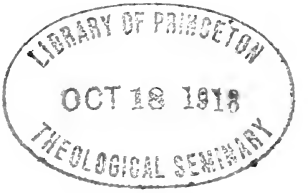
THE WINNING OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

JOSEPH H. CROOKER



BOOKS BY

JOSEPH H. CROOKER, D.D.

THE CHURCH OF TO-DAY. 50 cents net.

THE CHURCH OF TO-MORROW. 50 cents net.

SHALL I DRINK? $1.00 net.

THE WINNING OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY. $1.50 net.

THE WINNING OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

THE WINNING OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

BY
JOSEPH HENRY CROOKER, D.D.

Author of
"Shall I Drink?" "The Church of To-day"
"The Church of To-morrow"

THE PILGRIM PRESS
BOSTON CHICAGO

THE PILGRIM PRESS
BOSTON

FOREWORD

Political freedom and religious freedom stand or fall together. Both require organization for their development. Can the State and the Church flourish together, each independent of the other, yet in harmony? The author of this volume regards such a condition of society as the goal of democracy. He seems to have begun his work with a study of the Pilgrims of Plymouth Colony; then to have been led by it to examine the historic forces which came to find expression in the common life of that heroic band. His researches have kindled his enthusiasm. They have inspired him to give this history of religious intolerance and progress toward tolerance the fascination of a romance. It is a long road back from the forming of a body politic in the *Mayflower* to the establishment of a Christian Church by the disciples of Jesus. But the author essays to traverse it so far as to be able to conclude that "in the present world crisis, not Pope Benedict, but an American layman, President Wilson, has given ex-expression to the conscience of mankind."

Our attention is here mainly directed to the

progress of religious liberty during the last five hundred years. It is gradually concentrated on the expansion of the principles of the Pilgrims through their influence in creating the American Commonwealth. These principles found expression in the community life of companies of disciples of Christ separated from the worldliness of the society in which they lived, from the control of priests and bishops as independent congregations, and from the rule of the State over their religious beliefs and ways of worship in fraternal relations with one another. These principles also tended to banish the disposition within the churches to persecute one another for differences of opinion in religious affairs.

Dr. Crooker has enriched his book by brief and comprehensive sketches of prominent persons in this march of Christ's followers toward religious tolerance. He has a restrained but keen sense of humor in his word pictures illumined by genuine sympathy. The reader can almost see Robert Browne and Roger Williams looking into each other's eyes, detecting mutual defects while sharing the noble purpose common to both.

This book is especially pertinent for the present time. The world is at war in a struggle for ideals. Our country is coming to be foremost in the fight for political freedom against those who recognize no necessity which re-

strains them from imposing their opinions and their rule upon the world. When political liberty shall be won, how long will it be kept unless religious liberty is maintained also? The emancipation of society from tyranny and the deliverance of the spirit of man from human authority imposed from without run parallel in history. Here is pointed out what the spirit of the Pilgrims has done to banish religious intolerance from the Christian world. Here are indicated steps which may be taken to reorganize the forces of the community so that individuals of different ideals and convictions can live together in religious relations as peacefully as men of different political convictions live together in organized society.

I know of no other recently published volume which so impressively sets forth the value of the Congregational Order in its bearing on the worship of God and the service of men. It will aid the average reader to a fair judgment of leaders in ecclesiastical history whom he has been taught to revere and those he has been directed to condemn because of their religious views. The liberty of mankind to develop through the democratic spirit can be secured only in the direction indicated by the trend of history as described in this volume.

Ministers may do valuable service by making themselves familiar not only with it, but with the historical sources from which its con-

clusions are drawn, and then presenting their own conclusions to their congregations. It was never so important as now that young Americans should study this movement of history. This book is an important contribution toward finding ways to promote that unity in society and in common worship and service for which through this war new aspirations are awakening. For its author discerned that the time had arrived to revalue the fundamentals of religious faith, to put nobility of character before conformity of opinion, to simplify the message of the Church, to spiritualize its methods, to welcome co-operation in good works of all men who seek to do the will of God.

A. E. Dunning.

"The Congregational idea, so far as realized, cannot but nourish the finest tolerance. There are two stages in the history of tolerance. The first is achieved when the pretensions of the State to control or check the doctrine or life of the Church have been abandoned. The second will be achieved as soon as there has disappeared within the Church itself the last trace of a disposition to persecute for differences of opinion. Congregationalism has borne a conspicuous part in bringing about the former. It ought to be foremost in promoting the latter."

FREDERICK J. POWICKE,
in Henry Barrow.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

THE MARTYRDOM OF MAN

DANIEL WEBSTER ON RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

"The love of religious liberty is a stronger sentiment, when fully excited, than an attachment to civil or political freedom. That freedom which the conscience demands, and which men feel bound by their hope of salvation to contend for, can hardly fail to be attained. Conscience, in the cause of religion and the worship of the Deity, prepares the mind to act and to suffer beyond almost all other causes. It sometimes gives an impulse so irresistible, that no fetters of power or of opinion can withstand it. History instructs us that this love of religious liberty, a compound sentiment in the breast of man, made up of the clearest sense of right and the highest conviction of duty, is able to look the sternest despotism in the face, and, with means apparently most inadequate, to shape principalities and powers. There is a boldness, a spirit of daring, in religious reformers, not to be measured by the general rules which control men's purposes and actions. If the hand of power be laid upon it, this seems only to augment its force and its elasticity, and to cause its action to be more formidable and violent. Human invention has devised nothing, human power has compassed nothing, that can forcibly restrain it, when it breaks forth. Nothing can stop it, but to give way to it; nothing can check it, but indulgence. It loses its power only when it has gained its object. The principle of toleration, to which the world has come so slowly, is at once the most just and the most wise of all principles. Even when religious feeling takes a character of extravagance and enthusiasm, and seems to threaten the order of society and shake the columns of the social edifice, its principal danger is in its restraint. If it be allowed indulgence and expansion, like the elemental fires, it only agitates, and perhaps purifies, the atmosphere; while its efforts to throw off restraint would burst the world asunder."

Address at Plymouth: 1820.

THE WINNING OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

CHAPTER I

THE MARTYRDOM OF MAN

The denial of civil rights to people who hold religious opinions contrary to those in authority has been a common practice among Christian and non-Christian peoples. Governments have often disfranchised Jews, Protestants, Catholics, or Unitarians, making them incapable of holding office, denying them freedom of education and worship, and leaving them with no personal sanctities or privileges which any one must respect. The unbeliever in some mystical proposition beyond the range of observation and unrelated to human conduct, has been reviled as an enemy of God and punished as a menace to civilization. Intolerance has blotted the history of almost every Christian denomination. With this hateful spirit of intolerance has worked in all lands the fiercest and most cruel passions. Nobility of character has been no protection against its raging wrath. Public services of purest patriot-

ism and highest human value have not availed to turn aside its poisoned arrows of malignity. The innocence of youth and the sanctity of age have not restrained the inhumanity visited upon those whose differences of belief were so obscure as to be almost incapable of description.

The story of religious persecution fills many pages of ancient and modern history, and they are the blackest pages of all. Nowhere else has the inhumanity of man to man been so cruel as in the realm of religion. The most fiendish ingenuities have been used in inflicting torture upon heretics. Churchmen have vied with statesmen in inventing agencies for causing excruciating agonies by which to punish unbelievers and compel men and women to deny their faith. Of all punishments described in the annals of nations the most diabolical are those applied by papal inquisitors and Protestant persecutors. Nothing else seems so revolting, so inexcusable.

These horrors have come down even to recent times. In England, during the spring of 1612, only a year after King James' Version of the Bible appeared, in days made illustrious by Shakespere and Bacon, Bartholomew Legate and Edward Wightman were burned at the stake, being charged with erroneous opinions about the Trinity. On March 9, 1762, the Protestant, Jean Calas, was tortured, broken alive on the wheel and burned, at Toulouse, France,

being accused of murdering his son for becoming a Catholic: it was established by the highest judicial authority that he had committed suicide. This awful crime against humanity (with others like it) stirred Voltaire to undertake his glorious crusade against "L'infâme": the spirit of intolerance and persecution. On the eve of the American Revolution, James Madison, then a young man, was moved to hot indignation by seeing an estimable Baptist minister in a jail, where he had long been confined. And for what crime? Simply for preaching the Gospel! In Virginia at that time it was illegal for anyone, not an Episcopal clergyman, to conduct a religious service. Soon after, he expressed his detestation of such conditions in these words in a letter to a friend: "That diabolical, hell-conceived principle of persecution." Multitudes of similar cases burden the pages of comparatively recent history.

But the fires of the stake, so frequent and awful only a few years ago, no longer burn. The instruments of torture, used only two or three centuries ago in the most civilized lands, now rest in museums of antiquities. The cries of agony which at no distant day disturbed the peace of Smithfield and Oxford, Geneva and Leiden, are no longer heard: the spirit that worked in the breasts of Bloody Mary, John Calvin, and Philip II. has vanished. The dif-

ferences between human society then and now are great and numerous. The progress made in recognition of human rights, in growth of religious appreciation, in the emancipation of mankind from many of the worst passions that ever disgraced Church and State, is simply indescribable. The flood of tears stopped and the multitude of smiles produced, the miseries ended and the joys created by the transition from intolerance to freedom, from persecution to sympathy in religion are beyond calculation. And the question presses for an answer: By what method has this progress been won? To whom are our reverent thanks due for the numberless blessings which we enjoy?

We can understand how people should highly value their own belief and sacrifice to spread it throughout the earth. It is also easy to understand how a man may look with disfavor and even alarm upon a religious opinion radically unlike his own. But how any sane and sympathetic person can hold that his faith is the one and only infallible revelation from God and that all unbelievers in it shall everlastingly perish; that he is doing God's will in the noblest manner when he visits with contempt, hatred, disfellowship, and persecution, his brother who differs with him on obscure points of doctrine; that he is warranted in denying the unbeliever in his own creed all human rights and handing him over to torture here

and to the wrath of God hereafter,—all this seems utterly remote from present ways of thought and horribly inhuman to the conscience of this age.

In this difference of attitude and spirit, we see abundant evidence of radical mental change and vast moral progress. Nowhere else has there ever been a greater or more beneficent ethical advance than what is evident at this point: a profound transition in the ideals and habits of human life which has changed the character of civilization itself and reshaped the message and method of religion. And in view of all this the question faces us with great urgency: What influences co-operated to produce these changes? What prophets taught and what heroes fought to bestow these precious blessings upon us?

To answer this question means a long story; but it is an interesting and an important story. Here is one of the largest and gravest problems with which Churchman and Statesman, educator and philosopher, have struggled for many centuries: How to reorganize human society so that intolerance shall cease and persecution disappear; how to relate piety and patriotism so that sectarianism shall not corrupt government nor politics degrade faith; how to free religion from the passions that have perverted its life, wasted its substance, and disgraced its history; how to guarantee

freedom to the soul, so that no secular arm or ecclesiastical inquisitor shall punish honest doubt or deny the expression of sincere belief; how to liberate the Gospel from tyrannical king and intolerant priest, rationalizing religion, spiritualizing patriotism, and humanizing civilization; in other words, how to establish in both Church and State, a homo-centric order that shall guarantee and foster the humanity of man: all souls free to grow in wisdom and worship; in reverence, reason, and righteousness; and no soul coerced or punished on account of some peculiarity of faith. The story of this emancipation of the spirit of man makes one of the most thrilling chapters of human history.

The problem here under discussion was far larger and more important than the mere putting a stop to the misery and bloodshed caused by persecutions, and even that achievement has been most glorious. From the side of government, this problem ranks next in importance to the slow evolution of methods and agencies for the protection of life and property: the science and administration of law in general. The solution of this problem meant the protection of man, not simply in his material properties but in his spiritual estate; not simply freedom to exist as a citizen of the world but to live as the child of God. The State has gained efficiency in its own proper

realm by ceasing to attempt the supervision of beliefs: a task for which it has no fitness. Modern history clearly shows that when the State leaves theology and the Church alone, not only does the horror and waste of persecution cease, but civil government is then far better able to do its own specific work. Again, the State, by forcing uniformity of religious opinion, drives into opposition or loses the support of many of its best citizens: Spain, by its blundering intolerance, lost its most scientific minds; France, by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685), sent into exile its most skilful citizens; Bishop Laud drove across the Atlantic into New England thousands of conscientious people whose loss was a calamity to England.

From the point of view of religion, the granting of freedom stands next in importance to the transformation of the religious life from a sacrificial to an educational administration: the victory of reason over superstition, of spirituality over materialism, of social training over temple rites, of ethical ideals over bloody offerings, of soul culture over priestly magic, of a glad approach to God through the heart over the fears seeking blindly to propitiate him at some altar. How this ever widening divine dispensation proceeded from ancient Jewish Synagogue to Modern Congregational Church is an interesting and inspiring story.

But only passing allusion can be made to it here: later a more extended discussion of this important matter will be presented. (Chapter III.)

The point to be emphasized at present is this: To understand our heritage of civil and religious liberty and the wide sweep of religious freedom spreading through the world, we must appreciate those vast historic forces which worked through the Pilgrims; and to understand the Pilgrims, we must appreciate what spirited insights, what mighty enthusiasms, what heroic sacrifices came to expression in that small but immortal band.

The evils of the policy of intolerance and persecution in religion are far more than the sufferings imposed upon individuals. This policy injures religion as a "corporate life." It produces an atmosphere fatal to the freely expanding life of the congregation. Jesus was the product of the prophetic spirit of the Synagogue. His spirit and ideal first expressed itself in the free congregations of apostolic times. Only in such free congregations can his Gospel come to noblest fruitage. Whatever limits the freedom of the congregation or carries the Church back to the sacrificial form of religion represents a departure from the true Christian ideal.

The policy of intolerance and persecution, by destroying freedom and arresting growth has

turned the Church away from its original congregational organization to the sacrificial type. In this way it has fostered retrogression rather than progress: a return to superstitions instead of an expansion of the spiritual life of man along educational lines, individual and corporate. It was therefore inevitable that the exponents of this drastic and inhuman policy should, nearly always, have belonged to the sacrificial parties in Christendom: the Catholic, to whom the sacrificial mass is the center and essence of salvation, and to the sacerdotal churches of Protestantism, by whom the congregational life is neglected.

If the congregation is to grow in grace, expand in spiritual power, respond to the widening vision of truth, and obey the teachings of Providence, it must be free. Religion, as a spiritual evolution of the private soul, and also as the expansion of the corporate life of the congregation, cannot thrive, if poisoned by intolerance and coerced by persecution. Only by emancipating the local company of believers from these hateful and harmful bonds can they be placed in the freely expanding ways of the Spirit which mean beauty and power, holiness and service.

What then had to be done,—one of the master problems of modern times,—was not simply to stop punishing and killing people for differences of religious belief—glorious as that was

—but to devise some method by which a vastly greater good could be achieved, namely: to enable people with different ideals and convictions to live together in the religious world on terms of friendly appreciation and co-operation, such as exist in the best civic and social life. It was necessary to organize the religious life of the community so that the individual can move freely, without fear or coercion, along the line of his own thought and feeling, frank with others and sincere with himself: to make it possible for man to live his own life with no shadow of stake and gibbet falling across his pathway and no creaking of chains or rack sounding in his ears: never compelled to consider what is merely popular, politic, or permissible, but only what is true, just, and helpful.

What, therefore, had to be done, to stop the Martyrdom of Man, was to reinterpret and reorganize the religious life, so that men of differing faiths would come to realize that speculative opinions are not the deepest or most precious things and that the realm of religion is above all the place where openness of mind, charitableness of spirit, and brotherliness of action are most needed.

A great problem, indeed, to the solution of which the cries of the agonizing victims of persecution began, at the dawn of our modern era, to call impressive attention and demand im-

mediate action. Men came to see that there must be a readjustment of the relations of Church and State in order to put an end to these evils; that there must be some new rating of the values of the elements of religion, putting nobility of character above conformity of opinion and placing the simple pieties of the heart higher than abstruse dogmas; that the Church itself must be so reorganized that it would simplify its message and spiritualize its methods to the end that the soul might freely grow in grace and the congregation engage more largely in good works; and also, that a new fellowship might be created among the churches themselves, so that the scandals of sectarianism should cease and so that the friends of God should present a solid front, not only in the warfare against sin, but also in all the ministries for the relief of suffering.

II

In order to see what had to be done to bring about the great deliverance and to give man freedom to grow in religion as in other departments of life, the original Christian ideal must be briefly defined and then the departure from it during many centuries must be still more briefly indicated.

Jesus declared that his kingdom was not of

this world. He probably meant that what he had in mind was a spiritual character rather than a political régime. He described the kingdom of heaven in terms of Inner Life. The Gospel which he lived and taught was the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man. He affirmed that salvation is life in the spirit, spending itself in service: repentance its beginning, purity its condition, love its motive, growth its method, fruitfulness its test, character its organic expression, peace its reward. It is not given as a privilege or monopoly to a few, but all are invited to share it on equal terms. To possess the kingdom of heaven nothing is required except what the private heart can accomplish. No means need be used except the exercise of the powers belonging to man as a man,—inherent in him as a child of God. The one thing that Jesus most clearly and forcibly taught, what made his teaching *glad tidings,* was the great truth that no temple rite or priestly service is necessary to enable man to reach the fellowship and benediction of God. Let man open his heart in love, mercy and forgiveness, and the Father will enter to hear and bless.

Jesus used no force to establish his Gospel; he appealed solely to the love and reason of the individual. He asked no favors of kings to spread this *new life.* It would develop like leaven and triumph by its own inherent power.

He sought no soldier to protect the truth from destruction; it was supreme because enthroned in the heart. He devised no political machinery to institute the kingdom among men; it was mightier than throne or temple. And yet, strange to say, upon his mere remark to Simon (Matt. XVI, 18-19), calling him a "rock," and promising to give him the keys of the kingdom of heaven, his followers, some centuries later, built the fabric of a vast priesthood, whose head, the Pope, presumed to command the rulers of states to do his bidding, not only in matters of religion, but also in all secular affairs.

On this notable passage the following statements need to be made: The language is foreign to the teaching of Jesus, who constantly spoke of the *Kingdom* as a realm of life and love, not of a *Church* as a realm of authority. The words are plainly the dialect of a later age. The original thought has been lost or obscured in transmission: the teaching reshaped to meet subsequent ecclesiastical conditions. This inference is confirmed by the reading of Tatian (170) in his Diatessaron: "Thou art Peter and the gates of hell shall not prevail against thee,"—a natural, personal encouragement which fits into the conditions which then existed. Moreover, how could Jesus, who taught that his kingdom was *not* of this world (John XVIII, 36), give Peter a commission to *rule*

the world! This does violence to the whole spirit of his life and message.

The explicit statements of Paul prove that Peter held no such rank (James the brother of Jesus was head of the Apostolic Church at Jerusalem), and he is supported by New Testament texts, by early tradition, and by later historical testimony. Moreover, the popes slowly acquired their authority against the protests of powerful opponents, who appealed to ancient customs which contradicted these aggressions of Rome; and to maintain their ambitions the bishops of Rome used means and methods which violated every command of the Master. Popes have often set aside the "infallible decrees" of their predecessors. They have never at any time been able to rule more than a fraction of Christendom. Today, scholars and scientists, statesmen, philanthropists, and teachers of ethics, pay little or no heed to their encyclicals. In the present world-crisis, not Pope Benedict, but an American layman, President Wilson, has given expression to the conscience of mankind.

The brief discussion of this matter may seem, not only unimportant, but remote from the subject of these pages. But this brief review is necessary for two reasons: (1) We need to remind ourselves that the transfer of the emphasis of the Church from *service* to *authority* was a veritable corruption of Chris-

tianity. (2) It is important to realize that it was this assertion of "authority" over the thoughts and beliefs of men that led to the terrible Martyrdom of Man which we are considering. It was in this brief text, so fatally misused, that the Papal Hierarchy claimed to find warrant for its persecutions. So that, to set this subject clearly before our minds in the light of historic truth is the prerequisite to the understanding of the origin and nature of the inhumanities which we are studying.

For a long time, the Christian Churches remained true to the ideal of their Master, as stated in the words: "Render, therefore, unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's and unto God the things that are God's." How much better it would have been if this policy could have been continued through the centuries: absolute separation of Church and State! Though often persecuted (not however so much for their faith, but because as "secret societies," which were prohibited by law, they were considered dangerous to the Empire), Christians stood apart from political affairs, the churches attending strictly to their own functions and ministries as religious bodies. They were engaged in teaching men and women to be disciples of Jesus, conducting a spiritual worship, educating old and young in the principles of the Gospel, and training people in all manner of good works. They did not meddle

in state matters, but in making good citizens for the Kingdom of God they were also making the best citizens for the Roman Empire.

These churches, for many years, were little independent democracies, with no special distinctions between laity and clergy: there were no real *clerical orders* for a long time. Their officers were elective, and subject to removal by popular vote. The various churches were bound together by brotherly feelings, but no coercion was exercised by one church over others.

III

By the end of the third century, however, Christianity had become a compact organization, embracing large numbers of people, holding extensive possessions, maintaining many schools and charities, rejoicing in great scholars and skilful leaders. It had become too powerful to be longer ignored. As evidence of its prominence in the Empire, came the celebrated Edict of Milan in 313. This Edict granted freedom of worship to all, not only to Christian but to all forms of faith; and yet, the law did not secure what we at present understand by religious liberty. It did, however, stop the persecution of Christians, and it gave Christians full legal protection. In 321, Constantine legalized the bequests made to

Christian Churches, and commanded the civil observance of Sunday; and in 323, he ordered the effigies of heathen gods erased from the imperial coins. Thus, this first Christian Emperor, Constantine, by his Edicts near the beginning of the fourth century, slipped Christianity into the position of a *state religion* (324), which the worship of the Roman Emperor had long occupied. Christianity had now conquered the Roman world, but the worldly spirit had also, in many respects, conquered the churches.

Within a few years after toleration was granted them and the Christian Faith had become the established religion of the Empire, Christians themselves began to use force to support their views, and heresy (erroneous belief) became a crime punishable by death. From the first, even in apostolic days, there had been different parties within the churches; and later, different sectarian churches. And these warring factions early began to hurl *anathemas* back and forth with great bitterness, but naturally there were no persecutions of Christians by Christians until Christianity itself ascended the throne of the Cæsars. Or what would be a truer statement: until men professing to be disciples of Jesus became emperors.

Thus the Church was first the ward; then, in after ages, the master of the State. The in-

terests of Christianity now became the subject and concern of statecraft. The emperor decided what was the true faith, and he punished those who believed otherwise with banishment, confiscation, or death.

In 385, Emperor Maximus, who ruled in the West, condemned to death Priscillian (accused of advocating mystical opinions akin to Gnosticism) and six of his followers at Treves; the first death penalty inflicted by Christians for mere heresy, under the Theodosian law against heretics. But the true spirit of the Master still survived in some breasts, for Bishop Martin of Tours sent a vigorous protest against the cruel act to the Emperor, and he refused to commune with the bishops who instigated the act. But the Martyrdom of Man in the name of the Cross, the slaughter of men for holding erroneous beliefs about The Christ, had now begun, and for centuries it spread with increasing cruelties.

The union of Church and State produced the results which always flow from this unholy alliance. Having lost the secret of Jesus, people felt that religion needed the support of the strong arm of the law and that it was right to suppress unbelief by all the penalties used by the State against crimes in general. Christianity was transformed by the worldly spirit of Roman Imperialism, while the administration of law was poisoned by the sectarian

passions of bitter Christian zealots; both organizations were corrupted and weakened. The disciples of Jesus forsook their spiritual tasks and gave themselves to worldly ambitions and political intrigues; the machinery of civil government was diverted from the duties of general order and public justice to alien or unfruitful tasks in the intangible and mystical realm of speculative belief. This work of punishing heretics was a matter foreign to Roman Law, with which the civil administrators of the Empire had not been trained to deal.

Such a combination could only bring disaster to all concerned: the Gospel went into captivity to worldly passion and Roman Jurisprudence became a terrible engine for inflicting injustice. The hearts of men were now filled with hatred of heretics; the churches were distracted by bitter controversies; intolerance became a virtue and persecution the noblest service to God. The world was full of the woes of those outlawed on account of unbelief and the earth red with the blood shed to appease the wrath of the populace against "the enemies of Christ," whose only crime was an honest doubt or perhaps a sublimer faith. The story is long and sad; but we need to understand it in order to appreciate our present blessings of civil and religious liberty.

IV

It was no accident but manifest destiny that made the city of Rome the center of Christendom. It had been the seat of authority for centuries. The marvelous network of administration by which the nations had long been held and governed centered in that city, from which power spread and to which all eyes looked. This fact alone naturally gave the Bishop of Rome distinction and prominence. Other influences helped to make the Roman Church imperial. The missionary work spreading widely from that city strengthened the hands of its bishop by creating a clerical army and new churches obedient to his word. While the Christian leaders in the Orient were wasting their energies on petty and obscure problems of speculative theology, the Roman bishops, sagacious, conservative, and practical men, gave themselves to the more fruitful tasks of administration; and, by avoiding divisive controversies and settling disputes with wisdom, they drew the churchmen of many lands into friendly relations with the Imperial Church. Also, in time, the weakness of the civil power in the West (the emperors had long spent most of their days in Constantinople) and the assaults of the Barbarians made it easy for the Roman bishop to gratify his ambitions and assume great authority. Suc-

cessive popes marched onward toward supreme power, not because Jesus gave Peter a commission that conferred world-dominion; but this legend came into being to justify aggressive policies which issued during a slow evolution, due to the historic forces which have just been indicated.

In 440, a man, at once a wise statesman and a zealous churchman, of striking character and remarkable qualities of leadership, became Bishop of Rome. It was a time of crisis and transition; and Leo I. was master of the situation. He saw the necessity and the opportunity for a strong hand; and he improved the occasion to forward the interests of the Church and the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome. He occupied the vacant seat of the Cæsars, but he exercised a power which they never possessed, —the power of Christian faith and love, which touched, as they could not, the hearts of men. Thrilled by the ideas of Augustine respecting a spiritual empire, set forth in the "City of God," Leo bent his great energies to the building up of a new civilization under the form of the Christian Church. He labored, arbitrarily but earnestly, to exalt his power as Bishop of Rome in order to repress violence, to destroy the old paganism which had once more revived with show of power and beauty and had furnished a few years before a martyr in Hypatia (415), and he did much to establish

far and wide unity of faith and uniformity of church government.

All this Leo sought with courageous activity to accomplish. He felt himself the agent of divine Providence and the embodiment of supreme power to save humanity by the assertion of the authority of the Roman Church. He met the fierce barbarian Attila, and overawed him by his personal bearing. He everywhere maintained the supremacy of Rome as the representative of the primacy given to Peter; and he drew churches to himself by love when he could, while he used force to compel submission when necessary. He held his clergy to the practical tasks of social reorganization rather than let them waste themselves on doctrinal subtilties.

Very soon, in 444, came his clash with Bishop Hilary of Arles, in which the matter in dispute was whether the church in Gaul was subject to him or to its own bishop. And Leo, by maintaining his mastery, and ending the Gallician vicariate, definitely began that papal aggression which was consummated in 1870 at the Vatican Council by the formal declaration of the infallibility of the Pope. In all this, Leo often used what may seem to us questionable methods; but when we remember the severity of the crisis and the greatness of his labors, we pass a lenient judgment and rejoice over many of his services to civilization.

This movement for the supremacy of the Papacy culminated about the middle of the eleventh century in Hildebrand,—a carpenter's son, born in Tuscany, whose promise as a lad gained for him a good education. His remarkable qualities soon brought him to the front with a firm determination to reform the Church and redeem society, by making the supremacy of the Papacy a reality and infusing into it a new spirit. A man of immense resources, impressive bearing, powerful will, and tremendous energy, who for twenty-four years directed six popes in asserting the authority of the Papacy, and then for twelve years, 1073-1085, he was himself pope, taking the name Gregory VII. Hildebrand was a great politician, who knew how to use one nation against another, taking advantage of the jealousies of kings and the disorders of the time to gain his ends and advance the interests of Rome. He could touch men through their ambitions, leading some by their selfishness, while commanding others by appeals to their better nature.

These policies Rome has since followed and the papal system which Hildebrand helped to build up, in its essential elements, still endures. He subjected the clergy to rigid discipline, enforcing celibacy and absolute obedience to Rome. He put an end to "lay investiture,"—the right of local civil rulers to appoint favor-

ites to clerical positions in their own lands,—and in this way he centralized ecclesiastical power and brought all priests directly under the control of the pope. But most of all, he asserted and maintained the superiority of the Papacy to all temporal powers and the right of the pope to make and unmake kings, using against the disobedient, more rigorously than his predecessors, two weapons: *excommunication,* which cuts the individual off from the Church and the means of salvation (an awful punishment in those days); and *interdict,* which lays a curse upon the whole nation, so that no Church can be opened and no rite can be performed. It was the latter which brought Henry IV., King of Germany, to plead with him for pardon, at Canossa, where Hildebrand kept the monarch standing in the cold for nearly four days, before he would receive the royal penitent!

Thus the Gospel first came under bondage to the State and then to the Roman Hierarchy, which made vassals of both statesman and philosopher. Belief was enforced as compulsory, and the avenues to God were closed to all except those who obeyed the priest and paid him tribute. A more unfortunate condition for religion could not have been devised. A greater perversion of the Gospel of Jesus cannot possibly be imagined. What he made accessible to all, the Church conditioned upon

credulity and servility. The reason and love that he set free were put under deadening bonds. The Father whom he brought near was made difficult to approach. The simple pieties of the heart in which he located Eternal Life were supplanted by mystical rites, which only the priest could administer and which were the sole means for reaching heaven. The Hierarchy had a monopoly of the bread of life, and this power was used most despotically.

It was inevitable that conflicts should arise and calamities follow. Such extreme ambitions invited opposition. Such arrogant aggressions created unbelief and rebellion. In the twelfth century these results appeared. Heretics arose in the south of France: the Waldenses and the Cathari. The Roman Church felt that its very existence was threatened. These attacks must be resisted; these heretics destroyed. The authority of the Papacy must be vindicated. The atrocities of the Albigensian Crusade followed (after 1200). To accomplish more completely the destruction of its enemies, the Papacy instituted the Inquisition (about 1232). Later the Spanish Inquisition (1480) extended and intensified these brutal methods. In its two and a half centuries, 340,000 persons suffered as its victims: 32,000 being burned to death. The principle of this effective but monstrous engine of papal ambition and tyranny, the most un-

holy and frightful ever devised by man, was murderous. As Lord Acton (a Catholic), a competent authority, stated, it meant "religious assassination," and assassination in its most brutal and merciless form (Letters, 300. 1904).

The chief feature of the inquisitional process was a *questioning under torture* to secure confession of guilt or to obtain evidence against others: both objects unjust and inhuman. The following is a moderate statement by a fair and competent author: "The torture took place at midnight, in a gloomy dungeon, dimly lighted with torches. The victim,—whether man, matron, or tender virgin,—was stripped naked and stretched upon the wooden bench. Water, weights, fires, pulleys, screws,—all the appliances by which the sinews could be strained without cracking, the bones crushed without breaking, and the body racked exquisitely without giving up its ghost, were now put into operation. . . . All the forms of torture which the devilish ingenuity of the monks had invented. The imagination sickens when striving to keep pace with their dreadful realities" (Motley, Dutch Republic. I. 275).

Strange as it may seem, otherwise gentle people worked frantically at this horrible business. The Church madly and blindly followed its instinct of self-preservation. It felt that to tolerate unbelief meant its own death; it

must crush opposition or perish. Its impelling motive was an insanity of religious enthusiasm under the guidance of both hate and superstition. The awful mistake of making a crime of free thought, of putting an institution above humanity. It was no new thing in Christendom. By the end of the fourth century Church and State united to put infidels to death. The Arians, who suffered so much and so frequently for their heresies were, as a rule, more tolerant and merciful. But for four centuries after 1200, the Catholic inquisitors blackened the history of Europe with most terrible atrocities. Nothing so horrible is found in all the world outside Christendom. The Church made investigation a sin, punished free thought as a crime, and barred the way of mental and moral progress by the torture of the rack and the martyrdom of the stake.

The spirit of intolerance and the practice of persecution have not only inspired hatreds and created miseries beyond the power of imagination to conceive, or of language to describe, but they also kept back scientific discovery, civic progress, and religious development for centuries. In every realm of human good we would have been today centuries in advance of our present position had not rack and stake subjugated the human mind and blocked the highway of humanity. If such men as Roger Bacon,—dying just before 1300, after years

of cruel imprisonment; Copernicus, whose theories were looked upon with disfavor by successive popes and rejected by Luther and even by Lord Bacon; Bruno,—burned at Rome in 1600; Galileo,—cruelly persecuted and hurried to an untimely grave in 1642, because he trusted his eyes and his telescope rather than Biblical texts—to refer to only a few conspicuous names in one department of human effort,—if these and similar inquirers had been encouraged instead of being persecuted and slaughtered, we would now be enjoying blessings which will not appear for generations to come!

It is impossible to contemplate the indescribable cruelties and innumerable miseries of the Martyrdom of Man without feelings of intense horror. The modern heart is overwhelmed by the hateful story of unnecessary human suffering. When, by contrast, we call to mind the present blessings of civil and religious liberty, then our ardent thanks go out to those who won the great victory for freedom. When we realize how much the happiness of mankind has been enlarged because the passions and policies which operated through the Inquisition have disappeared, then we are stirred by a deep sense of gratitude that we live in a world free from the tortures of the rack, and where heretics are no longer burned at the stake. When we enter into the joys of those who now

have freedom of research, of speech, of worship, then we are moved to crown with highest honors those lordly souls, who did valiant service in putting an end to the reign of terror and in bringing in a new day of peace between Church and State, between Religion and Science. We rejoice with exceeding great joy in all that has been done to foster the spirit of brotherhood among all disciples of a common Master, however different their religious opinions.

And just because the people of Plymouth contributed so largely to this beneficent achievement, it is worth while in these Tercentenary Days to study the origin and character of those great historic forces which worked through them and constitute what may well be called the Pilgrim Glory.

CHAPTER II

EARLY PROPHETS AND PROTESTANT FAILURES

THE EDICT OF TORDA, TRANSYLVANIA: JANUARY 6, 1568

"His Royal Highness, as in former Diets, so in this now present, confirms that ministers of the Gospel may everywhere preach and explain it, each according to his own understanding; and the community may accept or reject the teaching as it thinks good. No force may be used to compel acceptance against conviction. Congregations are allowed to have each the preacher they wish. Preachers shall not be molested, nor any one persecuted, on account of religion; no one is permitted to remove from office, or to imprison, any one because of his teaching. Faith being the gift of God, which comes by hearing, and the hearing through the Word of God."

The Diet, won by the eloquence of Francis David, passed this Edict by a unanimous vote. This did not mean absolute religious freedom, but complete toleration for the four received religions of the principality: Catholic, Lutheran, Calvinistic, Unitarian.

I gladly appropriate the words of my friend, Rev. Dr. William Channing Gannett: "This was a most wonderful stretch of toleration for those days; probably the widest known in Christian history up to that time; and so wide that in most Christian lands, whether Catholic or Protestant, its like was no more than dreamed of for generations after. When we remember what the Inquisition was doing in the Netherlands in this very year, 1568—[a sentence of the Holy Office condemned practically all the inhabitants of the Netherlands to death as heretics—Feb. 16, 1568],—and that St. Bartholomew's Massacre in France was only four years away, and that Protestant leaders, German, French, Swiss, all but the Italian refugees, chorused approval of Calvin for burning Servetus, and that Shakespere might have watched heretics burning or drowning in England, and that fifty years after Shakespere's death English prisons were crowded with Quakers and Baptists,—when we remember these things, whatever rebate of praise may be needed, glory enough belongs to Transylvania and Torda and Prince John Sigismund for their Edict of Toleration in 1568."

CHAPTER II

EARLY PROPHETS AND PROTESTANT FAILURES

I

During the two hundred years previous to the discovery of America, many great events had occurred in Europe and radical changes were impending at the end of that period. Seven Crusades had swept eastward (1095-1291). The Holy Sepulchre was still, however, in the hands of the Moslem Infidels; but eastern scholars had fled westward with their literary treasures, an event which hastened a resurrection from the graves of ignorance and superstition. Amidst these varied activities, certain agencies, both material and spiritual, were effecting a revolution in civilization: its basis, spirit, and ideal.

The movement was complex, widespread, and radical. (1) Great economic forces were at work. The breakup of the Feudal System, hastened by the use of gunpowder, had effaced many class distinctions and had done much to liberate the masses. Such scourges as the

"Black Death," by sweeping off millions of workmen, had made labor high and had given more room and larger privileges to the toilers, hastening the rise of the "third estate": a great Middle Class dominated by the secular spirit. The rise of cities and the multiplication of trade guilds had evolved social impulses and promoted independence. Great maritime enterprises, with wider sweep and more venturesome spirit, made possible by the Mariner's Compass brought from the East about 1200, had broadened the popular horizon and thrilled the popular heart with vast ambitions.

(2) Creative intellectual forces were at work widely and deeply. A wider and better knowledge of the Greek and Latin literatures stimulated imagination, refined taste, developed reason, and humanized the spirit of man. An increasing acquaintance with the Bible, in Vulgate and vernacular translations, awakened inquiries and suggested new conceptions of God, Jesus, and salvation. Its cruder portions were better than relics and crucifixes; its noblest passages infinitely more helpful than Mass and Confessional. A few people began to ask questions and investigate the phenomena of Nature. Even alchemy and astrology opened doors toward discovery. The study of law and medicine provided a new outlook upon the world and produced a new

sense of the power of mind and the sanctity of Nature. The invention of printing,—Gutenberg's first Latin Bible was printed about 1455!—multiplied man's intellectual resources, reducing the cost of books to one-fifth their former price.

(3) Certain domestic and patriotic impulses came to mastery. The home instinct asserted itself against celibacy and monasticism. The love of country made itself widely felt and people began to experience the thrill of nationalism. Secular ambitions overcame the ascetic temper and the demand was made that the world, as a whole, be redeemed and reorganized, here and now. A worldliness, sometimes sensual, but often sanctified by noble and humane ideals, crowded aside the vague and non-human "otherworldliness" which had long dominated Europe.

(4) A general revolt arose against the Roman Church. There was a growing protest of the moral sense against the corruptions of the priesthood. There was a deepening protest of sincere piety against the scandals of the Papacy: the Babylonian Captivity (1309-1377), when the papal court was full of intrigue, venality, and sensuality, so vividly portrayed by Petrarch, and then the Great Schism, first with two popes (1378) and then (about 1400) *with three infallible vice-gerents of God!* There was an increasing protest of the intellect

against Romish superstitions: so numerous, gross, and absurd. There was an angry protest of the heart against the cruel Martyrdom of Man. There was a rising revolt of reason against the hierarchical enslavement of the mind to irrational dogmas and fruitless forms. There was also an expanding protest of patriotic nationalism against the tyranny of papal policies.

In all this stir of new forces, mental and moral, social, industrial, and political, the great obstacle in the way of progress towards religious liberty was the feeling: I alone have the absolute faith which saves the soul, and the State must enforce it. As long as people generally shared this feeling, the persecution of heretics seemed not only the righteous, but the merciful thing to do. A change of view at this point had to take place. Men must come to see: (1) That there is no such absolute faith which alone secures salvation. (2) That religion does not need the aid of the State to maintain itself. (3) That the human reason may safely be left free, for God himself abides in the rational soul. These seem like self-evident statements today, but it took many generations to incorporate them in government policy and church order; and in a large part of Christendom they are not yet accepted as true.

II

To find one of the first men who did see these great truths, we have to go back to Marsilius of Padua, who, in 1324, wrote a book, *Defensor Pacis,* influential and epoch-making, in which he set Church and State apart, holding that the State should have no religious functions and the priest no power in secular affairs. This was the prophecy of the modern secular State, which is thus described by an eminent modern author: "The Modern State does not consider religion a condition of legal status. Public and private law are independent of creed. The Modern State protects freedom of belief and unites peacefully different churches and religious societies. It abstains from all persecution of dissenters or unbelievers" (Bluntschli, The Theory of the State).

Little is known of the early life of Marsilius. He was a student, at several famous universities, becoming a master in theology, medicine, and law, the last two studies especially conducive to breadth of mind and liberality of spirit. He seems to have finished his education at the University of Paris, where he was highly honored, serving as its Rector; and it was there that he wrote his notable book, in the three months from April to June, 1324.

This book he dedicated to Louis of Bavaria, which was quite a natural thing for him to do,

for the author knew that the King (then Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire) was an opponent of the Roman Papacy, and would therefore be interested in a work which assailed the pretenses of the Catholic Hierarchy; while, for the same reason, his imperial protection of the author could be assumed. Marsilius at once went to Nuremberg and became an associate and advisor of Louis, probably greatly helping the King in his opposition to the pope. He played an important part during Louis' campaigns in Italy in 1328 when Pope John XXII. was temporarily deposed. Marsilius apparently remained under Louis' protection until his own death in 1343. It seems, however, that the King, toward the last, repudiated some of his extreme views.

The work, *Defensor Pacis,* was the most powerful treatise of the age, far more so than Dante's De Monarchia, issued a few years before Dante died, 1321. It exerted a profound and radical influence upon the thinking of Western Europe for two centuries. Lützow well states the case: "Its ideas seem to have been so generally shared by [advanced] thinkers of the time that they had about become common property" (Hus, 9). Wiclif (born the year it was issued, 1324) borrowed extensively from it; this was directly charged by Pope Gregory XI. in his various Bulls directed against Wiclif and Oxford in 1377.

The history of this remarkable treatise shows its immense influence for many years: Soon after it appeared, Pope John XXII. condemned it and its author (Ap. 3, 1327), and he referred to it in his official documents ten times in the next four years. For over two hundred years, it was repeatedly denounced by popes and by leaders of the Inquisition. So necessary did it seem to Rome to destroy this work that it was included four times in lists of "prohibited books" from 1546 to 1556, one of these drawn up under the direction of Charles V. It was translated into French before 1353, a fact which shows the wide popular demand for it. An Italian translation appeared in 1363; a German translation in 1522; an English translation in 1535. Eight German editions were issued from 1612 to 1692: more than a score of editions and translations from 1324 to 1692! An edition of the Latin text was published by Richard Scholtz at Leipzig in 1914. The teachings of Marsilius respecting the relation of Church and State, and consequently on toleration and persecution, so clear, original and radical, were powerful forces in Western Europe for two centuries and a half.

What were the teachings of this remarkable book? In its disconnected paragraphs, overloaded with unimportant details, some great general truths are found, which seem very modern, and which show that the author was

far ahead of his age. These for instance: His central idea was "the sovereignty of the people"; that government should be democratic: the people themselves being the source of civil power with sole authority to make laws. He held that the people had the right to elect their rulers and also to call them to account, and in case of injustice or misbehavior, to depose them and even put them to death. There is found in its pages also a plea for limited armament. And Marsilius supported these propositions by arguments based upon a rational interpretation of Scripture and by appeals to the fundamental facts of common human experience. He was undoubtedly indebted to Greek and Roman philosophers for many of these ideas, especially to the *Politics* of Aristotle.

But the chief interest of the treatise lies in its general purpose: its demand for a separation of Church and State as the only way by which a lasting peace can be secured: indicated by its very title: *Defensor Pacis.* This part of its teaching was peculiarly original. The defence or assurance of peace must be secured by separating the duties of civil government and the functions of religion. The horrors of the Martyrdom of Man deeply impressed Marsilius. He saw that the meddling of popes and priests in state affairs led to bad politics and innumerable wars. On the other hand,

when churchmen departed from their spiritual functions and became politicians, they weakened the Church and lessened their influence as moral guides and religious leaders. The State must be supreme in its own sphere, as a constitutional system based on popular rights, using democratic methods, and never going beyond the limit of civil affairs. To Marsilius the State was superior to the Church in so far as it was its duty to protect itself from ecclesiastical domination and compel priests to keep strictly to their spiritual functions. It was not, however, the duty of the State to determine heresy or punish heretics, except when they violated some civil law.

All this being granted, it naturally follows that popes and priests have no right to excommunicate or interdict. The Church has no right to compel belief or punish heresy: the Inquisition was condemned as an offense to both political rights and religious principles (Part II, Chapter VII.). The power of priests should be restricted to spiritual affairs; and when so restricted, the work of the Church will become far more successful and the personal influence of the clergy much more fruitful. Marsilius contended that all priests should be equal in power, while the Pope should only have certain privileges as the honorary president of Christendom!

However commonplace these principles may

seem today, they presented a revolutionary programme when set forth in 1324. They pointed the way to the great deliverance of the world from the Martyrdom of Man. No wonder that he and his book were bitterly condemned by popes. No wonder that eager minds kept demanding new editions of his work. A single quotation from it, is all that can be given here: "I say it is not lawful for any man to judge a heretic or misbeliever, or compel him to any pain or punishment during this life." How surprisingly modern that looks!

III

The story of John Wiclif (1324-1384) need not be given here. He was in college at Oxford when Marsilius died: there he remained as student, teacher, preacher, writer, to the end; translator of Scripture into English for the common people ("As Lords in England have the Bible in French, so it were not against reason that they [the people] hadden the same sentence in English"); writer of many tracts and treatises in both Latin and English in exposition of Gospel Christianity and popular rights; a true democrat before the time of democracies and a real socialist before the age of Socialism. He was truly catholic in religious spirit, setting up no dogmatic standard

by which to include his friends in heaven or exclude his enemies; he put pulpit in place of altar, emphasizing preaching as more valuable than sacraments,—he interpreted Christianity as an education of the soul, whose salvation was not dependent on any priestly rite, and over whose thought no pope should rule.

The Church he described as a free congregation of all Christian people, who must be saved by their own merit; with no sacramental magic and no final authority; an organization to promote morality by the exercise of freedom and the study of Scripture; an association of the disciples of Christ, intent on the practice of charity and the cultivation of piety rather than on monastic vows and physical penances, in the glad faith that "the real presence" is found wherever a human heart is penitent, forgiving and loving.

But we are not so much concerned here with the incidents of his career or his teachings on religion in general as with his assault upon the papal power; for it was this which gave him his abiding influence and wide popularity, which made him the leader of a Reformation broader than that advocated by many later Protestants, and which clearly pointed the way to the only permanent escape from the Martyrdom of Man. His teachings on these points he set forth, when about fifty years old, in his masterpiece: *De Dominio Divino,*—Concerning

God's Authority or Lordship; another work followed on Civil Power or Man's Lordship (De Civili Dominio). In his discussions, as has been stated, he assumed as fundamental the theories set forth by his predecessor, Marsilius.

The central theme of his discussion is the origin and nature of both spiritual and secular power, and the right relation of each to the other. Wiclif denied that power or authority resides solely in the papal Hierarchy or that saving grace flows to the individual solely through the sacraments,—the Roman Catholic claim,—and he boldly asserted that both descend directly from God alone to the individual and depend upon heart life and personal service. In this connection, he clearly stated and forcibly expounded these propositions: (1) That even the universal approval of mankind could not warrant the Roman popes in holding political dominion over the world. (2) That the disciples of Christ have no right to impose temporal penalties upon people: this would end all persecutions. (3) That popes and priests are not independent of public opinion but may lawfully be criticised, censured, and even be removed from office: sovereignty, both secular and spiritual, inheres only in the people themselves.

These radical and revolutionary principles did not root deeply in that age, or at once find organic expression. But these general doc-

trines, that struck at all tyrannies in both Church and State, were widely taught by the companies of popular preachers whom Wiclif trained and sent into all parts of the land. These seed-truths were never entirely lost or wholly destroyed; and the successors of those whom he personally trained, the Lollards, kept them alive, so that in after years they yielded a noble harvest in England.

In far-off Bohemia, they made for a time a deeper impression. The University of Prague was then a new institution, and its great professor, Adalbert Ranconis, gave money to send its bright students for further education to Oxford and Paris. Those going home from Oxford carried to their native land the ideas of Wiclif. His manuscripts were there lovingly studied and widely copied. Another circumstance helped this movement. The young English King, Richard II., in 1382, married Anne, a Bohemian princess, and she became an enthusiastic disciple of Wiclif, aiding this good work for a dozen years until her death in 1394. Meanwhile, John Hus had become an ardent follower of Wiclif, and his great book, "Ecclesia," was little more than a reproduction of Wiclif's teachings. His shameful death at Constance in 1415, in violation of the "safe-conduct" which had been given him, profoundly stirred Europe; and though Bohemia, in the war that followed, had

to yield to papal arms, the Bohemians won the right of the laity to the cup, or use of the wine at mass or the Lord's Supper—the only country where this is permitted by the Catholic Church!

It is a surprising fact that Wiclif, ridiculing mass and confessional, condemning the supremacy of the Papacy, denouncing persecutions, and asserting the rights of the people, should have been permitted to live in comparative peace and die a natural death. He did have troubles toward the end of his life: popes condemned him; and, long after his death, the Council of Constance (1415) ordered his bones dug up and burned—a pitiful exhibition of hate! Several causes, however, contributed to his protection: His life lay, mainly, in the long reign of Edward III. (1327-1377), when the English people, engaged in the Hundred Years' War with France, were strongly opposed to the popes, who, in those years, were tools of French kings. These other circumstances also protected him: He was the honored chaplain of the King, the beloved idol of the University of Oxford, while both the struggling peasants of the country and also the sturdy laymen of London saw in him their friend and advocate.

The figure of Wiclif looms large on the horizon of modern history. He saw the central principles of the impending crisis. He clearly

described the path of progress. He outlined what means must be used to solve the vast civil and religious problems then at hand. He set in operation forces that continued to act until radical reforms were secured. To the abolition of the Martyrdom of Man he made an immense contribution. His assault upon the Papacy, his plea for Gospel Christianity, his advocacy of popular rights, his condemnation of persecution,—these were vital factors in the making of modern civilization.

IV

The Reformation in England, slow in starting some hundred and fifty years after Wiclif, was a native and a national movement. King Henry VIII. was as bigoted and tyrannical as any pope, and three of the men who cooperated with him were compromising politicians,—Wolsey, Cromwell, Cranmer,—without clear vision or deep piety. Sir Thomas More (1478-1535), England's first lay chancellor (1529-1535), was never in agreement with the King respecting divorce or religion; and he lost his head because he would not agree to surrender the supremacy of the pope and make Henry head of the Church in England, nor would he agree to guarantee the succession of the crown through Anne Boleyn. Any such opposition was to the King treason. To be

friendly to Rome or to be very much of a Reformer was, to Henry, equally offensive.

The book which More published (1516) before he became prominent as a statesman, *Utopia,* displayed a remarkably broad and tolerant spirit. By the laws of the commonwealth there described, no one was to be punished for his religious beliefs: only those who violently attacked the religion of another were to be banished on the charge of sedition. Atheists were tolerated but not permitted to hold office.

All this is most clearly and interestingly stated in the following paragraph: "Utopus made a law that every man might be of what religion he pleased, and might endeavor to draw others to it by the force of argument, and by amicable and modest means, but without bitterness against those of other opinions; but that he ought to use no other force but that of persuasion, and was neither to mix with it reproaches nor violence; and such as did otherwise were to be condemned to banishment or slavery" (Book II.: *Religions of the Utopians*).

Unfortunately, More himself did not, as chancellor, live up to his own teachings. He was exceedingly severe in his treatment of those charged with heresy. He personally engaged in the search of John Pepit's house (London) for heretical books. And in 1532,

he advised Henry VIII. "to punish them [Protestants like Tindal, the translator of the Bible] according to justice by sore painful death, both for example and for infection of others" (Creighton, Persecution and Tolerance, 107). The words of Sir Thomas More on this subject have been pleasant reading, and they express the fancy of a generous spirit; but as a practical statesman, he helped to continue the Martyrdom of Man.

In the same year that More's Utopia appeared, Erasmus published his "Greek Text of the New Testament" (1516); the finest product of the *New Learning* by its greatest master; and this work at once promoted religious progress. It provided a text-book which helped toward more historical, rational, and spiritual views of Christianity. It aided the Reformation in various ways: (1) It placed in the hands of scholars these New Testament writings, freed from the gross errors which cumbered the pages of the Vulgate and which had long served to support the errors and assumptions of the Papacy. (2) It helped to banish from the minds of Christian students the mist and mysticism of medieval scholasticism and lead Christian thinking back to the spirit of Christ and the simplicities of the primitive church. (3) It aided the liberation of the Church from bondage to tradition; and in so doing, it promoted free inquiry.

Erasmus' *reconstructed* New Testament Text made clear the real character of the Biblical page, by stripping off the mystical gloss and making plain its somewhat uncertain and human texture.

Erasmus (1467-1536) was then at the height of his power and fame, accepted as the imperial leader of the European world of letters, occupying a position similar to that later held by Voltaire. A Dutchman, born at Rotterdam, he had studied and won high honors at several great universities. By his prodigious industry, his remarkable versatility, his vast funds of information, his perfect command of elegant Latin, then the language of all scholars, he had become the supreme *Humanist* of all the ages: broad in culture, clear in thought, mild in temper, keen in wit, comprehensive in his views.

The relation of Erasmus to the religious problems of his time was peculiar. He hated priests but he loved the Catholic Church. He despised papal pretenses and tyrannies, but he had no patience with actual revolt against Rome. He ridiculed the superstitions of the Catholic masses, but he also ridiculed the narrowness of the Reforming Sects. A competent scholar has well written: "His sharp pen, keener than any sword, fenced busily with his many enemies and he never delivered a thrust without drawing blood. From his secure retreat [Basel] he not only fought with, but

laughed at, the champions of both parties." And though he bitterly condemned the Reformers, it was only in Protestant centers,—Cambridge, Oxford, Basel, where he spent the last sixteen years of his life,—that he found safety and freedom to work!

Like many in later times, Erasmus wished to improve the Church *from the inside.* He wished for reform, but he was no reformer; and yet, he mightily aided the Reformation. Constantly protesting he was never a Protestant! He ridiculed all parties; he smote Catholic sins and superstitions, but he desired to live and die a Catholic; he forged weapons for the Protestants, but he would not use them to help the Reformation.

These characteristics were illustrated in the work which gave Erasmus international fame, —"The Praise of Folly" (1509), which was one of the most popular books of the age. It was a merciless attack upon the shortcomings of priests, and it did much to open the eyes of the world and arouse opposition to the Catholic Church. But Erasmus would not lead a crusade to suppress vicious priests and superstitious practices, and so give the world a better religion. He was a timid lover of ease, the victim of constant fears, which, associated with a strange infirmity of will, not only kept him from playing a heroic part, but also prevented him from being loyal to his better im-

pulses. No wonder that such a man as he and Luther did not long remain friends!

We must, however, remember that the general influence of Erasmus was decisively against bigotry and persecution and strongly in favor of freedom. He was an eloquent and untiring preacher of toleration. He helped to prepare the way for the separation of Church and State, not by definite teaching or courageous action, but by letting loose great liberating forces, both intellectual and spiritual. He even did one noble stroke for toleration, by having an article put into the city ordinance of Basel in 1527, the first but not very lasting example of the simultaneous legal recognition of several opposed religions. We must regret his lack of heroism, but we should be thankful that he used his vast ability to make the Martyrdom of Man look hateful, and in this way he hastened a better day.

V

The Sixteenth Century was a period of revolt against custom and tradition; an age of violent attack upon priestly authority; a time of rapid and radical transition. Many momentous changes were made in the policies of states and the faiths of peoples. New methods came into use in politics, in education, in the Church. The conditions of the world demanded strong

men and strong men were abundant. Brave hearts and powerful minds were everywhere. But there was not much clear and comprehensive thinking; few luminous contributions to the solution of life's deepest problems; and not many characters of winsome and gracious spirit. Christianity gained little in moral grace or spiritual beauty, but Protestants conquered the right to think and the liberty to grow. The foundations of spiritual freedom were widely though imperfectly laid. The Reformation meant that the individual should possess a direct access to God by the free use of reason and conscience. This consciousness of immediate fellowship with the Almighty deepened moral responsibility, braced the will, stimulated the intellect, and opened abundant springs of consolation.

In all this work, Martin Luther (1483-1546) stands out as "one of the strongest, bravest, ruggedest of mortal men," too much inclined to force his own opinion as perfect and final; too superstitious to reach lasting intellectual leadership; but a true hero, doing services of incalculable value to all mankind. It was the Unitarian Martineau who wrote of him: "Never since apostolic days, did Heaven bless us with truer prophet than Martin Luther;" and the Catholic historian, Alzog, amidst his criticisms, gave him this praise: "By the wonderful activity and tumultuous excitement of

his life, he is one of the most remarkable men the world has ever produced."

In this great German, one of the greatest creative personages of history, we have the heroic leader, who, using the help furnished by Erasmus and others, made the Reformation an historical dispensation. He did a monumental work for human freedom. He broke the chains of tradition, of custom, of dogma. He liberated the spirit of man. He opened a wide door by which the soul could go directly to God. This was the inner meaning of his doctrine of "Justification by Faith." He had boundless courage, masterful activity, vast personal power.

Luther was born a peasant, of Saxon parents, and he remained a peasant to his death, though a university student and a university professor. In this fact—his peasant origin—lay much of his strength: his simple habits, his popular instincts, his deep piety and his tremendous earnestness. He was a man of the people in his general sympathies, except in such sad incidents as the Peasants' War (1525). In this crisis, when the question of authority was at stake, he sided with the rulers. From this circumstance, of lowly origin, came also some of his blemishes: his vehement passion, pouring forth in language always strong and often coarse; his superstitions, which led him into what he took for personal encounters

with Satan; and his arrogant dogmatism, which made an enemy of Erasmus and led him to abuse Zwingli, one of the greatest mistakes of his life (at the conference at Marburg over the nature of the Eucharist, 1529). His love was ardent, and his hatred intense. With all his seriousness, he enjoyed fun and frolic.

Luther was a mighty believer in himself, and yet he was, in his social relations, often child-like in his humility. He was full of blood, even to hot temper; and yet he was given to great tenderness and forgiveness. Shrewd almost to the verge of craftiness, but he had mighty convictions, and he dared to act in obedience to them. Wherever we see Luther he always interests us, though we may not admire or approve. Greater in courage than in logic, stronger in feeling than in thought, with decided faults and some gross elements, he commands our interest as an heroic, masterful man, who won an immense victory for mankind.

In his age, the supreme need was for a man of dauntless courage. There were many who saw clearly and felt keenly, but they feared to act; they failed, like Erasmus, from lack of deep moral earnestness. The world needed heroic deeds: not timid scholars and cowardly thinkers; a leader who would take risks, who would strike heavy blows, shattering idols and destroying vices and superstitions. Luther was just this man of mighty action. His ham-

mer strokes nailing the Ninety Five Theses to the church door in Wittenberg (Oct. 31, 1517), his burning of the papal Bull directed against himself (Dec. 10, 1520), the bold assertion of his Protestantism at Worms before Charles V. (April 18, 1521),—these were heroic acts with flaming dramatic power and vast historic influence. He did not create the movement for Reform, there was more in it than he imagined, but his many brave deeds made him its representative and leader.

It is a surprising fact, however, that the horrors of the Martyrdom of Man made slight impression upon Luther. Although victims of the rack and the stake then abounded in European lands, he wrote no word of tender pity for these sufferers, and he uttered no powerful condemnation of their tormentors,—the inquisitors. His references to the burning of Hus ("Address to the German Nobility": Art. 24, 1520) show no "righteous wrath" against such cruelty. His discussion is tame and timid and his main criticism was that Rome violated the "safe-conduct" promised the heretic. Against Indulgences, he rightfully protested most vigorously in his Ninety Five Theses, but in this long list of charges against the Papacy, the indescribable cruelties of the Spanish Inquisition were not mentioned: it was then in full operation, having been instituted over two years before he was born!

Luther wrote nobly of "Christian Liberty" (1520), as a personal grace,—the liberty of faith being set over against the bondage of rite and tradition. But of liberty as an intellectual condition necessary for progress in culture and piety; of liberty as an atmosphere in Church and State which stops persecution and fosters humanity; of liberty which insures to the individual the right to his own convictions,—of liberty in this broad and modern sense there is little or no trace in his pages. He stoutly demanded freedom from Rome for himself, but he was never ready in actual life to grant full liberty of thought and faith to others. He won a great victory for freedom although he was not himself a liberal.

No one would expect so tumultuous a person as Luther to be always clear or uniformly consistent. The phrase, "liberty of conscience," often slipped from his tongue and pen, but what it describes was never the working conviction of his own life. Something like Congregational Polity apparently engaged his sympathetic attention for a time. But he, like Zwingli, depended upon the secular powers to reform the world. Early in life he made statements respecting the power of magistrates which indicate that he then felt some at least of the evils that flow from the union of Church and State: "Under the pope Satan pushed the Church into the State. Now he wishes to push

the State into the Church." And yet, the secularization of civil government would have seemed to him a most ungodly profanation.

Luther took a step in advance of the papal theory, that heresy is *per se* a sin that must be punished, holding in his better moments that the heretic is simply an enemy of both Church and State who must be silenced or banished: which would be punishment, though not as severe as that inflicted by inquisitors. That a king should compel his people to believe and worship as he thought best, did not seem to him an injustice. This was the common assumption of the time. Even the free-thinker, Hobbes (1588-1679), over a century later, in his *Leviathan* (1651), held that a sovereign had the right to dictate the faith of the individual, and also to punish him, if he disobeyed: precisely the tyranny over conscience, which Lutherans established by the Peace of Augsburg (1555). That came nineteen years after Luther's death, but it represented the spirit of his later years. He was willing to compromise in order to keep the support of the rulers; and he would go no farther than they would sustain him.

Of Luther, more than of many other great characters, it has to be confessed: We must highly honor him, but we must not forget his grave limitations. His failure to see and realize the Martyrdom of Man; his inability to

understand the evils necessarily inherent in the union of Church and State meant misfortune to Germany and the world. Instead of liberating both, he prolonged the bondage of both by continuing this union, the evil effects of which were well described by the eminent German writer, Geffcken, in these words: By this union "the true energies of the Reformation were first nipped in the bud" (Church and State, I., 330). All modern admirers of Luther deeply regret his serious error at this point. McGiffert states the case clearly: "Independency or separation of Church and State there was none. . . . A state church was constructed as a matter of course and Catholicism was put under the ban" (Martin Luther, 322). Innumerable misfortunes have followed. The bondage inflicted upon religion by the Peace of Augsburg,—that a ruler has the right to impose his faith upon the people of his country and that the State is master of the Church, —was confirmed by the Treaty of Westphalia (1648). As a result of the theory of life so expressed and instituted, Germany has never had any true liberty: neither in religion nor politics, neither in education nor industry.

In spite, therefore, of all that Luther did in a large way for liberty and progress, he himself had no conception of the need or nature of civil or religious freedom, as we understand this term at present. As Ruffini has well written:

"With complete liberty of conscience and worship Luther would never have anything to do" (Religious Liberty, 58). He struck off papal fetters from minds and hearts, but he had others ready to put on. However, many peoples, having escaped the old bondage, persisted in maintaining some measure of liberty: here was the gain to civilization along lines which Luther himself would not have approved. As a world-movement, Protestantism in many places finally overflowed the narrow banks within which he would have kept it.

When we read Luther's Plea to the German Princes, during the Peasants' War, in which we find the following words, we can readily understand why he fell far short of the Modern Spirit: "Let there be no pity; it is the time of wrath, not of mercy. He who dies fighting for authority is a martyr before God. So wondrous are the times that princes can merit heaven better by bloodshed than by prayers. Therefore, dear lords, let him who can, stab, smite, destroy!" There speaks the spirit that cruelly desolated Belgium. Similar words have recently been written by eminent professors of theology in German Universities. The greater the pity and the more terrible the horror! Surely a man who could pen those sentences could not be expected to put out the fires of the stake or break in pieces the torturing machinery of the Inquisition!

VI

Calvin had an imperial mind of vast logical power, which crushed papal arguments and compelled respect for Protestant Theology. By his stern spirit and remarkable skill as a teacher, he molded the life and faith of various countries. By his force as a leader, he rescued the Reformation from impending disintegration and permanently impressed himself upon the most thoughtful peoples of Europe. John Morley characterized him as "the stern and austere stepson of the Christian God"; and yet, he also wrote: "To omit Calvin from the forces of western evolution is to read history with one eye shut. . . . Calvinism saved Europe."

Calvin (1509-1564) was born of a cultivated family in northern France; he was well educated and trained to the law in Paris; the study of the "New Learning" made him a *Humanist;* he was then converted to evangelical Christianity by study of the Bible (about 1530). This change of religion exiled him from France, and he poured his energies into the writing of his chief work, "The Institutes of the Christian Religion," which was first issued in 1536 (written at Basel), when he was only a little over twenty-six years old. Successive editions were continually enlarged.

This treatise is a masterpiece of logical and

eloquent exposition—a systematic theology: elaborate, comprehensive, exhaustive. It is more original in its form than in its substance: a *restatement* rather than a *reconstruction* of Christian theology. It contains very little religious sentiment. It nowhere breathes the spirit of Jesus. Every topic shines in the dry light of the scholastic intellect. The tender and gracious feelings of humanity are almost wholly absent. It is hard and cold, but keen and forceful. It was the most powerful book of the century, it became the handbook of Protestantism. In the *Institutes* we have a presentation of the principles of the Reformation more logical than anything that Luther ever wrote; far more intense than the pages of Zwingli; but the teachings are far broader and less horrible than those of the later Calvinists, having little of the lurid light and awful wrath of the pages of Jonathan Edwards.

Soon after the publication of the "Institutes," Calvin visited Geneva, and he was persuaded to stop and assist in the reform of the city. Two years later (1538) he was driven out of the town, but he was brought back by friends in 1541, and for twenty-three years he ruled as a stern dictator. And during these years, 1541-1564, the center of Protestantism was not in Wittenberg, or Zurich, or London, but in Geneva. The work of government was in the hands of others, but his spirit was

supreme. Calvin attempted to control the entire life of the people, and conform them to his interpretation of the Bible. But he unfortunately exaggerated its harsher Jewish elements, while he wholly neglected the more gracious principles of both the Law and the Gospel.

Strenuous efforts were made to repress vice, to uproot every vestige of Romanism, to conform the beliefs of all to one standard. A severe code of morals was vigorously enforced. Amusements were abolished; slight sins were punished with death; even profanity and the disobedience of children. All were obliged to attend church and keep the Sabbath in the strictest manner. The diet, clothes, and daily habits of the people, in shop and home, were minutely regulated. It was a Theocracy, modeled after the sterner teachings of Judaism, with Calvin ruling as the representative of God.

A description of some of the punishments of offenders reads today like the story of an amusing series of comic incidents. One man was punished for wearing baggy knickerbockers in the streets, another for talking to his neighbor during sermon time, and a third for offering snuff to a companion during the prayer. One woman was fined for wearing her hair down her back, another for naming her cow Rebecca—this being a sacred scriptural

name—and a third for saying her prayers in Latin.

The opposition to the policies of Calvin was stubborn and prolonged. This thin-faced, keen-eyed, sour-looking, but dominating theological autocrat walked no easy path. From every quarter for many years constantly rose up bitter enemies, who were called *Libertines,* because they were charged with carrying *liberty* to *license.* Mobs assailed him, children hooted him, assassins laid in wait for him. But he toiled on, neither sparing himself nor anyone else—calm, stern, masterful. He labored all day over affairs of Church and State, planning, teaching, preaching. Men from all over the Christian world sat at his feet, receiving instruction and inspiration, to go back to their homes, like John Knox to Scotland, and spread the Reformation. Having time, often, to eat only one meal during the day, he spent a large part of the night in studying and writing.

The work that Calvin did was immense; the influence he exerted was tremendous; the courage he showed was great. He could rush among his enemies and present his defenceless breast to their lances! A harsh and gloomy man, with none of the warm blood of Luther, and he had none of the gentleness of Zwingli; but he was a powerful thinker who must be respected. We may reject his theology and condemn his spirit, but in that transition time

a strong man was needed, and he gathered and disciplined the men who saved Protestantism and made Europe free.

Calvinism has been a complex of contradiction: Its mighty emphasis on the vast importance of the individual has fostered the democratic spirit, but its aristocratic organization in Presbyteries and Synods has cramped that spirit, especially within the field of religion. Its exaggeration of the severer elements of ancient Judaism has made the conscience rigorous and impelling, but this overemphasis of punitive justice has made Calvinistic morality deficient in mercy and tenderness. Its vigorous doctrinal discipline has generated intellectual power, but its dogmatism has limited freedom of growth and has often diverted that power into sterile and unlovely activities. Its exaltation of the sovereignty of God has made men courageous, but this very demand for abject subjection to Divine Will has discounted human worth and obscured the grace of Jesus. It has accomplished all that could be done by appeals to the fear of the Law, but it has failed to harvest what alone grows in the sunshine of the Gospel of love.

VII

The one great blot upon the character of Calvin was his treatment of Michael Servetus. This act shows how and why the Protestants failed to put an end to the Martyrdom of Man. Servetus was Spanish born (1511); educated at the Universities of Saragossa, Toulouse, and Paris; and became famous in 1531 by the publication of his heretical book, De Trinitatis Erroribus, for the writing of which his friend Bucer of Strassburg, really a kind-hearted man, stated: "The author of such a book should be disembowelled and torn in pieces." Then he disappears as Servetus, taking the name Villanovanus (or Villenueve—the ancestral name) to escape persecution. About 1535, he appears at Lyons, under this name, engaged in editing scientific works for the Trechsels, the famous publishers. The next year he is in Paris studying medicine under several great masters, and it was during one of his sojourns there that he became acquainted with Calvin.

After leaving the University of Paris two years later, Servetus travelled and studied in various places until 1541, when his college friend, Paulmier, then Archbishop of Vienne, near Lyons, invited Villanovanus to locate there, where he remained for twelve years, practising medicine and continuing editorial work for the Trechsels. He edited an edition

of Pagnini's Latin translation of the Bible, in which he showed great ability by advancing important principles of historical criticism and by rationalistic interpretations of many Scripture passages. His editorial work on an edition of "Ptolemy" had also shown remarkable scientific and geographical knowledge. At the beginning of 1553, he had completed what he regarded his chief work, *Christianismi Restitutio* (Christianity Restored).

It was in this treatise that he described his important discovery of the pulmonary circulation of the blood: It was in 1628 that Harvey published his larger contribution to physiological science: He had made the discovery in 1616,—the year that Shakespere died. Servetus little appreciated the greatness of his discovery, as he simply used it, in his theological discussion, as an illustration of the operation of the Holy Spirit.

Just here Calvin comes into prominence as the revengeful enemy of Servetus. Calvin knew who this Villanovanus of Vienne was and what heresies he had advocated. A few years before there had been correspondence between them. Servetus had written with arrogance and had sent back to Calvin a copy of his "Institutes," its margins filled with caustic criticisms: to which, in writing to a friend, the Genevan Reformer had referred as "the vomit of Servetus." Calvin was not

only shocked at the heresies of Servetus ("pompous triflings"), but he was stirred to personal hate, for in his letter to his friend, Farel, he wrote (Feb. 13, 1546): "If he comes [to Geneva] I will never allow him, supposing my influence to be worth anything, to depart alive." But Servetus, though acrid in spirit at times, was in reality a mild heretic. While not a formal trinitarian, he was not an Arian. He held an exalted view of Jesus, which was impressively Christocentric, affirming that Christ was God manifest in the flesh,—all of God that man can know,—practically the view of Henry Ward Beecher.

If that had been all, Calvin could have tolerated his heresy. But he was moved by personal spite and revenge. When Servetus' *Restitutio* had been printed (1553) and a thousand copies were ready to be broadcast over Europe, a man acquainted with both, De Trie, then in Geneva, secured from Calvin certain pages, containing written matters by Servetus, —incriminating evidence,—and sent them to be used by the cardinal archbishop of Lyons against him, under the direction of the Inquisition. This was certainly a most shameful and reprehensible act: The leader of the Reformation gladly aiding its enemy in persecuting a mild and distinguished heretic!

Servetus was arrested and put on trial at Vienne, and hundreds of copies of his

Restitutio were burned. On April 7, however, he escaped from the town and wandered about, in unknown places, for many weeks. Then, apparently on his way to Zurich, he walked into Geneva Sunday morning, Aug. 13, 1553, went to church, was recognized, arrested, sent to prison, and on the next day he was put on trial,—Calvin exerting himself to the utmost for his condemnation. The trial lasted over ten weeks. The enemies of Calvin, the Libertines, came to the support of Servetus, for political, not for religious, reasons. Calvin treated Servetus, during the trial, with great harshness and unfairness. Finally, by a comparatively small majority vote he was condemned and the following sentence passed upon him (Oct. 26): "You, Michael Servetus, shall be bound, and led to the place called Champel, and there, chained to a pillar, shall be burnt alive, together with your books and your writings, until your body is reduced to ashes, and thus shall you end your days, as an example to others who may be tempted to commit your crime."

Servetus was stunned and unmanned, evidently not expecting such severity. But the next day, when he was chained to the stake, and the fire lighted, he met his fate with calm heroism, refusing to admit that Jesus was God, the Eternal Son, but reverently declaring that he was the Son of the Eternal God. The

revenge of Calvin was consummated and afterwards he could write to a friend: "You ought to exterminate such monsters as I exterminated Servetus." But as Principal Alexander Gordon has written: "That slow fire at Champel has burnt Calvin's reputation to a cinder. . . . He veiled the pity of an iceberg in the phrases of a saint!"

Calvin tried to defend this cruel execution, which horrified the world, accustomed as it then was to horrible things, and in 1554, he published an elaborate defense (*Defensio*), in which, however, he indulged in many false statements and exhibited a most savage temper. Many have excused his actions on the ground that what he did was in line with the habit and spirit of the time. But in all fairness these facts must be kept in mind:

(1) While it is true that he desired Servetus beheaded rather than burned, nevertheless, he exhausted his mighty resources as dictator of Geneva to crush the life of this personal enemy. He silenced those who insisted that no law then existed in the city warranting a capital punishment, which was true, banishment being the severest sentence permissible. He used his great influence with the neighboring cantons to secure their approval of his course, and while they expressed a desire for his condemnation, not one called for his death. The law under which Servetus was burned (from the

code of Justinian) had there long been extinct and was revived especially for this occasion.

(2) That Calvin acted from malice rather than from mere fear of heresy is evident from the fact that he himself had often written strongly in denunciation of the policy of persecuting heretics. Capital punishment in such cases is abhorrent to his general teachings. Those who try to excuse his act by appealing to the spirit of the age are, indeed, unjust to Calvin: they little understand his pages. He had himself forcibly pleaded for better things. There is, in this case, neither defence nor excuse for him.

When Voltaire railed at Calvin for the burning of Servetus, a Genevan pastor asked for the records of the trial in order to vindicate the great Reformer. But the Syndic Calandrini refused his request, saying: "There is no defence of Calvin. . . . We wish the conduct of Calvin to be buried in profound oblivion."

(3) In view of all the facts, it is simply wicked to attempt to excuse his wickedness in the execution of Servetus. It is clear that he acted in the spirit of revenge. But evidently another motive also moved him. Calvin had become a world figure. He wanted to show Europe that Protestantism had become strong and stable: able to suppress disorder and crush heresy. To do this would rob Rome of a powerful argument long used: the incapacity of

Reformers to guarantee the safety of the State and the protection of Christianity. The execution of Servetus would, therefore, be good policy. His *Defensio* was addressed quite as much to Catholics as to liberal critics. It was meant to prove that Protestantism stood for something even more solid than Rome itself. He was anxious to kill Servetus, not only from spite, but to checkmate the Papacy and to harden the Reformation into a rigid orthodoxy.

VIII

While the flames were burning Servetus at Geneva, Faustus Socinus was a lad of fourteen (born 1539) at his home in Sienna, Italy; and Francis David (born 1510) was Lutheran Bishop in his home town, Kolozsvár, Transylvania. Both these men played important parts in helping to stop the Martyrdom of Man.

Faustus Socinus imbibed, as a young man, the liberal religious views of his uncle, Lælius (born 1525), who spent the last fifteen years of his life at Zurich (1547-1562): "a gentleman out in search for a religion"; on friendly terms with Protestant leaders, esteemed but suspected by Calvin; resembling Erasmus in temperament; arguing against the popular beliefs of the time, but in so gracious a manner that he was left unmolested to the end of his days. When he died, the nephew, Faustus, hurried

to Zurich and took charge of his uncle's effects. He was probably deeply influenced by the manuscripts which he found.

After twelve years in the service of Isabella, daughter of Cosmo de Medici, archduke of Florence, Faustus spent some three years in study at Basel, writing during this period a notable work, *De Jesu Christo Servatore,* which powerfully advocated a more spiritual view of Jesus' ministry than that formulated by the great scholastic Anselm (1033-1109) in *Cur Deus Homo,* and then generally held by both Catholics and Protestants. Socinus urged a more ethical interpretation of the Atonement, the main elements of which are now the common property of modern theology. Socinus filled his pages with earnest pleas for a simple piety; he used Scripture rationally but reverently; and all his references to Jesus breathed a tender spirit. This work was long and widely circulated in manuscript copies, and it was not published until 1594 (in Poland), only ten years before his death.

During the middle decades of the sixteenth century a Protestant movement was well under way in the then flourishing Kingdom of Poland. Catherine Vogel, one of its first martyrs, had been burned at the stake in 1539, the year Socinus was born. In 1565, this movement had divided, the larger party remaining Orthodox and the smaller pushing on toward more

rationalistic views. In 1579, Socinus went to Poland, settled in Cracow, and he remained in Poland until his death twenty-five years later. He soon became the leader of the Polish Liberals. For some years, his work prospered, especially among the aristocracy; and, for a time, it gave promise of large results. These Liberals, both before his day and then under his leadership, founded schools, produced a voluminous literature and showed, not only a free and gracious spirit, but sent out earnest missionaries. Toward the end of the century, the more fanatical Catholics obtained control of the government and instigated repressive measures against these Liberals. Socinus was twice mobbed. His books and manuscripts were burned. He died at Luclavice in 1604, "weary and exhausted, not by life, but by persecution and hardship." By 1660, the Polish movement to which he had given his life was stamped out by most brutal measures, instigated by the Jesuits, having existed for about a hundred years.

Socinus became famous throughout Europe. He gave his name to a form of religious thought,—Socinianism,—which for many years profoundly influenced the world: adopted by many eminent thinkers but never popular anywhere among the masses. The authoritative expression of this Faith was set forth in *The Racovian Catechism* which was chiefly pre-

pared by Socinus: first printed, in Polish, in 1605, a year after his death,—in Latin in 1609. It is a simple, undogmatic exposition of Socinian principles of religion. Abstruse dogmas are nowhere discussed; appeals to tradition are infrequent; emphasis is placed on the spirit of the life; the Bible is used for its conduct values; the person of Jesus is lovingly presented and his Gospel forcibly advocated. In England during the first half of the seventeenth century, this document was more bitterly attacked and more frequently burned than any other book.

In the Preface of the Racovian Catechism (Rees' Eng. Ed. 1818, pp. XCVI., CIII.), we find these words which exactly express the teachings of Socinus, written by a disciple some years after his death: "Whilst we compose a Catechism, we prescribe nothing to any man; whilst we declare our own opinions, we oppress no one. Let every person enjoy the freedom of his own judgment in religion; only let it be permitted to us also to exhibit our views of divine things, without injuring or calumniating others. For this is the Golden Liberty of Prophesying which the sacred books of the New Testament so earnestly recommend to us, and wherein we are instructed by the example of the primitive apostolic church. . . . Charity teaches us that no one should be injured, that scandal, calumnies, railing accusa-

tions against our neighbor, invidious and unfair representations of the opinions of others, should be avoided; and on the other hand, that our equity, gentleness, and modesty should be known to all men."

In the Catechism itself, there is no extended discussion of toleration or religious freedom. But in a chapter on the "Discipline of the Church," the following punishments are described as suitable for the correction of offenders,—not so much unbelievers or misbelievers as violators of moral laws: "By our shunning the society and conversation of such a person and refusing to eat with him; though we do not regard him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother" (sec. VIII., chap. III.). How impiously mild such penalties must then have appeared to Pope and Inquisitor; to Lutheran, Calvinist, and Anglican!

It is a mournful fact that the English Parliament during the Commonwealth, should have voted, April 2, 1652, that all copies of the commonly called Racovan Catechism be seized by the sheriffs of London and Middlesex and burned on the following Tuesday and Thursday! And those were the days of Cromwell, Vane, and Milton, who, however, were innocent of its condemnation as "blasphemous, erroneous, and scandalous!"

Of this Catechism, a competent Italian author, Ruffini, recently wrote: "What an

abyss between this confession and those of all the other Protestant churches, Swiss, Scottish, Belgian, Saxon [and he might have added Dutch,—that of Dort], which affirm the duty of the magistrate to punish heresy" (Religious Liberty, 87). In fact, this advocacy of toleration by Socinus and his followers was counted against them as something even worse than their heresy respecting the Godhead. This was the stand taken by two eminent champions of the Catholic Church. Jurien wrote (1687): "The Socinian dogma [the plea for toleration] is the most dangerous of all the Socinian sect, powerful to ruin Christianity and establish indifference in religion." And Bossuet, the next year, made a similar statement. On the other hand, all writers now agree that the praise of Lecky is just: "Socinus was so distinctly the apostle of toleration that this was long regarded as one of the peculiar doctrines of his sect" (Rationalism: II., 51).

Surely, the world needs to remember and honor Faustus Socinus as one of the greatest and noblest champions of religious liberty. He was himself the Darwin of religious controversy, fair, just, courteous, in an age, when even the greatest, from Luther to Milton, indulged in bitterness and even vulgarity toward their opponents. He advanced the cause of toleration both by eloquent teaching and by noble action. The "Socinians" have dis-

appeared and his particular views of Jesus have been outgrown even by the churches which revere his name. It was in an obscure corner that he labored, and the organization which he led soon vanished in tortures and flames. But the principle of toleration which he advocated has become a precious and organic part of modern civilization. He did much directly to stop the Martyrdom of Man, and he indirectly did much to make the Pilgrim Glory possible.

The name of Francis David is not found in the story of religious freedom, as commonly told, but he deserves high honor as one who not only advocated toleration, but led to its enactment as a national law. And this was done when Elizabeth was a young queen, persecuting heretics; when Scotland was ablaze with flames of religious hate; when leaders in Germany, Catholic and Protestant, were passing death sentences upon each other; when Inquisitors were active in France, Spain and Italy; and when William of Orange was just beginning to plead for the rights of Anabaptists.

Francis David was born in Kolozsvár, Transylvania, 1510,—a year younger than Calvin, a year older than Servetus. He went at thirty,—though of Catholic family,—to Wittenberg to complete his education. After teaching, on his return home, in a Catholic school for a short time, he became a popular preacher to the Lutherans of his native city.

His mind broadened, and he soon became bishop of the Calvinists in the same town. Then by 1567, he became a rationalist in his interpretation of the nature and ministry of Jesus; and, as court preacher to Prince John Sigismund (a liberal from Poland), he stepped into a prominent position as the powerful advocate of a faith which was soon to become even more advanced than that of Faustus Socinus. Certainly a remarkably rapid religious evolution!

The principality of Transylvania was then in a tumult of religious excitement: four parties contending for supremacy: Catholics, Lutherans, Calvinists, Liberals,—soon to be called "Unitarians" (1600), the first use of the word as a sect-name. On Jan. 6, 1568, a Diet met at Torda to consider the religious situation. David by his eloquence brought the assembly to his way of thinking, and the Edict was adopted which may be found at the beginning of this chapter.

This was indeed a very great achievement: a wide liberty of worship was established by law. This was the most advanced position as yet taken in Christendom. It was thirty years to the less liberal Edict of Nantes (1598) and a hundred and twenty-one years to the English Act of Toleration, which was not nearly so broad. It was four years before the adoption of the Polish Declaration of Cracow (1572),

which, formulated by those who were soon followers of Socinus, was similar in its general spirit, but not so significant.

This "heavenly condition," putting an end for the time to the Martyrdom of Man, did not, however, last very long. The death of Sigismund brought a nephew to the throne who was a mild Catholic, and then shortly another nephew, Barthory, a bigot, came to the front, who lighted again the old torches of hate, and the former miseries soon followed. The Liberals were not, however, annihilated though terribly persecuted. Over a hundred churches of that faith now exist in Hungary. But, sad to relate, David was tried for heresy,—refusing to offer invocations to Christ,—condemned, and sentenced to imprisonment for life in a dungeon at Deva, where, after five months, he died, Nov. 15, 1579.

Just here we clearly see the limitation of all the measures advocated or attempted during the sixteenth century, for the emancipation of Christianity from priest and king; the liberation of both Church and State from an alliance which necessarily brings intolerance and persecution. No permanent basis for freedom was, as yet, secured. No assurance of continued religious liberty can be established, solely, by tolerant sentiments or royal decrees. The death of a ruler, the fall of a dynasty, the vote of a parliament may, at any moment, reverse the

humane order and open the floodgates of proscription. Although prophets may create a temporary tolerance and rulers momentarily stay the hand of the Inquisitor, a bigot with a more commanding personality may suddenly overwhelm humanity in all the former cruelties. The work of both David and Socinus in behalf of religious freedom was most praiseworthy. But it did not strike root deep enough. There must be a more radical reorganization of piety and politics: a new adjustment of civil government and religious organization.

IX

We come now to one who worked upon a more conspicuous platform than David or Socinus, but in the same humane spirit and for the same high end: William of Orange (1533-1584), often named the Washington of the Netherlands. He lived a comparatively short and stormy life, but he performed monumental services for the cause of religious liberty. He was born a Catholic, but at the age of thirty-five (1568), he adopted the Calvinistic faith: His public profession of it was delayed until Oct. 23, 1573. He early became a prominent figure in the public affairs of the Low Countries, but he long kept himself in patient restraint, winning the title: The Silent. He reached the position of Stadtholder a year

before the memorable siege of Leiden (1573). He did more than any one else to secure the practical independence of Holland (1581); the next year he became the chief ruler of Holland and Zeeland, and two years later he was assassinated.

Before William became a Protestant, he showed by the Antwerp Agreement (1566), a remarkably tolerant spirit: he assigned three churches to the Calvinists and demanded that Catholics and Reformers live in good fellowship, indulging in neither taunts nor hostility. The very year that he embraced Calvinism, he wrote to John Bazius (1568): "Should we obtain power over any city or cities, let the communities of papists be as much respected and protected as possible. Let them be overcome, not with violence, but with gentle mindedness and virtuous treatment."

Four years after he became a Protestant (1572), he instructed Lieutenant Sonoy: "To see that the Word of God was preached, without, however, suffering any hindrance to the Roman Church in the exercise of its religion." This was surely returning good for evil, for a little over three years before, the Inquisition and Philip II. had consigned the whole population of the country to death for heresy! In writing to the magistrates of Middelburg (1578), he gave this direction respecting the commonly hated Anabaptists (the first tolera-

tion granted to them by any European Ruler): "We declare to you, therefore, that you have no right to trouble yourselves with any man's conscience, so long as nothing is done to cause private harm or public scandal." And the next year (1579), he saw to it that this principle was embodied in the *Union of Utrecht* (the foundation of the Dutch Republic): "Every one shall be free in the practice of his religious belief" (Article XIII.). These few facts show how William of Orange came, not only to hold the doctrine of religious toleration, but also how he embodied the principle of religious freedom (something much larger and nobler) in the basic law of his country. And to him, the Reformer who became a bigot or indulged in persecution seemed doubly odious.

The judgment passed upon this great character by Motley is just: "He was the champion of the political rights of his country, but before all he was the defender of its religion. Liberty of conscience for his people was his first object." . . . He was a man "who, in an age when to think was a crime, when bigotry and a persecuting spirit characterized Romanists and Lutherans, Calvinists and Zwinglians, dared to announce freedom of conscience as the great object for which noble natures should strive; who, in an age when toleration was a vice, had the manhood to cultivate it as a virtue" (Dutch Republic, II. 145, 237).

X

The statement of Hallam: "The tolerant spirit rose out of the ashes of Servetus" (Literature of Europe, Vol. II., chap. I., §29) is more felicitous than accurate. The next hundred years and more saw more intolerance and persecution in Western Europe than any other period. In fact, that terrible execution confirmed Protestants in their worst ways. It helped to light fires that burned fiercely for years. The apt pupil of Calvin, John Knox, soon went back from Geneva to Scotland, and until his death in 1572, he enforced rigorous persecutions against all who disagreed with him in matters of religious belief.

Philip Melanchthon, one of the gentlest of the Reformers, showed the evil influence of the example by writing to Calvin a letter of congratulations, stating that the burning of Servetus ought to be an excellent advertisement of Geneva! Under Elizabeth, one of the broadest-minded rulers of her time, not simply Catholics, but English Protestants, were imprisoned, fined, and burned, especially Anabaptists, about 1575. From 1583 to 1593, occurred the notable cases of Copping, Thacker, Penry, Barrow and many others. Even as late as the middle decades of the seventeenth century, there were more heretics (Quakers, Baptists,

Unitarians) languishing in English jails than at any other time.

In the Netherlands, from the death of Calvin (1564) to the departure of the Pilgrims (1620), in spite of the mighty influence of William of Orange, persecutions were numerous and horrible, Catholics and Protestants killing each other and Protestants slaying Protestants. In his admirable essay on Grotius, Andrew D. White, after alluding to his plea, addressed to the Dutch, to be tolerant, made at this time, wrote this statement: "On the great mass of his countrymen the modern idea of toleration had not even dawned" (Seven Great Statesmen, 68). While the motives of the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) were chiefly political, nevertheless, in that terrible time the religious passions of the German peoples, Protestants as well as Catholics, exhibited themselves in many cruel ways.

The stand taken by William of Orange was both noble and notable. But the situation which developed soon after his death shows that even in the Netherlands no permanent and complete relief from the evils of intolerance and persecution had been secured. The Martyrdom of Man could not be ended simply by royal decree, by pulpit pleas for religious freedom, or by the growth of rationalism. Something more was needed than a tolerant spirit or an intellectual discovery. The diffi-

culty lay right here: A new king might in an hour, as has already been stated, revoke an Edict granting liberty of conscience and so change the currents of history: Witness the course of "Bloody Mary" in England; the failure of the Edict of Torda in Transylvania, the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685), which at best had given French Protestants only an imperfect and precarious freedom. Something more organic, radical, fundamental had to be done: a reorganization of politics and religion; a readjustment of Church and State.

As commendable as the conduct of William was, he did not clearly see the necessity for the separation of Church and State, what Marsilius and Wiclif did imperfectly understand. He pleaded for liberty of conscience and obeyed the generous impulse himself, but he did not use the only means necessary to make this principle a permanent rule among men. On this account, twenty-five years after his death, Arminian magistrates (1609) were claiming the right to regulate all religious matters by force. Ten years still later, when the Calvinists gained a majority in the Netherlands, two hundred Arminian pastors were driven from their pulpits, Barneveldt, "the most venerable citizen of the Dutch Republic," was beheaded, and Grotius, another ardent Arminian, an epoch-making man, was imprisoned, but afterwards escaped into exile. That land deserves

the title, "Brave Little Holland"; and yet, the Protestant Dutch, even as late as 1630 and after, were often intolerant "with a placid arrogance which papal infallibility could scarcely exceed" (Motley, United Netherlands, IV. 548).

The general situation is made clearer by the case of the broad-minded Anglican clergyman, William Chillingworth (1603-1644). He could nobly write (1637): "We wish heartily that all controversies were ended . . . in the meanwhile think it best to content ourselves with, and persuade others unto, an unity of charity and mutual toleration. . . . Christians must be taught to set a higher value upon these high points of faith and obedience wherein they agree than upon the matters of less moment wherein they differ" (Religion of Protestants, Chap. II., §85; Chap. IV., §40). Even Archbishop Laud heartily approved this treatise! But what of it? The Laudian persecutions continued: heretics were fined, imprisoned, banished, mutilated, and beheaded. This generous sentiment did not go to the root of the difficulty.

Another illustration drives home the same truth. John Fiske was warmly appreciative of the spirit of the Puritans, in its best estate. But he made this statement, which is a very true statement: "The most advanced liberalism of Elizabeth's time was not to be found in

Puritanism but in the magnificent treatise on 'Ecclesiastical Polity' by the churchman Richard Hooker'' (1554-1600). The spirit of its pages is, indeed, remarkably broad and gracious. But if all Englishmen had been disciples of Hooker, in regard to church organization, there would have been no Pilgrim Glory, no Commonwealth, no Free America! Moreover, in just the system here so eloquently described, the Anglican Establishment, have rooted many of the wrongs that have cursed England, and from it also have come many of the defects of English life. Even the most liberal spirit could not remove the evils inherent in the unholy alliance of Church and State. There must be a weapon with sharper edge, wielded by clearer insight and vaster enthusiasm.

CHAPTER III

THE INDEPENDENT CONGREGATION

CHURCH AND STATE: SEPARATE BUT SYMPATHETIC

"Magistrates have no ecclesiastical authority at all, but only as any other Christians—The Church is God's husbandry and not theirs; it is his building and not theirs —This freedom have all Christians, that they consider what is lawful and what is profitable, what they may do and what is expedient, and in no case to be brought under the power of anything—Therefore the magistrate's commandment must not be a rule unto me of this and that duty, but as I see it agree with the Word of God—The Lord's kingdom is not by force, as be the kingdoms of this world—Magistrates may do nothing concerning the Church, but only civilly, and as civil magistrates; that is, they have not that authority over the Church,—but only to rule the Commonwealth in all outward justice, to maintain the right welfare and honor thereof, with outward power, bodily punishment, and civil forcing of men. And therefore also because the Church is in the Commonwealth, it is of their charge: that is concerning the outward provision and outward justice, they are to look to it; but to compel religion, to plant churches by power, and to force a submission to ecclesiastical government by laws and penalties belongeth not to them—Yea, the Church hath more authority concerning church government than magistrates—Go to therefore, and the outward power and civil forcings, let us leave to the magistrates: to rule the Commonwealth in all outward justice, belongeth to them; but let the Church rule in spiritual wise, and not in worldly manner; by a lively law preached and not by a civil law written! by holiness in inward and outward obedience, and not in straightness of the outward only."

A Treatise of Reformation Without
Tarrying for Any.
(Spelling modernized).
By Robert Browne: 1582.

CHAPTER III

THE INDEPENDENT CONGREGATION

I

The Pilgrim Glory roots in the distant past: a past far more distant, even, than the fourteenth or sixteenth century. It is the flowering of methods of religious organization that antedate the rise of Christianity. But they were not understood even by those who, in the early days of the Reformation, became advocates of toleration. These workers for religious freedom did much to prepare the way, but a radical reorganization of civic and religious forces was necessary. Without such men as Luther, Erasmus, Socinus, and William of Orange, there would have been no Pilgrim Glory; but if others had not introduced a new method into Church and State, the immortal Mayflower Band would never have existed.

It is a remarkable fact that the early Reformers, while they planted themselves upon the teachings of the Bible, to which they turned for supreme authority, failed to understand what the New Testament teaches respecting the constitution or organization of the Christian Church. The great Protestant Leaders

could have stopped the Martyrdom of Man, emancipated the Gospel from priest and king, opened a broad highway for human progress, and achieved a more spiritual Christianity, if they had understood and followed the New Testament teaching. That teaching is this: The local Church is an independent congregation, its members separated from the world under the sole authority of Christ; asking nothing of the State except to be let alone, but loyal to the State so far as possible; all members equal and all officers elective; the whole congregation participating in all church affairs; each congregation free to live its own life, not subject to other congregations, but anxious to serve them in all brotherly ministries.

Luther, as has been stated, looked, for a moment, with favor upon a form of religious organization somewhat similar to this New Testament ideal and practice. He seemed, from the following statement, to have had some conception of the evils due to the union of Church and State: "The laws of the civil magistrate's government extend no farther than over the body or goods, and to that which is external; for over the soul God will not suffer any man to rule, only he himself will rule there." But these words represent his earlier and transient thought, rather than his later and permanent conviction and policy.

But Zwingli, Calvin, and Knox wholly failed to see what lay so prominently before them in the Biblical pages. Indeed, early Presbyterians and kindred bodies were much given to intolerance and persecution and stoutly insisted on the union of Church and State: religion must have the support of the strong arm of the magistrate. The three men,—Cromwell, Cranmer, Parker,—who were most prominent in guiding the fortunes of the Anglican Church through the sixteenth century, did not have the faintest conception of the teachings of the New Testament on this subject. Moreover, it never entered into the minds of such noble apostles of toleration as Francis David, Faustus Socinus, or William of Orange that the only radical and permanent solution of the great problem lay in the restoration of the Church to its original New Testament form.

II

To this deeper rootage of the Pilgrim Glory we must now turn.

When man discovered himself as a moral being, and came to view his relations to God as moral obligations, he abandoned the practice of sacrifice, and reinterpreted religion as a spiritual service,—an inward life flowing forth in reverence and righteousness. Men arose in Egypt, Judæa and Greece, who held these new

views of nature and life; but being only heralds of a new day, they simply abandoned the old sacrificial practices, without attempting a reorganization of religion on the basis of their spiritual discovery. The practice of sacrifice still continued among the people in general, and there was as yet no public administration of religion as both a spiritual worship and a humane service.

But if the new thought of God as moral law, and of man as a spiritual being, was to make itself felt in the world; if religion was to have a new method consonant with the facts of natural law and the ethics of human life, an administration of piety had to be created, free from the sacrificial theory and practice, and so spiritualized as to express the truth that man is a spirit related to the Infinite Spirit.

In other words, when man began to see that the office of religion is not to propitiate God but to develop the spirituality of the soul, then it was evident that religious methods must pass from sacrificial to educational forms. The development of such a new method was the problem which Judaism and Christianity worked out. In many respects it was one of the greatest problems in the historic evolution of humanity,—this creation of a corporate agency to cultivate religion as a spiritual development in the line of heart-worship and social service.

The Hebrew prophets, some eight centuries

before Christ, affirmed that God is Infinite Holiness, who demands of man only righteousness. This doctrine, by implication, swept away the sacrificial system as an absurdity. The prophets, however, did not go beyond the proclamation of the grand truth; they built up no organization founded upon this conception of the law of life. Long experience and the cooperation of many forces were needed to accomplish this achievement. The doctrine of righteousness proclaimed by these teachers, the necessities of the exiles in Babylonia and, possibly, some suggestions derived from Persia, conspired in unknown degrees to this end. When the Jews returned from their captivity, one sign of the profound change which had been wrought in them was the synagogue, the characteristic institution of Judaism, in which religion began to be organized as a spiritual education.

The synagogue was the incorporation of the prophetic doctrine as the basis and rule of a religious community. Here religion was administered, not as a sacrifice for the propitiation of God, but as a spiritual service for the training of man in righteousness. For four centuries, the problem of providing religion with an educational method was being worked out by the synagogues, sown thickly over Palestine, and spread through the Mediterranean countries by the Jews of the dispersion.

They were small religious communities where religion grew spiritual and humane; where Greek, Egyptian and Roman influences could enter and play upon the Jewish mind; and where the spirit of man could expand in the line of intellectual power and moral aspiration: Not the propitiation but the appropriation of God being their object.

This, then, was the situation: In Judaism the synagogue existed as a free religious community in the germ, where the moral sentiment was ready to burst traditional restrictions and make the institution more spiritual and cosmopolitan; in the world at large there was a growing moral enthusiasm and a readiness to unite for humane service. Now, add to the synagogue the expansive and creative personality of Jesus, also Paul's mighty universalism of spirit; and out of it there will come the Church as a religious community open to all, a religious method in the line of spiritual education, fitted to serve and develop man as a moral being. Offer this institution to the world, and it will be recognized by hundreds and thousands as the agency long sought,—a form of religious organization, expressive of the spirituality of man and serviceable for the creation of a new society.

This is exactly what happened. The early Church prospered because it served humanity better than any other existing association. Its

superiority was manifest and manifold. It was a community with a lofty religious spirit; it practiced a religious method which was the expression of educational rather than sacrificial purposes. It brought all classes and both sexes together as equal associates, in closer bonds and for nobler purposes than any other institution in the world. It had what no other association had,—the Gospel and the spirit of Jesus of Nazareth, the creative power of a sublime personality. Here the transition of religion from the sacrificial to the spiritual method was completed. Religion now had a corporate organization for pure worship and ethical training.

This transition was radical and beneficent. It meant the turning of the temple, with its implications of God's wrath, its superstitious terrors, its bloody ceremonials, into a "meeting house" for a community service with devout meditation, moral instruction, and spiritual inspiration. The sanctuary with its animal sacrifices became a "school of life," where the heart presents its reverent love as acceptable and adequate worship of God; where men strive to appropriate the Divine rather than simply to propitiate an angry Divinity; where, also, people are trained in loving-kindness to each other as more pleasing to the Infinite Father than formal rites. Under this new form, religion worked toward an Ethical Ideal

in a humane spirit. This meant a change from gross materialism to spiritual humanism. Piety came to express itself and to measure its success in terms of moral worth.

It is obvious that there are many and radical differences between a sacrificial and an educational administration of religion, and the advantages are all in favor of the latter. The former puts a priest beside an altar to offer a propitiatory petition and secure the favor of Heaven. The latter puts a preacher in a pulpit to teach the truth of God and to move the hearts of men to repentance. The former uses fear and demands abject obedience. The latter calls for loving reverence and creates a yearning for an ever-increasing wisdom of life. Sacrificial religion insists that people endure sufferings. Spiritual religion trains them to help sufferers and to destroy the conditions which produce suffering. The former lacks the social impulse and seeks to do little more than establish a friendly relation between man and his creator. The latter seeks to quicken and guide, by its congregational life, human sympathies, in the conviction that wherever a human being is blessed there God is served.

A sacrificial form of religion uses mystical rites and emphasizes authority and tradition, with reactions toward intolerance and persecution. On the other hand, religion as an educational process endeavors to realize the possi-

bilities of the soul, fostering freedom and growth. Religious Life, when organized and operated as a Congregational Method, makes for individual and corporate efficiency. It interprets and develops worship as an ethical and rational upreach of the soul. Its abundant fruitage is found in gladness of heart, in social helpfulness, in purity and nobility of character. Democracy and Science, that discredit sacrificial religion, approve and foster the Religion of the Spirit that finds expression in the Congregation. Wherever in modern times religion has turned from sacrificial forms to educational methods and ministries, there has been found an increasing abundance of the qualities that most adorn human life and that most enlarge the content of Civilization.

The rediscovery of this church order at the close of the sixteenth century, the recovery of the educational administration of religion, the re-establishment of the original Christian method of religious nurture: this was the modern beginning of the Pilgrim Glory, to the story of which we must now give our attention.

Many persons may think that these matters of mere church polity, or the forms of religious organization, are very unimportant, and that they really have had no special influence upon the course of human history. And yet, events of vast moment have actually flowed from these apparent trifles, which some regard as very

remote from practical affairs. If we note the radically different spirit and structure of civilization, especially in the western world (and among missions that are the product of these new conditions,—in the orient), between the present time and the sixteenth century, we discover vast changes along many lines, and changes too that are most beneficent. And these results have flowed largely from the matters, which are here under consideration. The historic importance of the Congregational Polity is greater than generally supposed. It has worked mightily in the making of the modern world, in the making and the meaning of the American Citizen, and especially in the victory for civil and religious freedom, which we are now discussing.

III

The term, "Anabaptist," was applied early in the sixteenth century, and by their enemies in derision, to extreme, sometimes fanatical, Protestants of varying shades of belief. Their common ground was the rejection of infant baptism and the contention that true baptism (immersion) is the symbol and seal of genuine conversion, to be administered only *after* the soul has accepted Christ. The term (rebaptism) they naturally resented; for, to them, they had never been really baptised,—the

superstitious service applied to children was not to them true baptism. They, like all Reformers of the time, hated Rome,—its priests, rites, and superstitions. Some were mystics, believing (like Quakers) in the direct guidance of the Holy Spirit. Some held positions similar to modern socialists, only more extreme, like Carlstadt and Münzer. Some advocated offensive views of marriage. Some were so unbalanced that they walked about naked in public places. Some in Holland even urged the use of the sword against unbelievers. Some went so far as to set up "the wild and wicked parody of the Kingdom of God" at Münster in 1535. The few fanatics, incident to a time of general disorder, brought disgrace upon large companies of so-called Anabaptists, who were, in the main, reasonable and law-abiding people.

As a rule, Anabaptists belonged to the middle classes (some early leaders like Denk, Grebel, Manz, Hubmaier, were learned men),—"the plain people," with a simple, austere, undogmatic piety. They emphasized *personal experience* in religion: much insisted upon today by Baptists and Methodists. In all times of stress and excitement such views often lead to many excesses. But recent researches have shown that they were more numerous and more worthy than it was formerly supposed. They existed in almost every country, and some of

their opinions respecting Scripture, the Church, and life in general, were then far in advance of their age, but they have since been generally accepted. They represented a movement of religious feeling: not an intellectual discovery or an organizing impulse. They cared very little for institutions, civil or religious. They disliked all the trappings of royalty, and ceremonial piety was to them an offence. They had slight respect for magistrates and bitter contempt for priests. They were too individualistic to organize a permanent religious movement; or to found schools —of whose learning they made little use. They made no efforts to create institutions of any kind. They strove to extend their beliefs by personal missionary efforts; sometimes in loosely grouped companies and sometimes in friendly relation with various existing churches.

The Anabaptists, at the very beginning of their activities, opposed persecution for mere opinion and they practiced toleration: they furnished many early martyrs to the cause of "soul liberty." At Schleithein, Switzerland (the Swiss Anabaptists were the sanest and ablest of all these extreme radicals), an Anabaptist Confession (the earliest known) was adopted Feb. 24, 1527, and it contains this statement: "In law the sword is ordained over the wicked for punishment and death, and the

civil power is ordained to use it. But in the perfection of Christ, excommunication is pronounced only for naming and for exclusion of him who has sinned" (Sixth Article).

The claims often made in behalf of this action are far greater than the words really warrant. There is here no clear statement of the doctrine of religious freedom nor is the modern doctrine of the separation of Church and State specifically described. The situation was simply this: These groups of earnest but lowly disciples of Jesus, separating themselves from the world, wished the State to let them alone. They asked no exercise of civil power to help propagate their views, and they wished to be tolerant toward other Christian bodies. Certainly a very praiseworthy stand to take.

What was best and sanest in the Anabaptists survived in the Baptists, the least sacramental and most scriptural of the great Protestant Denominations,—and often the most misunderstood! They, however, did not come into definite shape or marked influence in England until the early years of the seventeenth century. From the first these Baptist churches in England,—and their sisters in America,—have stood steadfastly for "soul liberty," for personal religious experience, for the independence of the local congregation, and for the complete separation of Church and State (and

all that this implies): their record in these respects is notable and deserves abundant honor. They were broader than even Milton, who denied toleration to Catholics; and no Baptist has ever advocated the punishment of any one for heresy. But the claim of Masson (Milton, III. 98) that the booklet, "Religious Peace or a Plea for Liberty of Conscience" (1614), which came out of the Baptist Church, established in London (about 1612) by Thomas Helwys and John Murton, from the hand of Leonard Busher ("It cannot be read now without a throb"), was the first English document to assert "the absolute principle of liberty of conscience,"—this claim is not warranted by facts, as the following pages will show.

IV

It was left for a comparatively obscure Englishman to see the great truth that others had missed: a person without genius, destitute of the gracious temper and the heroic spirit, with weaknesses that blighted his fame, whose enemies viciously smirched his name and whose real followers refused to accept him as their leader. And yet, these words of praise by Dr. Dexter are amply deserved: Robert Browne is entitled to "the proud pre-eminence of having been the first writer clearly to state

and defend in the English tongue the true—and now accepted—relation of the magistrate to the Church." (Congregationalism, p. 101.)

The facts of Browne's life may be briefly stated. The recent discoveries of Burrage, Crippen, and Cater, made within the past fifteen years, have greatly added to our knowledge of the man and his writings: they have set many circumstances in a new and more favorable light; they have made plain what was long obscure, but uncertainty still exists respecting many matters. Until recently only one page of manuscript, written by him, was known to exist, now there are over eighty pages; and some twenty-five writings, a majority brief, from his hand are known to scholars; and of them Burrage truly states: "They should forever preserve the memory of his name" (True Story, 73).

Robert Browne (c1550-c1633) was born of good family in Rutlandshire, England: the prominent statesman and favorite of Queen Elizabeth, Lord Burghley was a relative (probably his father's cousin) and frequently rescued him from serious difficulties. He took his bachelor's degree at Corpus Christi, Cambridge, in 1572. After teaching five years, he returned to Cambridge (the Benet church) to preach, and he showed his independence by refusing to accept a salary and by showing indifference to the bishop's license to preach,

which friends secured for him, June 6, 1579. He turned more and more to unconventional methods, preaching in houses and fields. He began to differ radically with Puritan and Presbyterian, who looked to the magistrate to use force or civil law to reform religion.

Browne then left Cambridge and spent some months going up and down the west coast of England, where the influence of Wiclif lingered and where Dutch and Anabaptist ideas were common. He worked largely in secret, but he made an immense impression by his vigor, directness, and zeal, so that the countryside, under his touch, burst into flame. As such actions as his were unlawful, the church officials demanded his arrest, and then began the long series of imprisonments, in jails, in some of which at noonday, he could not see his hand before his face,—over thirty in a period of less than ten years: probably the most frequently jailed man of his time. He was fortunate, however, in being again and again released through the intercession of Lord Burghley.

In the spring of 1580, he organized at Norwich a little covenant-church, according to the plan which he discovered in the New Testament: "The first church in modern days . . . which was intelligently, and, as one might say, philosophically, Congregational in its platform and processes" (Dexter, Congregationalism,

70). But life for him and his people was neither easy nor safe at Norwich. With a few friends, he—(a "pilgrim" before the Pilgrims) —went January, 1582, secretly, to Middelburg, Zeeland. But Browne was not happy with his own people or with the other English Protestants living in exile there. A somewhat angular and bitter spirit, he lacked the genius of leadership and could not long be friendly with any one.

But this much he did on that Dutch soil: He put his theories into print in three pamphlets: now rare, crudely printed, spelling varied and archaic, but embodying a flaming and powerful message. These writings (1582) bear the following titles—in brief:

A Booke which Sheweth the life and manners of all true Christians.

A Treatise of Reformation without tarying for anie.

A Treatise upon the 23d of Matthew.

These and two others comprise the important writings of Robert Browne: "A True and Short Declaration" (24 pp. probably 1584),—chiefly biographical, which was discovered by Rev. Dr. Henry M. Dexter, some forty years ago; and: "A Reproofe of Certaine Schismatical Persons" (65 pp. probably 1588), —a plea for the lawfulness of attending the

Established Churches: written after his submission to the Episcopal Church. This was found by Champlin Burrage in the library at Lambert Palace in 1905.

Browne, leaving Middelburg soon after printing his booklets, spent a short and uncomfortable time in Scotland, and soon returned to England. There, on Oct. 7, 1585, he subscribed to five articles of submission before Archbishop Whitgift of Canterbury. These were promises henceforth to accept the English Church as a true church, to obey its bishops, to partake of its sacraments, and to be quiet! And for the rest of his days, some forty-eight years, he was, nominally, an Anglican. He taught in an Episcopal school for a few years; he was ordained in 1591, and served as rector at Achurch (not an obscure position) from that date until his death in 1633.

John Fiske, having these and other facts in mind, refers to "the flimsiness of Browne's moral texture" (Beginnings of New England, 68). But Mr. Fiske would not have written this statement if he had been in possession of the facts which have come to light in the last ten years. The charges against Browne, that he was intemperate, a wife-beater, a sabbath-breaker, quarrelsome, a man who refused to pay his debts,—these rest probably upon nothing more than the vicious gossip of enemies.

Browne's submission to the Archbishop was

undoubtedly due to these influences: Chiefly to consideration for the welfare of his growing family. Next, to the advice of Lord Burghley who had befriended him and who wrote Feb. 17, 1585, to Browne's father: "I wish he might better be persuaded to conform himself, for his own good, and yours, and his friends' comfort" (Fuller, Ch. Hist. Brit. III. 64). And no doubt another reason was the apparent hopelessness of his movement and the desire for a less turbulent existence. Moreover, it is evident that these promises that he made to the Archbishop (which did not actually imply a definite recantation of his former teachings), were given with both open and mental reservations; or as Burrage puts it: "Did not mean much" (True Story, 39).

However, Browne did formally conform to the Established Church and accept a pastorate at Achurch. This seemed to his old friends weak and dishonorable conduct. No wonder that those who later adopted his views of church organization refused, with a good deal of heat, to be called "Brownists." Surely his action was not heroic; not what could be expected of one who had been courageous enough to go on with his work though put into more than thirty prisons. His case presents so vexatious a problem that Dr. Dexter tried to explain it by supposing that he was more or less insane during the last forty years of his life.

But recent researches show that this theory is unnecessary: the baseless scandals set afloat about him do not need any such explanation, and well-known facts make the theory of insanity very improbable. English bishops would not have entrusted a madman with a church, nor could a lunatic have written so gracious and coherent a treatise as his "Reproofe of Certaine Schismatical Persons."

The true situation seems to have been this: Robert Browne, weary and discouraged on account of his many failures and persecutions, did what many otherwise good people continue to do: He nominally conformed, while in secret holding radically different opinions. This Bredwell asserted in 1588: "Cunningly counterfeiteth conformitie" (Foundations of Brownisme). And Thomas Fuller (1608-1661) —who states that when a young man he often saw Browne,—made this assertion: "I will never believe that he ever formally recanted his opinions" (Ch. Hist. Brit. III. 65).

The following facts confirm this general judgment: (1) In 1586, he was arrested and charged (while serving as a teacher) with non-attendance at church. (2) During all his years at Achurch, he apparently did little or no preaching in the parish church, but employed a curate to occupy the pulpit. (3) He was excommunicated by the Bishop of Peterborough in 1616 and seems to have been under ban for

about ten years. (4) Rumors were long current in the region where he lived that he secretly preached his original and peculiar views to a private church, meeting in an obscure room at Achurch; which may account for his being disciplined by the bishop. (5) His so-called "Retractions," in *A Reproofe* (directed against Barrow and others), contain no explicit denials of the main elements of his early doctrine. He simply pleads for a friendly attitude toward Anglican ministers whom he had formerly bitterly condemned as false teachers of the Word of God, and whom, as he early held, it was a sin to hear preach: the view held by Barrow. The spirit of this work is, indeed, much broader and more tolerant than the pages of his early pamphlets. But this change of temper respecting one matter does not prove a renunciation of his general theory of church order. In fact, his failure in this connection, decisively to repudiate his early views, is good evidence that such had not been the case.

V

What was it that this Father of Congregationalism discovered? What contribution did he make to the cause of civil and religious liberty? What did he do that helped to put a stop to the Martyrdom of Man? What is his relation to the Pilgrim Glory?

The uppermost desire of Browne was to find an immediate and effective method of reformation. He saw clearly the failures and mistakes of the great Protestants. The reformed churches fell far short of the New Testament ideal. They were full of worldliness, superstition, ungodliness. Intolerance existed everywhere and persecutions were frequent. What could be done, what must be done to re-establish pure Christianity?

To him several things were evident: (1) Worldly people must be kept out of the churches. As it was, there were more sinners than saints in the churches. (2) The churches must be freed from the domination of the magistrate. As long as he held authority over them, believers in Christ were under the control of an alien and worldly power. (3) Each church, to make reformation vital and rapid, must be left free, not only from civil but from ecclesiastical authority, in order that it may live and grow under the direction of Christ alone. Believers must obey, in religion, only the authority of Jesus. In the things of the spirit, there must be no divided allegiance: the State must rule in things of the world, but Christ in matters of the soul's salvation. This seemed to Browne a very vital, as it is indeed, a very practical matter. If the Moral Ideal of Christ is to recreate mankind, the Church which ministers to this end must, in its mem-

bership, represent his spirit and not a low worldly ambition. Worldly followers of Jesus, cannot lift the world to the heights of Christian excellence: they cannot give what they do not possess.

These truths being accepted as fundamental, what must be done? The answer he found, clear as the day, in the pages of the New Testament, although it had not been seen by the great Reformers. The evangelical method or principle is this: *In the Church, the priesthood of all believers and the sole Lordship of Christ.* Grant this basic proposition and note what necessarily follows: (1) The true church is the local congregation of covenanted disciples of Jesus, who separate themselves from the world,—its vices, follies, and superstitions. It is a spiritual organization for spiritual ends. It is held together, not by civil coercion or ecclesiastical bonds, not by dogma or rite, but by a covenant with the Lord. "The church is a companie or number of believers which by a willing covenant made with their God are under government of God and Christ" (Booke which Sheweth. 3).

(2) Necessarily, such a church must be separated from the State. The magistrate must have no authority in it or over it. If he did, he would interfere with the Lordship of Jesus which in spiritual matters is supreme. Church and State must therefore stand apart,

each attending to the peculiar duties to which it is called.

(3) Each local church is a complete church, independent in and of itself; accountable alone to Christ, its sole Master; all members equal, because all spiritual heirs or priests of the Most High. As such, it is separated from all other churches: they must not coerce it, and it must not dictate to them. This puts a stop to ecclesiastical domination; and this double separation from State and Hierarchy puts an end to persecution while it provides liberty for growth in the spirit. And all members within the local church being equal, all have the same privileges of voting and holding office, making a Hierarchy or clerical orders within the single church impossible.

This was the Church Order which Browne found described in the New Testament and confirmed by the practices of the primitive churches. The bearing of all this upon the problem of the reformation of religion is obvious: (1) The parish churches of England embraced the whole community: good, bad, and indifferent. Such a heterogeneous company could not easily be moved and the general level of its spiritual life would necessarily be low. But a body of covenanted disciples of Jesus, a select company, separated from the world, provided a high type of religious life with which to begin.

(2) In this way, the reformation of religion could start at once and proceed without hindrances from magistrate or bishop. The parish churches, being tied together and in servitude to the State, could not easily move forward. The single church must wait for all the others, and when they were ready, the approval of the State must then be obtained. Practically, the way of progress was made so difficult that none whatever was made. But under the New Testament plan, Browne's "Independent Congregation," the way forward was always open: no bishop to restrain, no magistrate to coerce, no entangling alliances with other churches to be overcome. Growth became easy and continuous, in response to the spirit of Christ. Two advantages of incalculable value: A "Congregation" on a high spiritual level at the start,—perfect freedom of movement without any external restrictions.

These are the revolutionary principles which Browne clearly set forth in his little booklet, "A Treatise of Reformation without tarying for anie." In its pages, he is very bitter against the worldliness of the parish churches, as he well might be; and he was also very bitter against the Puritan clergy who wished to purify the churches, but by the strong arm of the magistrate. To these Browne appealed: Why wait for the magistrate? That is beginning at the wrong end! That is trying to pro-

duce spiritual results by use of carnal means! Why not start at once by organizing an "Independent Congregation," filled with the Spirit of the Lord and responsible alone to him and free to move as he directs?

Some of these points were more fully expounded by him in the two other booklets: "The Booke which Sheweth," and the Exposition of the Twenty-third Chapter of Matthew. Browne in these writings strikes at the root of *all National Establishments* of religion, then approved by all the Reformers, Lutheran and Calvinistic, Anglican and Puritan. In these teachings, he opens the way for effective reformation through the Independent Congregation; he gives to religion an educational expression in terms of heart life; he frees the "body of Christ" from unworthy elements; he provides for religious freedom by driving magistrates away from religious affairs and keeping ministers from participation in politics; and he puts an end to the Martyrdom of Man by the separation of Church and State: carnal weapons must not be used to coerce the soul, which, in matters of the spiritual life, is solely under the Lordship of Christ.

Some recent writers have contended that the newest investigations show that Browne did not believe, before his conformity, in religious freedom or the separation of Church and State. In this they are mistaken. They have miscon-

strued what he wrote respecting the magistrate and his relation to the Church. He admitted that a certain connection did exist, but the purpose of such connection was simply a friendly protection, as in the United States. The sole lordship of Jesus over the local congregation, which he so forcibly asserted, necessarily implies that the magistrate cease to supervise belief. How could members be *solely* responsible to Christ, if the magistrate has the right to dictate what they shall believe? The very keystone of his doctrine is the independence of the local covenanted Church under Christ alone. But this would be destroyed if the authority of the magistrate were admitted respecting belief and polity.

The followers of Browne (even those,—and they were many,—who refused to be called Brownists) were naturally known as *Separatists.* Their doctrine of Separation emphasized three things: (1) A company of devout disciples *separated* from the worldliness of the world and covenanted to walk in the ways of God under the sole leadership of Christ, securing in this way at once a radical reformation of religion. To this point Browne gave chief attention, as did John Robinson thirty years later: "The Justification of Separation" (1610).

(2) An independent congregation completely *separated* from priest and bishop: no

part of an Established Church, but free to grow as the Spirit of Jesus directed. While the Anglicans believed in the divine right of Bishops and the Presbyterians in the divine right of Presbyters, the Independents (as these Separatists came to be called) believed in the divine right of the Congregation.

(3) As a necessary consequence of these two propositions,—the *separation* of these local churches from the State and its Established Church,—the magistrate would have no control over their faith or practice. Therefore, the secular arm, being excluded from matters of religion, the civil punishment of heresy would cease. At first, this point was less discussed, but it was a vital part of the doctrine, and it was later seen to have supreme importance.

This, then, was a *threefold separation:* a doctrine of mighty power, which, when fully developed, radically reformed the organization of the Church, reinterpreted the ministry of religion; retired the magistrates from spiritual functions; and readjusted the relations of Church and State with infinite gain to both. The failure of many writers to understand how broad a doctrine "Separation" really was,—their failure to see its *threefold* character,—has led to much confusion and many errors. Early Separatists varied in their views respecting these elements and in the emphasis which they put upon them. Some stressed one

element and some another, few all three equally. Hence it has been easy for recent authors to deny that certain leaders were Separatists, when, as a matter of fact, they were simply limited in their views of the doctrine of Separation. It is necessary to keep in mind the breadth of this great doctrine.

This was Robert Browne's "great discovery." He found it in the New Testament. His greatness lies in the fact that he had eyes to see it and appreciate its importance and intellectual ability to formulate it with power and apply it with practical insight. It has often been asserted that he borrowed the doctrine from the Anabaptists. But the fact is that he had made this discovery before he left Cambridge and came into contact with the Anabaptists in and about Norwich. He neither referred to these people nor quoted from their writings. While there are some superficial similarities between his views and theirs, the differences are many and radical.

Three mistakes about *Brownism* have been current: (1) Figgis asserts that Browne held that the State should be indifferent to religion and the Church (Cam. Mod. Hist.—Wars of Religion, 756). What he really advocated was that the State should cease to coerce the Church,—quite another matter. (2) Some have represented, on the other hand, that Browne did not really believe in the separa-

tion of Church and State, but called upon the magistrates to help religion. A more careful reading of his language shows, as has been pointed out, that what he had in mind was not coercion of the Church or interference with conscience by the State, but such civil laws and policies as would protect the churches and foster piety, as is the case in our Nation where the separation is complete. (3) Browne did not teach that the local church should be solitary and unfriendly to other churches. He believed in a *fraternity* but not in a *hierarchy* of churches. Congregational Polity turns on two hinges: The *Independence* of the local church; the *cooperation* of all true churches in fostering the Kingdom of God.

The important fact to bear in mind is this: that Browne, by the help of the New Testament, did formulate and present to Protestantism a new method of religious life and church order of very great importance. Many of its uses and implications he did not himself realize: no more than Franklin the uses and applications of his great electrical discovery. Browne's discovery did, however, become a historic force which has changed the policies of western civilization and the method of Christianity. This "spiritual tool" did not at once make men tolerant. Browne himself was intolerant, as also many early Separatists. But the inevitable influence of the Independent

Congregation, as the history of over three centuries shows, has not only fostered toleration and freedom, but also stopped persecutions.

Congregational Polity cannot by itself, simply by separating Church and State, force Christians to love one another or compel churches to honor one another. But, by removing irritating bonds and tyrannical assumptions, by suppressing the lust for authority and the passion for persecution, by promoting freedom of thought and conscience, this form of religious life does give love and sympathy not only a chance to grow but also the impulse to grow. It fosters appreciation; puts faith under the discipline of kindness; and, in the end, it establishes a wide catholicity and a genuine friendliness in matters of the Spirit.

VI

It has been common to ignore the importance of Browne, one party calling him a fierce fanatic in his early life, and the other condemning him as an unworthy turncoat during his later years. But however lacking in certain qualities and however unheroic in his conformity, he did give his name to a form of religious life and a method of church organization, which, as "Congregational Polity," have had great historic influence and importance.

Those holding these views were long known as *Brownists.* As a party they resented the name, as has been stated, but it really belonged to them. That it was widely used as a term of reproach (indicating the existence of many such people) is evident from the fact that Shakespere (Twelfth Night, Act III., Scene II.; about 1600) represented Sir Andrew Ague-Cheek as saying: "I had as lief be a *Brownist* as a politician."

Browne had become so prominent and his writings so well known, during the last years of the reign of Elizabeth, that she issued a Proclamation specifically aimed at him (he being mentioned by name), his followers, and his books (June 30, 1583): This statute made Brownism punishable as sedition: it being a denial of the Supremacy of the Queen in matters of religion. And no wonder that the authorities were aroused; for a little before this (August 2, 1581), Dr. Freake, Bishop of Norwich, wrote that Browne "hath greatly troubled the whole country and brought many to great disobedience of all laws and magistrates" (Hanbury, Memorials I. 19). Soon after, in 1583, two men were executed at Bury St. Edmunds for circulating his books: Elias Thacker (June 4) and John Copping (June 6). The cause that he represented was sufficiently noteworthy to have its martyrs and engage the attention of Queen and Cabinet.

Ten years later, Sir Walter Raleigh, speaking in Parliament (April 4, 1593), asserted that his followers probably numbered twenty thousand (undoubtedly an exaggeration), and he used these words: "In my conceit, the Brownists are worthy to be rooted out of the Commonwealth." The movement, however, could not be stamped out, although at this date Browne had made his peace with the Bishops. It was about this time, that an opponent, Bredwell, gave this praise to him: "There is none among them [Separatists] that can justly take the garland from Robert Browne" (Foundations of Brownisme, 1588). On the other hand, the very slanders circulated about him at that period, and the fears of the authorities concerning the rapid spread of his doctrine, show his influence.

No more significant testimony to the importance of Browne can be found than the following statement by Lord Bacon (1592): "As for those which we call Brownists, being, when at their best, a very small number of very silly and base people, here and there in corners dispersed, they are now, thanks to God, by the good remedies that have been used, suppressed and worn out, so that there is scarce any news of them" (Certain Observations: Works, III. 60: London Ed. 1824). But how little Bacon knew of the matter of which he was writing! They were not, even then, so few or so obscure

as he imagined. Among the Brownists then and for more than a century to come, were many college men: men of worth and prominence. A poor prophet indeed! Suppressed and soon to disappear! They were so important a few years later that Bishop Joseph Hall gave them much attention in his book: A Common Apologie of the Church of England: Against the Unjust Challenges of the Overjust Sect, commonly called *Brownists* (1610). And even then the Pilgrim Band (really Brownists though disowning the name) had appeared and in time they shaped the destiny of America; and not many years to the Commonwealth whose great leaders, Cromwell, Milton and Vane advocated the Independency which he taught. This much overpraised man (Bacon made no scientific discoveries, and he found "many and grave difficulties" in the Copernican system!), though so far-famed, never really contributed so much to the betterment of human life as the obscure Robert Browne, who started a movement which, gathering elements from many directions, resulted in the reorganization of religion, the separation of Church and State, and so, in the end, secured freedom for learning and science, for politics and faith.

Lord Bacon expected that the Brownists would disappear long before his death. But what was the situation within a score of years

after he died in disgrace? An Independent, Cromwell, was ruler of England: an Independent, Milton, was the greatest poet then living in the world; across the sea, Independents were laying, deep and broad in America, the foundations of a new civilization. So many Brownists were living in England in 1640, that over fifty books against them were published in the following five years. So many in London that Archbishop Laud wrote complaints in his Diary (September and October, 1640) that whenever he moved about the streets of the city "riotous Brownists cry out against him."

Among many other facts showing the powerful influence of the ideas of Browne during the Commonwealth, there is one that needs to be mentioned just here. Robert Baillie (1599-1662 —past thirty when Browne died), one of the Scottish Commissioners, was highly honored by the most eminent divines connected with the Westminster Assembly. In tracing the demand made by the Independents in that body for religious liberty, to its source, he went back to Robert Browne. He wrote: "Concerning the magistrate, Master Browne teacheth that he hath no right to meddle at all in any matter of Religion, but to permit the liberty and free choice of Religion to the conscience of every one of his subjects" . . . "He stood in his infamous way for a full liberty of conscience." This statement, by a competent authority, an

opponent, makes two things clear: That Browne demanded the separation of Church and State; and that he was the source of the doctrine of religious freedom, then advocated by Independents.

In view of these facts, the praise of Browne by Burrage is fully deserved: "One of the most fearless and honest religious thinkers of a great age" (Early English Dissenters, I., 94). But the contention in this work, that Browne was not really a Separatist and that Early English Independents owed nothing to his teaching or influence, is surely a serious mistake. Widespread and intelligent tradition and testimony assert the contrary. Even the protestations of men like Robinson of Leiden and Bradford of Plymouth against being called "Brownists" (though they both adopted his principles) prove the breadth and depth of his influence. Even if only a "nickname," such a term reveals historic importance. However disowned himself, his doctrine had *infected* English thought. Those who departed from his precise theories worked in a light which he had created. Many yielded to his power while ignoring or deriding him. There is a good American illustration of the true situation. Republicans before the Civil War refused to be called Abolitionists and they would not accept Garrison as their prophet. Nevertheless, they were in the main his followers, and

if it had not been for him there never would have been any Republican Party.

VII

For some years after the nominal conformity of Robert Browne, the great truths, which he had advocated, found a place in many serious English minds, but no radical or extensive efforts were made to put them into practice. The notable "Scrooby-Leiden-Plymouth" movement was at the time inconspicuous. The reign of James I. was not brilliant but mediocre in religious accomplishment, with the exception of the splendid translation of the Bible (1611). But with the uprisings against Charles I., the Puritan Spirit burst into flame. Puritans, as a body, sought reformation by law and magistrate. They believed as much in a State Church as Anglicans and as little in toleration. They did not understand the necessity for the separation of Church and State. But under the shelter of Puritanism, many movements started, here and there, which afterwards became Independent Churches. At first some of these were broad Anglican, and some liberal Presbyterian, but the logic of events carried them to Independency, practically following the Ideal of Browne.

Very soon after the death of Browne, the very principles he had early taught became

dominant national forces. The Roundheads, victorious at Marston Moor and Naseby, fought, not only for civil, but for religious liberty. Probably few beside the leaders knew anything about the Founder of Congregationalism, and none cared for his name, but many were eager to have the method of religious life, which he had advocated, become the national policy. As Cromwell told the House of Commons, his soldiers fought for "liberty of conscience" and would not be satisfied with anything less. These men had a vision of the great truth which Lord Acton (a Catholic) thus describes: "The idea that religious liberty is the generating principle of civil, and that civil liberty is the necessary condition of religious, was a discovery reserved for the seventeenth century. . . . That great political idea. . . . has been the soul of what is great and good in the progress of the last two hundred years."

As early as July 4, 1635, Cromwell (1599-1658) had said in a notable speech at Whitehall: "Love all, tender all, cherish and countenance all, in all things that are good. And if the poorest Christian, the most mistaken Christian shall desire to live peaceably and quietly under you,—I say, if any shall desire but to lead a life of godliness and honesty, let him be protected." And John Morley's comment on these words is richly deserved:

"Toleration was now in Cromwell neither a conclusion drawn out by logical reason nor a mere dictate of political expediency. It flowed from a rich fountain in his heart of sympathy with men, of kindness for their sore struggles after saving truth, of compassion for their blind stumbles and mistaken paths." It was a common saying of Cromwell: Liberty of conscience is one of the most precious gifts of God. In March, 1643, he censured General Crawford, who had rebuked a faithful soldier for being an Anabaptist: "I advised you formerly to bear with men of different minds from you." The next year (1644), Cromwell secured an order from the House of Commons for the toleration of all, which was opposed by the Presbyterians as an unwise act, being described by Baillie, the prominent Scotch divine, already quoted, in these words: "The great shott of Cromwell and Vane is to have a libertie for all religions without any exception" (Letter, 1644). This act (Sept. 13, 1644) directed: "Do endeavor the finding out some ways how far tender consciences, who cannot in all things submit to the common Rule which shall be established, may be borne with."

Cromwell, as Protector (1653), began with two fundamental principles: (1) The toleration of various forms of Dissent. (2) The establishment of a state, non-prelatic church on broad evangelical principles. The latter

measure, incompatible with pure Congregationalism as advocated by Browne and with his own theory of toleration, was a compromise which was maintained after a fashion for a short period. Under it, the clergy were, in the main, Independents. The English Presbyterians, at this time, were friendly because quasi-Independents. The Baptists presented the chief difficulty. It was hard for them to accept tithes and for Cromwell to endure their demand for separation of Church and State. He realized the incongruities in his policy, but he, at this time, earnestly desired both general toleration and an Established Church.

At this point, it is interesting to note, that Milton earnestly opposed the great Protector, urging that tithes for the support of any church be abolished and all connection of Church and State absolutely cease: surely the wiser policy, which would have saved Cromwell many vexations, and which would have made an incalculable contribution to the progress of civilization. And yet, in spite of this difference between them, Milton wrote of Cromwell in his Sonnet: "Cromwell our Chief of Men":

> " Help us to save free conscience from the paw
> Of Hirling Wolves, whose Gospel is their maw."

The career of Cromwell is not spotless. There is enough in his record to warrant severe criticism. The most deplorable is his Irish

campaign, with the cruel slaughter at Drogheda (Sept. 10, 1649). Such things cannot be justified, but it ought to be remembered that those people suffered, not simply because they were Catholics, but because so-called Irish Rebels had done much that was equally inhuman. During the previous eight years (from the days of the Irish Massacre—1641) thousands of Protestants had been brutally slain. The lowest estimate, some 10,000; a conservative conclusion puts the number at 30,000,—ten times the number "butchered" at Drogheda. Over 200 families had been put to death at Kilmore by sword, fire and water; 150 men, women and children burned alive in the castle at Lisgool (the list of similar atrocities is long): and simply because they were Protestants! Harsh as the "Cromwellian Settlement" was, the Protector did many deeds during those days, not only of justice but of mercy (Hickson, Massacre of 1641, I., 156). Unfortunately the spirit of the time was inhuman. But in spite of serious defects, Cromwell was probably the greatest ruler England ever had; one of the three most masterful civic leaders of the Anglo-Saxon race, in company with King Alfred and President Lincoln, the latter far the greatest.

Cromwell would have done much more for religious freedom if the conditions had permitted him to do so. As it was, he stoutly warned narrow-minded Presbyterians who

hated the "hideous principle of toleration," that he would not suffer "the unchristian principle of intolerance to be turned against neighbors." He would not publicly pledge freedom to Catholics as Cardinal Mazarin urged (Dec. 26, 1656), but he was very tolerant to them if quiet and loyal. He never thought it wise to repeal the laws against Anglicans, but he winked at the private use of the Prayer Book. He was considerate toward Quakers, when Quakerism was associated with much that was intolerable. As a sensible man he realized that many of them were admirable people, that some were actually crazy, while others were only eccentric but harmless. He protected the Socinian, John Biddle, from the ravenous beasts who sought his blood, sending him to a comfortable prison (a castle in the Scilly Islands) to get him away from his enemies, and Cromwell gave him while there (two and a half years from Oct. 5, 1655) a pension of a hundred crowns a year. He was friendly toward the Jews; and while the Council would not vote to admit them, he permitted them to enter England, one by one, and he even protected their Synagogue in London; while to an Amsterdam Jew, Manasseh Ben Israel, he gave a pension of a hundred pounds a year!

VIII

John Milton was a great statesman as well as a great poet, and he was far in advance of his age respecting both civil and religious liberty: not only far in advance of the broadest Anglicans and Presbyterians, but of Cromwell and of many of the great Independent Divines. Broadminded Englishmen, at home and in New England, about 1645 and after, may be grouped into three parties (not including Cromwell) on the subject of Toleration: (1) Limited religious toleration under an established Church of some sort: John Cotton and Thomas Hooker in New England and some of the Independents in the Westminster Assembly. (2) A wide latitude of belief within the Anglican Church: Thomas Chillingworth, Jeremy Taylor,—and even Richard Hooker over a generation before had held similar views. (3) Absolute religious freedom (Catholics excepted), with no state church: John Milton, Sir Henry Vane, Roger Williams,—who spent much time in London (1643-1653),—the broadest of them all, who would have included Catholics. To this group, later, belonged Quakers like George Fox, Robert Barclay, and William Penn,—but also tolerant of Papists. And all these men had been influenced, directly or indirectly, by the teachings of Robert Browne.

Milton (1608-1674), in his *Areopagitica*

(1644), his noblest prose and no greater ever written, or "A Plea for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing," argued with wonderful cogency and mighty eloquence for freedom of thought, speech and press. This is one of his most notable sentences: "Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties." But in this great human document the author does not specifically discuss religious matters. The problem of toleration he discussed later (1659) in "Civil Power in Ecclesiastical Causes" (88 pages as then printed): a clear, strong argument, in plain English as befits religious discourse, in advocacy of complete separation of Church and State. The argument is mainly Scriptural, with no references to modern instances like Holland or Transylvania, and no use of the writings of Marsilius or Wiclif (to whom Milton, however, paid a glowing tribute); and he refers to neither Socinus nor Browne.

Milton's main contention in this treatise is that to compel a man to believe or obey in religion,—a spiritual matter, is neither pleasing to God nor helpful to man, nor safe for the State. Everything in religion is vicious unless sincere; vicious if under duress. Two of his statements follow: "The civil power, hath neither right nor can do right by forcing religious things." And this: "Force neither

instructs in religion nor begets repentance or amendment of life, but on the contrary hardness of heart, formality, hypocrisy." And Milton well affirmed that Protestants are more to blame if they indulge in persecuting than Catholics: "The more he professes to be a true Protestant, the more he has to answer for his persecuting than a papist."

Milton made a broad distinction between false opinions (which should be tolerated) and *a heresy* which is an *idolatrous practice,* and must not be tolerated. This was the ground of his refusal to tolerate papists: because they were *idolaters*—not simply on account of their Catholic belief: an argument that has no force with us. But we must remember that England was then fighting an uncertain battle against the Spirit of the Inquisition; and that many British Catholics were plotting against the government,—the situation may be crudely illustrated by an American instance: We disfranchise polygamous Mormons, not because of their religious faith, but because plural marriages are not only immoral but criminal.

John Morley has nobly written of Milton (Cromwell, 159): "It was Milton's lofty genius that did the work of bringing a great universal idea [toleration] into active relation with what all men could understand and what all practical men wished for." This statement is perfectly true. But Mr. Morley falls into error, not only

in writing of Cromwell and Milton, but in discussing Voltaire, by asserting that religious freedom has been wholly due "to the growth of rationalism." He completely ignores the large part played by Congregational Polity, leading on to the separation of Church and State, and so putting a permanent stop to the Martyrdom of Man. The growth of rationalism fluctuates; it does not *necessarily* end persecutions; and it cannot provide a permanent solution of the problem, making it *organic* in the very structure of civilization. "Rationalism" has, for a long period, been dominant in Germany, but in recent years the world saw Bismarck oppressing Catholics and only yesterday eminent German pastors (such as Jatho and Traub) were driven out of their pulpits by the government. The rationalistic spirit alone cannot create tolerant sentiments or insure humane actions. German rationalism, by its arrogance and frightfulness, has kept the world in blood and tears for four years. Rationalism is pronounced in Norway and Sweden (a majority of university professors there are actually unbelievers), but many positions are closed to an open advocate of unorthodox opinions.

It has needed something more than the growth of rationalism to emancipate the world from priestcraft and statecraft. Moreover, the reorganization of religion which set Church

and State apart, not only provided the necessary opportunity for the growth of rationalism, but it also provided the strongest motive and impulse in that direction. It is to be regretted that Lecky, in discussing the same problem (Rationalism in Europe) failed, like Morley, to take account of the organic agencies and the creative influences here emphasized. The same unfortunate limitation is found in that wonderful treasure-house of facts: Andrew D. White's "Warfare of Science." The basic fact is this: Rationalism often produces only indifference, —sometimes a prophet of toleration like Erasmus or Voltaire or John Stuart Mill; but such men alone would never have secured what we know as modern religious freedom.

IX

The members of the Westminster Assembly were remarkable men, and the "Confession" which they formulated is a notable document, but few today consider it a true description of Biblical teaching or an adequate interpretation of human life or divine providence. During its many sessions for four years (1643-1647) about half of its 151 original members were generally in attendance. The large majority were Presbyterians, and they were dominated by the narrower Scottish Commissioners, also Presbyterians, who could debate but not vote.

The Independent divines were less than a dozen, five of whom, under the leadership of Philip Nye, were Separatists who had recently returned from an enforced exile in Holland. Thomas Goodwin (1600-1680) was probably the ablest of this band, a frequent preacher before Parliament, a favorite of Cromwell,—at his bedside when he died. Although not a member,—he did not change from the Presbyterian to the Independent position until 1644,—John Owen (1616-1683), an abler man than any of the others, cooperated with them. Owen was a very superior scholar, tolerant in spirit and action, who went so far as to remonstrate with the New England leaders (1669) for yielding to Presbyterian influence and indulging in persecution: after 1666 he had a quiet pastorate of an Independent church in London until his death.

In January, 1644, the Independents in the Assembly addressed to Parliament a protest,—"Apologetical Narration,"—stating the case against the Presbyterian system (in the spirit of Milton's words: "Presbyter" is simply *Priest* writ large!), and arguing powerfully for Independency and general religious freedom. It is an interesting fact that the words used by these Independents were substantially reproduced over a hundred and thirty years later in the famous Declaration for Religious Liberty, incorporated in the Bill of Rights, as

Article XVI. enacted by the Virginia Assembly June 12, 1776!

These Independents were outvoted, but, so earnest was their opposition and so cogent their reasoning, that the Presbyterian members found difficulty in carrying their measures against this small minority, while the outside public were deeply impressed with their arguments. The sturdy Scottish divine, Robert Baillie, wrote of them (Nov., 1645): "Independents in the last meeting of our grand committee of accommodation have expressed their desyns for tolleration, not only to themselves but to other sects." This same Scottish Commissioner, Baillie, in a letter to a friend, stated the common opinion of the Assembly in these words: "Liberty of Conscience and toleration of all or any religion is so *prodigious an impiety* that this religious parliament cannot but abhor the very meaning of it!"

It was a great misfortune to Great Britain and the world that the Independents failed in their earnest endeavor. But in a larger way, they gloriously succeeded. The English Presbyterian churches,—those then in existence and afterwards organized,—became increasingly broad as the years passed, so that, under the influence of their teaching and other forces, these churches, by 1800, had nearly all become practically Independent: nurseries of religious progress, out of which, as we shall see, came

some of the strongest advocates of religious freedom that England has ever produced, the latest and greatest being James Martineau. Through them the teaching of Robert Browne, little known and nowhere honored, came to noble fruitage.

X

The "Friends," though they mentioned not his name, were followers, in the main, of Robert Browne, but with a strain of mysticism, —some with a wild spirit of fanaticism. They were extreme *Separatists,* not only from worldliness but from all entangling alliances with civil government.

George Fox (1624-1691), the founder of the Quakers or Friends, was a psychopathic, with glorious but perplexing visions; Apostle of the Inward Light; a strange mystic: heroic, patient, untiring; with bitter tongue against the wickedness of the world and also often active against people of other faith,—a man, who condemned persecution with considerable intolerance; but to be remembered with gratitude for many things, especially for writing a noble exposition of religious freedom (1677) to John Sobieski (Johannes III.), King of Poland, in which these words occur: "O that all Christendom had lived in peace and unity,

that they might by their moderation have judged both Turk and Jew; and let all have their liberty, that own God and Jesus Christ" (*Journal,* 523).

This was his view from the beginning of his ministry, an inevitable consequence of his position respecting non-resistance to evil. He adopted from the Independents their theory of separation of Church and State; and while he realized the necessity for civil government, he taught Friends to refrain from making oaths or going to law. The testimony of Friends from his day, by word and deed, has been powerful against persecution and for freedom: No Quaker has ever lifted up his hand to punish a man for his religious opinions.

In William Penn (1644-1718), the Quakers found a leader far broader, saner, and greater than Fox. He was a man of distinguished family. He spent two years at Christ College, Oxford, and while there was influenced by correspondence with the prominent Independent, John Owen. Called home in 1662, he was whipped, beaten, and turned out of doors by his father because he had become a Quaker. Later, he became intimate with James II., a fact which subjected him to the charge of being a Jesuit, though he constantly used his influence to protect those accused of heresy. While still a young man (1671), he published his notable

book: "The Great Case of Liberty of Conscience," in which many passages of broad and tolerant spirit, like the following, are found:

"If we do allow the honor of our creation due to God only, and that no other besides himself has endowed us with those excellent gifts of understanding, reason, judgment, and faith, and consequently that he only is the object as well as the author, both of our faith, worship, and service; then whosoever shall interpose their authority to enact faith and worship in a way that seems not to us congruous with what he has discovered to us to be faith and worship or to restrain us from what we are persuaded is our indispensable duty, they evidently usurp this authority, and invade his incommunicable right of government over conscience" (Works: II. 135, London Ed. 1825).

And Penn practiced what he preached. In formulating the constitution of Pennsylvania about a dozen years later, he made fundamental in it the principle of religious freedom. And several years before this, he had incorporated the same principle in the "Concessions," drawn up for West New Jersey, where we find these words: "That no man nor number of men upon earth hath power or authority to rule over men's consciences in religious matters" (Chap. XVI.).

While no direct dependence of Fox and Penn upon Robert Browne can be traced, it is nevertheless perfectly evident that without his influence upon England through the Independents, no such movement as that of the Quakers would have existed. He created the atmosphere which made them possible. They developed along other lines his principles of the equality of all disciples of Christ. They insisted upon the independence of all souls and their direct access to God. Moreover, like Browne, they demanded the separation of Church and State, and therefore freedom of conscience.

In the generation from the Commonwealth to the Revolution, all the great pleas for religious freedom were made by Independents (including Baptists and Quakers) with the exception of that issued in 1647 by Jeremy Taylor (1613-1667): A Discourse of the Liberty of Prophesying. The argument is eloquent and superficially broad: an earnest plea for toleration which exerted a wholesome influence especially upon Anglican minds, but the writer had a very imperfect conception of *religious equality.* This treatise would not probably have been written, if Episcopacy had then been dominant; but being at that time an outlaw, its friends might well argue for tolerant consideration.

In these pages many noble sentiments are expressed: "All such opinions, in which the public interest of the commonwealth and the foundation of faith and a good life, are not concerned, are to be permitted freely" (Section 22). Such teachings, however, had long been the accepted doctrines of the Independents. But it was helpful to have a Churchman advocate them: and that an Anglican clergyman should issue such a book shows what a profound impression the "gospel of religious liberty," as advocated by Independents, had made upon the English people. But as Taylor's plea went little farther than mere toleration, the breadth of his pages was more apparent than real. The general freedom which he granted to the heretic was only a temporary favor, not an inherent right or constitutional privilege. To be sure, there are hints of a wider horizon and a more catholic spirit, but if theories no more radical than those of this eloquent divine had been incorporated into the structure of modern government, the Martyrdom of Man would not have ceased and the Pilgrim Glory would not have appeared.

XI

During a whole generation, under the reign of Charles II. and that of his brother, James II., the English government passed rigorous laws for the suppression of freedom of thought in religion, and the Independents had to endure many hardships, although local public opinion often treated these obnoxious laws with indifference and officials frequently neglected to enforce them against their neighbors. Under such precarious shelter dissenting chapels were built, here and there, and numerous Independents rose to considerable influence. This situation itself reveals the steady growth of the spirit of toleration.

What John Locke (1632-1704) demanded was that this growing sentiment of toleration be made fundamental in the constitution of the land. He boldly asserted in his "First Letter concerning Toleration" (1689): "It is neither declaration of indulgence, nor acts of comprehension, such as have yet been practised or projected amongst us that can do the work. The first will but palliate, the second increase our evils. *Absolute liberty, just and true liberty, equal and impartial liberty, is the thing we stand in need of.*" He had reached these convictions when a young man, as early as 1666. Locke had been reared in the atmosphere of Independency; and his broad and catholic

mind, among its many notable achievements, reached a perfect mastery of the fundamental principle, by which alone the emancipation of the Gospel from priest and king could be secured. His discussion of this principle in his four "Letters on Toleration,"—the last written just before his death,—is a voluminous, comprehensive, and masterly presentation of all phases of this great problem.

Constitutional liberty, which the Englishmen of Locke's day had won, was vindicated by his reasoning as resting upon principles the most solid and indestructible. Locke's ideas of toleration were far in advance of his day. "There is absolutely no such thing under the Gospel," says Locke, "as a Christian Commonwealth"; that is to say, the State, as such, knows nothing of religious differences, and has no right to favor any religious opinions and practices, or to control them except as they may interfere with the civil order of society.

The "Letters on Toleration," by Locke, make a substantial volume of about six hundred pages: it abounds in lofty sentiments and powerful arguments. The following are interesting specimens: "The only business of the Church is the salvation of souls: and it no ways concerns the commonwealth, or any member of it, that this or the other ceremony be there made use of. Neither the use, nor the omission, of any ceremonies in those religious assemblies

does either advantage or prejudice the life, liberty, or estate, of any man." . . . "The care of souls cannot belong to the civil magistrate, because his power consists only in outward force: but true and saving religion consists in the inward persuasion of the mind, without which nothing can be acceptable to God." . . . "As the magistrate has no power to impose, by his laws, the use of any rites and ceremonies in any church; so neither has he any power to forbid the use of such rites and ceremonies as are already received, approved, and practiced by any church: because, if he did so, he would destroy the church itself; the end of whose institution is only to worship God with freedom, after its own manner" (Works, London Ed. 1823. 11, 30, 33).

The Act of Toleration (1689), the outcome of the English Revolution, applied these principles in only a small measure and left much to be done: and much is still to be done in Great Britain before Locke's ideal is reached. However, this Act did benefit Dissenters, although it did not improve the condition of Catholics. Civil rights remained limited by the obnoxious Test Act (1673), which required that all officials, to hold office, must first partake of the sacrament in an Anglican Church!

It was the good fortune of Voltaire to spend some time in England (1726-1729) a generation after the death of Locke. In his English ex-

periences, he became deeply interested, not only in Locke's "Human Understanding" and the "Reasonableness of Christianity," but especially in his *Letters on Toleration.* The impressions made by the latter were deepened by his associations with Quakers. He went home to France a new man, with radically different ideas of life. When in 1762, Calas was broken on the wheel and the family of Sirven put to torture (a little later La Barre—1766—was condemned to the stake, but the sentence was changed to beheading), Voltaire flamed forth into a denunciation of "The Infamous" which stirred the whole world. About this time his hot indignation expressed itself in "A Treatise on Toleration." In it we find many such sentences as these: "The law of persecution then is equally absurd and barbarous; it is the law of tigers: nay, it is even still more savage, for tigers destroy only for the sake of food, whereas we have butchered one another on account of a sentence or a paragraph" (Chap. VI.).

It is an interesting reflection, showing how far a generous impulse or a great thought may project itself, to remember that the movement for the separation of Church and State, to which Robert Browne contributed so much, went on deepening and broadening through the mighty men of the Commonwealth, through the Quakers, and then through the pages of

Locke, until it transformed the mighty spirit of Voltaire, and through him (and in other ways), it profoundly stirred the hearts of Franklin, Jefferson, and Madison, and helped (by this and other channels) to give us in America absolute religious equality: the consummate flowering of the Pilgrim Glory.

Whoever tells the story of the English Independents must not fail to mention that powerful thinker and progressive liberal, Joseph Priestley (a hundred years later than Locke: 1733-1804), a man with wonderful versatility as preacher, scholar, scientist, philosopher, author; with almost superhuman industry, who, in addition to parish duties and scientific experiments, could issue for years a pamphlet a month, and in addition a substantial volume a year. Priestley was, withal, a man of generous spirit, which made him a remarkable controversialist, who never abused or misrepresented his opponent.

In 1787, Priestley wrote "A Letter to William Pitt on the subject of Toleration," in which he clearly and forcibly advocated the great cause of religious liberty. But nearly twenty years before this, when a young man of thirty-five, he issued a volume: "First Principles of Government" (1768), which was largely devoted to the same subject; and in this treatise (300 pp.), he places "the most valuable interests of mankind [civil and relig-

ious freedom] on a broader and firmer basis than Mr. Locke."

Some of his statements are especially worthy of attention: "Those societies [nations] have ever enjoyed the most happiness and have been in the most flourishing state, where the civil magistrates have meddled the least in religion. . . . There is something in the nature of religion that makes it more than out of the proper sphere or province of the civil magistrate to intermeddle with it. The duties of religion, properly understood, seem to be, in some measure, incompatible with the interference of the civil power. For the purpose and object of religion necessarily suppose the powers of individuals and a responsibility which is the consequence of those powers; so that the civil magistrate, by taking any of those powers from individuals and assuming them to himself, doth so far incapacitate them for the duties of religion. . . . The more sensible part of mankind are evidently in a progress to the belief, that ecclesiastical and civil jurisdiction, being things of a totally different nature, ought, if possible, to be wholly disengaged from one another" (pp. 111, 139, 296).

The plea of Priestley was for something far greater than even "Universal Toleration": a demand for the rights of the individual, that he may possess and enjoy his belief, free from

external restraints, civil or ecclesiastical. This means the complete separation of Church and State, as urged by Robert Browne: a good illustration of which he found in Pennsylvania, where he happily spent the last ten years of his life, having himself suffered severely at the hands of a Birmingham mob, which was inflamed, not only by political passion but also by religious hatred.

CHAPTER IV

THE CONTRIBUTION OF AMERICA

THE PILGRIM GLORY IN FULL BLOOM

A Free Soul in a Free Church in a Free State

Robert Browne: The Church is a Christocentric Democracy, separated from the world, under the lordship of Christ alone, with implications of civil and religious freedom.

John Robinson and the Pilgrims: The Church is a Company of the followers of Jesus, covenanted to live in his spirit and do God's will,—broad Separatists with strong democratic instincts.

John Cotton and Thomas Hooker: The Church is a Congregation of God's people with an aristocratic eldership,—not separated from the State, but part of a Theocracy.

Roger Williams: The Church is the mystical body of Christ, all its members equal before God, its works and weapons being spiritual, so that it stands apart from the State and both grant liberty of conscience to all.

John Wise: The Church is a Homocentric Democracy,—all its members equal and all churches independent, being the spiritual companion of the State: both democracies based on liberty, equality, and the right reason inherent in human nature.

CHAPTER IV

THE CONTRIBUTION OF AMERICA

I

The "Contribution of America" began to take shape about 1600 on the east coast of England; it gathered strength and endured discipline for a few years in Holland under the leadership of a very remarkable man, John Robinson; it came across the Atlantic, seeking a larger life, in the souls of the small *Mayflower* Band; and it first took root in our soil at Plymouth. Since those days the Martyrdom of Man has waned, and Civilization has everywhere made progress toward perfect religious equality.

During the first decade of the seventeenth century, groups of people in and about the neighboring towns of Scrooby, Gainsborough, Austerfield, near the east coast of England, united in a church organization, using as the Bond of Union a brief covenant, substantially as follows: "We the Lord's free people, join ourselves, by a covenant of the Lord, into a church-estate in the fellowship of the Gospel, to walk in all his ways, made known or to be

made known unto us, according to our best endeavors" (IV. Mass. Hist. Coll., III. 9).

These people were Calvinists and Separatists, but they chose for the basis of their religious organization a Life-purpose, rather than a dogmatic formula. They believed in the main principles advocated by Robert Browne, but they very properly refused to be called *Brownists;* first, because it was an offensive nickname (as Robinson declared); and all the more so, because Browne (still living) had nominally forsaken these principles; and second, because they found this doctrine in the New Testament (as Browne himself had) and they proposed to build on Scripture truth, not on human tradition.

The story of these Pilgrims in England, their difficult escape to Holland (1608), their year at Amsterdam, their eleven years at Leiden (1609-1620), their voyage to America in the *Mayflower,*—this wonderfully interesting story has been so frequently and so eloquently told that it need not be repeated here. The inspiring facts are familiar. Only that part of the story need now be given that makes clear their special contribution to civilization, wherein we find their true and abiding glory.

Robinson (1575-1625) became sole pastor when the church removed to Leiden, just as the Twelve Years' Truce began between Holland and Spain (1609): an auspicious moment.

He was probably born in Gainsborough. He took high rank at Cambridge University, studying at Corpus Christi (where Browne was educated) and was honored with a fellowship. After seven years, he left Cambridge and served as curate in the Established Church, in or near Norwich (1600-1604), a region alive with Brownist sentiments. Here he became a Separatist and soon after joined what became the Pilgrim Church. They were fortunate in having such a leader, of whom Masson wrote: "So powerful were his qualities of head and heart,"—that he may well be regarded as the finest representative of Independency (Milton, II., 542). We therefore find symbolized in him what was essential in the Pilgrim Glory: the very heart of the contribution of America to the emancipation of the Gospel from priest and king: the treasure which came over in the *Mayflower*.

The standing of Robinson at Cambridge and the high position as scholar and disputant which he won in the University of Leiden, show that he was a man of remarkable intellectual ability. But he possessed qualities of character still more unusual: a saintly spirit, a sweet temper, "A broad and tolerant habit of mind" (Fiske, Beginnings of New England, 72). Prof. Walker is fully justified in calling him "the greatest of the Separatists" (Congregational Churches in U. S., 71).

How sturdy a Separatist he was is seen in these words of his in criticism of a liberal Anglican Church in Norwich: "St. Andrews is not a people separated and sanctified from the world into a holy covenant with God, but a confused assembly. . . . It hath not the libertie eyther to enjoye anye minister, though never so holye or to remove anie though never so propheane, but at the will of the bishop" (Burrage, New Facts, 19). In his chief work, "A Justification of Separation" (1610), in which his main plea was made for a separation of the Lord's free people from the worldly world, he also lays emphasis on the independence of the local church: "The Lord having appointed none other church, under the New Testament, but a particular congregation" (473).

Robinson advised the members of his church, who were departing for America, to shake off the name "Brownist." And this was wise advice, for the reasons just given. But it was common knowledge that the church was building on foundations which Browne had discovered and declared to be those of the Primitive Churches. All this Bostwick, who knew Robinson and his church in Leiden, clearly stated when he wrote, out of his full information: "Master Robinson, the pastor of the Brownist Church" (Utter Routing of Independents: 1646).

Early Separatists were deeply concerned about a subject which seems to us quite trivial: For a time it was commonly held by most of them that it was a sin to attend the English parish churches, such attendance being a harmful participation in popish rites and an unwise approval of a State Church and all its evils. However narrow this view may seem to us, the problem was then "a living issue." And not so strange, when we consider that bishops then fined, imprisoned, and mutilated people for attending Separatist meetings!

The only reason for referring to the matter here is to show the quality of Robinson's character: How he bore himself in this controversy. His views changed somewhat at this point during the last fifteen years of his life, but always in the direction of increasing catholicity, which reflected great honor upon him.

The treatise, "Justification of Separation," contains an elaborate and forcible reply to those who charged him, and those whom he represented, with narrowness and uncharitableness, because they left the Established Church. His reply was this: We do not hold that all members of parish churches are worldly, or all their ministers unworthy, or all their ceremonials popish. We separate from them in order to gain freedom of action, not there permitted; and also, to form a congregation composed only of persons who have

given their hearts to Christ,—which the parish does not provide. His words were: "Errors imputed to us are: that we hold none of their ministers [Anglicans] may be heard and that it is not lawful to join in prayer with any of them" ("Justification," 394). In other words, he contended that the charges of bigotry were baseless. This shows with what gracious catholicity he held the doctrine of Separation even at that date.

Four years later, Robinson issued a small volume: "Of Religious Communion" (1614), which grew out of personal controversies and church troubles at this point. Its pages reveal a broader view respecting attendance upon Anglican services. He was no less a Separatist, but he saw less harm in association with English parish churches. He now more clearly recognized the *reality* of their piety, if not their fidelity to New Testament teaching respecting the constitution of the Church. It must be noted here that he always maintained the most friendly relations with the Dutch, Swiss, and French Protestant Churches.

In this connection, we must note that his practices exemplified his teachings. The English Separatist Church at Amsterdam expelled a member for attending an Anglican Church when visiting in London. Robinson expressed himself as "deeply shocked and grieved" over this intolerant act. He secured the approval

of his own church in favor of his wider view. At the same time, he nobly showed his breadth in maintaining friendly relations with the erring church whose action he had disapproved. He took the same position respecting a London Independent Church which disciplined a member for the same offense.

Then, ten years later, just before his death, Robinson wrote another book: "A Treatise of the Lawfulness of Hearing of the Ministers of the Church of England,"—which was not published until 1634. There are no radical changes of view here. The spirit is still broader and a more friendly attitude is taken toward the matter in dispute, but he is still a loyal Separatist. He reaffirmed his allegiance in these words: "I cannot communicate with or submit unto the said church order and ordinances there established, either in state or act, without being condemned of mine own heart." These facts show that he was a man of catholic spirit who grew broader as he advanced in years, but always a loyal Independent: not only a remarkable thinker but a sweet-tempered saint.

In this connection, we find an explanation of an incident that has troubled some admirers of John Robinson. When the agents of the Pilgrims went to London and sought the permission and protection of the English government

for their American venture, he advised, not only an acknowledgment of the authority of the king, but also of bishops. In the Fifth of the Seven Articles sent by Robinson and Brewster to London in order to secure the favorable consideration of the government, they used this language: "The authority of the present bishops in the land we do acknowledge, *so far as the same is indeed derived from his Majesty unto them.*" A qualification which points to a *civil authority* bestowed by the king as *civil Ruler!* But later in the same document they asserted plainly their devotion to the Congregational Way, claiming the right to choose or dismiss their own ministers.

Some have felt that this meant weakness, if not duplicity. The action simply showed practical common sense: here is where a narrow fanatic would have wrecked the enterprise. They were Englishmen and they needed the protection of English Law, and they had to take the government of Great Britain as it was,—not as they might wish it to be. They did not believe in a State Church, but they had to admit the fact that bishops were state officials. Their situation was similar to that of Dissenters today, who protest against the union of Church and State, but meanwhile render obedience to the Established Church in certain matters. The Pilgrims would not turn

Anglicans, but they wisely agreed to respect the episcopal authority, whether civil or ecclesiastical is somewhat uncertain.

The famous sentence from Robinson's Farewell Address: "The Lord had more truth and light yet to breake forth out of his holy Word" (so given by Winslow in Hypocrisie Unmasked, 1646, 97), expresses the fundamental spirit of Robinson. While a stout Calvinist in some respects, his was a forward looking mind expectant of farther religious progress. The contention of Dr. Dexter ("Congregationalism," 404-410) that this language refers *solely* to church "polity" rather than to theological doctrines, is not supported by the facts. In this connection, Winslow represents him as complaining that "Lutherans . . . could not be drawne to goe beyond what Luther saw . . . and Calvinists . . . stick where he left them: a misery much to be lamented."

Robinson could here have had in mind only the *general positions* of these Reformers, which were theological. In fact, Luther never paid any special attention to "polity," and to Calvinists in those days, it was not a vital issue. So that it is clear that the only matters to which Robinson could have made reference when speaking as he did, were their general religious teachings. In view of these statements which follow it, it is absurd to limit the sentence to so narrow and unnatural a mean-

ing as that claimed for these words by Dr. Dexter. It was surely brave and notable for Robinson to use such language at that time. This fact increases the world's admiration of him as a man with remarkable clearness of vision and breadth of feeling.

And yet, this statement represented no new position on the part of Robinson, as any student of his work easily discovers. Moreover, an expectation of progress, as wide as that here claimed for his words, is found in the very phrase of the Pilgrim Covenant: "made known or *to be made* known to us,"—precisely the same idea; for the meaning of this phrase cannot be narrowed simply to matters of polity!

It was under the influence of such a saintly spirit,—wise, clear, sagacious, tolerant,—that the Pilgrims were trained in Holland. It was this spirit, organized in a small but remarkable band, with leaders like Bradford, Brewster, Carver, and Winslow, that the *Mayflower* brought to America. It was out of such souls, that had rediscovered original Christianity and had learned the secret of Jesus and had come to see the necessity for a separation of Church and State for the good of both, that the Pilgrim Glory sprang.

II

During the reign of James I. and after, the spirit of adventure moved many Englishmen to make settlements in North America. In this same period other Englishmen, plain, sturdy, earnest folk, kept demanding that the Church be purified; but these Puritans expected to accomplish their purpose by law. The little band in Leiden under Robinson cherished another ideal: they sought a more spiritual reformation than any undertaken by either Puritan or Presbyter. They had a wonderful vision, created by the teachings of Jesus and the practices of early Christians. To liberate the Church from its evils and stop the Martyrdom of Man, the followers of Christ must separate themselves by covenant from the world. The local church, so organized, must be independent of magistrate and bishop, free to grow as the spirit of the Lord directed.

When the settlement was made at Plymouth, the test came at this point: Would these Separatists remain true to their ideal? Would they be able to demonstrate the superiority of their conception of the Church? Would the great results claimed actually follow their experiment? Several important facts must be remembered: (1) There is no ground for the charge of inconsistency: that they sought a religious freedom for themselves which they

refused to grant others. They did not come to America to establish a refuge for believers in all sorts of creeds but to escape persecution. They are not to be condemned because they never urged people of alien faith to settle in their midst. The instinct of self-preservation forbade this: such a course would have meant discord and harm to all concerned.

(2) They were a small company (only about 300 as late as 1630) with three distinct functions: a church estate, a commercial enterprise, a civil state created by the *Mayflower* compact. In such a limited and experimental community, it would not be possible always to keep these functions distinct and separate. Civil and church interests and policies would necessarily at times overlap and intermingle.

(3) Worldly elements were present from the first and gave rise to evils for which the Pilgrims themselves must not be held responsible. Moreover, as the years passed and people with no interest in their ideals flowed into the town, while their own leaders died, changes would occur which would divert the life of the community, more or less, from the original intent. Therefore, we must not hold Carver and Winslow, Brewster and Bradford, responsible for mistakes committed a generation after the Landing.

The adventure at Plymouth was not the greatest event in modern history, but the spirit

there at work "served to mark our modern era." The faith in civil and religious freedom there exemplified has been a creative force in modern history; the noble success there achieved has shaped our national life; and through our Nation, it has enriched the whole earth. It was the first settlement on this continent dominated by great civic and religious ideals. It made the first planting in American soil of the principles of civil and religious liberty. It was the first community in the world actually to incorporate the principle of the separation of Church and State, now so widely accepted, from which great and innumerable blessings have flowed.

The leaders of the Pilgrims were loyal to their ideal as long as they lived: "The liberation of religion from sectarian, priestly and political control; the elimination of the mob of worldliness in religion and the swarm of mediators between God and man; the practical abolition of monopoly and privilege in religion" (William E. Griffis).

The early history of Plymouth supports this statement. Even Cotton Mather significantly wrote: "That rigid thing they call Brownism has prevailed sometimes a little of the furthest in the administration of this pious people" (Magnalia, I., 59). The Pilgrim Church welcomed the members of French, Dutch and Scotch churches, "merely by virtue of their

being so." Although stout Separatists, two Anglican clergymen, sent from England, were kindly treated (a very remarkable display of liberality for that age), until one (Lyford) was discovered to be a scamp, and the other (Rogers) showed himself to be "disordered in brain." While the leaders disapproved of some of the extreme views and irritating spirit of the brilliant but erratic Roger Williams, they listened to his preaching for many months, and remained friendly to him during all his troubles with Massachusetts Colony. They were "sufficiently liberal to tolerate illiberality"! (Goodwin, Pilgrim Republic, 349). A democratic spirit was impressively shown by the fact that all the men signed the "Compact" in the cabin of the *Mayflower;* and citizenship was never limited to church membership.

John Cotton (great-grandson of the famous Boston divine—his own grandfather had been minister of the Pilgrim Church) wrote, when a member of the Church in 1760—he was afterwards pastor at the neighboring town of Halifax—a very interesting account of the "Church of Christ in Plymouth." In it he states: "The provocation of the Quakers" (about 1656) was very great, as they "much infested the country" by their unseemly and disorderly conduct, nevertheless no capital laws were enacted against them, and in the excitement only one family was lost to the Church (Church of

Christ in Plymouth, 121)! However, about this time laws against Quakers were passed, but the punishments were mild for that age, inflicted more to preserve public decorum than to punish people for erroneous religious opinions, and even these laws were opposed by Isaac Robinson (son of the Leiden Pastor) and others, who represented the sentiments of the Founders: They were enacted by "the unruly elements," who had flowed in from abroad and had lowered the tone of the community.

New conditions, brought about by these lower elements and the inevitable deterioration due to their privations, led, during the second generation, to a few petty ecclesiastical disorders and disciplines. For instance: in 1651, John Rogers of Marshfield was fined 5 shillings for " villifying the ministry." The same year, Arthur Howland was admonished for non-attendance at church; in 1669, he was arrested for neglecting to pay his church-tax,—as required by an Act of 1658,—which Dr. Matthew Fuller, son of the celebrated Dr. Samuel Fuller, called "a wicked and devilish law,"—showing that he was as stout a Separatist as his father! Later, 1670, Robert Harper was whipped for reviling pastor Walley of Barnstable. But such cases were infrequent; and they had reference to misconduct rather than to heresy or unbelief.

Long before (1645), an event occurred in the House of Delegates of the Colony, which showed the catholic temper of the people. The following Act was introduced and favored by a majority of its members: "To allow and maintain full and free toleration to all men that would preserve the civil peace and submit unto the government; and there was no limitation or exception against Turk, Jew, Papist, Arian, Socinian, Nicolaitan, Familist or any other." A very remarkable proposition. Governor Bradford refused to put the motion, and his motive was probably not so much his objection to this catholicity, but his realization that such a course was not only unnecessary, but that it would do more harm than good, both by arousing suspicions against them in England, and also by serving to invite lawless and undesirable elements into the Colony. But the incident itself is very significant and stands as an impressive testimony to their liberality.

A striking illustration of religious catholicity is the fact that the Plymouth Church in 1641 voted to permit Charles Chauncy (later president of Harvard College), whom they desired to settle as their minister, to use immersion as the form of baptism, which was not only contrary to the usual custom, but which would have subjected them to the serious

charge of being Anabaptists (Cotton, Church of Christ in Plymouth: Mass. Hist. Coll. First Series, IV., 112).

The first Act for the punishment of heresy, so-called, is found in the General Laws of New Plymouth, published in 1671. The contention of Benjamin Scott that the original Pilgrims themselves never indulged in persecution is fully supported by the facts (Pilgrim Fathers, 1866).

The influence of the Pilgrims upon the religious life of New England was deep, wide, and continuous. In a little over a hundred years, people went out from Plymouth and established seven other churches of the same broad spirit, one of the most notable of which was that at Scituate. While conditions at Plymouth were soon somewhat changed by the influx of alien elements, the Pilgrim spirit continued to make itself felt throughout the land. It held in check the Presbyterian influence, which, for a time, threatened the independency of the Massachusetts churches and which did arrest the free development of the Connecticut churches. In cooperation with other forces, it finally brought the religious life of the eastern colonies very largely to its way of thinking about Church and State. While the intercourse southward was slight in those days, nevertheless, wherever Plymouth people went and wherever Plymouth history became known,

the Pilgrim example made a profound impression: The unusual and beneficent results of this experiment in freedom were seen to be so good that men took note of them and were moved to walk in the same ways.

But the most notable example of this influence was seen at the settlement of Salem (1629), which was for many years a more important town, in various ways, than Boston. When the Puritans, who settled at Salem, left England, they declared: "We do not go to New England as Separatists from the Church of England,"—obviously a thrust at the Pilgrims! Now, it so happened that soon after their landing in the new world, their leader, John Endicott, fell sick, and Dr. Fuller, deacon in the Plymouth Church, was sent for to treat him. So convincingly did the good doctor expound the Pilgrim Ideal during his visit, that Endicott wrote to Bradford (May 21, 1629): "I rejoice much that I am by him satisfied touching your judgment of the outward form of God's worship,"—referring, not to the order of Sunday services, but to their church polity. The example of Plymouth, now that they breathed "the air of the free wilderness," made these Puritans Separatists: an inevitable result which Robinson had predicted. And by making such a prediction, Robinson showed how loyal he was to the last to both the spirit of progress and to the Separatist Ideal. This

incident, the implications of which have not been sufficiently appreciated, is complete refutation of those who have asserted that he was neither a liberal nor a Separatist.

Thus it came about that, in organizing their church, the Salem folk sought the assistance of the Pilgrims. A Covenant was adopted almost exactly like that of the Scrooby-Leiden-Plymouth Church. Although their leaders, Francis Higginson (teacher or minister) and Samuel Skelton (pastor) had been ordained as Anglicans in England, they were inducted into their new offices according to the simple but impressive service used by Separatist churches: the first exposition and exhibition of Independency in America.

This was a notable and influential event. It marked the first triumph of the Pilgrim Ideal in America and the opening of a new era. The whole religious history of New England (to say nothing of the civic history of our Nation) would have been radically different had Salem adopted Anglican or Presbyterian forms. Instead, by keeping the door of freedom open, Salem became a leader in the cause of religious liberty and carried Essex County in the same direction, going far ahead of Boston in matters of civil and religious progress.

What happened in Salem also occurred in other places,—notably in the organization of the churches in Charlestown and Mattapan

(Dorchester): the influence of Plymouth was deeply felt. Writing in 1644, Rathband stated that he had been informed "that the rest of the Churches in New England came at first to them at Plimmoth to crave their direction in Church courses, and made them their pattern" (Briefe Narration). This is probably an exaggeration, but the general statement is supported by many facts.

Sir Thomas Hutchinson, the last Tory Governor of Massachusetts, a historian of wide knowledge who certainly was not prejudiced in favor of Plymouth, wrote, in 1767: "The settlement of this colony [Plymouth] occasioned the settlement of Massachusetts Bay, which was the source of all the other colonies in New England. Virginia was in *a dying state,* and seemed to revive and flourish *from the example of New England."* The Plymouth settlement represents the critical turning point in the history of British Colonization in America. And in more important directions than mere material successes. But even here, the civic orderliness, the resolute thrift, the unfaltering fortitude in face of severe hardships, these qualities made a profound impression up and down the Atlantic Coast. And they remained a people of distinction long after the Colony was incorporated with Massachusetts in 1692.

It is, however, to other qualities that we look for their supreme contributions to American

life. In those beginning days, the moral earnestness of the Pilgrims deeply impressed itself upon the life of the new world. Their high social and political virtues,—sanity, sobriety, self-discipline,—which meant political and domestic peace, exerted a powerful influence far and wide. Their religious devotion and liberality presented a noble example to which people everywhere gave heed. As Morton Dexter has well written: They exercised an "influence out of all proportion to the smallness of their Colony" (Story of the Pilgrims, 327). They were not rich in worldly goods, but they enriched our land with spiritual treasures whose glory brightens as the years pass.

III

The statement is often made that the Congregational was the "Established Church" of the old "Bay Colony." This was in one sense true, but in another and larger sense it was not true. True, in so far that the General Court of Massachusetts did in a few instances interfere in the local affairs of a particular church, as in the case of Salem (1631), giving warning against Roger Williams. True, in so far that many churches were (until 1833) supported by town taxes. True, in so far that citizenship was for a time limited to church members

(1631-1662). True, in so far that in certain cases, the General Court did pass laws against a few religious practices: publicly to condemn infant baptism was made a crime (1644) punishable by banishment. A clear distinction, however, was, from the first, drawn between the rights of the civil authorities and the rights of the churches. The civil power never yielded to the ecclesiastical. And although the churches were jealous of their independence, they admitted the superiority of the magistrate in all matters pertaining to temporal government.

As a matter of fact, there never was an "Established *Church*" in Massachusetts in the strictest sense. That would have been contrary to both the political and the religious ideals of the people. Its churches were not *colonial* but *town* institutions. They were protected by the government but not managed by the government. The General Court, for instance, authorized the formation of a new church in a town; but in doing this it steadily refused to act "without the approval of a great part of the churches" (Law of 1636). However, the people in forming a new church, formulated its creed or covenant, elected and installed its minister and other officers, and conducted its affairs as an absolutely independent organization. In no case did the General Court ever veto the action of a church in calling a minister. The ministers of these

churches had no special civic status. The functions which they exercised were purely religious and educational, conferred by the local congregation and exercised only so long as they held that particular office. The church could at any time dismiss its minister, who then ceased to be a minister and became a layman. He held no authority from the Colony; his ordination conferred no life privileges; his clerical functions ceased when he closed his service as pastor of a particular church. If he settled as minister over another church, he was reinstalled.

The ministers of Massachusetts exercised an extraordinary influence for nearly two hundred years. But this was due to public sentiment and personal worth: not to theocratic privilege or official station. During the first generation, there were a dozen men of very large ability, in a population of some 15,000 people, who occupied its prominent pulpits—nearly all graduates of Cambridge University; and Cotton Mather stated (Magnalia, I., 79) that, about 1700, nine out of ten of its ministers were graduates of Harvard College.

We must also remember that the religious life of the Colony for some years, while Congregational with few exceptions, was not all of one piece: There was considerable diversity along several lines, disproving the existence of anything like an "Established Church." The

town churches differed very much in their covenants: the First Parish at Hingham never seems to have had either creed or covenant. There were great differences respecting "Elders." While a majority of the towns supported their churches by public taxation, nevertheless the system of voluntary support was followed in many cases, especially in the early days. This was the rule in Boston from the first and it was never abandoned. It was the early practice at Salem, and it was followed at Watertown until 1642. That great leader, John Cotton, forcibly argued for the voluntary system, contending that when abandoned the churches declined. This was the policy at Plymouth until after 1657.

There was, therefore, in a way, during the early days in Massachusetts, a union of Church and State; but it was an arrangement which permitted local initiative, granted a large degree of individual liberty, and fostered a powerful democratic impulse. And it must always be remembered, what is so often forgotten, that Boston, Salem and the neighboring towns did not constitute an independent commonwealth. In the aggregate they were little more than plantations on the way to a colony; a population slowly growing toward a State. These communities were under English laws, which they must respect but could not revise. Their civil and judicial privileges were limited

and subject to review. A jealous British king and Parliament exercised authority over them, while enemies in England, especially the Ecclesiastics, were on the watch to take advantage of any mistakes committed. Whatever theocratic spirit existed,—and at times it was strong and perverse,—it was not so much organized as a government policy, but it operated more as a religious sentiment through some, but not all, ministers.

Moreover, these towns were, for a generation, little more than experimental settlements whose chief purpose was industrial and commercial, and they received their grants of land and privileges through a London Company which was a purely business enterprise. For years, the so-called "General Court" was not an independent civic institution with sovereign political functions. It was the agent of a Corporation in England, whose interests it must serve and whose commands it must obey. Also, the towns themselves were largely private companies with rights and duties analagous to modern clubs or business corporations. As such they had a perfect right to admit or exclude people, and to make regulations respecting franchise, property, conduct or faith. Those early settlers must not be judged as though they formed a complete and independent political organization. Their rules and policies were of a more private and limited

character. If they excluded Quakers, they acted very much as the Lodge which should today blackball a Negro, or a Corporation which should refuse to sell its stock to farmers: acts to be criticised but not crimes against human liberty.

IV

This truth finds clear illustration in the attitude taken toward the Founder of Rhode Island: a loveable, brilliant, erratic, disputatious man, of whom it is impossible to write without admiration, and yet, of whose character it is difficult to make a just estimate. Williams was born about the beginning of the seventeenth century (died 1683); educated at Cambridge University; ordained as an Anglican clergyman; became a Separatist at the age of about 30; landed in Massachusetts in February, 1631; refused to fill the pulpit of John Wilson, at the First Church in Boston, because "an unseparated people." He preached at Salem for a short period (1631) and at Plymouth for a longer time (1631-1633). Then came his banishment from Massachusetts (1635),—after a second and longer term of service at Salem. His final settlement where Providence is now located soon followed. He made two visits of considerable length to England (one in 1643; another in 1651, re-

maining nearly three years), in both of which he was representing the interests of the people settled about Narragansett Bay and seeking charters for their protection.

Williams had a noble but vexatious spirit; a mind with a narrow range that saw certain truths with great clearness. He exaggerated trifles and was passionately fond of petty controversy. In matters of religion, he was often narrow and intolerant; but in respect to the attitude of the State to religion, he was broad and tolerant. A man who won the esteem of Winthrop and Bradford and was honored by the friendship of Vane, Milton, and Cromwell, must, indeed, have been a remarkable character with many estimable qualities.

And yet, there is warrant for calling him, especially in his early life, a "pestiferous person"! Many of his actions and arguments in Salem and Boston show a petty spirit and a perverse mind. It was very narrow in him to turn his back upon the First Church because some of its members attended Anglican services when in London: that was Separatism gone mad. A position so much narrower than that of Robinson. It was certainly unmanly to break his pledge of silence to the General Court (1635)—which had graciously granted him permission to remain at Salem during the winter—by indulging in acrid controversy and bitter denunciation. His refusal to permit his

wife to participate in family worship, because she continued to attend the Salem church after he had left it,—such conduct reveals an extreme perversity of mind. He suffered, especially in his younger days, from an over-refinement of logic.

It is almost incomprehensible why a man of his intelligence should leave the Providence Baptist Church (the first organized in America, 1639), which he had helped to found, on the ground that his baptism was invalid, no one having apostolic authority to perform the rite. He waited to the end for some special messenger to be sent of God for this purpose! His objections against administering an oath to unregenerate persons and against the then current practice of addressing men by the given name with the title "Goodman" prefixed (as *Goodman William* when speaking to Governor Bradford) reveal an almost incredible pettiness of mind. He contended that the magistrate had no right to punish Quakers, whom he was glad to welcome to Providence and Rhode Island, though he disapproved of many of their doctrines and actions. However his treatment of George Fox showed not only a narrow intolerance, but great unfairness. The pages of his "George Fox Digg'd Out of his Burrowes" (1676) are not pleasant reading.

The Boston people very naturally began to

dislike Roger Williams when he bitterly refused to be their minister, because theirs was an "unseparated church." In this, he was narrow, and they were broad. At this time, he was not an advocate of "soul-liberty," but a young man, crude in judgment and irritating in temper. Roger Williams as an erratic young man of thirty was as unlike the mature governor of Rhode Island, twenty years later, as the wild college student is unlike what he comes to be when he takes office as a solemn judge at fifty. His conduct for some three years at Salem and Plymouth intensified their dislike; so that, when he returned to Salem, they warned the people there against him a second time. But Salem paid no heed, and he was settled as successor to Mr. Skelton (1633).

Then began the sharp controversies which led to his banishment. Certain facts must here be stated. No question of creed or rite was involved, and the trouble did not primarily hinge on the relation of Church and State. As the Colony was under grave suspicions in England at this time, the Massachusetts people realized that it would be very unwise to harbor a man who was a firebrand, indulging in virulent attacks upon the Anglican Church and their English friends. The minor positions of Williams, which aroused opposition, were these: That it was unlawful to administer oaths to the unregenerate; that it

was unlawful to attend Anglican churches in England; that a Christian ought not to pray with the unconverted, even though wife or child! Such teachings showed, not only an intolerant spirit, but a perverse mind.

The main charge, however, against Williams, when he was first brought to trial, was his contention that the patent from the King under which the people held their land was null and void: He had no right to it, not having bought it of the Indians. They should repent of their sin in taking possession of it without paying the Indians; and then proceed to pay for it. There was certainly an element of nobility in this contention, but from the point of view of practical politics at the time, the proposition was little less than madness. The people realized that to approve such views would incur the wrath of England and wreck their enterprise. This, indeed, was a blow at the very foundation of their government: practically an act of treason. Ministers and magistrates showed bad temper in the management of the affair, and religious passions were active; but the General Court was entirely justified, both in law and in ethics, in banishing this disturber of their peace. In this connection, we must remember that he was the *twentieth* person to be sent away in seven years; and, on the whole, with adequate justification.

The statement has often been made that

Williams was driven into the wilderness at the dead of winter, because of his religious belief. It would be hard to make a greater number of more serious errors in so short a statement. As above set forth, the main reason for his banishment was political, not religious. And what especially aroused opposition was not so much his opinions as his turbulent manner in attacking others. He forced the issue by his acrid and dogmatic spirit. Sentence was passed Oct. 9, 1635, and he was given six weeks in which to prepare to leave. He could have sailed for England or gone back to live in Plymouth. His appeal for an extension of time, on account of personal and domestic reasons, was granted, on condition that he refrain from bitter controversies: a very humane indulgence, as he was permitted to remain until the next May. When he violated these conditions and began to stir up trouble, the authorities very properly decided to ship him to England, not as a prisoner but as a free passenger. When the officer reached Salem to enforce this decision, early in January, 1636, he had left, having gone to a camp, which had previously been prepared for him by a few friends, in the region of Narragansett Bay. Therefore, the winter exile in the wilderness was, in fact, his own act.

The relations between Williams and Massachusetts never became cordial, although in

times of Indian troubles, he showed a friendly and magnanimous spirit to the Colony that had exiled him. But his own statement of his troubles with Boston ministers and magistrates, made late in life, shows that the wounds never healed, and his assertions, unfortunately, contain serious errors, due to failing memory or personal feeling. When the four Colonies, Plymouth, Massachusetts, Hartford, and New Haven were brought into a Union in 1643, Providence was not included: the irritation had not subsided. But Williams lived on intimate terms with Plymouth and Hartford to the end of his days.

Williams soon settled where Providence now stands, and he became the leader of the settlements about the Bay; and he deserves high honors as the Founder of Rhode Island. He visited England twice in the interests of these settlements. The second charter which he secured made religious freedom fundamental. Although such principles were not original with him, nevertheless he deserves great credit for basing the Colony on the doctrine of Soul-Liberty. His early disciplines, the maturity which comes with age, his association with the great men of the English Commonwealth, developed in him a breadth, sagacity, and wisdom, of which his early days gave no intimation.

As early as 1641, Providence Plantation,

under his leadership, declared for democracy and liberty of conscience. The following provision was incorporated into the Charter of 1663: "That all and everye person and persons may, from tyme to tyme, and at all tymes hereafter, freelye and fullye, have and enjoye his and their owne judgments and consciences, in matters of religious concernments . . . they behaving themselves peaceablie and quietlie and not using their libertie to lycentiousnesse and profanenesse, nor to the civill injurye or outward disturbance of others." The first charter (of Providence Plantation: 1647) contained no provisions respecting religion, because devoted solely to civil affairs.

It has sometimes been asserted (Armitage, History of the Baptists, 649) that Rhode Island, under Williams, was the first New England colony to incorporate civil and religious freedom in its organic law. But this is to forget that the Pilgrims were *practicing* these principles ten years before Williams came to America and over a score of years before such laws were enacted at Providence. However, the liberal conditions advocated by him, first attracted Baptists and then Quakers to those settlements; and they gave to Rhode Island a breadth of spirit along these lines which should always be recognized with the greatest admiration.

Shortly before the settlement of Boston

(1630) three men, John Cotton, Thomas Hooker, Roger Williams (all Cambridge University men), took a horseback ride one day from Old Boston, England, to Sempringham, eighteen miles away. John Cotton (1585-1652) was then minister of an Anglican church in Boston, but his Puritan principles were bringing him into trouble. Thomas Hooker (1586-1647) was teaching not far away at Chelmsford, having John Eliot (1604-1690), the Apostle to the Indians, as assistant. The serious topics of conversation on this ride were matters respecting the Prayer Book. It is a remarkable fact that these four men should have exerted such dominating influences upon New England: Little did they then imagine the careers before them! Cotton, the ablest of the four, put his impress more deeply upon the New World than any other man of his time. Williams, the most brilliant and original, secured the most conspicuous place in history. Hooker, more of a democrat than Cotton and less tolerant in state affairs than Williams, was the author of the constitution of Connecticut, the first elaborate compact of civil government formulated on these shores (1638).

During his first visit in England, Williams published (1644) his book, "The Bloudy Tenent of Persecution," which contains the clearest exposition of his thought on the subject of religious freedom. He and Cotton had,

several years before, corresponded respecting this matter, so that his Boston antagonist came in for extended criticism in this treatise. Williams contended, as at the time of his trial, that magistrates have no right to punish offences against God,—disobedience of the first five commandments of the Decalogue. He pleaded for absolute liberty of conscience: "The civil magistrate owes two things to false worshippers: (1) Permission; (2) Protection" (Chapter CXXV). Other luminous sentences are the following: "The civil sword may make a nation of hypocrites and anti-Christians, but not a single Christian." "The civil Republic and the religious Republic [the Church], not opposed, but independent of each other,"—just the position of Robert Browne. "It is less hurtful to compel a man to marry somebody whom he does not love than to follow a religion in which he does not believe."

The following statement (from the Preface) is probably the broadest assertion of religious liberty made in English up to the date of its composition: "Sixthly: It is the will and command of God, that a permission of the most Paganish, Jewish, Turkish, or Antichristian consciences and worships be granted to all men in all Nations and Countries: and they are only to be fought against with that Sword which is only able to conquer, to wit, the Sword of God's Spirit, the Word of God,"—(spelling modern-

ized.) This is a noble plea for universal religious equality.

But even Williams was not able to make his Colony as broad as his vision. In the first printed Digest of the Laws of Rhode Island (1719), a Law is found, purporting to have been enacted in 1663 which granted citizenship *only to men professing Christianity* (*Roman Catholics only excepted*). It is uncertain when these four words, excluding Catholics, were inserted. What is certain is that the Law was in force for nearly a hundred years and not repealed until 1783. In 1762, the two Jews (Lopez and Elizur) who petitioned for citizenship were denied their civil rights by the Superior Court, whose judges based their decision upon the restriction of citizenship to Christians as given in the Law of 1663.

Cotton replied to Williams (1647) in "The Bloudy Tenent, Washed And made white in the blood of the Lamb." For that age, while sharply personal, the controversy was in good temper. To this Williams made a rejoinder. However, neither gained a decisive victory. Cotton did not defend intolerance, but his exposition of the liberty of conscience left doors open for all sorts of persecutions. Nevertheless, to the fair-spirited modern reader, it is clear that Cotton's was, on the whole, the broader mind,—with the one notable exception: the authority of the magistrate in

matters of religion. Williams saw with perfect clearness the absolute necessity for a separation of Church and State, but on other points he was often confused and narrow. This principle Cotton did not understand, but in various directions he saw more clearly than Williams.

V

The religious life of early New England was largely shaped by three men: Richard Mather (1596-1669) of the First Parish, Dorchester; John Cotton of the First Church, Boston; Thomas Hooker, first at Newtown (now Cambridge),—1633-1636,—and then went with his people to found Hartford. These men were Puritans, non-conformists but not Separatists: followers of Henry Barrow rather than Robert Browne. Mather put the most emphasis on the Eldership within the local church and he was the least democratic. Hooker was the most democratic,—he refused to limit citizenship to church members,—but he was inclined to give more authority to synods than the other two. Cotton, who was the most influential, steered a middle course between Brownism and Barrowism.

Mather had been for some years minister of a church in Toxteth Park—Liverpool—which had been mildly Anglican, then Presbyterian with Independent leanings, now Unitarian.

He published in 1643 his book: "Church-Government and Church-Covenant" (written in 1639). Its most significant statement is this: "We give the exercise of all church power of government . . . neither all to the people excluding the presbytery [the elders], nor all to the presbytery excluding the people." These elders (between the minister and his people) were to be elected by the congregation, and they could be removed by popular vote. They ruled as representatives of the congregation, whose approval was necessary. In case of division of opinion, their actions being questioned, the appeal should first be to Scripture; and finally, a conference of churches should be called to settle the dispute, if possible. This was an aristocratic policy with leanings toward democracy.

The last word on these matters by Hooker, "Survey of the Summe of Church Discipline," was printed (London) a year after his death (1648). He held that the Churches of England are true churches; and he condemned the policy of Separation, because no one has a right to leave a church, even though it contains sinners or lacks certain ordinances. He held, also, that each local congregation is a complete Church, equipped with full authority: "There is no Presbyterial Church in the New Testament." To him ordination had no mystical character: "Only a solemn installing of an officer." And

"there ought to be no ordination of a minister at large": the New England mind had no relish for clerical orders: it hated prelacy. He put more emphasis on "Consociation": the friendly association of neighboring churches,—than many others. These consociations, in time did much to *presbyterianize* the Connecticut churches; and they there arrested free religious development. But Hooker himself insisted that they had no right to excommunicate or pass final judgments.

The more decisive teachings on these matters are found in two little books by Cotton: "Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven" (1644, pp. 59), and: "The Way of the Churches of Christ in New England Cleared" (1648, pp. XII., 104). The latter converted the great English divine, John Owen, to Independency. After nearly twenty years of experiment in the new world there was need for definition, which the second treatise especially provided.

Two opposing parties were at work in the land. On the one hand the Separatists of Plymouth and their friends. On the other, many new people, who came with Presbyterian notions. The Westminster Assembly was coming to a close; and it had been dominated by the Scotch Presbyterians. Very naturally, the Presbyterians in Great Britain were anxious to shape the religious life of the new world.

But these American churches were distinctly non-conformist and their people had grown broader in the freedom of the wilderness (many almost Separatists without knowing it), and the arrogance of Presbyteries was offensive to a large majority of them. Cotton defended the common church-order and permanently attached the term "Congregational" to these churches: a very appropriate name. New Englanders did not like the term "Independent," then in use in England, because it implied separation from one another and from the State, and also because unwise to use a term that might offend the mother country by the assumption of political independence. Mather reports the Apostle, John Eliot, as giving this very appropriate description of the church-order set forth by Cotton: "He perceived in it a sweet sort of temperament between rigid Presbyterianism and levelling Brownism" (Magnalia, I., 499). As the main teachings of Cotton were almost identical with the principles formulated by the Cambridge Synod, they will be sufficiently described in discussing its Platform.

It may not be out of place to call attention here to an important fact: New England Congregationalists, as a rule, were stout Separatists, in one of the most important meanings of that word: "separation from the sinful world." This was one of the most prominent doctrines

in Browne's Treatise of Reformation, and also in Robinson's Justification of Separation. The demand of all the great New England divines was, that church members must be *separated* from worldliness, having covenanted "to walk in the ways of Christ." Here probably we have the origin and cause of that very distinct, precious, and powerful, if sometimes over-stressed, element in American life: *The New England Conscience.*

The Presbyterian influence growing stronger and the need of a recognized standard becoming clearer, the demand grew for a general New England Conference. Several local meetings had already been held. The discovery of a movement to establish the Presbyterian System in all the Colonies, led by Vassall, Child, and Maverick (1646) had made a decided impression. Various other influences hastened the calling of the Cambridge Synod in 1648. It was a representative body composed of delegates from about fifty churches. But many doubts had arisen before it met respecting the wisdom of such a Synod, both in the General Court and also among the churches. Both sides were jealous of their liberties, showing that no dominant hierarchy or established religion then existed. In the General Court the magistrates were favorable, but the deputies, representing the people, "had their little scruples how far the *civil authority* might interfere in matters

of such religious and ecclesiastical cognizance" (Mather, Magnalia II., 174).

When the General Court finally adopted the plan to call a general conference, it decided to hold itself free to reject or approve the recommendations that might be made. It is also significant, that on the other side, the First Church of Boston hesitated to appoint delegates "lest some invasion of that liberty were threatened." When the Platform was finally presented to the General Court, its members voted to recommend it, but only "for the substance of it." They declined to make it obligatory. They refused to set forth "any forms as necessary to be observed by the churches as a binding rule." A notable decision.

The conclusions of the Synod on three points are especially interesting: the eldership, the authority of magistrates, the functions of conferences or synods. (1) Beside the minister (or ministers: teacher and pastor), every local church should have elders, who might, if necessary, preach and administer baptism and communion. Their special duty was thus described: "to pronounce sentence according to the mind of Christ, *with the consent of the church*"; that is: to oversee the conduct of members and the services of the congregation. This authority came from the people who could recall it. "This power of government in the elders doth not any wise prejudice the power or privilege

in the brotherhood [congregation]" (Platform: Chapters VII.-X.). Moreover, churches need not necessarily have elders: some had none at that time. Theoretically the congregation is supreme, but practically the eldership intruded an aristocratic element, which, as Dexter declared (Congregationalism, 698), to that extent *presbyterianized* Congregationalism: a useless intrusion, like a fifth wheel to a coach. However, as time passed the influence of elders waned, and they finally disappeared.

In the Salem Church (the first *Protestant* church organized in America): "The office [of elder] never existed but in name and did not survive the first generation" (Bentley, Hist. Salem, 243). In the First Church of Ipswich, the eldership continued until the beginning of the Eighteenth Century and then ceased. Many churches stopped having elders earlier than this. Cotton Mather stated (about 1679) that the churches were "generally destitute of such helps in government": the rising democratic sentiment had swept them aside.

(2) On the authority of magistrates and the relation of Church and State, the language of the Platform is somewhat contradictory, because the public mind of the Colony was then more or less confused. On one point, the teaching is explicit: "The choice of such church-officers belongeth not to the civil magistrates" (VIII., 9). Another statement is

significant: "As it is unlawful for church-officers to meddle with the sword of the magistrate, so it is unlawful for the magistrate to meddle with the work proper to church-officers" (XVII., 5). But the way to persecution was kept open by these words: "It is the duty of the magistrate to take care of matters of religion" (XVII., 6). That is, the magistrate must not go *inside* the local church to dictate in its affairs, but the General Court should insist on obedience to the whole Decalogue,—duties to God as well as to man. It must not meddle in parish affairs, but it must publicly protect and foster religion. This opened the door to a certain amount of state control of religion, which, so far as applied in practical affairs, would necessarily lead to persecution. Thus the door to persecution was kept open, but the authorities seldom passed through it, being restrained by a strong public sentiment, which, before many years passed, closed the door and left men free to think and to grow.

(3) While churches are described as distinct and equal, and "have no dominion one over another," a fellowship among the churches is emphasized. And a practical application of this idea meant the calling of a conference (synod) to help a local church in time of need or trouble, "to give directions for the reformation thereof; *not to exercise . . . church*

authority or jurisdiction'' (XVI., 4). The church involved could accept or ignore the advice offered by the conference.

This Platform describes the Congregational Church as a Democracy under restraint. The Presbyterian party was defeated, but an aristocratic excrescence (the eldership) was permitted. On the whole, this was a forward-looking document, which affirmed many more liberties than it denied, and it kept the field free for growth into fuller freedom,—which followed.

VI

There has been a widespread legend that the early settlers of the Bay Colony declared their purpose in coming to America to be to found a refuge for all sorts of persecuted heretics; and then, when here, proceeded at once to punish cruelly every one holding a different faith. Therefore they have been severely condemned, not only for inhumanity but for hypocrisy. But this fairy tale has nearly faded away. Their enterprise was far more economic than religious; they never pretended that they proposed to establish religious equality; and the persecutions, in which they did unfortunately engage, were few and mild in comparison with what then existed, with very few exceptions, throughout the world.

The celebrated case of Anne Hutchinson (1637) involved both political and religious passions, like that of Roger Williams. She was, primarily, "a disturber of the peace": although she did not, like Williams, attack the very foundations of civil government. Her banishment is a blot upon the history of the Colony, which no plea of "political necessity" can efface. The only extenuation possible is that such disorders involved, at that time, serious political dangers; and also, that similar conduct would, in that age and in many lands, have been visited with more drastic punishment. Various isolated cases of punishment, chiefly for so-called offences against religion, need not here be discussed.

The treatment of the Quakers by Massachusetts was shamefully inhuman from our point of view; but the details of the story need not be given in these pages. It represents an episode of criminal foolishness rather than a settled policy of religious persecution. Cotton Mather wisely made a broad distinction between those Foxian Quakers, who disturbed Boston, and the sedate and orderly followers of Penn, a generation later: the former having "an intolerable contempt of authority" (Magnalia, II., 453). They insulted the governor, denounced all civil government, disturbed worshipping congregations, and walked naked in public places. Such people would today be

sent to an asylum as lunatics, instead of being flogged, imprisoned or banished as was then done. Governor Endicott and the clergy made the mistake of considering them possessed of the devil and therefore deserving death. This, however, was the common view, not only in England but throughout the world: In New York these "Friends" were never so violent, but there they were severely punished as in the Colonies farther south.

They invaded Massachusetts in 1656,—Anne Austin and Mary Fisher,—but they were shipped to Barbadoes. Eleven came the next year and made " permanent plantings of their views." The Governor begged them to keep away. The Act establishing the death penalty did not refer to their lawless conduct, much less to their religious views, but to their wilful return,—quite another matter. At first, there was, in the Lower House, a majority against the law: 15 to 11, which showed the popular feeling to be averse to such severity. By use of considerable clerical pressure it finally passed by a majority of one vote. It must be remembered that at this time there were fifteen crimes punishable by death: such as idolatry, blasphemy, sabbath breaking, and cursing parents. In Europe generally, the list was longer and included milder offences. As a result of this law three men and one woman (Mary Dyer) suffered death. So great, how-

ever, was the popular protest, that only the presence of soldiers prevented an uprising. And when Christison was condemned in 1661, public sentiment was so strong that he escaped the death penalty. The story is a mournful one, but the incidents were not unusual in the world at that time. There was, in these cases, no real persecution for heresy. The victims were few and an end soon came to the bad business. There was no justification for the severity exercised, but the offences committed actually deserved punishment.

The treatment of the Baptists was, in many respects, more reprehensible than the punishment of the Quakers. The Baptists were then, as now, an exceedingly earnest, orderly and God-fearing people, the least sacramental and the most Scriptural of the large Protestant sects. There were many points of contact between them and the Congregationalists: They were strict Calvinists; they put great emphasis on religious experience; their church polity was similar; their opposition to prelacy was intense. But there was radical difference respecting baptism. They rejected infant baptism for various reasons: because unscriptural; because they regarded baptism, not as a mystical rite, but as seal and symbol of conversion, —the experimental acceptance of Christ by faith—what was impossible with the babe; and because they held a more generous view of

God's providence and man's nature: children did not need to be *christened* to be saved from hell-fire.

Obscure and petty as the matter may appear to us, fundamental differences seemed then to separate Congregationalists and Baptists. The Congregationalists believed mightily in a fiery hell to which all unregenerates were sent: even the merciful Wigglesworth could only venture to hope that non-elect infants might occupy "the easiest room in hell" (Day of Doom: 1662). Therefore to them, baptism seemed of supreme importance, because its sacramental efficacy took babes out of the company of the damned and placed them under the shelter of God's saving grace.

The views of the Baptists were radically different, as has just been intimated: Baptism being not a sacrament but a symbol, both of the Atonement of Christ and also of its experimental acceptance by the believer; and as such, it should never be administered except to adults, and then only *after* conversion. Hence, to them, infant baptism seemed sinful, because it destroyed the true meaning of the rite; and also, because it obscured the great doctrine of Redemption. Again, they looked upon infant baptism as a Romish superstition: a part of the paganish magic of the Papacy. In view of these facts, it is easy to see why Baptists were bitter against *infant* baptism,

and why Congregationalists were equally bitter against the *Baptists*. A great gulf separated them. The latter hated as an evil superstition, what the former regarded as an indispensable agency for the rescue of their children from the wrath of God.

So it came about that the denial of infant baptism angered the magistrates and ministers of Massachusetts. In some cases this denial was made with great bitterness. In 1643 (June 12), Lady Deborah Moody of Lynn was admonished because she denounced the rite as popish, and she was so persecuted that she felt obliged to leave her large estate which she had bought in Swampscott. In 1646, William Witter of Lynn was persecuted for saying: "They who stayed while a child was baptised do worship the devil": certainly language offensive to the founders of the Colony. But such fanatical expressions were not common. A little before (1644) a law was passed which provided that persons persistently denouncing the baptism of infants be banished from the Colony.

The most noteworthy case was that of three ministers,—Clarke, Holmes and Crandall,—from the Newport Baptist Church, who held a meeting at a private house in Swampscott, July 20, 1651. For this they were lodged in the Boston jail and fined by the Court.

Holmes would not pay his fine of £30 and on Sept. 6, following, he was whipped Thirty Stripes!—this was according to English law. At their trial, Rev. John Wilson, of the First Church, really a gentle spirit, so far forgot himself that he struck and cursed Holmes! Thirteen persons present at the trial were punished in varying degrees for showing sympathy. John Spur and John Hazel were sentenced ten lashes or forty shillings for shaking hands with Holmes while he was going to the whipping post! And all this John Cotton foolishly and wickedly defended.

In these cases there was nothing that resembled sedition, as with Williams; and there was no assault upon the authority of magistrates or upon public decency, as with the early Quakers. It was inexcusable bigotry concerning what seems to us a small matter: infant baptism. The Baptists continued to suffer numerous hardships and injustices for many years. It was not until 1727, that an Act was passed exempting them from paying taxes for the support of the parish churches. To their great credit, it must be stated that the Baptists bore these wrongs with great patience and self-restraint. They persistently labored for universal religious freedom, and to them more than any other church was due the victory for the separation of Church and State by the new

Constitution of the Commonwealth in 1833. The so-called "non-aid" amendment of 1917 completed this movement.

In passing judgment upon Colonial Massachusetts, we must compare conditions there with conditions in other American Colonies at the same time. In the Dutch Colony of New Netherlands, a law was passed in 1640 prohibiting all forms of worship except the Dutch Reformed. Stuyvesant prohibited (1656) all men from preaching except those having a license from himself: any one preaching without such a license to be fined £100, and each of his hearers, £25. The next year, he prohibited J. E. Goetwater, a Lutheran, from organizing a church in his own house: he a representative of liberal Holland, and the silenced preacher an orthodox Lutheran with a faith differing from his own only in minute particulars! The same year Sheriff William Hallett of Flushing was removed from office and fined £50 for permitting a Baptist, Rev. William Wickenden of Providence, to hold services in his house, and the minister was fined £100 and banished, being held in jail until fine and costs were paid (Armitage, History of Baptists, 748).

On the arrival of Governor Nicolls from England, New Amsterdam became New York, and in his code of laws (1665), he acted with great liberality and granted general toleration in matters of religion. But when Episcopacy

became firmly established later, different conditions soon arose. In fact, Nicolls' law on this subject was little more than a transient ideal. The claims that religious liberty in America was established, as some assert, by the Dutch, and others by Nicolls, have no foundation in fact, as will be seen from statements to be made later in the Appendix which follows this chapter.

While Puritans were persecuting Baptists in Massachusetts (1662), a law was passed in Virginia imposing a fine of 2,000 pounds of tobacco upon any one refusing to have his child baptised: aimed at Baptists and Quakers. Early in the history of Virginia, only those could teach who had certificates from the Archbishop of Canterbury; while in North Carolina, among the many acts of persecution perpetrated by the Episcopalians was the regulation which was in force until about 1770, which prohibited all persons, no matter how pious or cultivated, from engaging in the work of education unless licensed by the Bishop of London: "a foolishness of bigotry" that never stained the history of Massachusetts at its worst. In both these Colonies for many years, no minister but an Episcopalian could solemnize marriages.

The agents of Massachusetts in conference with Charles II., in 1682, could assure the King that the days of persecution were passed:

Episcopalians enjoyed all civil privileges, laws against Quakers had been repealed, and there were no longer any penal statutes against Baptists,—certainly a very creditable showing considering the date and the condition of the rest of the world. In one respect, that is, the freedom of the franchise in the Colony at that time from religious tests, was almost a unique situation in America. To be citizens in New York, Maryland, and even Rhode Island, men must believe in Christianity, and this test was imposed that very year upon the franchise by the organic law of Pennsylvania.

VI

A man is not justified in his wrong doing by the fact that others are at the same time committing worse sins; but before passing a severe and final judgment upon the Puritans of Massachusetts during the seventeenth century, it is no more than right that we consider the conditions in European nations during the same period.

In June, 1630, the Star-Chamber Court passed the following sentence upon an English minister, Alexander Leighton (both a divine and a physician), for publishing "Sion's Plea against the Prelacie" (1628): To be degraded from the ministry, to be imprisoned for life, to pay a fine of £10,000, to be pilloried and

whipped, to have an ear cut off and the nose slit, and to be branded "S. S." (sower of sedition) on the cheeks! He escaped this horrible fate, although a part of the sentence was inflicted with great barbarity. But many others were not so fortunate. Nothing as bad as this ever occurred in Massachusetts.

The persecutions of the Baptists in Massachusetts have been briefly described. But while these were at their worst, Jeremy Taylor, the broadest-minded Anglican divine of his day, made this statement in his notable plea for toleration (Liberty of Prophesying: 1647),—referring to English Baptists, then commonly called Anabaptists: They should be rooted out as "the greatest pest and nuisance!"

Harvard College was founded in 1636, and it was open from the beginning to all, religious tests never having been applied. But such tests were only recently abolished in the British Isles: Oxford and Cambridge in 1871; Dublin in 1873; the Scottish Universities in 1889.

Citizenship was conditioned upon church membership in Massachusetts for some years, and there was some excuse in the somewhat private and commercial character of the settlement. One strong motive behind this law was the desire to keep out lawless and adventurous Anglicans who would simply exploit the country. But by the Test Act of 1673 an Englishman to hold office must first take the sacrament

in an Anglican Church, and this law was not wholly abolished until within the last hundred years. Such restrictions on citizenship continued to a much later date in many European countries. This has been true in the Scandinavian nations. All "sects" were prohibited in Denmark until 1849. At present Baptist churches are tolerated in Sweden only under the shelter of the established Lutheran Church, for whose support they must pay taxes. University professors still have to *pretend* to be Lutherans!

While the Westminster Assembly was in session (1643-1648) many Unitarians were severely punished, though they were not offensively disorderly like the Quakers in Boston (thirty years before they had been burned): their punishments were far worse than those inflicted upon Baptists in Massachusetts a little later. In 1697, a boy-student of eighteen in the University at Edinburgh, Thomas Aikenhead, was hanged for asserting (though he denied the charge made by student enemies) that the term, "God-man" is as absurd as the term, "Square-Round"! The severe laws against Unitarians were not repealed until 1813. They could by the Statutes of William III. and George III. be disfranchised, imprisoned (and property confiscated), for denying the Trinity or the infallibility of the Bible. Catholics did not

obtain full civil rights until 1829, Jews not until 1858.

Roger Williams, in a letter (March 26, 1671) to John Cotton, Jr., minister of the Pilgrim Church at Plymouth, made the statement that copies of his great book were burned in England: " 'Tis true my first book 'The Bloudy Tenent' was burned by the Presbyterian party (then prevailing)"—probably about 1645. No heretical books were ever burned in Massachusetts.

From 1660 to 1688 (while there were practically no punishments in Massachusetts for heresy alone), 60,000 English Dissenters were thrown into jails and prisons,—about 2,000 a year in a population of some 5,000,000,—and 2,000 there died of privation: at the rate of one every fifth day! In this period fell the Protestant St. Bartholomew Day (Aug. 24, 1662), when over 2,000 non-conformist ministers were driven out of their pulpits. A little later came the Conventicle Act (1664), which imposed punishment upon those attending a religious service in a private house, and then the Five Mile Act (1665), which prohibited the non-conformist ministers from living within five miles of an Anglican church! It was also in this period that John Bunyan, the Baptists' most celebrated writer, was kept in jail at Bedford for twelve years, being

liberated in 1672 by a royal decree intended, not so much to help Dissenters as to favor the Catholic friends of his Majesty, Charles II.

The story of intolerance and persecution on the continent of Europe during this period is too long to be given here. But a few of the innumerable facts may well be briefly stated by way of comparison. Conditions in Holland were more favorable than elsewhere and the relations of New England to that land were more intimate than with any other European country. And yet, in *free* Holland the Martyrdom of Man had not ceased. As much as the Pilgrims were esteemed in Leiden, they were not permitted a place for "public" worship. Before the *Mayflower* sailed, the Synod of Dort had formulated a creed which drove two hundred Arminian ministers out of their pulpits: No man could henceforth teach children, lecture to the young, or preach to the mature unless a subscriber to its drastic Calvinistic Creed. It was ten years later (1630) before these Remonstrants gained partial freedom, and full recognition did not come until 1795. The fate of their two most eminent representatives was most pathetic: Barneveldt, the most eminent Dutchman of the age, was beheaded (1619), their greatest lawyer, the celebrated Hugo Grotius, was imprisoned, but he was later able to escape into exile, and all this for a slight difference of speculative opinion, a piece

of mysticism difficult to define and destitute of religious importance. Nothing so horrible as this ever occurred in New England. Possibly this terrible tragedy at the Hague,—the execution of Barneveldt,—a short day's ride distant, may have stirred the Pilgrims to serious thoughts in reference to leaving Holland.

While the Cambridge Synod was making its Platform, the Treaty of Westphalia (1648) was signed: the beginning of International Law. Its provisions show that principles of religious freedom had made little impression upon the minds of European rulers and statesmen. All rulers were confirmed in their right to impose their own faith upon all their subjects: if dissenters arose they might be permitted or even forced to emigrate,—this then seemed a very merciful provision! Protestants were, however, positively excluded from Austria. After thirty years of most devastating war, religious liberty had gained nothing.

A single fact shows how far ahead of the world Massachusetts really was during the last half of the eighteenth century. In France, then the most cultivated country in the world (1766), —and many "rationalists" were prominent in its affairs,—La Barre, a lad of nineteen (of distinguished family), was accused merely by idle rumor, of having mutilated a crucifix. After one of the most notable trials of the century, during which he was put to torture,

he was convicted and beheaded. But at that very time, in many prominent pulpits of the oldest churches of Massachusetts, ministers were preaching sermons that denied the distinctive dogmas of Calvinism, ignored the doctrine of the Trinity, and affirmed universal salvation, and not a single heresy trial was held!

VII

Certain facts respecting religious bigotry in the history of New England have been overemphasized. Other facts, and they are many, illustrating the breadth and catholicity of its churches have been given no adequate attention. Many people have thought of the Pilgrim or the Puritan as a very grim and solemn person, and there are facts to support this impression. But other facts have been neglected. This for instance: On May 28, 1698, Timothy Edwards, the father of Jonathan Edwards, was ordained over the church at Windsor Farmes, between Springfield and Hartford. On the evening of the same day, "An Ordination Ball" was given at the pastor's house, the invitations to which he himself wrote. Many today would think such an affair "unseemly levity"!

Two years later than this (1700), Solomon Stoddard of the First Church, Northampton (the grandfather of Jonathan Edwards, who

succeeded him), published a book, "Doctrine of Instituted Churches," in which he defended his own practice of inviting *all persons* to join in the Lord's Supper, holding that whatever their belief, even though in "a natural condition" (unconverted), they should be given the sacrament, which as a means of grace might help them. This practice was the outcome of a custom, begun a half century before and called "The Half-Way Covenant." This was the product of a broad spirit and it promoted liberality. It was a device for including men of good character within the local church on easy doctrinal terms. It was an arrangement by which parents, who had been baptised in infancy but who had never made an open and formal confession of faith, could, by "owning the covenant"—not a *creed* but a spiritual *promise,* —have their children baptised, and so become *visible* members of the Church. The privileges of persons so admitted broadened to such an extent that they came in time to possess practically nearly all the rights and privileges of those who entered by definite conversion. The wide liberality is obvious.

There were, for a season, differences and heartburnings at this point. When John Davenport of New Haven, a strong opponent of the "broad way," became minister of the First Church, Boston, on this issue, twenty-eight members left and formed the Old South Church

(1667), and for some time there was unfriendliness between the two, and other churches took sides. But the two points to be emphasized here are these: (1) That the churches should desire such a generous method for accommodating and including persons of good character but indefinite religious experience. (2) That in a few years contention at this point so completely vanished that in 1726 Cotton Mather could write that the different views and practices along this line neither interfered with fellowship nor disturbed the peace of the churches; showing a remarkable breadth of spirit.

This liberality was, in a sense, implicated in the Covenants of the early churches. The expectation of growth is clearly stated in that of the Pilgrim Church: "Made known *or to be made known unto us.*" Through such an open door more would come,— more did come, —than was expected. The same door was kept open by that of the Salem Church: "according as God is pleased to reveal himself unto us in his blessed Word of truth,"—the expectancy of progress. Of this, the distinguished divine, Dr. William Bentley (1758-1819) of Salem, well wrote: "If it speaks not the language of a sect, it breathes the spirit of Christian union" (History of Salem: First Series: Mass. Hist. Coll. VI., 243). Similar covenants were used by other churches.

It was of such a covenant that the early historian wrote (1669): "It was acknowledged only as a direction . . . and therefore no man was confined unto that form of words, but only to the substance, end, and scope of the matter contained therein" (Morton's Memorial, 99). In discussing this general subject, Dr. Palfrey arrived at this conclusion,—amply warranted by the facts: The covenants were "remarkably free in the earliest times from statements of doctrine" (Hist. of N. E. II., 36). It was this broad spirit of the covenants which spoke in the words of John Cotton: "We are far from arrogating infallibility of judgment to ourselves or affecting uniformity; uniformity God never required; infallibility he never granted us" (Letter to Sir R. Saltonstall [1640], Hutchinson Papers, II., 133).

In the preface to the Cambridge Platform (1648), there is a stout defence of the custom of the churches in using a wide charity respecting church members; and in it these notable words are found, in answer to those who condemned their inclusive policy: "By admitting none into the fellowship of our churches but saints by calling, we [would] rob many parish churches of their best members." The writer (probably John Cotton) argued "that being overparticular would despoil ministers of their best hearers." More remarkable still is this language: "The weakest measure of faith is

to be accepted in those that desire to be admitted into the church, because weak Christians, if sincere, have the substance of that faith, repentance and holiness [not dogma and rite], which is required in church members''! (Chap. XII., 3.) There are few churches in Christendom today which follow so liberal a policy as this. The same breadth is found in discussing the subject of excommunication: ''Excommunication being a spiritual punishment, it doth not prejudice the excommunicate in nor deprive him of his civil rights''(Chap. XIV., 6). This fact shows how far Church and State were separated.

Samuel Mather (1706-1785), the fourth and last of the ''Mather Dynasty,'' was a prominent patriot-preacher of Boston during the Revolution: probably the first American writer to claim that Europeans had visited this continent before Columbus. In 1738,—ten years after his father's death—he published a little book, ''Apology for the Liberties of the Churches in New England,'' which ought to have given him more fame than he has enjoyed. The teaching of this book, although it appeared half way through the Great Awakening (1734-1742), in the midst of a theological reaction, is decidedly broad. He quotes a remarkable letter written by his father, Cotton Mather, in which these words are found: ''Piety will anon be the only basis of [Church] Union, . . . and pious men, in several forms, will come to love and live as

brethren" (p. 150): a platform broader than that of our present Federation of American Churches! His own words are even more explicit,—they might have been written by Channing: "For although we prefer the constitution of these churches before any other; still we think it our duty to love and show our affection to all good and well disposed people of whatever communion or religious profession they may be, to speak well and handsomely concerning them and serve them to the uttermost of our power; nor indeed have we any scruple about admitting any Baptist, Presbyterian, or Episcopalian into our communion. Not only our houses and hearts, but our churches also are open to them, as far as in a judgment of charity we have reason to think them to be persons of good understanding, piety, and virtue" (Apology, p. 34). Those are indeed noble words!

And this broadening spirit showed itself, not only in words but also in deeds. There were many incidents, similar to the following, during the opening decades of the Eighteenth Century in Massachusetts, which reveal a surprising liberality, a remarkable advance during the two generations:—In 1717, Ellis Callender was ordained over the Baptist Church in Boston (organized 1665). Cotton Mather, seldom considered a liberal in religion, preached the ordination sermon and the venerable Increase

Mather (1639-1723),—the greatest of the Mathers,—gave the right hand of fellowship! In this connection it may be well to recall that for over fifty years after this event in Boston, Baptist ministers in North Carolina were not permitted to perform the marriage ceremony, while as late as the eve of the Revolution many Baptist preachers were confined for many days in Virginia jails for unlawfully preaching the Gospel!

The religious development of Massachusetts during the last half of the Eighteenth Century was more rapid, more varied, more radical, with less friction and less controversy, than that of any other country anywhere in the world at that time. The same changes in Scotland would have lighted fires of hate and persecution in every town. If equally great departures from the Thirty-Nine Articles had then occurred in the Anglican Churches of England, as those represented by Bentley of Salem, Gay of Hingham, and Mayhew and Chauncy of Boston, a revolution would have followed. If the ministers of Northern Germany had, in those years, departed as far from the principles of Lutheranism as a large number of the Congregational ministers of Massachusetts then departed from certain doctrines of Calvinism, bloodshed would have followed. And yet, the progress was so quiet in and about Boston that it left few traces in the parish records of the period,

while in no case did the General Court take note of the changes, and no church disfellowshipped its sister church on the ground of heresy until after the year 1800! Surely a most remarkable fact.

VIII

In writing his "Apology," Samuel Mather built upon the broad foundation which had been laid nearly a generation before by John Wise of Ipswich, in writings suggested by *Sixteen Proposals* (1705), in the formation of which, curiously, his own father, Cotton Mather, had taken a prominent part.

But who was this man, John Wise? His name has so completely faded from the present thoughts of men that hardly a reference to him can be found in history or cyclopædia. And yet, he was a mighty man in his day and contributed much to the making of America. Born at Roxbury (August, 1652) and educated at its "free school"; trained under Rev. John Eliot and graduated from Harvard College in 1673; preached in various churches and settled over Chebacco parish (now Essex), Ipswich in 1680; chaplain in King Philip's War and in the disastrous expedition to Quebec. John Wise possessed robust manhood; strong in physique (famous as a wrestler in his youth); vigorous in mind, with large capacity for convincing

argument and keen satire; an intense hater of injustice and tyranny, but with broad and tender sympathies; gifted with abounding humor; writing the first pages in New England possessing high literary quality; advocating, with great eloquence, freedom and equality in both Church and State.

John Wise deserves our gratitude, especially for three things:—

(1) When Governor Andros tyrannically levied a tax on the towns of the Colony (1687) without consulting the General Court, he so eloquently urged the town meeting at Ipswich to resist payment that a vote to that effect was passed, and the example was followed by other towns. For this he was arrested, denied habeas corpus, tried, fined, dispossessed of his office as minister and put under heavy bonds to keep the peace. He was the first man in our land to suffer for advocating the principle, "No taxation without representation," which was the point at issue in the Revolution a hundred years later.

(2) In 1705, certain ministers in and about Boston began to feel that religion was declining and that to save the churches a stronger government must be devised to keep watch over their affairs. Their alarm arose from various facts: Elders were disappearing from some churches and in others they were dormant; the Half-Way Covenant had overloaded many

churches with *worldly* people; there were many cases of church disorder which ought to be suppressed with a firm hand. As a remedy, they issued Sixteen Proposals. This document, in brief, proposed two innovations: A standing committee of ministers to exercise authority over clerical matters; and, an established district conference to pass final judgment upon troubles within and between churches. This was, as President Ezra Stiles of Yale College charged against the Mathers (Increase and Cotton), an attempt "to presbyterianize the New England Churches" (Diary, I., 37, Feb. 18, 1770).

Here was something new and dangerous in Congregationalism. This John Wise saw with clearness, and from his study in 1710, came a booklet of 152 small pages (as then printed), "The Churches' Quarrel Espoused," which destroyed these "Proposals" and put an end to the danger. Not only was the independence of the local congregation defended, the democracy of the church was placed upon a broader and firmer foundation than ever before: Congregational Polity here received its final form. The praise of Prof. Moses Coit Tyler is deserved: "A book that by its learning, logic, sarcasm, humor, invective, its consuming earnestness, its vision of great truths, its flashes of triumphant eloquence, simply annihilated the scheme which it assailed. . . . It is, of its

kind, a work of art. . . . It is a piece of triumphant logic, brightened by wit, and ennobled by imagination, a master specimen of public controversy" (His. Am. Lit. II., 106-110).

The argument need not even be summarized here. But a few illustrative sentences will be of interest: "The scheme seems to be the spectre or ghost of Presbyterianism . . . there is something considerable of prelacy in it." He resents the implied autocracy: "It smells very strong of the infallible chair." He returns to the same idea again: "It smells so strong of the pope's cooks and kitchen . . . that they are enough to strangle a free-born Englishman, and much more these churches, that have lived in such a clear air and under such enlargements so long a time. . . . They have out-poped the pope himself." He points out the inevitable consequences: "Let the churches be plucked and deplumed as the Proposals intend, and they are, after the possessing a fair estate, become bankrupts." And why? The scheme "is very dishonorable, and also a very unreasonable encroachment upon the officers and government of the churches." . . . Again: "Take away these high prerogatives from the churches [the right to manage their own affairs], and you take away their being." Another statement lifts the discussion to a wider plane: "Let it be considered, whether it is not great intellectual weakness,

or want of policy, for one generation to contrive needless loads for the next, especially when they may get as well to heaven without carrying such packs along the road?" There spoke the spirit of John Robinson! There was manifested and fulfilled the Pilgrim Spirit!

(3) This biting satire accomplished its purpose. But John Wise continued to be interested in the general subject. The product of his thought and study, he published in a second small book, in 1717: "A Vindication of the Government of New England Churches." The power and clearness of his mind, the breadth and nobility of his spirit, are shown in the large way in which he approached the subject. He first addressed himself to a discussion of the general principles of government. This he did in the thirty and more pages of Demonstration II.,—one-third of the book. And it would be difficult, if not impossible, to find in the same space in any book in any language an equal amount of wisdom respecting the true basis, method, and spirit of civil government.

He held that governments should be based on three fundamental principles which are essential elements of human nature: (1) "The dictates of right reason founded in the soul of man"; again, "The dictates of right reason excited by the moving suggestions of humanity." (2) "An original liberty enstamped upon his rational nature. He that intrudes

upon this liberty violates this law of nature. . . . Those persons only who live in obedience to reason are worthy to be accounted free. . . . And so every man must be conceived to be perfectly in his own power and disposal, and not to be controlled by the authority of any other. And therefore considering all men thus at liberty, every man has a prerogative to judge for himself, namely, what shall be most for his behoof, happiness, and well-being." The gospel of human liberty, appealing to "the laws of nature," and to "the dictates of right reason." (3) "An equality amongst men. . . . Every man must be acknowledged equal to every other man. . . . It follows as a command of the law of nature that every man esteem and treat another as one who is naturally his equal, or who is a man as well as he. . . . All men are born free, and nature having set all men upon a level and made them equals, no servitude or subjection can be conceived without inequality." No wonder that a book with such teachings was in demand in America in 1772! Glorious sentences written nearly a generation before Jefferson was born.

There is room here for only three other quotations: "A civil state is a compound moral person, whose will is the will of all, to the end it may use and apply the strength and riches of private persons toward maintaining the common peace, security, and well-being of all,

which may be conceived as though the whole state was now become but one man,"—an anticipation in a way of Comte and Spencer. Again: "The first human subject and original of civil power is the people. . . . The formal reason of government is the will of the community. . . . A democracy is a very honorable and regular government according to the dictates of right reason . . . which the light of nature does highly value and often directs as most agreeable to the just and natural prerogatives of human beings." For the following sentence alone, John Wise deserves to be canonized as one of the chief political saints of America: "The end of all good government is to cultivate humanity and promote the happiness of all, and the good of every man in all his rights, his life, liberty, estate, honor, without injury or abuse done to any." After reading these brilliant sentences, every one will gladly admit that no other colonial writer was his equal in the combination of cogent argument, greatness of thought, nobility of sentiment, and splendor of diction.

Then he proceeds to apply these principles to the Church, contending that all the reasons for democracy in the State are applicable to the Church, making every local congregation independent and all its members equal. Therefore councils have consultative but not judicial power. He drove the thought of "authority"

completely out of religion. He did not specifically discuss the problem of religious freedom, or the relation of Church and State. He did not have to do so: His general conclusions respecting democracy, as applied to both politics and religion made that unnecessary. If secular and spiritual affairs are organized as he advocated, intolerance and persecution *must* cease, being contrary to human welfare and right reason. But his passing allusions to Smithfield and "ten bloody persecutions" show how strongly he was devoted to "soul-liberty." Also, his brief but crushing reply to the criticism of Brownism as "abhorred anarchy," proves that the fundamental doctrine of the original Separatist came to full expression in him and that he gave complete expression to the Pilgrim Ideal.

Therefore, John Wise did vastly more than merely to put an end to the "Proposals." The influence of his writings was creative, not only in the realm of church polity, but in the larger field of religious life and thought. The movement toward a hierarchy in New England was nipped in the bud, and the freedom of the local churches was placed upon a secure foundation. His exposition of Congregational Polity became final authority in civil court and church conference. But more than this: He not only kept the door of religious progress wide open, but he also imparted the mighty impulses of

democratic principles to Church and State. His masterful appeal to "the right reason implanted in the nature of man" was a mighty solvent of dogma and privilege in both politics and theology. It provided a new method of approach to all religious problems. It was an imperative challenge to progress in religious thought. Had it not been for him, it is doubtful whether such teachers of liberal religion as Chauncy and Channing, Bushnell and Munger would ever have arisen in America.

(4) But John Wise must be honored for even larger things than these. He became a powerful influence in the making of our national life. He was called up from the grave to train and inspire the patriots who fought at Lexington, Concord, and Bunker Hill. His two booklets were printed in one volume and put into their hands as the authoritative Textbook of American Liberty. During the year 1772 the Boston *Evening Post,* the leading patriot journal of New England, contained many references to the republication of the writings of John Wise: repeated advertisements, notices to subscribers, commendations by editorials and by letters from correspondents, and also statements respecting a second edition. A long article in the issue for March 16 commends "that valuable book," and advises people to read it carefully, because in it "the true fundamentals of our civil Liberties and Privileges

are very judiciously investigated." This was the only book mentioned by the *Post* during the whole year.

Thus, when the struggle with England came, the words of John Wise were like fuel upon the altars of American Patriotism. By a true instinct, the people turned to his eloquent and powerful advocacy of democracy for inspiration in the time of crisis. The books were caught up by eager hands as they came from the press and given the widest possible circulation. A second edition soon followed the first. The names in the subscription list present a significant display of the patriotic leaders of the Colony: leading ministers, merchants, teachers, public officials, and military officers. In these pages they found the spiritual ammunition which enabled them to fight their battle for American Liberty. Far and wide the influence spread, and his great sentences respecting freedom and equality were incorporated into the Declaration of Independence.

These words were put by his loving parishioners on the monument over his grave (died in 1725) :—

> "For Talents, Piety, and Learning, he shone
> As a star of the first magnitude."

This statement is no mere exaggeration, so characteristic of monumental inscriptions; of a truth, he did for years shine far and wide as

a brilliant flame of healing and creative light. It is to be regretted that such "a star" has so long been in eclipse. In these days so near the bicentenary of the publication of his "Vindication," with its emphasis on the dictates of right reason in the nature of man; with its powerful pleas for freedom, equality, and humanity; and with its eloquent expositions of democratic principles, we may well cherish the hope that his star will reappear and shine once more upon the earth!

In the pages of John Wise, the New Testament method discovered by Robert Browne, the Independency advocated by Cromwell, Milton, Locke, and Priestley, the Congregational Ideal of Robinson and the Pilgrims was fully realized. The historic evolution was completed. The separation of Church and State was implied as a necessity, and each being a democracy, the Martyrdom of Man must cease and freedom must become the rule of life in both civil and religious affairs. All that was now needed to make the Contribution of America complete was to put these teachings into practice: to abolish all laws and customs contrary to them, to incorporate them into the sentiment and conduct of the people, and to make them fundamental in the organic laws and governmental policies of the land.

How the struggles of the Colonies during the Revolution brought these important results

about is briefly described in the Appendix: Religious Freedom in Five Colonies. The topic has not received the attention which it deserves. The structural products of this general movement, as embodied in our Constitutions, Federal and State, must here be given brief attention. In these basic documents of our civilization, we find the fruitage of the Pilgrim Spirit, which, finally made itself felt in other Colonies and spread as a creative influence from many centers besides Plymouth.

IX

A push for liberty in one direction carries men toward freedom in other directions. Those who struggle for their political liberties, naturally seek to be free in their worship, their labor, their investigation. The American Revolution was chiefly an assault upon privilege and despotism in matters of civil government, with a demand for political rights. In all the Colonies, however, especially among the plain people, there was unrest concerning religious conditions; while in some, notably in North Carolina and Virginia, there was a strong popular feeling for religious as well as political freedom.

The inevitable reactions of the revolutionary struggle were all in favor of "the utmost liberty of religious thought within the churches"

(Bolles, Hist. Penna., 423). An irresistible demand arose for the abolition of all state restrictions upon worship and belief: the destruction of ecclesiastical privileges. Men who had won their civil rights at a great sacrifice, could not be expected to tolerate the interference of priest or magistrate respecting their private religious opinions. A free conscience in one direction meant a free conscience in all directions. This is why the people in Virginia and North Carolina gave this matter immediate attention as soon as the call to arms came.

When the problem of a National Government began to be seriously considered, the question of the relation of Church and State had to be faced. But none were in favor of a national establishment of religion. The logic of events, the universal conditions which then existed, made that impossible. The first decisive action taken in this direction was by the Continental Congress near the end of its existence. Its declaration respecting religious liberty is found in Article I. of the Ordinance of 1787, creating the Northwest Territory (passed July 13), which reads: "No person demeaning himself in a peaceable and orderly manner, shall ever be molested on account of his mode of worship or religious sentiments in the said territory." This broad provision was due to the very remarkable man who shaped that document, Rev. Manasseh Cutler, minister at

Ipswich, Mass., who had been a subscriber to the edition of John Wise's Writings, issued in 1772, and who had been inspired by his powerful democratic spirit.

There were differences of opinion among the members of the Constitutional Convention (1787),—not on the general principle of religious freedom,—but respecting the necessity or advisability of making any statement whatever in the Constitution on the subject. James Madison made himself felt in favor of some definite expression. But it was Gen. Charles C. Pinckney, of South Carolina (an Episcopalian), who presented the statement (Aug. 30) which went into the Constitution by unanimous vote, as Section 3 of Article VI., and which reads as follows: "No religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States." He had used similar language in the Draft of a Constitution which he had early presented to the Convention (Elliot, "Debates," I. 277).

However, in the discussions respecting the Constitution in the State Conventions and in the public prints, it was generally admitted that an amendment must be added, defining and guaranteeing religious liberty more clearly and more positively. Urgent resolutions to this effect were passed by the Conventions of Virginia, New York, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, North Carolina: in various cases, the

Constitution was adopted only on the promise that such a step would be immediately taken. In this movement, as might be expected, Madison was the leader. The first Amendment to be added to the Constitution (adopted 1791) contains these words: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." This meant absolute separation of Church and State, so far as the Federal Government is concerned.

Nothing, however, in the Federal Constitution, even as amended, prohibits the States from having an Established Church. But all the State Constitutions do contain such prohibitions. Our greatest authority, Judge Cooley, gives this clear and comprehensive summary of the things that are unlawful under all our Constitutions (Constitutional Limitations: 575):

"(1) Any law respecting an establishment of religion.

(2) Compulsory support by taxation or otherwise of religious instruction.

(3) Compulsory attendance upon religious worship.

(4) Restraints upon the free exercise of religion according to the dictates of the conscience.

(5) Restraints upon the expression of religious belief."

While these laws are very clear and positive,

it is to be regretted that they are, even at the present time, being ignored or violated, to some extent, in many places under ecclesiastical pressure and political connivance.

In a few states, even today, there survive a few remnants of the times when the Martyrdom of Man was a grim reality: remnants which the Pilgrim Spirit has not completely destroyed. For instance: In the constitutions of Maryland, Delaware, Tennessee, Kentucky, ministers of all churches are ineligible to civil office. In Pennsylvania, office holding is limited to those who believe in God and a future state of rewards and punishments. In Mississippi, Tennessee, and Maryland, atheists are still disqualified from holding office. The same is true in North Carolina, although the constitution of the state at the same time strangely forbids the application of religious tests! But these limitations in the laws are generally ignored in the actual affairs of these commonwealths.

X

Madison, in writing to his friend, Judge Livingston (July 10, 1822), described the result of over forty years of experience in Virginia, after the separation of Church and State, in these words: "It is impossible to deny that [in Virginia] religion prevails with more zeal and a more exemplary priesthood than it ever did

when established and patronized by public authority. We are teaching the world the great truth that governments do better without kings and nobles than with them. The merit will be doubled by the other lesson: That religion flourishes in greater purity without than with the aid of government." A significant and prophetic statement.

Our Nation has demonstrated on a large scale during four generations, the following great truths: The interests of piety are most prosperous where religion is left to make its own way, on its own merits, by its own authority. Under these conditions, it is purer, stronger, more spiritual and more fruitful than anywhere else. Under the voluntary system, as in our country, the contributions for the support of religion are larger, per capita, than in any other land. Religious sentiment expresses itself in missions, schools, philanthropies, as nowhere else in the world. There are fewer hypocrites within and fewer enemies without the Church under this policy than elsewhere. Where Church and State are separated, piety is free from political corruption and politics from sectarian passion.

One of the most remarkable and beneficent movements of the last hundred years has been the progess of the world in the direction of the American Ideal: the separation of Church and State. Great historic forces which early

pushed Independents and Pilgrims along this highway have been operating powerfully and widely in many lands. But beside these general influences, the example of America has made everywhere a profound impression: it has been a veritable providential dispensation. It has helped to lift many peoples toward the high level of religious freedom. Wherever the experiment has been tried, even in a slight degree, the results have shown a rich harvest of human good: religion itself has prospered more abundantly. The Episcopal Church in Ireland has grown more since it was dis-established in 1869, than ever before: more than Episcopacy anywhere else in the British Isles.

The influence of America may be seen even where the complete religious regeneration has not, as yet, appeared. A brief reference may well be made here to two nations where this influence has been felt most decisively. As soon as the unity of Italy was accomplished, the government of Victor Emanuel sent this decree to all its diplomatic agents (Oct. 18, 1870): "Compulsion as to matters of faith, rejected by all modern states, found, in the temporal power [of the pope], its last asylum. Henceforth every appeal to the secular sword will be suppressed at Rome, and the Church will profit in its turn by freedom. Freed from embarrassments and the transitory necessities of politics, the religious authority will find in

the respectful adhesion of the consciences of men, its true sovereignty." As Madison predicted, our Nation had helped to teach Italy this important lesson.

The most impressive demonstration has been made in France. After long agitation and many bitter conflicts, the convictions of the French people came to expression in the Law of December, 1905, which made the separation of Church and State absolute: "The Republic assures liberty of conscience and guarantees the free practice of religions (Chap. I., Art. 1). . . . The public religious establishments are hereby suppressed" (Chap. I., Art. II). What one of the most eminent French writers foretold (1906), experience has confirmed: "There will then be a new Catholicism, in which earnestness, hard work, manliness, love will be the supreme virtues; a Catholicism which will resemble the old no more than the butterfly resembles the chrysalis; and yet, it will be the old, and will be able tomorrow to emblazon on the pediments of its temples the words of the Galilean: 'I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil'" (Paul Sabatier in "Disestablishment in France," 138). In the present world-crisis, the French people have astonished all nations and won universal praise. The "separation" that was expected to destroy, has enabled them to write "victory" with their life-blood upon the altars of a nobler and larger Faith!

XI

Both extreme praise and severe censure have been bestowed upon the Mayflower Band. But exaggeration in either direction is unfortunate. A correct estimate of their achievement is, however, important. And yet, the chief thing is not so much to honor them, as to understand wherein their true greatness lay, to learn the lesson of their endeavor, and to lay to heart ourselves the principles which they so nobly exemplified. To admit that they had faults and limitations is simply to accept them as human. It is clear that they were not always obedient to their "heavenly vision." They did not fully realize all the implications of their central doctrines. There was more in their venture than they themselves understood. But these necessary qualifications should not lessen our appreciation of their own worth or of the value of their contributions to civilization.

What we see is this: In an age when Europe was engaged in the Martyrdom of Man, the Pilgrims keenly felt the horror of the persecution of heretics and withheld their hands from such cruelties. When magistrates dictated in matters of faith and worship, they demanded that the State retire from all attempts to supervise the affairs of the Church. When priests, prelates, and presbyters forcibly imposed their opinions upon men, they asserted

the inalienable right of the soul to think and feel as reason and conscience dictate. When Church and State united to impose creeds and rituals as finalities, they pleaded that the way be kept open for discovery and progress. When churches everywhere were crowded with the ungodly, subjected to political and ecclesiastical passions, and restrained by tradition and authority from the freedom of life under Christ alone, they insisted that the local company of devout believers alone constituted a true church and that its worth must be solely measured in terms of personal righteousness. Nowhere else in the world, during the first quarter of the Seventeenth Century, did any other body of people so clearly see or so faithfully obey these supremely important principles.

The Pilgrims were the first, on the American continent, to incorporate these principles in a civic community and a religious congregation. Catholic conquerors and papal churches had long been in the lands farther south. But they had simply transplanted ancient ideals and policies which rooted in tradition and authority and permitted neither civil nor religious liberty. There were Protestant Settlements before the Landing on Plymouth Rock, but none were animated especially by distinctively high religious ideals or consecrated to make an experiment in civilization on the broad basis of

Democracy in both Church and State. In view of all the adverse conditions, it is remarkable that this small company of Separatists were able to remain as loyal as they did to their Ideal. Confronted by the loneliness of the wilderness; surrounded by communities, many of whose people were dominated by traditional views respecting Church and State radically unlike their own convictions; menaced by intruders who despised their cherished principles; under the jealous supervision of a home government in Britain unfriendly to their own central purposes,—nevertheless these sturdy pioneers went straight forward in remarkable loyalty to the impulses which originally animated them.

The Pilgrim Glory consists in the originality and loftiness of conception, the humanity of spirit, the fidelity in execution, the breadth and permanence of influence which characterized the experiment which these people carried to a successful realization. No other company in that age, though many times its size, held in trust such valuable political and spiritual treasures. No other exhibited so large a degree of fidelity in life to principles professed. No other made so profound and creative an impression upon the course of human events on this continent. No other continued to exist until its Ideal became the working method of a great Nation.

All that is great and good in American life is not by any means due to the Pilgrims. Many others have co-operated in the making of our civilization. Contributions have flowed in from English Commonwealth and Dutch Republic, from French Huguenots and Scotch Presbyterians, from Quakers and Baptists. Many important contributions,—historic characters and heroic deeds,—have been produced through the experiences of other peoples in various parts of our country. But those earnest pioneers at Plymouth were the first to establish successfully on these shores a community which incorporated the civic and religious principles and policies which are now the central and dominant forces in American Civilization. Very much was, indeed, done by others, but the best and most enduring achievements everywhere were, in the early days, along the line of that which was fundamental in their enterprise. And the greatest contribution, which this Nation, in later years, has made to the whole world, has been the influence which it has been able to exert in other lands, in stopping the Martyrdom of Man which they condemned, and winning the victory for religious freedom in which they believed and for which they sacrificed.

APPENDIX

Religious Freedom in Five American Colonies:

I. Maryland.
II. New York.
III. Pennsylvania.
IV. North Carolina.
V. Virginia.

APPENDIX

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN FIVE AMERICAN COLONIES

In the histories of all the American Colonies there is much about religion that is interesting. But it is unnecessary to attempt here a survey of all these fields. As many facts respecting Massachusetts and some references to Rhode Island have already been given, brief mention of important conditions in Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and Virginia will now be made. Other Colonies present important facts, but these are particularly instructive on account of special prominence and peculiar features.

MARYLAND

Many eminent Catholics like Cardinal Gibbons have asserted that "this Colony of British Catholics was the first to establish on American soil the blessings of civic and religious liberty (1908)." This is a very erroneous and misleading statement. Some things in the early settlement of that Colony are uncertain, but the main facts are perfectly clear. (a) George Calvert, first Lord Baltimore, prepared the Charter, which was issued on June 20, 1632, a few weeks after his death. It contains absolutely nothing about civil or religious liberty. It does, however, state that "all churches" within that region shall be "consecrated according to the ecclesiastical laws" of England: the Anglican Church. This provision precluded the possibility of religious liberty.

(b) Baltimore had publicly declared himself a Catholic eight years before, and he had probably been a Catholic some time previous to that date. His son, Cecil, who succeeded him as second Lord Baltimore and Proprietor of Maryland, had married a Catholic. Cecil Calvert repeatedly promised toleration to the settlers of Maryland, and he kept his promises. Whatever his private opinion may have been, this was a political and economic necessity. On no other condition could a charter have been obtained from the Protestant English government. The first intimation that we have of his willingness to grant toleration was his promise to Protestants who demanded protection of their religious rights *before* they would emigrate to the new Colony. His son, Charles, writing in 1678, frankly acknowledges: "Without the complying with these conditions [the Protestant demands for toleration], in all probability this province would never have been planted."

As the settlers in America, on both sides of his grant, were Protestants, and as he hoped to attract them to his plantations, as he and his representatives often tried to do, he was compelled to see to it that their religion would be respected. These facts must be kept in mind, even though we grant that he was genuinely devoted to religious freedom. To pass judgment upon his private opinion is neither fair nor necessary. The doctrine of toleration was then abroad in the world, and he must have frequently met it in his Protestant boyhood. Two generations before, William of Orange, while still a Catholic, had put it into practice, and Sir Thomas More, a Catholic, had eloquently advocated it more than a century before his day in "Utopia."

(c) It is not true, as Cardinal Gibbons implies, that Maryland was specifically a "Colony of British Catholics" or that they, *of their own accord,* established civil and re-

ligious liberty. All the evidence shows this to be untrue,—even the testimony of the two Jesuits among the original settlers. Fathers More and White, writing some ten years after the settlement, declared: "Far the greater part were heretics"! In 1649, a so-called *Toleration Act* was passed (April 21). But certain facts must be kept clearly in mind: 1) The demand for this Act did not originate in the Colony, but was imposed from abroad by Baltimore. And no wonder. Cromwell was then in authority, and he must have been troubled by reports of Jesuit activities in Maryland and of Catholic intrigues in England looking in that direction. Baltimore had himself already had serious troubles with the Maryland Jesuits on account of their aggressions. He had been obliged to rebuke Father White for his intolerance to Protestants. He had ordered his brother (1642) to arrest, on his arrival in America, a Jesuit, who had secretly sailed for Maryland against his express command not to do so. He realized that there was no future for his Colony unless Protestants were fully protected.

(2) When the Act was passed a Protestant was governor of the Colony: Captain William Stone had been appointed in 1647. The Assembly which passed it (16 members) was about equally divided between Catholics and Protestants (there is uncertainty at this point), though the Protestants were in a majority in the plantations.

(3) The Act did not grant full religious freedom, as Cardinal Gibbons asserts, but only a limited toleration: atheists and Jews were left unprotected. Unitarians,—all those who "shall deny the holy Trinity," . . . "shall be punished with death" and confiscation of property: The same penalty was prescribed for blasphemy. Severe penalties were imposed upon those who used reproachful words against the blessed Virgin Mary. In later years, its pro-

visions were invoked to justify many severe persecutions of the Quakers. As a matter of fact, this Act deserves no special praise, when we consider all the conditions which surrounded its enactment, and also its own provisions. It was neither as good as the best nor as bad as the worst along this line in that age.

(d) One other fact deserves prominent attention. This Act does not represent the past or present policy of the Catholic Church. Papal officials had nothing to do with its enactment, and therefore cannot claim any credit for its provisions. No Pope has to this day commanded that such a law be passed by any legislative body. Where Catholic countries have given religious freedom to its peoples, this has in no case been done in obedience to a command from Rome. These victories for liberty have been won against the protests of its ecclesiastics. The papal Syllabus of 1864 (Pius IX.) condemned "religious toleration," as one of the eighty hateful heresies of the age. We may praise Baltimore, the Catholic, for his tolerance; but whatever he did in this line was contrary to the settled policy and general practice of his Church.

Protestants in the Colony unwisely set aside the Act for some four years (1654-1658) and deprived Catholics of their rights. This bigotry, while in no sense justified, was fostered by local conditions which aggravated the Protestant suspicions of Catholics. Political passions intensified religious prejudices. However, it is important to bear in mind that the London Commission, which reinstated Baltimore in his rights and re-established the Act in 1658, was composed of Protestants. As a result of the English Revolution, Episcopacy became the Established Church of Maryland in 1692. On the whole, Maryland made no special contribution to the cause of religious freedom, and

it exerted little influence by its statutes or authors in the movement for the separation of Church and State in America.

NEW YORK

For some years after the founding of New Netherlands, no religious services were permitted except those of the Dutch Reformed Church. The Dutch West India Co., in control of the Colony, enacted this rule, July 19, 1640: "No other religion shall be publicly admitted in New Netherlands except the Reformed" (N. Y. Ecclesiastical Records, I., 130). That Church was supported by the government. In 1654, it was reported that "the Lutheran request . . . has been rejected. Thus also the way for other sectarians has been closed up" (Id., 326). In 1657 the home Company sent its approval of this effort to "check at the beginning this toleration of all sorts of religion" (Id., 372). The following year, Rev. Johannes Megapolensis stated in a letter (Sept. 24), that Quakers "swarm to and fro sowing their tares" (Id., 433). In those years, both Quakers and Baptists were often fined, imprisoned and whipped. It is surprising that the Dutch in the New World were so much more intolerant than in Holland at the same time, while the English in New England were more tolerant than the people in Great Britain. A powerful influence in maintaining this narrow spirit was, probably, the fact that Peter Stuyvesant, an able Dutchman, who was governor from 1647 to 1664, was despotic and intolerant. Very soon, however, moved by economic reasons, permission was given (1661) to New Englanders to establish their own church (Id., 510).

The English governor, Col. Richard Nicolls, who succeeded Stuyvesant and transformed New Amsterdam into New York, was a man of breadth and sagacity, who had lived much in Holland and had imbibed its tolerant spirit

as his predecessor had not. He came to America with secret instructions from the proprietor, the Duke of York (a Catholic), to avoid meddling in religious matters. After studying various charters of New England Colonies, he framed a code of laws to which he demanded the assent of the representatives of the people whom he called to meet him at Hemstead, Feb. 28, 1665. This code, known as "The Duke's Laws" (in honor of the royal proprietor), was wholly Nicolls' work: not the product of a legislative assembly. It represented, not the wishes of the people, but the mind of the governor. It contains a declaration in favor of toleration, citizenship being based upon ownership of land and not upon church membership. The precise language of the code in dealing with toleration is this (Article 10): "Nor shall any persons be molested, fined or imprisoned for differing in judgment in matters of religion, who profess Christianity" (Eccl. Rec. I., 572). This provision is much narrower than that put about the same time into the Rhode Island Charter. Article 4 put restrictions upon preachers.

This regulation meant very little at that time or even later. In fact, the few and scattered people of various sects then in that region paid little attention to religion. They were largely adventurers chiefly intent on business enterprises. A dozen years later (1678) Gov. Andros reported the existence of only twenty meeting places, and only half of them had preachers (Doc. Hist. N. Y. I., 92). The frequent references to the dilapidated churches and the few ministers show that religion then received little or no popular attention. But after Stuyvesant, the Dutch showed a more liberal spirit. They surrendered on condition that their religion should be respected: a pledge which the English kept, in the main, for some years. For a time, the Dutch people and the English Episcopalians

held services in the same meeting house, at different hours on Sunday. And to their credit, it appears from innumerable original records, the Dutch clergy exhibited, with few exceptions, a tolerant spirit toward the Anglicans.

In the Charter of 1683, toleration was granted to all who "profess faith in God and Jesus Christ" (Eccl. Rec. II., 864),—somewhat narrower conditions than those laid down by Gov. Nicolls, who had remained in America only a brief period. But when the Duke of York became king in 1685 as James II., he vetoed this Charter, which he had approved two years before. That toleration had not as yet taken a very strong hold upon the people is seen from the fact that the very next year (1686), Quakers were bitterly complaining of severe persecutions.

At the time of the English Revolution, the general provisions of the so-called Toleration Act (1689) were applied to the Colony: all but *Papists* were *tolerated.* Then came the celebrated "Ministry Act of 1693," which provided public support for five "good sufficient Protestant ministers" in four counties,—from which it is clear that religion was still receiving very slight attention. Then followed the two special Charters: one in 1696 giving certain privileges to the Dutch Churches and the other in 1697, giving special and much larger privileges to Episcopal Churches.

At Jamaica, Gov. Cornbury began, in 1704, an usurpation of authority and a policy of favoritism toward Episcopal ministers, which practically made them the clergy of an Established Church. He drove Hubbard, an Independent, out of his church (1704) and caused an Episcopal Minister, Urguhart, to be installed in his place. He also insisted upon his right to decide who should be settled as ministers over Dutch Churches. The same year, he directed his secretary, George Clark, to condemn the people of

Esopus bitterly for not supporting the Episcopal minister, referring in this connection to the Dutch minister as one "who is only *tolerated* to exercise the *unestablished* religion." The next year (1705), the "Ministry Act" was amended so that public taxes were paid only to the Episcopal Churches (Eccl. Rec. III., 1576-1595). In line with this executive aggression in church matters, it is recorded (Id., IV., 2375), that in 1727, the Dutch Church of the town of New York had to ask Gov. Burnet for permission to build a new church!

But the Revolution brought radical changes in religious affairs in this as in other Colonies. The movement was hastened by the fact that by the time Independence was declared every Episcopal minister had proved himself disloyal to the American cause. Such was the admission of Rev. Charles Inglis, of Trinity Church, New York, in a letter written Oct. 31, 1776 (Id. VI., 4292). It was not surprising, therefore, that the Convention which framed the Constitution of 1777, for the free State of New York, repealed the Ministry Act of 1693 and inserted in that document these words (Art. XXXVIII): "Ordain, determine, and declare that the free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship without discrimination or preference shall forever hereafter be allowed within this State to all mankind" (Id. VI., 4300).

In the history of New York, during both the Dutch and the English Colonial periods, there was nothing especially significant done in the line of religious freedom. In the hundred years before the Revolution, conditions were far less tolerant than in Pennsylvania or Rhode Island; but they were decidedly better than in Virginia and North Carolina at the same time. In Massachusetts, religion in those years possessed a vigor, variety, breadth and progressive spirit, which were not then found in the churches

in the region of the Hudson River. No man arose in that Colony with a plea for religious liberty comparable to that made by Roger Williams. No writer there advocated civil and religious rights with the power and eloquence of John Wise. When the restrictions were abolished in the midst of the political upheaval which gave us Independence and Nationality, there were no great leaders such as Jefferson and Madison in Virginia.

PENNSYLVANIA

This Colony was fortunate in its beginnings (1682). At that time there were many English settlements for nearly a thousand miles along the Atlantic Coast, some large and prosperous. The serious Indian troubles had ceased. The settlers of the Colony were superior people: the Quakers, who were in a large majority, had become a sedate and orderly folk. Its founder, William Penn, was a notable man of wide experience, high in the esteem of the King, Charles II., with noble qualities of character. He gave a large measure of civil and religious liberty to the commonwealth which he established.

Religious *toleration* was secured in the amplest form to all who professed belief in God. But this was far short of *religious equality*. The following statement was placed at the beginning of "The Great Law," which Penn proposed and the First Assembly approved at Chester, in December, 1682: "That no person, now or hereafter living in the province, who shall confess one Almighty God to be Creator . . . shall in anywise, be molested or prejudiced for his or her conscientious persuasion or practice, nor shall he or she, at any time, be compelled to frequent or maintain any religious worship, place or ministry, contrary to his or her mind, but shall freely and fully enjoy his or

her liberty in that respect, without any interruption or reflection." However, a profession of the Christian Religion was made a necessary qualification for the exercise of the franchise or the holding of office. By a law operative from 1703 to 1776 (enacted against the judgment of Penn) to hold office a man had to repudiate Mass and Virgin Mary, and profess a belief in the Trinity and the inspiration of the Bible. Franklin kept such a provision out of the Constitution of 1776. By a provision of the Constitution of 1790 (still in force) a man to hold office must declare his belief in God and in a future state of rewards and punishments. What Penn incorporated into law was a principle far narrower than what Roger Williams advocated a generation before in The Bloudy Tenent of Persecution.

As the years passed, this Colony demonstrated, by actual results, the vast advantages of a large degree of religious freedom: a practical separation of Church and State. It exerted a profound influence both north and south: its growth was rapid and its peaceableness was impressive. Here, on a large platform, was demonstrated the superiority of the principles which Robert Browne had taught and which the Pilgrims had practiced in the face of many obstacles on a narrower stage. It began to be seen, far and wide, how the Martyrdom of Man could and must be stopped. When, a century later, the time came for the making of a National Constitution, the Quaker Influence, of which Pennsylvania was the chief representative, helped mightily to incorporate into it guarantees of religious freedom. Quakers in other Colonies, especially Rhode Island, New Jersey, Virginia, North and South Carolina contributed to the same great end. In this respect, it might almost be called a Quaker Document. But, in this connection, we must remember that they built on the

foundations broadly laid by the English Independents, and it was the glory of the Pilgrims, to have planted on these shores, two generations before, the same great standard of Human Rights.

NORTH CAROLINA

The story of this Colony for the first hundred years and more (1663-1776), is full of constant turbulence in religious affairs: oppression, persecution, even civil war,—the "Cary Rebellion" (1711). Although there were no judicial murders for heresy, no other colony had such continuous church strife, and in no other did a demand for religious liberty play so prominent a part as one of the producing causes of the Revolution. For over a generation, Dissenters (Baptists, Quakers, Presbyterians) really had no religious rights.

In 1701, a Vestry Act was passed which made the Episcopal the Established Church and put Dissenters on the same footing, theoretically, as in England. And yet, their condition soon became worse. A most iniquitous law (the Schism Act) was passed in England in 1714, which was intended to exclude Dissenters from all positions of power, dignity and profit. But protests were so numerous and urgent that in 1718 it was repealed. It was, however, just the hateful provisions of this atrocious measure that the governors of the Colony attempted to enforce, backed by pressure from London. For over forty years, all manner of attempts were made by Episcopalians to compel the Assembly to increase the power and authority of their church. These efforts were all the more resented because the *Established* Churches were so incompetent and unspiritual: their ministers being arrogant and profligate,—far worse than the people themselves. While in New Eng-

land conditions were more favorable than in Great Britain, in North Carolina the situation was far worse from 1730 to 1770 than in England.

Among the many injustices suffered by Dissenters, only two need be mentioned here: (a) No one, however competent in education or character, was permitted to teach, unless approved by the Bishop of London, which closed to Dissenters the avenue to greatest usefulness. (b) Baptist and Presbyterian ministers were prohibited from solemnizing marriages under a fine of £50! These oppressive conditions continued up to the very eve of the Revolution.

As the years passed, a crisis drew near. Successive Assemblies became less responsive to executive demands. Dissenters increased in numbers, and they constantly broadened their opposition. Baptists and Quakers insisted upon separation of Church and State; Presbyterians demanded their own rights, but did not go so far as to advocate universal freedom in religion. It became difficult to collect tithes for the support of the Episcopal Churches, which consequently languished; and their clergy fell, more and more, into contempt, because lazy and bigoted. The growing liberality of the age, some sturdy leaders from New England, the inevitable reaction against unjust laws finally made the opposition to Episcopacy irresistible.

The causes which precipitated the fight at Alamance (May 16, 1771), claimed to be the first real battle of the Revolution, were as much religious as political. The patriots of Mecklenburg County, in September, 1775, instructed their delegates to the Halifax Convention to oppose a Church Establishment: they demanded religious as well as civil liberty. Such sentiments were widely held far outside this "hornets' nest of the Revolution." This demand was repeated the next year. In response to this

pressure, the Halifax Convention put into the Constitution for the State (Dec. 18, 1776) an Article which prohibited a Religious Establishment, and enacted that "all persons shall be at liberty to exercise their own mode of worship" (Section XXXIV). This Constitution however, granted the right to hold office only to Protestants (meaning Trinitarian Protestants), thereby excluding Catholics, Jews, Unitarians, and Infidels. In the new Constitution of 1835, the word "Christian" was substituted for *Protestant.* Atheists are still disqualified from holding office. Thus it came about that, in preparation for war with Great Britain, the sturdy yeomen of North Carolina also made provision for a large degree of religious liberty. Church and State were separated, but it took some years to give the law a reasonably broad scope, and even now, it has an unfortunate limitation in word if not in practical application.

VIRGINIA

The story of the growth of religious freedom in this Colony has peculiar interest because it presents some special features. The Episcopal was from the first the Established Church. The persecution of Dissenters began at an early date. Gov. Sir Thomas Dale had a law passed in 1611 which condemned to death any man who denied the dogma of the Trinity. It was never enforced, and no bloodshed stains the history of religious persecution in Virginia. However, persecutions continued to be very severe for many years. In 1643 a law was passed which permitted only those to preach who could present a certificate from the Bishop of London. Long before this, a law had been enacted which directed that persons treating ministers disrespectfully be publicly whipped three times!

Stripes, fines, and imprisonment were frequently inflicted: Episcopacy never respected the rights of conscience in Virginia during colonial days.

(a) The Congregationalists of Nansemond County were the first to suffer. Prominent citizens invited Puritan ministers from Massachusetts to locate in their settlements. Two of them, however, were banished about 1648. Another, who had been an Anglican and chaplain to Gov. Berkeley, Rev. Thomas Harrison, having turned Puritan, was also banished: He went to England and became chaplain to Cromwell. These and similar persecutions practically put an end to Puritanism in the Colony.

(b) The Quakers, who came about 1656, met with great severity. In 1660, a law was passed, fining the shipmaster who brought a Quaker into Virginia the sum of £100. The poor Quaker was kept in jail until he agreed to leave the Colony; and, if he returned a second time, he was to be treated as a felon. In 1663, a law was enacted, providing that, if five or more adult Quakers assembled anywhere, they were to be fined: for the first offense, 200 pounds of tobacco; for the second, 500; and for the third, they were to be banished. A person harboring a Quaker preacher over night was fined 500 pounds of tobacco. About the same time a law was passed, — which would apply to Quakers,—imposing a fine of 2,000 pounds upon a man who refused to have his child baptised.

(c) The Baptists settled in Virginia about 1714 and endured great hardships for over sixty years. The story is long and revolting. But their churches rapidly multiplied under persecution: the movement spread among the "plain people." What most astonishes the reader today is the fact that Baptist ministers continued to be imprisoned down to the very eve of the Revolution. Dr. Hawks, the learned Episcopal historian, comments upon these per-

secutions of the Baptists: "They were beaten and imprisoned; and cruelty taxed its ingenuity to devise new modes of punishment and annoyance" (Prot. Epis. Ch. in Virginia, 121). In 1768, Patrick Henry rode fifty miles to defend three Baptist ministers for "preaching the Gospel unlawfully!" James Madison, in writing (June 24, 1774) to a friend—Wm. Bradford, Jr., in Philadelphia,—stated that there were then *six* Baptist ministers in jail in one neighboring county!

(d) Soon after the Baptists, came the Presbyterians (1732), a resolute, orderly, and orthodox people. As they lived, at first, chiefly by themselves in a somewhat frontier valley and were less aggressive in their methods than the Baptists, they did not, for a time, come very much into conflict with the law. The case of a layman, Samuel Morris, is, however, significant. He began about 1743, before he became a Presbyterian, to give *Bible-readings* wherever he could find a congregation. For this impiety, so shocking to the Episcopal clergy, he was fined twenty times in half that number of years!

The influences which led to the triumph of religious liberty in Virginia were chiefly these: (a) The constant pressure of Dissenters who vigorously demanded their rights. The Quakers and Baptists, there as elsewhere, testified in behalf of liberty of conscience: complete separation of Church and State. Presbyterians sought toleration but came, as a body, more slowly and less unanimously to belief in complete religious liberty for all men. The Presbyterians, especially of Hanover Presbytery (organized 1755) did, on the whole, noble service for this cause.

But a very erroneous claim for them is made by Rev. Dr. Thomas Smyth (1843): "Presbyterians forced upon the State the doctrine of the entire independence between Christianity and the civil power" (Works: Vol. III., Chap.

II., Sec. XI). Calvin in Geneva and Knox in Scotland contradict this claim. The Presbyterians in the English Commonwealth bitterly opposed even toleration. Their influence in New England was decisively against religious liberty and progress. The truth respecting their influence in Virginia will shortly appear in describing the work of Madison, to whom Dr. Smyth does not refer; and that of Jefferson, whom he treats with contempt!

(b) The benefits of religious liberty as demonstrated in the neighboring Colonies had a profound influence upon the people of Virginia. This was especially true in the case of Pennsylvania.

(c) The inevitable reaction against the injustice suffered by Dissenters, who had become a majority in the Colony, was intensified by the profligacy of the Episcopal clergy, who, as a rule, in those years, spent the most of their time in hunting, drinking, gambling, and horse-racing.

(d) The new and profound influences to enter into the problem,—English Independency and French Rationalism, operated chiefly through Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826), and James Madison (1751-1836). Jefferson was a great admirer of Locke and Voltaire; both advocates, not simply of toleration but of widest religious freedom. The modern, emancipating Ideal, advocated by Robert Browne, and made an organic policy by Independents and Quakers and Baptists, entered into American affairs through these great political leaders, both by way of these churches in their neighborhood and also by way of the luminous pages of these great teachers whom they studied with admiration.

When the Assembly of Virginia met in the Spring of 1776, Dissenters presented memorials demanding their rights. For some years similar petitions had been ignored. Now it was different. Protests against church tithes and tyrannies, as well as against Stamp Acts, were parts of

the rising patriotism. A memorial of special interest came from the Hanover Presbytery (written by Rev. Caleb Wallace): not original but significant, for it sounded a comparatively new note in that part of America,—a demand for universal religious freedom: a complete separation of Church and State.

James Madison was a new member, an unknown man of twenty-five. Though reared in an Episcopal family, his heart had hated persecution for some years: since as a lad he stood with his father and heard a pious Baptist minister preach through an open jail window to a company outside: imprisoned for preaching the Gospel unlawfully! Two years before he had written: "This vexes me the worst of anything whatever." Patrick Henry, nominally an Episcopalian but an advocate of toleration, had written a resolution, following mainly the language used by the Independents in a statement presented to the Westminster Assembly some hundred and thirty years before. The resolution (to be included in the Bill of Rights) was introduced by George Mason, the leader of the Assembly. In it was the statement: "All men should enjoy the fullest *toleration.*" But Madison protested that what was needed was not "toleration," but equal religious rights for all. He presented an amendment: dropping these words and adding the statement: "No man or class of men ought, on account of religion, to be invested with peculiar emoluments or privileges nor subjected to any penalties or disabilities." This meant separation of Church and State: complete religious liberty.

The Assembly, however, was not ready for so radical a measure. But, as Madison often insisted, had his amendment been adopted, Virginia would have been saved ten years of bitter controversy on this subject. As finally passed unanimously (June 12, 1776), Article XVI. of the

Bill of Rights reads: "That religion, or the duty we owe our Creator, and the manner of discharging it, can be directed only by reason and conviction, not by force or violence, and therefore all men are equally entitled to the free exercise of religion according to the dictates of conscience; and that it is the mutual duty of all to practice Christian forbearance, love, and charity toward each other." This statement was adopted, with slight changes, by Conventions in New York, North Carolina, and other states. This is, indeed, a noble declaration. But, on the main point,—separation of Church and State,—it was not sufficiently clear; far less satisfactory than the language used by Madison. It left the problem in confusion.

When the Assembly met the following autumn, petitions on this subject were numerous, and something more had to be done. The matter was handed over to a committee of nineteen members, one of whom was Thomas Jefferson, who over three months before had written our Declaration of Independence. Jefferson had long occupied a position well described in these words, written somewhat later: "What has been the effect of coercion [in religion]? To make one-half the world fools and the other half hypocrites" (Notes on Virginia, p. 199. 1784).

The Committee struggled for two months with this problem. Of these labors Jefferson wrote: "The severest contests in which I have ever been engaged." The Dissenters themselves were not united; and they were in a minority in the Assembly, although they had a popular majority in the State. But many looked no farther than mere "toleration." However, on Dec. 5, 1776, a Bill was passed with two important provisions: One repealed many laws against Dissenters; and the other *temporarily* exempted Dissenters from church taxes. The confusion that then existed in the popular mind is shown by the

fact that it was left an open question whether the permanent plan for the support of *all* churches should be by public tax or by voluntary contribution. The debate went on until 1779, when the Episcopal Church was virtually disestablished.

So great was the disorder at the close of the Revolution, that all religious bodies found themselves in great distress. There was a general feeling that something vigorous must be done. The policy of "a general assessment" for the support of religion began to be widely discussed. Early in the autumn of 1784, Patrick Henry introduced a resolution favoring such a policy, and it was adopted by a vote of 47 to 32,—so little did many then care for the principle which had been enacted into law, eight years before, in Article XVI. of the Bill of Rights. Many Dissenters sent in approving petitions: notably one from the United Clergy of the Presbyterian Church. At first, Presbyterian ministers in general favored the plan: a fact which drew from Madison,—for a time almost the only outspoken opponent,—this stinging rebuke: "I do not know a more shameful contrast than might be found between their memorials on the latter [1784] and former occasion' [1776]" (Letter to Monroe, April 12, 1785). In these words, he had especial reference to the fact that the Hanover Presbytery, which had pleaded so earnestly in 1776 for religious liberty, turned about, and in October, 1784, petitioned for a state tax to support the churches! Even the great Washington, usually so clear and broad, approved, as also did John Marshall!

Madison kept his head and fought for time. He and his friends secured a postponement. Meanwhile, during a recess of the Assembly, early the next year, at the urgent request of a few friends he prepared a powerful appeal to the people of the State (Memorial and Remonstrance),

which was widely circulated. It is a great historic document, containing about 3,000 words. Its argument for complete religious liberty,—clear, forcible, broad,—has never been surpassed. It made a profound impression, especially upon laymen: those in the Presbyterian churches compelled their ministers to change front. And as Madison wrote some years later (Nov., 1826) to Lafayette: "The projected innovation was crushed."

In 1779 (June 13), Jefferson, in presenting a Code of Laws for the State, had proposed "A Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom," but for six years it received practically no attention. This Madison now brought to the front. The people had spoken in response to his "Memorial" and the Bill, substantially as prepared by Jefferson, became a law: passed by the Assembly Dec. 17, 1785, by vote of 74 to 20: by the Senate on Dec. 23. The important part is Section II., which reads as follows:

"Be it therefore enacted by the General Assembly, that no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry whatsoever, nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested, or burdened in his body or goods, nor shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief; but that all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of religion, and that the same shall in no wise diminish, enlarge or affect their civil capacities."

The broad intention of the Assembly in passing this Bill, is shown by the fact, stated by Jefferson (who was then U. S. Minister to France), that when a member proposed to insert "Jesus Christ" in the Preamble, so limiting its scope to Christians, he was rebuked by "a great majority" (Ford's Jefferson, I., 62). As Jefferson contended, this vote showed that the Assembly demanded protection alike

for Jew and Gentile, Christians, Mohammedans, Hindoos, and Infidels.

No wonder that Jefferson took pride in the authorship of this Bill, ranking it with the Declaration of Independence and the Founding of the University of Virginia, as the three things worthy of mention on his monument. And it is good to record that he generously shared this honor with his younger associate, Madison. Jefferson, writing from Paris to Madison (Dec. 16, 1786), stated that reprints of this Bill had made a profound impression in Europe.

This was the most notable victory won for Religious Freedom, up to that time, in the whole world. Rhode Island is hardly an exception. However, it was not broader than the position of Roger Williams himself as stated in "Bloudy Tenent" (Preface). But far broader than the Constitution of such a progressive State as Pennsylvania, made in 1790, which limited citizenship to those who "acknowledge the being of God and a future state of rewards and punishment." While the Maryland Constitution of 1851 (Art. 34) permitted Jews and others to hold office only on condition that they declared their belief in a future state of rewards and punishments!

Date Due

FACULTY			
[illegible] 22 '42			
Mr 13 44			
Mr 28 '46			
AP6-'53			
AP22 '48			
MY 31'48			
AP 3-'54			
MY 6-'54			
FACULTY			
[redacted] '64			
[redacted]			
[redacted]			
[illegible]			