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OLD SOUTH PRIZE ESSAYS.

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The Policy of the early Colonists of
Massachusetts toward Quakers
and Others whom they
regarded as Intruders.

1881.

BY HENRY L. SOUTHWICK.

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BOSTON:
OLD SOUTH MEETING HOUSE.
1885.





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Book 572

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The Old South Prize Essays.

THE Old South Prizes for essays on subjects in American History were first offered in 1881. The purpose and conditions of the prizes may best be stated in the language of the circular announcing them, as follows:

In order to encourage the growing interest in American history, the undersigned are authorized to offer prizes for the best essays on the subjects named below, the competition being open to all who have graduated from the Boston High Schools (including the Latin Schools) in 1879, 1880, and 1881.

Forty dollars will be awarded for the best essay on each of the subjects named below, and twenty-five dollars for the second best—making in all four prizes. Competitors may write on both subjects, if they wish, but no one can receive more than one prize.

The essays must be sent between October 1 and December 1, 1881, to Mrs. Kate Gannett Wells, 155 Boylston Street. It is recommended that they should be written on quarto letter-paper, and that no essay should exceed in length fifteen pages of the *North American Review*. Each essay must bear an assumed name, and must be accompanied by a sealed letter having the assumed name outside and the real name of the writer within, together with the date of graduation and the name of the High School at which the pupil graduated.

The judges will give some weight to the literary merit of the essays, but will chiefly consider the amount of historical knowledge and thought displayed. They will reserve the

right to withhold any or all of the prizes in case essays of sufficient merit are not offered.

SUBJECTS FOR ESSAYS.

I. What was the policy of the early colonists of Massachusetts toward Quakers and others whom they regarded as intruders? Was this policy in any respect objectionable, and, if so, what excuses can be offered for it?

II. Why did the American colonies separate from the mother country? Did the early settlers look forward to any such separation, and, if not, how and when did the wish for it grow up? What was the difference between the form of government which they finally adopted and that under which they had before been living?

MRS. AUGUSTUS HEMENWAY,
EDWIN P. SEAVER,
MISS LUCRETIA CROCKER,
MRS. KATE GANNETT WELLS,
Committee.

THOMAS WENTWORTH HIGGINSON,
MISS C. ALICE BAKER,

Judges.

The essays received in 1881 were all on the first subject named. The number received was perhaps smaller than was expected,—the numbers have largely increased in the subsequent years,—but this fact was more than counterbalanced by the unexpected merit of the essays. Their average execution was very creditable, and those higher on the list exhibited an amount of study and thought far beyond what was looked for.

The first prize was awarded to Henry L. Southwick, a graduate of the Dorchester High School in 1880, the second prize to Leo R. Lewis, a graduate of the English High School in 1879, and the third to Clift Rogers Clapp, a graduate of the Latin School in 1880. The

third prize was not in the original offer, but was granted because of the unexpected concentration of all the essays upon a single subject.

The judges expressed the opinion in 1881 that several of the essays submitted in that year well deserved publication; and the same is true of many of the essays submitted in subsequent years. It is intended to follow the publication of Mr. Southwick's essay, which is here presented, by the publication of some and perhaps all of the later first-prize essays. This publication is not simply on account of the intrinsic value of the essays, although, while that indulgence is asked which is due to the youth of the writers, it is felt that some of them have a high intrinsic value. It is desired to furnish the competitors for the prizes in subsequent years with a certain standard or criterion, by showing them what their predecessors have done; and it is desired to make the general public better acquainted with the interest of the young people in historical and political studies, and with their excellent accomplishments.

The subjects assigned for the essays in 1882, 1883, and 1884 were as follows. The names of the prize essayists of each year are printed in connection:—

1882.

I. Ethan Allen and the Green Mountain Boys; or the Early History of the New Hampshire Grants, afterwards called Vermont.

II. The Town Meeting in the Old South Meeting House on July 22d and 28th, 1774.

I. First prize: Miss Bertha Goodale, Girls' Latin School, 1882. Second prize: Edward B. Bayley, English High School, 1882. II. Second prize: Miss Eleanor F. Lang, Girls' High School, 1881.

1883.

I. The right and wrong of the policy of the United States towards the North American Indians.

II. What were the defects of the "Articles of Confederation" between the American States, and why was the "Constitution of the United States" substituted?

I. First prize: Shattuck Osgood Hartwell, Boston Latin School, 1883. Second prize: Miss Bertha Goodale, Girls' Latin School, 1882. II. First prize: Miss Louisa E. Humphrey, Girls' High School, 1883. Second prize: Miss Harriet P. Blancher, Girls' High School, 1882.

1884.

I. Why did the Pilgrim Fathers come to New England?

II. The struggle to maintain the Massachusetts Charter, to its final loss in 1684. Discuss the relation of the struggle to the subsequent struggle of the Colonies for Independence.

I. First prize: Franklin E. E. Hamilton, Boston Latin School, 1883. Second prize: Shattuck Osgood Hartwell, Boston Latin School, 1883. II. Second prize: Benjamin C. Lane, English High School, 1883.

*Old South Meeting House,
Boston, April, 1885.*

THE POLICY OF THE EARLY COLONISTS OF MASSACHUSETTS TOWARD QUAKERS AND OTHERS WHOM THEY REGARDED AS INTRUDERS.

BY HENRY L. SOUTHWICK.

THE story of the rise of the Puritans, of the training and development of that mental and moral phenomenon, the Puritan character, for its peculiar destiny, has been narrated ably and copiously. The history of that portion of the sect which remained in England, and followed the standard of Cromwell from victory to victory, hurled Charles from his throne, and buried crown and miter under the foundations of the Commonwealth, and of that other portion who left their peaceful, smiling, merry England for a wild and inauspicious shore, crossed the ocean, fought their way

“Through tangled forests, and through dangerous ways,
Where beasts with man divided empire claim,
And the brown Indian marks with murderous aim,”

and laid the foundation of a commonwealth still broader, grander, and more enduring,—these things are “familiar as a household word.”

The settlement of New England was almost wholly due to the bitter antagonism between the Protestant Dissenters and the Church of England. In Plymouth it took the form of separation, a total severance from the Episcopal church, while in Massachusetts Bay it aimed at the establishment of a theocracy, a sort of “renovated Israel,” with the Old and New Testaments as statute-book and constituents. The famous words of Daniel Webster strike the key-note to the situation: “Let us not forget the religious character of our origin. Our fathers were brought hither by their high veneration for the

Christian religion; they journeyed in its light and labored in its hope. They sought to incorporate its principles with the elements of their society, and to infuse its influence through all their institutions, civil, political, and literary." And let us not misconceive the aims and purposes of the founders. The attempts to palliate their faults, to apologize for the harshness of their spirit and the cruelty of their dealings, fail to get at the root of the matter. As Dr. Ellis says, "On no subject dealt with among us has there been such an amount of crude, sentimental, and wasteful rhetoric, or so much weak and vain pleading, as on this." Could our fathers but listen to what has been offered in their behalf, if their merriment were not overmastered by indignation at being so grossly misrepresented, how they would laugh over the delusions of their progeny, much as the chiseled skulls on antique grave-stones are said to grin at their own epitaphs. Their assailants and defenders alike fall into the common fallacy of attributing to the founders the purpose of seeking to establish an asylum for persecuted consciences. Poets sing of it, orators dilate upon it, and school-books inculcate it. But the fact is that, of all the popular notions respecting the early Puritans, none are less warranted by history than that which credits them with a love or regard for religious liberty. They never intended to permit freedom of conscience in their midst. They were not sufficiently advanced for it. They abhorred the very name. To them it was the synonym for the deadliest of heresies, for moral looseness, and for social anarchy. They had seen its tendency in England, and they dreaded its results. They could not and would not tolerate it.

Ignorance on this important matter seems to be widespread and almost universal. Even the learned Dr. Palfrey shares the popular fallacy, when he says: "As a corporation, the company had obtained a large American territory, on which it designed to place a colony which should be a refuge for civil and religious freedom." But, if we would obtain a correct insight into the real aims and purposes of the founders, we must turn to the writings of the early settlers themselves.

Winthrop speaks of "the work we have in hand, to seek out a place of cohabitation and consortship, under a due form of government, both civil and ecclesiastical." Here is truly a wide discrepancy. We see at once that the difference between Dr. Palfrey's "refuge for civil and religious freedom," and the Governor's "place of cohabitation and consortship, under a due form of government, both civil and ecclesiastical," is immeasurable. In the same strain with Winthrop, Gov. Hutchinson says: "It was one great design of the first planters of the Massachusetts Colony to obtain for themselves and their posterity the liberty of worshipping God in such manner as appeared to them to be most agreeable to the sacred Scriptures."

These extracts, which are fair samples of the spirit of the early planters, seem to establish, beyond challenge or cavil, the assertion of Mr. Quincy, that "they came here not to acquire liberty for all sorts of consciences, but to vindicate and maintain the liberty of their own." A truly representative Puritan was Gov. Dudley, one of the most eminent of the settlers of New England. He was a man of sound judgment, inflexible integrity, and exemplary piety. How strongly he was imbued with the intolerance of his age will appear from his reply to an inquiry from Holland as to whether "those that differed from you in opinion, yet holding the same foundation in religion, might be permitted to live among you." "God forbid," said he, "our love to the truth should be grown so cold that we should tolerate errors." After his death these lines were found in his pocket:

"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 heresy and vice."

The hard, intolerant, unchristian theology of the Puritans has justly met with unsparing condemnation, while their morose and grotesque manners, their canting phrases and their very atmosphere, "black with sermons," are made the subject of stinging jests and much flippant ridicule. But the

charge of hypocrisy, so often hurled at them, seems to have little, if any, foundation in fact, except, perhaps, the duplicity of the colony's relations toward the mother country. Marten says: "Their inconsistencies were almost equal to their virtues. The disciples of liberty, they soon confined its blessings to themselves. The loud champions of the freedom of the conscience, they allowed of no freedom which interfered with their narrow views." Now I have carefully and diligently sought the records for evidence that the Puritans of Old or New England ever advocated or sued for religious freedom. I have found none. True, remonstrances were frequent and petitions numerous, but they were invariably remonstrances against some abuse of the ecclesiastical régime, petitions for some modification of the ritual or church government. As Col. Higginson so pertinently observes: "In England they did not wish to be tolerated for a day as sectaries, for they claimed to have authority as the one true church. They objected to the Church of England, not that it persecuted, but that its persecution was wrongly aimed." They were consistent to their consciences, narrow and perverted though those consciences were. Long before James I had carried out his threat to "harry them out of the land," they had adopted opinions which they fully believed they ought to profess, a mode of public worship which they fully believed they ought to observe; they reposed in the security of conservatism; they claimed the sword of the magistrate to punish the schismatic and the heretic; they proposed to regulate their commonwealth by the strictest legislation of the Bible—the whole Bible, but especially the Old Testament. We look in vain through the darkness of Puritan Judaism for any gleams of that light of Nazareth which they professed to adore. They preached, not the fatherhood, but the wrath of God. They were absurdly credulous, completely swaddled in the "grave clothes of creed and custom," and, in their supreme arrogance, fancied they were "God's elect." But we must give them the credit of their work. We must look at the facts, not with our prejudices, but with our eyes.

The Puritans brought to bear a coolness of judgment and an immutability of purpose which seem inconsistent with their religious zeal. Bancroft says of them: "The wildest theories of the human reason were reduced to practice by a community so humble that no statesman condescended to notice it." To do them justice, we must review their purposes and actions by the light, or, if you please, the darkness, of their own beliefs and consciences. They were men of intelligence and wisdom for their age. Their purposes were pure and lofty. They "scorned delights, and lived laborious days." They were attempting a great enterprise in the midst of dangers and privations and all the somber influences which stamped indelibly upon the Puritan character all that it had of gloom and repulsion. "Their fundamental error," Judge Story says, "was their theory of the necessity of a union between church and state." This attempt to construct a state from a church proved a conspicuous failure.

The colonists wished to have it distinctly understood that "New England was a religious plantation, not a plantation for trade." Their great misgiving was that the wickedness or waywardness of any strangers or interlopers who might steal in among them would imperil the success of their cherished undertaking. The earlier settlements had been filled with a lawless multitude. They now proposed to admit only the "favored of heaven" to form a "peculiar government" and to colonize "the best." In their determination to keep out all unwelcome persons, they took refuge behind the following clause of their charter, the only provision in the entire instrument which could, by the most extreme distortion of its meaning, even technically justify their exclusive policy: "That it shall be lawful for the chief commanders and officers of the said Companie for the tyme being for their special defence and safety to encounter, repulse, repell and resist by force of arms all such person or persons, as shall at any time hereafter attempt or enterprise the destruction, invasion, detriment, or annoyance of said plantation or inhabitants, and to take and surprize by all ways and

means whatsoever, all and every such person and persons, with their ships, armour, munition, and other goods, as shall in hostile manner invade or attempt the defeating of the said plantation, or the hurt of the said company and inhabitants." To disclose what there is in this very clear and significant provision of a colonization and trading charter to justify the historian, Henry Cabot Lodge, and that eminent authority, Dr. Ellis, in asserting that it endowed the colonists with all the exclusive privileges of householders, and with full authority to exclude all unwelcome persons, and to drive them away even by legislation of excessive cruelty, thus vindicating the iniquitous proceedings toward Baptists and Quakers, requires a well developed faculty of extracting undreamed-of meanings from legal phraseology. The clause is clearly a reference to hostile invasion, and admits of no other interpretation, without grossly perverting and distorting its significance. It simply empowers "the chief commanders and officers" to "resist, by force of arms," those who may "in hostile manner invade" their territory. The word "annoyance," used in this connection, is merely a military term.

It was doubtless intended that the charter should be administered in Old and not New England. Had it been but faintly suspected that their colonization and trading charter would have been made the cloak for establishing a Puritan theocracy, the instrument would never have received the royal seal. The planters were granted permission to make their own laws, but "so as such lawes and ordinances be not contrary or repugnant to the laws and statutes of this our realme of England." Now, it must be frankly admitted that their government and its administration were such as the statutes and common law of England did not warrant. While they stretched the provisions of their charter, they grossly violated its spirit. Governor Winthrop says: "Let the patent be perused, and there it will be found that the incorporation is made to certain persons by name, and unto such as they shall associate to themselves. None other can claim privilege with them but by free consent." Now, a careful perusal of the

patent will find therein neither authority, nor the shadow of authority, for Governor Winthrop's interpretation. That "the incorporation is made to certain persons by name," is a logical and necessary inference, for it is difficult to conceive how else it could have been granted. It is a very significant fact that, when the second charter, granted by William III, received the royal seal, the colonists were expressly forbidden to expel unwelcome persons from their jurisdiction.

Starting from the hypothesis that they were members of a joint stock company, and possessed all the rights of proprietors, the fathers, urging the necessity of protecting their own property, their own franchise, their own great design, decided to restrict the right of franchise to church-members alone, to those whom they supposed to be in full sympathy with the religious purpose of the colony, which they believed would alone insure its success. This, it will be conceded, was plainly "repugnant" to the laws of England. As it might be readily supposed, the result was all manner of mischief. Their scheme, while it shut out many of their best citizens, afforded no adequate protection against the worst. And yet, in that age of universal intolerance, even the New England Puritans, with all their narrowness and bigotry, seem, by contrast, liberal, and even indulgent, when we consider that France and England were gasping under the despotism of intolerance, that Holland and Germany were torn asunder by the implacable wars of religion, while the demons of the Inquisition held bloody saturnalia in Spain.

That the Puritans, in choosing their course of action, made a most grievous mistake, is a truism which requires no demonstration. They were now at liberty to make their own choice, and to carry their principles into full effect. They deliberately, with their eyes wide open, chose the path of intolerance, and their fault is aggravated by the reflection that they themselves were the living witnesses of the utter folly of the experiment. Untaught by experience, they repeated in America the self-same crimes from which their fathers had suffered so much in England, and thus justified

the men who had wronged them. In the language of Macaulay: "They should have learned, if from nothing else, from their own discontents, from their own struggles, from their own victory, from the fall of that proud hierarchy by which they had been so heavily oppressed, that it was not in the power of the civil magistrate to drill the minds of men in conformity with his own system of theology." But the stand of the founders had been taken, and they held to it with consistent pertinacity.

The first troublers of the Puritan Israel were John and Samuel Brown, who were sent back to England in 1629, for adhering to Episcopal forms. They were reputed "sincere in their affection for the good of the plantation," but, to the eyes of the colonists, the service of the Church of England was as great a crime as the conventicles of Brownists and Anabaptists had ever been to the eyes of the Church itself, in the days of Whitgift and Barlow. Nor was their enmity without real foundation. The Episcopalians had waged against their party a war of extermination. They could not imperil the safety of the colony by a breach of its unity. Having settled here to maintain and perpetuate Puritan Christianity, and made the greatest sacrifices so to situate themselves, they did not propose to have the hierarchy, whose persecutions had driven them into exile, intrude into the forests of Massachusetts.

Their next trial was the advent of Roger Williams, the apostle of "soul liberty," "young, godly, and zealous, having precious gifts." His great and unchanged tenet was the sanctity of the conscience, a doctrine especially abhorrent to the Puritan fathers. He held that "the magistrates should restrain crimes, but not control opinions." Compulsory church attendance he regarded as a violation of the natural rights of man, and the church-membership limitation met with his stern and unequivocal disapproval. In his *Bloody Tenet* he says: "Not only did the law of calling to magistracy shut out natural and unregenerate men, though excellently fitted for civil office, but it also shut out the best

and ablest servants of God, except they be entered into the church estate." He denied *in toto* the notion of the church's concern in civil affairs, which was the foundation of New England's polity. But his crowning and unpardonable heresy was when he attacked the right of the colonists to their land. The planters resolved to bear with him no longer. At the session of the General Court, held at Boston in September, 1635, this order was passed: "Whereas, Mr. Roger Williams, one of the elders of the Church of Salem, hath broached and divulged divers new and dangerous opinions against the authority of the magistrates, and also writ letters of defamation, both of the magistrates and churches here, and that before any conviction, and yet maintaineth the same without retraction, it is therefore ordered that the said Mr. Williams shall depart out of this jurisdiction within six weeks now next ensuing." All the ministers, save one, approved the sentence. The church had driven from her fold one of her best and holiest children, but one who was nevertheless dangerous to the state. The historians generally agree that the banishment of Roger Williams was more a matter of policy than a question of religious tolerance. In the language of Henry Cabot Lodge, "He (Roger Williams) denied the power of the magistrates to enforce the laws; he struck at allegiance to the government; he strove to encourage a policy which would still further inflame the King, and embitter their relations with England, and all this was done in a time of trial and extreme danger from abroad." The colonists were very reluctant to have Williams point out to them the wide differences between their practice under their charter, and the real meaning of the instrument. But they were nevertheless justified in treating him as an intruder.

Hardly were they well rid of Roger Williams, when Mrs. Hutchinson appeared upon the scene. She was a woman of high and subtle intellect, deeply imbued with the controversial spirit of her age. She stood at the head of a constantly growing party, largely composed of individuals who had arrived after the civil government of the colony had

been established, and who, following out the doctrines of strict Calvinism with logical precision, maintained that salvation was the fruit of grace and not of works. The conservative party, which consisted of the original settlers, of the men who had founded the colony, and who were content with the established order of things, readily conceived how such a doctrine might be perverted by logical interpretation, and religious standing be made independent of moral character. She was supported in her rebellion against spiritual authority by Governor Vane, Rev. John Wheelwright, and a majority of the people of Boston, but Winthrop, Dudley, and nearly all the ministers were arrayed against her. The subject became one of supreme political importance. At the ensuing choice of magistrates the theological divisions played a principal part in the elections, and the triumph of the clergy was complete. Mrs. Hutchinson was summoned before the General Court, denounced as "weakening the hands and hearts of the people against the ministers," as being "like Roger Williams and worse," and Massachusetts, true to her theocratic system, banished Mrs. Hutchinson and her followers, as she had banished Roger Williams. But while the case of Williams was perhaps chiefly political, in that of Mrs. Hutchinson the religious element was predominant. Her attack upon the church, however, in a community where church and state were substantially one, was practically an assault upon the state itself. In defending the order of the court of 1637, to the effect that "none shall be allowed to inhabit here but by permission of the magistrates," and thus vindicating the expulsion of Antinomians, Winthrop says: "A commonwealth is a great family, and as such is not bound to entertain all comers, nor receive unwelcome strangers."

If Roger Williams was the first individual to uphold the liberty of conscience, the Baptists were the first sect to publicly maintain its doctrines. I have before me, as I write, a quaint old volume of Baptist tracts, published in London in 1644. In one of them, entitled *Religious Peace*, we find this typical paragraph: "And how much more ought Christians

to tolerate Christians whereas the Turks do tolerate them. Shall we be less merciful than the Turks? or shall we learn the Turks to persecute Christians? It is not only unmerciful, but unnatural and abominable; yea, monstrous for one Christian to vex and destroy another for difference and questions of religion." Like other advocates of this dangerous heresy, the Baptists could expect little indulgence from the Puritan colonists of Massachusetts. Indeed, as Hildreth so justly observes: "The horror of toleration is an inherent and essential characteristic of every theocracy." The Baptists had been relentlessly persecuted in England, and the colonists, naturally imbibing the prejudices of the mother country, shaped their legislation in the same direction. Their dread and aversion to this sect arose, in part, it may be readily supposed, from confounding them with the Anabaptists, a German sect, whose extravagant opinions, and still more extravagant practices, had incurred universal odium in Europe. In 1644 a law was passed, inflicting banishment upon all such as, after due time and means of conviction, continued obstinate in opposing infant baptism. Among the victims of this enactment were Gorton and his six associates, who were banished, Clark and Crandall, who were fined, and Obadiah Holmes, who in 1651 was whipped for heresy. Several of the Baptists, who in 1655 attempted to organize a church in Boston, were fined and banished for not attending the established worship. "The same conduct," says the astute Chalmers, "has been invariably pursued in all times and in every country; the persecuted, when they acquire power, will always persecute!" Wretched and deplorable as was the treatment of the Baptists, that the Puritans were not unanimous in their acts of oppression and intolerance will appear from the noble letter of Sir Richard Saltonstall, one of the original founders of the colony, written in 1652 to Wilson and Cotton, ministers of Boston: "It doth not a little grieve my spirit to hear what sad things are reported daily of your tyranny and persecution in New England, as that you fine, whip, and imprison men for their conscience. First,

you compel such to come into your assemblies as you know will not join you in your worship, and, when they show their dislike thereof, or witness against it, then you stir up your magistrates to punish them for such, as you conceive, their public affronts. I hope you do not assume to yourselves infallibility in judgment, when the most learned of the Apostles confesseth he knew but in part, and saw but darkly, as through a glass."

The high-souled nobleman was prompt to recognize that, among the New England Puritans, the old principles of the independency had been completely subverted by the spirit of the establishment; that the union of church and state was fast corrupting both. But now the attention of the colonists was absorbed by a new influx of heretics, before whom Ritualists, Antinomians, and Baptists faded into insignificance. The rise of the sect called Quakers was one of the results of that fermentation of public opinion in England which Cromwell allowed to go on unchecked. It was a consequence of the moral warfare against corruption and bigotry. The Quakers sought to effect a reform in manners, rather than in belief. They were irreproachable in their lives, meek and patient in suffering, never returned evil for evil, advocated the utmost simplicity, and were outspoken in their testimony against war, intemperance, slavery, and all immorality. They were men of whom Cromwell said: "I cannot win them by gifts, honors, offices, or places." Regarding the *Inner Light*, their oracle of duty, as the only and all-sufficient authority for proclaiming the truth, they rejected all forms, all rituals, and opposed all ordained ministry. "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." They asked for no privileges for themselves which they were not willing to accord to others. They denounced religious persecution, and advocated perfect freedom of opinion and expression for all mankind, recognizing in all creeds some mixture of truth. By their constancy of purpose and unshaken resolution, they worked out for themselves and the world one of the grandest problems of civilization.

At the age when Quakerism took its rise, public opinion was in a state of perpetual agitation. The nature of the Quaker doctrines and the cruel treatment which the sect received aroused in many an extravagance of speech and action hardly distinguishable from insanity. They had their "illuminations"—imagined that they were inspired with the spirit of prophecy—addressed warnings to ministers and magistrates. In England they were whipped, imprisoned, fined, branded, and treated with atrocious cruelty. But, far from shunning, they gloried in persecution. "The Quaker entered the contest," says Macaulay, "with all the zeal of a reformer, the confidence of an enthusiast, and the cheerfulness of a voluntary martyr." The Quakers had heard of New England as a place where religious liberty was crucified, where "the servants of the Lord were forbidden to serve him;" and single-handed, without organization and rejecting the use of carnal weapons, they resolved to brave the perils of the sea and attack the Puritan stronghold. That they were not wanted here did not hinder them in the least, but rather quickened their zeal, and threats were interpreted as invitations.

In Massachusetts the fame of the Quakers had preceded them. The fathers had heard of them as wild and noisy fanatics, "drunk with zeal,"

"Mad scoffers of the priesthood, who mock at things divine."

They had heard reports of their dismal prophesyings and revilings and their coarse and unfriendly behavior. Endicott and his followers remembered but too well the violence and tumult of the Antinomian controversy, and dreaded a repetition of such a strife. Their fevered fancy saw the "fabric of their institutions overthrown and their long and arduous work undone." They resolved to keep the Quakers out at all hazards. Their policy of "absolute intolerance sustained by capital punishment" had been successful in the cases of Williams, Gorton, the Antinomians, and other offenders, and they now proposed to try it on the Quakers. But little did they know the immutability of purpose and the invincible

determination of the Quaker character. The Quakers had resolved to break down Puritan intolerance in spite of every obstacle, and in spite of the most atrocious barbarities which might be inflicted upon them, and faithfully and thoroughly did they perform their task. That the conduct of the Friends was excessively aggravating, often giving provocation for the most radical measures, there can be little doubt. Even Roger Williams called them "insufferably proud and contemptuous." But the remedy chosen by the magistrates was worse than the disease itself. The sincerity of neither party is questioned. Both were consistent from their respective standpoints. The Quakers were the aggressive party, but, under the law of England, and as English subjects, they claimed the right to come here.

Ann Austin and Mary Fisher arrived at Boston early in 1656. Acting-Governor Bellingham ordered them to be seized, their persons searched for marks of witchcraft, and their papers burned by the common hangman. They were then shipped back to England. In October, 1656, eight more Quakers landed in Boston and, like the others, were promptly seized and thrown into jail. Thus these Quakers were punished, not for what they had done, but for what the magistrate imagined they might do. Furthermore, at this time there was no law against Quakers, and the colonists, aware of the weakness of their position, passed laws to meet the case. This was practically before a Quaker had appeared in New England, or had any opportunity to commit "lawlessness."

Quakers coming into Massachusetts were to "be forthwith committed to the house of correction, and at their entrance to be severely whipped, and by the master thereof to be kept constantly at work, and none suffered to converse or speak with them during their imprisonment." Masters of vessels were subject to a fine of £100 for bringing a Quaker into any part of the jurisdiction, and required to give security to take him away again. In the following year the severity of the laws was increased. A fine of forty

shillings for every hour was imposed for harboring Quakers, and the forfeiture for bringing them in was enforced by a more rigid rule. It was furthermore ordered that every Quaker coming into the jurisdiction, after having been once banished, should, "for the first offence, suffer the loss of one ear; for the second offence the loss of the other; and for a third offence should have his tongue bored through with a hot iron." In October, 1658, the penalty of death was decreed against all Quakers who should return after they had been banished. Let us do the fathers the justice to say that the death penalty was passed by a bare majority and after much opposition.

The federal commissioners soon wrote to the General Court of Rhode Island, remonstrating against the leniency of its policy toward these "cursed heretics." Here they were enjoying such a refuge as the early Puritans themselves had found in Holland. The reply of Governor Arnold contained a significant and valuable suggestion, which the magistrates of Massachusetts Bay had done well to adopt. It had been his experience that where the Quakers are "suffered to declare themselves freely, there they least desire to come; and that they are likely to gain more followers by the conceit of their patient sufferings than by consent to their pernicious sayings."

But brandings, whippings, and croppings of ears had but little effect in keeping out the Quakers. Especially did they swarm to Massachusetts, as the hot-bed of bigotry, and, therefore, in the greatest need of their remonstrances and preachings. The cruelties inflicted upon them would seem incredible if not too well authenticated. Nicholas Upsall, a venerable and highly-respected citizen, for showing some compassion to Quakers in prison, was himself thrown into the same prison, fined and banished, and suffered incredible hardships for his humanity. Sarah Gibbens and Dorothy Waugh were imprisoned three days without food, then "whipped with a threefold knotted whip, tearing the flesh," and afterward banished. In September, 1658, Holden, Cope-

land, and Rouse, who had twice come back after banishment, each had the right ear cut off by the constable. The law compelling all persons to attend meeting under a penalty of five shillings, was rigidly enforced, and caused great distress among the Quakers. The fines often accumulated to a large amount against the same person, and many were thrown into jail, and their cows, sheep, and other substance taken from them, and their families reduced to utter destitution. A law had also been passed requiring all persons to take the oath of fidelity to the country. As Quakers could not take an oath, they could not be protected in person or estate by the laws, and were the helpless prey of every designing rogue and swindler. The case of the Quaker then seemed to stand something like this: If he stayed away from the Puritan "steeple-house," he would be fined; if he went there, and the spirit moved him to utter a protest, he would be fined again; if he chose to attend his own meeting, he would inevitably be fined. If, driven to a perfect frenzy of fanaticism by his sufferings, he should revile his persecutors, fine and imprisonment were his certain fate, supplemented, perhaps, by the branding-iron and whipping-post. If unable to pay his fines, his property would be confiscated, and he himself liable to be sold into slavery. Truly a disheartening prospect for the outlawed Quaker. The number of Friends who were fined, imprisoned, or scourged, by order of the General Court, was about thirty. The number punished in a like manner by sentence of the county courts is not ascertained.

In 1659 Puritan persecution reached its climax by the judicial murder of four persons; but it was done amid much murmuring and public protest. In the summer of that year, Mary Dyer, William Robinson, and Marmaduke Stevenson, three exiled Quakers, returned to Boston. They were tried, condemned, and in the following October, the two men were hanged on Boston Common; but Mary Dyer's sentence, at the intercession of her son, was commuted to banishment. She soon came back, however, and on the 1st of the follow-

ing June was again led to the gallows. Being offered her life on condition that she would go away and stay away, she replied: "Nay, I cannot; for in obedience to the will of the Lord I came, and in his will I will abide faithful to the death." The brand of that day's infamy will never disappear from the annals of the Puritan founders. In all these barbarities the clergy heartily concurred. In pronouncing sentence of death upon the Quakers, in defiance of the law of England and the patent from which all his authority was derived, Governor Endicott exceeded his authority and plunged into the double guilt of treason and murder. It would, indeed, seem as if the magistrates

"Bereft of light, their seeing had forgot."

They might have perceived that, while they proceeded from one severity to another, the evil they were seeking to crush augmented rather than diminished. For every Quaker hanged, five were ready to take his place. The next victim was William Leddra. He was offered his life on the condition of going to England and not returning, to which he replied: "I have no business there; I stand not in my own will, but in the will of the Lord; to make you the promise, I cannot." On the following day, March 14, 1661, his name was added to the list of martyrs. While Leddra's trial was still in progress, Wenlock Christison appeared before the court. There was something sublime in his courage. At his trial he demanded to know if the court was bound by the law of England, and, on receiving an affirmative reply, declared that there was no English law for hanging Quakers, and appealed to England for protection. Governor Endicott treated his demand with derision. Not without reason did poor Christison exclaim against such "monstrous illegality," that the "Magna Charta was trodden down, and the guarantees of the colonial charter utterly disregarded." But his cruel sentence was destined never to be executed. In the meantime the General Court had met, and public opposition to the rigorous policy of the magistrates had made itself

heard in indignant threats and protests. The contest of will was over. The spirit of humanity had uttered itself in overpowering tones, and the softening sway of gentle patience, under suffering, had, at length, melted the ice of Puritan austerity.

The zealous defenders of the Puritans hasten to affirm that the barbarity of the law was justified on the ground that Quaker doctrines seemed subversive to all established order. But the same argument is equally applicable to the case of the Moors in Spain and the Huguenots in France. "The fears of one class of men are not the measure of the rights of another." And the Puritan founders, by ignoring the fact that it was the conscience of the Quakers which moved them to question the righteousness of the law, and by charging it solely to their obduracy, claim, in effect, that there could be no conscientiousness except within their own hearts. The statement of Dr. Ellis is probably literally true, that "at any stage of the proceedings against them (the Quakers), even when on the gallows, each and all of them were at perfect liberty to go off unharmed." But the Quaker knew this would be a weak and fatal concession. Holding duty paramount, he could die, but would not deny the truth nor surrender his sacred mission. He had resolved to break down Puritan intolerance, even though it cost him his life. He conquered, and left to posterity the invaluable legacy of religious freedom.

Upon the question of the historical accuracy of the "King's missive," over which there has been some recent discussion between the Quaker poet and Dr. George E. Ellis, through the medium of the *Boston Advertiser*, it is not now necessary to dwell at any length. Suffice it to say that Mr. Whittier's information upon the effect of the royal mandamus seems to have been well founded and derived from authentic sources. True, some of the inhuman laws suspended on receipt of the King's instruction were revived in October, 1662. But even these were reenacted with some modifications, while the death

penalty for Quakers never again disgraced the statute-books of Massachusetts Bay.

For a little while after the discontinuance of capital punishment, the antics of the sufferers grew more absurd and annoying than before. Railings, prophesyings and disturbances became more numerous than ever. Lydia Wardwell at Newbury, and Deborah Wilson at Salem, were constrained to appear naked "as a sign." Mary Brewster entered the Old South Church in a gown of sackcloth, with her face smeared with lamp-black. But as the severity of the persecution relaxed, so the fanaticism of the Quakers declined; their absurdities became less frequent, and were soon heard of no more. As the colony grew stronger, the magistrates became more confident in their own power and security, better reconciled to the existence of dissent, and more willing to relax those severities which in their early weakness they had deemed essential.

It is commonly asserted that Quaker persecution owed its origin, not to the settled purpose of the founders to permit no difference of opinion among them on religious subjects, but to the effrontery and indecency of the persecuted. But it is most evident that Quaker excesses were engendered by Puritan persecution. Quaker men were stripped of all their property, starved in Puritan jails, tortured and mutilated; Quaker women dragged through jeering crowds, stripped for the lash, until, driven to a perfect frenzy by their inhuman treatment, they were goaded on to acts of defiance and indelicacy.

The incivility and abusive language of the Quakers are often urged as an excuse for the treatment which they received. They believed that they were doing God's work, and naturally denounced their persecutors, and in language not remarkable for its charity or delicacy. Ministers were stigmatized as "Baal's priests," "the seed of the serpent," "the brood of Ishmael," "painted sepulchres," etc. But, in extravagance of language, the Puritans often rivaled their victims. Cotton Mather writes: "In Quakerism, the sink of all here-

sies, we see the vomit cast out in the by-past ages by whole kennels of seducers licked up again for a new digestion." In the matter of offensive epithets, the two parties were pretty evenly matched. The language of controversy of that age was not notable for urbanity or decorum.

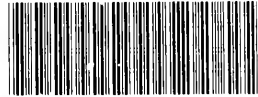
But what the Puritan clergy, who were the instigators of the laws, most violently opposed was the theology of the Quakers. This was the primary cause of the persecution, and this the Puritan ministers never for a moment faltered in their determination to root out. The Friends were sometimes punished for abusiveness of language, but the records show that they more frequently suffered for refusing to attend the established church, for attending Quaker meetings, for returning after banishment, or for refusing to take oath. After the persecutions for religion were over, we may search the records in vain for a single instance of imprisonment or arrest. The laws inspired by dread of Quaker heresies speak of "blasphemous opinions," "cursed heretics," their "denial of all established forms of worship," and "their withdrawal from church assemblies."

Much as we condemn the fathers in their treatment of the early Friends, we must not fail to bear in mind the fact that, while a very large minority was constantly opposed to these cruelties, a reaction ended them. Even Cotton Mather, writing in 1695, says: "I will not, cannot, make myself a vindicator of all the severities with which the zeal of some eminent men hath sometimes enraged and increased, rather than reclaimed, these miserable heretics." It was an age hard, coarse, and intolerant. Persecution was practiced by every dominant sect in Christendom. It is hard for men with the power in their own hands to respect the rights of others. The Puritans, with all their pure and lofty principles, were very fallible in their judgments, and we cannot expect them to rise far above the prejudices of their age. We must rather "walk backward and throw over their memories the mantle of charity and excuse, saying reverently, 'Remember the temptation and the age.'" The verdict of impartial history, view-

ing their piety, patriotism, and moral worth, their incredible sacrifices, and the almost unparalleled difficulties with which they had to contend, must pronounce the New England Puritans, despite all their faults and weaknesses, the most remarkable body of men the world has ever seen. The Quakers live in the works that follow them : in a civilization better, because purified by the searching fire of persecution ; in a higher plane of mercy, justice, and equality ; in the " religious freedom which is now our life."

" The Puritan spirit perishing not,
To Concord's yeomen the signal sent
And spake in the voice of the cannon-shot
That severed the chains of a continent.
With its gentler mission of peace and good-will
The thought of the Quaker is living still,
And the freedom of soul he prophesied
Is gospel and law where the martyrs died."

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