

But forasmuch as, about the beginning of this lustre, at least before it was half run out, the Massachusetts Bay was begun to be planted, so that after 1628 the history of the affairs of New England is to be turned into that channel; we must, in what follows, look a little back, till we come to the springhead of that stream, and take notice of every turn of Providence that helped to raise or increase that broad river with streams; of which more in the next, and following chapters.

About September,¹ § in the year § 1630, was one Billington executed at Plymouth for murder. When the world was first peopled, and but one family to do that, there was yet too many to live peaceably together; so when this wilderness began first to be peopled by the English, when there was but one poor town, another Cain was found therein, who maliciously slew his neighbor in the field, as he accidentally met him, as himself was going to shoot deer. The poor fellow perceiving the intent of this Billington, his mortal enemy, sheltered himself behind trees as well as he could for a while; but the other, not being so ill a marksman as to miss his aim, made a shot at him, and struck him on the shoulder, with which he died soon after. The murderer expected that, either for want of power to execute for capital offences, or for want of people to increase the Plantation, he should have his life spared; but justice otherwise determined, and rewarded him, the first murderer of his neighbor there, with the deserved punishment of death, for a warning to others.

CHAP. XVIII.

The discovery and first planting of the Massachusetts.

SEVERAL mariners, and persons skilled in navigation, (whether employed by others in a way of fishing and trading, or to satisfy their own humors in making further and more exact discoveries of the country, is not material,) had some years before looked down into the Massachusetts Bay. The inhabitants of New Plymouth had heard the fame thereof, and in the first year after their

¹ In October, says Prince, p. 319.—H.

arrival there, took an occasion to visit it,¹ gaining some acquaintance with the natives of the place, in order to future traffic with them; for which purpose something like a habitation was set up at Nantaskit, a place judged then most commodious for such an end. There Mr. Roger Conant, with some few others, after Mr. Lyford and Mr. Oldham were, (for some offence, real or supposed,) discharged from² having any thing more to do at Plymouth, found a place of retirement and reception for themselves and families, for the space of a year and some few months, till a door was opened for them at Cape Anne, a place on the other side the Bay, (more convenient for those that belong to the tribe of Zebulon, than for those that chose to dwell in the tents of Issachar,) whither they removed about the year 1625; and after they had made another short trial thereof, for about a year's continuance, they removed a third time, down a little lower towards the bottom of the Bay, being invited by the accommodations which they either saw or hoped to find on the other side of a creek near by, called Naumkeag, which afforded a considerable quantity of planting land near adjoining thereto. Here they took up their station, upon a pleasant and fruitful neck of land, environed with an arm of the sea on each side, in either of which vessels and ships of good burthen might safely anchor. In this place, (soon after by a minister³ that came with a company of honest planters called Salem, from that in Ps. lxxvi. 2.) was laid the first foundation on which the next Colonies were built. The occasion which led them to plant here, shall be mentioned afterwards. For the better carrying on the story of which, mention must in the first place be made of what was doing on the other side of the Bay, towards Plymouth, by a company of rude people there, left by one Captain Wollaston, called Mount Wollaston, from his name that first possessed it; but since, it is by the inhabitants, after it arose to the perfection of a township or village, called Braintree. This Captain, not taking notice of the great estate and whole stock of credit which Mr. Weston had not long before shipwrecked at a place near by, called Wessagus-

||there, of about||

¹ See pp. 68-9.—H.

² For in the MS.—H.

³ Francis Higginson. See p. 112.—H.

quasset, attempted in like manner to try his fortune in this fatal place, about the year 1625, yet had he this consideration, as not to venture all his own stock, §or§ in one single bottom; for three or four more were embarked with him in the same design, who rather took New England in their way to make a trial, than to pitch their hopes ultimately thereon.

These brought with them a great many servants, with suitable provisions, and other requisites necessary to raise a Plantation; with which they might have effected their purpose well enough, as they have done that came after, had it not been for one Morton, a master of misrule, that came along in company with the rest, that sometimes had been a pettifogger of Furnivall's Inn, and possibly might bring some small adventure of his own, or other men's, with the rest. But after they had spent much labor, cost, and time in planting this place, and saw that it brought in nought but a little dear bought experience, the Captain transports a great part of the servants to Virginia¹; and that place at the first sight he likes so well, that he writes back to Mr. Rasdale, his chief partner, to bring another part of them along with him, intending to put them off there, as he had done the rest, leaving one Filcher behind, as their Lieutenant, to govern the rest of the Plantation till they should take further order.

But in their absence, this Morton took the counsel of the wicked husbandmen about the vineyard in the parable: for making the company merry one night, he persuaded them to turn out Filcher, and keep possession for themselves, promising himself to be a partner with them, and telling them that otherwise they were like all to be sold for slaves, as were the rest of their fellows, if ever Rasdale returned. This counsel was easy to be taken, as suiting well with the genius of young men, to eat, drink, and be merry, while the good things lasted, which was not long, by that course which was taken with them; more being flung away in some merry meetings, than, with frugality, would have maintained the whole company divers months. In fine, they improved what

¹ In the fall of 1628. Prince, page 240.—H.

goods they had, by trading with the Indians awhile, and spent it as merrily about a May-pole¹; and, as if they had found a mine, or spring of plenty, called the place Merry Mount. "Thus stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant;" till it be found, that "the dead are there, and her guests in the depths of hell."²

News of this school of profaneness, opened at Merry Mount, being brought to Mr. Endicott, the deputed Governor of the Massachusetts, soon after his arrival, in the year 1628, he went to visit it, and made such reformation as his wisdom and zeal led him unto. After this, Morton, like the unjust steward in the Gospel, to provide himself of a way of subsistence, after he was turned out of his office, began to comply with the Indians, being, as is reported by those of Plymouth, the first that taught them the use of guns, and furnished them with powder, shot, and brass plates, wherewith to make arrow heads; not regarding what mischief he brewed for others in after time, provided he might drink a little of the sweet in the present time. But the trade was not to last long; for upon a general complaint of all the inhabitants on either side, he was seized by force, and sent over to the Council of New England, who, it is said, dealt more favorably with him than his wickedness deserved; so as, sometime after, he found means to return into the country again, with a malicious purpose to do all the mischief he could to the Colony, both by writing scurrilous pamphlets, and other evil practices, on which account he was divers times sent backward and forward over the sea, imprisoned, and otherwise punished, till at last he ended his wretched life in obscurity at Pascataqua, as may be more particularly declared afterwards. By this means Mr. Wollaston's Plantation came much what to the same conclusion as Mr. Weston's; so as the place, being now wholly deserted, fell into the hands of persons of another temper, by whom it is since improved to become the seat of an honest, thriving, and sober township. Thus, notwithstanding the many adventures which had hitherto been made, by sundry persons of estate and quality, for the discovery and improvement of this part

¹ "Which I suppose is the only one ever set up in New England," says Prince, page 244.—H.

² Prov. ix. 17-18.—H.

of America, called New England, nothing could as yet be settled by way of planting any Colony upon the coast, with desirable success, save that of New Plymouth, discoursed of before. As for the rest of the Plantations, they were, like the habitations of the foolish, as it is in Job,¹ cursed before they had taken root.

In the year 1623, some merchants about Plymouth and the west of England sent over Mr. David Tomson, a Scotchman, to begin a Plantation about Pascataqua; but out of dislike, either of the place or his employers, he removed down into the Massachusetts Bay within a year after. There he possessed himself of a *very* fruitful island, and a very desirable neck of land, since confirmed to him or his heirs by the Court of the Massachusetts, upon the surrender of all his other interest in New England, to which yet he could pretend no other title than a promise, or a gift to be conferred on him, in a letter by Sir Ferdinando Gorges, or some other member of the Council of Plymouth.²

But the vanishing of all the forementioned attempts did but make way for the settling the Colony of the Massachusetts; and this was the occasion thereof. As some merchants from the west of England had § for § a long time frequented the parts about Munhiggon, for the taking of fish, &c., so did others, especially those of Dorchester, make the like attempt upon the northern promontory of the Massachusetts Bay, in probability first discovered by Captain Smith, before or in the year 1614, and by him named Tragabizanda, for the sake of a lady from whom he received much favor while he was a prisoner amongst the Turks; by whom also the three small islands at the head of the Cape were called the Three Turks' Heads. But neither of them glorying in these Mahometan titles, the promontory willingly exchanged its name for that of Cape Anne, imposed, as is said, by Captain Mason,³ and which it retaineth to this day, in honor of our famous Queen Anne, *then surviving,* the royal consort of King James; and the three other islands are now known by other names.

¹ V. 3.—H.

² See p. 89; Bradford, in Prince, p. 230; and Savage's Winthrop, i. 44.—H.

³ A mistake. See Young's Chronicles of Massachusetts, p. 22.—H.

STAGES

Here did the foresaid merchants first erect stages whereon to make their fish, and yearly sent their ships thither for that end for some considerable time, until the fame of the Plantation at New Plymouth, with the success thereof, was spread abroad through all the western parts of England so far, as that it began to revive the hopes of some of those merchants who had not long before adventured their estates to promote so honorable a design as was the planting and peopling this new world; although finding hitherto but small encouragement that way, they were ready to withdraw their hands.

On this consideration it was, that some merchants and other gentlemen about Dorchester did, about the year 1624, at the instigation of Mr. White, the famous preacher of that town, upon a common stock, together with those that were coming to make fish, send over sundry persons in order to the carrying on a Plantation at Cape Anne, conceiving that planting on the land might go on equally with fishing on the sea in those parts of America.

Mr. John Tylly and Mr. Thomas Gardener were employed as overseers of that whole business; the first with reference to the fishing, the other with respect to the planting on the main land, at least for one year's time; at the end of which Mr. White, with the rest of the Adventurers, hearing of some religious and well-affected persons, that were lately removed out of New Plymouth, out of dislike of their principles of rigid Separation, (of which number Mr. Roger Conant was one, a religious, sober, and prudent gentleman, yet surviving about Salem till the year 1680, wherein he finished his pilgrimage, having a great hand in all those forementioned transactions about Cape Anne,) § they § pitched upon him, the said Conant, for the managing and government of all their affairs at Cape Anne. The information he had of him, was from one Mr. Conant, a brother of his, and well known to Mr. White; and he was so well satisfied therein, that he engaged Mr. Humphry, the Treasurer of the joint Adventurers, to write to him in their names, and to signify that they had chosen him to be ||their|| Governor in that place, and would commit unto

[then]

him the charge of all **||the||** affairs, as well fishing as planting. Together with him, likewise, they invited Mr. Lyford, lately dismissed from Plymouth, to be the minister of the place; and Mr. Oldham, also discharged on the like account from Plymouth, was invited to trade for them with the Indians. All these three at that time had their dwelling at Nantasket. Mr. Lyford accepted, and came along with Mr. Conant. Mr. Oldham liked better to stay where he was for awhile, and trade for himself, and not become liable to give an account of his gain or loss. But after a year's experience, the Adventurers, perceiving their design not like to answer their expectation, at least as to any present advantage, threw all up; yet were so civil to those that were employed under them, as to pay them all their wages, and **||^d proffered||** to transport them back whence they came, if so they desired.

It must here be noted, that Mr. Roger Conant, on the foresaid occasion made the superintendent of their affairs, disliked the place as much as the Adventurers disliked the business; and therefore, in the mean while, had made some inquiry into a more commodious place near adjoining, on the other side of a creek, called Naumkeak, a little to the westward, where was much better encouragement as to the design of a Plantation, than that which they had attempted upon before at Cape Anne; secretly conceiving in his mind, that in following times (as since is fallen out) it might prove a receptacle for such as upon the account of religion would be willing to begin a foreign Plantation in this part of the world; of which he gave some intimation to his friends in England. Wherefore that reverend person, Mr. White, (under God one of the chief founders of the Massachusetts Colony in New England,) being grieved in his spirit that so good a work should be suffered to fall to the ground by the Adventurers thus abruptly breaking off, did write to Mr. Conant not so to desert **||^d the||** business, faithfully promising that if himself, with three others, (whom he knew to be honest and prudent men, viz. John Woodberry, John Balch, and Peter Palfreys, employed by the Adventurers)

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would stay at Naumkeag, and give timely notice thereof, he would provide a Patent for them, and likewise send them whatever they should write for, either men, or provision, or goods wherewith to trade with the Indians. Answer was returned that they would all stay, on those terms, entreating that they might be encouraged accordingly. Yet it seems, before they received any return according to their desires, the three last mentioned began to recoil, and repenting of their engagement to stay at Naumkeag, for fear of the Indians and other inconveniences, resolved rather to go all to Virginia, especially because Mr. Lyford, their minister, upon a loving invitation, was thither bound.¹ But Mr. Conant, as one inspired by some superior instinct, though never so earnestly pressed to go along with them, peremptorily declared his mind to wait the providence of God in that place where now they were, yea, though all the rest should forsake him, not doubting, as he said, but if they departed he should soon have more company. The other three, observing his confident resolution, at last concurred with him, and soon after sent back John Woodberry for England to procure necessaries for a Plantation. But that God who is ready to answer his people before they call, as he had filled the heart of that good man, Mr. Conant, in New England, with courage and resolution to abide fixed in his purpose, notwithstanding all opposition and persuasion he met with to the contrary, had also inclined the hearts of several others in *old* England to be at work about the same design. For about this time the Council established at Plymouth for the planting, ruling, ordering, and governing of New England, had, by a deed indented under the common seal, bearing date March 19, 1627,² bargained and sold unto some knights and gentlemen about Dorchester, viz. Sir Henry Roswell, Sir John Young, knights, Thomas Southcoat, John Humphry, John Eudicot, and Simon Whetcomb, Gentlemen, that part of New England that lies between Merrimack and Charles River, in the bottom of the Massachusetts Bay. And not long after, by the means of Mr. White, the foresaid gentlemen were

¹ "And there shortly dies," says Bradford, in Prince, page 245.—H.

² Observe, that this date is according to Old Style.—H.

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brought into acquaintance with several other religious persons of like quality in and about London, such as Mr. Winthrop, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Dudley, Mr. Cradock, and Mr. Goffe, and Sir Richard Saltonstall; who being first associated to them, at last bought of them all their right and interest in New England aforesaid;¹ and consulting together about settling some Plantation in New England upon the account of religion, where such as were called Nonconformists might, with the favor and leave of the King, have a place of reception if they should transport themselves into America, there to enjoy the liberty of their own persuasion in matters of worship and church discipline, without disturbance of the peace of the kingdom, and without offence to others, not likeminded with themselves, did at the last resolve, with one joint consent, to petition the King's Majesty to confirm unto the forenamed and their associates, by a new grant or Patent, the tract of land in America forementioned; which was accordingly obtained.²

Soon after, the Company, having chosen Mr. Cradock, Governor, and Mr. Goffe, Deputy Governor, with several others for Assistants,³ sent over Mr. Endicot, sc. in the year 1628, to carry on the Plantation of the Dorchester agents at Naumkeag, or Salem, and make way for the settling of another Colony in the Massachusetts.⁴ He was fully instructed with power from the Company to order all affairs in the name of the Patentees, as their agent, until themselves should come over, which was at that time intended, but could not be accomplished till the year 1630. With Mr. Endicot, in the year 1628, came Mr. Gotte, Mr. Brakenberry, Mr. Davenport, and others; who, being added to Capt. Traske, [blank] and John Woodberry, (that was before this time returned with a comfortable answer to them that sent him over,) went on comfortably together to make preparation for the new Colony, that were coming over; the late controversy that had been agitated with too much animosity betwixt the forementioned Dorchester planters, and their new agent, Mr. Endicot, and his company then sent over, being by

¹ See Prince, p. 247.—H.

² March 4, 1628-9.—H.

³ The Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay may be found in Young's Chronicles of Massachusetts, pp. 37-128.—H.

the prudent moderation of Mr. Conant, agent before for the Dorchester merchants, quietly composed; that so *meum* and *tuum*, that divide the world, should not disturb the peace of good Christians, that came so far to provide a place where to live together in Christian amity and concord.

In the same year were sent over several servants upon the joint stock of the Company, who, arriving there in an uncultivated desert, for want of wholesome diet and convenient lodgings, were many of them seized with the scurvy and other distempers, which shortened many of their days, and prevented many of the rest from performing any great matter of labor that year for advancing the work of the Plantation. Yet was the good hand of God upon them so far, as that something was done which tended to advantage; nor was, upon that account, an evil report brought upon the place by any of them, so as to discourage others from coming after them.

During this whole lustre of years, from 1625, there was little matter of moment acted in the Massachusetts, till the year 1629, after the obtaining the Patent; the former years being spent in fishing and trading by the agents of the Dorchester merchants, and some others of the West Country.¹

In one of the fishing voyages about the year 1625, under the charge and command of one Mr. Hewes, employed by some of the West Country merchants, there arose a sharp contest between the said Hewes and the people of New Plymouth, about a fishing stage, built the year before about Cape Anne by Plymouth men, but was now, in the absence of the builders, made use of by Mr. Hewes's company, which the other, under the conduct of Captain Standish, very eagerly and peremptorily demanded: for the Company of New Plymouth, having themselves obtained a useless Patent for Cape Anne about the year 1623, sent some of the ships, which their Adventurers employed to transport passengers over to them, to make fish there; for which end they had built a stage there, in the year 1624. The dispute grew to be very hot, and high words passed between them, which might have ended in blows, if not in blood and slaughter,

¹ See page 109, note a.—H.

had not the prudence and moderation of Mr. Roger Conant, at that time there present, and Mr. Peirse's interposition, that lay just by with his ship, timely prevented. For Mr. Hewes had barricadoed his company with hogsheads on the stagehead, while the demandants stood upon the land, and might easily have been cut off; but the ship's crew, by advice, promising to help them build another, the difference was thereby ended. Captain Standish had been bred a soldier in the Low Countries, and never entered the school of our Savior Christ, or of John Baptist, his harbinger, or, if he was ever there, had forgot his first lessons, to offer violence to no man, and to part with the cloak rather than needlessly contend for the coat, though taken away without order. A little chimney is soon fired; so was the Plymouth Captain, a man of very little stature, yet of a very hot and angry temper. The fire of his passion soon kindled and blown up into a flame by hot words, might easily have consumed all, had it not been seasonably quenched.

WM
PEIRCE

In transactions of this nature were the first three years spent, in making way for the planting of the Massachusetts.*

CHAP. XIX.

Several planters transport themselves into New England; Ministers invited to join with them. The first Plantation in the Massachusetts, called Salem.

Now those that first promoted the design in England were not unmindful that this fair beginning being made, unless it were followed with proportionable endeavors for an orderly settlement of this, all would come to nothing, as the attempts of some others had done before; therefore were they very solicitous not without all due preparation to proceed in this solemn undertaking.

In the first place, therefore, they considered where to find two or three able ministers, to send over to them that or the next year; not doubting but if they could meet with any such, they should be sure not to fail of a

[consideration]