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11

COTTON MATHER

By

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RICHARD MONTGOMERY

By

JOHN ARMSTRONG

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LIFE

OF

COTTON MATHER

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WILLIAM B. O. PEABODY

COTTON MATHER.

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"Under this stone lies Richard Mather,
Who had a son greater than his father,
And eke a grandson greater than either."

This ancient epitaph is introduced, not on account of its poetical merits, but because it describes the priestly succession of this remarkable family, which bore a distinguished part in the early history of New England. The scale of reputation, which it contains, probably assigns to each one of those commemorated the rank

which he deserves, at least so far as natural ability is concerned.

Richard Mather was a Non-conformist divine, who became an exile for the sake of truth and freedom, and emigrated to America in 1635. The year after his arrival, he was invited to become the pastor of the church in Dorchester, where he resided till his death. He is not described as remarkable for talent, but as possessing a weight of character and knowledge of ecclesiastical affairs, which gave him great influence in his day. He also sustained the less enviable reputation of an able controvertist, whose services were called for on more than one occasion. Our fathers were good judges of intellectual and practical ability; and, though we have not many means of judging for ourselves, we may safely believe that his high reputation was deserved.

The name of Increase Mather, the third son of Richard, is, as the epitaph declares, more distinguished than that of his father. He began to preach the year after leaving college, and soon after sailed for England, where his brother Samuel lived, in great favor with the ruling powers, till the time of the Restoration, when he was one of the ejected "two thousand." Increase Mather was strongly urged to remain in England; but he rejected all offers, which re

quired him to renounce his principles, "choosing rather to trust God's providence than to violate the tranquillity of his own mind," and after an absence of four years he returned to his own country. In 1664 he was ordained pastor of the North Church in Boston. He was twice chosen President of Harvard College. The first time, in 1681, his church refused to part with him, on any conditions; but in 1684, when the office was again offered him, he accepted with a stipulation that he should retain his relation to his people. He retired from the station in 1701, when an act of the General Court was passed, requiring the President to live at Cambridge. His son thought that this law was aimed at him by his enemies; but other authorities say, and probably with sufficient reason, that he resigned on account of infirmity and age.

Increase Mather was engaged in public services, not usual with members of his profession; these were high and honorable, and will be noticed in their proper place. His character needs to be drawn, in order to show under what influences Cotton Mather came forward in life. Increase Mather was a man of great energy and practical good sense, with an intellect clear and strong, but not adventurous, and a heart that was equal to all duties and dangers. Formed under the teaching of one, who became an exile for

the sake of conscience, and having himself been tried and tempted in those changing times, he had all the devotion of the "prophets old," together with a leaning toward severity and gloom. As a preacher, he was powerful and fervent, with more regard to manner than was usual; and such was his conviction of the degeneracy of the times, that all his sermons were filled with that plaintive lamentation for the decline of religion, which always finds audience in the heart.

It is curious to see his representations of the state of society in his day. He says that drunkenness, tavern-haunting, sabbath-breaking, and neglect of public and domestic worship, together with all kindred transgressions, had become com mon in New England. Unfortunately he regarded the growing liberality of the age, not perhaps as one of its sins, but certainly as one of its dangers; he cried out against toleration, as the instrument which Satan was employing to root out every vestige of religion; but, by a fortunate and honorable inconsistency, his heart being better than his maxims, he extended liberality further than some who thought it a duty Though he had his trials when he lived, and often suffered from the jealousy of others and the want of a sufficient support, there was no man of his age, who was more honored when living, or more lamented when he died.

The good sense and sound judgment, for which Increase Mather was renowned and trusted, were the very qualities in which his son was most notoriously wanting; but this was a defect of which Cotton Mather was not likely to be conscious, and he was often perplexed to account for the little confidence that was felt in him, and the little reverence that was paid him. For many years he was associated with his father in the pastoral office, and he seems to have been greatly admired for his talents and learning; but the confidence of the people, and the honors of public trust, were prizes that he never was able to gain. He was well aware, that his father could bear no comparison with himself in point of genius and attainments; nor could he conceive why one, not equal to himself in these respects, should stand so much higher in the general esteem.

It was not, however, to Cotton Mather's own deficiencies alone that his want of influence was owing; other causes were at work to deprive the clergy of that ascendency, which they had held for many years. In the days of persecution for conscience' sake, the pastor of the church the leader of their devotions, stood in a different relation to his people. His business then was to defend, rather than to lead the flock; to set them an example of fortitude, patience, and in-

flexible resistance to all authority, which attempted to enslave their souls. The qualities required for such a duty were all of the bold and commanding sort, and ordinary men did not covet a distinction to which they knew that they were not equal. But, when those times passed away, and peaceful virtues were required for the sacred office, the political influence of the clergy naturally lessened. Power was intrusted to other hands; a change which seemed to them humiliating, though it was, in fact, placing them on the ground, where their own usefulness and duty required them to stand.

There was a sufficient reason, then, why Cotton Mather should not inherit his father's political influence; because the days of such influence had passed by, and Increase Mather was the last who was permitted to hold it in his hands. And even he, venerated as he was, retained it more from habit than any other reason; the people had been taught to confide in him, and therefore continued to make him an exception to the general rule of his profession. Cotton Mather does not appear to have understood the change which was going on in the public mind, and he therefore ascribed to the ill-will of his enemies, that which they had little power to do.

Cotton Mather was born in Boston, February 12th, 1662-3. His mother was Maria

daughter of the celebrated John Cotton, a man whose praise has been in all the churches, though there is some reason to doubt, whether he deserved the whole of his renown. To show respect to his memory, Increase Mather gave the name of Cotton to his son.

This account of his parentage is enough to show what his expectations were likely to be. Inheriting the name and profession of two such men, he could see no cause why he should not stand as high as they did in the public esteem. But, for the reasons just given, this was impossible; and it was not surprising, that this perpet ual disappointment should have affected his view of men and things. He must be censured with forbearance and reserve; for there are very few who, in the same situation, would not have fel deeply wounded. Many, doubtless, would have kept the feeling more to themselves, knowing how little sympathy it awakens; but Cotton Mather made no secret of his mind and heart; whatever his emotions were, he expressed them with freedom, and did not always select the most favorable and timely occasions

It is impossible to deny, that the reputation of Cotton Mather has declined of late years. In his own age, he was looked on as a wonder, not so much on account of his talent and industry, as for his extensive attainments His talents

were of a high order, and his energy and method in seizing and using every moment of time for some purpose of improvement are alone sufficient to show, that he was not an ordinary man. The attainments in which he delighted were not all of the most valuable kind; but it must be remembered, they were approved by the prevailing taste, and made him a subject of universal envy and applause. He is said to have known more of the history of New England than any other man; but it is now discovered, that his facts and dates are not to be relied on. Characters are drawn by him with great partiality, and all his representations more or less colored by his own likings and aversions.

The greatest stain upon his memory is the part, which he took in the memorable witchcraft delusion. This matter is not wholly explained; but enough appears to show, that the prevailing frenzy was owing in some measure, at least, to his influence and exertion. His father set his face against those ferocious proceedings. Many others of the clergy, also, though they believed in witchcraft, were entirely opposed to the hasty convictions and cruel executions of the accused. But he, without seeming to have a full confidence in the goodness of his cause, does appear to have urged others on to lengths, to which he would himself have been afraid and ashamed to

go. His writings on the subject show a willingness to excite the passions of others, together with a desire to keep apart from the prosecutions, which, taken in connexion with subsequent avowals, seem to prove, that he was not convinced that his course was honorable.

The account of his education and early life, given by his biographers, is but meagre. This, however, is no great loss; for the incidents commonly set down to fill this page of a great man's history are poor indications of character, and are more apt to show how much the writer was pressed for materials, than what the subject of his memoir was likely to be. We might naturally expect to find Cotton Mather manifesting an early passion for books and learning, and in this we are not disappointed. He was educated at the free school in Boston, first by Mr. Benjamin Thompson, a man, we are assured, "of great learning and wit"; and afterwards by the famous Mr. Ezekiel Cheever, whose memory has descended to our own times, and who, in addition to his other qualifications, had the advantage of some experience in his profession, which he followed for seventy years. His studies in preparation for college were more extensive, than was usual at that day; since we hear of his studying Homer and Isocrates, besides many Lat-

in authors, which were not very familiar, even to those who had taken a degree.

He entered college at the age of twelve, which was then thought very early, and certainly is too early both for the pursuits and temptations of the place. But he seems to have had a strong ambition, which aided his better principles, in securing him from moral dangers, and making him attentive to his duties. He wished and expected to be a great man; and though expectations of this kind are not often shared by others in his case, on account of his birth, they were thought appropriate and graceful. When he became a member of the institution, Dr. Hoar, who was then president, gave him according to custom, "this head for his initial declamation";

"Telemacho veniet, vivat modo, fortior ætas."

We have little information concerning his rank in college; but, judging from its close, it must have been sufficiently high; for, when he took his first degree, President Oakes, in his Latin oration at the commencement, expressed himself in a strain, which may be thus translated.

"Mather is named Cotton Mather. What a name! But my hearers, I confess, I am wrong; I should have said what names! I shall say nothing of his reverend father, since I dare not praise him to his face; but should he resemble and represent his venerable grandfathers, John

Cotton and Richard Mather, in piety, learning, elegance of mind, solid judgment, prudence, and wisdom, he will bear away the palm; and I trust that in this youth, Cotton and Mather will be united and flourish again."

Such an address, on such an occasion, would now make a considerable sensation. The effect of it was to fan the flame of Mather's ambition, and so to make him what all expected him to be. But it doubtless had another effect, which was to produce much of that jealousy in others, and that discontent in himself, which brought so much unhappiness on his later years. Some poet of the day alluded to what he called his "ominous name";

> "Where two great names their sanctuary take,
> And in a third combined a greater make."

Being blessed, as his son informs us, "with a modest inquisitiveness," a gift which is said not to be uncommon in New England, he made rapid advances before taking his second degree, which he received from the hand of his father. The *Thesis*, which he then maintained, was "the divine origin of the Hebrew points"; but he afterwards saw reason to change his mind, and held the contrary opinion to the last.

Such a man as Increase Mather would not regard learning and intellectual accomplishments as so important as religious education. His first

efforts, therefore, were directed to the formation of a Christian character in his son, who had sufficient fervor and readiness to receive impressions, and wanted the judicious counsel, which his father was well able to give. We are told, that almost as soon as he began to speak he began to pray, and practised this duty constantly in all his earlier years. He often composed forms for his schoolmates, and recommended the duty to them. He frequently reproved them for profaneness and misconduct, and set them the example of avowing his religious principles fearlessly on all proper occasions; a kind of moral courage, which, if it were more generally found in the young, would save many from ruin; for the truth is, that many are led away, not merely against their judgment, but actually against their will, for the want of firmness to bear up under the ridicule of those, whose good opinion they would not value.

It is clear from the history of his emotions at this time, that he needed judicious treatment like that of his father; for his spirit was one that might easily have been kindled with enthusiasm, and thus have been a firebrand to the churches. He was early, as his son assures us, ' brought by some miscarriages into inquiry into his spiritual estate. He found very frequent returns of doubts and fears, and frequently renewed his closure with Jesus Christ, as his only relief against them."

While he was oppressed with a sense of his vileness, his father took the occasion to point out to him, as the chief beauty of religion, the welcome which it gives to the repenting, whom it receives as readily as if they had never wandered. By clear illustrations he explained the subject to him in such a manner, that the formation of his religious character was not left to the imagination.

When he was fifteen, he was much affected by reading Dr. Hall's "Treatise on Meditation," which advises the reader to proceed methodically in the performance of this duty. Probably this advice was never more faithfully regarded than by Cotton Mather. He made many attempts to form a perfectly logical system of meditation, and wrote a treatise on the subject, which was highly regarded by his friends. There cannot be much doubt of its originality, as the reader will see from a description. He first proceeded doctrinally, with answering a question, explaining a scripture, and considering the causes, effects, adjuncts, opposites, and resemblances of the subject of his reflections. In the second place, he proceeded practically, first with an examination of himself, next an expostulation with himself, and lastly, a resolution in the strength of grace offered in the new covenant. His biographer calls this a happy way of preaching *with* and to himself. Whatever the religious effect may have been, it would not

be easy to find any thing more illustrative of his peculiar character, and at the same time of the taste of the age.

At the age of fourteen he began that system of prayer and fasting, which he afterwards carried quite as far as nature could sustain it. In his day, men had become skeptical as to the obligation and effect of abstaining from food; not so with him. He was ambitious rather to resemble a Rabbi mentioned in the Talmud, whose face was black by reason of his fastings. His son in his funeral sermon remarks, that the fasts observed by his father amounted to about four hundred and fifty, and proceeds to fortify his assertion, by saying, that "he thought himself starved, unless he fasted once a month;" he often kept weekly fasts, sometimes two in the week. Once, in the latter part of his life, he was resolved to abstain from food for three days together, and "to spend the time in knocking at the door of heaven." The character of the first day was confession and contrition. The character of the second day was resignation to the will of God, in which, says his biographer, "he found astonishing entertainment"; the character of the third day was request. He himself declares, that the fast had a happy effect on his mind. On one occasion, it seems to have affected his nervous system. He says that heaven seemed open to him, so that he longed to die;

he was hardly able to bear the ecstasies of divine love. They exhausted him; they made him faint; they were insupportable, and he was obliged to withdraw from them, lest the raptures should make him swoon away.

It is not surprising, that these observances, so early begun and so steadily pursued, should have had an effect on his character, inclining him to grasp at every thing, which seemed like an emanation from the invisible world.

At the age of sixteen he made the Christian profession. He considered this service as binding him to efficient self-examination; and some exercises which he wrote at this age, show his peculiar sense of this duty. The language is certainly overstrained and excessive; apparently not so much meant to express his feelings, as to state a standard to which his feelings must be brought to conform. This view of "things as they ought to be, not as they were," runs through a great proportion of his writings.

But there was another duty to which he believed himself bound by his Christian profession; it was usefulness; doing good as he had opportunity. He was deeply impressed with a sense of this obligation, and there is reason to suppose that he regarded it. He began by instructing his brothers and sisters, exhorting the domestics, and doing them every service in his power. As he

grew older, he extended his aims and endeavors. As his principles and maxims on this subject were embodied in his well-known *Essays to do Good*, it will not be out of place to give some account of that performance now.

In this work, which was highly approved by Dr. Franklin, he endeavors to show the various ways and relations in which good may be done, and to prove, that it is the only sure process by which we can secure good for ourselves. He says, that there is a "scorbutic and spontaneous lassitude in the minds of men, which, while it sometimes prevents their being active in evil, is also the cause of their doing so little good." His object is to remove it, by showing the various reasons they have for being active in usefulness, and to point out to them the ways in which their energy can be exerted without waste of power. But he expresses a prophetic anticipation, that fields of action, which were then unimagined, would afterwards be opened. "A vast variety of new ways to do good will be lit upon; paths, which no fowl of the best flight at noble designs has yet known, and which the vulture's most piercing eye hath not seen, and where loins of the strongest resolution have never passed."

He suggests the expediency of resorting to the principle of association, to accomplish by the authority and force of numbers, what individuals

are unable to do. There is reason to think, that this suggestion, though not new, was adopted to some extent, in consequence of his recommendation; and thus was established the system, which now operates throughout our country. His plan was to have associations formed in every neighborhood, which should keep an eye upon all growing evils, and use the most effectual means to suppress them. They were to extend their oversight even to personal and domestic relations, and, if they saw any man violating or neglecting his duty, were to offer him their friendly warnings. They were also to reconcile dissensions, and search out and relieve distress.

But after he has sketched the plan of such associations, and painted in glowing terms the good they are able to do, he thinks it necessary to caution their members, not to expect gratitude at the hands of men. "When such societies have done all the good they can, and nothing but good, and walk on in more unspotted brightness than that of the moon in heaven, let them look to be maligned and libelled as a set of scoundrels." This is not very encouraging, and hardly consists with Scripture; "Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?" He was one of those unlucky persons, who, from want of discrimination, would mortally offend those whom he was most desirous to serve

He subjoins to this work a list of desirable objects, which such societies should keep in view The first is, the communication of the gospel to other nations. He says, however, that "till the temple be cleansed, there will be no gathering of the nations to worship in it; and there will be danger that many persons, active in such societies, will be more intent on propagating their own little forms, fancies, and interests, than the more weighty matters of the gospel." He also proposes sending Bibles, Psalters, and other works, among the nations, translated into the various languages of the world. He recommends soldiers and sailors as proper subjects of instruction, believing that the moral character of those professions may be much exalted. He also points out the tradesman's library as a source of moral influence, and proposes institutions for teaching the young the elements of religious duty.

On the whole, he takes a comprehensive view of a subject, which was not then familiar as it now is to the public mind, disfigured only by complaints of human ingratitude, which are not particularly graceful, in those who profess to act on motives not connected with the present world.

While he was thus ambitious to be useful, even in his early childhood, there were some traits in his goodness peculiar to himself. Among other things we are told, that he thought it his duty to

devote to Melchizedek a tenth part of all that was afforded him. It is not easy to tell precisely what was the nature of this appropriation; but it illustrates character, and that is sufficient for the present purpose. There were other instances in which he had some remarkable proofs of the truth of the maxim, that virtue is its own reward. He calls them "the retaliating dispensations of heaven towards him." "I can tell," he says, "that the Lord has most notably, in many instances, retaliated my dutifulness to my father. As now, I was the owner of a watch, which I was fond of for the variety of motions in it. I saw my father took a fancy to it, and I made a present of it unto him, with some thoughts, that, as it was but a piece of due gratitude unto such a parent, so I should not go without a recompense. Quickly after this there came to me a gentlewoman, from whom I had no reason to expect so much as a visit. But in her visit, she, to my surprise, prayed me to accept, as a present from her, a watch, which was indeed preferable to that with which I had parted. I resolved hereupon to stir up dutifulness to parents, in myself and others, more than ever." His exhortations would probably have taken effect, if children could have looked forward to an immediate payment in kind; but when acts of favor were attended with such retaliations, it did not require any remarkable self-sacrifice to do them

At another time he bought a Spanish Indian servant, and afterwards bestowed him on his father. Some years after, a knight, whom he had laid under obligations, bestowed a Spanish Indian servant upon him.

For the seven years after leaving college, Cotton Mather engaged in the business of instruction, chiefly in preparing students for college. He had some under his care, older than himself. He carried them through the various branches of academic learning, including some which would now hardly be embraced in preparatory studies. He heard their recitations every day in the originals both of the Old and New Testaments, giving particular attention to the Hebrew. But he considered these attainments quite inferior to others, and therefore labored most assiduously to instruct them in the principles of religious duty. He endeavored to turn every incident and every lecture into an occasion for giving this kind of instruction, which practice, his son assures us, had a good effect upon his readiness and wit, and had a happy influence on the young men.

There is no doubt that his fervor and his strong passion for learning must have inspired similar desires in his pupils. Many of them became eminent and useful men. He used sometimes to say, that he "would give all that he was worth in the world, for the measures of grace and sense, which

he saw in some that were once his scholars." He no doubt believed what he said; but it shows his simplicity not to perceive the line where humility borders on affectation. But it was said, because he had imposed upon himself; not because he had any desire to impose upon others.

Cotton Mather, the heir of two such ecclesiastical names, could of course be destined to no other profession than the ministry; but there was a difficulty in his way not easily overcome, which was, an uncommon impediment in his speech, with which he was troubled from his early years. His son says, that the evil was made more tolerable by the circumstance, that Moses, Paul, Virgil, and Boyle were stammerers before him; and to have such great and good companions in adversity must have been a great relief. However this may have been, he did wisely to follow the advice of "that good old schoolmaster, Mr. Corlet," who called on purpose to advise him; saying, that he must accustom himself to a "dilated deliberation" in public speaking; for, as in singing no one stammers, so by prolonging his pronunciation he might get a habit of speaking without hesitation. This advice was followed, and with perfect success

He had for some time given up all thoughts of the ministry on account of this defect; but, when he was thus taught to surmount it, he abandoned his medical studies, in which he had become

deeply engaged; and, after having given the attention to theology which was then thought necessary, he prepared for his public appearance. In so doing he did what probably would not have been thought of by others; "on account of the calling he had relinquished, he did, in his first sermon, consider our Saviour as the glorious physician of souls."

"Nachmanides," says Samuel Mather, "was styled Rabbi at eighteen years of ago;" and Cotton Mather deserved the title at the same age; for at this age he distinguished himself and began to teach; for in August, 1680, he first preached for his grandfather in Dorchester, the Sabbath after for his father in Boston, and on the succeeding Sabbath in his grandfather's desk in Boston. The North Church turned their attention to him at once as a proper person to associate with his father, and in February, 1680, gave him a unanimous invitation. It would not be easy now, to invite a preacher in February, who preached the first time in August of the same year; but this was in the days when the New Style was not adopted.

It does not appear what the terms of this invitation were; it could not have been to become a colleague with his father; for this offer was accepted, and yet it was not till January, 1682, that they invited him to become their pastor. He for

some time declined complying for various reasons; one was, that his father was in full strength, and did not need a colleague; another was, his low estimation of his own powers; and we are told, that, whenever he read the text, "They watch for your souls as those who must give an account," the words "caused an earthquake within him."

Before he accepted the trust that was offered, he kept many days of fasting and prayer. At last, having made up his mind, he was ordained May 13th, 1684, when Mr. Allen, Mr. Willard, and his father, imposed hands on him, and he received from the celebrated Eliot the fellowship of the churches. Some portion of the scruples, which prevented his acceding to the wishes of the society before, rested upon the subject of ordination. To satisfy himself, he examined the Fathers of the first three centuries, and at last determined that the choice of the people was essential to the validity of that service. Truly, there are not many now, of any sect, who, even without examining the Fathers, would hesitate to adopt his conclusions.

This congregational principle does not appear to have been carried to its full extent, even by those who considered it as most important. In the year 1697, the church of which the Mathers were pastors, voted, "a letter of admonition to the church in Charlestown, for betraying the ib-

erties of the churches, by putting into the hands of the whole inhabitants, the choice of a minister." Cotton Mather says, that many people would not allow the church any priority of right in the choice of a pastor. Sometimes the church made choice of several pastors, from whom the congregation selected one; a mode which seems only to have answered the purpose of securing the authority of the church in name, since it gave to the inhabitants generally all the substantial power. It is plain enough to every one who reads our history, that, in political matters, the people were jealously careful to retain all rights and powers within their own control, if not in their own hands; and this circumstance would serve to show, that they considered ecclesiastical powers quite as much their own, and never to be surrendered, where it was important to insist upon them.

At the time of entering upon his duties, he was conscientious and apprehensive; and a passage in his Diary * shows in a curious manner, what were his temptations, and the means employed to resist them. He writes, "The apprehension of cursed pride, the sin of young ministers, working

* During many years of his life, Cotton Mather kept a *Diary*, in which personal incidents and opinions were often minutely entered. This Diary is now scattered in different places. It has been examined, and much use made of it, in drawing up the present memoir.

in my heart, filled me with inexpressible bitterness and confusion before the Lord. In my early youth, even when others of my age are playing in the streets, I preached unto very great assemblies, and found strange respects among the people of God. I feared, and thanks be to God that he ever struck me with such a fear, lest a snare and a pit were by Satan prepared for such a novice. I resolved, therefore, that I would set apart a day, to humble myself before God for the pride of my heart, and entreat that by his grace I may be delivered from that sin, and the wrath to which I may, by that sin, be exposed."

In the account given of the exercises of that day, he contrives to award himself a considerable portion of praise. He states with great honesty the reasons he had for self-applause, but he says, that "proud thoughts fly-blow'd his best performances." In order to take down his self-exalting spirit, he taxes his invention for hard names to apply to himself by way of humiliation. He says, that he is "viler than a beast"; "unsavory salt, fit for nothing but the dunghill." His son gives the passage at great length, thinking that, as he had found it beneficial to himself, it might be so to others, especially of the sacred order. It is valuable as a remarkable specimen of self-delusion in which he reminds himself constantly of his own "grandeurs," as he calls them, in the same tone

that the rich man uses when he professes himself to be poor, a profession which he will thank no one for believing.

His rules of preaching were systematic, in some respects more so than was necessary. They serve to show the man and his habits of mind. When he was at a loss for a text, "he would make a prayer to the Holy Spirit of Christ, as well to find a text for him as to handle it"; which seems to be carrying the principle of dependence quite as far as it should go. He never undertook to treat a subject, without carefully examining the text in the original languages, and consulting all commentators concerning it. He always chose his subjects with a view, not to the display of his own resources, but to the edification of his hearers. He studied variety in his topics and illustrations, bringing scriptural quotations to bear on every part, and endeavoring "to fill his hour well."

So far as respected manner, he was careful not to be too fast nor too loud, writing in short sentences, so that every hearer could easily grasp his meaning. He always made use of notes in preaching, though he was not enslaved by them. In this he differed from his father, who, with all his various and laborious duties, imposed on himself the labor of writing his sermons and committing them to memory; a process which shows his

ideas of faithfulness in his duty. In general, very little would be gained by this preparation; it would not have the effect of extemporaneous speaking; but there are some men, who, by having some such support to lean upon, can address audiences in words suggested by the occasion, throw out new thoughts and illustrations as they arise, and give to these efforts the finish of studied, together with the fervor of extemporaneous speaking.

It may be as well to give, in this place, an account of the plan on which he proceeded in order to make himself useful in his profession. He took a list of all the members of his church, "and, in his secret prayers, resolved that he would go over the catalogue, by parcels, upon his knees, and pray for the most suitable blessings he could think of, to be bestowed on each person by name distinctly mentioned." He also endeavored "to procure an exact account of those evil humors, of which the place where he lived was at any time under the dominion; and, whereas those devils could only be cast out by fasting and prayer, to set apart a day of secret prayer and fasting fo each of them."

His ideas of the amount of visiting, required in the discharge of duty, show that it was not expected from a clergyman in that day to have frequent intercourse with his people He devoted

one and sometimes two afternoons in the week to that purpose, sending word beforehand to the families that he intended to visit them. It was not, however, a familiar visit, so much as a religious exhortation, when he inquired particularly into the religious feelings of each member of the family, and gave them the counsel which they seemed to require. "He could seldom despatch more than four or five families in an afternoon," and he looked on this work as one of his most difficult labors. Dr. Palfrey, in his Sermon on the history of the Church in Brattle Square, remarks that Dr. Colman extolled Cooper for "knowing where to find the sick and poor of the society when they sent their notes." It should be remembered, that congregations then thought it necessary to have two clergymen, one of whom was called pastor, the other teacher, though their duties were the same.

His son tells us, that "his love to his church was very flaming." He often kept a fast with special reference to its wants and welfare, and then, though there were about four hundred connected with it, he would pray for each one of them by name. Before his evening prayers, he would ask himself, Which hath shown me any kindness? And he would supplicate heavenly blessings on each one that had obliged him. He did not limit his prayers to his friends, but endeavored

to keep his mind in a proper state toward his enemies; but in this endeavor he appears to have been less successful, if the style of his controversy truly represents his feelings.

He was certainly solicitous to be useful, and spared neither labor nor expense in promoting the spiritual good of his people. What subsistence was allowed him by his people does not appear. His father suffered much from poverty at times, which might have been owing to his accepting the agency abroad; a trust in which the agent was thought sufficiently recompensed by its honors. Cotton Mather was constantly employed in distributing religious books among his people. We are assured by good authority, that he sometimes gave away more than a thousand a year, and this at a time when such works were more ponderous than they are now, and the cheap inventions of modern times were entirely unknown.

The disposition to derive improvement from all circumstances, for himself and others, attended him through life; and though it was always sincere, it did not always manifest itself in the most judicious and edifying manner. He determined early in life to let no suggestion pass by him, and many, which most men would never have thought of turning to purposes of instruction, were welcomed as excitements of devotion in his soul.

When the common business of the household

was going on, he was led into spiritual medita tions. If they happened to be brewing, he would say, "Lord, let us find in a glorious Christ a pro vision for our thirsty souls;" when baking, "Lord, let a glorious Christ be the bread of life unto us;" and on the washing-day, which is not apt to bring the mind into a devotional frame, he would say, "O, wash us thoroughly from sin! O, take away our filthy garments from us." These ejaculations were provided and used on all such occasions.

So in all his personal actions. Late in his life he writes in his Diary: "The snuffing of my candle is a frequent action with me. I have provided a great number of pertinent wishes and thoughts and prayers and praises, to be formed upon the occurrences in my life, which afford occasions for them." It must have been by an oversight that this action was so long omitted. For all his mature life he had been accustomed, when he wound up his watch, to bless God for another day, and pray that it might be spent to his glory. When he heard a clock strike, he would pray that he might so number his days, as to apply his heart unto wisdom. When he knocked at a door, he used it as an occasion for reviving the memory of the promise, "Knock, and it shall be opened unto you." When he mended his fire, it was with a prayer that his love and zeal might be kindled into a flame. When he put out his candle on

retiring to rest at night, it was with an address to the Father of lights, that his light might not go out in darkness. When he paid a debt, he reflected, that he should owe no man any thing but love.

He bore upon his mind a great number of ejaculatory prayers, prepared for the occasions when they were to be used. As a specimen, those which were sometimes used at table may be given. Looking on the gentlewoman that carved for the guests, he said to himself, "Lord, carve a rich portion of thy graces and comforts to that person." Looking on a gentlewoman stricken in years, "Lord, adorn that person with the virtues which thou prescribest for aged women." For one lately married, "Lord, marry and espouse that person to thyself in a covenant never to be forgotten." For a gentlewoman very beautiful, "Lord, give that person an humble mind, and let her be most concerned for those ornaments that are of great price in thy sight."

So when he walked the streets, he implored secret blessings upon those, who passed by him. At the sight of a tall man, he said, "Lord, give that man high attainments in Christianity." For a lame man, "Lord, help that man to walk uprightly." For a negro, "Lord, wash that poor soul; make him white by the washing of thy spirit." For a very little man, "Lord, bestow great blessings on that man." For young gentle-

women, "Lord, make them wise virgins, and as polished stones in thy temple." For a man going by without observing him, "Lord, I pray thee, help that man to take a due notice of Christ." For a very old man, "Lord, make him an old disciple." For a wicked man, "Lord, rescue that poor man, who, it is to be feared, is possessed by Satan, who leads him captive."

When he had a family, he taught his children, in like manner to use the incidents of life as so many suggestions from on high. Some years after this he writes; "Two of my children have been newly scorched with gunpowder, wherein, though they have received a merciful deliverance, yet they undergo a smart that is considerable. I must improve this occasion to inculcate lessons of piety upon them; especially with relation to their danger of everlasting burnings."

CHAPTER II.

Marriage of Cotton Mather. — Character of his Son, Samuel Mather. — Mode of instructing and governing his Children. — Sir Edmund Andros. — Increase Mather. — Sir William Phips. — Cotton Mather's Agency in promoting the Delusions of Witchcraft.

In his twenty-fourth year, Cotton Mather thought it advisable to marry; not being moved to that step by a partiality for any particular person, but by more general considerations relating to his usefulness in life. "He first looked up to Heaven for direction, and then asked counsel of his friends." Having thus commenced where most men end, he looked around for some suitable person on whom to fix his affections. The person, whom he selected to be the object of this passionate attachment, was the daughter of Colonel Phillips of Charlestown, and to her he was married shortly after. It is recorded of her by Samuel Mather, with somewhat faint praise, that "she was a comely, ingenious woman, and an agreeable consort;" but he might have enlarged upon her merits without seeming too partial. Her husband evidently had reason to bless the hour

in which he formed the connexion. By this lady he had nine children, of which but one survived him.

Samuel Mather, who afterwards officiated as his biographer, was one of two children by a second wife. He was a man very sparingly endowed with talent, but with something of his father's taste for a certain kind of learning. As for the monument, which he erected to his father's memory, no one can read it without lamenting that he had not left that pious office to other hands. It is a proof of his filial reverence and affection, but it does him no honor in any other point of view. It is chiefly remarkable for its resolute silence in regard to all those peculiarities of habit, character, feeling, and domestic life, which his relation to the subject of the memoir gave him the best opportunity to know. He seems to have admired nothing in his father, not even his industry, energy, and various learning, so much as the fasts, vigils, and other forms which he so religiously observed. As a specimen of the work, it may be mentioned, that the whole history of witchcraft is despatched in a couple of pages; and, as if to show that this was not an intentional silence to save his father's memory, he gives the history of inoculation, by far the most honorable passage in his father's life, in somewhat less than six lines. Those, who are interested to know

something of Cotton Mather, consult the book with a perpetual feeling of disappointment, and unfeigned sorrow that he had not left it to some other writer. In the business of educating his children, Cotton Mather was far more judicious than could have been expected from a man of his peculiar temperament, and certainly deserves great credit for acting on a system, which was entirely opposed to the prevailing theory and practice. His son, who had the best opportunities of knowing, says that he was zealous against "the slavish way of education carried on with raving, kicking, and scourging; he looked upon it as a dreadful judgment of God upon the world."

He believed that children were alive to principles of reason and honor at a much earlier period of life than is generally supposed. He endeavored, first of all, to convince them of his own affection, and in that way, to lead them to the belief that to follow his judgment was the best way to secure their own good. He impressed upon them, that it was shameful to do wrong; and, when one of his children had offended, his first punishment was, to express his astonishment that the child could do any thing so unworthy. Removal from his presence was his ordinary punishment, and it was only in extreme and peculiar cases that he ever inflicted a blow. He rewarded obedience by teaching them some curious piece

of knowledge, which he had always at command; and thus, beside giving the immediate recompense of good conduct, he conveyed the impression, that to gain instruction was not a hardship, but a privilege and reward. His earliest attempt at intellectual education consisted in entertaining his children with stories, generally selected from the Scriptures. He hardly ever rose from table without some such effort to excite reflection in young minds. He also sought opportunities to teach moral lessons, showing them the duty of being kind to each other, and warmly applauding them when they had obeyed the law of love. He taught them to write at an earlier age, and in a less formal way, than is usual, and thus enabled them to record for themselves many things, which it was important for them to remember. If they deserved censure, he would forbid their reading and writing; a prohibition which was strongly associated in their minds with degradation. All this was well-judged; and it is very doubtful if such cases were often to be found in those days, when parental discipline was generally conducted more in the spirit of fear than love.

Though he was deeply interested in having his children governed by principles of reason and honor, he did not rely on those impulses alone. He led their minds as early as possible to religious thoughts and contemplations; giving them views

of religion, which were as solemn as possible, but taking care to make them sensible of the goodness of God. He often told them of the good angels, whose office it was to protect them, and who ought never to be offended by misconduct or neglect. "He would not say much to them about the evil angels, because he would not have them entertain any frightful fancies about the apparitions of devils; but yet he would briefly let them know that there are devils, who tempt them to wickedness, who are glad when they do wickedly, and who may get leave of God to kill them for it." But his chief aim was to give them a spirit of prayer, and to lead them to make known their wants and cares to his father and their father, to his God and their God.

The troubles in which New England was involved with the mother country began the year after Cotton Mather's ordination. At the close of 1686 Sir Edmund Andros made his appearance with a commission as governor, and from the beginning showed a determination to push his authority quite as far as it would go. A sentiment, too, had been expressed by Dudley, the president of the Council, which tended to alarm the free spirit of New England. He said, that the colonists must not think, that they could carry the privileges of Englishmen with them to the ends of the world. There was a deep and growing excitement it was plain that

usurpation must at length be resisted; but no one could tell where or in what form the explosion was most likely to come.

The clergy had, from the peculiar construction of the state, been allowed a great ascendency in public affairs, and had been consulted on all great occasions. When Charles the Second, in 1683, demanded an unconditional surrender of the charter of Massachusetts, Increase Mather, at the request of the authorities, appeared in a meeting of citizens, who were met to deliberate concerning a compliance with that demand. He exhorted them to resist it by all the means in their power; not to rush into ruin with their eyes open, but to resolve, that if they must be undone, it should be by the tyranny of others, and not their own folly. This spirited advice prevailed. "The clergy," says Hutchinson, "turned the scale for the last time;" probably there never was a time when their influence was exerted more to their own honor or the advantage of their country. It was one of those acts and counsels, from which oppression should have taken warning.

When Andros first came to New England, he concealed his true character; and, though the charter was forfeited, there was no very general sentiment against him. But he soon began to show a disposition to encroach upon the rights of the people, in some instances, for purposes of extortion, in

others, simply to make them feel his power. One of his first proceedings was, to restrain the liberty of the press, and Randolph, who was universally detested, was appointed licenser of publications. An alteration also was made in the regulations respecting marriage, by which the parties were obliged to enter into bonds with sureties, to the governor, to be forfeited in case that any impediment should afterwards appear.

The Congregational clergy were regarded as mere laymen; and by this exaction, it was contemplated to provide for the support of the Episcopal ministers, who were to be introduced. At this time there was no Episcopal church in Massachusetts, and hardly a society; but the people were threatened with having their meeting-houses taken from them, and worship in the congregational forms suppressed by law. After a time these apprehensions were quieted for a moment by James's declaration in favor of toleration; but, when they saw cause to suspect that this was preparing the way for the Roman Catholic religion, the alarm was greater than ever.

Besides these greater causes of uneasiness, there was a general irritation occasioned by exorbitant fees, and other similar exactions. The governor, with a few of his creatures in the Council, laid whatever taxes they thought proper; and, as if these sources of revenue were not sufficient, they maintained that all titles to land were invalidated by the

loss of the charter, and required holders of estates to take out a patent from them, for whatever consideration they thought proper to demand.

On account of Increase Mather's agency in preventing the surrender of the charter, and the great influence which he possessed, which it was well known would be exerted to prevent a tame submission to wrongs, Randolph, who was the most active of the cabal that surrounded the governor, attempted to ruin Dr. Mather with the government, thinking it impossible to bring him into suspicion with the people. Randolph professed to have intercepted a letter from Dr. Mather to a person in Amsterdam, containing many passages likely to exasperate men in power, and showed it to Sir Lionel Jenkins, secretary of state. He treated it with perfect contempt, so that the stratagem was defeated. When Dr. Mather heard of the attempt, he immediately declared, that the letter was a forgery, executed either by Randolph or his brother. Randolph brought an action for defamation against the Doctor, in which he did not succeed; but, some time after, by some perversion of justice, the same action being brought again, Dr. Mather kept concealed to avoid the service of the writ, knowing that, in those days, right would avail but little in a contest with power.

Some of the chief men of the colony, governed by a feeling of loyalty, hoped that their grievances

were unauthorized by the King, and that redress might be obtained by a direct appeal to the throne. Dr. Mather was selected as their agent, and as the service of Randolph's writ would have prevented the expedition, he was taken on board the ship at night, and in disguise, by some members of his society. During all these proceedings, Cotton Mather was associated in interest and feeling with his father, and some passages in his Diary show how deeply he laid these things to heart. On one occasion, he says, that he rose at night, and threw himself upon the floor of his study, in tears, praying for his country, and that he was assured of the happy result of all these troubles by a sign from Heaven.

Dr. Mather sailed for England in April, 1688. In April of the succeeding year, the report of the landing of the Prince of Orange reached this country, and shortly after came a copy of his Proclamation, which was brought from Virginia by a gentleman, who was imprisoned for the crime. Nothing was, or could be known of William's success; and doubtless the prudent course would have been to wait till the event was known, since, if he succeeded, there would be no need of revolution in New England, and, if he failed, all concerned in such a revolution must have suffered for treason. But by one of those sudden and unaccountable impulses, which are sometimes given to

the public mind, the people rose, seized and imprisoned the governor and some of his associates, and recalled the old magistrates to authority till something could be learned from England. The people came in from the country in great numbers, and insisted upon it, that the governor should be put in irons. To satisfy them, he was confined in the fort, where he received a communication from the magistrates, informing him that his authority was at an end in New England.

The services of Cotton Mather were called for on this occasion. A long declaration was read from the gallery of the town-house, which was prepared by him, as was generally supposed, with very little warning. Hutchinson says, "There would be room to doubt whether this declaration was not a work of time, and prepared beforehand, if it did not appear, from the style and language, to have been the work of one of the ministers in Boston, who had a remarkable talent for quick and sudden composures." The circumstance, that his services should have been called for, shows that he was familiar with the political affairs and questions of the day.

From the account given by Samuel Mather of his father's agency in the revolution, one would suppose that the movement against Andros and his crew, as he calls them, was not wholly unexpected. He says, that while those "roaring lions

and ravaging bears were in the midst of their ravages," which, by a slight confusion of metaphor, he makes to consist in their "fleecing" the people, (a phrase which does not very accurately describe the operations of those animals against the flock,) a strange disposition entered into the body of the people to assert their liberties. The phrase, *strange* revolution, implies his own, and probably his father's opinion, that it was not called for; and he actually says, that the more sensible gentlemen in Boston feared lest a public excitement of the kind should be produced by some soldiers, who, having refused to take part in the eastern war, and having thereby incurred the governor's displeasure, would, for the sake of securing themselves, engage the country in a revolution, that would destroy the chief magistrate's power.

These gentlemen consulted with Mr. Mather, and agreed, if possible, to extinguish by their personal influence and exertions, all fires, that others might attempt to kindle; but that, if they found the country people, who were more excited than others, should push the matter so far as to render a revolution unavoidable, they would put themselves at the head of the movement and direct it. A declaration was accordingly prepared, to be used, in case of necessity, doubtless the one which was afterwards employed. It was not, then,

as Hutchinson supposed, a quick and sudden composure; Samuel Mather had ample information on the subject; and, had it been possible for him to claim for his father the honor of preparing such a paper on the spur of the occasion, he would have seized the opportunity to mention it to his praise.

The same authority assures us, that when the community suddenly rose on the 18th of April, those gentlemen, who had anticipated that result, found it necessary to appear, as they had proposed in case of emergency, to direct the blind fury of the people. Then, he says, Mr. Mather appeared, like Nestor or Ulysses, and, by his wise and powerful appeals, withheld the people from those excesses, into which they were ready to run. This, he thinks, saved the fallen oppressors from a tragical fate; for, had a single syllable been said by any man of influence in favor of avenging the public wrongs on those who had inflicted them, they would have been put to death without mercy or delay.

He also mentions that this change was seasonable, to prevent his father from suffering under their persecution; for, on the very day that he was to have been committed to prison, those who were to have done him that injury were actually imprisoned themselves. There is no other information given on the subject of this proposed

arrest; but there is no reason to doubt it; for, while there was no ground for a legal charge against him, the governor probably had information of his movements, and could easily have found a pretext for giving the name of justice to personal revenge. He was desired to attend a meeting of the inhabitants of Boston, previous to the revolution, when he addressed the people with great effect, dissuading them from violence, which would be injurious to their cause, and thus succeeded in restraining their passions. This, to be sure, was a favor to the government; but men of that description always resent a favor of that kind, as much as an insult or wrong.

Dr. Mather, at this change, which seemed so favorable for Massachusetts, made efforts, which were seconded by several men of influence in England, to obtain the restoration of the charter, and at one time seemed to come very near succeeding. He had engaged the interest of the Dissenting ministers, who, at that time, formed a powerful body, and several members of Parliament also took a strong interest in his mission. But the King was strongly prejudiced against the former charter, and was determined to retain the appointment of governor in his own hands. A bill was introduced into the House of Commons and passed, providing for the restoration of the charters; but the King suddenly prorogued the Par

liament for the purpose of going to Ireland, and the opportunity was lost, if ever it had really existed. Andros, instead of being punished for his tyranny, obtained from the King the government of Virginia, where he spent the remainder of his life.

Dr. Mather, believing the restoration of the old charter to be entirely out of the question, abandoned all hope of succeeding, and thought it best to secure as favorable terms as possible without insisting on this. But two other agents, who were sent out from Massachusetts, declared that their authority only extended to the solicitation of the old charter, without permitting them to accept a new one. A new one, however, was prepared, which Dr. Mather thought it advisable to accept, as the best which could be had, though it deprived the colony of some of the privileges, which it had claimed and enjoyed before. As the other agents were of a different opinion, the business was managed with him alone; and, as an act of grace to him, the appointment of all those officers, which the new charter reserved to the crown, was given to Dr. Mather; a compliment which was rather unfortunate, since it gave the impression, that he had acted the part of a courtier rather than of a friend to his country.

These suspicions were certainly unjust; for he had spent considerable sums of his own property

for his support while abroad, for which he never received full payment; and, from his well-known character, it is manifest that his error, if it was one, was an error of judgment and not of intention. But the General Court, who might be supposed good judges of what was wanted, approved his conduct, and appointed a day of thanksgiving in consequence of his return, and the successful result of his labors. His son might have seen enough in his father's history to give him a distaste for those public cares, in which he had a strong passion for engaging; for his father, through all his remaining days, was troubled with the feeling that he was suspected, distrusted, and abused by those, whom he had done his best to serve. If the charter was, as the General Court declared in the proclamation for thanksgiving, a "settlement of government, in which their Majesties graciously gave distinguishing marks of their royal favor and goodness," there seemed to be no reason why his accepting such favors should be censured as injurious to his country.

Perhaps the selection, which he made, of a person to hold the office of governor, was one of the chief reasons of this suspicion. Sir William Phips, a person adventurous and energetic by nature, but singularly destitute of the ability and discretion, which were needed in that high trust, was the man whom he recommended; and in this

choice he was influenced by Cotton Mather who probably thought it not the least of Phips's merits, that he was willing to receive advice from wiser men. He had made himself known by his persevering efforts to discover the rich wreck of a Spanish vessel near the Bahamas, in which he succeeded, gaining considerable property from the vessel, and the honor of knighthood from the crown. His principal merit in the eye of the country was, that he did not coincide with Andros in his oppression, and that he rejected the government when it was offered him by King James.

Sir William Phips did not long retain the office in which the partiality of his friends, the Mathers, had placed him. Though kind and generous in his disposition, he was fiery and indiscreet. He first brought himself into discredit by a dispute with the collector of the customs, whose authority was not universally admitted. The people thought it enough to enter and clear at the naval office, and the governor, himself being the naval officer, favored the popular impression; but, the collector asserting his right and seizing a vessel, the governor resented it so warmly, as to inflict personal violence upon him. He had a similar misunderstanding with the captain of a British frigate. Having required him, as he had a right, to detach some of the hands on a particular service, the captain refused; upon which the governor

beat him in the street, and then committed him to prison. He was ordered to England to answer for this proceeding; but, while he was engaged in securing his authority and answering the complaints offered against him, he was seized with an illness of which he died.

It is in connexion with the proceedings on the subject of witchcraft, that Cotton Mather is most generally and least favorably known. But prominent as his name appears, in all this affair, from its beginning to its close, it is not easy to understand the precise extent of his responsibility. He fully believed in this kind of supernatural agency, as was common in that day; the wise and foolish stood on the same ground; though many were skeptical as to particular cases of that agency, there was none who seemed wholly to deny its existence. The circumstance of his giving credit to tales of this kind, would not form any just reproach upon the name of Mather, since no amount of learning and talent could then exempt any man from superstition.

But there is reason to believe, that he went farther than this; and that he led the men of his day farther than they would have gone, had it not been for him. How far his credulity will justify his attempting to excite the public mind upon the subject, must be left for the moralist to say. He was not probably aware what a fierce

spirit he was raising; and when it was raised, he was at once swept away with its fury; so that, though we cannot hold him guiltless, his responsibility is less than if he had not been so thoroughly steeped in the delusion. No one, who reads the history of the time, can doubt his agency in creating the general excitement; and a question arises, What could have been his object in making those ill-omened exertions? Was it his natural restlessness, which compelled him to interest himself in all that was passing? Or was it to gratify his ravenous appetite for wonders? Or was it a movement, by which he hoped to restore to the clergy the influence, which they once held in public affairs, but which the change of circumstances and public sentiment was fast wresting from their hands? The latter supposition would imply a degree of art and hypocrisy, which does not appear to have been in his nature. He was more adroit in imposing on himself than on others. At the same time, various impulses, of some of which he was not conscious, may have combined to make him excite in the public mind that superstitious fear, the most savage of all passions, which, when once excited, could not be satisfied without blood.

If he had followed the example of some other good men, who, after the frenzy was over, lamented and publicly acknowledged the blind fanaticism under which they had acted, he would have been

more generally forgiven. But it does not appear that his eyes were ever opened. To the day of his death, he seems to have retained his full conviction that all was preternatural; and indeed that the loss of innocent lives, so far from being the result of delusion, was the effect of diabolical agency exerted with unusual art and power. The public accused him as the chief author of the excitement; but while he was very desirous to throw off the odium, which rested upon him, by showing that he himself had always preached caution and forbearance, it is clear that no uneasiness from within, no self-upbraiding for the part he had acted, ever disturbed his repose.

After the executions in Salem, he admits that there has been "a mistake"; not in believing in the witchcraft, nor, so far as can be discovered, in the selection of victims; the mistake appeared in the character of those, against whom charges were at last made; for the accusers, becoming satiated with humble sacrifices, at length brought their accusations against those in high places, whereupon it was discovered that they were going too far. He seems to lament this chiefly because it gives advantage to the accuser of the brethren.

In 1685, the year in which he was ordained, he published a work called *Memorable Providences relating to Witchcraft*. This was several years before the Salem tragedy; and he remarks

that this work of his was used as authority on that occasion, at the same time greatly commending the wisdom of the magistrates, for submitting themselves to the counsel of learned writers. Cases of witchcraft at distant intervals had occurred in some parts of the country. One victim had been hanged in Charlestown half a century before. One was executed at Hartford in 1662; and in 1671 there was a case at Groton, which was attended with circumstances, which, one would have thought, might have opened the most superstitious eyes.

One Elizabeth Knapp, moved probably by spite against a neighbor, went through the ordinary evolutions, and was pronounced bewitched; but the person accused, instead of resenting it, went directly to the accuser, who endeavored to prevent her approach by counterfeited convulsions, prayed by her bedside, and so wrought upon her conscience, that she dared not persevere in her vile purpose; she came to herself, confessing that she had been moved by Satan to bring a false and malicious charge. Had others, in similar circumstances, possessed the good sense and religious temper of this person, the probability is, that all would have been saved from destruction; but, as the charge was generally fixed on those, who were disliked for their ill temper, and they were exasperated to madness by the accusation, there

was no such appeal made to the conscience and the fears of the accuser.

Another case, which indeed seems almost the only one beside, was attended with self-explaining circumstances. The other instances do not belong to the department of witchcraft, but to that of haunted houses, such as are not unknown at the present day, when some inmate of a family, in sport or wantonness, undertakes to practise on the fears of the rest.

The case alluded to was that of one Smith of Hadley, a worthy and exemplary man, who had been severely threatened by a pauper, whom he had offended in the discharge of some official duty. He fell into a painful decline; and, says Mather, *while he was yet of a sound mind*, he assured his brother that strange things should be seen in Hadley; that he should not be dead when he seemed to be so, and at the same time expressed his suspicion, that the woman in question had made him the subject of her revenge. He then "became delirious and uttered a speech incessant and voluble, and, as it was judged, in various languages. He cried out, not only of pains, but of pins tormenting him in various parts of his body; and the attendants found one of them." This seemed to Cotton Mather a clear case of witchcraft, and he recorded it with sufficient minuteness. Happily the people of Hadley saw the matter in its

true light; and though some young men undertook to persecute the woman, they soon desisted, and she was saved from a death, which was inflicted on many when the evidence was equally strong in favor of the accused.

It was not long before he enjoyed the great felicity of having a case of witchcraft directly under his eye. In 1688, the family of John Goodwin, in Boston, was afflicted with preternatural visitations. The eldest daughter, about thirteen years of age, had some quarrel with a laundress, an Irishwoman, and, shortly after, the girl and her sisters were tormented by strange affections of the body, which, to any one at all suspicious, would have carried their own explanation with them, but were pronounced *diabolical* by the superstitious physicians who happened to be consulted. The ministers of Boston and Charlestown held a day of fasting and prayer; and the youngest of the children, afraid to persevere, and at the same time afraid to confess, was delivered from its tormentors. But the magistrates took up the affair, and, having examined the person on whom suspicions rested, committed her to prison.

Her conduct, when brought to trial, so clearly indicated mental derangement, that the court could not with decency proceed without appointing several physicians "to examine her very strictly whether she was no way crazed in her intellectuals."

They do not appear to have been acquainted with the fact, that a person may be deranged on one subject, and yet sane on all others. They conversed with her a good deal, and, finding that she gave connected replies, agreed that she was in full possession of her mind. She was then found guilty of witchcraft and sentenced to die.

Cotton Mather was now in his element. He paid many visits to this poor old lunatic after her condemnation, and received vast entertainment from her communications. She described her interviews with the Prince of darkness, and her attendance upon his meetings, with a clearness that seems to have filled him with perfect delight.

After her execution, the children, not inclined to abandon their successful stratagem, complained of suffering as much as before. Some instances of their prudence are amusing. He says, "they were often near drowning or burning themselves, and they often strangled themselves with their neckcloths; but the providence of God still ordered the seasonable succors of them that looked after them." On the least reproof of their parents, "they would roar excessively"; it usually took abundance of time to dress or undress them, through the strange postures into which they would be twisted on purpose to hinder it." "If they were bidden to do a needless thing, such as to rub a clean table, they were able to do it unmolested;

but if to do a useful thing, as to rub a dirty table, they would presently, with many torments, be made uncapable." Truly, if such are the evidences that children are bewitched, there is reason to doubt whether preternatural visitations have yet ceased from the land.

Such a choice opportunity, as this family afforded, for inquiry into the physiology of witchcraft, was by no means to be lost. In order to inspect the specimen more at leisure, he had the eldest daughter brought to his own house; he wished "to confute the Sadducism of that debauched age," and the girl took care that the materials should not be wanting.

Her conduct during her residence there is well worth noting, as it is recorded by his own hand. When he prayed in the room, her hands were by a strong, but not even force, clapped upon her ears; and, when the bystanders withdrew them, she would declare that she could not hear a word that he said. She complained that Glover's (the name of the person that was executed) chain was on her leg, and thereupon walked with the constrained gait of one who was bound. An invisible chain would be thrown upon her, while she cried out with pain and fear. Sometimes he could knock it off, or rather prevent its being fastened; but often she would be pulled by it out of her chair towards the fire, so that they were obliged to hold her

She seemed to take great pleasure in entertaining him in this way, perhaps out of gratitude that he never intimated any suspicion.

The manner in which she played with his religious prejudices shows considerable art. A Quaker's book, which was then one of the greatest of abominations, was brought to her, and she read whole pages in it, with the exception of the names of the Deity and the Savior, which she was not able to speak. Such books as she might have read with profit, she was not permitted to open; or, if she was urged to read in her Bible or Catechism, she was immediately taken with contortions. On the contrary, she could read in a jest-book without the least difficulty, and actually seemed to enjoy it. Popish books she was permitted to read at pleas ure, but a work against the Catholics, she might not touch.

One gleam of suspicion seemed to shoot over his mind on one occasion; for he says, "I, con sidering there might be a snare in it, put a stop to this fanciful business. Only I could not but be amazed at one thing; a certain prayer-book, [the Episcopal, doubtless,] being brought her, she not only could read it very well, but also did read a large part of it over, calling it her Bible, and put ting more than ordinary respect upon it. If she were going into her tortures, at the tender of this book, she would recover herself to read it. Only

when she came to the Lord's prayer, now and then occurring in that book, she would have her eyes put out; so that she must turn over a new leaf, and then she could read again. Whereas also there are scriptures in that book, she could read them there; but if any showed her the same scriptures in the Bible itself, she should sooner die than read them. And she was likewise made unable to read the Psalms in an ancient metre, which this prayer-book had in the same volume with it."

It was not very surprising, that she should after a time lose her veneration for him. Accordingly, he remarks, that, though her carriage had been dutiful, "it was afterwards with a sauciness, which I was not used to be treated withal." She would knock at his study door, telling him that some one below would be glad to see him; when he had taken the trouble to go down, and scolded her for the falsehood, she would say, "Mrs. Mather is always glad to see you." "She would call out to him with numberless impertinencies." Having determined to give a public account of her case, in a sermon to his congregation, she was troubled at it, thinking it not unlikely that sharper eyes than his might be turned upon her. She made many attempts to prevent it by threatening him with the vengeance of the spirits, till he was almost out of patience, and exorcized them in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. All these were per-

fectly intelligible to them; "but the Indian languages they did not seem so well to understand."

One part of the system of this artful young creature was to persuade him, that he was under the special protection of Heaven, so that spells could have no power over him. When he went to prayer, "the demons would throw her on the floor, where she would whistle, and sing, and yell, to drown the voice of prayer; and she would fetch blows with her fist and kicks with her foot at the man that prayed. But still her fist and foot would recoil, when within an inch or two of him, as if rebounding against a wall." This powerful appeal to his vanity was not lost upon him. It made him more solicitous than ever to patronize the delusion. *

This account of his personal intercourse with the demoniacs is given at length, because it illustrates his character, and the heartiness with which he entered into the snare. It also affords the only apology which can be made for his attempts to spread the excitement, by showing that he was

* In the archives of the Massachusetts Historical Society, among the manuscripts of Cotton Mather, there is a paper, on which is endorsed the following curious record in his hand-writing. "*November 29th*, 1692. While I was preaching at a private fast, (kept for a possessed young woman,) on Mark ix. 28, 29, the Devil in the damsel flew upon me, and tore the leaf, as it is now torn, over against the text."

himself completely deluded. No man, with any artful design, would have exhibited himself in so grotesque a light. Let it be remembered, too, that the above particulars were reprinted in London, with a preface by Richard Baxter, in which he says, "This great instance comes with such convincing evidence, that he must be a very obdurate Sadducee, that will not believe it."

It is not difficult to conceive what the fascination of such narratives must have been, when they came from the pen of a learned divine, who was supposed to have devoted particular attention to the subject. They were dressed in such forms, as to excite the appetite of superstition, and from our knowledge of human nature we are safe in believing, that the *Wonders of the Invisible World* was popular, both with old and young, in every part of the country. There is no account of any other person, who displayed the same taste or attempted to operate on others; while it is certain, that he exerted himself diligently for the purpose; making no secret of his persuasion, that such an excitement might be made an engine for restoring the fallen authority of religion, and as a preliminary, replacing that power in the hands of the clergy, which they lost when the circumstances of the country and the feelings of the people were altered.

In 1692, the seed, which he had sown, began to bear fruit. Some young girls in the family of

Mr. Parris, minister of Salem village, now a part of Danvers, began to go through such evolutions as they had seen described in cases of witchcraft. Physicians were consulted, and one of them in an evil hour gave it as his opinion that supernatural agency was concerned. Cotton Mather himself says, "They were in all things afflicted as bad as John Goodwin's children at Boston," and gives this as a reason for not enlarging upon their sufferings. So that the movements of the young conspirators on this occasion seem to have been regulated by their pattern, excepting that they were carried a little farther.

The circumstances were made important at once, by appointing a day of fasting and prayer. The girls accused an old Indian woman, who lived in Mr. Parris's family, as the person who bewitched them; and she, worn out by fear, exhaustion, and, as it is intimated, by severe treatment, confessed all that was expected and required. This encouraged the girls to persevere, if they can be supposed to have acted with deliberation, when the probable explanation of their conduct is, that they were bewildered and swept away with the frenzy, which they had themselves excited.

The agency of Cotton Mather soon appeared in this transaction. The magistrates applied to the Boston clergy for advice; which they gave in such a manner, as to encourage the excesses already

committed, and to lead on to more. They recommended caution in respect to evidence, but at the same time advised that the proceedings should be vigorously carried on.

The result of these deliberations was drawn up by Cotton Mather, who often mentioned it afterwards in terms of high praise. That there may be no doubt as to the authorship, he says that it was drawn up by Mr. Mather the younger. There were many formal expressions in it, in which prudence was recommended; but the spirit and certain effect of it were to sanction what had been done, and to encourage farther investigations.

He was not sustained by all the clergy. Mr. Brattle, in his letter on the subject, published in the Collections of the Historical Society, says, that "Increase Mather did utterly condemn" the proceedings of that period. Samuel Willard also, a venerable man, would never sanction the measure, though three of the judges were members of his church. This bears hard on Cotton Mather; for his father and Dr. Willard undoubtedly believed in the reality of witchcraft, as well as he; and this shows, that to believe in supernatural agency was one thing, and to turn the engines of persecution on those, who were accused of that crime, was another.

There is no need here of tracing the history of the events, that took place in Salem, any farther

than Cotton Mather is directly concerned; and it must be acknowledged, that he made himself very prominent in all the proceedings. He greatly commends the impartiality and forbearance of the judges, who borrowed light from his books among their other sources. What sort of counsel they were likely to get from this quarter, appears from a passage extracted by Mr. Upham from one of his sermons. "When we are in our church assemblies, how many devils do you imagine crowd in among us? There is a devil that rocks one to sleep. There is a devil that makes another to be thinking of, he scarcely knows what himself. And there is a devil that makes another to be pleased with wild and wicked speculations. It is also possible, that we have our closets or our studies gloriously perfumed with devotions every day; but alas! can we shut the devil out of them? No; let us go where we will, we shall still find a devil nigh unto us." Little did the venerable doctor think, that he himself and his coadjutors were furnishing one of the best proofs of diabolical agency in the world, by their unhappy activity on these memorable occasions.

As soon as the fury of the storm was over, he is found drawing up an account of the trials. This is said to have been published by the special command of the governor, and is heralded with a flourish of trumpets from Stoughton, the presiding

judge. He takes a contemptuous notice of the doubts, which had begun to prevail upon the subject, but does not give any intimation to his readers that the whole country was filled with horror and shame.

If any are disposed to speak lightly of New England, in consequence of this visitation, he repeats for their instruction the following story, which answers the double purpose of recognizing the doctrine of possession, and of furnishing him with a reply. "There are many parts of the world, who, if they do on this occasion insult over the people of God, need only to be told the story of what happened at Lorin in the Duchy of Gulic, where, a Popish curate having ineffectually tried many charms to eject the devil out of a damsel there possessed, he at last, in a passion, bid the devil come out of her into himself; but the devil answered him (in good Latin), 'What need I meddle now with one, whom, at the last day, I am sure to have and hold as my own for ever.'"

Some points, he thinks, are clearly established by the results of the trials. The chief one is, that there is a great conspiracy among the powers of darkness to root out the Christian religion from New England. The devil having always looked upon that land as his own, naturally felt aggrieved when the Pilgrims took possession of it, and even more disgusted with their religious principles and

lives. It is also proved, that the devil, "exhibiting himself ordinarily as a small black man, has decoyed a number of base creatures, and enlisted them in his service, by entering their names in a book." These persons meet with their employer in "hellish rendezvouses," wherein they have their diabolical sacraments, imitating the baptism and supper of our Lord. Each one of these associators has spectres or devils in his command, and many are suffering under their evil hands, "being miserably scratched and bitten." The spectres have an odd faculty of clothing the most substantial instruments of torture with invisibility, while the wounds given by them are sufficiently palpable. One of the worst things about it is, that the devils have obtained power to take on themselves the likeness of harmless people; "there is an agony in the minds of men, lest the devil should shame us with devices of a finer thread than was ever before practised upon the world." "And meantime he improves the darkness of this affair to push us into a blind man's buffet, and we are even ready to be sinfully, yea hotly and madly, mauling one another in the dark."

The conclusion to which he came is more practical, than could have been expected from such a beginning. "If we carry things to such extremes of passion, as are now gaining among us, the devil will bless himself to find such a convenient lodg-

ing. And it may be that the wrath, which we have had, one against another, has had more than a little influence on the coming down of the devil in that wrath, which now amazes us. For this, among other causes, perhaps God has permitted the devils to be worrying as they now are among us. But it is high time to leave off all devilism, when the devil himself is falling upon us; it is no time to be reviling and censuring one another with a devilish wrath, when the wrath of the devil is annoying us." If he had himself followed this sensible advice, the visitation of darkness might have brought happier results than it did.

In his account of some of the trials at Salem, his moral sense seems to be strangely perverted. When the clergyman, George Burroughs, was before the court, with no other testimony against him, than that he had shown many exploits of bodily strength, some of the witnesses, confused perhaps by the consciousness of their perjury, were for a time unable to speak. The judge, Stoughton, inquired of Burroughs, what he supposed hindered them from giving testimony. He replied he imagined it was the devil. "That honorable person replied: 'How comes the devil, then, to be so loath to have testimony brought against you?' which cast him into a very great confusion." As well it might; for it made it clear as the sun, that he had no chance for his life, in the hands of a

judge, whom superstition and prejudice made so oppressive and unfeeling.

Among other perversions of justice, two of the afflicted were permitted to testify, that the ghosts of Burroughs's wives had appeared and declared that he had been the death of them. It is true, as Mr. Upham remarks, that there are very strong indications of personal malice in this testimony against Mr. Burroughs, who had formerly preached in Salem village, and been the object of some ill-will.

This, however, was not peculiar to him. Several of the women appeared to have been ill-tempered and violent in their language, and in that way to have become objects of general hatred and suspicion, till the public sentiment was so strong against them, that no one lamented their fate. It is probably true, that they had at times threatened the witnesses. Considering the proportion of evil in the world, the witnesses could not pass through life without some disasters, and, in all cases of accident and suffering, their suspicions turned at once upon their ill-favored neighbors.

Neither was their testimony an entire fabrication. Among other things they deposed, that strong drink in their vessels had suddenly and unaccountably disappeared; which was doubtless true; but might have happened without diabolical agency, and in fact without any other than their own. The evils

complained of were sickness, misfortune in business, loss of cattle and other visitations, which no doubt had occurred, as they said, but might have been accounted for by the common order of nature.

One remark of Cotton Mather is true, though the reasoning in it requires to be inverted. Speaking of the provoking manner in which the witches elude observation, he breaks forth in a tone of disappointment; "Our witches do seem to have got the knack; and this is one of the things, which make me think that witchcraft will not be fully understood, till the day when there shall not be one witch in the world." It is true, in point of fact, not that witchcraft has been explained, because witches are gone, but that witches are no longer found, because the matter is understood.

There are in the testimony, which he has set before us as the most convincing offered on these occasions, many such instances of mistaking cause for effect. It was testified in the case of Bridget Bishop, that a woman named Whetford had accused Bishop of stealing a spoon; Bishop resented the charge, and made many threatenings of revenge. One night, Bishop, with another person, appeared by her bedside, and consulted what should be done with her. At length, they took her to the sea-side and there tried to drown her; but she called on God, and his name destroyed their power. After this, Whetford was a "crazed sort of

woman." Nothing could be clearer than that the lunacy was father to the charge; but at that day it was thought much more natural to ascribe the lunacy to preternatural power.

Cotton Mather afterwards was unwilling to bear the odium of what he had done. He then endeavored to show, and probably deluded himself into the belief, that he had discouraged the popular passion. But there can be no doubt, that he officiated on the occasion like the fire department of Constantinople, who are said at times to pour oil from their engines upon the fire, which they profess to extinguish. In this report of the trials, he quotes "gracious words," as he modestly calls them, from the advice given by the Boston clergy. "We cannot, but with all thankfulness," says he, "acknowledge the success, which the merciful God has given unto the sedulous and assiduous endeavors of our honorable rulers, to detect the abominable witchcrafts which have been committed in the country; humbly praying that the discovery of these mysterious and mischievous wickednesses may be perfected." The only touch of humanity about the work is found in his reference to Giles Corey, whom he tenderly calls, "a poor man, lately prest unto death, because of his refusing to plead." The manifest objection to this representation is, that it gives the impression that Corey's suffering under the *peine forte et dure* was a mat-

ter of taste and choice; whereas the truth is, that he firmly refused to plead, because he saw that there was no hope of justice or mercy from the savages into whose hands he had fallen.

It is also said in the close of the report; "If a drop of innocent blood should be shed in the prosecution of the witchcrafts among us, how unhappy should we be! For which cause I cannot express myself in better terms than those of a most worthy person, who lives near the present centre of those things. 'The word of God in these matters is to be looked into with due circumspection, that Satan deceive us not with his devices.' But on the other hand, if the storm of justice do only fall on the guilty witches and wretches, which have defiled our land, how happy!" From this it appears, that there was nothing insupportable in his unhappiness on this occasion.

The manner in which, in his MAGNALIA, he refers to the Salem history does him no honor. Without the least expression of regret for the innocent blood that had been shed, he only remarks that "there had been a going too far in that affair." But, so far from taking any responsibility upon himself, or his coadjutors, he charges these excesses upon the powers of darkness, which he said had circumvented them, and made them proceed against persons, who were not guilty. That they had gone too far, he says, using the words

of another, appears from the numbers of the accused; "it was not to be conceived, that in so small a compass of land, so many should so abominably leap into the devil's lap all at once." Many of them were persons of blameless lives, who could hardly be supposed guilty of such a sin. Of the nineteen who were executed, not one at the last moment confessed himself guilty.

On the strength of these considerations, which unfortunately did not occur to him till somewhat late in the day, he thought there was some mistake, and says that he had heard of the like mistakes in other places. In fact, there was nothing in the acknowledgments of error made by many of the actors in these scenes, which would have prevented their engaging in a similar prosecution at any future time. Some were sincerely penitent, and had their eyes entirely opened. But some of the most distinguished actually regretted, that the turning tide of popular feeling prevented them from clearing the land of witchcraft and sorcery.

There were those, who, at the time, disapproved these proceedings, but, finding themselves unable to resist the current, chose rather to be silent observers of the scene, than to hazard their peace, and even their lives, by an ineffectual opposition. Ineffectual they supposed it would be; and yet it appears, that, as soon as one energetic man turned

upon his accusers, and prosecuted them for libel and slander, the spell was broken, their charges were seen in the true light, and it was impossible to renew the delusion.

That there were those, who understood the true history and character of the excitement, appears from the remarkable letter of Thomas Brattle, which is written in the spirit of the present age. It was not published at the time, and, had it been, it might possibly have injured him without serving the cause of truth; but it is matter of regret, that the experiment was not tried; for sometimes, when wisdom cries and no man regards it at the moment, it prepares the way for an earlier triumph of reason and humanity; and in cases where it excites passion, as his letter probably would have done, the public are inflamed because the voice reaches their conscience, requires them to justify their proceedings to themselves, and compels them, in spite of themselves, to ponder, and thus deprives them of the apology and consolation, that "they know not what they do."

Had the governor of the Commonwealth been a man of higher order, much of this fanaticism, or rather the cruel results of it, might have been prevented. When William Penn officiated as judge in his new colony, two women, accused of witchcraft, were presented by the grand jury. Without treating the charge with contempt, which the public

mind would not have borne, he charged the jury to bring them in guilty of being suspected of witchcraft, which was not a crime that exposed them to the penalty of the law. Sir William Phips appears to have been in every thing the reverse of Penn. He had much of that active energy, which is so often mistaken for intellectual ability, though he was neither sagacious nor discerning. In his own concerns he was sufficiently headstrong and ungovernable; but in matters like witchcraft he was wholly at the disposal of others, not having formed, and not being capable of forming, any sound judgment of his own.

CHAPTER III.

Sir William Phips. — Robert Calef. — The Influence of his Writings in exposing the Deceptions and allaying the Frenzy of Witchcraft. — Further Opinions of Cotton Mather on this Subject, and his Attempts to justify his Conduct.

Nothing can exceed the triumph, with which Cotton Mather hailed the appointment of Phips to the office of governor. He writes in his Dairy, "The time for favor is now come; yea, the set time is come. I am now to receive the answers of so many prayers as have been employed for my absent parent, and the deliverance and settlement of my poor country. We have not the former charter, but we have a better in the room of it; one which much better suits our circumstances. And, instead of my being made a sacrifice to wicked rulers, all the counsellors of the province are of my father's nomination, and my father-in-law, with several related to me, and several brethren of my own church, are among them. The governor of the Province is not my enemy, but one whom I baptized, and one of my flock, and one of my dearest friends."

Cotton Mather was not disappointed in his expectations. Governor Phips, as long as he remained in office, was uniformly friendly to him. It is not right to say, without direct evidence to that effect, that Cotton Mather was the keeper of his conscience; but he was certainly his confidential adviser, and the governor adopted his views and feelings with respect to the invisible world. Not so his lady; she appears to have had a mind and will of her own. Once, in her husband's absence, hearing that a poor creature had been committed to prison on suspicion of witchcraft, she sent orders to the officer to release the accused person without delay; and the sheriff, though the movement was not strictly legal, thought it his wisdom and safety to comply.

The governor probably felt grateful to Cotton Mather and his father for their exertions in his behalf; but there were many in the country, who were no better satisfied with the new governor than with the new charter, and always felt indignant at Cotton Mather for the part he took at the time of Andros's fall. The general sentiment was, that the old magistrates then should reassume their offices, and go on as if nothing had happened; but Cotton Mather exerted himself to persuade the people, that such a step would interrupt the prosperous course of his father's agency, and make the King less willing to grant the privileges they desired.

When the new charter came, with its abridgment of their rights, they felt as if, had not his influence prevented the resumption of the old charter, they might have continued in the enjoyment of it, without any interruption or question from England. Probably they would not have found it so; but such was their suspicion, and of course, they were provoked with him, whose influence prevented them taking the step, by which they believed that their ancient privileges might have been secured.

Those who were at enmity with Cotton Mather, on account of his concern with witchcraft, brought this also against him, that he was the means of giving them such a chief magistrate. They seem, however, to ascribe Sir William's misdeeds to his weakness, and do not hesitate to say, that if his clerical adviser could have had his way, the reign of terror would not have been over so soon. Not that they ascribe the sudden stop put to the prosecutions to any rising independence on the part of the governor, but simply to the circumstance that his own lady was at length accused. It is said, that Cotton Mather, finding that so much of the responsibility was coming home to himself, resorted to his pen for defence, and wrote a sort of apologue, in which he compared himself to Orpheus, and his father to Mercury, attempting to give a striking representation of the value of the blessings, which they

both had been instrumental in bringing to the country.

The way in which Calef speaks of Sir William Phips, shows his conviction, that he was a well-meaning man, who desired the good of his country; but, from his want of talent and education, was unable to act independently for the public good. At the same time, he shows his opinion of the extent of Cotton Mather's activity and influence, by ascribing to him the responsibility of all that the governor had done. Phips died too soon to be grateful to Calef for this defence, which ascribed his innocence to his inefficiency; but Mather, though on any other occasion he would have been proud to have it said that the chief magistrate was under his influence, felt that, in this instance, the credit of having that influence would bring him more reproach than renown. It is intimated, that, on this account rather than from the natural exaggeration of friendship, he represents Phips as a man of more ability than he or any one else believed him to possess.

The name of Robert Calef deserves to be mentioned with honor in connexion with this unhappy delusion. Though a merchant by profession, and therefore not so directly concerned as many others with such subjects of thought, he had good sense enough to see the truth and the right. In this he was not alone; there were others who saw plainly,

that all the accusations, and the cruelty which they occasioned, were either the result of hypocrisy or excited imaginations. But, while others were swept away by the torrent, he was stout-hearted enough to declare his sentiments and maintain them. The plain common sense with which he opposed fanaticism, was exceedingly provoking to those, who had involved their reputation in the success of the delusion; and the general outcry of wrath, with which his statements were received, showed the fear on the part of his adversaries, that truth would be found on his side, and error and shame on theirs.

Calef's letters and defence were published in London in the year 1700. The delusion was then in a great measure done away; but, as Hutchinson remarks, there were so many living, who had taken part in those transactions, and were therefore interested to keep up the impression that there was some supernatural agency on the occasion, that, long after the public mind was disabused, the truth could find no welcome. As soon as Calef's book reached this country, it was ordered by Dr. Increase Mather to be publicly burned in the College Yard; a ceremony which doubtless had the usual effect of such burnt-offerings, causing the book to be in general demand, and therefore filling the hearts of the author and bookseller with joy.

The part taken by Calef was particularly offensive to Cotton Mather, inasmuch as he charges him with being the chief agent in exciting the passions of the community to this work of blood. After the execution of Mrs. Hibbins, the widow of one of the counsellors, who was hanged for witchcraft in Boston in 1655, much to the dissatisfaction of many judicious persons, the taste for such scenes had abated; and it was not till Cotton Mather, in 1685, published an account of several cases of witchcraft with arguments to prove that they were no delusions, that such fears and fancies revived. The case of Goodwin's family took place soon after, and this being also published renewed the appetite for horrors, and prepared the way for the scenes exhibited in Salem.

The advice given by the Boston clergy to the Governor and Council, which was drawn up by Cotton Mather, was another reason for Calef's directing his battery against him. Douglass speaks of it as the address of some of the very popular, but very weak clergy, to Sir William Phips, a very weak governor, with thanks for what was already done and exhortations to proceed.

It cannot be said that this is an unfair representation of it; for it certainly exults in the success, which had attended the prosecutions, and though it gives many exhortations and rules for caution, it winds up with these words: "We cannot but hum-

bly recommend unto the government the speedy and vigorous prosecution of such as have rendered themselves obnoxious, according to the directions given in the laws of God, and the wholesome statutes of the English nation, for the detection of witchcraft." There is no doubt as to the course recommended; and the dissuasion only amounts to a caution, not to rely too much upon evidence "received only on the devil's authority," since he was not to be implicitly trusted.

Calef remarks with sufficient sharpness on Mather's publications, in one of his own, entitled *More Wonders from the Invisible World.* He declares that many of those facts, to which the afflicted, according to Mather, testified, were fabrications without the least basis of truth, and that sometimes circumstances, which were true and easily accounted for, were exaggerated and distorted, till not a vestige of truth remained. In some instances, where the afflicted, according to Mather, were bitten by the witches, it was sufficiently evident to the court and jury, that the prisoners had not a tooth in their head.

One instance, related by him, shows how basely justice was perverted. While one of the accused was on trial, a girl testified that the accused had stabbed her with a knife, which was broken in her limb, and the broken piece of the blade was produced in court; but a young man came forward

and stated to the judges, that he had broken his knife the day before, and threw away the broken piece in presence of the witness. He immediately produced his broken knife, and, on comparing the parts, it appeared that his statement was true. Instead of committing this perjured wretch for trial, the court only reprimanded her, and actually used her testimony for the condemnation of other prisoners.

The witnesses were allowed to tell old stories of twenty or thirty years' standing, which could have no relation to the case on trial, except what prejudice gave them; and it is clear to any one, who reads the testimony, that the judges did every thing in their power, by artful leading questions and overbearing menaces, to drive the prisoners either to confession or condemnation, or, what was worse, to cheat them with false hopes of mercy.

The case of Mr. Burroughs, the clergyman, is a dark one, and Cotton Mather, according to Calef, was guilty of misrepresenting the testimony against him, and of cruelly exulting in his doom. The principal things alleged against him were his feats of personal strength. Mather says, that he was a feeble man; but Calef declares, that all, who ever knew him, were well aware that he was from his youth remarkable for physical power. In fact, he proved on his trial, that another person had at the same time performed the same exploits of strength,

so that they evidently were not beyond human power. But, instead of admitting this testimony, which was conclusive in his favor, the court infamously turned it against him, declaring that it must have been the devil in human shape, aud Mather has so reported it in his account of the trial. Calef informs us, that, when Burroughs was led to execution, he conducted himself in such a noble manner, and prayed so fervently, as to melt the bystanders with admiring compassion; but Mather, moving about among the crowd, assured them that it was the devil who enabled him to do this, in order to deceive them; and thus encouraged, they exulted in his fate, and afterwards treated his corpse with a brutality unexampled in a Christian land.

If Calef had been a man of doubtful character, or strongly prejudiced against the clergy, it would weigh in favor of those whom he accused. But nothing of the kind is charged against him. Hutchinson, who was nearly connected with the Mather family, speaks of Calef as a man of fair mind, who was deliberate in his statements and brought good evidence to sustain them; and however hardly his statements bear on Cotton Mather, they cannot be rejected without doing him great and manifest injustice.

In a pamphlet, which purports to have been published by some of Cotton Mather's society in

defence of their pastor against Calef's charges, these accusations are commented upon with no little asperity, from an idea, which was no doubt correct, that his attack was directed against the whole magistracy and clergy of the State. They say, that, when he arraigns those honorable persons as guilty of shedding innocent blood, it is strange, that the fear of God, if he ever had any, should not have reminded him of the text, "Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people." As to the clergy, he says, they upheld the delusion so long as they were themselves in no danger; but, when they could no longer defend their ground, not one of them was found conscientious and candid enough to enlighten the public mind upon the subject.

To this, the defenders reply, by quoting some passages from the advice of the clergy, in which they formally recommend caution. It seems, however, that Calef did not confine his charges to one subject, but carried the war into the general field of theology. He declared that the clergy taught "that there are more Almighties than one, and that Satan is almighty, and can do what he pleases." To this they reply, not by disproving the charge, but by charging him with "venomous and malignant purpose to bring the clergy into contempt," which, they say, will only return upon his own head; while, so far from alienating the people from their ministers, they will be requited good "for

the curses of every Shimei." The sarcastic power, with which this pamphlet is written, may be inferred from their merry play on Calef's unfortunate name; "this calf" being the name by which he is mentioned.

At the close of this pamphlet Cotton Mather appears in his own defence, beginning with a lamentation, that he should be called on to answer a vile book, written by one, who pretends to be a merchant, when he is nothing more than a weaver. The only argument advanced by Calef, on the subject of all the remarkable providences, is, "that there is a certain weaver that won't believe them." Therefore Mather addresses himself to his friends, and not to Calef, who, he says, had never mentioned his name without some lie about him.

In reply to the charge, that he had favored the witchcraft delusion, Cotton Mather says, that he had always recommended great caution and charity. On this he insists in the strongest terms. "But you 'll say, How came it to pass, that so many people took up a different notion of me? Surely, Satan knows. Perhaps 't was because I thought it my duty always to speak of the honorable judges with as much honor as I could; a crime, which I am generally taxed for, and for which I have been fairly requited; this made people, who judge at a distance, to dream that I approved all that was done. Perhaps also my dis-

position to avoid extremes, as 't is said 'he that feareth God shall come out of them,' causeth me to be generally obnoxious to the violent in all parties. Or, perhaps, my great adversary always had people full of Robert Calef's malignity, to serve him with columnies and reproaches."

One passage in it is a singular specimen of patient and resigned devotion. He is speaking of a misrepresentation, which Calef had published in regard to a visit relating to the subject of witchcraft, which he had made to an *energumen* of his flock. "I believe there is not one Christian," says he, "but would think of it with indignation, that when ministers of the gospel faithfully and carefully discharge their duty in visiting the miserable in their flocks, little bits, and scraps, and shreds of their discourse, carried away perhaps by some idle eavesdroppers, should be basely tacked together to render them contemptible; and many falsehoods, yea, and smutty ones too, and such as none but a coal fetched from hell could have suggested, should be added for the blackening of them. It were enough to procure me the respect and friendship of all men, who have the least grain of honesty in them, if I had it not before, to see such a man and such a book treat me with such brutish malignity. However, I am verily persuaded, that the holy Lord, whose we are, and whom we serve, will at some time or other, make this man a *Ma-*

ger Massabib for his deliberate wickedness. I will say no more of it, but leave it to those hands, which alone will do right unto us."

It is much to be feared, however, that if justice should be done to him, so far as relates to his conduct on this occasion, he must appear at considerable disadvantage. His contemporaries, as has been suggested, were, almost all of them, more or less involved in the delusion, and of course were not forward to bring charges against each other. But in modern times, when the actors in this tragedy and those directly interested in them are passed away, as soon as the attention is turned to this subject, it must be confessed, that the name of Mather appears foremost, as the most effective and prominent agent in creating the excitement, and pushing it on to its excesses.

That he sincerely believed in the reality of witchcraft, cannot for a moment be doubted; but this does not excuse him beyond a certain extent; for his father, though as firm a believer in such agency as he, did not countenance the bloody and revengeful proceedings of the day. Unfortunately Cotton Mather did, much as he afterwards attempted to disclaim it. Probably his feelings and opinions on the subject were not well defined in his own mind; but every impartial reader sees, that, while he felt bound to give cautions, he gave still more encouragement to the work of blood, and

never wrote one syllable, expressing the least regret for the waste of innocent lives, though he confessed that the matter had been carried too far.

When Mr. Upham published his *Lectures* on this subject, he was called upon by a writer in the public prints, to make good his charge against Cotton Mather, of having exerted himself to increase and extend the frenzy of the public mind. He produced in reply, an original letter from Dr. Mather to Stephen Sewall of Salem, in which he manifests an excessive earnestness to prevent the excitement from subsiding. This was written in September, after the summer which had witnessed the executions in Salem, and contains an importunate request, that Mr. Sewall would furnish him with the evidence given at the trials. He urges this request, by reminding him of the benefit that may follow, and wishes him to add to it remarks and observations of his own. He tells him, that he must not consider himself writing to Cotton Mather, but to an obstinate unbeliever in all such matters, and he must adopt the tone and style most likely to make an impression on such a man. "Imagine me as obstinate a Sadducee and witch-advocate as any among us; address me as one that believed nothing reasonable; and when you have so knocked me down, in a spectre so unlike me, you will enable me to box it about among my neighbors till it come, I know not where at last."

It appears that he did *box it about among his neighbors*, with more success than could have been expected, after the revulsion of public feeling, which followed the transactions in Salem. In 1693, one Margaret Rule was seized in a remarkable manner, which he ascribed to spectral visitations. He says, that she had at some previous time shown symptoms of religious thoughtfulness; but he does not undertake to speak with confidence respecting her character, a forbearance, which implies that it was not irreproachable. She was assaulted by several cruel spectres, some of which had their faces covered, so that she could not be sure respecting them. They requested her to put down her name in a book, and, on her declining to subscribe, they tormented her in a cruel manner, at the command of a black man, who stood by, and appeared to be their master. She was thrown into such agonies, that Cotton Mather says, with much pathos, "they, that could behold the doleful condition of that poor family without sensible compassions, might have entrails indeed; but I am sure they could have no true bowels in them."

He says, that to imagine that all this was imposture, would be an uncivil and unchristian thing. Indeed it is not necessary to the entire explanation of the affair, for he has thrown abundant light upon it when he assures his readers, that the young woman fasted for nine days, her tormentors not allow-

ing her to swallow any food all the while, except an occasional spoonful of rum. Whoever understands the relation between cause and effect, would readily believe in the witchcraft, after such a disclosure; but it does not seem to occur to him, when he makes the statement, that the rum would help to account for any of the appearances ascribed to spectral visitation.

Calef thought it advisable to inquire into this affair, while it was in progress. Accordingly he attended in her chamber one night, when Cotton Mather and his father were there. The former conducted the examination by leading questions, such as this. "Do there a great many witches sit upon you?" Answer; "Yes." "The witches scratch, and pinch, and bite you, don't they?" Answer, "Yes." This is a specimen of the whole investigation, which of course produced the answers desired. The questions to her attendants were also satisfactorily answered. "What does she eat and drink?" Answer, "She eats nothing at all, but drinks rum." Soon after the clergymen withdrew, the afflicted desired the women to be gone, saying, "that the company of the men was not offensive to her, and having laid hold of the hand of a young man, said to have been her sweetheart formerly, who was withdrawing, she pulled him again into his seat, saying he should not go to-night."

Calef's interference gave offence to Cotton Mather, who complained much of his misrepresentation of the scene; but on examining these alleged misrepresentations, it appears that Calef's statement is admitted to be substantially true. Calef proposed to Dr. Mather to meet with him and converse upon the subject; but, instead of granting the interview, Cotton Mather caused him to be arrested for a libel, and bound over to answer at the sessions. A correspondence passed between them, but little to the satisfaction of either party.

One of the most remarkable documents brought forward was the testimony of several persons, who declared that they had seen her elevated in a surprising manner. If their evidence had stopped there, no one, who considered the nature of her diet, would have hesitated to believe them; but they deposed, that they had seen her lifted up from her bed, without any exertion on her own part, and suspended in the air at a considerable height; one account says, high enough to touch the garret floor without touching any support whatever. Several strong men were obliged to exert all their strength to pull her down.

Calef remarks on this testimony, that they should have stated the number of persons employed, in order to ascertain how many are required to overcome an invisible force. "On the whole," he says to Cotton Mather, "I suppose you expect I

should believe it; and, if so, the only advantage gained is, that that which has been so long controverted between Protestants and Papists, whether miracles are ceased, will hereby seem to be decided for the latter." Testimony of this kind, so explicit and so unaccountable, without taking it for granted that the witnesses were perjured, would probably have taken effect, even with the Salem history fresh in the public mind, had it not been for the firmness of Calef. Influence was against him, but truth and reason were so manifestly on his side, that, with small pretensions to learning, he overcame the divines in argument, and dispersed the remnants of delusion.

Mr. Upham has produced another letter, which, though the signature is wanting, was evidently from the style, and, as we are told, from the handwriting, the work of Cotton Mather. Like the former, it is addressed to Mr. Sewall, and describes the public manner in which he had been insulted in Boston. This was in 1707, several years after these events had taken place, but while he was yet in trouble from his controversy with Governor Dudley. He tells Mr. Sewall, that, one day in a bookseller's shop in Boston, he was railed at by a couple of malignant fellows, who, among other things, said, "His friend Mr. Noyes has cast him off;" on which they set up a shout of laughter. He wishes Mr. Sewall to show that part of the letter to Mr.

Noyes, in order to ascertain whether there was any truth in what they had said; for, though he professed not to believe it, he thought it not impossible that there might be some foundation for the story.

The truth is, that he was suspicious and distrustful; the public had accused him as the one, who had done most to mislead them, and his standing in society was suddenly changed. From being regarded as a man of great and venerable character, he was generally shunned and treated with aversion. Possibly this conversation was accidental, and had reference to some other person; but, at any rate, the incident shows the state of his own feeling, and betrays a consciousness that he had lost his former place in the public respect and good-will.

The part of his Diary, which relates to this portion of his history is still preserved, and throws some light upon the subject of his own feelings and opinions. It is not, however, so full as could be desired. It seems to have been written after the excitement was over, when the subject was no longer pleasant to him. It is written with an attempt at self-justification, which shows either that he had misgivings at the time when he was most engaged, or that the altered feelings of those about him induced him to suspect and reëxamine his own.

In the beginning of the year 1692, he says, that his heart is set upon a design of reformation to extend through the churches, to revive the sinking spirit of piety, and prevent religion from declining. In order to produce this revival, he applied himself to the neighboring clergy; but they were in the habit of waiting for the agency of the divine spirit, and showed no disposition to join with him in taking the measures proposed. Finding that he must act alone, he wrote the publication entitled, "*A Midnight Cry.*" He says, "I set myself to recount the abasing circumstances of the land, and my soul mourned over them. I wrestled with my God, that he would awaken the churches to *do some remarkable thing* in returning to him." This language shows, that he was desirous to see some enthusiastic impulse given to the public mind, which should excite it to powerful action; and, when the panic of witchcraft came, he was doubtless prepared to welcome it as an answer to his prayer.

There is another memorandum on the 29th day of the second month, to this effect; "This day I obtained help of God, that he would make use of me as of a John, to be a herald of the Lord's kingdom now approaching." This evidently referred to the case of witchcraft, since the sentence concludes thus, "My prayers did especially insist upon the horrible enchantments and possessions

broke forth in Salem village, things of a most prodigious aspect; a good issue to those things, and my own direction and protection thereabout, I did especially petition for."

The rest of the Diary for this year is not dated, and, as has been said, is written in a singular spirit of self-defence. After commenting upon the manner in which, by the judgment of Heaven, evil spirits were permitted to torment unfortunate persons in Salem, he says, that many persons, of various characters, were accused and prosecuted upon the visions of the afflicted.

"For my own part," he adds, "I was always afraid of proceeding to convict and condemn any person, as a confederate with afflicting demons, upon so feeble an evidence as a spectral representation. Accordingly, I ever protested against it, both publicly and privately; and in my letters to the judges, I particularly besought them, "that they would by no means admit it; and when a considerable assembly of ministers gave in their advice about that matter, I not only concurred with them, but it was I who drew it up. Nevertheless, on the other side, I saw in most of the judges a most charming instance of prudence and patience, and I knew the exemplary prayer and anguish of soul wherewith they had sought the direction of Heaven above most other people; whom I generally saw enchanted into a raging, railing, scanda-

lous, and unreasonable disposition, as the distress increased upon us. For this cause, *though I could not allow the principles, that some of the judges had espoused*, yet I could not but speak honorably of their persons, on all occasions; and my compassion upon the sight of their difficulties, raised by my journeys to Salem, the chief seat of those diabolical vexations, caused me yet more to do so. And merely, as far as I can learn, for this reason, the mad people through the country, under a fascination on their spirits equal to that which *energumens* had on their bodies, reviled me as if I had been the doer of all the hard things that were done in the prosecutions of the witchcraft."

He appears to forget, that the "advice," of which he claims the authorship, contained not only cautions, but a recommendation to the authorities to prosecute vigorously those, who were under the charge of witchcraft. There is every reason to believe, that, had he spoken as doubtfully on all occasions, as he does in making this registry in his journal, the courts, not sustained by the clergy, would have suffered the matter to rest. It would be gratifying to see these things explained in any way creditable to his fame.

There may, however, have been a reason for his delicacy on this occasion, which one would have thought would have occurred to no one else, were it not for his assurance that it suggested itself sooner

to others than to him. It seems that this visitation of evil spirits was, in some sort, a personal attack upon himself, so that, as a party concerned, he could not decently be free in giving his opinion to the judges.

"I had filled my country with little books," he says, "in several whereof I had, with a variety of entertainments, offered the new covenant, formally drawn up, unto my neighbors, hoping to engage them eternally unto the Lord by their subscribing with heart and hand unto that covenant. Now, in the late horrid witchcraft, the manner of spectres was, to tender books unto the afflicted people, soliciting them to subscribe a league with the devil therein exhibited, and so to become the servants of the devil for ever. Which when they refused, the spectres would proceed to wound them with scalding, burning, pinching, pricking, twisting, choking, and a thousand preternatural vexations. Before I made any such reflection myself, I heard the reflection made by others, who were more considerate, that this assault of the evil angels upon the country was intended by Hell, as a particular defiance unto *my poor endeavors* to bring the souls of men unto Heaven."

It would seem impossible for credulity to go further than this, and, so far as the sincerity of his delusion is an excuse for his attempting to influence others with the same excitement, he is entitled to

the benefit of it all. But it seems, that his doubts grew upon him in later years; for his Diary contains this passage, dated the 15th day of the second month, 1713; "I entreated of the Lord, that I might know the meaning of that descent from the invisible world, which, nineteen years ago, produced, in a sermon from me, a good part of what is now published." This relates to the Salem witchcraft, and shows that the subject troubled him at times, long after the excitement had passed away.

He was very much annoyed with the letters of Calef, which were so civil and respectful in manner, that no complaint could be made of the form. The substance was so unanswerable as to be particularly trying. In 1701, he says, "I find that the enemies of the churches are set with an implacable enmity against me; and one vile tool, namely R. Calf, is employed by them to go on with more of his filthy scribbles, to hurt my precious opportunities of glorifying the Lord Jesus Christ. I had need to be much in prayer to my glorious Lord, that he would preserve his poor servant from the malice of this evil generation, and of that vile man particularly." It appears from this, that he considered all his persecutions from men or demons, as so many testimonies to his zealous exertions in the cause of religion; a view of the subject, which must have brought with it peculiar consolation.

It would be unjust to Cotton Mather to leave this subject without mentioning an act recorded in his Diary, which shows that his thoughts sometimes reverted to Salem, perhaps with a touch of self-upbraiding, though he does not confess it. But whatever his motive may have been, the citizens of that ancient town will doubtless rejoice to preserve the memory of his benefactions. In the latter part of his life, he writes; "There is a town in this country, namely, Salem, which has many poor and bad people in it, and such as are especially scandalous for staying at home on the Lord's day. I wrapped up seven distinct parcels of money, and annexed seven little books about repentance, and seven of the monitory letter against profane absence from the house of God. I sent those things with a nameless letter unto the minister of that town, and desired and empowered him to dispense the charity in his own name, hoping thereby the more to ingratiate his ministry with the people. Who can tell how far the good angels of Heaven coöperate in these proceedings?"

CHAPTER IV.

Characteristic Extracts from his Diary.—His Vigils. — Description of the "Magnalia Christi Americana."—Instances of his Enthusiasm.—A remarkable Courtship.—His Second Marriage.

In the Diary for 1696, is an entry dated the 23d day of the second month, which shows what kind of circumstances made most impression on his imagination, and what he thought it most important to record. "This evening I met with an experience, which it may not be unprofitable for me to remember. I had been for about a fortnight vexed with an extraordinary heart-burn, and none of all the common medicines would remove it, though for the present some of them would a little relieve it. At last, it grew so much upon me, that I was ready to faint under it. But under my fainting pain, this reflection came into my mind. There was *this* among the sufferings and complaints of my Lord Jesus Christ. My heart was like wax melted in the midst of my bowels. Hereupon, I begged of the Lord, that, for the sake of the heart-burn undergone by my

Savior, I might be delivered from the other and lesser heart-burn wherewith I was now incommoded. Immediately it was darted into my mind, that I had Sir Philip Paris's plaster in my house, which was good for inflammations; and laying the plaster on, I was cured of my malady."

All incidents of this kind were ascribed by him to a particular Providence, and his journal abounds with intimations and assurances received directly from Heaven. On the 22d day of the twelfth month, 1699, he says, "A terrible thing happened in my family; for my daughter Katy, going into the cellar with a candle, her muslin ornaments about her shoulders took fire from it, and blazed up so as to set her head-gear likewise on fire. But, by the wonderful and merciful providence of God, her shriek for help was heard, and by that help the fire was extinguished. The child's life was preserved, and her head and face, though in the midst of horrible flames; but her neck and hands were horribly burnt, and she was thrown into exquisite misery. My child fell into a fever, and her neck obliged her to so wry a posture of her head, that I was in grievous distress, whether she would live, or whether, if she did live, there would not be some visible mark of the stroke of the wrath of the Lord always upon her. I cried unto the Lord in this my distress, and I obtained assurance from Heaven, that the child should not only be shortly and safely

cured of her burning, but that God would make the burning to be the occasion of her being more effectually than ever brought home to himself."

Not only was information thus given, but he believed that interpositions of Heaven in his behalf were common and manifest, particularly in what related to his public labors. He says; "I often find, that when I preach on the angels, or on any subject, such as the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, particularly agreeable to the angels, I have a more than ordinary assistance in my public ministrations. My mind, and voice, and strength are evidently under some special agency from the invisible world, and a notable fervency, and majesty, and powerful pungency set off my discourses."

There are many curious passages in his Diary, which show the peculiar nature of his devotions, and how firmly he expected, and perhaps in consequence of that expectation, found, an immediate answer to his prayers. In 1702, he began the practice of keeping vigils, that is, of spending whole nights in prayer.

"I called unto mind," says he, "that the primitive Christians, in obedience to that command of watching unto prayer, sometimes had their vigils; accordingly I resolved, that I would make some essay toward a vigil. I dismissed my dear consort unto her repose, and, in the dead of the night, I

retired into my study, and there, casting myself prostrate on my study floor before the Lord, I was rewarded with communications from Heaven, that cannot be uttered. There I lay for a long time, wrestling with the Lord, and I received some strange intimations from Heaven, about the time and the way of my death, and about mercies intended for my family, and several points, about which my mind may be too solicitous. Lord, what is man that thou visitest him? If those be vigils, I must, so far as the sixth commandment will allow, have some more of them."

The *intimations*, which he received on this occasion, were so direct and satisfactory, that the practice became a favorite one with him. Whatever service it may have done to his devotional feelings, it did not benefit his health or spirits; but he seems to have persevered in it to the last, notwithstanding some discouraging circumstances that attended it. For example, immediately after this vigil, he writes; "Now, as I have often observed it, so it still continues matter of observation unto me, that, when I have been admitted to some near and sweet and intimate communion with Heaven, I must immediately encounter some vexation on earth; either bodily illness, or popular clamor, or Satanic buffets immediately followed. I expected something on this occasion. Accordingly, when I was preaching on the day following, one of my

chimneys took fire, and my own house, with my neighbors', was endangered, and a great congregation ran out of the meeting-house to the relief of my house, and I was thus marked out for talk all over the town."

Thus it appears, that he was so much in the habit of looking for consequences of a certain kind, that the most trifling accidents were ascribed to special agency, and, if necessary, exalted into crosses and trials. It was an instance of rare moderation on the part of Satan, one would say, to satisfy his revenge by setting fire to a chimney; and there are few of the ills, which flesh is heir to, that may be regarded as lighter, than that of being the owner of a chimney, which occasioned such an alarm. But, as there was no other event near the vigil in the order of time, which could be ascribed to Satanic malice, this accident was compelled to officiate in that capacity, though it was hardly equal to the occasion.

In 1704, he writes; "I am very much concerned about one thing. My little daughter, Nancy, has her unknown distemper still hanging about her. She languishes and perishes under a pain, which the ablest physicians in all the town confess themselves unable to cure. I cry to the Lord about it; yea, I have received over and over again a particular faith from Heaven, as I thought, that the child shall be recovered, and yet the malady proceeds

even to a hopeless extremity. Lord, what shall I think of this thing?"

Such was the reliance, which he placed on these intimations, he does not say in what manner conveyed, that he is very much perplexed to know how to reconcile the child's growing worse, with these promises made to him from on high. He speaks sometimes of sensible appearances; at others, he seems to have taken his own feelings, as direct suggestions of Heaven, and to have relied upon them as firmly, as if they had been spoken by an angel's articulate voice. About a fortnight after, he writes; "Now again I see, that faith is not fancy. My little daughter, Nancy, is wonderfully recovered. The Lord showed us how to encounter her malady. The child is got abroad again, perfectly recovered from any sign of her late sickness, and her strength comfortably returns to her."

He had another proof, quite acceptable to an author, that faith is not fancy. In 1701, he writes; "This day I received letters from London. My church history is a bulky thing, of about two hundred and fifty sheets. The impression will cost about six hundred pounds. The booksellers of London are cold about it. Their proposals for subscriptions are of uncertain and tedious event. But behold what my friend, Mr. Bromfield, writes me from London. 'There is

one Mr. Robert Hackshaw, a very serious and godly man, who proposes to print the Ecclesiastical History of New England, which you entrusted me withal. He is willing to print it at his own charges, and to serve you with as many books, I believe, as you desire. When he proposed it to me, I said, Sir, God has answered Mr. Mather's prayers. He declared, that he did it, not with any expectation of gain to himself, but for the glory of God.'"

This was the MAGNALIA, a chaotic collection of materials for a history of New England, rather than a history itself; a work, which contains so much that is valuable, that it is read with interest and pleasure still, though it is deformed by some enormous faults, and not to be trusted as a guide in matters of importance.* Cotton Mather was generally allowed to know more particulars of the history of New England than any other man; and had his other qualifications as an historian been proportionate to his curiosity and industry, he might have raised a durable monument to his own fame. But the portion of history, which it embraced, was so near his own times, as to awaken

* The work is entitled, "MAGNALIA CHRISTI AMERICANA, or the Ecclesiastical History of New England." It was published in London, in the year 1702, making a large folio volume. It was reprinted at Hartford, Connecticut, 1820, in two volumes octavo.

his partialities and aversions, so that in many of his sketches of character, we have little more than a view of his own prejudices. The times, too, were credulous, and he even more so than the times. Hence the marvellous was often quite as welcome to him as the true.

As to dates, it was not to be expected that any man could despatch in a few years a work, which was large enough to be the labor of a life, without falling into various errors in matters, which he doubtless regarded as of very small importance. Grahame calls the Magnalia the most interesting work, which the literature of this country has produced, declaring that many of the biographical parts of it are superior to Plutarch; but this is absurd and extravagant praise; the highest pretension of the work is, that it is curious and entertaining.

The Magnalia is divided into seven books, or parts. The first part contains the history of New England, with a description of the design *whereon*, the manner *wherein*, and the people *whereby*, the colonies were planted. This is followed by a set of portraits of the public men and divines, who had distinguished themselves in the country. He then gives an account of Harvard College, which had not yet had the opportunity to displease him. From this, he proceeds to the articles of faith and rules of discipline, which prevailed in the churches.

The sixth book was that, in which his soul delighted, because it recorded the manifestations of Divine Providence in connexion with the wonders of the invisible world. The last book contains an account of the disturbances, which the New England colonies suffered from Indians, Quakers, and wolves in sheep's clothing, who were grouped together in an unheard-of association, as so many allies in opposition to the cause of God.

This work, which it was formerly difficult to procure, has been made so familiar in modern times, by a cheap edition, that it needs no particular description. Every one knows its general character, and its quaintness recommends it to those who read for amusement, while it is fallen into disrepute with those who read for instruction. The miscellaneous scraps of learning, strung together on invisible threads of association, make the reader wonder at his industry, however misapplied; and occasional gleams of talent assure him, that the author was really an able man, apart from his affectation. It is like an antiquarian collection, the value of which must not be estimated by its usefulness, but by the more doubtful standard of its oddity and its age.

How far he sometimes carried his peculiar enthusiasm, appears from a memorandum dated the 23d day of the sixth month, 1702. He says, that when sitting in his study, he perceived a strange

impression on his mind, that God was willing to converse with him after a very familiar manner, if he would look and wait in a proper posture. It was actually said to him, "Go into your great chamber, and I will speak with you." He immediately went to a large apartment, the most retired in his house, and there threw himself prostrate on the floor. "There," he says, "I cried unto the Lord, with humble and bitter confessions of my own loathsomeness before him. I abhorred myself as worthy to be thunderstruck in dust and ashes."

For a time he perceived nothing out of the common course; but at length there came an extraordinary *afflatus*, which dissolved him in tears, that ran down upon the floor. He burst forth with such expressions as this; "And now my heavenly Father is going to tell me what he will do for me. My Father loves me, and will fill me with his love, and will bring me unto everlasting life. My Father will never permit any thing to befall me, but what shall be for his interest. My Father will make me a chosen vessel to do good in the world. My Father will yet use me to glorify his church; and my opportunities, my precious opportunities to do good, shall be after a special manner increased and multiplied. The condition of my dear consort, my Father will give me to see his wonderful favor in it. My Father

will be a father to my children too. He will provide for them, and they shall, every one, serve him through eternal ages." This conversation with Heaven, he describes as leaving a heavenly, sweet, and gracious impression on his soul.

This reference to the condition of his wife, was on account of a lingering sickness, of which, after much suffering, she died in the year 1702. It is recorded in his Diary, that, after she had been sick about half a year, he fasted and prayed on her account; and that same night, there appeared to her, she supposed in her sleep, a grave person leading a woman in the most meagre and wretched state. She broke forth into praising God, that her condition was so much more tolerable, than that woman's. The grave person then told her, that she had two distressing symptoms, for which he would point out some relief. For the intolerable pain in her breast, he told her to take the warm wool from a living sheep, and lay it upon the part affected. For the salivation, which nothing had relieved, he told her to take a tankard of spring water, and dissolve in it over the fire a quantity of isinglass and mastic, of which she was to drink often. She communicated this vision to her physician; he advised her to try the experiment. She did so for a time with singular success. She was even able to leave her chamber; but her disorder was too deeply fixed, and in De-

cember it became evident that she must die. His account of her death is affecting.

"The black day arrives! I had never seen so black a day in all the time of my pilgrimage. The desire of my eyes is this day to be taken from me. Her death is lingering and painful. All the forenoon of this day, she was in the pangs of death, and insensible till the last minute or two before her final expiration. I cannot remember the discourse that passed between us; only her devout soul was full of satisfaction about her going to a state of blessedness with the Lord Jesus Christ. As far as my distress would permit, I studied to confirm her satisfaction and consolation. When I saw to what a point of resignation I was called of the Lord, I resolved, with his help, to glorify him. So, two hours before she expired, I kneeled by her bedside, and took into my hands that dear hand, the dearest in the world, and solemnly and sincerely gave her up to the Lord. I gently put her out of my hands and laid away her hand, resolved that I would not touch it again. She afterwards told me, that she signed and sealed my act of resignation; and before that though she had called for me continually, after it, she never asked for me any more. She conversed much until near two in the afternoon. The last sensible word that she spoke was to her weeping father; 'Heaven, Heaven will make amends for all!'"

A passage, which follows hard upon this, is written with the same solemnity, while the subject is ludicrous in the extreme. It shows his want of taste; his mind hardly seemed to discover any difference of magnitude and proportion between any two subjects, that happened to come before it. Shortly after the death of his wife, as he was reflecting upon the follies to which persons situated as he was are frequently led, he prayed earnestly that God would sooner kill him, than suffer him to do any thing that would bring discredit upon the religion which he professed. He assures us, that, a few minutes after, he was taken very ill, and was not a little alarmed; for, said he, "I suspected that the Lord was going to take me at my word." The disorder did not prove fatal; he soon recovered; and then, as if perfectly unable to discover any thing otherwise than serious in the subject, says, "I perceived it was nothing but vapors."

In the month of February, he records, that he was beset with "a very astonishing trial." Others might have been disposed to smile at it, but he evidently considered it no subject of mirth. It dwelt upon his mind, and troubled him so that his life became almost a burden. There was a young lady, whom he describes as so remarkably accomplished, that no one in America exceeded her, abounding in wit and sense, with a comely aspect, and most winning conversation, who, after writing to him once

or twice, made him a visit, and gave him to understand, that she had long felt a deep interest in his ministry, and that, since his present condition had given her more liberty to think of him, "she had become charmed with my person to such a degree, that she could not but break in upon me with her most importunate requests, that I would make her mine." She however declared, that the chief interest she felt in the attachment arose from her desire for religious improvement; for, if she were once connected with him, she did not doubt that her salvation would be secured.

To a proposal so direct and flattering, it was not easy to make any other than a grateful reply. It was not altogether to his taste, but he could not say so to her. All at once, a way of escape seemed to be offered; and, nothing doubting that it would answer the purpose, he told her of his austere manner of life, and the frequent fasts and vigils, which his wife was expected to share. But, instead of being daunted by this communication, she told him that this was the very thing of all others, which she desired; for she had already weighed all those discouragements, but was prepared with faith and fortitude to encounter them all.

"Then," he says, "I was in a great strait how to treat so polite a gentlewoman, thus applying herself unto me. I plainly told her I feared whether her proposal would not meet with unsurmountable

objections from those, who had an interest in disposing of me. However I desired that there might be time taken to see what would be the wisest and fittest resolution. In the mean time, if I could not make her my own, I should be glad to be any way instrumental in making her the Lord's."

Having secured this reprieve, he seemed to breathe freely, though he was utterly unable to discover any way of escape from this affectionate persecution.

This matter appears for some time to have oppressed his very soul, and the manner in which he treats it is too characteristic to be passed by. After a time, the Diary proceeds; "My sore distresses and temptations I this day carried before the Lord. The chief of them lies in this. The most accomplished gentlewoman, mentioned, though not by name, in the close of the former year, one whom everybody sees with admiration, confessed to be, for her charming accomplishments, an incomparable person, addressing me to make her mine, and professing a disposition unto the most holy flights of religion to lie at the bottom of her addresses, I am in the greatest strait imaginable what course to steer. Nature itself causes in me a mighty tenderness towards a person so amiable. Breeding requires me to treat her with honor and respect, and very much of deference; but religion, above all, obliges me, instead of a rash rejecting of her

conversation, to contrive rather how I may imitate the goodness of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the dealing with such as are upon a conversion to him." No contrivance could arrange the matter to his mind; for again he says, "As for my special, soul-harassing affair, I did, some days ago, under my hand, beg, as for my life, that it might be desisted from, and that I might not be killed by hearing any more about it." But even his written solicitations produced no effect, so desirous was she to secure the welfare of her soul.

To add to his trouble, his relations, suspecting some attachment to exist between him and the lady, treated him as if the engagement was already formed. So intolerable was their upbraiding, that he says, "My grievous distresses, occasioned especially by the late addresses made unto me by the person formerly mentioned, caused me to fall down before the Lord with prayers and tears continually. And because my heart is sore pained within me, what shall I do, or what shall be the issue of this distressing affair?"

Some light began to be thrown upon this subject, but, though recorded by his hand, it does not appear to have explained any thing to him. He goes on with the registry, with the same blending of simplicity and self-applause.

"First month, 6th day, 1703. That young gentlewoman, of so fine accomplishments, that there

is none in this land comparable to her, who has, with such repeated importunity pressed my respects unto her, that I have had much ado to keep clear of great inconveniences, hath, by the disadvantage of the company which commonly resorted to her father's house, got but a bad name among the generality of people. There appears no possibility of her speedy recovery from it, be her carriage never so virtuous. By an unhappy coincidence of some circumstances, there is a noise, and a mighty noise it is, made about the town, that I am engaged in a courtship to that young gentlewoman; and, though I am so very prudent, and have aimed so much at a conformity with our Lord Jesus Christ, yet it is not easy prudently to confute the rumor." Upon this he gathered all his energies for a decisive blow. "The design of Satan to entangle me in a match, that might have proved ruinous to my family or my ministry, is deferred by my resolution totally to reject the addresses of the young gentlewoman. I struck the knife into the heart of my sacrifice, by a letter unto her mother."

In this curious history it appears, that, while he had no particular regard for the lady, he was not insensible to her professed admiration for him. He does not perceive, that, while he delays, he is giving encouragement to her, and affording a subject

of remark to others. Nor does he seem to suspect, from first to last, that her zeal for the interest of her soul may have been counterfeited, as a pretext for approaching him. The course of conduct, which he praised in himself as so wise and prudent, was so extremely unguarded, that he was fortunate indeed, not to have been unconsciously entangled in an engagement from which there was no escaping.

Though the decided stand, which he had taken in self-defence, released him from the lady's addresses, it does not seem to have restored peace to his soul. A fortnight after he writes; "Was ever man more tempted than the miserable Mather? Should I tell in how many forms the devil has assaulted me, and with what subtlety and energy his assaults have been carried on, it would strike my friends with horror. Sometimes temptations to vice, to blasphemy and atheism, and the abandonment of all religion as a mere delusion, and sometimes to self-destruction itself; these, even these, do follow thee, O miserable Mather, with astonishing fury. But I fall down into the dust on my study floor, with tears, before the Lord; and then they quickly vanish, and it is fair weather again. Lord, what wilt thou do with me?"

In one respect he was more fortunate than could have been expected; for, as he has intimated, the attachment was made a subject of common conver-

sation, and was carried about in a form not flattering or favorable to him. After complaining bitterly of the manner in which he is misrepresented, he says; "God strangely appears for me in this point also, by disposing the young gentlewoman, with her mother, to furnish me with their assertions that I have never done any unworthy thing. Yea, they have proceeded so far beyond all bounds in my vindication, as to say, that they verily look on Mr. M——r to be as great a saint as any upon earth. Nevertheless, the devil owes me a spite, and he inspires his people in this town to whisper impertinent stories."

The perplexity, into which he was thrown, had a strong effect upon his ill-regulated mind; and his friends, apprehensive of the consequences, urged him to marry again. Seeing how much his family of young children suffered for the want of a mother, "he looked to Heaven to heal the breach, that had been made in his household." Samuel Mather, who says very little of the first wife, is more diffuse on the subject of the second, who had the honor of being his mother. His father's petitions, he says, "were abundantly answered. God showed him a gentlewoman, a near neighbor, whose character I give, as I had it from those who intimately knew her. She was one of finished piety and probity, and of unspotted reputation; one of good sense, and blessed with a complete discretion in ordering

a household; one of singular good humor, and incomparable sweetness of temper; one with a very handsome and engaging countenance, and honorably descended and related. 'Twas Mrs. Elizabeth Hubbard; she had been a widow four years, when Dr. Mather married her, which was August 18th, 1703. He rejoiced in her, as having found great spoil."

From this time, not however on account of this connexion, his condition began to change. The decline of that respect and consideration, with which he had been regarded, began to make itself felt. He was at open enmity with the government, and was not sustained, as the antagonists of ruling powers are apt to be, by the sympathy and affection of the people. They, having learned to charge him with the guilt of misleading them on former occasions, were no longer disposed to follow his guidance, nor even to treat him with common respect and regard. This was sufficiently irritating to one like him, who had been accustomed to live on applause, and was almost famished without it.

When to this was added the evil of an unpromising household of children, some of whom, though qualified by nature to be his glory, were fated to be his sorrow and shame, it is easy to see how dreary and depressing his closing years must have been. Even his piety, which, though strangely

expressed, was no doubt sincere, depended so much on evidences and manifestations, that it was more likely to see, in these changes, signs of the displeasure, than of the trials and chastening, of the Most High.

CHAPTER V.

Governor Dudley.—Disappointment of Cotton Mather at not being chosen President of Harvard College.—His extraordinary Letter to Governor Dudley.—His Belief in the special Interpositions of Providence.—Elected a Fellow of the Royal Society.—Received the Degree of Doctor of Divinity.—His Domestic Afflictions.

In 1702, Joseph Dudley was appointed governor of Massachusetts. He was strongly attached to New England, though he was not disposed to favor popular claims. When Andros was governor, he held the offices of chief justice and president of the council, and was severely handled at the time of Andros's fall. He was then appointed chief justice of New York; but he could not rest, till he obtained some commission in Massachusetts, which was the object of his desire and ambition, and was pursued, as was generally thought, with too little regard to the means employed. He was long engaged in soliciting the appointment, and did not receive it till 1702, when he had the address to procure a letter from Cotton Mather in his favor, which, being exhibited in England, removed the

objections of the King, and was supposed to be the cause of his appointment to the chair.

He found, on his arrival, that he had a difficult part to act. On the one hand he was to secure the prerogative of the crown, and on the other he desired the favor of the people. This occasioned a conflict of purpose and action; but, finding it impossible to please both sides, he resolved to keep on good terms with the fountain of honor and power. In order to do this, he was obliged to assert his own prerogative in the first place; and whereas Sir William Phips had been under the influence of some of the leading clergy, and Lord Bellamont's popularity saved him from the necessity of taking such decided ground, Governor Dudley was compelled to enter upon a course of claims and conduct, which were new to the people.

The first step was to release himself from the clergy, whom he treated with respect, while he steadily refused to consult them. This was not pleasant to the Mathers, who conceived themselves entitled to consideration, the father from his public, the son from his personal services, and who were not prepared for the sudden change from unbounded respect and confidence to alienation and disregard.

The early years of his administration were full of trouble, arising partly from the unprosperous state of the country, and partly from his collision

with the representatives of the people, who steadily opposed him in all his public designs. A letter written by his son, Paul Dudley, the attorney-general, was transmitted from England, in which he remarked, "The government and college are disposed of here in chimney-corners and private meetings, as confidently as can be. This country will never be worth living in for lawyers and gentlemen, till the charter is taken way. My father and I sometimes talk of the Queen's establishing a court of chancery in this country." This letter, taken in connexion with the governor's course of conduct, made him so unpopular, that many attempts were made to remove him, but without success.

One circumstance, which was diligently used to his disadvantage, gave his enemies the opportunity to charge him with treasonable communication with the French, with whom the English were then at war. A person, who was sent to Nova Scotia to negotiate an exchange of prisoners, returned with a very small number, and was immediately charged with having spent his time in trading with the enemy, and supplying them with military stores, instead of attending to the business of his mission. Some merchants of note were also accused, and brought to trial with him, and all were found guilty.

At the same time a memorial to the Queen, signed by Nathaniel Higginson and several others,

some in Boston and others in London, charged Governor Dudley with participating in the guilt of these transactions. The Council and House of Representatives at once passed votes declaring their persuasion, that the charges were false; but, such was his unpopularity, that it was with the utmost difficulty he was able to maintain his ground.

In 1707, at the death of Samuel Willard, President of Harvard College, if learning alone had been a sufficient qualification, Cotton Mather would have been selected to fill the vacancy; and he was so confident of receiving the appointment, that he observed days of fasting, after his usual manner, to solicit the divine direction. But Governor Dudley prevailed on Judge Leverett, who was one of his Council, and in every respect fitted for the trust, to accept the office, which he filled with usefulness and honor for many years. This appointment was a signal to the Mathers, that their influence was at an end, and they made no secret of their displeasure. While President Leverett was in the chair, they seldom, if ever, attended the meetings of the Overseers. Cotton Mather was not honored with a place in the Corporation; while he was compelled to see Dr. Colman and Mr. Brattle, men with whom he was not on friendly terms, members of that board, and holding the concerns of the institution in their own control.

Though many, who admired the attainments of

Cotton Mather, were disappointed at his not receiving the charge of the College, the general sentiment approved the conduct of Governor Dudley in passing him by; not from any disposition to underrate him, but from a conviction, apparently well-founded, that in judgment, prudence, and practical ability, he was inferior to others, who were not to be compared with him for learning. In fact the public feeling, in the latter part of Dudley's administration, took a turn in his favor. His ability, patriotism, and engaging manners made friends of many, who had been strongly opposed to him in politics, and he was generally admitted to hold a high place among the useful and eminent men of the country.

A passage found in Cotton Mather's Diary, dated June 16th, 1702, shows what kind of language he thought himself authorized to hold to the governor, and how much he was exasperated to find his counsels disregarded.

"I received a visit from Governor Dudley. Among other things that I said to him I used these words; 'Sir, you arrive to the government of a people, that have their various and divided apprehensions about many things, and particularly about your own government over them. I am humbly of opinion, that it will be your wisdom to carry an indifferent hand to all parties, if I may use so coarse a word as parties, and to give occa-

sion to none to say, that any have monopolized you, or that you took your measures from them alone. I will explain myself with the freedom and the justice, though not perhaps with the prudence, which you would expect from me. I will do no otherwise than I would be done to. I should be content, I would approve and commend it, if any one should say to your Excellency, By no means let any people have cause to say, that you take all your measures from the two Mr. Mathers. By the same rule I may say without offence, By no means let any people say, that you go by no measures in your conduct but Mr. Byfield's and Mr. Leverett's. This I speak, not from any personal prejudice against the gentlemen; but from a due consideration of the disposition of the people, and as a service to your Excellency.' The wretch went unto those men, and told them that I had advised him to be no ways advised by them; and inflamed them into an implacable rage against me."

Whatever degree of prudence the governor expected from Cotton Mather's reputation for that virtue, it cannot be regarded as surprising, that he should have taken this choice speech as a warning against Leverett and Byfield, nor that he should have felt as if there was something too assuming in such dictation from such a quarter. He probably did not put himself often in the way of so free a counsellor; and the alienation, combined with

other causes, created so much discontent in Cotton Mather, that, in 1707, he addressed a letter to Governor Dudley, which seems intended for no other purpose, than to express his own displeasure.

He begins this long and singular production by telling the governor, that he feels it to be his duty to give him some words of faithful advice; and this is what he proposes to do. Having heard that the governor had done him injuries, his purpose is to return good for evil. He assures his Excellency, that a letter from himself, read to King William, had been the means of placing him in the chair of state; and, if he never received any thanks for it, he had at least received all that he expected.

He would have Governor Dudley call to mind what he had said to him in former days. The whole country knew his efforts to lead the chief magistrate to a right discharge of duty. But it was all in vain. Had it been otherwise, he never would have known the meaning of a "troubled sea." But now it is evident, that the Lord has a controversy with him; and the best office of love, that can be done, is to show him wherein his ways have displeased the Lord.

This office of love Cotton Mather performs in a very hearty manner, and without the least manifest reluctance. He tells his Excellency, that the

chief difficulty he has to contend with is covetousness, the thing which a ruler should hold in most aversion. When a man makes his government an engine to enrich himself, and does many base and dishonorable things for the sake of gain, it excludes him from the kingdom of Heaven, and sometimes from his worldly station. It was known, that he once said to Sir William Phips, that the office might be made worth twelve hundred a year; to which Phips replied, that it could not be done by an honest man; but now it appears how the thing is done.

He also tells the governor, that, to his own knowledge, he has been guilty of bribery and corruption. Besides, the infamous things done by his son reflect dishonor on him, because it is known, that they are intimately associated in all that they do. The Pagans themselves condemned such proceedings, but Christians in high office are seen practising what they condemned as the worst of crimes. This is pernicious to the Queen's government, but far more so to the man who is guilty, because there is one requisite of saving repentance, with which he can never bring himself to comply, and that is, restitution.

He then goes on to charge the government with having carried on an unlawful trade with the enemies of his country. The circumstances are known, but it is feared, that, when an investiga-

tion takes place, the disgrace will be greater than it is now. The attempt to cover the transaction by a forced vote of the Council will not shield him. He then charges the governor with having libelled the people of New England in his official despatches to England. He also recounts the military enterprises of the existing administration; Church, sent against Port Royal, but secretly forbidden to take it, and the forces retreating from it as if they were afraid of its being surrendered. These proceedings, to say nothing of the expense, bring a shame on the country, that will not soon be forgotten.

He tells the governor, that, in all civil affairs, he is irregular, impatient, and not the least reliance can be placed upon his word. Sometimes he asserts a thing with great vehemence, and soon after, if any indirect purpose is to be answered, he asserts the contrary with equal decision. The Council are not allowed to deliberate; they are hurried, forced, and driven; and when they are thus pushed into unjust measures, the governor says they are wholly owing to the Council. A day is sometimes appointed for the election of justices; it is often privately altered, and an earlier one appointed, when none are present but those whose company is desired.

These things being so, it must needs be, that the governor is under the divine displeasure. There is a judgment to come, when he will be

required to answer for the manner in which his duties were performed. Considering his age and health, his Excellency ought to lose no time in thinking seriously on this subject, and applying for the divine mercy.

Finally, Cotton Mather declares, that no usage shall ever induce him to lay aside the feelings of love and kindness, which he thinks it his duty to maintain with all mankind. He has often been silent, when he felt strongly tempted to speak; he has been neglected and treated with contempt and aversion; those who visited him have been insulted, though that act of attention was all their sin; even those who live in the same part of the town have been proscribed for that and no other transgression; but he cherishes no resentment; he forgets and forgives all injuries, and prays that the governor may have an old age full of good fruits and a blessing in both worlds.

Such was the tenor of this courteous communication, which had evidently been prepared for, by a long series of mortifications; not probably intended on the governor's part, but still felt and resented as if each one was aimed at the heart.

This letter was accompanied with another of the same date, also addressed to the governor, by Increase Mather, and written in the same tone with that of his son. The governor answered both at once, saying that he was not so destitute

of the Christian temper, as not to be willing to receive admonitions and reproofs addressed to him in a proper spirit, but such as theirs did not answer to that description. Their address, he says, would have been insolent, if addressed to the humblest man, and, when directed to the chief magistrate of the State, was quite insufferable. He thought, that, when admonitions were given, the facts charged should be matters of proof, not mere suspicion; that the reproof should be administered with meekness, not contempt; and given, moreover, when the adviser is in a good temper, and not influenced by prejudice, wrath, and ill-will.

As to their charges, they have been very credulous, if they believed them; but, if they were all true, their spirit and manner would be quite as unjustifiable. He does not answer their accusations, which would take more time than he has to spare; he exhorts them not to disturb the peace of the province by their seditious harangues, but to suffer the other clergymen, men in every respect as good as they, to have a share in the government of the College. This seems to have been the chief difficulty; for the governor says to them, that either that institution must be disposed of according to their opinion, and against that of all the rest of the clergy, or the chief magistrate must be torn in pieces

Cotton Mather does not say a word in relation to the College, but his father speaks of the College charter, which he says might have been confirmed by the royal government, if Governor Dudley had done his duty.

The breach between the governor and Cotton Mather was never healed; and the latter apprehended, that the man in office would make him feel the effects of his displeasure. In 1709, there are several allusions to the governor in his Diary. On one occasion, when speaking of a day of fasting and prayer, he says, that he supplicated, that he might be saved from the malice of the governor and council, who suspected him to have been the author of a work lately arrived from England, in which their criminal mismanagement was exposed to public censure. Again he says, "The other ministers of the town are this day feasting with our wicked governor. I have, by my provoking plainness and freedom, in telling this Ahab of his wickedness, procured myself to be left out of his invitations. I rejoiced in my liberty from the temptations, wherewith they were encumbered. I set apart the day for fasting with prayer, and the special intention of the day was to obtain deliverance and protection from my enemies. I mentioned their names unto the Lord, who has promised to be my shield. I sang agreeable psalms, and left my cause with the Lord."

Nothing could exceed his confidence in the immediate efficacy of such prayer for temporal blessings. In the same year, he remarks that he had taken a violent cold, from exposure in bad weather, and was threatened with a fever. Instead of resorting to the usual remedies, he says, "I set apart the day for fasting and prayer with abundant alms. I sang the beginning of the forty-first psalm, and my malady vanished beyond expectation." The consequences of neglecting to pray were equally direct. He records, that, about the same time, his son Nathaniel, an infant, was sick, and he neglected to pray for him as fervently as he ought. The consequence was, that the child died, and the father reproached himself, as if he was persuaded that its life might have been easily saved, if he had attended to his duty.

There was no case whatever, to which this kind of supplication did not apply. In the same year he takes notice of an incident, which he calls a very particular effect of prayer.

"Though I am furnished with a very great library," said he, "yet, seeing a library of a late minister in the town was to be sold, and a certain collection of books therein, which had in it, may be, above six hundred single sermons, I could not forbear wishing to be made able to compass such a treasure. I could not forbear mentioning my

wishes in my prayers, before the Lord, that, in case it might be of service to his interests, he would enable me, in his good Providence, to purchase the treasure now before me. But I left the matter before him with the profoundest resignation, willing to be without every thing, which he should not order for me. Behold! a gentleman, who a year ago treated me very ill, (but I cheerfully forgave him,) carried me home to dine with him, and, upon an accidental mention of the library aforesaid, compelled me to accept of him a sum of money, which enabled me to come at what I had been desirous of."

He could not have had means of his own to spare for such a purpose; for, at the same time, he records, that, owing to the largeness of his family, he was in such wants and straits, that he was, literally speaking, in rags, and his children were no better arrayed.

This special interposition, as he deemed it, sometimes gave him light upon the subject of political movements, which agitated the country. As New England was deeply interested in the national quarrels with France, and compelled more than once to fight the battles of Great Britain, the people here naturally watched the proceedings of the two nations with an anxious interest, which was increased by the difficulty and delay of sending intelligence across the sea.

He says, in 1703, "The 24th day, second month, was a fast, in which I enjoyed considerable assistance. In my sermon, I let fall these words. 'I have much reason to suspect that a war is breaking out in Europe. In the late peace of Ryswick, the wind came not about the right way. There must be another storm and war, before all clearness. If it should be so, there is reason to suspect that the French oppressor, who wants nothing but New England to render him the master of all America, and has been under provocation enough to fall foul upon us, may, before we do so much as hear of a war proclaimed, swallow us up.' Three days after this, arrived very surprising intelligence indeed, which represented unto us all Europe in a new flame, and the union between France and Spain. The nations are in a most prodigious convulsion. Great Britain, particularly, is in extreme hazard and ferment, and the plantations are in a very hazardous condition."

He never was able to contemplate foreign or domestic politics with any satisfaction, till the accession of Governor Shute. Whether his partiality for him was personal or political, does not appear, but his registry in 1717 affords a strong contrast to his memorials of the days of Governor Dudley. He writes, "Our excellent governor, who has delivered the country from a flood of corruptions, which was introduced by selling places,

is to be encouraged; and a course must be taken, that he may be vindicated from the aspersions of a cursed crew in this place, who traduce him as guilty of that iniquity."

But his notice of the College at the same time is written in a different tone. "*July* 3*d*. This day, being the Commencement as they call it, a time of much resort into Cambridge, and sorrily enough thrown away, I chose to remain at home, and I set apart a good part of it unto prayer, that the College, which is on many accounts in a very neglected and unhappy condition, and has been betrayed by vile practices, may be restored unto better circumstances, and be such a nursery of piety, industry, and all erudition, as that the churches may see therein the compassion of the Lord Jesus unto them." It will be seen hereafter, that the College never rose in his esteem. At the time when he wrote these words, it was supposed by all others to have an uncommon measure of peace and prosperity within its walls.

The year 1713 brought an unusual variety of incidents to him and to his family, some of them welcome, others severely trying. Among the latter class may be set down the circumstance, that a new church was formed, or, as he expresses it, *swarmed* from his own; a movement which became necessary from the crowded state of the house, but which appears to have been very unpleasant to

him. Possibly he was vexed, that any were willing to leave him; or it may have been, that some of those, who separated, were the most valuable members of his society. He makes constant reference to this matter in his Diary, till the arrangements are entirely completed, and praises himself repeatedly for the judicious, conciliating, and excellent course, which he was enabled to pursue

This praise, however, was not awarded him by all concerned. There is an interesting journal of Mr. Barnard of Marblehead, which it is understood will soon be published, in which he gives a full account of the proceedings of Cotton Mather and his father. Mr. Barnard says, that the new house was intended for himself; but that Cotton Mather addressed the members of the society privately, and used all kinds of machinations to induce them to pass over him, and to select another. In this attempt he succeeded; but, according to Mr. Barnard, many men of influence severely condemned his conduct on the occasion. Nor did it pass without its retribution; for, afterwards, the clergyman, for whom the Mathers had interested themselves, proved contumacious, and gave them cause to regret his election. Then they lamented their intrigue when too late, and wished that they could get rid of him, and have Mr. Barnard in his stead. It is not safe to rely wholly on the statements of the most respectable witnesses, in

cases where they are personally concerned. Cotton Mather does not speak of Mr. Barnard in his Diary, and probably did not think himself presuming, when he gave his sentiments freely to those, who were at the time a portion of his own people.

In the eighth month he records, that he received letters from the Secretary of the Royal Society, who told him that his *Curiosa Americana* had been read before that body; and, so well satisfied were they with it, that they presented to him, in acknowledgment, the thanks of the Society. They also signified their wish and intention to admit him a member of the Society; and he was assured, that at their next lawful meeting he should be regularly admitted. This, says the Diary, "is a marvellous favor of Heaven to me; a most surprising favor."

There were many in New England, who, according to his son, "were so foolish and impudent as to doubt, nay, to deny his right to that title." They gave as a reason, that his name was not included among the published members of the Royal Society. His son explains it by saying, that, though any of his Majesty's subjects, in any of his dominions, might be members of that Society, they could not have their names on the list, if they were absent. Foreigners were exempted from this necessity; but it was not accorded to English, or Americans, without their passing

through the ceremony of a formal admission. He also says, that, whenever his father received letters from members of that Society, they always gave him his title as one of their number. The subject seems to be decided by the Secretary's words; "As for your being chosen a member of the Royal Society, that has been done, both by the Council and body of that Society; only the ceremony of admission is wanting; which, you being beyond the sea, cannot be performed."

He also received the degree of Doctor of Divinity from the University of Glasgow, accompanied with letters, which expressed to him the high respect in which he was held in Great Britain. His son establishes his right to this honor, by quoting from the oration of the renowned Zanchy, who said, "Who can reject whom God hath promoted? Who can deny the title of doctor to him, whom God has endowed with such excellent gifts as are worthy of a doctor indeed?" The same, he says, "may be said concerning Mr. Mather. When he was worthy of the doctorate, why should he not have it?"

He does not seem to have been insensible to these distinctions. It is said, that some of his friends advised him to wear his signet ring, as a token and assertion of his being a doctor of divinity; not out of any vanity of ornament, but out of obedience to the fifth commandment. This

commandment was never before thought broad enough to cover such a case, but it was sufficient to weigh with him. "The Doctor therefore would wear this ring; and made this action, so seemingly inconsiderable, a great engine of religion." "The emblem on the Doctor's signet is a tree, with Psalm i. 3, written under it, and about it, *Glascua rigavit.* The cast of his eye upon this, constantly provoked him to pray, 'O God make me a very fruitful tree, and help me to bring forth seasonable fruit continually.'"

A notice taken in his Diary of a contemplated journey to Ipswich, while it shows, that in his day a ride of that distance was a serious affair, manifests the sorrow, with which the vanity of others sometimes filled him, and at the same time proves in a striking manner the absence of it from his own breast.

"I have some thoughts concerning taking a journey to Salem and Ipswich, within a week or two, having there a very great opportunity to glorify my Savior, and to edify his people. I therefore carried the whole affair before the Lord, that all the circumstances of it may be ordered in very faithfulness; and particularly that the fond expectations of the people, flocking in great multitudes to hear me, may not provoke the Lord any way to leave me to confusion, *as a chastisement for their vanity.* But as I observed a strange

coldness in my prayers about my journey to Ipswich, so there fell out something next week which prevented my going thither at all."

In the course of the next month, he accomplished this journey, of which he speaks as a citizen of Boston would now speak of a tour to the Rocky Mountains. He *travelled* unto Salem, and the day after unto Ipswich, preaching in both places, and after a few days returned, rejoicing that "the Lord had smiled on his journey, and filled it with comfort and service."

In this year, 1713, he was called to endure much domestic distress. His wife was taken sick with the illness of which she died. He mentions her in the Diary, praising her for her piety, her amiable disposition, and the prudence with which she conducted his affairs. The measles came into his family and seized her and her children. On the 8th day of the ninth month he writes; "When I saw my consort very easy, and the measles appearing with favorable symptoms upon her, I flattered myself, that my fear was all over But, this day, we are astonished at the surprising symptoms of death upon her, after an extreme want of rest by sleep for divers whole days and nights together. To part with so desirable, so agreeable a companion! a dam from such a nest of young ones too! Oh, the sad cup which my Father hath appointed me!" "God made her

willing to die. God extinguished in her the fear of death. God enabled her to commit herself to the hands of a great and good Savior; yea, and to cast her orphans there too. I prayed with her many times, and left nothing undone that I could find myself able to do for her consolation." "On Monday my dear, dear, dear friend expired. Whereupon with another prayer in that melancholy chamber, I endeavored the resignation to which I am called I cried to Heaven for the grace that might be suitable to this calamitous occasion, and carried my orphans to the Lord. Oh, the prayers for my poor children! oh! the counsels to them, now called for!"

Eleven days after the death of his wife, he writes; "Little Martha died at ten o'clock in the morning." "I am again called to the sacrifice of my dear, dear Jerusha. Just before she died, she asked me to pray with her; which I did, with a distressed, but resigning soul; and I gave her up unto the Lord. The minute that she died, she said she would go to Jesus Christ. She had lain speechless for many hours. But in her last moments, her speech returned a little unto her. Lord! I am oppressed! undertake for me!"

CHAPTER VI.

Philanthropic Undertakings. — He Attempts to Christianize the Negroes. — Manner in which he employed his Time. — Habits of Industry. — First Introduction of Inoculation into America. — It is boldly and firmly sustained by Cotton Mather against a violent Opposition. — Much Praise due for the Part he acted. — Early and successful Labors of Dr. Boylston in this Cause. — Warm Controversy on the Subject.

It is a little remarkable, that a man, so much engaged in his studies as Cotton Mather, should have been so constantly suggesting philanthropic undertakings; and while his infirmities are remembered, these bright points in his character ought in justice to be brought out in bold relief. One of the subjects, which troubled him most, was the prevailing intemperance of the day. He wrote and published much on the subject. Being himself habitually temperate, he recommended his own experience to others; and, though no general reform was produced by his exertions, he succeeded in awakening some to a sense of the danger to which the country, as well as individuals, was exposed by the alarming prevalence of the sin. He

records in his Diary; "About this time a nameless and unknown gentleman sent me his desire, with what was needful for defraying the expense, that a paragraph in my *Theopolis Americana*, relating to the abuse and excess of *rum*, should be printed by itself, and sent unto every part of the country."

One of the subjects mentioned in Cotton Mather's Diary is slavery, which, even as matter of history, is so completely forgotten in New England, that when he speaks of buying slaves, as he does more than once, he seems like an inhabitant of another country. He says, that, in the year 1706, he received a singular blessing. Some gentleman of his society, having heard accidentally that he was much in want of a good servant, had the generosity to purchase for him "a very likely slave," at an expense of forty or fifty pounds. He describes him as a negro of promising aspect and temper, and says, that such a present was "a mighty smile of Heaven upon his family." He gave him the name of Onesimus, and resolved to use his best endeavors to instruct him in useful knowledge, and all that related to the religious improvement of his soul.

One act is very honorable to his philanthropy and kindness of heart. Perceiving that the negroes, though kindly treated, had not those advantages of instruction, which were necessary to make

them familiar with the religion which he wished to have them embrace, he established a school, in which they were taught to read. And he himself bore the whole expense of it, paying the instructress for her services at the close of every week. There are many, who point out to others the way of duty and benevolent exertion; but this was better; it showed that he was willing to make sacrifices as well as to enjoin them on others; indeed, that he would sometimes impose on himself, what he would not ask others to do.

But common as this traffic then was, his attention was earnestly devoted to the subject of Christianizing this portion of our race; and the zeal, which he manifested, considering that it was not caught by sympathy, but originated in his own breast, was such as did honor to his feelings. In the beginning of June, 1706, he writes; "I did, with the help of Heaven, despatch a work, which my heart was greatly set upon, a work which may prove of everlasting benefit to many of the elect of God, a work which is calculated for the honor and interest of a glorious Christ, a work which will enrage the devil at such a rate, that I must expect he will fall upon me with a storm of more than ordinary temptations. I must immediately be buffeted in some singular manner by that revengeful adversary. I wrote as well-contrived an essay as I could, for the animating and facilitating

that work, the Christianizing of the negroes And my design is, not only to lodge one in every family in New England, that has a negro in it, but also to send numbers of them unto the Indies."

This looking for consequences to follow from every act of virtue attended him through life After every act of kindness, he waited for some sign of approbation from above, and some visitation of anger from below. Considering the variety of accidents in life, not many days could pass without something, which he could ascribe to one source or the other. And so on this occasion. A trouble, which had followed him for a long time, became, as it would seem, in consequence of this publication, severer and more fatal than ever. For, immediately after, he records; "Among the many trials and humiliations, which the Holy One has appointed for me, not the least has been the affliction of having some very wicked relations. Especially, I have two brothers-in-law, who can hardly be matched in New England for their wickedness. I have never done these creatures any harm in my life. I have essayed numberless ways to do them good; but Satan inspires them even to a degree of sensible possession. A Satanic rage against me possesses their hearts and tongues. The first of these prodigies, namely, T. O., married my lovely sister, Hannah, a most ingenious and sweet-natured and good-carriaged child, and

that would have been a wife to make any gentleman happy; but married unto a raving brute The fellow, whom they called her husband, perfectly murdered her by his base and abusive way of treating her; and he chose to employ in a special manner the ebullitions of his venom against me, to worry her out of her life, who loved me dearly. At last, on the first day of the tenth month, the pangs of death came upon her; her death was long and hard, and has awakened me more than ever to pray for an easy death. She kept, in her dying distresses, calling on me, her brother, her brother!"

If we may credit his own statement, these trials had no unfavorable effect upon his disposition. He was constant in his self-examination; but he does not seem to have been fully aware, that the feelings, which are uppermost in the repose of the study, may differ from those, which are called up in the excitement of the world. Nor does he seem to have known, that feelings are little to be trusted, never to be trusted without the evidence of deeds; and that we need that evidence, to convince ourselves, as well as others, that we possess the feelings, from which alone they can flow. There is no doubt that he believed himself what he professes to have been. That he was really as self-forgetful as he imagined, is not so sure In the same year he writes; "My love to my

neighbor improves to a very sweet serenity. I take an unspeakable pleasure in all manner of beneficence. If I can see an opportunity to do good, I want no arguments to move me to it. I do it naturally, delightfully, with rapture. There is this enjoyment added unto the rest; as I am nothing before God, so I am willing to be nothing among men. I have no fondness at all for applause and honor in the world. It is with a sort of horror, if I perceive myself applauded. I have a dread of being honored. I am got above anger at those, who think or speak meanly of me."

It may not be uninteresting to read an account of the manner, in which his days were generally spent. The reader will observe, that the expressions are his own, though it cannot easily be given in the form of quotation. He complained, that for a great part of his time he was dead. Too much of his precious time was consumed in sleep. Through his feebleness, or, as he said, his slothfulness, he sweated away the morning in rest, and did not rise till seven. As soon as he left his bed, he sang a hymn, to show forth the loving kindness of God in the morning, and then wrote down remarks on some subject, which had engaged his thoughts the night before; after which he proceeded to add to his *Biblia Americana*. Then he offered his morning prayers in his study, in which, besides his usual supplications, he fetched

new matters of petition from what he had just been writing.

It was not till after these private devotions, that he went down to his family. With them he read a portion of the Scriptures, with remarks suggested by the words, and then joined with them in prayer; after which he retired to his study where he employed himself without permitting any interruption through the remainder of the forenoon.

At dinner, he made it his regular business to converse on some subject, from which his family could derive instruction and improvement; as soon as it was over, he returned to his study and recommenced his labors with a prayer.

His afternoons were generally spent in his study, with the exception of one, or at most two, in the week, which were devoted to pastoral visits. As soon as the evening began to fall, he assembled his family, and read to them a psalm, with remarks upon it as he read. Then they sang the psalm, and he closed with his evening family prayer.

The evening was generally spent in his study, though he sometimes indulged himself in a visit to a neighbor. At ten o'clock he came to his light supper, and spent some time in conversation with his family. He then returned to his study, and after meditating on what he had done, and

what he had neglected to do in the past day, he humbled himself on his knees before the Lord. When he retired to rest, he carried some book with him and read till he fell asleep.

The proceedings, which took place when the attempt was first made to introduce the practice of inoculating with the small-pox, afford a curious example of the resolute ignorance, with which improvement is always resisted; and they also exhibit the subject of this memoir in a very advantageous point of light; showing, that, in all cases not within the province of superstition, he had sagacity to discern the truth, and that he had moral courage to assert his convictions, at a time when he felt that he was unpopular, and that his support of the new doctrine would add to the general aversion.

It has been said, and possibly it is true, that inoculation prevailed in Wales and in the Highlands long before it was introduced into medical practice. But, however this may have been, it never was extensively known, and was at last introduced to the notice of the English by the letters of two Italian physicians, Pilarini and Simoni, who became acquainted with it in Turkey. Simoni, or Simonius, as he is learnedly called, was a Fellow of the Royal Society. In 1713, he wrote from Constantinople, that this practice had been brought into that city from the Georgians

and Circassians, about forty years before. At first, the people were cautious and afraid; but their fears were removed by the uniform success of the experiment, and it came into general favor.

This account was fully confirmed by Pilarini, Venetian consul at Smyrna, who did not seem to have known what was written by the former. He says, that it was in use among the poorer sort of the Greeks long before it was adopted by physicians. A noble Greek, who was anxious for his children, consulted him respecting them. While they were conversing on the subject, a Greek woman, who was an *inoculatrix* by profession, came in, and such were her statements and proofs, that they determined to submit the children to the operation. They did it accordingly, and they all recovered. The news of this success spread abroad at once, and inoculation was soon established in the general favor.

It appeared from the testimony of the Negroes, that a similar practice had long been known in Africa, where the small-pox was common and fatal. Such was the weight of testimony in its favor, that, in 1717, the celebrated Lady Mary Wortley Montague, wife of the English ambassador in Constantinople, had a child inoculated there according to the custom of the country. She afterwards had another child inoculated in England, and her example produced an effect upon the

nigher orders, who followed the dictates of fashion, when they would have laughed at science and skill.

As soon as Cotton Mather saw the letters above mentioned, he was struck with the advantages of the practice, and his zeal was quickened by the alarm, which the coming of the small-pox had spread throughout the town. In May, 1721, he records in his Diary; "The grievous calamity of the small-pox has entered the town. The practice of conveying and suffering the small-pox by inoculation has never yet been used in America, nor indeed in any nation; but how many lives might be saved by it, if it were practised! I will procure a consult of physicians, and lay the matter before them."

There are several memoranda about the same time, which show how much he was troubled. "I have two children, that are taken with this distemper, and I am at a loss about their flying and keeping out of town. My African servant stands candidate for baptism, and is afraid how the small-pox, if it spread, may handle him." He endeavored, as he proposed, to submit the matter to the physicians; but he was received by them with less cordiality than might have been expected. Perhaps they considered him an intruder upon the ground of their profession.

There is something curious enough in the sort

of arguments employed by the two parties, which immediately prepared for war. The clergy, who were generally in favor of inoculation, supported it by arguments drawn from medical science; while the physicians, who were as much united against it, opposed it with arguments which were chiefly theological, alleging that it was presumptuous in man to inflict disease on man, that being the prerogative of the Most High.

Not one of the faculty would listen to Cotton Mather, except Dr. Zabdiel Boylston, one of those strong-hearted men, who deserve to be most honorably remembered, for the services to their fellow-men rendered against their will. Cotton Mather first applied to Dr. Douglas, a physician of Scotch descent, and educated abroad, who treated the suggestion with contempt, and afterwards opposed it by all the means in his power. But, when he applied to Dr. Boylston, a man of higher order, he was at once struck with the intelligence, and welcomed it as a signal blessing to the world. In 1721, he inoculated two hundred and seventy-one patients, of whom very few died; and being thoroughly convinced of its advantages, he continued the practice through such a storm of abuse as reformers are apt to encounter.

Through the whole, he was manfully sustained by the clergy. The Boston Association used all possible exertions to enlighten the minds of the

people; but the people thought them wandering beyond the sphere of their professional duty, and were less likely to know the truth on the subject than the physicians. They were hardly listened to with patience on the Sabbath, and for a time, it seemed as if the existing religious institutions would be overthrown.

Cotton Mather records his indignation and sorrow in sufficiently expressive words. "The cursed clamor of a people," said he, "strangely and fixedly possessed of the devil, will probably prevent my saving the lives of my two children." He is full of distress about Sammy. The poor child begged that he might receive the disorder by inoculation, instead of being left to the hazards of the common way, and his father desired to gratify so reasonable a request; but, on the other hand, he saw the people so possessed with fury, that he apprehended serious consequences, if he took the course which he thought the best. It must be recorded to his honor, that he acted according to his conscience, and determined to brave the consequences, whatever they might be.

Dr. Boylston was soon attacked in such a manner, as compelled him to appear in his own defence; which he did in a spirited manner, and such as implied that he wrote, less to remove aspersions from himself, than from the new discovery, which was destined to take away the

terrors of one of the worst diseases, that afflicted the world. His "Account of what is said of inoculating or transplanting the Small Pox," was published in 1721. After describing the accounts of the Eastern physicians, which he was obliged to do at second hand, since the only person who had the book refused to lend it, he says, that it would be easy for him, if it were necessary, to answer the attacks which had been made upon him; but he thinks, that a considerate man ought rather to decline foolish contentions. He shall therefore take not the least notice of them, hoping that his character and conduct will vindicate themselves with all reflecting men.

It is not often, that one so situated has the good sense to keep steadily to his purpose, without resenting insults and injuries, particularly when they are sustained and echoed by the public voice. In this pamphlet he says, that, considering the general excitement, he is afraid to say on what numbers he has performed the operation; but he assures his readers, that, though he considered himself yet a learner, his success had been com plete.

One of the most dispassionate reasoners on the other side, in a "Letter addressed to a Gentleman in the Country," attempted to show, that the whole question turned on two points. "First; When God sends judgments, such as wasting dis-

tempers on men, what are the means of preservation, which men may lawfully employ? The second; Is inoculation a lawful means, and capable of affording relief?" In respect to the first, he maintains that God, for wise and unknown reasons, sends those judgments, and that men must bear them with patient submission, or resort to the only appointed means of relief, which are humiliation and prayer. We are nowhere permitted to use human means to anticipate and prevent them; and, if we make the attempt, it will only make the visitation severer when it comes.

If the originator of this choice argument was a physician, his principle, carried out, would have interfered to some extent with his practice; since, according to him, we must wait for the disease to come, in other words, to see whether the patient will die, before any means are used to restore him. But, having some consciousness of the difficulty, to which his argument would reduce him, the writer was constrained to allow, that, in ordinary cases, diseases might be resisted; but, in the case of epidemics, to maintain that they might be prevented was blasphemy, and to make the attempt was sin. With the same force the writer argues, that the success of inoculation is far from being evidence in its favor; since unjustifiable attempts often succeed and prosper in this wicked world.

In treating of the second point, the writer takes

his stand upon the strong ground of the sixth commandment. That commandment forbids our doing any thing, which has a tendency to endanger the lives of our neighbors. He says, there is no doubt that inoculation has this tendency, both to destroy the inoculated person, and those around him. This seems a little like begging the question; but the writer takes this matter to be too clear for discussion, and declares, that, unless men are eaten up with prejudice, they must be awake to its iniquities and dangers. On the whole, he declares, that it so openly opposes the principles of the Gospel, and is so manifest a resistance to divine Providence, that every conscientious person must give it up as scandalous to religion and dangerous to the world.

One of the best publications of the time was written by Dr. Colman, minister of the Brattle-Street Church. He recommends it, without arguments drawn from theology or medicine, simply on the ground of its success; which was evidently the thing most important to ascertain; and, if that was once made certain, the controversy was at an end. He brings forward his own experience and observation, to show that this disorder, once so dreadful, has been tamed down, by this practice, to a harmless indisposition; and his desire is, that no prejudice may prevent men from enjoying its benefits and blessings.

It is quite refreshing to read the remarks made by a man of sense at such times, who, instead of arguing for his own side, takes a larger view of the subject, and pleads for the interests of his race. In the close of his pamphlet Dr. Colman says, that he does not consider himself as having overstepped the line of his profession; for to save life and give comfort becomes him and every one else. He says, that, if he has betrayed any ignorance of medical science, it is of no importance; he shall at least be conscious, that he has written for the good of his people.

Next came "Several Arguments, proving that Inoculating the Small-pox is not contained in the Law of Physic, either Natural or Divine, and therefore Unlawful." It is a striking contrast to Dr. Colman's plain and manly statement. The writer dedicates it to the Selectmen of Boston. After acknowledging himself unequal to his undertaking, he remarks to those men of authority; "Say not who hath written, but consider what is written, and I pray God to give you understanding." The syllogisms of this writer are irresistible. He says, "If inoculation is not contained in the rules of natural physic, it is unlawful; the rules of natural physic are sympathy and antipathy, now inoculation is neither a sympathy nor antipathy; therefore it is not lawful." Probably there never was a process of argument conducted with greater ease and success.

Next he considers it with respect to divinity, saying, that if there is no rule in the word of God to found inoculation upon; if it perverts the rights of the fatherless and the widow; if it is doing violence to nature, it is certainly unholy. Now inoculation, says Mr. John Williams, is clearly liable to all these objections, and therefore is unholy.

In an equally summary manner, he disposes of the clergy, thinking that a minister cannot understand any thing beyond the limits of his profession; a doctrine, which is not without acceptance in modern times, though it does not appear, by what peculiar disability a clergyman should be incapable of that, which is easy to all the rest of the world. He makes one suggestion, that must have been truly alarming. He advises people to inquire, whether, when they think they are transferring only the small-pox, they may not at the same time transfer to a healthy subject all the ailments of the individual from whom the matter is taken, such as the gout, the rheumatism, or the stone. This writer, though sufficiently disposed to be severe upon the clergy, is mild and moderate compared to another, who wrote concerning "Inoculation as practised in Boston."

The author disclaims any purpose of bringing contempt upon the clergy; but he thinks, that the six "inoculating ministers," as he calls them,

ought to be exposed to public displeasure. He states, that the practice was introduced by Cotton Mather, who, being a man of credulity and whim, and having accidentally seen the Transactions of the Royal Society, tried to induce the physicians to make the experiment, but without success, till he found one, more bold than wise, who did as he was desired, but so rashly and unfortunately, that he was publicly exposed. Upon this he applied to his ministers to save his reputation; and thereupon they, with four more, testified to his reputation and success. Having once taken their ground, these clergymen chose rather to hazard the lives of all the community, than to retract what they had once asserted. Such is the manner in which, when controversy rages, characters are trifled with and facts distorted.

This pamphlet, which appeared without a name, and is particularly severe upon Cotton Mather, was answered in a "Friendly Debate" by Academicus, who appears to take it for granted, that Douglas was the author, from his making one of the parties to the debate a Scotchman, and alluding to Douglas in terms that could not be mistaken. The object of the "Friendly Debate" was to defend the clergy, and particularly the Mathers, from Douglas's charges; and the whole is written with a coarse freedom, which does not give a very pleasant impression.

It seems that Douglas was the person, who had in his possession the only copy of the Philosophical Transactions. So great a regard did he profess for the health of the community, that he would not lend the book even to the governor, who applied for permission to read it. He appears to have been a man of some ability, but of a temper so assuming and disputatious, that he was soon engaged in a general warfare. After doing all in his power, which was considerable, to resist the improvement, and to injure those who abetted it, he was obliged at last to subscribe to the opinions of "the bold and ignorant quack," as he courteously termed Dr. Boylston.

The result of the investigation held by the town authorities, assisted in their deliberation by the physicians, was the publication of certain resolutions, which were produced with great solemnity on the 21st of July, 1721. They say, that it appears by numerous instances, that inoculation has proved the death of many persons, soon after the operation, and has brought distempers on many others, which were fatal to them at last; also, that "the natural tendency of infusing such malignant filth into the mass of blood is to corrupt and putrefy it," and, if there is not a sufficient discharge of that malignity, it lays the foundation of many dangerous diseases; also, that the operation tends to spread and continue the disease in a place longer

than it might otherwise be. The conclusion of the whole matter was, that, "to continue the operation was likely to prove of the most dangerous consequence."

At the same time this venerable body came out with a statement concerning the small-pox, as it had prevailed up to that time from May to July, in which they would persuade the public, that notwithstanding the terror and mortality, which it had occasioned, it was in fact a light visitation. But even the authority of the fathers of the town gave way before the force of truth. Their counsels could not induce people to die without an effort to preserve themselves, when a chance of escape was opened. But, while many of those who were in danger resorted to the proposed relief, the general voice cried out against it. It was the prevailing wish, that a law should be passed for the special benefit of Dr. Boylston, providing, that every physician, on whose hands an inoculated patient might die, should be condemned and executed for murder.

While this tempest was raging, Cotton Mather persevered in his spirited and manly course, without yielding in the least to the abuse and menaces that were showered upon him. One is tempted to wonder, that he was not overcome with that assertion of his opponents, which ascribed inoculation to the powers of darkness, a point on which

his fears were so easily excited. But his good sense seemed to have been uppermost from the beginning, and, being firmly persuaded of the correctness of his course, he never for a moment faltered.

One example is enough to show how far the age of his adversaries was carried. His nephew, Mr. Walter, the clergyman of Roxbury, was inoculated in his house. The operation was privately performed, but the circumstance was known to a few, and information was soon given to those, who were active against inoculation. The same night, at day-break, a hand-grenade was thrown into the window of the chamber where Dr. Mather generally slept, which was then occupied by Mr. Walter. Fortunately, as it passed through the window, the fusee was beaten off, and the meditated destruction prevented. A paper was found attached to it, which contained coarse abuse of Cotton Mather, and a threatening to inoculate him in such a manner, that he would not soon recover. The author of this attempt was never detected.

So great was the popular excitement, that the General Court were required by the public opinion to take up the subject, and devise some way to protect the community from those innovators, who so wantonly trifle with human lives. A bill was prepared, making it a crime to inoculate for

the small-pox within the bounds of Massachusetts, and was carried through the House without much opposition. The Council, however, were not so directly influenced by popular feeling, and they certainly took the most effectual way to put the matter at rest. Instead of contending with the common prejudice, they passed silently over it, and the result was, that nothing more was ever heard of the bill. It was fortunate, that the statute-book was not defiled with this provision, which could only have served to show how communities often stand in their own light, and resist the means which Providence has appointed for their good.

If any one considers the extreme difficulty of forming a judgment in opposition to universal prejudice, and the courage it requires to avow it, when the avowal exposes one to injury and danger, he will not withhold from Cotton Mather the praise due to his sagacity, good sense, and fortitude, on this occasion. It was the more difficult to maintain his ground, because the matter seemed to belong to the jurisdiction of another profession, the members of which, with one exception, were united against him.

It must not be said, that he had great authority abroad to which he could appeal; for the fact was, that Lady Mary Wortley Montague did not inoculate her child in England, till the same month in which Cotton Mather did the same in Boston

This is a case in which his merit was great and unquestionable. Dr. Boylston also deserves to be honored for his moral courage. In fact he was honored abroad, though reviled in his own country. When he visited England, where his character and services were well known, he received great attention. Among other proofs of consideration he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, and was thus compensated by foreign liberality for the abuse, which he received from his brethren at home. The best reward, which they received, was the sight of their own success. Prejudice gradually subsided, and men honored those, who had resisted the general delusion.

It appears from the best accounts, that the number of those, who had the small-pox in 1721, was five thousand five hundred and eighty-nine. Of these, two hundred and forty-seven were inoculated. The deaths among the inoculated were in the proportion of one to forty-two, while among those, who received the disease by contagion, the deaths were one to seven. Such facts could not be resisted for ever, and in some later visitations of the disease, the town became, as it was said, "inoculation-mad." The admission of fresh air to the patients was another innovation of that time, which saved many from the grave.

CHAPTER VII.

Case of Self-delusion. — Harvard College. — Curious Record from the Diary of Cotton Mather describing the State of his own Mind. — His last Sickness and Death. — Remarks on his Character and Writings.

One of the most remarkable instances of self-delusion recorded in personal history, is found in Cotton Mather's description of his feelings, when the office of President of Harvard College became vacant by the death of President Leverett, who had filled the office with usefulness and honor for many years. He writes in his Diary, May 7th, 1724; "The sudden death of the unhappy man, who sustained the office of President of the College, will open a door for my being of singular service to the best of interests. Indeed, his being within a year of the same age with myself loudly calls upon me to live in daily expectation of my own call from hence. I do not know that the care of the College will now be cast upon me, though I am told it is what is most generally wished for. If it should, I shall be in abundance of distress about it; but if it should not, I may do many things for the good of the College more quietly and more hopefully than formerly."

Notwithstanding this apprehension of distress, his thoughts, it seems, were often turned toward this subject. "Why may I not write unto the tutors of the College, and solicit for such things as these; viz. that, under a deep sense of their great opportunities to do inexpressible good unto the College, and more than all, to the country, and what both God and man expect from them, they would come unto a combination," &c. After this he seems to grow less confident, as to the prospect of his election as successor to Judge Leverett; for, on the 1st of July, he writes; "This day being our insipid, ill-contrived anniversary, which we call the Commencement, I chose to spend it at home, in supplications, partly on the behalf of the College, that it may not be foolishly thrown away, but that God may bestow such a president upon it, as may prove a rich blessing unto it and unto all our churches."

He ascribed his loss of this appointment, on the former vacancy, to the enmity of Governor Dudley; and now he seems to believe, that his enemies are at work to excite prejudices against him. The true reason he never suspected; which was, that the public had no confidence in his judgment, while they admired his literary ability; and they determined wisely, that such a defect in his personal character entirely disqualified him for the station.

In order to keep his name before the public, in connexion with the office to which he believed himself entitled, he addressed the convention upon the subject of the College, and its bearing on the interests of religion, endeavoring to impress upon them, as he says, that "a well-principled governor of that society would be of mighty consequence to all." But his exhortations did not produce the effect desired. With the exception of a few of his admirers, the people generally felt the necessity of looking elsewhere for a president, and Dr. Sewall was accordingly chosen. The effect is thus recorded in the Diary.

"I am informed that yesterday, the six men, who call themselves the Corporation of the College met, and, contrary to the epidemical expectation of the country, chose a modest young man, Sewall, of whose piety (and little else) every one gives a laudable character."

"I always foretold these two things of the Corporation; first, that, if it were possible for them to steer clear of me, they will do so. Secondly, that, if it were possible for them to act foolishly, they wil do so. The perpetual envy, with which my essays to serve the kingdom of God are treated among them, and the dread that Satan has of my beating up his quarters at the College, led me into the former sentiment; the marvellous indiscretion, with which the affairs of the College are managed, led me into the latter."

But while he betrays this vexation at the loss of an appointment, which he considered his own by right, and withheld from him only from the impulse of personal dislike, he endeavors to persuade himself, that he had no desire of the station, except for the advantage which it would give him for doing extensive good. And before he is censured as hypocritical, it must be remembered, that very possibly he may have dreaded the labor of the office, while he wished for the honor of the election; and, in the midst of his disappointment at losing the one, he may, at the age of sixty-two, have felt relieved at escaping the burden of the other. He writes; "It proves accordingly now, through the senseless management of these men themselves, little short of a dissolution of the College; yet I have personally unspeakable cause to admire the compassion of Heaven to me, on this occasion. Though I have been a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, yet none of the least exercises that I have had withal was the dread of what the generality of sober men expected I desired, the care of the College to be committed unto me. I had a dismal apprehension of the distresses, which a call at Cambridge would bring upon me."

He had at this time domestic distresses, which were enough to weigh him down; and they probably were the chief cause of that severity of

feeling, which grew upon him in later years. His third wife, to whom he often alludes in his Diary, generally writing those passages in Latin, was a woman either diseased in mind, or most unfortunate in her temper. From the terms he employs in describing her conduct, it cannot be easily determined whether he considered her insane or responsible for her actions. Sometimes she was very affectionate and devoted to him; then, without any visible cause, she would break forth into explosions of passion, which destroyed all the peace of his life. Without entering much into this subject, one passage from his Diary will be sufficient to show what kind of trouble it brought upon him. In 1724, he writes; "My dear, dear Nancy, a child of so many afflictions all her days! The unreasonable and implacable aversion of her mother-in-law, augmented no doubt by the wicked kinswoman of my wife, who sojourns with me, and otherwise adds to her uneasiness, and compels me to seek some other place where I may board her. I must contrive all the ways imaginable to comfort the child, and to make her sorrows profitable to her."

But the most oppressive of all his domestic sorrows was the conduct of his son Increase, a young man of uncommon ability, but unfortunately led away by bad associates, so far as to be a burden to his friends. In 1721, he writes in his Diary, "My

miserable son! I must cast him and chase him out of my sight, forbid him to see me, until there appear some marks of repentance upon him" Again; "Now, now, I have a dreadful opportu nity to try how far I may find a glorious Christ, a comforter that shall relieve my soul. What shall I find in store to comfort me under the horrible distresses, which the conduct of my wicked son Increase has brought upon me?" Again; "I must write a tremendous letter to my wicked son; and, after I have set his conduct in order before his eyes, I will tell him that I will never own him, or do for him, or look on him, till the characters of repentance are very conspicuous in him. God prosper it! Though I am but a dog, yet cast out the devil that has possession of that child!"

This young man was lost from on board a vessel at sea. He seems to have been regarded with anxious affection by his father, and there is reason to believe, that his early promise was such as to justify ambitious hopes. But the notices of his conduct and character in the Diary grow more and more discouraging, till the last trace of him that we find recorded, is in the affecting words, which have no other explanation than that which they carry with them. "My son Increase! my son! my son!"

The Diary of Cotton Mather for the year 1724, when he was sixty-two years of age, gives the im-

pression that his mind was diseased almost to the verge of insanity. Whether it was that his disappointed ambition had made him look on every thing in its most unfavorable light, or whether he had really met with more ingratitude than usual, cannot now be ascertained; but it seems certain, that he was in that state of mind in which he could not see things as they are; a state of mind, which, if permanent, becomes insanity.

He entitles this record, "Dark dispensations, but light arising in darkness." The dispensations, as he describes them, are dark enough; what light there was among them, as they presented themselves to his mind, it is not easy to discover. He gives fourteen instances to show how his attempts to do good in the world had been requited; apparently without the remotest suspicion, that some part of the fault may have been his own.

In the first place, he mentions his exertions in behalf of seamen; he really desired to do good to that class of men, in the same way as philanthropists have labored in modern times to serve them. But he had no aptness in recommending himself to them. Traditional respect for his office was not enough to secure a hearing from them; and he found, that he himself could not accomplish the good, which it was evident might easily be done. He says, that the recompense of his efforts has

been, that "there is not a man in the world, so reviled, so slandered, so cursed among sailors."

A second of these dispensations has followed his efforts in behalf of the negroes. At a time when they were hardly thought of as subjects of sympathy and compassion, and when the idea of making them Christians would have been deemed a vision, he appeared as their advocate, pleading for their instruction, comfort, and salvation. And yet, he says, many, on purpose to affront him, affix his name, Cotton Mather, to the young negroes, so that if any mischief is done by them, the credit of it comes upon him.

The third instance of this retribution appears in the result of his services to the female sex. No man had done so much to elevate them in the respect of the community, or to hold up the lives of excellent and distinguished women, as an example to others. "Yet," says he, "where is the man, whom the female sex have spit more of their venom at? I have cause to question whether there are twice ten in the town, who have not, at some time or other, spoken basely of me."

In the fourth place, he has labored to be a blessing to all connected with him. He has even kept a catalogue of his relations, and never suffered a week to pass without some act of kindness to each one. Yet, so far from enjoying the comfort in their society, to which he was well entitled, there was

not a man on earth, who had been tormented with "such monstrous relatives"; with the exception, perhaps of Job, who said, "I am a brother to dragons."

In the fifth place, the conduct of the Scotch toward him has been singularly ungrateful. He has labored unceasingly to vindicate the reputation and honor of the Scotch nation; yet no Englishman was ever so much reviled and libelled by Scotchmen as he. In this, probably, he refers to the treatment, which he had received from Douglas, who had just before poured out upon him the effervescence of a temper, never very sweet, and at the time particularly excited by the subject of inoculation.

The sixth example is found in the result of his efforts to do good to the country. He has labored incessantly to secure its best interests, both by public and private exertions, and has filled it with publications tending to promote its happiness and virtue; and yet, he says, there is no man, in any part of the country, who is so loaded with disrespect, calumny, and all manner of expressions of aversion.

The seventh is found in his efforts to uphold and strengthen the government, and to maintain it, when it was shaken, in the reverence and affection of the people. And yet nothing could excel the discountenance, which he had always received

from the government. No man, of whatever station, had ever received from a government so many injuries, indecencies, and indignities as he.

The eighth, and probably the most bitter of these dispensations, was that connected with the College, an institution which, he says, he has done much to serve and adorn, so that it might be known as the intellectual birth-place of "such as are somewhat known in the world, and have read and wrote as much as many have done in other places." And yet the College has always treated him with every possible mark of disesteem. If he were the greatest blemish that ever came upon it, or the greatest blockhead that ever came out from it, its managers could not treat him with more contempt than they do.

In the ninth place, he speaks of his general efforts to raise the standard of conversation. He has never gone into company for nearly fifty years without direct contrivance to say something, which should make those who heard it either wiser or better. And nevertheless, his company is as little sought for, and there are as few resort to him, as to any minister in all his acquaintance.

The tenth example is that of good offices, which he has invariably made it a point to do whenever and wherever an opportunity could be found. Such opportunities he has ever welcomed with alacrity, when they offered themselves, and

nas sought for when he found them not. He has even offered pecuniary rewards to those, who would give him information where his services could be applied. And yet he cannot see a man living, for whom others are so unwilling to do good offices, as for him. He cannot say, that he is entirely destitute of friends, but he has *how few!* He has often said to himself, "What would I give, if I could find any one, who is willing to do for me, what I am willing to do for all the world!"

In the eleventh place, he has served the cause of literature and religion, by constant exertions in writing books of piety, and such as might advance the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom. Their number exceeds three hundred. And yet, he has had more books written against him, more pamphlets to traduce, reproach, and belie him, than any man that he knows in all the world.

The twelfth of these dispensations relates to the variety of services, which he had been enabled to perform. For lustres of years, not a single day has passed without constant effort on his part, to be serviceable to his friends, his country, and to men. And yet, he adds, "My sufferings! Everybody points at me and speaks of me, as by far the most afflicted minister in all New England." And many look upon him as the greatest sinner, because he is the greatest sufferer, and are pretty

arbitrary in conjecturing what sins he is suffering for.

From these dispensations, it would seem that he was suffering not so much from the infliction of Heaven, nor from the coldness and contempt of men; but rather from a depression, which had been gathering upon him for many years. Some of these dispensations, arising from his domestic trials, are not so proper for the public eye; but the truth is, that he had anxieties and trials, which were enough to irritate the best temper in the world.

When it is remembered, that, in addition to this, he saw various prizes, which he considered his own, passing away to other hands, and found that he could never inherit the political influence, the literary honors, nor even the general confidence, which his father enjoyed, it is not surprising, that he should have felt as if his services were underestimated, and rewards withheld from him for personal reasons, which would have been readily given to any other man.

There is in his Diary the air and manner of one, who is conscious of having done much that is wrong; but nothing can be inferred from this to his disadvantage. Boswell, finding such intimations in Johnson's Diary, supposed, from the depth of his self-abasement, that he must have been guilty of some great crimes. But in his case, and

probably in that of Cotton Mather, such language was only an exaggerated expression of the remorse, which they felt for that waste of life, and that indifference to the purposes of existence, of which so many are guilty, but for which few men have a conscience faithful enough to upbraid them.

Nothing is known of the closing years of Cotton Mather, till he was seized in December, 1727, with the disease of which he died. His son in accordance with the principle on which his "Life" is written, to withhold all such information as might interest the reader, does not say what the disorder was. But, whatever it may have been, Dr. Mather had a strong conviction, that he should not recover. In writing a note to his physician, he made use of these words; "My last enemy is come; I would say, my best friend."

He died on the 13th of February, 1728, when he had just completed his sixty-fifth year. In the interval, while he was gradually drawing near to the grave, he exerted himself to make useful and lasting impressions on those around him. One of his church asked him if he was desirous to die He replied, "I dare not say that I am, nor yet that I am not; I would be entirely resigned unto God." When the physicians believed it their duty to tell him, that he could not recover, he lifted up his hands, and said, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven." A few hours before

his death, he said, "Now I have nothing more to do here; my will is entirely swallowed up in the will of God." When it came to the last, he said, "Is this dying? Is this all? Is this all that I fear ed, when I prayed against a hard death? O! I can bear this! I can bear it! I can bear it!" When his wife wiped his disordered eye, he said, "I am going where all tears will be wiped from my eyes."

Indeed, the whole of his closing scene was calm and collected. "He died as every man should die." His self-delusion, and all the peculiar infirmities of his character, seemed to leave him as he drew near the grave. To his nephew, after urging him to be earnest, zealous, and unwearied in doing good, he said, "My dear son, I do, with all possible affection, recommend you to the blessing of our Lord Jesus Christ. Take my hands and my heart full of blessings." He had passages read to him, from his book called *Restitutus*, saying that they exactly expressed his feelings. One of them was this. "It shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light. O, the light, which a glorious Christ, present with us, will give us in the evening, when we apprehend ourselves in all the darkness which we should else have to terrify us, when the curtains of the death-bed are drawn about us. The light of a soul passing into the inheritance of the saints in light! The light

of an open and abundant entrance into the paradise of God!"

He was followed to the grave by an immense procession, including all the high officers of the province. It was the general sentiment, that a great man had fallen. Though some had been at enmity with him, and many had disliked him, over his grave they seemed with one consent to regard him as a man of great powers and sincere piety; who, though sometimes misled by prejudice and passion, had endeavored to do good.

Several of the funeral sermons preached on that occasion were published; and, as some of them were not formal exercises, but unsolicited expressions of the feelings of the writers, they are not probably exaggerated in their praise. Dr. Colman particularly, a man of deliberation, in the Thursday Lecture after his death, described him as "the first minister in the town; the first in age, in gifts, in grace; the first in all the provinces of New England for universal literature and extensive services." Mr. Prince, of the Old South Church, gave the same testimony to the public loss, beginning his allusion to the departed, by saying, "The infirmities of the fathers should be reverently covered."

The general impression of his character was faithfully expressed in the language of his colleague, Mr. Gee; "The capacity of his mind, the

readiness of his wit, the vastness of his reading, the strength of his memory, the variety and treasures of his learning, in printed works, and in manuscript, which contained a much greater share, the splendor of virtue, which, through the abundant grace of God, shone out in the tenor of a most entertaining and profitable conversation; his uncommon activity, his unwearied application, his extensive zeal, and numberless projects of doing good; these things, as they were united in him, proclaimed him to be a truly extraordinary person." It is true, that funeral eulogies are not the best sources in general, from which to derive information with respect to character; but, in this case, there is no reason to distrust them; and, considering the relation in which the subject of this memoir stood to many of his contemporaries, he was more likely to have full justice done to him after his death, than while living.

Cotton Mather was not a man of original genius, though his mind was active and strong. He was inclined to read rather than to think; and it was by familiarity with the works of others, and the trains of thought which they awakened, that he was able to send out so many works of his own. Dr. Chauncy testifies of him, that he was the greatest redeemer of time he ever knew; that there were hardly any books in existence, with which Cotton Mather was not acquainted. As this was

his passion, to devour all the literature of ancient and present times, it led him into habits of thought and writing, in which it is not easy to judge what his native talent, if differently cultivated, might have been.

The writings of Cotton Mather afford striking remarks, and passages of occasional eloquence; but they are not sustained. Such was the irregular habit of association, which prevailed in his mind, that some illustrations, from the vasty heaps of his learning, were perpetually starting up, and diverting his attention from the subject. Sometimes these illustrations were appropriate and happy; sometimes they seemed to be introduced only to display his attainments. They remind the reader constantly of the works of Jeremy Taylor, not so much by their richness, though in this they are not deficient, as by this oddness of illustration, which makes us wonder by what sort of intellectual process they could have connected it with the subject in hand. In both cases, we are surprised at the capacity of a memory, which could retain so much that was recommended, not by its usefulness, not by its value, but simply by the circumstance that it was little known to other men.

Whatever may be thought of Cotton Mather's natural ability, which was certainly great, no one can help admiring his industry and application; qualities hardly to be expected in a man of quick

parts, who was ready, brilliant, and entertaining in conversation; and who, as his company was in universal request, might easily have been tempted to content himself with the display of that power. The spirit, which induced him to pass so much time in his study, and to set up over the door an intimation to his visiters in the words, "Be short," was honorable to him, since it appears to have been the result of a sense of duty.

It is impossible to give any account, within these limits, of his printed works, which amounted to three hundred and eighty-two. The great proportion are light tracts, such as occasional sermons; many of them are pamphlets on subjects which happened to interest the public at the moment; and which, having answered their purpose, would have been forgotten, but for the name of the writer. One of the best of his large works is his *Christian Philosopher*, a popular work on natural theology, in which he assembles the information, which naturalists had given, and presents it in such a manner as to afford a strong impression of divine goodness and power.

Another is a version of the Psalms, in which he made it his object "to give in metre an exact and literal translation of the Hebrew text, without any jingle of words at the end." His son extols the plan of this work, mentioning among its other advantages, that he was not tempted to select improper words for the sake of a rhyme.

His greatest undertaking was a work to be called *Illustrations of the Sacred Scriptures.* He commenced it in his thirty-first year, and labored daily upon it, till, twenty years after, it was sufficiently advanced to send out proposals for its publication. From that time to his death he was continually adding to it. This prodigious manuscript is deposited in the Library of the Massachusetts Historical Society, where it remains a monument of the matchless industry of the writer. The sort of learning, which he brings to bear upon the subject, is better calculated to show the extent of his own attainments, than to illustrate the meaning of the sacred writers, exposition not being a work in which he was qualified to excel.

It is very difficult to form a satisfactory estimate of a character like Cotton Mather's, which abounds in contradictions; to tell the precise amount of blame due to his faults, which were many, and how heavily they should weigh against the credit due to his virtues. It is impossible to hold him up as an illustrious example of excellence; but, while the testimony of his friends cannot be safely received, there is danger, lest, in our disgust at his fanaticism and occasional folly, we should deny him the credit which he actually deserves. There are some points in his conduct, which are open to severe reproach; but, taken in connexion with other points, it seems easier to

account for them in some other way, than to ascribe them to a calculating and unscrupulous ambition, which was ready to sacrifice every principle to self-aggrandizement and love of applause.

It has been remarked already, that his course on the subject of witchcraft was the most discreditable part of his history. His agency in it cannot be doubted, nor can it be explained by saying that he sincerely believed in the existence of the crime. But the thing, which exposes him to the charge of hypocrisy, is, that after the frenzy was over, he endeavored to persuade others, that, so far from encouraging the proceedings, he had labored to recommend forbearance and caution, when it is so plain, that his influence and exertions were one of the chief causes of their being carried to such excess.

This, however, seems more like a case of self-delusion. It is not uncommon for men, when they are compelled to see their conduct in a new light, to persuade themselves, and with success, that they never felt as their actions seemed to imply. And, with his remarkable powers of self-blindness, it was easy for him to convince himself, that he was always in favor of deliberation. Those cautions, which, when he wrote them, were simply formal, afterwards appeared to him like his real convictions at the time. At any rate it seems more consistent with what we know of him, to

believe that he deceived himself than that he should attempt and hope, while his opinions were on record, to deceive the world.

It is not a little singular, that one so excitable, and withal so firm and zealous in his religious opinions, should not have been as forward to persecute heretics as witches; and yet he was more liberal on this subject, than his father, and indeed than most men of his age. Not that he was able to comprehend the principle and duty of toleration, as it is now understood; not that he could tread in the footprints of William Penn. But, comparing him with those about him, he was distinguished by his religious liberality. This is one of the inconsistencies referred to; that he should have raised his voice against inflicting penalties on men for religious errors, while he thought, that the dealers with the powers of darkness deserved to die. For fanaticism generally enters on one pursuit as warmly as on the other. But he shows a generous exultation in the absence of such a spirit from his own community. In one of his sermons, he says; "In this capital city of Boston, there are ten assemblies of Christians of different persuasions, who live so lovingly and peaceably together, doing all the offices of friendship for one another in so neighborly a manner, as may give a sensible rebuke to all the bigots of uniformity; and show them how consistent a variety of rites in

religion may be with the tranquillity of human society; and may demonstrate to the world, that persecution for conscientious dissent in religion is an abomination of desolation; a thing whereof all wise and just men will say, 'Cursed be its anger.'"

With respect to the disposition and temper of Cotton Mather, we know nothing except what we learn from his son. He assures us, and there is no reason to doubt his testimony, that in his family, he was systematical, but by no means severe. On the contrary, he employed gentleness and persuasion in dealing with his children, far more than was common in that day. We learn, that his conversation in social life was remarkably agreeable, and his company sought for on account of his cheerful and entertaining powers.

It is certain, that he was strongly disliked by many, and believed by them to be unscrupulous, restless, and intriguing. Whether this was only the aversion, which is always provoked by a man of his temperament in some of those whom he deals with, or whether there was just reason for their charges, it is not easy to determine with the small means of information, which we now possess. In the latter part of his life, his expressions in his Diary indicate a settled jealousy and distrust of others, owing doubtless to his disappointments, and the mortification, which he naturally felt, to

see that all the winds, which in early life had filled his sails, had completely died away.

His expressions in controversy are bitter enough; but we find language quite as strong in the writings of his father, who never was accused of malignity. The friends of his reputation cannot say, that his sentiments were elevated or habitually generous; nor can its enemies, who are still many, bring more proofs of bad feelings and passions, than can be found in the lives of most ardent and active men.

Cotton Mather died but little more than a century ago. No name in our history is more familiar to readers of every description. He was the kind of man, whose peculiarities were most likely to be remembered; and yet the amount of information, which can be gained concerning him, is exceedngly small, as this memoir will show. The writer nas made all possible exertion, and gone to every source where information may be looked for; but, with the exception of his Diary, the remnants of which are scattered in various hands, and a few occasional references to him in the history of the times, nothing is known of the personal history of Cotton Mather. His works are of a kind, which were attractive and interesting in their day, but now sleep in repose, where even the antiquary seldom disturbs them He will be remem

bered, however, as the author of the MAGNALIA, a work, which, with all its faults, will always find interested readers; as a man, too, of unexampled industry, and unrivalled attainments in curious rather than useful learning.

LIFE

OF

RICHARD MONTGOMERY

BY

JOHN ARMSTRONG

RICHARD MONTGOMERY.

THE subject of this notice was born on the 2nd of December, 1736, at Convoy House, the name given to his father's seat near the town of Raphoe, in the north of Ireland. His parentage and connexions were highly respectable,* and such as secured to him an early and liberal education at the College of Dublin. At the age of eighteen, in conformity to his own taste and his father's wishes, a commission in the British army was obtained for him. Of his attention to the duties, or proficiency in the study, of this new

* Thomas Montgomery, of Convoy House, had three sons, Alexander, John, and Richard, and one daughter. Alexander commanded a grenadier company in Wolfe's army, and was present at the capture of Quebec. On the death of his father, he withdrew to his estate, and for many years in succession represented the county of Donnegal, in the Irish Parliament. John lived and died in Portugal; and the daughter married Lord Ranelagh, and was the mother of two sons, Charles and Thomas, who have since succeeded to the title.

vocation, we know nothing with certainty; but judging from the habits and character of his future life, remarkable alike for industry, sobriety, and a scrupulous discharge of engagements, public and private, it may be safely inferred, that his youth, like his manhood, escaped that idleness and vice, which so strongly marked and so greatly degraded the manners, as well professional as national, of that period.

It was the fortune of this young soldier to begin his career of field service in America, where, in another war, it was destined to end. In 1757, the regiment to which he belonged was despatched to Halifax; and, in 1758, made part of the army assembled at that place for the reduction of Louisburg, a French fortress, on which much time, money, and science had been expended, and to which, from a confidence in its strength, had been vauntingly given the name of the American Gibraltar.

It may readily be supposed, that a place thus characterized, and believed by both belligerents to be the key, which opened or shut the great commercial avenue between Europe and Canada,* could not long escape the notice of the elder Pitt; who, to efface the disgrace and retrieve the disas-

* The site of Louisburg is the promontory, at which the waters of the St. Lawrence and the Atlantic meet

ters of three preceding campaigns,* had been recently called to the direction of the national arms. We accordingly find, that on the 28th of May a naval and military force, commanded by Major-General Amherst and Admiral Boscawen, began its voyage from Halifax to Cape Breton; and on the 2nd of June arrived in Cabarras bay. It was not, however, until the 8th, that the wind and surf had so far abated, as to render a descent on the island practicable. On this day, the reconnoitrings of the coast and the covering positions given to the ships, with other preliminary arrangements, being completed, the troops were embarked on board of boats in three divisions, two of which, commanded by Generals Wetmore and Lawrence,† the better to keep the enemy in a state

* We allude to the loss of Calcutta in Asia, and of Minorca in Europe; and on this continent, to the defeat of Braddock, the capture of Fort Oswego and garrison (sixteen hundred men); and of Fort William Henry and garrison (twenty-five hundred men); to which may be added the abortive campaign of 1757, made with twelve thousand troops and sixteen ships of the line, under the direction of Lord Loudoun and Admiral Hopson.

† While commanding in the trenches before Louisburg, a bomb thrown from the fort knocked off the hat and grazed the skull of this officer, but without seriously injuring him; a circumstance, which gave occasion for a sarcastic remark made by our General, Charles Lee, then a captain in the British army. — "I 'll resign

of separation, menaced points not intended for attack; while the third, composed of the *élite* of the army and led by General Wolfe, pressed strenuously forward to a head-land near Freshwater Cove, and, in despite of a heavy and well directed fire from the French, and a surf uncommonly high and exceedingly perilous, gained the bank, routed the enemy, and seized a position, which covered at once the farther debarkation of the troops and the necessary communications with the fleet.* It was in this movement, equally difficult and dangerous, that Montgomery furnished the first decisive evidence of those high military qualities, which so distinctly marked every step of his subsequent conduct; and which drew

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to-morrow," exclaimed Lee. "Why so?" asked the person to whom he spoke. "Because," said the wit, "none but a fool will remain in a service, in which the generals' heads are bomb-proof."

* Sir Jeffery Amherst, in his journal of the siege, describes this first step as follows;—"The enemy acted wisely; did not throw away a shot till the boats were near the shore, and then directed the whole fire of their cannon and musketry upon them. But, notwithstanding the fire of the enemy, and the violence of the surf, Brigadier Wolfe pursued his point and landed at the left of the Cove, took post, attacked the enemy, and forced them to retreat. Many of our boats overset, several broke to pieces, and all the men jumped into the water to get on shore."

from his commanding officer, himself a model of heroism, such commendation as procured for him an immediate promotion to a lieutenancy.

It would be wide of our purpose to go into a detail of the investment and siege which followed, or of Montgomery's connexion with either. On these points it may be sufficient to remark, that the former terminated on the 27th of July in the surrender of the fortress, the destruction of several French ships of the line, and the capture of a garrison of five thousand men; and that the latter was such, as confirmed the favorable impressions already made of our aspirant's aptitude for mili tary service.

While the British were thus triumphant at Louisburg, they at another and important point were fated to sustain a heavy loss, as well in reputation as in numerical force. It will be seen, that in this remark we allude to Abercromby's defeat before Ticonderoga; on the first notice of which, Amherst hastened to conduct six regiments of his army to the aid of the discomfited General and among these was the seventeenth, to which Montgomery belonged, an arrangement, which, besides its useful effect at the time, fortunately made him acquainted with a *champ de bataille*, on which, in 1775, he was destined to lead an army against the troops of his former sovereign. At this point (Lake Champlain) he remained

until 1760; when, by the concentration of three armies on Montreal (Amherst's from Oswego, Murray's from Quebec, and Haviland's from Crown Point), Vaudreuil, the French Governor-General, was compelled to surrender his garrison, his post, and his province.*

The large military force now in British America having no longer any professional occupation there, detachments were made from it against the French and Spanish West India Islands. Of these expeditions the principal objects were the reduction of St. Pierre and Fort Royal, in the Island of Martinico, and of Havana in that of Cuba. The two campaigns employed in the prosecution of this policy were rendered peculiarly laborious and perilous, by the climate and season,† by the many extraordinary means of defence furnished by nature, and by others not less formidable supplied by art. In each of these,

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* Mante's *History of the War of* 1754 *in America*, p. 134.

† In a siege of two months and eight days, the loss sustained by the British army in Cuba amounted to twenty-eight thousand men; besides which, more than one half of the troops sent back to New York (Burton's brigade), either died on the passage, or after their arrival. Of the garrison left at Havana under General Keppel, but seven hundred men were found fit for duty at the peace. — Mante's *History*.

Montgomery had a full share, as well of the toil and danger, as of the commendation * bestowed upon efforts, which ultimately triumphed over every kind and degree of resistance. Martinico surrendered to Moncton and Rodney on the 13th of February, 1762; and a portion of Cuba, including Havana and the Moro Castle, to Albe marle and Pococke, on the 12th of August following; two events greatly tending to hasten the treaty of Versailles, which put an end to the war on the 10th of February, 1763.

Soon after the official annunciation of peace, Montgomery, who with the seventeenth regiment had returned to New York, sought and obtained permission to revisit Europe; where he remained until the close of the year 1772. Of his occupations during these nine years the details we possess are very imperfect; a circumstance the more to be regretted, as it may be presumed, that what remained of his life took much of its color and character from occurrences, happening during this period. Such were the origin and progress of the controversy between Great Britain and her American Colonies; the intimacy formed between himself and those members of the English Parliament (Fox, Burke, and Barré), who most favored

* His conduct on this expedition procured for him the command of a company.

the pretensions of the latter; his abandonment of the King's service in 1772; and lastly, his determination to seek in America a future and permanent home.

On these points nothing written by himself has been found among the few papers, which have come down to us; nor have we any better authority than tradition for stating, that finding himself twice circumvented in the purchase of a majority, and being satisfied that there was a government agency in both cases, he promptly determined to quit, at once, the service and the country, and retire to America. He accordingly, in 1772, sold the commission he held, and in January of the year following arrived in New York. Having soon after purchased a farm in its neighborhood, and either revived an old or formed a new acquaintance with the Clermont branch of the Livingston family, he in the July following married the eldest daughter of Robert R. Livingston, then one of the Judges of the Superior Court of the province. Removing soon after to Dutchess County, he became a resident of Rhinebeck, where he began and prosecuted his new career of agricul ture, with that combination of diligence and discretion, which directed all his movements.

It will not be thought extraordinary, that in the exigencies of the time and the country, a man like Montgomery, though comparatively a stranger

should not be long permitted to remain in the obscurity of his own domicile. We accordingly find that, in April 1775, he was elected a member of the delegation from the county of Dutchess to the first Provincial Convention held in New York. Of his labors in that body, we have his own estimate, which may be usefully offered as an example of unaffected modesty, and an admonition to the unfledged statesmen of the present day. In a letter to his father-in-law, he says; "For all the good I can do here, I might as well and much better have been left at home, to direct the labors of my people. On the simple question between us and England, I am I hope sufficiently instructed, and will not go wrong; but how many may be the views growing out of that and subordinate to it, of which, in the present state of my knowledge, I may not be able to judge correctly? Inquiry and reflection may, in the long run, supply this defect; but the long run requires time, and time stops for no man. It is but justice to the Convention to say, that it has in it both talents and knowledge sufficient for its purposes; and, on the whole, no unwillingness to do business, which, notwithstanding, is a good deal obstructed by long, useless speeches, an opinion, which after all may be mere prejudice, arising from my own taciturn nabits."

At the period to which we have brought our story, the injustice of England had taken a character of decided hostility, and made necessary, on the part of the united Colonies, an immediate resort to arms. In this state of things, the national Congress employed itself in June, 1775, in organizing an army; and, among other acts having this object, appointed a commander-in-chief, four major-generals, and eight brigadiers. Of the latter description Montgomery was one. This unequivocal mark of distinction, conferred by the highest acknowledged authority of the country, without solicitation or privity on his part, was received by him with a homage mingled with regret, apparently foreboding the catastrophe, which was soon to follow. In a letter to a friend he says; "The Congress having done me the honor of electing me a brigadier-general in their service, is an event which must put an end for a while, *perhaps for ever*, to the quiet scheme of life I had prescribed for myself; for, though entirely unexpected and undesired by me, *the will of an oppressed people, compelled to choose between liberty and slavery, must be obeyed.*" Under these noble and self-sacrificing views and feelings, Montgomery accepted the commission tendered to him; and from that hour to the moment of his death, the whole force of his mind and body was devoted to the honor and interest of his adopted country.

The contiguity of Canada to the northern section of the union, the military character of its French population, as displayed in the war of 1754, the strong posts held by the British garrisons in its neighborhood, their control over Indian feelings and movements, and the means taken to give to some of these circumstances a new and increased activity in the approaching struggle,* could not escape the notice of the sages, who composed the Congress of that day. To neutralize powers, so extended and menacing, became a matter of early and serious consideration with that body; the result of which was the adoption of a plan for invading Canada by two routes, the one by the Sorel, the other by the Kennebec; and that for these ends, an army of three thousand men should be raised and organized to act on the former against Forts St. John, Chamblee, and Montreal; while a second corps of one thousand men should be detached from Cambridge by the latter, to enter Canada at or near Quebec contemporaneously with the other, and effect a junction, if practicable, with Major-General Schuyler, who should command in chief.

To the first of these armaments Montgomery was assigned, as the elder of the two brigadiers;†

* The Quebec Act.

† General Wooster was the other.

and in this capacity he repaired on the 15th of July to Albany, whence, on the 17th of August, he was fortunately transferred to Ticonderoga, the point selected for the principal rendezvous and outfit of the projected invasions.* On arriving at this post, his first object was to acquire a correct knowledge of the enemy's force, position, and projects; and on this last head, being informed that General Carleton, now at Montreal, was preparing and had nearly ready a considerable naval force intended to act on Lake Champlain, he saw at once the effect of the plan, if permitted to go into execution, and the necessity for immediately taking post at the Isle-aux-Noix; as the measure, by which it could be most promptly and surely defeated. In a letter to General Schuyler announcing this intention, he says, "Moving without your orders, I do not like; but, on the other hand, the prevention of the enemy is of the utmost consequence; for if he gets his vessels into the Lake, it is over with us for the present summer. Let me entreat you to follow in a whale-boat, leaving some one to bring on the troops and artillery. It will give the men great confidence in your spirit and

* Congress was anticipated in its policy with regard to Ticonderoga, by Allen and Arnold, who, on the suggestion of a few thinking men in Connecticut, surprised the garrison and took possession of the post and its munitions on the 10th of May, 1775.

activity; and how necessary to a general this confidence is, I need not tell you. I most earnestly wish, that this [suggestion] may meet your appro bation; and be assured that [in making it] I have your honor and reputation much at heart. All my ambition is to do my duty in a subordinate capacity, without the least ungenerous intention of lessening that merit, which is justly your due."

After giving this exemplary proof of personal friendship for his chief, and of professional duty to the public, he hastened to place himself at the head of a small corps, not exceeding one thousand combatants, sustained by two pieces of light artillery, with which, on the 26th of August, he began his movement down the Lake. Being, however, much retarded by continued and violent head winds, it was not till the 5th of September, that he was able to reach the position he had selected for himself. Major-General Schuyler having arrived on this day, it was thought that a nearer approach to the enemy might be useful; not only from the means it would afford of better reconnoitring his position, but from the favorable impression it might make on the Canadian population. The movement was accordingly ordered, and a landing effected without obstruction, about a mile and a half from St. John's. After a short march in a direction of the fort, and while engaged in fording a creek somewhat difficult of

passage, the left of the line was vigorously attacked and much disordered by an Indian ambuscade; but being speedily supported by Montgomery, with the centre and right, the combat was soon terminated, and with considerable disadvantage to the assailants.

During the night, General Schuyler was visited by a person giving the following information; "that the twenty-sixth was the only regular British corps in Canada; that with the exception of fifty men, retained by General Carleton at Montreal, the whole of this was in garrison at St. John's and Chamblee; that these two forts were strongly fortified and abundantly supplied; that one hundred Indians were at the former, and a large body collected [at some other point] under Colonel Johnson; that the vessel intended for the Lake would be ready to sail in three or four days, and would carry sixteen guns; that no Canadian would join the American army, the wish and policy of the people being neutrality, provided their persons and property were respected and the articles furnished by, or taken from them, paid for in gold or silver; that, under present circumstances, an attack upon St. John's would be imprudent; and, lastly, that a return to the Isle-aux-Noix would be proper; as from this point, an intercourse with the inhabitants of Laprairie, might be usefully

Believe me dear Sir
with much respect
Your affectionate & obliged
Humble Servt
Richd Montgomery

Holland House
Dec.r 6th

(1775-NEAR QUEBEC)

opened." * A council of war, to whom this information was submitted, participating with the commanding general in the preceding opinion, the troops were on the 7th reconducted to their former position on the island. In reporting these transactions to Congress, General Schuyler says; "I cannot estimate the obligations I lie under to General Montgomery, for the many important services he has done, and daily does, and in which he has had little assistance from me; as I have not enjoyed a moment's health since I left Fort George; and am now so low, as not to be able to hold the pen. Should we not be able to do any thing decisively in Canada, I shall judge it best to move from this place, which is a very wet and unhealthy part of the country, unless I receive your orders to the contrary." With this manifest foreboding of eventual disappointment, the commanding general left the camp and returned to Ticonderoga; where, and at Albany, he was actively and usefully employed, during the remainder of the campaign, in forwarding supplies to the army.

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* Whether this information was given by friend or enemy, it was essentially incorrect; the seventh as well as the twenty-sixth regiment was then serving in Canada. No great Indian force had anywhere been assembled, and many Canadians were disposed to join, and did actually join, the American army.

Montgomery, being now left to the choice and direction of his own measures, and being strongly impressed with the necessity of doing quickly, what it would be possible to do at all, availed himself of the arrival of a reinforcement of men and a small train of artillery to resume his position before St. John's, where he began his intended experiments of investment and siege.

With a view to the first of these objects, he on the 18th led a corps of five hundred men to the north side of the fort; where, falling in with a detachment from the garrison, which had just repulsed an American party under Major Brown, a rencounter took place, of which he gives the following brief description. "After an ill-directed fire for some minutes, the enemy retired with precipitation; luckily for them they did so; for had we sooner known their situation, which a thick wood prevented, not a man of them would have escaped." With the conduct of his own troops on this occasion, he was little satisfied. "For as soon," he adds, "as we saw the enemy, the old story of treachery spread among the men; and the cry was, we are trepanned and drawn under the guns of the fort. The woodsmen were less expert in forming than I had expected, and too many of them hung back. Had we kept more silence, we should have taken a field-piece or two."

Being now left to pursue his object without further obstruction, he proceeded to the junction of the two roads, the one leading to Montreal, the other to Chamblee; where he established an intrenched camp of three hundred men. Having thus done what was practicable to interrupt the communication between St. John's and its sustaining posts, he hastened back to his camp to try the effects of his artillery on the strength of the walls, and the temper of the garrison. In this labor, from causes, neither soon nor easily removed, his progress was not flattering; the cannon given him were found to be too light; the mortars defective; the artillerists unpractised; the ammunition scanty, and the person assigned to him as an engineer, utterly ignorant of the first principles of the art he professed.* To this list of untoward circumstances may be added the character of the ground he occupied; which, being wet and even swampy, was productive of many and serious diseases; which, besides hourly diminishing his strength, greatly retarded his operations.

To lessen the number and pressure of these embarrassments, Montgomery decided on changing his position and removing to the northwestern side of the fort; which, as he was informed, would furnish ground of greater elevation and dryer sur-

* Captain Mott.

face, with a sufficient supply of wholesome water With this intention, a road was opened and fascines were collected on the site chosen for the new batteries; when, more to his mortification than surprise, he discovered, that to persist in the measure would give occasion to evils of greater malignity, than either or all of those, which it was proposed to remedy by it; in a word, that a general mutiny of the army would be the consequence. Abhorrent as any kind or degree of condescension to an insubordinate soldiery must have been to a man of Montgomery's habits and principles, still he could not conceal from himself, that the evil, which now beset him, grew in a great measure out of the spirit of the times, and was perhaps inseparable from revolutionary movements; that, at any rate, he possessed no power of punishing or even controlling it, and that any course, which should precipitate the army into an act of open mutiny, would be a signal for its dissolution, and an end of all public views and hopes founded on the expedition. In this view of the subject, personal feelings and professional scruples were made to yield; and instead of a peremptory order to execute the project, he prudently submitted it to the decision of a council of war, who, as was expected, refused to give it their approbation.*

* At a later period, the General's plan was adopted and a new position taken on the northwest side of the fort.

While this inauspicious occurrence took place in the camp, another of the General's plans, from misconduct in the leader, terminated unfavorably. To quiet the restless activity of Ethan Allen, who, without commission or command, had attached himself to the army as a volunteer, Montgomery sent him to Laprairie, with an escort of thirty men, and orders "to mingle freely with the inhabitants and so to treat them, as would best conciliate their friendship and induce them to join the American standard." In the outset of this business, Allen was not unsuccessful, and soon acquired an addition to his corps of fifty Canadians; when, either deceived in regard to the enemy's strength, or indifferent to its magnitude, and without direction or privity on the part of the General, he determined to risk an attack on Montreal. He accordingly crossed the river in the night of the 24th of September, and was met in the morning by a British party, who, after a short and slight conflict, captured him and thirty-eight of his followers.

Another affair, more prudently managed and having a favorable influence on the operations of the campaign, occurred soon after. Mr. James Livingston, a native of New York, who had some time before established himself in Canada, had fortunately gained a good deal of popularity with its inhabitants; which, at the instance of Montgomery, he employed in raising among them an

armed corps, under the promise of eventual protection, made and promulgated by the order of Congress. With three hundred of these recruits and a small detachment from the army, Majors Brown and Livingston obtained possession of Fort Chamblee, capturing the whole of the garrison, and a large quantity of military stores, among which were one hundred and twenty-six barrels of gunpowder. This acquisition having greatly invigorated the siege, and rendered probable a speedy reduction of St. John's, General Carleton found himself compelled to quit his insular position at Montreal, and risk a field movement in defence of his fortress. The force at his disposal for this purpose was not formidable from numbers or from character, and was rendered less so by the division of its parts. Its amount in combatants of all arms did not much exceed twelve hundred men; the bulk of whom was made up of Canadian militia serving with reluctance, and Scotch emigrants recently engaged, and little if at all acquainted with military duty. Of these, nearly one thousand had been retained at Montreal by Carleton, and the remainder stationed with M^cClean at the mouth of the Sorel. Under these circumstances and with Carleton's present views, a concentration of the two corps became indispensable; and accordingly, on the 31st of October, that officer began his movement across the St. Lawrence

to Longueil, whence he purposed marching to M^c^Clean's camp, and thence to the attack of the besieging army.

The probability of a movement of this kind and with these objects did not escape the foresight of Montgomery; who, soon after the capture of Chamblee, withdrew Warner and two regiments from the investing position they had hitherto occupied to the Longueil road, with orders "to patrol that route carefully and frequently, as far as the St. Lawrence; to report daily to the commanding general such information as he might be able to obtain; and lastly, to attack any party of the enemy indicating an intention of moving in the direction of the American camp, or in that of the Scotch emigrants." In execution of these orders, Warner arrived at Longueil early in the morning of the 31st, and making no display of his force until the leading boats of the British column had nearly reached the southern bank of the river, he then opened upon them a fire of musketry and artillery, which in a few minutes completely disabled them and put to rout what remained of the armament. About the same time, and with orders of a similar character, Easton, Brown, and Livingston approached M^c^Clean, who, losing all hope of support from Carleton, hastily withdrew to his boats and descended the St. Lawrence.

This new and favorable state of things was promptly communicated to Montgomery, who hastened to turn it to its proper account, the surrender of the fort, the occupation of Montreal, and the capture of Carleton. The first of these objects was accomplished by a written statement of the preceding events, made to the commandant; the consequent hopelessness of succor to the garrison; and the useless effusion of blood, which would necessarily follow any attempt to prolong the defence. The second object was less easily attained, not from any obstruction given by the enemy, but from the disinclination of his own troops to remain longer in the field; nor could this be overcome, but by a promise on the part of the general, that, "Montreal in his possession, no further service would be exacted from them." Under this arrangement, he was enabled to display a force in front of the town, which, on the 12th of November, secured to him a full and peaceable possession of it, and of the armed vessels left by the enemy.* With regard to his third and great object, he was wholly unsuccessful. Some days before the last-mentioned event, the British general not reposing firmly in Canadian fidelity, and

* Eleven sail of vessels with General Prescott, and one hundred and twenty regular troops of the seventh and twenty-sixth regiments.

fearing much from the enterprise and vigor of his antagonist, quitted Montreal and took refuge on board of the fleet, with which he hoped to be able to make good his retreat; but finding on experiment, that this project was impracticable, and perceiving the imminent danger to which the capital of the province was exposed, as well by his absence from it, as by the presence of a new and unexpected enemy at its gates, he promptly and prudently put himself on board of a small boat with muffled oars, and, trusting to his personal fortunes and a dark night, was able to pass the American batteries and armed vessels, without notice or annoyance of any kind.*

Though now master of a great part of Canada, Montgomery's labors, far from becoming lighter or fewer, were much augmented in both number and character. A pursuit of Carleton, a junction with Arnold, and an experiment on the strength of Quebec, were objects sufficiently indicated by his own judgment, the policy of Congress, and the hopes of the nation. But to prosecute these promptly and successfully required means, in which he was obviously and greatly deficient. His situation in this respect, given in a letter to a member of the Committee of Congress sent to

* The position at the mouth of the Sorel was held by Colonel Easton of the Massachusetts militia.

confer with him on the subject of his campaign, will not be deemed uninteresting.

"For the good fortune," he says, "which has hitherto attended us, I am, I hope, sufficiently thankful; but this very fortune, good as it has been, will become a serious and insurmountable evil, should it lead Congress either to overrate our means, or to underrate the difficulties we have yet to contend with. I need not tell you, that, till Quebec is taken, Canada is unconquered; and that, to accomplish this, we must resort to siege, investment, or storm. The first of these is out of the question, from the difficulty of making trenches in a Canadian winter, and the greater difficulty of living in them, if we could make them; secondly, from the nature of the soil, which, as I am at present instructed, renders mining impracticable, and, were this otherwise, from the want of an engineer having sufficient skill to direct the process; and thirdly, from the fewness and lightness of our artillery, which is quite unfit to break walls like those of Quebec. Investment has fewer objections, and might be sufficient, were we able to shut out entirely from the garrison and town the necessary supplies of food and fuel, during the winter; but to do this well (the enemy's works being very extensive and offering many avenues to the neighboring settlements) will require a large army, and from present appearances mine will not, when brought together, much

if at all exceed eight hundred combatants. Of Canadians I might be able to get a considerable number, provided I had hard money, with which to clothe, feed, and pay their wages; but this is wanting. Unless, therefore, I am soon and amply reinforced, investment, like siege, must be given up.

"To the storming plan, there are fewer objections; and to this we must come at last. If my force be small, Carleton's is not great. The extensiveness of his works, which, in case of investment, would favor him, will in the other case favor us. Masters of our secret, we may select a *particular time* and *place* for attack, and to repel this the garrison must be prepared at *all times* and *places;* a circumstance, which will impose upon it incessant watching and labor by day and by night; which, in its undisciplined state, must breed discontents that may compel Carleton to capitulate, or perhaps to make an attempt to drive us off. In this last idea, there is a glimmering of hope. Wolfe's success was a lucky hit, or rather a series of such hits. All sober and scientific calculation was against him, until Montcalm, permitting his courage to get the better of his discretion, gave up the advantages of his fortress and came out to try his strength on the plain.* Carleton, who was Wolfe's quartermaster-general, under-

* See the Note at the end of this Memoir.

stands this well; and, it is to be feared, will not follow the Frenchman's example. In all these views, you will discover much uncertainty; but of one thing you may be sure, that, unless we do something before the middle of April, the game will be up; because by that time the river may open and let in supplies and reinforcements to the garrison in spite of any thing we can do to prevent it; and again, because my troops are not engaged beyond that term, and will not be prevailed upon to stay a day longer. In reviewing what I have said, you will find that my list of wants is a long one; *men, money, artillery,* and *clothing accommodated to the climate.* Of *ammunition* Carleton took care to leave little behind him at this place. What I wish and expect is, that all this be made known to Congress, with a full assurance, that, if I fail to execute their wishes or commands, it shall not be from any negligence of duty or infirmity of purpose on my part. *Vale, cave ne mandata frangas.*" *

Assured, on the 17th of November, of Arnold's arrival at Point Levi, and on the 19th, of his having crossed the St. Lawrence in safety, Montgomery hastened to effect a junction with him; and having, on the 4th of December, accomplished

* Letter to R. R. Livingston, Member of Congress.

this object, he immediately proceeded to take a position before Quebec.

Great care was now employed in acquiring a knowledge of the extent and structure of the enemy's works; the force and composition of his garrison;* the disposition of the inhabitants of the town and neighboring country, and the means possessed by the latter to supply the wants of the former. The result of the information received on these points was such, as confirmed the General in the opinion expressed in the preceding letter; that siege and investment were forbidden by the paucity of his numbers, not much exceeding eight hundred combatants; by a want of artillery of sufficient calibre, and by the inclemency of the season; and again, that, of the different modes of attack, that of escalade was, under all circumstances, the most advisable.

But that no means of attaining the proposed object might be neglected, this opinion, though decidedly formed, was not permitted to supersede the use of other and preliminary expedients. A summons of surrender in the customary form, a cannonade of the fort from a battery of five

* Seamen and marines, four hundred and fifty; privates of the seventh regiment, fifty; M^cClean's corps, one hundred and fifty; Canadian militia, two hundred and fifty.

guns and one howitzer; a display of the American force in full view of the British garrison, made in the hope that its feebleness would induce, or its defiance provoke, the enemy to forego the advantage of his fortress and risk a contest in the field, were successively tried, but without producing any useful effect. A partial investment, confined to points which most favored an intercourse between the town and the country, was also resorted to; and would have been longer continued, had it not been found that its effect on the Canadian population was unfriendly, from the interruption it gave to their ordinary commerce without furnishing an equivalent market as a substitute; and again, from a belief generally entertained, that a proceeding of this kind indicated a want of strength in the American army. A discovery of these facts could not fail to make an impression as well on the troops as on the general, and besides inducing an abandonment of the investing plan, hastened in both a desire to try the effect of a *coup de main*. Two attacks of this character were accordingly projected; the one on the lower town, from the suburbs of St. Roque; the other on the upper, at the Cape Diamond Bastion, "to be executed in the night and when the weather should be favorable." But before the last of these conditions was fulfilled, a circumstance took place, that menaced the project with both defeat and disgrace.

Three companies of Arnold's detachment (whose term of service was on the point of expiring) having, from some cause not well explained,* taken umbrage at the conduct of their commanding officer, seized the present occasion to make known their intention of quitting the army, unless, in the approaching movement they were permitted to attach themselves to some other corps. Under circumstances differing from those which belonged to the case, a transfer, such as they desired, would not have been refused; but as, on investigating the facts, Montgomery found the complainants wholly in the wrong, he promptly determined, as well in punishment of them as in justice to Arnold, to reject their proposal. Still, believing that under all circumstances it would be prudent, before officially announcing this decision, to try the effects of a free and friendly expostulation with the malcontents, he fortunately recurred to that process, and was promptly enabled to bring them back to a sense of good order and obedience, without the actual employment or menace of any coercive means.†

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* Montgomery, in his last letter to Schuyler, speaks of this occurrence, thinks his friend Major Brown at the bottom of it, and promises in his next a full explanation of it.

† Mr. Marshall ascribes the return to duty, on the part of the malcontents, to the influence of arguments ad-

Though now satisfied that the flame of the late controversy was extinguished, yet suspecting that the embers might still be alive, and knowing that means would not be wanting to re-excite them, Montgomery hastened to avail himself of this new and last favor of fortune. A council of war was accordingly convened, and to this the General submitted two questions; — "Shall we attempt the reduction of Quebec by a night attack? And if so, shall the lower town be the point attacked?" * Both questions having been affirmatively decided, the troops were ordered to parade in three divisions at two o'clock in the morning of the 31st of December; the New York regiments and part of Easton's Massachusetts militia, at Holland House; the Cambridge detachments and Lamb's company of artillerists, with one field-piece, at Captain Morgan's quarters; and the two small corps of Livingston and Brown, at their respective grounds of parade. To the first and second of these divisions were assigned the two assaults, to be made on opposite sides of the lower town;

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dressed to their *love of plunder*, by Captain Morgan. We have adopted in substance the statement given by Colonel J. Livingston, which is, we think, more credible, and certainly more creditable.

* The first or main question was carried by a single vote.

and to the third, a series of demonstrations or feigned attacks on different parts of the upper Under these orders the movement began between three and four o'clock in the morning, from the Heights of Abraham Montgomery advancing at the head of the first division by the river road, round the foot of Cape Diamond to Aunce au Mere; and Arnold, at the head of the second, through the suburbs of St. Roque, to the Saut de Matelots. Both columns found the roads much obstructed by snow, but to this obstacle on the route taken by Montgomery were added huge masses of ice, thrown up from the river and so narrowing the passage round the foot of the promontory, as greatly to retard the progress and disturb the order of the march. These difficulties being at last surmounted, the first barrier was approached, vigorously attacked, and rapidly carried. A moment, and but a moment, was now employed to re-excite the ardor of the troops, which the fatigue of the march and the severity of the weather had somewhat abated. "Men of New York," exclaimed Montgomery, "you will not fear to follow where your general leads,—march on;" * then placing himself again in the

* When Bonaparte assumed the offensive in the battle of Marengo, he hurried through the ranks exclaiming "Comrades, you know it is my practice to sleep on the field of battle."

front, he pressed eagerly forward to the second barrier, and when but a few paces from the mouths of the British cannon, received three wounds which instantly terminated his life and his labors Thus fell, in the first month of his fortieth year, Major-General Richard Montgomery.

The fortune of the day being now decided, the corpse of the fallen general was eagerly sought for and soon found. The stern character of Carleton's habitual temper softened at the sight; recollections of other times crowded fast upon him; the personal and professional merits of the dead could neither be forgotten nor dissembled, and the British general granted the request of Lieutenant-Governor Cramahé to have the body decently interred within the walls of the city.*

In this brief story of a short and useful life, we find all the elements which enter into the composition of a great man and distinguished soldier; "a happy physical organization, com-

* It does not fall within our proper limits, to exhibit in detail the future fortunes of the assailing army. It may therefore be sufficient to say, that, in losing their commander, all hope of eventual success was lost. The column of the right, under the direction of its new leader, made a hasty and disorderly retreat to the Heights of Abraham; while that of the left, first under Arnold and again under Morgan, gave evidence only of a high and persevering, but fruitless gallantry.

bining strength and activity, and enabling its possessor to encounter laborious days and sleepless nights, hunger and thirst, all changes of weather, and every variation of climate." To these corporeal advantages was added a mind, cool, discriminating, energetic, and fearless; thoroughly acquainted with mankind, not uninstructed in the literature and sciences of the day, and habitually directed by a high and unchangeable moral sense. That a man so constituted, should have won "the golden opinions" of friends and foes, is not extraordinary. The most eloquent men of the British Senate became his panegyrists; and the American Congress hastened to testify for him, "their grateful remembrance, profound respect, and high veneration." A monument to his memory was accordingly erected, on which might justly be inscribed the impressive lines of the poet;

"Brief, brave, and glorious was his young career;
His mourners were two hosts, his friends and foes:
And fitly may the stranger, lingering here,
Pray for his gallant spirit's bright repose;
For he was Freedom's champion, one of those,
The few in number, who had not o'erstept
The charter to chastise, which she bestows
On such as wield her weapons; he had kept
The whiteness of his soul, and thus men o'er him wept.

NOTE.

(See page 217.)

As nothing will better illustrate Montgomery's freedom from prejudice, and correctness of military judgment, than this opinion, respecting Wolfe's success at Quebec, we may be permitted to give a brief view of the grounds on which it rested.

It will be remembered, that, in the campaign of 1759, General Wolfe was placed at the head of an army of eight thousand combatants, sustained by a fleet of twenty-two ships of the line, as many frigates, and several smaller vessels, with orders to reduce Quebec, a fortress, strongly fortified by nature and art, defended by ten thousand effective men and commanded by an officer, distinguished alike by capacity and experience. The promontory on which this fortress stood, presented to the south a naked rock, rising from the St. Lawrence several hundred feet in height; to the north and east, a declivity less elevated and abrupt than the former, but such as everywhere forbade an ascent, but by a narrow and winding foot-path, secured at different points by strong palisades; and on the west or land side, a line of bastions, brist-

ing with cannon and extending from one height to another; thus forming the base of the angle and completing the outline of the work; while within its area rose the citadel of St. Louis, overlooking and commanding the whole. It is not therefore to be wondered at, if, after reconnoitring the place and its defences, the General should have discovered "obstacles greater than had been foreseen," or that he should have come to the conclusion, "that to reduce the place by a direct attack, was impracticable," and that the only expedient left, for giving him even a chance of accomplishing the plans of the government and the hopes of the nation, was a constant and unrelaxing endeavor to decoy into detachments, or to provoke to a general battle, his old and wary antagonist, who seemed to understand too well the value of his fastnesses, to be easily seduced from them.

With these vague and hopeless prospects, the north bank of the St. Lawrence *above* the town was carefully reconnoitred, but without discovering a place, at which the detachment, that should be first landed, would not be liable to be cut to pieces before another could be brought to support it Still, as something must be hazarded, the General fixed on St. Michael's, three miles from Quebec, for making the experiment; when he discovered, that the enemy had penetrated his design and was preparing to defeat it

Giving up therefore this side of the town as unfavorable to his project, he now returned to an examination of that lying between the rivers St. Charles and Montmorency; and, though every accessible part of the shore was found to be "intrenched and redoubted," and protected besides by "a great breadth of shoal water and a muddy bottom, scooped into holes and intersected by gullies," he, notwithstanding, decided on making his descent there, because "it possessed advantages, not to be found at any other place," namely, room for the developement of his whole force, and, if necessary, "a safe retreat at low-water." The attempt was accordingly made, but ended in new disappointment and increased vexation, for the enemy refusing to quit his intrenchments, neither advanced in mass, nor in detachment, to attack him, while his own troops showed "a great want of both order and discipline."

This failure no doubt increased, if it did not create, an indisposition, which caused a temporary suspension of the general's activity; during which he submitted to the consideration of the brigadiers serving under him, the general question of future operations and the direction to be given to these; subjoining at the same time statements and opinions, which sufficiently indicated the leaning of his own judgment, in favor of a renewed attack on the French positions at Beauport, either

"by turning their left flank and assailing their rear, or by a direct approach in front, on the side of the St. Lawrence." The answer to this communication, was precisely what it ought to have been; respectful to the general, but adverse to both the courses suggested by him. It may be paraphrased as follows; "On either project, the risk is certain, and the advantage to be gained unimportant. If we adopt the first, a march of nine miles, through woods intersected by creeks, swamps, and defiles, becomes unavoidable, every step of which must be known to the enemy and liable to obstruction from his numerous bodies of Indians and light troops. A new repulse, at this time, would be very unfavorable, and a defeat, probably fatal to the army; while its most complete success would have the effect only of compelling the enemy to change his front, and take the new and more formidable position behind the St. Charles. The second proposition is liable to similar objections; since our whole movement must be made in the view, and exposed to the fire of the batteries and intrenchments of the enemy; a circumstance, which our recent experience shows cannot be encountered, without considerable loss, and with the hazard, in case of disaster, of having our retreat entirely cut off, as it is only in a particular state of the tide, that a retreat will be at all practicable.

"On the other hand, taking for granted that British courage will triumph over many difficulties and that the enemy will be driven from Beauport and its dependencies, what advantage will the acquisition of these places give to us, or what injury will the loss of them produce to the enemy? The effect to either party will be unimportant, since the place itself has no possible influence on the fate of the capital, neither covering nor exposing its supplies, neither strengthening nor weakening its defences; in a word, 't is but an outpost, which Mr. Montcalm may abandon without loss, and which he artfully presents to us, in the hope that we will knock our heads against it. The movement, which in our opinion should be substituted for these, is, that the army assemble and embark at Point Levi, and ascend the St. Lawrence above the town, and there seek for a place at which they may debark and gain the bank. If they fail in accomplishing this, they run no risk of any serious loss, since the attempt will not be made but under the guns of the shipping. If, on the other hand, we succeed in gaining the bank and in taking a position which shall place us between the enemy and the interior of the province, we may hope to draw him from his walls and to the risk of a battle; — but, whether this last purpose be effected or not, we shall be precisely in the situation the best adapted to a

coöperation with General Amherst's army, which, agreeably to the general plan of campaign, must now be on its march to join us."

This reasoning silenced, if it did not satisfy, the objections of Wolfe. He adopted the plan with the frankness and good faith with which it was offered, and, being now reinstated in health, lost no time in giving it execution. The troops, to the amount of four thousand effectives, were embarked as proposed on board of a division of the fleet, which ascended the St. Lawrence, while another division of it, the better to mask the real attack, continued to menace a descent at Beauport. This was the moment that fortune began to show her partiality for the British arms. Believing the movement to be only a feint, Montcalm steadily adhered to his field position on the eastern side of the town, and contented himself with detaching Bougainville at the head of twenty-five hundred men to the western side, with orders to keep pace with the ascending division of the British fleet, watch its operations, and repel all attempts at landing.

This officer had accordingly lined the bank with sentinels, established small posts on the few paths which admitted an ascent of the bank, and taken post himself about six leagues west of Quebec and directly opposite to the ships of war. Till now, the vigilance of this corps had been irre-

proachable, and had even merited and received the praises of an enemy; but on the night of the 12th of September it slept, and so profoundly, that the British fleet and army were enabled to execute their whole purpose, without notice or discovery. The latter, being embarked on board of the boats, fell down the stream to the point agreed upon for the descent, followed and protected by the former, and at one o'clock in the morning, effected their landing, mounted the precipice, drove in the sentries and seized a battery, before even the common signals of alarm were given When the day dawned, the British line found itself on the Heights of Abraham, and, in a few minutes, perceived the French army approaching by the bridge of St. Charles.

What a moment of anxiety for Wolfe! Was it Montcalm's intention to shut himself up in Quebec, and leave to the British army the doubtful and dangerous experiments of investment or siege? Or was he in motion to stake on the chances of a battle the fate of himself, of his army, of the capital, and of the province? Is it probable, that he, who has hitherto acted so warily, will be less circumspect in proportion as his fortunes become more critical? Is it reasonable to hope, that a general, who has till now so distinctly seen the advantages of his position, will at once cease to avail himself of what art and nature

nave united to do for him? Should he lose the power of making new combinations, will he lose his memory also, and, forgetting alike the maxims of war and the dictates of duty, hazard a post with the defence of which he is specially charged, or give battle on the invitation of an enemy, who has no hope but in the chance of his doing so?

A few minutes solved these momentous questions. As soon as the heads of the French columns, preceded by their skirmishers, were seen to issue from the gates of the town and advance towards their enemy, there could be no longer a doubt of the intentions of the French commander. At this moment, the British army had not yet taken an order of battle; but the simple formation of a single line a little bent on its left, and reinforced on its right, by one regiment in open order, was soon executed. Neither army could claim much support from artillery; the British not having been able to bring up more than one piece, while the French, who could have strengthened their line with a battery of fifty pieces, either neglected or despised the advantage, and brought with them only two nine-pounders. The battle which followed was decided by musketry, and was unmarked by any extraordinary or well applied evolution of any kind. The fall of Montcalm hastened, if it did not occasion, the flight of the French, who left fifteen hundred men on the

field of battle. In this moment of route on the one side, and of triumph on the other, the head of Bougainville's corps marching from La Foix, showed itself on the rear of the British line. But, the fortunes of the day being apparently decided, he retired perhaps prudently, to concert measures with the commander of the fort, to keep up his communications with it, to check the enemy's attempts at investment, or, if the measure became necessary, to join in the direct defence of the place. On the part of the British nothing could be considered as done, while Quebec remained to be taken; and for its security, there was still left a sufficient garrison and abundant supplies, with an exterior force already formidable and hourly increasing. Time, on the other hand, which was thus strengthening them, was sensibly weakening their enemy.

The British effective force, originally eight thousand combatants, was now, including the corps at Point Levi and the Isle of Orleans, reduced to four thousand men; the weather had already become wet and cold; the sick list was rapidly increasing; and but thirty days remained for field operations, while those of the water might probably be limited to even a shorter period. Much must be done before a siege could be commenced, and an investment, from the nature of the ground, and the deficient number of the troops, was quite

impracticable. Under this aspect of things, the chances were yet against the invaders; and it required only a vigorous resistance on the part of the garrison, to have saved both the fortress and the province. But "fear betrays like treason." M. de Ramsay saw in some demonstrations, made by the British fleet and army as trials of his temper, a serious intention to attack him by land and water; when, to escape this, he opened a negotiation for the surrender of the fort at the very moment when a reinforcement of eight hundred men, with an additional supply of provisions, was ready to enter it. Townshend, who, after the fall of Wolfe, commanded the British army, was both a politician and a soldier, and readily subscribed to any terms, the basis of which was the surrender of the capital.

Such is the chapter o accidents by which Quebec was taken in 1759. Had not Wolfe become seriously ill, there would have been no opinion required from Monckton, Townshend, and Murray, and the army would have continued to waste its strength in new attacks on the French positions at Beauport, in conformity to Wolfe's opinion.

Had not Wolfe, in despite of this opinion, followed the advice of his brigadiers and carried his operations from the eastern to the western side of the town, the same consequences would have followed.

Had the French guards done their duty on the night of the 12th of September, the British would have failed in making good their landing and ascent to the Heights of Abraham.

Had Montcalm refused the battle offered to him on the 13th, or had he reinforced his centre and flanks by competent divisions of artillery, or had he delayed coming to blows for a single hour, or had Bougainville arrived in the rear of the British line, before the battle was lost, in either of these cases, the fortune of the day would have been different from what it was.

And lastly, had M. de Ramsay, instead of surrendering, defended his post, the expedition must have failed; since, circumstanced as the British were, they had no sufficient means for reducing the place by *storm*, *siege*, or *investment*.

THE END

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