a savage attempt to murder the whole colony. A plot had been formed by which all the English settlements were to be attacked on the same day, and at the same hour. The conspiracy was betrayed by a friendly Indian, but not in time to prevent a fearful massacre of three hundred and forty-seven persons, among whom were some of the wealthiest and most respectable inhabitants. Then followed all the evils of an Indian war, and the settlements were reduced from eighty to eight plantations; and it was not until after a protracted struggle that the colonists regained their prosperity.

Scarcely had hostilities with the Indians commenced, before dissensions among the company in England led to a quarrel with the king, and a final abrogation of their charter. The company was too large and too democratic. The members were dissatisfied that so little gain had been derived from the colony; and moreover they made their courts or convocations, when they assembled to discuss colonial matters, the scene of angry political debate. There was a court party and a country party, each inflamed with violent political animosities. The country party was the stronger, and soon excited the jealousy of the arbitrary monarch, who looked upon their meetings "as but a seminary to a seditious parliament." A royal board of commissioners were appointed to examine the affairs of the company, who reported unfavorably; and the king therefore ordered the company to surrender its charter. The company refused to obey an arbitrary mandate; but upon its refusal, the king ordered a writ of *quo warranto* to be issued, and the Court of the King's Bench decided, of course, in favor of the crown. The company was accordingly dissolved. But the dissolution, though a bitrary, operated beneficially on the colony. Of all cramping institutions, a sovereign company of merchants is the most so, since they seek simply commercial gain, without any reference to the political, moral, or social improvement of the people whom they seek to control.

Before King James had completed his scheme for the government of the colony, he died; and Charles I. pursued the same arbitrary policy which his father contemplated. He instituted a government which combined the unlimited prerogative of an absolute prince with the narrow and selfish maxims of a mercantile

corporation. He monopolized the profits of its trade, and empowered the new governor, whom he appointed, to exercise his authority with the most undisguised usurpation of those rights which the colonists had heretofore enjoyed. Harvey's disposition was congenial with the rapacious and cruel system which he pursued, and he acted more like the satrap of an Eastern prince than the representative of a constitutional monarch. The colonists remonstrated and complained; but their appeals to the mercy and justice of the king were disregarded, and Harvey continued his course of insolence and tyranny until that famous parliament was assembled which rebelled against the folly and government of Charles. In 1641, a new and upright governor, Sir William Berkeley, was sent to Virginia, and the old provincial liberties were restored. In the contest between the king and parliament Virginia espoused the royal cause. When the parliament had triumphed over the king, Virginia was made to feel the force of republican displeasure, and oppressive restrictions were placed upon the trade of the colony, which were the more provoking in view of the indulgence which the New England colonies received from the protector. A revolt ensued, and Sir William Berkeley was forced from his retirement, and made to assume the government of the rebellious province. Cromwell, fortunately for Virginia, but unfortunately for the world, died before the rebellion could be suppressed; and when Charles II. was restored, Virginia joyfully returned to her allegiance. The supremacy of the Church of England was established by law, stipends were allowed to her ministers, and no clergymen were permitted to exercise their functions but such as held to the supremacy of the Church of England.

But Charles II. was as incapable as his father of pursuing a generous and just policy to the colonies; and parliament itself looked upon the colonies as a source of profit to the nation, rather than as a part of the nation. No sooner was Charles seated on the throne, than parliament imposed a duty of five per cent. on all merchandise exported from, or imported into, any of the dominions belonging to the crown; and the famous Navigation Act was passed, which ordained that no commodities should be imported into any of the British settlements but in vessels built in England

or in her colonies; and that no sugar, tobacco, cotton, wool, indigo and some other articles produced in the colonies, should be shipped from them to any other country but England. As a compensation, the colonies were permitted the exclusive cultivation of tobacco. The parliament, soon after, in 1663, passed additional restrictions; and, advancing, step by step, gradually subjected the colonies to a most oppressive dependence on the mother country, and even went so far as to regulate the trade of the several colonies with each other. This system of monopoly and exclusion, of course, produced indignation and disgust, and sowed the seeds of ultimate rebellion. Indian hostilities were added to provincial discontent, and even the horrors of civil war disturbed the prosperity of the colony. An ambitious and unprincipled adventurer, by the name of Bacon, succeeded in fomenting dissension, and in successfully resisting the power of the governor. Providence arrested the career of the rebel in the moment of his triumph; and his sickness and death fortunately dissipated the tempest which threatened to be fatal to the peace and welfare of Virginia. Berkeley, on the suppression of the rebellion, punished the offenders with a severity which ill accorded with his lenient and pacific character. His course did not please the government in England, and he was superseded by Colonel Jeffries. But he died before his successor arrived. A succession of governors administered the colony as their disposition prompted, some of whom were wise and able, and others tyrannical and rapacious.

The English revolution of 1688 produced also a change in the administration of the colony. Its dependence on the personal character of the sovereign was abolished, and its chartered liberties were protected. The king continued to appoint the royal governor, and the parliament continued to oppress the trade of the colonists; but they, on the whole, enjoyed the rights of freemen and rapidly advanced in wealth and prosperity. On the accession of William and Mary, the colony contained fifty thousand inhabitants and forty-eight parishes; and, in 1676, the customs on tobacco alone were collected in England to the amount of one hundred and thirty-five thousand pounds. The people generally belonged to the Episcopal Church, and the clergy each received, in every parish, a house and glebe, together with sixteen thousand

pounds of tobacco. The people were characterized for hospitality and urbanity, but were reproached for the indolence which a residence in scattered villages, a hot climate, and negro slavery must almost inevitably lead to. Literature, that solace of the refined and luxurious in the European world, was but imperfectly cultivated; nor was religion, in its stern and lofty developments, the animating principle of life, as in the New England settlements. But the people of Virginia were richer, more cultivated, and more aristocratic than the Puritans, more refined in manners, and more pleasing as companions.

The settlements in New England were made by a very different class of men from those who colonized Virginia. They were not adventurers in quest of gain; they were not broken-down gentlemen of aristocratic connections; they were not the profligate and dissolute members of powerful families. They were Puritans; they belonged to the middle ranks of society; they were men of stern and lofty virtue, of invincible energy, and hard and iron wills; they detested both the civil and religious despotism of their times, and desired, above all worldly consideration, the liberty of worshipping God according to the dictates of their consciences. They were chiefly Independents and Calvinists, among whom religion was a life, and not a dogma. They sought savage wilds, not for gain, not for ease, not for aggrandizement, but for liberty of conscience; and, for the sake of that inestimable privilege, they were ready to forego all the comforts and elegances of civilized life, and cheerfully meet all the dangers and make all the sacrifices which a residence among savage Indians, and in a cold and inhospitable climate, necessarily incurred.

The efforts at colonization attempted by the company in the west of England, to which allusion has been made, signally failed. God did not design that New England should be settled by a band of commercial adventurers. A colony was permanently planted at Plymouth, within the limits of the corporation, of forty persons, to whom James had granted enormous powers, and a belt of country from the fortieth to the forty-eighth degree of north latitude in width, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific in length.

On the 5th of August, 1620, the Mayflower and the Speedwell, freighted with the first Puritan colony, set sail from Southampton.

It composed a band of religious and devoted men with their wives and children, who had previously sought shelter in Holland for the enjoyment of their religious opinions. The smaller vessel, after a trial on the Atlantic, was found incompetent to the voyage, and was abandoned. The more timid were allowed to disembark at old Plymouth. One hundred and one resolute souls again set sail in the Mayflower, for the unknown wilderness, with all its countless dangers and miseries. No common worldly interest could have sustained their souls. The first adventurers embarked for Virginia, without women or children; but the Puritans made preparation for a permanent residence. Providence, against their design, guided their little vessel to the desolate shores of the most barren part of Massachusetts. On the 9th of November, it was safely moored in the harbor of Cape Cod. On the 11th, the colonists solemnly bound themselves into a body politic, and chose John Carver for their governor. On the 11th of December, (O. S.,) after protracted perils and sufferings, this little company landed on Plymouth Rock. Before the opening spring, more than half the colony had perished from privation, fatigue, and suffering, among whom was the governor himself. In the autumn, their numbers were recruited; but all the miseries of famine remained. They lived together as a community; but, for three or four months together, they had no corn whatever. In the spring of 1623, each family planted for itself, and land was assigned to each person in perpetual fee. The needy and defenceless colonists were fortunately preserved from the hostility of the natives, since a famine had swept away the more dangerous of their savage neighbors; nor did hostilities commence for several years. God protected the Pilgrims, in their weakness, from the murderous tomahawk, and from the perils of the wilderness. They suffered, but they existed. Their numbers slowly increased, but they were all Puritans, — were just the men to colonize the land, and lay the foundation of a great empire. From the beginning, a strict democracy existed, and all enjoyed ample exemption from the trammels of arbitrary power. No king took cognizance of their existence, or imposed upon them a despotic governor. They appointed their own rulers, and those rulers governed in the fear of God. Township independence existed from the first; and this is the nursery and the genius of

American institutions. The Plymouth colony was a self-constituted democracy; but it was composed of Englishmen, who loved their native land, and, while they sought unrestrained freedom, did not disdain dependence on the mother country, and a proper connection with the English government. They could not obtain a royal charter from the king; but the Grand Council of Plymouth — a new company, to which James had given the privileges of the old one — granted all the privileges which the colonists desired. They were too insignificant to attract much attention from the government, or excite the jealousy of a great corporation.

Unobtrusive and unfettered, the colony slowly spread. But wherever it spread, it took root. It was a tree which Providence planted for all generations. It was established upon a rock. It was a branch of the true church, which was destined to defy storms and changes, because its strength was in the Lord.

But all parts of New England were not, at first, settled by Puritan Pilgrims, or from motives of religion merely. The council of Plymouth issued grants of domains to various adventurers, who were animated by the spirit of gain. John Mason received a patent for what is now the state of New Hampshire. Portsmouth and Dover had an existence as early as 1623. Gorges obtained a grant of the whole district between the Piscataqua and the Kennebec. Saco, in 1636, contained one hundred and fifty people. But the settlements in New Hampshire and Maine, having disappointed the expectations of the patentees in regard to emolument and profit, were not very flourishing.

In the mean time, a new company of Puritans was formed for the settlement of the country around Boston. The company obtained a royal charter, (1629,) which constituted them a body politic, by the name of the *Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay*. It conferred on the colonists the rights of English subjects, although it did not technically concede freedom of religious worship, or the privilege of self-government. The main body of the colonists settled in Salem. They were a band of devout and lofty characters; Calvinists in their religious creed, and republicans in their political opinions. Strict independency was the basis and the genius of their church. It was self-constituted, and all its officers were elected by the members.

The charter of the company had been granted to a corporation consisting chiefly of merchants resident in London, and was more liberal than could have been expected from so bigoted and zealous a king as Charles I. If it did not directly concede the rights of conscience, it seemed to be silent respecting them; and the colonists were left to the unrestricted enjoyment of their religious and civil liberties. The intolerance and rigor of Archbishop Laud caused this new colony to be rapidly settled; and, as many distinguished men desired to emigrate, they sought and secured, from the company in England, a transfer of all the powers of government to the actual settlers in America. By this singular transaction, the municipal rights and privileges of the colonists were established on a firm foundation.

In 1630, not far from fifteen hundred persons, with Winthrop as their leader and governor, emigrated to the new world, and settled first in Charlestown, and afterwards in Boston. In accordance with the charter which gave them such unexpected privileges, a General Court was assembled, to settle the government. But the privilege of the elective franchise was given only to the members of the church, and each church was formed after the model of the one in Salem. It cannot be said that a strict democracy was established, since church membership was the condition of the full enjoyment of political rights. But if the constitution was somewhat aristocratic and exclusive, aristocracy was not based on wealth or intellect. The Calvinists of Massachusetts recognized a government of the elect, — a sort of theocracy, in which only the religious, or those who professed to be so, and were admitted to be so, had a right to rule. This was the notion of Cromwell himself, the great idol and representative of the Independents, who fancied that the government of England should be intrusted only to those who were capable of saving England, and were worthy to rule England. As his party constituted, in his eyes, this elect body, and was, in reality, the best party, — composed of men who feared God, and were willing to be ruled by his laws, — therefore his party, as he supposed, had a right to overturn thrones, and establish a new theocracy on earth.

This notion was a delusion in England, and proved fatal to all those who were blinded by it. Not so in America. Amid the

unbroken forests of New England, a colony of men was planted who generally recognized the principles of Cromwell; and one of the best governments the world has seen controlled the turbulent, rewarded the upright, and protected the rights and property of all classes with almost paternal fidelity and justice. The colony, however, — such is the weakness of man, such the degeneracy of his nature, — was doomed to dissension. Bigotry, from which no communities or individuals are fully free, drove some of the best men from the limits of the colony. Roger Williams, a minister in Salem, and one of the most worthy and enlightened men of his age, sought shelter from the persecution of his brethren amid the wilds on Narragansett Bay. In June, 1636, the lawgiver of Rhode Island, with five companions, embarked in an Indian canoe, and, sailing down the river, landed near a spring, on a sheltered spot, which he called *Providence*. He was gradually joined by others, who sympathized with his tolerant spirit and enlightened views, and the colony of Rhode Island became an asylum for the persecuted for many years. And there were many such. The Puritans were too earnest to live in harmony with those who differed from them on great religious questions; and a difference of views must have been expected among men so intellectual, so acute, and so fearless in speculation. How could dissenters from prevailing opinions fail to arise? — mystics, fanatics, and heretics? The idea of special divine illumination — ever the prevailing source of fanaticism, in all ages and countries — led astray some; and the desire for greater spiritual liberty animated others. Anne Hutchinson adopted substantially the doctrine of George Fox, that the spirit of God illuminates believers, independently of his written word; and she communicated her views to many others, who became, like her, arrogant and conceited, in spite of their many excellent qualities. Harry Vane, the governor, was among the number. But there was no reasoning with fanatics, who fancied themselves especially inspired; and, as they disturbed the peace of the colony, the leaders were expelled. Vane himself returned to England, to mingle in scenes more congenial with his excellent but excitable temper. In England, this illustrious friend of Milton greatly distinguished himself for his efforts in the cause of liberty, and ever remained its consistent advocate; opposing equally the tyranny of

the king, and the encroachments of those who overturned his throne.

Connecticut, though assigned to a company in England, was early colonized by a detachment of Pilgrims from Massachusetts. In 1635, settlements were made at Hartford, Windsor, and Wethersfield. The following year, the excellent and illustrious Hooker led a company of one hundred persons through the forests to the delightful banks of the Connecticut, whose rich alluvial soil promised an easier support than the hard and stony land in the vicinity of Boston. They were scarcely settled before the Pequod war commenced, which involved all the colonies in a desperate and bloody contest with the Indians. But the Pequods were no match for Europeans, especially without firearms; and, in 1637, the tribe was nearly annihilated. The energy and severity exercised by the colonists, fighting for their homes, struck awe in the minds of the savages; and it was long before they had the courage to rally a second time. The Puritans had the spirit of Cromwell, and never hesitated to act with intrepid boldness and courage, when the necessity was laid upon them. They were no advocates of half measures. Their subsequent security and growth are, in no slight degree, to be traced to these rigorous measures, — measures which, in these times, are sometimes denounced as too severe, but the wisdom of which can scarcely be questioned when the results are considered. All the great masters of war, and of war with barbarians, have pursued a policy of unmitigated severity; and when a temporizing or timid course has been adopted with men incapable of being governed by reason, and animated by savage passions, that course has failed.

After the various colonies were well established in New England, and more than twenty thousand had emigrated from the mother country, they were no longer regarded with benevolent interest by the king or his ministers. The Grand Council of Plymouth surrendered its charter to the king, and a writ of *quo warranto* was issued against the Massachusetts colony. But the Puritans refused to surrender their charter, and prepared for resistance against the malignant scheme of Strafford and Laud. Before they could be carried into execution, the struggle between the king and the Long Parliament had commenced. The less resistance

was forgotten in the greater. The colonies escaped the vengeance of a bigoted government. When the parliament triumphed, they were especially favored, and gradually acquired wealth and power. The different colonies formed a confederation to protect themselves against the Dutch and French on the one side, and the Indians on the other. And this happily continued for half a century, and was productive of very important results. But the several colonies continued to make laws for their own people, to repress anarchy, and favor the cause of religion and unity. They did not always exhibit a liberal and enlightened policy. They destroyed witches; persecuted the Baptists and Quakers, and excluded them from their settlements. But, with the exception of religious persecution, their legislation was wise, and their general conduct was virtuous. They encouraged schools, and founded the University of Cambridge. They preserved the various peculiarities of Puritanism in regard to amusements, to the observance of the Sabbath, and to antipathy to any thing which reminded them of Rome, or even of the Church of England. But Puritanism was not an odious crust, a form, a dogma. It was a life, a reality; and was not unfavorable to the development of the most beautiful virtues of charity and benevolence, in a certain sphere. It was not a mere traditional Puritanism, which clings with disgusting tenacity to a form, when the spirit of love has departed; but it was a harmonious development of living virtues, which sympathized with education, with freedom, and with progress; which united men together by the bond of Christian love, and incited them to deeds of active benevolence and intrepid moral heroism. Nor did the Puritan Pilgrims persecute those who did not harmonize with them in order to punish them, but simply to protect themselves, and to preserve in their midst, and in their original purity, those institutions and those rights, for the possession of which they left their beloved native land for a savage wilderness, with its countless perils and miseries. But their hardships and afflictions were not of long continuance. With energy, industry, frugality, and love, they soon obtained security, comfort, and health. And it is no vain and idle imagination which assigns to those years, which succeeded the successful planting of the colony, the period