, it is historically well settled that religious persecution followed in the wake of Christianity, — followed it, indeed, as a logical necessity. There is no utterance of Christ more sadly prophetic than when, declaring that his mission was not to send peace on the earth, but a sword, he added, — "I come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother."

Before Christ preached, or Christians either were persecuted or themselves persecuted others and each other, the pagan systems unquestionably had their sacrifices; and those sacrifices, as every one knows, not infrequently included human victims: but the cause of sacrifice was rarely difference of faith. The offering was, on the contrary, merely a blood-offering; and, as in the cases of Abraham and Isaac, of Agamemnon and Iphigenia, and of "the daughter of the warrior Gileadite," the victim was quite as likely to be one of the family and the faith as an alien and an unbeliever. In Greece and Rome forms of worship infinite in variety were tolerated; for, as Gibbon characteristically remarks, they "were all considered by the people as equally true; by the philosopher as equally false; and by the magistrate as equally useful. And thus toleration produced not only mutual indulgence, but even religious concord." Even the Jew — the Hebrew, who tolerated no one — was by the Greeks and Romans tolerated; a fact to which Paul bore evidence when in his famous sermon on Mars Hill to the Athenians he said, — "As I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, 'to the Unknown God';" and, in the beginning of the fourth century, the Emperor Galerius, in his famous edict as respects the Christians, enunciated the whole principle of Religious Toleration, saying, — "We permit them, therefore, freely to profess their private opinions, and to assemble in their conventicles without fear of molestation, provided always that they preserve a due respect to the established laws and government." And it will be well to note here the words "freely to profess their private opinions" and "assemble in their conventicles," for the permission in these words accorded constitutes the essence of Religious Toleration.

But in Christianity there was, and for that matter still is, a large infusion of Judaism; and the fundamental claim of Judaism was The One True Faith, with the angry and the jealous God behind it. So, almost at once, the very different path trod by the Saviour turned into the straight and narrow way which alone led to that gate of which Saint Peter held the keys; and, as the life on earth became a mere brief prelude to the everlasting life to come, — as Salvation awaited the True Believer and Eternal Perdition the Unbeliever, — as these tenets — the tenets of all the earlier, and most later, Christians — obtained foothold, intolerance and persecution followed. So Christ brought the sword!

The world moves slowly. The easy-going toleration of Greece and Rome disappeared in presence of Judaism, and the time came when Hebraized Christianity superseded the mythologies as the religion of the state; until, about eight hundred years ago, the rule of uniformity was established. Thereafter, as Gibbon asserts, a spiritual empire acquired by fraud was defended by violence. Universal conformity was exacted, and toleration, becoming a thing extinct, was in process of time forgotten; or, worse than forgotten, remembered and loathed as a feature of paganism. The One True Faith knew it not; nor, indeed, could know it.

This rule of religious conformity prevailed from the beginning of the eleventh to the beginning of the sixteenth century, and was enforced both then and later by all necessary measures, whether Catholic or Calvinistic, including excommunication, persecution, crusades, the Inquisition and other agencies, whether civil, — numbering the block, the gallows, the wheel and the fagot, — or spiritual, stimulated by terror of the rack in this world and hell-fire in the next. But now, as the nineteenth century is drawing to a close, there are quite as many phases of religious belief in communities not, like Spain, still mediæval, as there were altars in Athens; and they are treated with much the same forbearance. Thus in the matter of Religious Toleration the world has struggled painfully back to where it was when Paul preached on Mars Hill. So, as I said, Religious Toleration is in a way a revival; not a discovery.

Nor does this statement of historical facts imply that the persecutions and bloodshed which made terrible centuries of European existence were, however unnecessary, otherwise than inevitable. On the contrary, they were the logical outcome of existing conditions, and as such in no way to be avoided. The impelling power of an unquestioning, fanatical faith was necessary for the work in hand and then to be done. That sufficed, and nothing less would have sufficed, to lift civilization to a higher plane. Among phases of religious belief it was a plain case of the survival of the fittest. Fanaticism implies intolerance; and intolerance persecution. The world struggled through ten centuries of both to attain the Religious Toleration of to-day; and the mature Christian Religious Toleration of to-day is on a plane vastly more lofty than the crude, indifferent Pagan toleration of the earlier time. The two are merely akin.

But with the principle of Human Equality before the Law nothing worthy to claim even kinship can be found in the past. It is the creation of the last four centuries. More than that, the battle over it has only recently been fought out here in America; and, elsewhere, is not yet wholly fought out even in Europe. Caste and slavery die hard.

Taking then this drama of modern history, — this Emancipation from Superstition and Caste, with its two underlying principles of Religious Toleration and Equality before the Law, — what part has America played in it? So far as Equality before the Law is concerned, — personal, civil liberty, — the record of no community seems to me more creditable, more consistent, nor, indeed, more important than that of the community composing the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The idea was the offspring of the English Commonwealth. Its godfathers were Hampden and Milton and Cromwell. It found inarticulate expression in the death of King Charles. No portion of the world was, however, then ready to accept so startling a paradox. All existing habits, traditions, institutions, — social, political, religious, — recoiled from it. It seemed like an absurdity on its face, to assert that the peasant who turned the clod was, before the law, or anywhere else, the equal of the lord at whose castle's gate he lived, or of the priest who represented God. Such an idea no more found acceptance with the peasant than it did with the lord or the priest. Indeed, the first, no long time before, had been a serf, — an adjunct to the soil and inseparable from it. Though a protest against human inequality, the English Commonwealth was, accordingly, only a passing protest. Law, usage, tradition, were forces too powerful to be at once overcome; and the hereditary, privileged-class principle reasserted itself. But meanwhile the germinal idea of the Commonwealth had been transferred across the Atlantic. It was there planted in Massachusetts, where it slowly developed under the most favoring of possible conditions. At first it was accepted here hardly more than it had been in England. The magistrates talked of the "common people;" and one code of criminal law applied to them, while another applied to the gentry. But there was no king and no noble in the land, and in the church and the town-meeting all stood upon a footing of absolute equality. Slavery also existed for a time; but it was only in its least objectionable form. No large gangs of bondsmen ever worked under overseers. Never organized, the system died a natural death. Thus when the Massachusetts Constitution of 1780 went into effect, all the opposing forces had disappeared, and the principle of human equality before the law, theoretically enunciated in the Declaration, was a thing in practice in New England. The country, as a whole, accepted it only subject to limitations. It applied but to white men. Then in due course of time followed the long slavery struggle, in which Massachusetts was arrayed against Virginia, the Puritan idea against the idea of caste. Not until April, 1865, was the question definitely settled.

The history of Massachusetts is, therefore, the record of the gradual and practical development of a social and political truth of the first importance. Viewed in this light, the passage of the Red Sea was not a more momentous event than the voyage of the Mayflower; and the founding of Boston was fraught with consequences hardly less important than those which resulted from the founding of Rome. Hence, too much labor cannot be devoted to the history of Massachusetts. Its every detail merits the closest scrutiny; for, from the days of the settlement, through the revolutionary troubles, down to the fall of slavery, so far as the principles of civil liberty and human rights are concerned, Massachusetts has always been at the front. In one century, acting from Philadelphia, through the Continental Congress and the Declaration, on the French Assembly in Paris, and, in another, through the broken Confederacy, on Spain and Brazil, her influence has been world-wide. The backbone of the movement which preceded the French Revolution, she inspired the agitation which ended in the fall of African slavery.

Such has been the Massachusetts record as respects Equality before the Law; as respects Religious Toleration it has been of a character wholly different. Upon that issue, indeed, not only has Massachusetts failed to make herself felt, but her record as a whole, and until a comparatively recent period, has been scarcely even creditable. This, too, was the case from the beginning.

The story opens with the contested charter election of 1637, as a result of which Governor John Winthrop replaced Governor Sir Harry Vane as chief executive of the colony. This election took place in the open air upon what is now Cambridge Common, on the 27th day of May.[1] Four months later it was followed by the gathering of the first Synod of Massachusetts churches; which again, meeting here in Cambridge, doubtless held its sessions in the original meeting-house standing on what is now called Mount Auburn Street.[1] The Synod sat through twenty-four days, during which it busied itself unearthing heterodox opinions and making the situation uncomfortable for those suspected of heresy, until it had spread upon its record no less than eighty-two such "opinions, some blasphemous, others erroneous, and all unsafe," besides "nine unwholesome expressions," all alleged to be rife in the infant community. Having performed this feat, it broke up amid general congratulations "that matters had been carried on so peaceably, and concluded so comfortably in all love." Finally, here in Cambridge, also, and without doubt in the same meeting-house, took place the trial of the archheretic Mistress Anne Hutchinson, and on the 18th of November, 1637, she was condemned to banishment.

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[1] The scope of the present study does not admit of a statement of details, and an acquaintance with the leading facts in New England history is assumed. I have narrated the events which led up to the momentous election of 1637, and described what then occurred, in the second of my *Three Episodes of Massachusetts History*. The present publication is an outgrowth of that work, and, to be read intelligently, should be read in connection with it.

As the twig is bent, the tree inclines. The Massachusetts twig was here and then bent; and, as it was bent, it during hard upon two centuries inclined. The question of Religious Toleration was, so far as Massachusetts could decide it, decided in 1637 in the negative. On that issue Massachusetts then definitely and finally renounced all claim or desire to head the advancing column, or even to be near the head of the column; it did not go to the rear, but it went well towards it, and there it remained until the issue was decided. But it is curious to note from that day to this how the exponents of Massachusetts polity and thought, whether religious or historical, have, so to speak, wriggled and squirmed in the presence of the record. "Shuffling," as George Bishop, the Quaker writer, expressed it in 1703, "and endeavoring to Evade the Guilt of it, being ashamed to own it: So that they seldom mention to any purpose, even in their Histories." They did so in 1637, when they were making the record up; they have done so ever since. There was almost no form of sophistry to which the founders of Massachusetts did not have recourse then, — for they sinned against light, though they deceived themselves while sinning; and there is almost no form of sophistry to which the historians of Massachusetts have not had recourse since, — really deceiving themselves in their attempt to deceive others. And it is to this aspect of the case — what may perhaps be not unfitly described as the filio-pietistic historical aspect of it — that I propose to address myself. For in the study of history there should be but one law for all. Patriotism, piety and filial duty have nothing to do with it; — they are, indeed, mere snares and sources of delusion. The rules and canons of criticism applied in one case and to one character, must be sternly and scrupulously applied in all other similar cases and to all other characters; and, while surrounding circumstances should, and, indeed, must be taken into careful consideration, they must be taken into equal consideration, no matter who is concerned. Patriotism in the study of history is but another name for provincialism. To see history truly and correctly, it must be viewed as a whole.

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[1] The original meeting-house of Cambridge stood on the corner of what are now known as Mt. Auburn and Dunster streets. It was, probably, a primitive, temporary structure of hewn logs, covered with thatch, and was replaced in 1649 by the second meeting-house, which stood within the limits of the present college yard, nearly opposite Holyoke Street and close to the site of Dane Hall. *Three Episodes*, vol. i. p. 484.

On its face, the Massachusetts record from November, 1637, when those of the faction which followed Anne Hutchinson were disarmed, disfranchised and exiled, down through the Baptist and Quaker persecutions to the culmination of the witchcraft craze at the close of the seventeenth century, does not seem to admit of evasion. The first decision, and the policy subsequently pursued in accordance with it, were distinct, authoritative and final, — against Religious Toleration. The policy assumed definite form after the political defeat of Vane in May, 1637. The subsequent banishment of John Wheelwright and Anne Hutchinson, together with the body of their active adherents, was, as a proceeding, indisputably inquisitorial and extra-judicial. The offence, as well as the policy to be pursued by the government, was explicitly and unmistakably set forth by the chief executive and the presiding official at the trial of Mrs. Hutchinson, when Governor Winthrop said to her, — "Your course is not to be suffered; . . . we see not that any should have authority to set up any other exercises besides what authority hath already set up." Note here again the words "set up any other exercises." Then it was maintained, and it has since been maintained, that the persecution in this case was "not for opinion's sake," that the magistrates did not "challenge power over men's consciences," that "the government never claimed any power over men's private opinions;" and, indeed, only the Inquisition, as the Holy Office of Catholicism, has gone to this length. But where was the right so distinctly set forth in the edict of Galerius, and which is of the essence of Religious Toleration, — the right "freely to profess private opinions" and to "assemble in conventicles without fear of molestation"? The privilege of holding opinions in secret, without ever disclosing them, is of limited value, and one a denial of which it is difficult to enforce.

But Winthrop's words speak for themselves; and in the subsequent history of Massachusetts the policy set forth in them was maintained and rigorously enforced by frequent infliction of the penalties of banishment and death. The public sentiment behind the policy, and which insured its enforcement, expressed itself in many forms. Now it was in the well known verses found in Governor Dudley's pocket after his death:—

"Let men of God in courts and churches watch
O'er such as do a toleration hatch,
Lest that ill egg bring forth a cockatrice
To poison all with heresie and vice."

Again, in 1647, while the battle for Toleration was waxing hot in England, the *Simple Cobler of Aggawam in America* thus delivered himself:—

"My heart hath naturally detested foure things: . . . Tolerations of divers Religions, or of one Religion in segregant shapes: He that willingly assents to the last, if he examines his heart by day-light, his conscience will tell him, he is either an Atheist, or an Heretique, or an Hypocrite, or at best a captive to some lust: Poly-piety is the greatest impiety in the world. . . . I lived in a City, where a Papist preached in one Church, a Lutheran in another, a Calvinist in a third; a Lutheran one part of the day, a Calvinist the other, in the same pulpit: the Religion of that place was but motley and meagre, their affections Leopardlike. . . . Concerning Tolerations I may further assert. That Persecution of True Religion, and Toleration of false, are the Jannes and Jambres[1] to the Kingdom of Christ, whereof the last is farre the worst. . . . It is said that Men ought to have Liberty of their Conscience, and that it is Persecution to debarre them of it: I can rather stand amazed than reply to this: it is an astonishment to think that the brains of men should be parboyl'd in such impious ignorance."

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[1] "And like as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these

More than thirty years after the Rev. Nathaniel Ward thus expressed himself, the Rev. William Hubbard, the first historian of Massachusetts, a man of whom it was said he was "equal to any of his contemporaries in learning and candor, and superior to all as a writer," preached the Election Sermon (1676) at the inauguration of Governor Leverett. In it he said, —

"I shall not entertain you with any sharp invective, or declaiming against a boundless toleration of all Religions, lest it should be an insinuation that some here present are inclined that way, which I believe there was never any occasion given to suspect. . . . Such opinions in Doctrine, or professions and practices in Religion, as are attended with any foul practical evils, as most Heresies have been, ought to be prohibited by publick Authority, and the broachers or fomenters of them punished by penal laws, according to the nature of the offence, like other fruits of the flesh. God never appointed a Sanctuary for Satan, nor City of Refuge for presumptuous offenders. As Joab was taken from the Horns of the Altar, whither he was fled, so let all such heretical transgressors, that fly for refuge to the Altar of their Consciences, seeing their practices and opinions are rather fearedness, than tenderness of Conscience, and therefore such weeds justly deserve the exercise of his power to root them up that bears not the Sword in vain."

Let me now put on the stand two ministers of the church of Cambridge here, Urian Oakes, afterwards

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also withstand the truth; men corrupted in mind, reprobate concerning the faith." — 2 *Timothy*, iii. 8.

President of the College, and Thomas Shepard, second of the name. In his Election Sermon delivered in 1673, Urian Oakes said, — "I profess I am heartily for all due moderation. Nevertheless I must add, that I look upon an unbounded toleration as the first born of all abominations;" while the year before Thomas Shepard had declared, — "To tolerate all things, and to tolerate nothing (its an old and true maxim), both are intolerable. . . . Yet I would hope none of the Lords husbandmen will be so foolish as to Sow Tares, or plead for the Saving of them, I mean in the way of Toleration aforesaid, when as it may be prevented: the light of Nature and right Reason would cry out against such a thing." So much for Thomas Shepard the son; but I come now to Thomas Shepard the father, first pastor of the Cambridge church. Thomas Shepard is handed down to us by tradition as a divine of gentle character; — pronounced shortly after his death "a silver trumpet" of the faith, Cotton Mather also declared that "his daily conversation was a trembling walk with God." The mind of this man would naturally incline to toleration; — he surely on this issue should have been in advance of his contemporaries. Yet in his *New England Lamentations for Old England's Errors*, printed in London in 1645, he expressed himself thus: —

> "To cut off the hand of the Magistrate from touching men for their consciences will certainly in time (if it get ground) be the utter overthrow, as it is the undermining, of the Reformation begun. This opinion is but one of the fortresses and strongholds of Sathan, to keep his head from crushing by Christ's heele, who (forsooth) because he is krept into mens consciences, and because conscience is a

tender thing, no man must here meddle with him, as if consciences were made to be the safeguard of sin and errour, and Sathan himself, if once they can creep into them."

I have cited Urian Oakes, President of Harvard College from 1675 to 1681. He was succeeded by Increase Mather, who was President from 1685 to 1701; and in 1685 Increase Mather thus delivered himself on the subject of religious liberty: —

> "Moreover, sinful Toleration is an evil of exceeding dangerous consequence: Men of Corrupt minds though they may plead for Toleration, and Cry up Liberty of Conscience etc. yet if once they should become numerous and get power into their hands, none would persecute more than they. . . . And indeed the Toleration of all Religions and Perswasions, is the way to have no true Religion at all left. . . . I do believe that Antichrist hath not at this day a more probable way to advance his Kingdom of Darkness, than by a Toleration of all Religions and Perswasions."[1]

But it is useless to multiply citations where all are to the same effect. If in the somewhat arid as well as meagre record of Massachusetts seventeenth-century utterances there are any which, subsequent to 1637, favor religious toleration, or breathe the spirit of toleration, I am not familiar with them, and would much like to have my attention called to them.[2] For, in dealing with such a subject and making general statements in regard to it, the tendency always is to an appearance at least of exaggeration. It is attack and defence; not a holding of equal scales. So in this connection I can only say that, while my investigations in the field referred to have brought to light many expressions on the subject of toleration such as those I have quoted, I fail to remember any of an opposite character. The record is sufficiently full; but it is all one way. And, in the full light of that record, judicially examined and compared with the records of other lands during the same epoch, it is difficult to detect any flaw in the following indictment by George Bishop in his *New-England Judged*, —

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[1] *A Call to the Rising Generation* (1685), pp. 107, 108.

[2] But see *Magnalia*, B. VII. chap. iv. § 5.

> "For, this let me say, That tho' more Blood hath been shed, and with greater Executions, and in some sense more cruel, by those who have not pretended to Religion, at least to *Liberty of Conscience*, from whom no other thing could be expected; . . . yet, from Men pretending to Religion and to Conscience; who suffered for Religion and their Consciences; who left their Native Country, Friends and Relatives, to dwell in a Wilderness for to enjoy their Conscience and Religion; from Professors, who have made so much a do about Religion, and for their Conscience, and set themselves up as the Height of all Profession of Religion, and the most Zealous Assertors of Liberty of Conscience; and for that Cause have expected to be had in regard, viz.: because of Conscience and Religion, for Men . . . thus to Exceed all Bounds and Limits of Moderation, Law, Humanity and Justice, upon a People, barely for their Conscience, and the Exercise of their Religion . . . and for you to do it, who yourselves are the Men (not another Generation) which so fled, which so suffered, is beyond a Parallel."[1]

This indictment was framed in 1661; the only possible plea in answer to it was that made by Samuel Willard in a wholly different connection, exactly twenty years later. It was in these words, — "I perceive they are mistaken in the design of our first Planters, whose business was not Toleration; but were professed Enemies of it, and could leave the

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[1] *New-England Judged*, p. 139.

World professing they *died no Libertines.* Their business was to settle, and (as much as in them lay) secure Religion to Posterity, according to that way which they believed was of God."[1] This is true; but the question then arises, — Wherein did they differ in this respect from those of the established churches of the Old World against whose persecutions they so loudly and so properly bore witness?

But the difficulty with this portion of the early record of Massachusetts — that of the Founders and those prior, we will say, to 1660 — is not merely that it is all one way; but, unhappily, in addition to breathing a strong spirit of intolerance, there runs through it a vein of apology and sophistical excuse, or implied denial, which shows that the fathers of Massachusetts in saying and doing what they did say and do failed to act wholly according to their lights. In other words, they knew better. They once had been subjected to persecution, — they were themselves the victims of religious intolerance; and, as is usual with those so situated, they had in that school made rapid advance in the lessons of toleration. Now they were in power and authority; and, being so, they proved themselves no less intolerant than those from whose intolerance they had fled. They were not unaware of the fact. Conscience troubled them, as those who suffered from their intolerance wrote down words like these,[2] —

> "But that which most of all may be the Astonishment and Detestation of Mankind is, That [the Spirit of Persecution, Cruelty and Malice] should predominate in those, who had Loudly Cried out of the Tyranny and Oppression of the

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[1] *Brief Animadversions*, p. 4.

[2] *New-England Judged*, preface.

Bishops in Old England, and from whom they fled; but when they settled in a place, where they had liberty to Govern, made their little Finger of Cruelty bigger than ever they found the Loyns of the Bishops."[1]

I have given Winthrop's emphatic words, uttered from his seat as the presiding officer of the General Court, wherein he laid down for Massachusetts the rule of rigid conformity, pronouncing against "any other exercises besides what authority hath already set up," and declaring his readiness as a magistrate to "restrain" any "from maintaining this course." But, when in his imagination he heard the ugly echo of these words coming back from across the Atlantic, the same John Winthrop, governor of Massachusetts, hastened in anticipation tacitly to deny himself, asserting over and over that the Court had not censured doctrine, but only "declared it to tend to sedition;" and "we do not challenge power over mens consciences, but when seditious speeches and practices discover such a corrupt conscience, it is our duty to use authority to reforme both;"[1] and finally, Mistress Hutchinson's "case was not matter of conscience, but of a civill nature." In the same way, and echoing the very language of the Holy Office, the Rev. Thomas Welde, writing in England seven years after the event,[2] declared in regard to the adherents of Mrs. Hutchinson that, when the magistrates of Massachusetts, "driven with sad hearts to give them up to Satan," these magistrates did "not simply for their Opinions (for which I find wee have been slanderously traduced) but the chiefest cause of their censure was their miscarriages persisted in with great obstinacy."[3] At about the time

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[1] Roger Williams makes this point effectively on Cotton in *The Bloudy Tenent.* Writing in 1635 Cotton had in his *Answer* to *Arguments against Persecution for Cause of Conscience* referred to the arguments of the English Roman Catholic writers in favor of toleration, dismissing them contemptuously with the remark that "they speake for *toleration of Religion*, where themselves are under *Hatches*, when they come to sit at Stern they judge and *practise* quite contrary." To this Williams replied in his *Bloudy Tenent* (1644) as follows: — "If this practice be so abominable in his [Cotton's] eyes from the Papists, viz. that they are so partial as to persecute when they sit at Helm, and yet cry out against persecution when they are under the Hatches, I shall beseech the righteous judge of the whole world to present as in a water or glass (where face answereth to face) the faces of the Papist to the Protestant, answering to each other in the sameness of partiality, both of this doctrine and practise.

"When Mr. Cotton and others have formerly been under hatches, what sad and true complaints have they abundantly poured forth against persecution?

"But coming to the Helm (as he speaks of the Papists) how, both by preaching, writing, printing, practice, do they themselves unnaturally and partially express toward others, the cruel nature, etc.

"O that the God of Heaven might please to tell them how abominable in his eyes are a *waight* and a *waight*, a *stone* and a *stone* in the bag of *waights!* one waight for themselves when they are under Hatches, and another for others when they come to Helm." — *The Bloudy Tenent*, chap. lxxiv.

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[1] *Short Story*, p. 28.

[2] Preface to the *Short Story*.

[3] It is curious to note the similarity of language and expression of the apologists for religious persecution. The text contains the statements of Governor Winthrop and Rev. Thomas Welde. During the same half century James I., referring to Queen Elizabeth, said, — "The trewth is, according to my owne knowledge, the late queene of famous memory never punished any Papist for religion;" and Charles I. said of James I., — "I am informed, neither Queen Elizabeth nor my father did ever avow that any priest in their times was executed merely for religion." Which statements with all others of like character, whether emanating from Archbishop Laud, Governor Winthrop, or Thomas Welde, are thus contemptuously disposed of by an able English writer: — "This is the stale pretence of the clergy in all countries, after they have solicited the government to make penal laws against those they call heretics or schismatics, and prompted the magistrates to a vigorous execution, then they lay all the odium on the civil power; for whom they have no excuse, but that such men suffered, not for religion, but for disobedience to law." (Buckle, *His-*

Thomas Welde penned these words, "Baillie, the Covenanter," as Carlyle calls him, was writing in London, — "Only they in New England are more strict and rigid than we, or any church, to suppress, by the power of the magistrate, all who are not of their way, to banishment ordinarily and presently even to death lately, or perpetual slavery." Thus the friendly Presbyterian divine; on the other hand, still at the same time, the even more friendly Sir Richard Saltonstall wrote from England to Wilson and Cotton, "preachers of the church which is at Boston," remonstrating at the things "reported dayly of your tyranny and persecution in New England, as that you fyne, whip and imprison men for their consciences;" and while writing these words, Sir Richard set forth the true principles of Religious Toleration in such language and spirit as sufficed to show conclusively that those principles were then well understood. When this letter was received in Boston, John Cotton, shutting his eyes against the light, replied, — "You thinke to compell men in matter of worship is to make men sinne. If the worship be lawful in itselfe, the magistrate compelling him to come in to it compelleth him not to sinne, but the sinne is in his will that needs to be compelled to a christian duty. . . . You know not, if you thinke wee come into this wildernesse to practise

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tory of Civilization, vol. i. pp. 338, 339, notes.) And thus the General Court of Massachusetts at its November session in 1646 (*Records*, ii. 179) declared, — "Though no human power be Lord over the faith and consciences of men, and therefore may not constrain them to believe, or profess against their conscience, yet because such as bring in damnable heresies tending to the subversion of the Christian faith . . . ought duly to be restrained from such notorious impiety, if any Christian . . . shall go about to subvert . . . the Christian faith, by broaching" etc.; and then follow the usual penalties for seditious utterances.

those courses here which wee fled from in England. We believe there is a vast difference betweene mens inventions and Gods institutions;[1] we fled from mens inventions; to which wee else should have been compelled; wee compell none to mens inventions." And there John Cotton stopped![2]

In exactly the same line, and at about the same time, Thomas Shepard, minister of the Cambridge church, wrote,—"As for New England, we never banished any for their consciences, but for sinning against conscience, after due means of conviction."

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[1] The whole distinction between Papist and Calvinist,—so far as enforced conformity was concerned,—lay in this distinction "betweene mens inventions and Gods institutions." Both sides to the controversy were intolerant and persecuted; but the one did it by the authority of the Church and the Popes, while the other found its warrant in the Bible,—God's word. The subject is discussed in the preface (pp. vii., viii.) to Ellis' *Puritan Age in Massachusetts*, and more fully in Adams' *Three Episodes of Massachusetts History*, pp. 382–9.

[2] "But to excommunicate an Heretick, is not to persecute; that is, it is not to punish an innocent, but a culpable and damnable person, and that not for conscience, but for persisting in error against light of conscience, whereof it hath been convinced."—Cotton's *Answer to Williams*, Narragansett Club Publications, vol. iii. pp. 48, 49. Also, vol. ii. p. 27.

"We humbly conceive men that are not prejudiced will easily discern that suppressing with all gentleness and tenderness a dangerous error and of bad tendency, and the enforcing of Ceremonies in Religion, which are neither directly, nor by any good consequent required, in or by the word of God, do differ toto cœlo."—Samuel Willard's *Brief Animadversions* (1681), p. 6.

II.

I CLAIM descent from both Thomas Shepard and John Cotton, — my father was among the offspring of the former, my mother among those of the latter. I am, therefore, not free from the usual inducement to palliate and excuse their utterances and course; and, influenced by that inducement, reference might now be made to "the prevailing bigotry of the age," and the claim put in on their behalf that the situation should be looked at from a seventeenth-century point of view, etc. Though a descendant, I find myself unable to see the facts in that light for them and not for others. One light for all! — Those men were not uneducated, nor in any way lacking in perspicuity or logic. Of Shepard I have already spoken. Of Cotton it remains to be said that, the friend, preceptor and guide of Vane, he had not only been taught tolerance by persecution, but, by nature, he was a tolerant man; — as was said in the funeral discourse of John Norton, — "No man did more placidly bear a dissentient." Even more than Shepard, therefore, Cotton should have seen the coming light and borne witness to it; and when, instead of so doing, these two preached conformity, they could not plead in their own behalf, as could Archbishop Laud in his behalf, that, naturally prone to conform, they had, having always been in authority, received no teaching in the school of persecution. None the less, they wandered into the maze of sophistry revealed in the language just quoted; and they wandered, not because they did not have light, but because they shut their eyes to the light. If they did not know better, they had no excuse for not knowing better. *They* were men of mind; they were not John Wilsons or Thomas Dudleys!

Nevertheless, in saying what they said they expressed the best thought of their day in Massachusetts, — the most advanced thought as respects Religious Toleration; and it remained such for half a century, during which the battle was going on elsewhere. The Synod of 1637 set the step by which the Puritan Commonwealth marched through the lives of two generations; those who voiced the Commonwealth prided themselves on it at the time: and, curiously enough, their descendants have prided themselves on it since — even to this day!

But, in reality, Massachusetts missed a great destiny, — and missed it narrowly though wilfully, — it, "like the base Judean, threw a pearl away, richer than all his tribe;" for, both Roger Williams and young Sir Harry Vane were once part of the Commonwealth, — they had lain, as it were, in its hand.

Roger Williams, as all know, was the prophet of complete religious toleration in America. Into the causes of his banishment from Massachusetts, and the circumstances attending it, I do not propose now to enter. That as a man he was "conscientiously contentious" I should naturally be among the last to deny; most men who contribute materially towards bringing about great changes, religious or moral, are "conscientiously contentious." Were they not so they would not accomplish the work they are here to do. Such men are an essential element in the economy of nature; and the logic which defends the expulsion of Roger Williams from Massachusetts in 1635 is only consistent when it expresses regret that William Lloyd Garrison was not banished from the United States, exactly two centuries later, instead of being dragged through the streets of Boston with a rope around his body![1] The situations were much the same; nor were the two men unlike.

So also as respects Sir Harry Vane. He is a very considerable historic figure; but I will say at once that, Milton's great sonnet to the contrary notwithstanding, I am no ardent admirer of the first titled governor of Massachusetts. I have never been able to get over his course in the House of Commons during the trial of Strafford. It was, in my judgment, simply dastardly, — the course of an eaves-dropper and a spy; — the transaction was one of which no man innately high-toned could have been guilty, — a memory neither to be outlived by him nor forgotten of him. Later in life he seems to have developed to a marked degree in his political course the qualities commonly described as adroit; — a sincere man, he was likewise an astute politician. I should, in fine, be inclined to believe that Cromwell, to use a familiar but expressive figure of speech, "sized him" correctly, and I accordingly feel a certain sympathy with the great Protector's famous cry of "Good Lord, deliver me," etc. There is, none the less, such a thing as historical justice; and historical justice exacts the admission that Vane, more than any other man in the England of his day, understood and voiced Religious Toleration. He imbibed the principle early, and he imbibed it while in daily intercourse with John

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[1] Rev. J. A. Vinton, *Antinomian Controversy of* 1637, pp. 84, 85.

Cotton, here in Massachusetts: — but he did not find the Massachusetts soil a kindly one; and John Cotton fell away from his teachings. The idea germinated, but failed to fructify. The seed fell in a stony place. Vane preached the new doctrine in his controversy with Winthrop during the winter of 1636, and later in England he "declared," as Burnet tells us, "for an unbounded liberty of conscience," propounding and defending this thesis consistently, persistently and fearlessly. Young Henry Vane, like Roger Williams, was in advance of the fathers of Massachusetts, and they rudely displaced him and drove him away; and, again, the stones which the builders refused became the head-stones of the corner!

In fine, then, after Roger Williams, young Sir Harry Vane and Mistress Anne Hutchinson were banished, or abandoned the field, it is putting the case none too strongly to say that for nearly half a century, until 1680, religious conformity of a rigid character was in Massachusetts enforced by all necessary ecclesiastical and civil compulsion. During that period the clergy were inquisitorial, the magistrates severe. Intensity of theological conviction secured a firm control, and with the results which invariably thereon ensue. The strong original tendency to a broader view of things was relentlessly suppressed, and in a short time ceased to make itself felt. It died out in the persons of Winthrop and Cotton. Of the latter, and the "placidity" of his bearing to the "dissentient," I have just spoken; while Bishop, the Quaker martyrologist, referring to the former twelve years after his death, speaks of him kindly and with respectful restraint as "an honest man" who had some hand in the persecutions, "being drawn to it by your priests."

These men had in spirit caught a glimpse of the coming light; and, again applying the accepted rules of historical criticism, it will not do to pass a harsh judgment upon them because they did not proclaim that light, and, if need be, suffer martyrdom for it. That, if they had proclaimed it, they would in all human probability have been compelled to suffer the martyrdom must be admitted; and it is hardly worth while here further to argue the question discussed by Buckle whether men are bound to be martyrs, or to jeopardize their personal and family interests, unless, by so doing, they clearly see their way to some immediate public good.[1] Suffice it to say, Winthrop and Cotton were not made of the same stuff as the younger Vane and Roger Williams. They were men of calmer, less turbulent disposition. They could bear to be suppressed; and they were suppressed.[2]

When a man thus submits to be suppressed, — conforms outwardly to tenets in which he does not wholly believe, — the verdict of the moralist and the historian is adverse to him. He is held to have been derelict, — unequal to the test; and his course in life is compared with that of the martyr, who bore fearless evidence regardless of consequences, whether imprisonment, exile or death. Especially is this true of the non-conformist who later becomes, as did Cotton, a conformist. In such case, the inference is inevitable that, as the man grew older his courage failed him, — the desire for peace and the comfort of an accustomed life prevailed over the love of testifying to the truth; and then follow the words, "It was not so with Roger Williams!" That is all true; and posterity has most properly taken cognizance of the fact. John Cotton does not stand on an equal pedestal with Roger Williams.

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[1] *History of Civilization*, vol. iii. p. 469.

[2] Hubbard, the historian, who was himself a contemporary of Cotton's, says that Cotton, notwithstanding "he was persuaded to an amicable compliance with the other ministers . . . did still retain his own sense and enjoy his own apprehension in all or most of the things then controverted." But it also appears that, in the words of Winthrop in another connection, he "kept his Judgement to himselfe," and it subsequently became known only "by some expressions of his . . . since that time published."

None the less, there is in justice something to be said on the other side. Material of every description is worked into the woof and warp of human development, and is essential to the fabric.

> "They also serve who only stand and wait."

Roger Williams had a call to go out into the wilderness, and bear testimony. He went; and it was well. John Cotton deemed it better to remain in Boston, and there bide his time. He did so. His time, it is true, never came: but, none the less, he worked his life into that Massachusetts fabric; and it is there now. All men cannot be martyrs; nor would it be good that all men should be martyrs, or yet the stuff of which martyrs are made. The fabric calls for only a certain proportion of that material. Every man subjected to the crucial test must look into his own make-up, and, at his peril, judge of it, correctly understanding himself. If he makes a mistake he must accept the consequences; but, if he judges correctly, — appreciates his own capability and limitations, — it makes little difference in the grand result where he puts in his work. For instance, John Winthrop's proper place was in Massachusetts. There, in spite of temporary fluctuations of influence and estimation, he could and did in the long run and final result do the best work of which in all probability he was capable. In like manner, John Cotton, taking his own qualities and confessed shortcomings into the estimate, with the influence he might hope to exert and the conditions by which he was surrounded, might fairly have concluded that he could produce the largest results of good through silence and patience, — through a waiting and expectant policy. That, if he did so think, he misjudged the situation and the permanence of the forces at work, is now apparent; for, in the result, he underwent permanent suppression. But, none the less, it may well have been an honest error of judgment on a point admitting at the moment of infinite question; and he and what he thought, said and wrote went into the great resultant fabric all the same: only his thread was not destined to shine through the sombre woof, a gleam of gold!

Winthrop was more fortunate; but Winthrop was a man of different mental mould. His force lay in character. With high moral sense, calm judgment, fair intellectual capacity and sufficient courage for the occasion, he had not a questioning spirit or a hungry mind, — on the contrary, he was almost childish in his superstition and credulity. He was a well-balanced, high-minded administrator; in no respect a prophet. He uniformly accepted the situation, and, if it was other than he would have wished, patiently bided his time. With his limitations, he was right in so doing. By nature tolerant in all things, Winthrop in obedience to the behests of the clergy did in his capacity as magistrate many things from which his own judgment and better nature recoiled; and history has recorded them against him. Nevertheless, though we might wish that on more than one occasion he had entered a firmer and clearer protest, and conducted himself otherwise than as he did; yet his life, too, was worked into the fabric which without his life would at this day be essentially other and poorer than it is. It would not have been well, had he, being other than he was, felt a call to martyrdom. As I have just said, the world stands in need of a due proportion of martyrs, and to them posterity at least is not niggardly of crowns; but a world made up wholly of martyrs, or of those having in them a call to martyrdom, would not be a world to be commended. In the economy of nature there is also room for, as well as need of, observers, philosophers and administrators, — for patience as well as zeal, — for silent meditation as well as the voice crying in the wilderness.

It was so in New England in the seventeenth century. There was a place for John Winthrop, as well as for Roger Williams; and both did the work they were there to do. There was no place for Sir Harry Vane, and it was well he withdrew. For John Cotton there was a place, and a great place; but he miscalculated his surroundings and missed half his destiny. He bided his time; and only the night came.

Governor Winthrop died in 1649, lamenting on his death-bed the acts of persecution to which he had been compelled; the Rev. John Cotton followed him three years later, to the last a silenced man: and with them vanished the last faint glow of that light which had shone strong in Vane and Williams. A deep night of conventional, old-time theology ensued,— a night which the filio-pietistic historians of the present century are wont to dwell upon with self-satisfied complacency as a period during which peace and quiet reigned in the land. It was in fact a century of intellectual torpor, — a torpor the completeness of which can only be appreciated by those who have passed long hours toiling through the sermons, discourses and theological treatises which bear incontrovertible witness to it.

During the forty years which immediately followed the Synod of 1637, dissentients and intruders were accordingly punished in the colony, or expelled from the colony under penalty of death in case of their return. Nor was the threat of this penalty an empty one. In the language of an historian whom it is impossible to accuse of any lack of the spirit of filial piety in dealing with the founders of Massachusetts, — "The provision which threatened with death persons returning after being banished was no novelty in Massachusetts legislation. It had been resorted to over and over again, through a course of years, and had never once failed of its intended effect."[1] After 1680 a certain degree of formal toleration existed, but it was a toleration compelled from without; and how reluctantly and grudgingly it was conceded the pages of Sewall's diary bear witness. Until after the close of the first century of colonial and provincial history, the Congregational Calvinist of Massachusetts tolerated after a fashion the presence of communicants of the Church of England, for he could not help so doing; but the character of that toleration may be inferred from the following extract from a discourse by the Rev. Samuel Mather, a graduate of Harvard in the class of 1643: —

> "If you do but wear a Surplice for peace sake, why not as well admit the sign of the Cross in Baptism, or bow to an Altar, and in a little time you will find that the same Reason is as strong for bowing to an Image, to a Crucifix, and why

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[1] Palfrey, vol. ii. p. 471.

not as well say Mass too, for the peace of the Church, and then at last swallow down every thing, Submit to the Pope, worship the Beast, and so be damned and go to Hell, and all for the peace of the Church."

And when in 1686 the newly arrived royal governor of New England, not unreasonably, as it now seems, asked that a religious edifice might be assigned in which services could be held according to the Church of England ceremonial, a modern and sympathizing historian asserts that the people were not less "shocked" by the proposition than "if the demand had been for the use of the building for a mass, or for a carriage-house for Juggernaut."[1] He describes the demand as the "intrusion of episcopacy." A similar view as to the establishment of places of Protestant worship in Madrid and other papistical localities has, both then and since, prevailed; but those composing the Massachusetts school of historians have not expressed themselves in regard to it with the same leniency of language.

While the presence of the communicants of the state church of the mother country was thus tolerated, all other dissidence was frowned down; and that, too, in a way which, as matter of fact and practically, made its existence impossible. Throughout the first half of the eighteenth century Massachusetts was an arena of theological conflict; and though a modified form of toleration was in 1780 grudgingly admitted into the first constitution of the State, it was not until 1833, — when the third century of its history was already entered upon, that complete liberty of conscience was made part of the fundamental law. The battle of Religious Toleration had then been elsewhere fought and won; Massachusetts reluctantly accepted the result. So far from winning laurels in that struggle, her record in it is in degree only less discreditable than that of Spain.

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[1] Palfrey, vol. iii. p. 521.

But, again, this judgment, assuming it to be correct, does not necessarily carry with it the stigma now commonly supposed. The trouble with the historical writers who have taken upon themselves the defence of the founders of Massachusetts is that they have tried to sophisticate away the facts. In so doing they have of necessity had recourse to lines of argument which they would not for an instant accept in defence or extenuation of those who in the Old World pursued the policy with which they find themselves confronted in the early record of the New. But there that record is: and it will not out. Roger Williams, John Wheelwright and Anne Hutchinson come back from their banishment, and stand there as witnesses; the Quakers and Baptists, with eyes that forever glare, swing from the gallows or turn about at the cart's tail. In Spain it was the dungeon, the rack and the fagot; in Massachusetts it was banishment, the whip and the gibbet. In neither case can the records be obliterated. Between them it is only a question of degree, — one may in color be a dark drab, while the other is unmistakably a jetty black. The difficulty is with those who, while expatiating with great force of language on the sooty aspect of the one, turn and twist the other in the light, and then solemnly asseverate its resemblance to driven snow. Unfortunately for those who advocate this view of the respective Old and New World records, the facts do not justify it. On the contrary, while the course in the matter of persecution pursued by those in authority in the Old World was logical and does admit of defence, the course pursued by the founders of Massachusetts was illogical, and does not admit of more than partial extenuation.

In the first case, the argument is conclusive and the logic of the situation plain; a modern analogy will illustrate it. During the last few years what is termed in medicine the germ theory has been scientifically developed. We now know to a certain extent how given forms of epidemic originate and spread, — we more or less understand infection and contagion; and we take sanitary precautions accordingly. Those precautions are sometimes of a very drastic and severe description, — as the expression goes, the disease is stamped out. If cholera, typhus, small-pox, scarlet fever, diphtheria, or even measles are apprehended, or appear in an epidemic form, we take the measures deemed necessary, and the well are carefully segregated from the sick. That a child from a house infected with small-pox or diphtheria should attend a school, or in any way mix with other children, would not be tolerated. Formerly it was the same with religious heresies, — they were poisonous opinions. Indeed, Cotton in one of his controversial writings makes use of this very illustration, saying, — "What if a child of God were infected with a plague-sore, or some other contagious disease, may not their Brethren exclude them the common ayre . . . ? Truely there be some unsound and corrupt opinions and practises which are more infectious and contagious than any plague-sore."[1]

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[1] *Answer to Roger Williams*, Narragansett Club, vol. ii. p. 27, also *Ib.* vol. iii. p. 53.

"Old" Ephraim Pagett, as he is called, in the epistle dedicatory to his *Heresiography*, published in 1645, uses the same simile, — "The plague is of all diseases most infectious: I have lived [in London] among you almost a Jubile, and seen your great care and provision

Those people believed. They never for one instant questioned. Their belief was, perhaps, a phase of immature development; and we certainly have outgrown it. None the less they entertained it, and it possessed them wholly. Such being the case, they had to live up to their faith; — indeed they could not do otherwise. That faith was realistic; — it included God and the Devil, — Heaven and Hell, — a brief period of probation here, and a whole eternity of rewards or punishments hereafter. The devout Catholic or the elect Calvinist only would be saved; the rest must burn. And who were the elect and the devout? — Practically, those who believed as the professors of the faith believed. The heretic was with them what a person infected with cholera or small-pox is with us, — a source of contagion, — something to be put away, — in no degree, great or little, to be tolerated.

We look after the life that now is; they regarded the life to come as of infinitely greater moment. Infection was even more to be guarded against in matters of faith than in those of health. These facts once firmly grasped, the same mantle of charity must cover Old-World Calvinist and Old-World Catholic, — Scotchman and Spaniard. To each Religious Toleration meant, not what it means to us, — far otherwise, it meant a license to infect! "Heresy was an unclean thing; the presence of the misbeliever was a danger

to keep the City from infection, in the shutting up the sicke, and in carrying them to your pest-houses, in setting warders to keep the whole from the sicke, in making of fires and perfuming the streets, in resorting to your Churches, in pouring out your prayers to Almighty God with fasting and almes to be propitious to you. The plague of heresies is greater, and you are now in more danger than when you buried five thousand a week: You have power to keep these Hereticks and Sectaries from sholing together to infect one another."

like that of the secret sinner in the Jewish camp, like the house under a hereditary curse in the Greek commonwealth."[1] This being so, the rest followed.

James Anthony Froude, dealing with this topic, puts the case well: —

> "Persecution has ceased among ourselves, because we do not any more believe that want of theoretic orthodoxy in matters of faith is necessarily fraught with the tremendous consequences which once were supposed to be attached to it. If, however, a school of Thugs were to rise among us, making murder a religious service; if they gained proselytes, and the proselytes put their teaching in execution, we should speedily begin again to persecute opinion. What teachers of Thugism would appear to ourselves, the teachers of heresy actually appeared to Sir Thomas More [and John Endicott], only being as much more hateful as the eternal death of the soul is more terrible than the single and momentary separation of it from the body. There is, I think, no just ground on which to condemn conscientious Catholics [or Calvinists or Puritans] on the score of persecution, except only this: that as we are now convinced of the injustice of the persecuting laws, so among those who believed them to be just, there were some who were led by an instinctive protest of human feeling to be lenient in the execution of those laws; while others of harder nature and more narrow sympathies enforced them without reluctance, and even with exultation . . . And thus, and thus only, are we justified in censuring those whose names figure largely in the persecuting lists. Their defence is impregnable to logic."[2]

The position of the founders of Massachusetts would therefore be impregnable, were it not that it is illogical; for the trouble is that, in Massachusetts, they refused to see a light which they had seen clearly enough in

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[1] Doyle, *English in America; Puritan Colonies*, vol. ii. p. 90.

[2] *History of England* [Cabinet Ed.], vol. i. pp. 171, 172.

England. It will not do for a notorious and persistent non-conformist on the east coast of the Atlantic to go about to enforce a rigid system of conformity on the west coast of that ocean. The man who has suffered from those in authority for opinion's sake must not, when in his turn clothed with authority, inflict for opinion's sake suffering on others; and, if he does do so, he and his posterity must accept the consequences. The position of that man is not logical. Nor is it true to assert that in so judging we are applying nineteenth-century truths to seventeenth-century facts. On the contrary we apply now only the rule that Cromwell applied then. "Had not they labored but lately under the weight of persecution? And was it fit for them to sit heavy upon others? Is it ingenuous to ask liberty and not to give it? What greater hypocrisy than for those who were oppressed by the bishops to become the greatest oppressors themselves, so soon as their yoke was removed?"[1] And in like manner the contemporaneous remonstrances of Saltonstall[2] and the formal recorded protest of all the more eminent English divines of their own way of thinking,[3] judging them by seventeenth-century standards, constitute nothing less than a seventeenth-century indictment of the early polity of Massachusetts at the bar of history; and the sophistry to which the representative Massachusetts divines had recourse in reply was no less sophistry then and to them, than it is to us now. On the pleadings they stand convicted. So much for the early clergy. As to the magistrates, in the mouths of James I. and Charles I., — of Philip II. of Spain or

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[1] Carlyle's *Cromwell*, Part viii. Speech iv.

[2] Hutchinson's *State Papers* [Prince Soc. Ed.], vol. ii. pp. 127–9.

[3] *Magnalia*, B. vii. chap. iv.

Louis XIV. of France, the words — "We see not that any should have authority to set up any other exercises besides what authority had already set up," — these words in those mouths would have had a familiar as well as an ominous sound. To certain of those who listened to them, they must have had a sound no less ominous when uttered by Governor John Winthrop in the Cambridge meeting-house on the 17th of November, 1637. In them was definitely formulated and clearly announced the policy thereafter to be pursued in Massachusetts. It was thereafter pursued in Massachusetts. John Winthrop, John Endicott and Thomas Dudley were all English Puritans. As such they had sought refuge from authority in Massachusetts. On what ground can the impartial historian withhold from them the judgment he visits on James and Philip and Charles and Louis? The fact would seem to be that the position of the latter was logical though cruel; while the position of the former was cruel and illogical.

With the next generation of clergy and magistrates the case was different. Never persecuted themselves, they had been brought up in the school of intolerance. They accordingly were merely true to the lessons of their youth. They did not sin against light. They were in the position of the Catholics of Spain, and the same mantle of logical charity which is conceded to these last must be conceded to the others.

In one of the foot-notes to his *Discovery of America*, John Fiske, referring to the way in which some unpleasing event had been ignored in local Spanish archives, exclaims with a tinge of cynicism — "That is the way history has too often been written. With most people it is only a kind of ancestor worship." What may be called the cosmopolitan school of history is, perhaps, a thing yet to be developed; for the fact is, our histories are all Catholic or Protestant, — European or American, — English, French, Spanish or German, — Whig or Tory, — Federalist, Democrat or Republican. The historian invariably scrutinizes the record through eyes jaundiced by faith or patriotism or filial affection or partisan zeal; and he is even lauded for so doing! He dilates on the blood-sealed devotion of the martyrs to the faith he professes, and the valor of the soldiers and the sailors of the land of his birth; he execrates those who oppressed the one, and depreciates those who fought against the other. And so it has come about that we Americans are only just beginning to read the record, at once long and obscure, through eyes neither necessarily English nor Protestant nor republican. In the literature of our mother tongue there is one great example of the opposite method of historical treatment; and just a century ago, in illustration, as it were, of the truth of what I say, the President of the college here felt called upon to make public a denial of the rumored use made of that example as a text-book for the students.[1] But the world does move, and the *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* still remains the most delightful, instructive and refreshing of all works of the kind, simply because the man who wrote it — a scholar, an investigator and a thinker — chanced, also, to be nothing else, — not even what is known in common parlance as a Christian! Consequently, undeterred by a storm of theological and now forgotten obloquy, he dealt with the fall of the old faith and the rise of the new as a philosopher, not as a partisan. On the other hand, there is Macaulay's magnificent epic, with William of Orange its Æneas and Ulysses, — almost professedly a Whig account of "the Glorious Revolution of '88"! An incomparable political pamphlet, no one can read it without delight; and no one should read it as history. Interesting as a novel, unhappily it also resembles a novel in other respects.

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[1] For the Centinel.

Mr. Russell: —

A writer in the Centinel of the last Saturday, under the signature of Christianus, says "that an abridgement of Gibbon's history (if his information be true) is directed to make a part of the studies of the young gentlemen at our University." I now beg leave through the channel of your paper, to acquaint the writer, as also the publick, that his information is not true. The system taught is Millot's Elements of General History, ancient and modern, and Gibbon's history was never thought of for the purpose.

Joseph Willard, President.

Cambridge, Nov. 14, 1791.

So far as America is concerned, it is greatly to be feared that we in the matter of historical work are yet in the filio-pietistic and patriotic stage of development. "Ancestor worship" is the rule,[1] and an excellent illustration of the results to which that worship leads those given to it is afforded in the treatment which has been accorded to that portion of the Massachusetts record which relates to religious toleration. It is not too much to say that the resources of sophistry and special pleading have been exhausted in the attempt to extenuate it or explain it away. On its face it presents difficulties of an obvious nature: — wholesale proscription; frequent banishment under penalty of death in case of return; the infliction of punishments both cruel and degrading, amounting to torture, and that regardless of the sex of those punished; the systematic enforcement of rigid conformity through long periods of time; — all these things are part of the record: — and in these bad respects it is not at once apparent how the Massachusetts record differs from those of Spain or France or England. But the Massachusetts school of historians, undismayed by the difficulties which confronted it, has addressed itself to the task in such a blind sense of filial devotion that the self-deception of many, and not the least eminent, of those composing the school has been complete.

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[1] It is not pleasant to have such remarks made, but there is a certain justice in Sir Henry Maine's reference to "the nauseous grandiloquence of the American panegyrical historian" (*Popular Government*, p. 222); and J. A. Doyle might have extended his criticism of the early New England chroniclers, — that in reading their writings "we are reading not a history but a hagiology," — so as to include not a few later investigators.

And, in venturing on this criticism, as broad as it is outspoken, I have not lost sight of the personal relations I have had with not a few of those I thus classify, and the profound respect I entertain for their character, their industry and their attainments. But in this matter they and I belong to different schools; and, belonging to different schools, it is incumbent on me, as well as upon them, to set forth the facts, each from his own point of view, as forcibly as may be. I would see Massachusetts men and events exactly as I see Spanish or French or English men and events; applying to them the same rules of criticism and the same leniency or severity of judgment.

Take, for instance, in the case of Massachusetts, the first undisputed proposition, — that of the proscription and banishment of the so-called Antinomians in 1637. It included an entire faction in the state; — true, the state was small, but the proportion was not. In the words of Winthrop, those of one party, composing a large majority of the dwellers in the principal town of the colony, "were so divided from the rest of the country in their judgment and practice, as it could not stand with the public peace that they should continue amongst us. So, by the example of Lot in Abraham's family, and after Hagar and Ishmael, he saw they must be sent away." And they were sent away! This was more than two centuries and a half ago; but only recently it has been ingeniously argued, not in extenuation but in full and complete defence of this proceeding, that Massachusetts was not a state, — a community, — it was merely a commercial plantation; and the right to exclude at their pleasure dangerous or disagreeable persons from their domain was never regarded by the early Massachusetts magistrates as any more questionable than the right of any householder to determine who should be the inmates of his home.[1] Accordingly these magistrates said to the dissentients, — "The world is wide . . . there is no place for you among us." Banishment, the historian then admits, is a word of ill sound; but, after all, there was little hardship in leaving unattractive Massachusetts for a residence on the beautiful shore of Narragansett Bay.[2] And so Massachusetts not only acted within her right, but, in the action taken, was right.

Admitting the legal soundness of this position in its construction of the rights and powers conferred by the Massachusetts patent, — a large admission and one which has not passed unchallenged,[3] — but admitting it in its whole extent for the purposes of the present discussion, — the question at once suggests itself, — In what way did the position of Massachusetts and its magistrates differ in these respects from that of other countries then and now? — All great bodies politic claim the power of exclusion and banishment. Philip II. claimed it in the case of Spain; — and exercised it in the cases of the Jews and the Moriscoes. Louis XIV. claimed it when he revoked the edict of Nantes, and proceeded to drive the Huguenots out of France. The Russians are claiming it to-day in the case of the Jews; the United States in the case of the Chinese. The position of the founders of Massachusetts was, therefore, in this respect in no way peculiar. They stood on what they regarded well-considered principles of state. But did not Philip II. and Louis XIV. do the same? — Was not Archbishop Laud a prelate of undoubted honesty and singleness of purpose? — Why is it that acts of proscription and general banishment for opinion's sake are held up to execration when portrayed in one scene of the great drama, but in another scene of it are extenuated and made to conform to the precepts of wise statesmanship and lofty morality?

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[1] Palfrey, vol. i. p. 299.

[2] *Ib.* p. 419. See, also, Dexter, *As to Roger Williams*, pp. 17, 18; Vinton, *The Antinomian Controversy*, pp. 84–87.

[3] Adams, *Emancipation of Massachusetts*, pp. 58, 59; Hallowell, *Quaker Invasion*, pp. 38, 70.

Again, approaching a yet larger question, — the question of Toleration. Confronted with the record on that matter, the Massachusetts historian, so free and frank in his denunciation of English and Italian and Spanish ecclesiastical bigotry and intolerance, proceeds to argue that, after all, "religious intolerance, like every other public restraint, is criminal wherever it is not needful for the public safety: it is simply self-defence whenever tolerance would be public ruin."[1]

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[1] Palfrey, vol. i. p. 300. The general proposition here set forth is argued at length by Palfrey; it has since been discussed in a most

These words from the latest and most elaborate history of New England sound like an echo, — loud-reverberating, close at hand, — of the utterances of two centuries before. Thus Increase Mather, later president of Harvard College, expressed himself in 1681, — "the place may sometimes make a great alteration, as to indulgence to be expected. It is evident, that that Toleration is in one place, not only lawful, but a necessary duty, which in another place would be destructive; and the expectation of it irrational."[1] The door to extenuation and sophistry is thus cautiously opened, and, when the archbishop of an established church sits at the head of the council-board, intolerance is denounced as "cruelty," — the prelate riots in barbarities;[2] when a Governor of Massachusetts sits there, it is self-defence, or at worst a wholesome and necessary restraint.[3] Another modern authority asserts that "had our early ancestors adopted the course we at this day are apt to deem so easy and obvious, and placed their government on the basis of liberty for all sorts of consciences, it would have been, in that age, a certain

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elaborate manner, and with great subtlety of thought and logic, by J. S. Mill in his essay *On Liberty;* and, more recently still, by Leslie Stephen in the paper entitled *Poisonous Opinions*, published in his *Agnostic's Apology* (pp. 242–257). The last of these treatises is peculiarly interesting and suggestive.

[1] Preface to Samuel Willard's *Brief Animadversions.*

[2] Adams, *Three Episodes*, vol. i. pp. 248 n., 262 n.

[3] "If men will call unjustifiable Practices by the name of their Opinion: and, when their evils are borne witness against, make out cries that they suffer for their Opinion, and for their Conscience: How is it possible for those to help them, who desire to keep their own Consciences pure, and without offence towards God, by being faithful according to that capacity the Lord hath set them in; and giving a due testimony against those things, which they believe provoke him to jealousie?" — Increase Mather's Preface to Samuel Willard's *Brief Animadversions* (1681).

introduction of anarchy. It cannot be questioned, that all the fond hopes they had cherished from emigration would have been lost. . . . The non-toleration which characterized our early ancestors, from whatever source it may have originated, had undoubtedly the effect they intended and wished."[1] Here, in regard to one of the most disputed points in the process of modern development, — the effect of repression on a natural movement of the human mind towards diversity of opinion, — we are informed that a given result of pernicious character was "certain," — that "it cannot be questioned," — that a desired and most salutary effect was "undoubtedly" produced by repression. These are the usual forms of speech in "ancestor worship;" and yet the very same language and line of argument if applied in the case of Spain and England would absolutely justify the course pursued by Philip II., who certainly prevented the "introduction of anarchy" into his dominions, and would excuse the policy of Archbishop Laud, who tried to prevent its introduction into the land of which he was primate: — the vastly more probable fact being that in all these cases, whether in Spain, France or Massachusetts, the policy of repression worked incalculable misery, mischief and ruin. Yet another authority, going over the same ground in the same spirit, sees in the record of Massachusetts nothing to condemn, nothing to regret. The civil policy which certain investigators have characterized as intolerant and exclusive this investigator declares "arose wholly from the necessity of the case, and was the dictate of that instinct of self-preservation which has justly been called 'the first law of nature.' Our fathers acted merely on the defensive. . . . The authorities had the right to send [dissentients] away, and this right they were determined to exercise. This is the conclusion of the whole matter. . . . Toleration, as the word is now understood, would not have been safe. 'The Puritan fathers of New England did not profess toleration ; it would have been suicidal.'"[1] In reply to this somewhat summary disposal of the question at issue, it might be urged that, if "the Puritan fathers 'did not profess toleration,'" quite a number of them, like John Davenport, Hugh Peter and the "Simple Cobbler of Agawam," went to Holland to obtain it; and there enjoyed an object lesson in that religious forbearance which, harmless on the Zuyder Zee, it is "certain" would on Massachusetts Bay have been "suicidal."[2] It is indeed strange how many things of doubtful outward aspect are in the eyes of the filio-pietistic historian "certain," "undoubted" and in no way open to question. — One thing indeed is "certain," — Archbishop Laud entertained exactly the views here set forth as respects toleration: it was "suicidal," and, "acting in self-defence" he waged war upon it, — not successfully, it is true, as did Philip II. and the early magistrates of Massachusetts, though to the best of his ability; — but "Canterbury," as they loved to call him, was, we are told by these same authorities, an "execrable prelate," "rioting in barbarities!"

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[1] *Memorial Hist. of Boston*, vol. i. p. 127.

A little further on the same student of history says, speaking of the results of the so-called Antinomian controversy in the wholesale expulsion of the adherents of Mrs. Hutchinson, — "Banishment is a word which grates harshly on the ear.[1] . . . The sending away these men, we allow, has *prima facie* an aspect of rigor and harshness. But the charter gave the right and the power." Advocates "concede" and "allow" and "admit;" the historian should be judicial: but the climax of the filio-pietistic school is reached when the authority I have quoted from, having proved that toleration did not and could not safely and, therefore, should not have existed in New England, suddenly remembers that, after all, Religious Toleration, like Civil Liberty, was a great cause, and that it might be unbecoming in a devout worshipper of ancestry to cut that ancestry off from all claim to participation in the struggle for that cause, — remembering this, and having just defended and excused unreservedly their intolerance, he exclaims — "Our fathers should not be blamed for not acting in all respects according to the light we now enjoy; . . . they were actually far in advance of their contemporaries."[2]

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[1] Rev. J. A. Vinton, *The Antinomian Controversy*, pp. 16, 17, 23, 86.

[2] "Thirdly, let conscience and experience speak how in the not cutting off their many religions, it hath pleased God not only not to be provoked, but to prosper the state of the United Provinces our next neighbors, and that to admiration." — *The Bloudy Tenent* (1644). p. 160.

So also in speaking of results. "When two scores of years passed before the recurrence of any serious internal dissension in Massachusetts, the substantial wisdom of the course now pursued may be deemed to be vindicated by the event. If the treatment was harsh it was effective; . . . the defeat of Mrs. Hutchinson's party introduced a long term of tranquillity."[3] Thus one authority. To the same effect another of the school remarks of "non-toleration," — "It is unquestionable, that it was chiefly instrumental in forming the homogeneous and exclusively republican character for which the people of New England have, in all times, been distinguished."[1] Finally a third, echoing the utterances and conclusions of him first quoted, says of the events of 1637, — " the strong policy of repression, at all events, answered its purpose, and peace, quiet and safety were restored." So much for the historians of the Massachusetts filio-pietistic school, echoing with approval, though two hundred years of progress and education had intervened, the exulting boast of him who in 1643 wrote to England from Massachusetts that, since the suppression of the Hutchinsonian heresy, "not any unsound, unsavorie and giddie fancie have dared to lift up his head, or abide the light amongst us."[2] Optimistic conclusions of like character, both of the earlier and later periods, might easily be multiplied. Turning now to Spain and the conclusions of the Spanish historians of the same filio-pietistic school on the expulsion of the Moriscoes, John Fiske says that " the eminent historian Lafuente, writing in 1856, freely confessed that the destruction of Moorish industries was economically a disaster of the first magnitude ; but after all, he says, just think what an ' immense advantage ' it was to establish ' religious unity ' throughout the nation and get rid of differences of opinion. . . . It was a terrible delusion," Fiske goes on to add, in words curiously though unintentionally apposite to the present discussion, —

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[1] Also, Palfrey, vol. i. p. 419.

[2] Vinton, p. 24.

[3] Palfrey, vol. i. p. 509.

> " It was a terrible delusion, but perhaps we are not entitled to blame the Spaniards too severely when we reflect that even among ourselves, in spite of all the liberalizing influences to which the English race has so long been subjected, the lesson is only just beginning to be learned that variety in

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[1] Quincy, 200*th Anniversary of Boston*, p. 29.

[2] I. *Mass. Hist. Coll.*, vol. i. p. 247.

religious beliefs is not an evil, but a positive benefit to a civilized community, whereas uniformity of belief should be dreaded as tending toward Chinese narrowness and stagnation. This is the true lesson of Protestantism, and it is through this lesson, however imperfectly learned, that Protestantism has done so much to save the world from torpor and paralysis."

It does, indeed, seem at times as if a certain class of delusions were fixed and immovable in the human mind. Accepted from time immemorial as truisms, reason and experience alike, no matter how clear the teachings of the one may be or how bitter those of the other, produce no real impression. The thing is repeated over and over again in words slightly varied, but always when analyzed reducible to the same residuum. Fixity and uniformity of belief are good in themselves; and unlimited freedom of thought and discussion, no matter how decently exercised, have a dangerous tendency to unsettle! In other words, faith is not generally felt that the truth is only made stronger and clearer by discussion, and that error only has to fear from it. The average historical writer, like the average man, instinctively clings to his delusions, — hence the cant with which so-called histories are replete.

III.

Returning to our thesis, the simple fact is that in the seventeenth century, as in the centuries which preceded as well as those that have followed, — in Massachusetts just as much as in Spain, — discussion, the antagonisms of thought and idea were no less necessary to mental activity and development than was atmospheric movement to air purity. "There is always hope when people are forced to listen to both sides; it is when they attend only to one that errors harden into prejudices, and truth itself ceases to have the effect of truth, by being exaggerated into falsehood. And since there are few mental attributes more rare than that judicial faculty which can sit in intelligent judgment between two sides of a question, of which only one is represented by an advocate before it, truth has no chance but in proportion as every side of it, every opinion which embodies any fraction of the truth, not only finds advocates, but is so advocated as to be listened to."[1] In thus stating this law of intellectual progress John Stuart Mill did but reëcho in our day and to us the more majestic language of Milton two full centuries before: —

> "Where there is much desire to learn, there of necessity will be much arguing, much writing, many opinions, for opinion in good men is but knowledge in the making. Under these fantastic terrors of sect and schism we wrong the

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[1] Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 101.

earnest and zealous thirst after knowledge and understanding which God hath stirred up in this city. What some lament of, we rather should rejoice at, should rather praise this pious forwardness among men to reassume the ill-deputed care of their religion into their own heads again. A little generous prudence, a little forbearance of one another, and some grain of charity might win all these diligences to join and unite into one general and brotherly search after truth; could we but foregoe this prelatical tradition of crowding free consciences and Christian liberties into canons and precepts of men." [1]

This is now accepted as the fundamental law in the slow evolution of truth, — the friction of mind against mind, — the testing of thought against thought in the crucible of discussion. And in the working of this fundamental law the Quakers and the Baptists, so far as early Massachusetts was concerned, performed a service of inestimable value. Banished, persecuted, put to death, they still compelled discussion. Under the undisturbed theocratic régime the community along the New England coast, cut off from intercourse with Europe by the ocean on the one side and hemmed in by an unexplored wilderness on the other, stood in imminent danger of intellectual atrophy. That result the clergy, — the dominant influence, — courted. They, as men are apt to do under such circumstances, looked on change with suspicion and dreaded innovation as concealed heresy. Like nearly all communities so placed, Massachusetts was threatened with a lasting plague of self-sufficient provincialism.

That the earlier generations — those occupying the soil between 1640 and 1700 — did not see this, is no cause for surprise. That they persecuted and drove out those who broke in on the deathly torpor which was stealing over the little isolated community was natural. They did not wish to be disturbed; no one falling into that condition ever does wish to be disturbed: and, uniformly, those so circumstanced angrily repel and seek to put away whoever and whatever distracts them. They are wedded to their idols. The matter for astonishment is, — not that the seventeenth century Massachusetts minister and magistrate took this view and failed to see in the "intruders" a healthy stimulant and restorant at a period of moral and intellectual torpor, — this was merely in the order of nature, — the occasion for wonder is that the Massachusetts historians have as a rule never been able to see it since. That Antinomian and Quaker and Baptist were the best friends the New England Puritan had, — the acrid salt which saved him from corruption, — this elementary truth has never dawned on the mind of the filio-pietistic investigator. As his pages show, he has been intent only on defence, or, if defence was impossible, on extenuation. He has failed to see that, in the wonderful economy of nature, the Puritan was as much indebted to the Quaker and Baptist, as is the man, sinking into frigid torpor, to the dog that worries him into activity; he was as wrong in driving away the "intruder" as is the man in striking at the dog. The fact that the Massachusetts Puritan was unaware of his danger and the "intruder" did not realize the service he was performing, had nothing to do with the operation of the natural economic law. That the actors were blind to it then, is no reason why the historian should shut his eyes to it now, and see in the "intruder" only "a coarse, blustering, conceited, disagreeable, impudent fanatic," who "in all strictness and honesty" persecuted the Puritan founders — not they him; and who, then and now, was no more entitled to sympathy than one "who persistently intrudes his bad manners and pestering presence upon some private company, making himself, upon pretence of conscience, a nuisance there."[1]

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[1] *Areopagitica* (1644).

That the "intruders" were offensive to the Puritans is of course, — that they were exasperating in their bearing and acted in disregard both of law and decency may or may not be true, for, when looked at from the philosophical point of view, its truth or falseness is immaterial. Members of sects that believe intensely, and are persecuted on account of their belief, always run into excesses. That they should is, again, a law of nature; and the historians who dilate and expand on this subject in connection with Quaker and Baptist would find a no less fruitful field of investigation in the iconoclastic record of those early Christians and Protestants, who bore witness to the truth as they saw it in defiance of law and in utter disregard of what Pagan and Catholic accepted as decency. What did Quaker or Baptist more than defile the idols and trample on the host? Yet the Massachusetts historians have failed to mete out the same stern justice to Christian and Protestant which they award to Antinomian, Quaker and Baptist. They do not have one law for all.

And yet in all the records of Protestantism, it would not be easy to find an utterance breathing a loftier and purer spirit of broad Christianity than the letter of the humble Quaker, Daniel Gould, addressed to the magistrates and people of Boston from "rod Iland the 3 month 1660." Bunyan himself used not better English.

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[1] Dexter, *As to Roger Williams,* pp. 90, 138.

> "Concerning religion let every one be fully persuaded in his own mind and worship according as God shall persuade his own heart, and if any worship not God as they ought to do and yet liveth quietly and peaceably with their neighbors and countrymen and doeth them no wrong, is it not safer for you to let them alone to receive their reward from him who said, I will render vengeance to mine enemies and reward them that hate me. . . . Let God alone be Lord of the conscience, and not men, and let us have the same liberty and freedom amongst you, as other Englishmen have, to come and visit our friends and kindred and do that which is honest and lawful to be done in buying and selling; and if any have a mind to reason or speak concerning the way and worship of God, that they may not be put in prison or punished for it; and so let people have liberty to try all things and hold fast to that which is good."[1]

Yet the man who wrote these words was persecuted and maltreated in Massachusetts in the seventeenth century of the Christian era, in much the same way as the man who delivered the Sermon on the Mount was persecuted and maltreated in Judea when that era had hardly yet begun. Why not one rule for all? Why, condemning the Jew, defend the Puritan?

Having thus freely expressed myself in regard to those who have heretofore rendered the history of Massachusetts, it remains for me briefly to outline it in accordance with the general principles here laid down, — applying to it the same canons of criticism, — those and none others, — which we apply to the history of corresponding development in Spain or France or Great Britain, — viewing it always in the full, strong light of subsequent events.

Thus regarded, one thing in the history of Massachusetts development stands out in striking relief. In his review of the condition of Scotland in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and his examination of the Scotch intellect during the eighteenth century, Buckle more than once calls attention to what he terms the "paradox" and "difficulty" of Scotch history "that the people should constantly withstand their kings, and as constantly succumb to their clergy; that while they are liberal in politics, they should be illiberal in religion; and that, as a natural consequence of all this, men who, in the visible and external department of facts and of practical life, display a shrewdness and a boldness rarely equalled, should nevertheless, in speculative life, and in matters of theory, tremble like sheep before their pastors, and yield assent to every absurdity they hear, provided their church has sanctioned it." And, calling attention to the fact that this singular anomaly had been completely neglected even by those who had written most fully on the history of the Scottish nation, Buckle proceeds to consider it as "surely a phenomenon worthy of our careful study."[1] Precisely the same anomaly and apparent contradiction runs through the history of Massachusetts during the two centuries which followed the settlement, — the same "love of independence and hatred of tyranny" which "saved the country from the yoke of a cruel despotism," and the same "religious servitude" which encouraged superstition, "prolonged the reign of ignorance and stopped the march of society." This, indeed, constitutes to my mind the key-note of Massachusetts, as it did with Buckle of Scotch, history, and yet, so far as I am aware, a single writer only has even alluded to it, and that one, a writer not to the manner born.[1] In his book entitled *The English in America*, J. A. Doyle remarks that, "The spiritual growth of Massachusetts withered under the shadow of dominant orthodoxy; the colony was only saved from mental atrophy by its vigorous political life;" and he adds of the established church of Massachusetts, that while, by forcibly suppressing free speech through the action of the civil magistrates, the church cut the community off from all hopes of intellectual progress, "her rule so long as it endured was a rule of terror, not of love; her ways were never ways of pleasantness, her paths were never peace."[2] As one of its mouthpieces proclaimed, New England Congregationalism "was a speaking Aristocracy in the face of a silent Democracy."[3]

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[1] Hallowell, *Quaker Invasion*, pp. 90, 210.

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[1] *History*, vol. iii. pp. 5, 191, 192.

To describe in detail the action and counter-action of these two forces, — the vigorous political life on the one side and the shadow of spiritual orthodoxy on the other, — would be to re-write the history of Massachusetts. For that there is neither present space nor time; nor yet, indeed, occasion. A brief outline will suffice; but that outline must of necessity cover the leading events, and the principal characters who figured in those events, through two centuries and a half.

The turning point in the history of early Massachusetts was the Cambridge Synod of September, 1637,

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[1] "Casting aside all but ecclesiastical considerations, the clergy consistently rejected any compromise with the crown which threatened to touch the church. Almost from the first they had recognized that substantial independence was necessary in order to maintain the theocracy." — Brooks Adams, *Emancipation of Massachusetts*, 205.

[2] *The English in America; the Puritan Colonies*, vol. i. pp. 187, 188.

[3] The Rev. Samuel Stone, of Hartford. Quoted in *Magnalia*, B. III. chap. xvi.

— the first convocation of the kind ever held in America, — that already referred to as "carried on so peaceably, and concluded so comfortably in all love," which succeeded in spreading on its record, as then prevailing in the infant settlement, eighty-two "opinions, some blasphemous, others erroneous and all unsafe," besides "nine unwholesome expressions," the whole mighty mass of which was then incontinently dismissed, in the language of one of the leading divines who figured in that Assembly, "to the devil of hell, from whence they came."

The mere enumeration of this long list of heresies as then somewhere prevailing is strong evidence of intellectual activity in early Massachusetts, — an activity which found ready expression through such men as Roger Williams, John Cotton, John Wheelwright and Sir Henry Vane, to say nothing of Mrs. Hutchinson, while the receptive condition of the mental soil is likewise seen in the hold the new opinions took. It was plainly a period of intellectual quickening, — a dawn of promise. Of this there can no doubt exist. It was freely acknowledged at the time; it has been stated as one of the conditions of that period by all writers on it since. The body of those who listened to him stood by Roger Williams; and the magistrates drove him away for that reason.[1] Anne Hutchinson so held the ear of the whole Boston community that she had "some of all sorts and quality, in all places to defend and patronize" her opinions; "some of the magistrates, some gentlemen, some scholars and men of learning, some Burgesses of our General Court, some of our captains and soldiers, some chief men in towns,

[1] Savage's *Winthrop*, vol. i. p. 175; Cotton's *Answer* (in Publications of Narragansett Club, vol. ii. p. 93).

and some men eminent for religion, parts and wit."[1] These words of a leader of the clerical faction, — one of those most active in the work of repression, — describe to the life an active-minded, intelligent community quick to receive and ready to assimilate that which is new. Then came the Synod. It was a premonition. It was as if the fresh new sap, — the young budding leaves, — the possible, incipient flowers, had felt the chill of an approaching glacier. And that was exactly what it was; — a theological glacier then slowly settled down upon Massachusetts, — a glacier lasting through a period of nearly one hundred and fifty years, the single redeeming feature in which was that beneath the chilling and killing superincumbent mass of theology, superstition and intolerance ran the strong, vivifying current of political opposition and life.

That, like most phases of historical development, this was all inevitable, the logical outcome of what had gone before, is to us apparent; but it in no way alters the fact. It was natural that in the mass of self-exiled men who sought refuge in Massachusetts between 1630 and 1637, there should be many of active, inquiring mind. Indeed it could not have been otherwise. On the other hand, the fundamental idea of the settlement was a theocracy, — an Israel in the New World, a reproduction of Bible history. A struggle was inevitable, for theocracy was incompatible with mental activity, — just as incompatible as is superstition with a spirit of investigation and doubt. Mere brute instinct sufficed to make this plain. The struggle took place in 1637, and was as decisive as it was short. The orthodox theological spirit gained an easy and complete ascendency; and the glacial period began. There was no further contest. It was a mere question thereafter of maintaining an undisputed ascendency. This ruthlessly asserted itself in 1646, nine years later, in the case of the Robert Child petitioners — an obscure episode in colonial history, no accurate account of which has yet been prepared. The first organized movement in direction of healthy political reform, it also included the widest possible religious freedom, for "the sum of it was, to allow and maintain full and free tolerance of religion to all men that would preserve the civil peace and submit unto government; and there was no limitation or exception against Turk, Jew, Papist, Arian, Socinian, Nicholayton, Familist, or any other."[1] Bearing freshly in mind the peril of 1637, the Massachusetts magistrates in dealing with the movement stretched forth a vigorous hand. It was summarily suppressed, and is since referred to by the filio-pietistic school of historians as a "plot" and those concerned in the movement as "conspirators."[2] Next followed the Synod of 1647, which formulated what is known as the Cambridge platform of faith, — a declaration of orthodox belief which maintained a fixed hold and benumbing influence on Massachusetts for more than a century. The principle of state control, already invoked in 1637, was formally sanctioned, and the punishment of heresy was devolved on the civil magistrate. "Without a protest the rulers and divines of Massachusetts were suffered to block every loophole through which free speech could make its voice heard."[3] Then ensued the legislation against the Baptists, the record of which covers the life-time of a generation, extending as it does from 1644 to 1678; and running side by side with it through the same period was the persecution of the Quakers. In 1678, the intolerance habitually practised in Massachusetts, and the strict conformity then enforced in an English colony against the members even of the Church of England, had long attracted the attention and censure of the home government. The founders of the colony had also one by one passed away, and with them had died out even the tradition of a wider education and a more tolerant spirit. As I have already said, Cotton was buried in 1652, and with him smouldered out the last spark of a broader, a more liberal theology.[1]

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[1] Thomas Welde, Preface to *Short Story*.

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[1] Hutchinson, *State Papers*, Prince Soc. Ed. vol. i. p. 174.

[2] Palfrey, vol. ii. pp. 175, 177.

[3] Doyle, *Puritan Colonies*, vol. ii. p. 94.

The generation then on the stage was born and had grown up under the benumbing influence of a provincial life and teaching. Those composing that generation, as well as those composing the generations which succeeded, could not under the circumstances be other than they were. The conditions which anteceded them and surrounded them shaped their existence. They were between the upper and the nether millstones, — the theological glacier and the material wilderness; and each exercised its influence upon them. Nor was this all. So far as religious tolerance and intellectual activity were concerned, they had always before their eyes an object lesson of the most unfortunate character in the neighboring colony of Rhode Island, — an object lesson which was made to do active service with the Massachusetts theologians then, as it has with the Massachusetts historians since.

It does not need to be said that anything taken in excess acts as a poison. No matter how good or healthful it may be in itself and in proper quantities, — too much milk or bread or broth even will disorder even the adult system, while the infant stomach rejects the excess almost at once. The stronger and more stimulating the food, the sooner any undue quantity of it is felt; until, in the case of wine, while a carefully measured use may stimulate the healthy and nourish the sick, excess brings on fever and delirium. Rhode Island went through this experience in its early days. It was, so to speak, the dumping-ground for the surplus intellectual activity of New England. The born agitator, the controversialist, the generally "otherwise-minded," — every type of thinker, whether crude and half crazy like Samuel Gorton, or only advanced like Roger Williams, there found refuge. Thus what was a good and most necessary element in the economy of nature and the process of human development, was in excess in Rhode Island; and the natural result followed, — a disordered community. Again, it could not have been otherwise; it was inevitable. But it by no means followed that what disordered infant Rhode Island would have proved more than a healthy stimulant for larger and more matured Massachusetts. In its spirit of rigid conformity Massachusetts rejected and expelled whatever did not immediately assimilate; and so did Spain. Indeed, Spain regarded Holland much as Massachusetts regarded Rhode Island — both were of the species "colluvies," or cess-pool, — the Gerizim and Sichem, the common receptacle and sanctuary of offenders, — places where, in the sneering words of Cotton Mather, "if a man had lost his religion, he might find it at the general muster of opinionists."[1] But in the seventeenth century intellectual

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[1] "A Man of a Better Spirit, in his Day." *New England Judged*, p. 124, n.

[1] *Magnalia*, B. VII. chap. iii.

activity and the friction of minds through variety in opinion was just as good and necessary to a healthy condition as it is now; the only trouble was that while Massachusetts did not have enough of the stimulant, Rhode Island had too much.[1] The tonic was unduly apportioned.

But, as I have observed, this fact the inhabitants of Massachusetts could not see then, and the Massachusetts school of historians has refused to see it since. Those composing that school have systematically narrowed their vision; and, denouncing the rulers of Spain and France and England for bigotry, intolerance and cruelty, — shutting their eyes to Holland, where Burnet, as a result of his own observation, tells us that at this very time "toleration made all people easy and happy," — seeing only what they wanted to see and ignoring whatever might be inconvenient to admit, they have pointed to Rhode Island as an example of what must inevitably have ensued had the rulers of Massachusetts in its formative period not pursued that policy of which Philip II. was the great and only wholly successful expositor. In other words they insist that in the seventeenth century toleration meant chaos, — "had our early ancestors . . . placed their government on the basis of liberty for all sorts of consciences, it would have been in that age a certain introduction of anarchy;"[2] and, in proof of this, they point to Rhode

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[1] "Between the range of diversity in utterance and deed there indulged and allowed, and the strict uniformity labored for in Massachusetts, one is reminded of the difference between attempting to cord up into a symmetrical pile and range straight sticks of wood of the same length, and assaying the same object with a heap of stumps drawn from the earth, with their roots and prongs projecting at all angles in every direction." — Dr. Geo. E. Ellis, in *Mem. History of Boston*, vol. i. p. 172.

[2] *Mem. Hist. of Boston*, vol. i. p. 127.

Island. They might with equal propriety adduce the case of Botany Bay to prove that immigration having led to a dangerous development of the criminal class in one port of Australia was a certain introduction to crime everywhere. But, admitting the argument thus advanced, why could not Philip II. and Louis XIV. and Archbishop Laud, as well as Endicott and Cotton Mather, point to that "colluvies" of Rhode Island? How can Massachusetts claim a monopoly in this line of argument? — It cannot; but as an argument it has been abandoned by students of history except in Massachusetts and Spain.

So much for Rhode Island in contrast with Massachusetts; but two centuries ago the presence of the younger and smaller community was a potent factor for ill. It was a conclusive object lesson against any tendency to increased liberality. Its very existence proved orthodoxy's case; and so orthodoxy ruled supreme. This state of affairs continued through an entire century, and until the growing difficulties with the mother country stirred the colonies into a condition of mental as well as political activity. The theologico-glacial period of Massachusetts may, therefore, be considered as lasting from the meeting of the Cambridge Synod in September, 1637, to the agitation over the Writs of Assistance in February, 1761, culminating in what is known as "the Great Awakening" of 1740–5. As a period, it was singularly barren, — almost inconceivably sombre. It has left behind it a not inconsiderable residuum of printed matter, mainly theological, but of little, if indeed of any literary, value. Than this residuum there can, indeed, "be no better proof how fully Puritanism had done its destructive work. Bid the New Englander tell the great things which God had wrought by him and his countrymen, his deep and overpowering faith raised him to noble thoughts, his scriptural learning clothed them in noble language; bring him to a lower range, to the sphere of the disputant, the critic, or the essayist, and all sense of grace, of proportion or humor has vanished."[1] In the mother-country that period was a fruitful season, for it began with Milton and closed with Johnson; while Clarendon and Burnet, Dryden, Pope and Goldsmith, Bunyan, Swift, Addison, Steele and Defoe, Locke, Bolingbroke and Newton were included in it. In Massachusetts, of writers or thinkers whose names are still remembered, though their works have passed into oblivion, Cotton Mather and Jonathan Edwards can alone be named. They were, indeed, typical of the time, — strange products of a period at once provincial and glacial, — huge literary boulders deposited by the receding ice.

"The grave humorists, who call themselves historians of philosophy, seem to be at times under the impression that the development of the world has been affected by the last new feat of some great man in the art of logical hair-splitting."[2] In other words, the writer, — the thinker, — the typical man in philosophy as in every other branch of human development, is not a cause, — or, if a cause at all, only such in a very minor degree, — but the conditions of development must be sought in the "environment" as well as in the new expression. "We can only explain the spread of the organism by showing how and why the soil was congenial." Cotton Mather and Jonathan Edwards were the ripe fruit of the theological period of Mas sachusetts; its outcome was "the Great Awakening." In the writings of the first and in the history of the last that period can best be studied. By its fruits it must be judged!

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[1] Doyle, *The Puritan Colonies*, vol. ii. p. 103.

[2] Stephen, *An Agnostic's Apology*, p. 309.

The strange story of the religious revival which swept over New England about the year 1742 — that frenzied epidemic of superstitious excitement, — has been told in sufficient detail by Palfrey.[1] Presently I shall have occasion to refer to it in detail; suffice it now to say that the more its details are studied the more incredible they seem. It was an exaggerated case of mania, — at once emotional and devotional, — not unlike the similar mania which spread over Europe six hundred and fifty years before in the days of Peter the Hermit, — though, of course, on a greatly reduced scale. As to the Rev. Cotton Mather and his literary productions, two biographies of this most typical Massachusetts colonial divine have been issued from the press within the last eighteen months. In their pages he can be studied; though, to obtain any realizing sense of the man and of the community in which he lived and for which he wrote, recourse must be had to the *Magnalia* itself. Considered purely as a literary character and one of the most prolific of authors, Cotton Mather's career was, in point of time, nearly identical with that of Daniel Defoe; for, born two years later than his English contemporary, he died three years earlier, and the *Magnalia* was printed in London at about the same time as that famous tract entitled *The Shortest Way with Dissenters*, which at once elevated Defoe to literary fame and to the pillory. Of Mather it has recently been said that

> "He was the last, the most vigorous, and, therefore, the

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[1] *History*, vol. v. pp. 3–41.

most disagreeable representation of the Fantastic school in literature. . . . The expulsion of the beautiful from thought, from sentiment, from language; a lawless and a merciless fury for the odd, the disorderly, the grotesque, the violent; strained analogies, unexpected images, pedantries, indelicacies, freaks of allusion, monstrosities of phrase; — these are the traits of Cotton Mather's writing, even as they are the traits common to that perverse and detestable literary mood that held sway in different countries of Christendom during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Its birthplace was Italy; New England was its grave; Cotton Mather was its last great apostle."[1]

But it is a fact worthy of note that the *Magnalia* stands to-day the one single literary landmark in a century and a half of colonial and provincial life, — a geological relic of a glacial period, — a period which in pure letters produced, so far as Massachusetts was concerned, absolutely nothing else, — not a poem, nor an essay, nor a memoir, nor a work of fancy or fiction of which the world has cared to take note.[2]

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[1] Tyler, *American Literature*, vol. ii. pp. 87, 88.

[2] The following, from one of his better literary efforts, are not unfair specimens of Cotton Mather's method of thought and quaintness of expression: —

IX. "I would be Sollicitous to have my *Children* Expert, not only at *Reading* handsomely, but also at *Writing* a fair Hand. I will then assign them such *Books* to *Read*, as I may judge most agreeable and profitable; obliging them to give me some Account of what they *Read;* but keep a Strict Eye upon them, that they don't Stumble on *the Devils Library*, and poison themselves with foolish *Romances*, or *Novels*, or *Playes*, or *Songs*, or *Jests that are not convenient.* I will set them also, to *Write* out such things, as may be of the greatest Benefit unto them; and they shall have their Blank Books, neatly kept on purpose, to Enter such Passages as I advise them to. I will particularly require them now and then, to *Write* a *Prayer* of their own Composing, and bring it unto me; that so I may discern, what sense they have of their own Everlasting Interests." — *Essays to do Good*, p. 58.

"*Nero* took it very ill, that *Vespasian* Slept, at his *Musick'*. It is

But Cotton Mather I have considered only as a man of letters, and the period was theological;—Jonathan Edwards was as a theologian infinitely greater than Mather, incomparably the greatest theologian America has produced. Jonathan Edwards deserves consideration therefore as the most perfect specimen of the Massachusetts theological period. As such he, also, is a curiosity,—a vast glacial boulder! He, too, is the legitimate, logical outcome of orthodoxy—the system inaugurated by the Cambridge Synod of 1637—that convocation which imposed on Massachusetts rigid conformity;—or, as the Massachusetts historians prefer to express it, the inestimable boons of rest and stability.

With an intellect so powerful and acute that not even the monotony of colonial life in a frontier village could make it provincial, Jonathan Edwards was a man of pure life and gentle, kindly nature. Nor was he, as his writings show, by any means devoid of imagination, though pitiless logic was his forte. Educated wholly in that deductive method of reasoning to which the theologian naturally has recourse, and

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very much, very much to be Wished, That the Sin of *Sleeping* at *Sermons*, were more Watch'd against, and more Warn'd against. Your *Sleepy Hearers*, if, alas, the *Catechresis* may be allow'd that calls them *Hearers*, do miserably lose the *Good* of your Ministry; and the *Good* which you might, perhaps, have particularly design'd for them, whom at the Time of your Speaking what you prepar'd for them, you see Siezed with an horrible *Spirit of Slumber* before your Eyes. Will no *Vinegar* help against the *Narcoticks*, that Satan has given to your Poor *Eutychus's?* Or, Can't you bring that *Civility* into Fashion among your Hearers, *To wake one another?*" — *Ib.* p. 103.

Speaking of his "thirst for knowledge" as a boy of twelve, Franklin, in his *Autobiography*, refers especially to a "book of De Foe's, called an *Essay on Projects*, and another of Dr. Mather's, called *Essays to do Good*, which perhaps gave me a turn of thinking that had an influence on some of the principal future events of my life."

which therefore is in almost exclusive use in all theological periods and lands, Edwards never flinched from the conclusions to which, granting the postulates, his logic led. A grotesque horror resulted; and that horror he never ceased to impress upon his people, until in its contemplation, he, the kindest and most domestic of men, grew to take delight. No inquisitor-in-chief ever gloated over the implements of the torture chamber with more morbid interest and pleasure than Edwards gloated over that hell, upon the prolonged and exquisite torments of which he loved to dilate. His God was a horrible fetich, a demon of injustice, vengeance and wrath; and of a cruelty of disposition at once infinite and insatiable. And this frightful nightmare, this access of morbid superstition, Edwards deduced logically from the Scriptures; nor did it ever once occur to him that there must be something wrong in the premises which led to such an abhorrent result. In other words, he was the logical outcome of his environment — the system in which he had his being — and he represented it fairly.

One cannot use such words as I have just used of Edwards, his system of reasoning and its outcomes, — words which, through Edwards, apply to his time and its whole mental development, for than this it had no other development at all, religious or intellectual, — one cannot, I say, use such language as that just employed on authority alone. It leaves behind a sense of exaggeration; it verges on vituperation, and so tends to weaken the force of statement. Accordingly, in this instance, it is necessary to pause and turn to the original documents.

In his sermons Edwards never wearies of depicting the Deity as being "omniscient, omnipotent, immutable," of infinite "power and wrath," "jealous" and "angry," in no degree "liable to be moved and affected and overcome by seeing a creature in misery," "dreadful in wrath;" one who "glorifies himself in the eternal damnation of ungodly men" and who possesses an inexhaustible ingenuity in the invention of indescribable torments.[1]

This deity, we are then informed,

"hath undertaken to right himself. He will reckon with [such as will not yield to parents, or to the counsels, warnings or reproofs of ministers]; he hath undertaken to see that the debts due to him are paid. All their sins are written in his book; not one of them is forgotten, and every one must be paid. If God be wise enough, and strong enough, he will have full satisfaction; he will exact the very uttermost farthing. . . . There is no hope of [sinners] escaping without notice when they leave the body. There is no hope that God, by reason of the multiplicity of affairs he hath to mind, will happen to overlook them, and not take notice of them, when they come to die; and so that their souls will slip away privately, and hide themselves in some secret corner, and so escape divine vengeance. . . . Nor is there any hope that God will alter his mind. . . . Hath he spoken, and will he not make it good? When did God ever undertake to do anything and fail?"[1]

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[1] The ingenuity displayed by some of the eighteenth-century ministers in degrading the ideal of a Divinity exceeds belief. Instead of man being made in His image, they reversed the process, and the God they set up for their congregations to worship was made in man's image; and a very repulsive image it was! They thus worshipped themselves; and, in so doing, there was nothing too base, too cruel, too mean to attribute to Him. One of the most instructive examples of this I have come across is the following, from an election sermon delivered before the assembled dignitaries of Massachusetts as late as May, 1728, in which a clergyman advanced the singular theory that in permitting the redemption of fallen man the Almighty was probably actuated less by sentiments of mercy and compassion for his creatures, than by a malicious and vindictive desire to spite the devil. Here are the preacher's words: —

"I know not why it may not be justly supposed, that one great motive with God thus to desire and seek the recovery of Man from his fallen and miserable State, was to frustrate & disappoint the great Enemy of God and Man, the wicked and malicious Devil, who triumphed over the ruins of the Fall, and blessed himself in having been Instrumentall to deface the Divine Image impressed on Man, and thereby gratified his accursed Malice against God and his Creature made in his likeness; . . . the very thought whereof gave Ease & Satisfaction in the midst of that gloom and horror, that everlastingly adheres to the apostate Angels. Then these fallen Stars sang together, and these Sons of Perdition shouted for joy. I say that this may be thought a motive with the Divine Being, to desire, seek and accomplish the restoration of Man, and thereby to frustrate the great expectations the Devil had of the happy success of his Temptation; and thereby also to add to the punishment of His and our great Adversary." — *Election Sermon* of Robert Breck (1728), p. 19.

We then come to hell, which Edwards describes as "God's prison. It is a strong prison; it is beyond any finite power, or the united strength of all wicked men and devils, to unlock, or break open the door of that prison. Christ hath the key of hell; 'he stands and no man opens!'"[2] — The Saviour a turnkey!

Having thus laid his foundations, and in so doing disposed of St. Peter and Purgatory, — Rome and Anti-Christ, — Edwards next proceeds to deal with his own particular Hereafter, in its details. I have said that he did not lack imagination; and it was in this portion of his work that his imagination came into play. That which he then wrote reminds one of the Sistine chapel mural efforts in St. Peter's, and those realistic pictures in the cloisters at Pisa wherein the Italian artists of the Middle Ages depicted the horrors of hell and the tortures of the damned. In the same spirit Edwards proceeds: —

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[1] *Works*, vol. iv. Sermon X.

[2] *Ib.*

> [The wicked will never] "be able to find anything to relieve them in hell. They will never find any resting place there; any place of respite; any secret corner, which will be cooler than the rest, where they may have a little respite, a small abatement of the extremity of their torment. They never will be able to find any cooling stream or fountain, in any part of that world of torment; no, nor so much as a drop of water to cool their tongues. They will find no company to give them any comfort, or to do them the least good. They will find no place where they can remain and rest, and take breath for one minute: for they will be tormented with fire and brimstone; and will have no rest day nor night forever and ever. . . .
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> "You have often seen a spider, or some other noisome insect, when thrown into the midst of a fierce fire, and have observed how immediately it yields to the force of the flames. There is no long struggle, no fighting against the fire, no strength exerted to oppose the heat, or to fly from it; but it immediately stretches forth itself and yields; and the fire takes possession of it, and at once it becomes full of fire, and is burned into a bright coal. — Here is a little image of what you will be the subjects of in hell." [1]

But to all human suffering, — even to the tortures of the Inquisitor, — death brings relief. Annihilation at least is escape. But this does not apply to an omnipotent God, and so, in a whole sermon entitled *Eternity of Hell Torments*, Edwards proceeds to close this door to mercy. From the scripture he irrefutably deduces the perpetuity of suffering, and then proceeds as follows: —

> "Be entreated to consider attentively how great and awful a thing eternity is. Although you cannot comprehend it the

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[1] *Works*, vol. iv. Sermon X.

more by considering, yet you may be made more sensible that it is not a thing to be disregarded. Do but consider what it is to suffer extreme torment forever and ever; to suffer it day and night, from one day to another, from one year to another, from one age to another, from one thousand ages to another, and so adding age to age, and thousands to thousands, in pain, in wailing and lamenting, groaning and shrieking, and gnashing your teeth; with your souls full of dreadful grief and amazement, with your bodies and every member full of racking torture, without any possibility of getting ease; without any possibility of moving God to pity by your cries; without any possibility of hiding yourselves from him; without any possibility of diverting your thoughts from your pain; without any possibility of obtaining any manner of mitigation, or help, or change for the better any way.

"Do but consider how dreadful despair will be in such torment. How dismal will it be, when you are under these racking torments, to know assuredly that you never, never shall be delivered from them; to have no hope: when you shall wish that you might but be turned into nothing, but shall have no hope of it; when you shall wish that you might be turned into a toad or a serpent, but shall have no hope of it; when you would rejoice, if you might but have any relief, after you shall have endured these torments millions of ages, but shall have no hope of it; when after you shall have worn out the age of the sun, moon, and stars, in your dolorous groans and lamentations, without any rest day or night, or one minute's ease, yet you shall have no hope of ever being delivered; when after you shall have worn out a thousand more such ages, yet you shall have no hope, but shall know that you are not one whit nearer to the end of your torments; but that still there are the same groans, the same shrieks, the same doleful cries, incessantly to be made by you, and that the smoke of your torment shall still ascend up forever and ever; and that your souls, which shall have been agitated with the wrath of God all this while, yet will still exist to bear more wrath; your bodies, which shall have been burning and roasting all this while in these glowing flames, yet shall not have been consumed, but will remain to roast through an eternity yet, which will not have been at all shortened by what shall have been past."

But naturally, knowing that the great majority of mankind were doomed to this torture, the sympathies of those who were to be saved might be excited for the lost, — they also might be doomed to suffer torments in witnessing the suffering of others, — their neighbors, their parents, their children. So Edwards next went on to say that this scene of awful and everlasting torture would only serve

"to give the saints a greater sense of their happiness, and of God's grace to them. . . . When the saints in heaven shall look upon the damned in hell it will serve to give them a greater sense of their own happiness, seeing how vastly different their case is from their own. The view of the doleful condition of the damned will make them the more prize their own blessedness." [1]

"Consider how it will be at the day of judgment, when you shall see Christ coming in the clouds of heaven, when you shall begin to wail and cry, as knowing that you are those who are to be condemned; and perhaps you will be ready to fly to some of your godly friends; but you will obtain no help from them: you will see them unconcerned for you, with joyful countenances ascending to meet the Lord, and not the less joyful for the horror in which they see you. And when you shall stand before the tribunal at the left hand, among devils, trembling and astonished, and shall have the dreadful sentence passed upon you, you will at the same time see the blessed company of saints and angels at the right hand rejoicing, and shall hear them shout forth the praises of God, while they hear your sentence pronounced. You will then see those godly people, with whom you shall have been acquainted, and who shall have been your neighbors, and with whom you now often converse, rejoicing at the pronunciation and execution of your sentence."[1]

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[1] *Works*, vol. iv. Sermon XIV.

"When the saints in glory, therefore, shall see the doleful state of the damned, how will this heighten their sense of the blessedness of their own state so exceedingly different from it! When they shall see how miserable others of their fellow-creatures are, who were naturally in the same circumstances with themselves; when they shall see the smoke of their torment, and the raging of the flames of their burning, and hear their dolorous shrieks and cries, and consider that they in the mean time are in the most blissful state, and shall surely be in it to all eternity; how will they rejoice!"[2]

"The sight of hell torments will exalt the happiness of the saints forever. It will not only make them more sensible of the greatness and freeness of the grace of God in their happiness; but it will really make their happiness the greater, as it will make them more sensible of their own happiness; it will give them a more lively relish of it; it will make them prize it more. When they see others, who were of the same nature, and born under the same circumstances, plunged in such misery, and they so distinguished, O it will make them sensible how happy they are. A sense of the opposite misery, in all cases, greatly increases the relish of any joy or pleasure."[3]

A modern writer, who combines great research with much acumen, says of a certain class of most devout theological writers that they define "the nature of God Almighty with an accuracy from which modest naturalists would shrink in describing the genesis of a black-beetle;"[1] and, in reading last-century sermons the intimate knowledge of the methods and councils of the Almighty therein habitually evinced sounds to modern ears a little strange; indeed, it savors of blasphemy: but it is not easy to overstate the confidential relations which the Massachusetts clergy of that period were supposed and believed themselves to hold with the Deity. For instance, Edwards, in one case, mentions his predecessor in the pulpit from which he was preaching, by name, and pictures to his congregation "Mr. Stoddard" in the world to come indicating his entire approval to God, as the latter wrathfully hustled into Hell defunct members of the Northampton church.[2]

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[1] *Works*, vol. iv. Sermon XIII. [2] *Ib.*

[3] *Works*, vol. iv. Sermon XI.

Nor was this frightful doctrine preached by Jonathan Edwards and his contemporaries alone or during one period; it was preached through a century and a half and from all the New England pulpits; nor was it the staple of the ministers only, for those who were regarded and passed current as poets chanted the same refrain. I have quoted from Jonathan Edwards the utterances of 1735; here is a specimen of the similar utterances of Thomas Shepard, in 1635, just one century earlier: —

> "God heweth thee by sermons, sickness, losses and crosses, sudden death, mercies and miseries, yet nothing makes thee better. What should God do with thee, but cast thee hence? O consider of this wrath before you feel it. . . . Thou canst not endure the torments of a little kitchen fire, on the tip of thy finger, not one half hour together. How wilt thou bear the fury of this infinite,

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[1] Leslie Stephen, *An Agnostic's Apology*, p. 5.

[2] "The End of the Wicked Contemplated by the Righteous," *Works*, vol. iv. Sermon XII., Section IV.

endless, consuming fire, in body and soul, throughout all eternity? Death cometh hissing . . . like a fiery dragon with the sting of vengeance in the mouth of it. . . . Then shall God surrender up thy forsaken soul into the hands of devils, who, being thy jailers, must keep thee, till the great day of account; so that as thy friends are scrambling for thy goods, and worms for thy body, so devils shall scramble for thy soul. . . . Thy forlorn soul shall lie moaning for the time past, now it is too late to recall again; groaning under the intolerable torments of the wrath of God present, and amazed at the eternity of misery and sorrow that is to come; waiting for that fearful hour, when the last trump shall blow, and body and soul meet to bear that wrath, — that fire that shall never go out."[1]

But Shepard and Edwards were preachers only. Michael Wigglesworth was a writer of popular verses as well as a preacher, and in 1662 he published his poem entitled *The Day of Doom*, a book which in popularity exceeded any other work, in prose or verse, produced in America before the Revolution. Of it Prof. Tyler says, — "No narrative of our intellectual history during the colonial days can justly fail to record the enormous influence of this terrible poem during all those times. Not only was it largely circulated in the form of a book, but it was hawked about the country, in broadsides, as a popular ballad; . . . its pages were assigned in course to little children, to be learned by heart, along with the catechism; as late as the present century, there were in New England many aged persons who were able to repeat the whole poem," and men who survived the middle of this century still referred to the excitement and fright with which as lads they had read it. Thus, in versified jingle, Michael Wigglesworth described those whom "angels stout" had dragged to "the brink of hell":

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[1] Tyler, *History of American Literature*, vol. i. p. 209.

> "With Iron bands they bind their hands
> and cursed feet together,
> And cast them all both great and small,
> into that Lake for ever.
> Where day and night, without respite,
> they wail, and cry, and howl,
> For tort'ring pain which they sustain
> in body and in Soul.
>
> "For day and night, in their despight,
> their torments smoak ascendeth,
> Their pain and grief have no relief;
> their anguish never endeth.
> There must they lie and never die,
> though dying every day;
> There must they dying ever lie,
> and not consume away.
>
> "Die fain they would, if die they could,
> but Death will not be had:
> God's direful wrath their bodies hath
> for ev'r Immortal made.
> They live to lie in misery,
> and bear eternal wo;
> And live they must whilst God is just,
> that he may plague them so."[1]

Nor is it as mere matter of literary curiosity that I make these long extracts from forgotten sermons and old-time doggerel. On the contrary, they are essential to my purpose; — their significance has to be fully grasped if the evolution of Massachusetts history is to be understood, and its proper place in the great whole assigned to it.

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[1] Wigglesworth, *The Day of Doom*, stanzas 209–211.

IV.

THE pulpit was the intellectual, moral and religious rostrum of early Massachusetts, and it is not putting it too strongly to say that the pulpit oratory of that period is one long Jeremiade, — an unending, monotonous wail over the degeneracy of the present as compared with the past, — over the decay of religious fervor and the neglect of observances, — over the apostacies of the people of God. Here, for instance, is a specimen from a discourse entitled *The Glory Departing from New England*, delivered by Increase Mather in 1702: —

> "O New England! New England! Look to it, that the Glory be not removed from thee. For it begins to go. . . . The Glory of the Lord seems to be on the wing. Oh! Tremble for it is going, it is gradually departing. . . . You that are Aged persons, and can remember what New England was Fifty Years ago, that saw these churches in *their first Glory;* Is there not a sad decay and diminution of the Glory? We may weep to think of it. . . . Ancient men, though they bless God for what they *Do* see of His Glory remaining in these Churches, they cannot but mourn when they remember what they *Have* seen, far surpassing what is at present."

But possibly the climax of Cassandra-like ravings was reached by Dr. Increase Mather when in 1696, being then President of this College, he remarked to the students in a discourse delivered in the college-hall,

> "It is the Judgment of very learned Men, that, in the

glorious Times promised to the Church on Earth, *America* will be *Hell*. And, although there is a Number of the Elect of *God* to be born here, I am very afraid, that, in Process of Time, *New England* will be the wofullest place in all *America;* as some other Parts of the World, once famous for Religion, are now the dolefullest on Earth, perfect pictures and emblems of *Hell*, when you see this little Academy fallen to the Ground, — then know it is a terrible Thing, which God is about to bring upon this Land."[1]

The result of this teaching was, of course, a thoroughly morbid general condition, — no food pleased the moral palate unless highly seasoned. As a contemporary writer noted, should the people "hear a minister preach in the most evangelical manner upon any moral duty, or recommend the exercise of reason and understanding, they would call him a dry, husky Arminian preacher, and conclude for certain that he was not converted. No sermons please but such as heat the passions, or scare and frighten them. Solid instruction is heathen morality or carnal preaching."[2]

Accordingly in the arid waste of those pulpit deliverances one meets with no occasional gleam of humor or insight, no conception of a spirit of inquiry or observation, no desire to look for a why or a wherefore. The dry husks are fed out, the old straw is thrashed over. Nor did the evil stop here. "Added to all this," it was in Massachusetts as it had been in Europe, "the overwhelming importance attached to theology diverted to it all those intellects which in another condition of society would have been employed in the investigations of science."[3] An utterly false method of reasoning was in vogue, making any real progress impossible. Recurring for an illustration of this once more to Jonathan Edwards, in a sermon of his entitled *Eternity of Hell Torments*, from which I have already quoted, he argues against annihilation in the following way: —

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[1] *Man knows not his Time*, p. 37.

[2] Quoted by Palfrey, vol. v. p. 37.

[3] Lecky, *Hist. of Rationalism*, vol. i. p. 282.

> "The state of the future punishment of the wicked is evidently represented to be a state of existence and sensibility, when it is said, that they shall be cast into a lake of fire and brimstone. How can this expression with any propriety be understood to mean a state of annihilation? Yea, they are expressly said to *have no rest* day or night, but to be *tormented* with fire and brimstone for ever and ever, Rev. xx. 10. But annihilation is a state of *rest*, a state in which not the least *torment* can possibly be suffered. The rich man in hell *lifted up his eyes being in torment*, and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom, and entered into a particular *conversation* with Abraham; all which proves that he was not annihilated."

This is thoroughly characteristic both of Edwards and of the system of teaching in use during the theologico-glacial period. Nothing could be more deceptive or vicious. Starting from the literal construction of a translated version of a text assumed to be in the original inspired, they argued deductively, with pitiless logic, to conclusions which it was impossible to escape from without, by questioning the premises, incurring a charge of infidelity and atheism. And this system, which, by putting a final stop to any intellectual movement, created a universal paralysis, — this system had to be slowly outgrown.

But in all this there was nothing new, — nothing peculiar to America. Long before, Bacon wrote in England —

> "Nor should we neglect to observe that Natural Philosophy has, in every age, met with a troublesome and difficult opponent: I mean Superstition, and a blind and immoderate zeal for Religion. . . . In short, you may find all access to any species of Philosophy, however pure, intercepted by the ignorance of Divines. Some, in their simplicity, are apprehensive that a too deep inquiry into Nature may penetrate beyond the proper bounds of decorum, transferring and absurdly applying what is said of sacred Mysteries in Holy Writ against those who pry into divine secrets, to the mysteries of Nature, which are not forbidden by any prohibition. Others, with more cunning, imagine and consider that if secondary causes be unknown, everything may more easily be referred to the divine hand and wand; a matter as they think, of the greatest consequence to Religion, but which can only really mean that *God wishes to be gratified by means of falsehood.*"[1]

And so the great originator of inductive reasoning concluded that "an instauration must be made from the very foundations, if we do not wish to revolve forever in a circle, making only some slight and contemptible progress;" and, as it was in England in the beginning of the seventeenth century, so was it in Massachusetts in the middle of the eighteenth century. The world moves slowly. But it does move!

Thus three generations of the children of the soil toiled here in New England painfully across the ever thickening crust of lava which had poured from a volcano, once living, but long since extinct; and the only thing the teachers seemed greatly to deplore was the creation of a new soil on the black and desolate waste, from which they could anticipate nothing but harvests of poisonous weeds. Superstition and bigotry were thus the trade staples of the educated men of the period. In other words, that people — men and women, old and young, down to the very children in the nursery — were crushed and driven to the verge of insanity, and often over that verge, by a superstitious terror — the terror of what their teachers defined as God's "vindictive justice." If any one doubts this statement, or feels disposed to put it aside as an exaggeration, he has but to turn to Jonathan Edwards's *Faithful Narrative* and Cotton Mather's *Magnalia* and there read the piteous stories of little Phebe Bartlett and little Anne Greenough, each aged five, blighted and driven crazy in their nurseries by fear of death and hell; and for that reason exhibited as prodigies of infant piety![1]

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[1] *Novum Organum*, B. I. §§ xxxi., lxxxix.

Yet, strange to say, there is even now a generally accepted belief that, somehow or in some way, this degrading parody of religion, this burlesque of philosophy, — this system worse than that of Dotheboys Hall, which, if in practice upon children to-day, would be indicted by any intelligent commission of lunacy, — the belief, I say, prevails that this system in its day subjected the people of Massachusetts to a most useful, though severe discipline, the good results of which their descendants enjoy, though they have themselves fallen away from the strict faith. Nor is this merely a popular belief; it silently pervades the pages of the historian and the moralist. It is needless to say that for any such belief no ground is disclosed by a closer historical research. The Massachusetts of the time prior to 1760 was, it is true, poorer and simpler and more primitive than the Massachusetts of the later period; but that it was morally any better is unsupported by evidence, while it was infinitely less intelligent, less charitable and less cleanly. There is also no more reason to suppose that the terrifying theology then sedulously taught was less an injury to the men, women and children composing the generations which lived prior to 1760 than it would be to those living now. It is, indeed, one of the curious phenomena of man's mental make-up, this implicitly accepted belief that a religious practice or creed which has now become abhorrent, and is recognized as morbid, should once have produced most beneficent results; while, on the other hand, it is equally recognized that some Sangrado method of medical treatment, known to be bad now, was equally bad then. The simple fact is that the Calvinistic, orthodox tenets of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries constituted nothing more nor less than an outrage on human nature productive in all probability of no beneficial results whatever. As a phase of immature development it is entitled to about the same scientific respect as the contemporaneous purging, bolusing and bloodletting medical treatment; the first blighted then and the last killed; just as both, if in use, would blight and kill now.

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[1] Edwards's *Works* (ed. 1855), vol. iii. pp. 265–9; *Magnalia*, B. VI. chap. vii., Appendix, Ex. iv.

It would have been inconsistent with any accepted theory of human nature that the moral conditions, continually and systematically developed by the treatment which has been described, should not periodically have broken out in phases of acute mania. We can view the thing from a cold pathological and scientific point of view, observing cause and effect; at the time it was taken theologically, and a fit of madness was regarded as a manifestation of the immediate presence of the Deity. At first the acute attacks of the mania took the forms of ordinary religious persecutions, finding vent against Baptists and Quakers; then it assumed a much more interesting phase in the Salem Witchcraft craze of 1691–92. The New England historians have usually regarded this curious and interesting episode as an isolated phenomenon, to be described as such, and then palliated it by references to the far more ferocious and unthinking maniacal outbreaks of like nature in other lands at about the same time.[1] This is simply to ignore its significance. Lecky, in his *History of Rationalism*, sets forth the law as follows: "It may be stated, I believe as an invariable truth, that, whenever a religion which rests in a great measure on a system of terrorism, and which paints in dark and forcible colors the misery of men and the power of evil spirits, is intensely realized, it will engender the belief in witchcraft or magic. The panic which its teachings will create, will overbalance the faculties of multitudes."[2] And, again, referring to the fact that, during the period of the Commonwealth, probably more alleged witches perished in England than in the whole period before and after, the same investigator declares that this "was simply the natural result of Puritanical teaching acting on the mind, predisposing men to see Satanic influence in life, and consequently eliciting the phenomena of witchcraft."[3] The mania of 1691–92 in Massachusetts was no isolated or inexplicable manifestation; on the contrary, it was a most noticeable instance of the operation of law: — given John Winthrop's journal in 1630–40, Salem witchcraft at a somewhat later period might with safety be predicted. The community was predisposed to the epidemic; but, instead of looking at the record with these cold, scientific eyes, the Massachusetts historian, after narrating the facts, merely goes on to suggest in extenuation of his ancestors that if evil spirits anywhere had power, it might most naturally seem to be "where Sabbath bells, till strangers brought them, had never knolled to church;"[1] but the modern investigator may see reason to suspect that the system of moral terror and apprehension systematically taught in the churches to which those bells knolled the people had far more influence in bringing on the maniacal access than any "bestial rites" theretofore practiced in the same localities by "savage men."

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[1] Palfrey, vol. iv. p. 122; Ellis, *Puritan Age*, pp. 558, 559.

[2] *Rationalism in Europe*, vol. i. p. 37.

[3] *Ib.* pp. 102, 125, 143, 144.

But, on the other hand, there is one aspect of this phase of development, as seen in Massachusetts, which is both unusual and in the highest degree creditable both to people and clergy. Lecky lays it down as another general truth "that when men have come to regard a certain class of their fellow-citizens as doomed by the Almighty to eternal and excruciating agonies, and when their theology directs their minds with intense and realizing earnestness to the contemplation of such agonies, the result will be an indifference to the sufferings of those whom they deem the enemies of their God, as absolute as it is perhaps possible for human nature to attain." And he adds that, in such communities it is not only towards the heretic that this inhumanity is displayed; it is reflected more or less in the penal systems. In countries given up to superstition and bigotry those systems are almost invariably reckless of life, and marked by excess of cruelty.[2]

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[1] Palfrey, vol. iv. p. 129.

[2] *History of Rationalism*, vol. i. pp. 150, 331, 332.

Massachusetts from the very beginning constituted a marked and honorable exception to this rule. Throughout, the moral sense of the people has been opposed to a frequent infliction of the death penalty or cruel corporeal punishment, and the penal code has been correspondingly humane. The Antinomian excitement of 1637 resulted in measures of severe repression; but, though many were banished, not one was put to death. Subsequently laws of a cruel character were enacted against the Quakers, and certain of the magistrates and divines illustrated by their conduct in the enforcement of the penalties provided in those laws the truth of the proposition just formulated; but in every instance public opinion revolted, and magistrate and priest became powerless. When, in 1659, under the impulse of Endicott's iron will and John Wilson's stubborn bigotry, two Quakers, William Robinson and Marmaduke Stevenson, were hanged on Boston Common, the popular sympathy was so moved in their behalf that the streets had to be patrolled by an armed force to prevent an outbreak; while in other cases the mob demanded from the courts justice on those who inflicted cruel punishments in the execution of a sentence, and on more than one occasion freed the prisoners. Volumes have been written about the witchcraft craze of 1692, and it has had a world-wide notoriety; it seemed, indeed, to be the one thing connected with the settlement of America which impressed itself on the mind of Voltaire.[1] Yet the Salem madness was local, and lasted only some six months, resulting in the execution of about twenty persons; the reaction then set in, public opinion revolted, and those responsible for the excesses thereafter did penance or became pariahs.

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[1] Parton's *Life of Voltaire*, vol. ii. p. 406.

At a later day one hundred and sixty capital offences could be enumerated in the penal code of the mother country; Massachusetts then contented itself with a tenth of that number.[1] This was in 1755. In 1794 it was asserted that no person had then been hanged in Plymouth County "for above these sixty years past;" and a century before, in 1686, John Dunton wrote from Boston "there has not (it seems) been an execution here this seven years."[2]

This historical anomaly, — for anomaly it is, — a mild penal code existing through a long period side by side with a most sulphurous theological creed, — this, I cannot but attribute to that under-current of vigorous political life, which orthodoxy could not wither and which constitutes the distinctive feature in Massachusetts development; but certain it is that, even while Jonathan Edwards was proclaiming hell and depicting its torments with a clearness and fervor which could not well be surpassed, an English observer was noting the fact that "as to criminal matters, they are very tender in punishing of them; and very rarely put any to death, unless it be for murder."[3]

Nature avenges itself in all sorts of ways for outrages perpetrated upon it. It avenged itself for the undesigned and even well-intended theological outrages perpetrated on it in Massachusetts through a long series of years, by the witchcraft mania of 1692; and, then, when those outrages did not cease, it presently proceeded to avenge itself in another and a wholly different way. The wizard craze was in due time followed by the religious revivals of the first half of the eighteenth century. Of these there was a succession, developing, like epidemics, in some one locality and thence spreading far and wide, all conditions being favorable. The last, known in New England history as "the Great Awakening," began in the Northampton church, over which Jonathan Edwards presided, in 1734, and it was nearly ten years before it expended its force.

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[1] *Proceedings of Mass. Hist. Soc.* vol. xx. pp. 145, 153.

[2] *Letters from New England* (Prince Soc. ed.) p. 118.

[3] *Proceedings of Mass. Hist. Soc.*, 1860–1862, p. 121.

History has had much to say of the early religious persecutions in Puritan Massachusetts, — Anne Hutchinson, the Baptists, the Quakers, — and the witchcraft tragedy is as familiar as a twice-told tale; "the Great Awakening" is a mere name, and few know to what it refers. Yet there is no phase of Massachusetts history more curious, more interesting or more worthy of scientific observation. About it there is a well developed element of the farce as well as the tragedy, and scenes in it are quite as suggestive of the stews as of the mad-house; for, though it was underlaid by a panic fear of Hell, it found expression, not in fagots, the gibbet and at the whipping-post, but in loud outcries and ludicrous antics. I have set forth in their own words the completely accepted doctrine of a wrathful God and a devouring and insatiable Hell, as depicted by the clergy; but under the stimulus of Edwards' success among his own people, a class of preachers presently came to the front, — itinerants, veritable Peter the Hermits, who by their wild appeals lashed the community into absolute madness. When Whitfield preached on Boston Common in 1740, though the population of the place was then estimated at less than 20,000, it is said that the people of the neighboring towns so swarmed in to listen to him, that some 30,000 human beings were gathered together.[1] So absorbed was the whole community in the saving of souls that the necessary work of life was neglected. Religious gatherings were held everywhere and all the time, — in dwelling-houses, in meeting-houses, in the open air, — and the utterances and actions on these occasions exceed belief. They can only be adequately referred to and described in the words of those who witnessed them; for the frightened and overwrought people, — men, women and children, — crouched trembling in the belief "that this is the last call that ever they are likely to have; that they are now hanging over the Pit of Destruction, and just ready, this Moment, to fall into it; that Hell-fire now flashes in their faces; and that the Devil now stands ready to seize upon them, and carry them to Hell;" then the preacher would pause and presently vehemently cry out to his audience, "that he saw Hell-Flames flashing in their Faces, and they were now! now! dropping down to Hell;" and he would add — "Lord, thou knowest, that there are many in that Gallery, and in these Seats, that are now dropping down to Hell!" Symptoms of agitation and panic would then show themselves: —

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[1] Palfrey, vol. iv. pp. 9, 10.

> "They often begin with a single person, a child, or woman, or lad, whose shrieks set others a shrieking; and so the shrieks catch from one to another, till the whole Congregation is alarmed, and such an awful scene, many times, open'd, as no imagination can paint to the life. . . . And forty, or fifty, or one hundred of them screaming all together, makes such an awful and hideous noise as will make a man's hair stand on end. Some will faint away, fall down upon the floor, wallow and foam. Some women will rend off their caps, Handkerchiefs, and other clothes, tear their hair down about their ears, and seem perfectly bereft of

their reason. . . . Many of the young women would go about the House praying and exhorting; then they would separate themselves from the other people, and get into a corner of the house to sing and rejoice together; and then they would break forth into as great a laughter as could be, to think, as they exprest it, that they should go hand in hand to Heaven." [During commencement week of 1742] "meetings were held every evening at which in the course of two or three hours, there would be, it may be, twenty or thirty distinct exercises carried on by five or ten distinct persons; some standing in the pulpit, some in the body of the seats, some in the pews, and some up gallery; and oftentimes, several of them would speak together: so that some praying, some exhorting and terrifying, some singing, some screaming, some crying, some laughing and some scolding, made the most amazing confusion that ever was heard." [In another locality] "they had a public exercise every day and for nine nights successively. Numbers of the people continued the greatest part of the night in the utmost disorder. They were groaning, crying out, fainting, falling down, praying: exhorting, singing, laughing, congratulating each other, which they did by shaking hands and embraces (the latter was commonly practiced by different sexes) and by the fifth night there were almost three hundred thus affected, who were acting their different parts at the same time." [1]

It was small matter for wonder, therefore, that the Rev. Charles Chauncy, referring at the time to these gatherings, wrote of the "bitter shriekings and screamings; convulsion-like tremblings and agitations, strugglings and tremblings, which, in some instances, have been attended with indecencies I shan't mention: None of which effects seem to have been accidental, nor yet peculiar to some particular places or constitutions; but have been common all over the land."

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[1] Chauncy, *Seasonable Thoughts* (1743), pp. 77, 240.

It is a curious and interesting fact, illustrating both the result of the abuse of natural laws and the utter inability of the ordinary historical observer to connect cause and effect, that the period of this acute religious mania, stimulated as it unquestionably was by a clergy of remarkable purity and singleness of purpose, was, as the records show, also a period of pronounced looseness of morals, — a period during which, as the ministers expressed it, "a tide of immorality rolled" over the land which "not even the bulwark of the church had been able to withstand;" and they attributed this deplorable condition of affairs, not to that moral and physical condition which naturally resulted from a century of artificial terror and stimulus, but to the influence of the French wars which broke out in 1744 and lasted until 1755![1] To us, of course, cause and effect are obvious: there is no paradox, no contradiction; all is sequence, all order, all law.

Of this strange frenzy, which, as I have already said, originated in Jonathan Edwards's congregation, Edwards has himself left us by far the best account. His *Narrative of Surprising Conversions*, though much less dramatic, is scarcely less interesting than Defoe's *History of the Plague;* both are nearly contemporaneous accounts of the course of epidemics, one physical, the other moral; the first due to material filth, the last to intellectual superstition.

By 1745 "the Great Awakening" had run its course. The reaction had then set in; but it was more than a mere reaction, — it was as if a glacial period had passed its climax, and the superincumbent mass of snow and ice had begun to waste and recede; and yet the process was slow — it occupied, indeed, the lives of two generations. Leaving this part of the story, — a sterile waste, — it is necessary to turn and study the concurrent course of that political activity, which in Massachusetts had from the very beginning flowed as a stream of living water beneath the thick ice-crust of theology.

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[1] See paper entitled "Some Phases of Sexual Morality in Colonial Massachusetts," in *Proceedings of Mass. Hist. Soc.*, June, 1891: Series II., vol. vi. pp. 477–516.

I have referred to the curious but intimate sympathy in regard to all political issues which, in Massachusetts as in Scotland, existed between the people and the clergy throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As a rule, and from the earliest times, the church and the priesthood have been a part of the governmental machinery, and in closest relations with the civil authority. That it was altogether otherwise in Scotland during those two centuries Buckle attributes to the fact that, for a hundred and twenty years after the establishment of Protestantism, the feudal rulers of Scotland either neglected the church or persecuted it, thereby driving the clergy into the arms of the people. Hence an alliance between the two parties; and hence, too, the steady development of that democratic spirit, which the clergy encouraged.[1] An exactly similar alliance may be studied in the evolutionary processes of Massachusetts.[2] From the beginning the ministers preached rigid conformity in religion, and stubborn independence in politics. For instance, the very ministers who met in Cambridge in September, 1637, to crush out once for all religious freedom in Massachusetts, — those same ministers only twenty months before had been summoned to Boston to confer with the magistrates as to the course to be pursued if King Charles and Archbishop Laud should indeed, as was threatened, commission and send out to New England a Governor-General. When this question was referred by the magistrates to the ministers, the answer came back, quick and decisive, — "We ought not to accept him, but defend our lawful possessions, if we are able!" In that answer there was no superstition about the divine right of kings and obedience to rulers; no obligation to conformity: and it was prophetic. It struck the key-note which rang true and strong from that January, 1635, to April, 1775.

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[1] *History*, vol. iii. p. 191.

[2] "An established priesthood is naturally the firmest support of despotism; but the course of events made that of Massachusetts revolutionary. . . . Massachusetts became the hot-bed of rebellion because of this unwonted alliance between liberality and sacerdotalism." — Brooks Adams, *Emancipation of Massachusetts*, pp. 342, 362.

Of the course of political events in Massachusetts through its theological period and down to the year 1760, when at last political predominated over religious life, it is not necessary here to speak in detail; nor, indeed, is the story an interesting one. It can be read in its dreary details in the pages of the historians: but, after all, perhaps Hawthorne in his *True Stories*, his *Scarlet Letter*, and his *Twice Told Tales* has best embalmed most of its facts with all of its romance. It was a monotonous period of slow, provincial growth, in the course of which the community passed through a series of Indian and then of other wars, — Queen Anne's war, the old French war, King George's war, — holding innumerable town meetings, governing themselves absolutely in local affairs and practically in colonial, and everlastingly bickering over salaries and tenure of office with the governors appointed by the crown to rule over them. The erection of a fort at Pemaquid continually emerges; while the unfortunate provincials seem never to weary of experimenting upon themselves with every conceivable form of currency nostrum. A record less inviting to the general reader could not be found; and yet with the slow narrative of its details Palfrey fills two cumbrous volumes, nor even then does he complete it. But it was the long period of slow preparation; and at last in 1760, one hundred and forty years from the founding, the hour struck.

Into the details of the conflict which then began it is for the purposes of this sketch wholly needless to enter. The story has often been told. It opened with the struggle over writs of assistance in February, 1761, and closed with the suppression of Shays' rebellion in January, 1787. The single fact about it to which attention needs now to be called, is that it was a period of great political activity, during which all religious and theological issues dropped out of consideration. The public mind was intent on other things. Then the frost was coming out of the ground, the sap began to start and the soil blossomed; — the town meeting sprang into activity, the legal profession came to the front, the questioning spirit of scientific research manifested itself. As usual, the new movement embodied itself in individuals, each of whom was more than any other typical of the environment; and those men, three in number, were Samuel Adams, the exponent of the town-meeting; John Adams, the framer of the constitution of 1780; and Benjamin Franklin, the pioneer in America of scientific research through inductive reasoning. These three were to the Massachusetts of the political period what Cotton

Mather and Jonathan Edwards were to its theological period; and by its fruits each period will be known!

Necessarily a mere outline, this sketch implies in those whom it reaches a very considerable knowledge of Massachusetts history. For instance, until the culmination of the theological period in 1740, the law was in Massachusetts hardly looked upon as even a respectable calling. In the early days it was under a positive ban; and even as late as 1786 the "growing power of Attorneys or Barristers at Law" was alleged as a public grievance. But about the year 1740 the profession, as a profession, began to receive recognition, and in 1760 the course of public events forced it into the lead. The discussions with the mother-country turned on legal and constitutional principles; prior to that time theology, — sermons, discourses, treatises, discussions of free-will, infant baptism and salvation, — had monopolized the press; and, then as now, the press produced just what the public called for. But between 1760 and 1775 the bar took the word out of the mouths of the ministry; nor has it ever reverted. The immediate result was the constitution of 1780, which first fixed on philosophical principles the lines and limitations of what has since come to be known as the American written constitution; and, in so doing, pioneered the way for the federal instrument of eight years later.

It would not be without grounds were this put forth and emphasized as the one great and indisputable contribution of Massachusetts to the cause of civil and religious liberty and the political progress of the race. Mr. Gladstone has pronounced the Federal Constitution as "the most wonderful work ever struck off at a given time by the brain and purpose of man." We know that it is nothing of the sort. The American written constitution was, like all good things which prove permanent, evolved tentatively; so far from being struck off at a single effort, it was worked out slowly, and through a century and a half of experiment and failure. Built up little by little, step by step, on the lines of Anglo-Saxon development, it bears everywhere the evidence of a careful regard for usage and precedent; but the distinguishing feature of the Massachusetts constitution of 1780 was that, for the first time, the philosophy of that development was in it correctly divined, and then and there reduced to form and practical working. It was again the egg of Columbus.

It was not until after the adoption of the Federal Constitution in 1787 that the political agitation which for Massachusetts began in 1760 can be said to have practically subsided. Thus for thirty years it filled the public mind of the Commonwealth to the exclusion of all else. During that period, nearly the lifetime of a generation, the glacial mass of superstition and terrorism had been gradually but imperceptibly receding and disappearing. It was still potent, but in an inert sort of way. It had lost its aggressiveness. When the constitution of 1780 was framed, it yielded a grudging and reluctant consent to limited concessions of non-conformity; but it was then so potent and so rife that the framer of the instrument abandoned in despair the attempt to put his idea of religious freedom in any form of words likely to prove acceptable to those who were to pass upon his work.[1]

This spirit of inert theological quiescence continued for yet thirty years more, and until, on the 5th of

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[1] John Adams, *Works*, vol. iv. p. 222, n.

May, 1819, at the ordination of Jared Sparks in Baltimore, William Ellery Channing called into life, in unconscious response to the demand of his environment, New England Unitarianism. The tenets of the new creed were in no way novel. When they were foreshadowed to John Adams in 1815, he simply said that he had been familiar with them for sixty-five years; that Lemuel Briant, the minister of Braintree in his boyhood, had been a Unitarian, and created a small theological tempest by enunciating those very doctrines. And this statement illustrated curiously the principle of "environment." It was in every respect literally correct. In 1749 the Rev. Lemuel Briant, then pastor of the North Precinct church of Braintree, had published a discourse on moral virtue, as a ground for soul-salvation, in comparison with faith in the articles of the catechism. This discourse led to a sharp controversy. In it Mr. Briant unquestionably set forth the full religious doctrines enunciated by Channing nearly seventy years later, — the practice of a Christian life as opposed to the profession of Calvinistic tenets. But the preacher was in advance of his time, and probably declining health alone saved him from being driven from his pulpit. The dominating sentiment of the day was not unfairly expressed by one of his brethren in the clergy who girded himself to the orthodox vindication of "Divers important Gospel-Doctrines" against this new inroad of what he termed "Arminianism," and in so doing did not hesitate to declare that —

> "Whatever Pretences are made to Religion, which are but meerly *moral*, the most refined Vertues, void of a saving *Faith* in Christ, and without his *imputed Righteousness*, will be but as *filthy Rags*, — and can give no more

Title to final Justification in the sight of God, than if a Man *cut off a Dog's Neck, or offered Swine's Blood in Sacrifice under the Law.*"[1]

And in 1743 the Rev. Charles Chauncy wrote: "I have myself been present in a large assembly when the preacher (and he would take it ill not to be thought a first-rate one, too) spoke of good works, with a loud and vehement voice, in that style, '*your abominable, filthy, cursed good works,*'"[2] curiously illustrating what Channing observed seventy years later, how large a portion of the primitive Orthodox faith consisted "in disparaging good works and human virtue, for the purpose of magnifying the value of Christ's vicarious sufferings."[3] But the whole difference lay merely in the fact that in 1750 the seed fell in rocky ground, or rather on a soil still held in the grip of that frost remaining from the glacier which had only begun to recede. Naturally it failed to germinate. In 1819 the broken sod was ripe and warm.

It is not necessary to trace the remaining development of Massachusetts religious thought, until, at last, thirty years further on, it flowered in Theodore Parker and Ralph Waldo Emerson.[4] Two complete centuries had then elapsed since the Synod of 1637 and the expulsion of Anne Hutchinson; yet the continuity in the process of human development was distinct and clearly to be traced, — no less than the break in it, corresponding to what in geology is known as a "fault." Theodore Parker was the theological successor of Roger Williams, just as Ralph Waldo Emerson was the intellectual sequence to Sir Harry Vane and Mistress Anne Hutchinson. The Massachusetts veins of liberal theology and transcendental thought, suppressed in November, 1637, reasserted themselves in 1837, when in June of that year Theodore Parker was ordained at West Roxbury, while in August Emerson delivered his Phi Beta Kappa oration at Cambridge. The soil was at last prepared. The seed not only fell but germinated; and the flower came. It told of its environment.

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[1] *A Vindication*, etc., by Samuel Niles (1752), p. 47.

[2] *Seasonable Thoughts*, p. 275.

[3] *Works*, vol. iii. p. 92.

[4] See Burgess, *Pages from the Ecclesiastical History of New England, 1740–1840.*

We no longer hear now of "the learned professions." In fact were the expression made use of in ordinary conversation, it is doubtful if a person born in Massachusetts since the outbreak of the Rebellion would know exactly what was meant by it. But it was otherwise with those who came forward during the first sixty years of the century. It meant then the three callings, — Divinity, Law and Medicine, — it meant those and nothing else. Law and Medicine, also, were decidedly junior members of the trinity. In the early New England days Theology alone was looked upon as a learned calling. The seal of Harvard College still bears living witness to the fact. Indeed, the Harvard University Medical School did not come into existence until 1783, nor the Law School for yet thirty-four years more. The earlier development of the Law in Massachusetts, as a learned profession as well as a reputable calling, has already been alluded to. Its first fruit was the constitution of 1780; but subsequently it flowered profusely as well as resplendently in Parsons and Shaw and Story, in Mason and Webster and Choate.

Passing rapidly on, and next observing the same process of natural development in response to the change in environment due to altered conditions, it will be observed that medicine had to go through its theological stage before it could reach the scientific stage; and, indeed, as recent discussions about the desecration of the Sabbath and the spread of the cholera tend to show, the theological stage in respect to medicine, strange to say, has not yet wholly passed away. By Massachusetts members of Congress even,[1] epidemics, plagues, contagions, are still looked upon with awe as manifestations of divine wrath, rather than as the result of filth and violations of the laws of health, either because those laws are not understood or because they are ignored. This was of course and still is, in the benighted quarters in which it prevails, an inevitable conclusion from orthodox tenets. The Deity is with such, and must remain, omniscient as well as omnipotent, — a jealous and an angry God, visiting the sins of the fathers on the children.

In the last century the small-pox was popularly regarded as a visitation of divine wrath; and hence one of the most striking and instructive episodes in Massachusetts colonial history. During the first century of the settlement the most terrible of epidemics had ravaged Massachusetts on an average once in each twenty years; and, as its periods of visitation usually lasted about three years, it might be said that the community passed at least one sixth of its time in acute dread of pestilence. Not until 1721 did the idea of a preventive suggest itself; but, after inoculation had been introduced into England from the East by Lady Mary Wortley Montague, accounts of this medical innovation reached the two Mathers, — Increase and Cotton, father and son, — and were by them brought to the attention of Dr. Zabdial Boylston, then the leading physician of Boston. Dr. Boylston considered the matter carefully, was impressed favorably, and experimented on his family. At once superstition asserted itself in theological guise. The fear, of course, was that the epidemic would be artificially introduced through efforts at prevention; the favorite argument was the impiety of any and all efforts to avert the visitations of divine providence. God, in his wisdom and his wrath, let loose the plague on a sinful generation, those composing which might indeed through prostration and supplication, — appeals to pity and mercy, — influence the operation of natural laws; but to go about to counteract it was impiety, and would only stimulate God to new outbursts of anger.[1]

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[1] "The awful scourge, known as the Asiatic cholera, is at our door. God only knows what the next twelve months may develop, or who will be its victims. In this presence can we afford to offend the Almighty by a national sanction of the desecration of the Lord's day that we were commanded to observe amid thunderings and lightenings from Sinai?" — Hon. E. A. Morse, M. C., to Bishop Potter of New York, December 9, 1892, *On the Question of Opening the Chicago World's Fair on Sundays.*

To the everlasting credit of the two Mathers, — one the President of Harvard College, — ministers though they were, — they rose above this grovelling stage of superstition, and faced the storm of popular odium. The excitement was great, and Dr. Boylston subsequently bore witness to the fact that, without the great moral support of the Mathers, he would have been obliged to succumb; even as it was an attempt was made on the life of Cotton Mather, while his father, then 83 years of age, closed his long life of literary activity by a pamphlet, — probably the most creditable to him of all his writings, — designed to show that inoculation against small-pox was, not only scientifically correct, but that it had been, as the title of his pamphlet expressed it, "blessed of God."

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[1] See Buckle, vol. iii. pp. 248, 249.

As the theological period passed away, and the age of scientific inquiry gradually replaced it, the study of medicine assumed a new phase. It reflected its environment. The traditional empiric methods, — what might not unfairly be described as the old-fashioned, orthodox treatment, — that deduced from Middle-Age treatises, and largely made up of bleeding, purging, starving, drugging and otherwise impeding or defeating the natural efforts of the human body towards recuperation, — this system remained long in vogue, and was perfectly described by William Douglass in his *Summary*. Douglass, by birth a Scotchman, established himself as a physician in Boston in 1718, where he says: —

> "When I first arrived in New England, I asked . . . a noted, facetious practitioner, what was their general method of practice. He told me their practice was very uniform: bleeding, vomiting, blistering, purging, anodyne, and so forth; if the illness continued, there was 'repetendi;' and finally 'murderandi;' nature was never to be consulted or allowed to have any concern in the affair."

Known as allopathy, this system of medical treatment was one superstitious extreme, naturally leading in course of time to a hardly less superstitious extreme of the exactly opposite description, known as homœopathy. As usual, the traditional led to the paradoxical; the truth probably lay between the extremes. At last, in 1835, Dr. Jacob Bigelow, being then 47 years of age, delivered before the Massachusetts Medical Society his *Discourse on Self Limited Disease* which afterwards led to the general introduction into the sick-room of what became known as the Expectant Treatment; in other words, in medicine the inductive method was quietly substituted for the deductive, — the scientific for the theological, — and nature, no longer brutally and systematically outraged by the physician, was watched and, through careful, intelligent nursing, assisted in its struggles to throw off disease. A man of the strong, virile, Benjamin Franklin type, — observing, humorous, skeptical, inquisitive, — Jacob Bigelow again only reflected his environment. Thirteen years after he led the Massachusetts medical profession to true principles in the treatment of disease, Morton and Jackson simultaneously discovered anæsthetics; and at once both medicine and surgery rose into new regions before impossible of attainment. The ice age had wholly passed away, and in one more direction yet Massachusetts flowered.

From Cotton Mather to Nathaniel Hawthorne is a long stride, but in Massachusetts literature there is no intermediate stepping-stone. The *Magnalia* was published in 1702; *Twice-Told Tales* in 1837, that year of profuse germination: and, between the two, so different and yet both distinct and unmistakable products of the Massachusetts mind, the one a boulder and the other a flower, — between them there is — nothing! This Hawthorne himself recognized, and to the *Magnalia* he instinctively went back as to a storehouse of material. So also did Longfellow; for, with the possible exception of Franklin's autobiography, the intermediate 135 years of Massachusetts history between 1702 and 1835 left absolutely nothing to be classified as general literature which posterity has cared to preserve, outside of its rarely opened cabinet of curious antiquities. Then the period of literary germination set in, and Emerson, Bryant,[1] Whittier, Longfellow, Holmes, Lowell, Bancroft, Prescott, Palfrey, Motley, Thoreau, Hedge and Alcott, — poets, novelists, historians, essayists and philosophers, broke simultaneously into life in every direction.

The phase of political activity has already been alluded to. In that field Massachusetts was always at home — it enjoyed an easy American supremacy which even its ice age did not wholly arrest. And now, when the struggle against superstition had drawn to a close, that against caste came again to the front, with Massachusetts still in the van. Indeed, on this issue, in 1837 as in 1635, the proper and natural place for the Puritan commonwealth was in the van. It stood there; indeed it was the van. In 1835, exactly two centuries after the convocation of ministers at Boston had declared in answer to the question of the magistrates that "we ought to defend our lawful possessions if we are able" against King Charles, — exactly two centuries from that epochal utterance occurred the Garrison riot. One year later, in 1836, Massachusetts championed the Right of Petition in Congress. The rest of that story does not need to be told. It also is familiar.

In his *History of American Literature*[2] Professor Tyler remarks of the New England people that from the outset "the æsthetic sense was crushed down and almost trampled out by the fell tyranny of their creed;" but, for reasons which he sets forth, he adds that "it is not permitted to us to doubt that in music, in painting and in sculpture the highest art will be reached, in some epoch of its growth, by the robust and versatile race sprung from those practical idealists of the seventeenth century." The connection between the physical, intellectual and moral conditions of a community and its artistic development is so subtile that no law governing it has yet been traced. As the experience of Spain shows, a period of art effervescence is in no way incompatible with intense religious conviction; on the contrary, such a moral and mental condition may conduce to it. On the other hand the long political agony of Holland preceded the appearance of the Dutch school of painters. Modern French art culminated amid a people strongly inclined to every description of doubt and infidelity; while the schools of Italy flourished and died away under conditions so contradictory that they defy classification. Unquestionably the material and moral circumstances of early New England, — a plain people struggling for existence in a poor wilderness, — were not favorable to any development of the art side of nature. Their lives were to the last degree matter of fact, realistic, hard. Nevertheless the examples of Copley, Stuart, Trumbull and Powers show that the possibility was there. The trouble seems to have been, and, indeed, it may be added, still seems to be that, while the artistic element exists in New England in sufficient quantity and there germinates freely enough, it hitherto has not flourished in the home atmosphere. It requires a warmer air, — more genial surroundings. Copley, for instance, was born and did his early work in Boston; but in 1774, being then thirty-seven, he went to Europe: nor did he ever feel moved to return to his native land. Stuart, born eighteen years after Copley, was of Rhode Island stock and did not until comparatively late in life come under Massachusetts influence. Not so Washington Allston or William Hunt; of these two the first was a native of South Carolina, the second of Vermont, and both got their inspiration in early life and in Europe; both came back and settled in Boston, the former at thirty-nine and the latter at thirty-one, but neither underwent further development. Their artistic faculty seemed to pine and lose fruitfulness. Of the New England sculptors, not one has produced his better work at home. They have instinctively sought Italian skies, and clung to them. The cause of this phenomenon, — the existence and germination of a seed which refuses to mature and flourish at home, — cannot be explained, nor its continuance predicted or denied. It is merely apparent that while law, science and literature have in this century seemed to find a natural soil and to enjoy a vigorous life in Massachusetts, art has been an exotic.

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[1] *Thanatopsis* appeared in 1817.

[2] Pp. 113, 114.

The record, opened at Plymouth in December, 1620, closed as a distinct and independent record in April, 1865. That long struggle for the recognition of the Equality of Man before the Law, of which Massachusetts was the peculiar and acknowledged champion, came to its close at Appomattox. Truly, the war had been carried into Africa; and, at the cannon's mouth, a mission was fulfilled. Then, the mission being fulfilled, Massachusetts, intellectually as well as politically, merged in that larger community of which it had always been a part, though ever a distinct part, and, at times, one exercising, and never more than towards the close, a dominating influence. So far as America was concerned, the long struggle against

Caste and Superstition, — the conflict for Religious Toleration and the Equality of Man before the Law, — was over.

But, as I have endeavored to show, the part borne by Massachusetts in that sustained dual struggle has not yet been fully told; and the spirit of filio-pietism has perverted the facts and distorted the record even in so far as the story has been told. As I see it, and have sought to set it forth, the record divides itself naturally into four distinct periods: (1) the period of settlement, extending from 1620 to 1637; (2) the theological, or glacial, period, extending from 1637 to 1760; (3) the period of political activity and organization, extending from 1760 to 1788; and (4), and finally, the scientific, or florescent, period, extending from 1788 to 1865, at first slow, then rapid, in movement. Those periods cannot properly be considered separate from each other; for they all merged one with another, exactly as geological epochs merge. In spite of "faults," the original strata and deposits traceable before 1637 are distinctly recognizable in the upheavals and florescence of 1837. The one period becomes intelligible and significant only when observed in the other. When so observed, confusion disappears, all is logical, all is necessary, all is the subject and outcome of law.

But this the Massachusetts historian has as yet failed to see, or refused to see. In the great, developing drama of Civil and Religious Liberty, — the modern phase of human evolution, — Massachusetts played no insignificant part; but Massachusetts cannot claim for itself the proud guerdon which the ultimate verdict of history will concede to Holland, that at one time, and for a long time, it stood forth alone, but erect in desperate bravery, the sole champion on earth of both Civil Liberty and Religious Toleration. William the Silent is a veritable colossus. John Winthrop, deservedly revered, was not altogether equal to the great occasion.

But it is time to see things as they are. Massachusetts had its ice age. That ice age, — sterile, forbidding, unproductive, its history dotted only with boulders and stunted growth, — was like similar ages in other lands, — as in Spain, for instance, where it has not yet come to its close. Such a period was, moreover, for Massachusetts no more a necessity, or a thing good in itself, than it would have been for Holland or England, had Philip II. or Charles I. prevailed. Indeed, an exactly similar period may by the Massachusetts historian be studied, in all its repulsive objectiveness, in the development of Scotland. But why, in the spirit of filial piety, should it be indefinitely urged through every form of iteration and sophistry that what was admittedly bad and only to be endured elsewhere, was desirable, — indeed was of all possible things best, — here?

If not inspired, the Hebrew annals included in themselves much of that wisdom which is concentrated experience derived from long contact of mankind with facts; — and Massachusetts illustrated forcibly the truth of one scripture aphorism, when the fathers sinned in 1637, and the sins of the fathers were visited on the children through three and four generations until 1760. And now in closing I can only repeat what I have elsewhere said: — "That in time the intellect of Massachusetts — schooled by self-government through a long struggle with nature and against foreign encroachments — did work itself out from under the incubus of superstition, prejudice and narrow conformity imposed upon it by the first generation of magistrates and ministers, cannot be denied; but it is certainly going far to infer therefrom that, in this especial case, superstition, prejudice and narrow conformity were helps instead of obstacles. It is not easy, indeed, to see how the *post ergo propter* fallacy could be carried further. It is much like arguing, because a child of robust frame and active mind survives stripes and starvation in infancy, and bad instruction and worse discipline in youth, — struggling through to better things in manhood, — that therefore the stripes and starvation, and bad instruction and worse discipline, in his case at least, worked well, and were the cause of his subsequent excellence. It is barely possible that New England, contrary to all principle and precedent, may have profited by the harshness and bigotry which for a time suppressed all freedom of thought in Massachusetts; but it is far more likely that the slow results afterwards there achieved came notwithstanding that drawback, rather than in consequence of the discipline it afforded. Certainly the historians who with such confidence set aside all the lessons of human experience — in order to assert that, in the case of their ancestors, whatever was, was right, as well as best — would be slow to apply the same rules or draw similar conclusions in the case of such as persecuted, banished or suppressed those who thought like their ancestors."

J. S. Cairnes