

CHAP. XLI.

The first planting of the country about the River of Connecticut. The occasions leading thereunto, and progress thereof, in the years 1635 and 1636, with some occurrences which have since happened there, both in their civil and ecclesiastical affairs.

THE discovery of the famous River of Connecticut, known to the Dutch by the name of the Fresh River, and by them intimated to the inhabitants of New Plymouth, (possibly to make them some amends for the abuse formerly offered in supplanting them upon their first adventuring into those parts,) hath been mentioned already,¹ where it is declared how the English about the same time happened to discover it by land, as the other had done by sea. The Dutch had only resorted thither on the account of trade with the Indians; and if those of Plymouth had entertained any thoughts of removing thither, they spent too much time in deliberation about the matter, and so were prevented by the inhabitants of the Massachusetts, who were at that time overpressed with multitudes of new families, that daily resorted thither, so as, like an hive of bees overstocked, there was a necessity that some should swarm out. The places about the Bay were already, in a manner, all taken up, and the country about the said river, (whose fame, peradventure, did not a little outdo its real excellency,) though more remote, yet was thought to make compensation for that, by the abundant fertility of the soil. A great number, therefore, of the planters of the old towns, viz. Dorchester, Roxbury, Watertown, and Cambridge, were easily induced to attempt a removal of themselves and families upon the first opportunity afforded; which was not a little advanced by the fame and interest of Mr. Hooker, whose worth and abilities had no small influence upon the people of the towns forementioned. It was also said, that besides the *causa procatarctica*, there was a *causa προηγουμενη*, an impulsive cause, that did more secretly and

¹ Page 169.—H.

powerfully drive on the business. Some men do not well like, at least, cannot well bear, to be opposed in their judgments and notions, and thence were they not unwilling to remove from under the power, as well as out of the bounds, of the Massachusetts. Nature doth not allow two suns in one firmament, and some spirits can as ill bear an equal as others a superior: but whether they have mended themselves by their choice, they are best able to judge, that have had longest experience of another Colony. Possibly it might have been as well for the whole, if they could have been included in one jurisdiction; for by that means their union together, by an incorporation, had been much firmer and stronger, than by a confederation, as afterwards it came to pass.

It was generally accounted no wisdom to be straitened in a wilderness, where there was land enough, and therefore these, with Isaac, preferred a Rehoboth before a Sitnah; and it were to be wished, that men's desires being obtained as to room, there may never be contention about their bounds. But whatever were the cause, or gave the occasion, of setting up these Plantations, the design being resolved upon in the year 1634, some¹ were deputed from amongst the towns in the Bay to view the country, who returning from this Eshcol with a large commendation of the commodiousness of the place, and fruitfulness of the soil, they took up a resolution forthwith to begin several Plantations there; accordingly, in the year 1635, several families, with the approbation of the authority of the Massachusetts, undertook the removal of themselves to that Canaan of Connecticut; and in the way thereunto, whether they so well expected it and prepared for it or no, they met with many difficulties, and trials of a wilderness, before they were comfortably settled there. For those their hasty resolves, that had so early budded, were sorely nipped, and almost quite blasted, by the sharpness of the winter season that year, and other sad occurrences, which they were called to encounter with, in the following year, by the barbarous outrage of the Pequod Indians, who, like Amalek of old,

¹ See Sav. Win. i. 136. —H.

that set upon the rear of Israel in the wilderness, did sorely annoy those Plantations upon Connecticut River, at their first settling there.

The place which those that went from Cambridge had, by their agents, chosen to settle upon, was by the Indians called ||Suckiaug|| where some of them began the Plantation in the end of the year 1635; Mr. Hooker and Mr. Stone, the ministers of the church, engaging to follow them the next year, which they did,¹ and called it Hartford. Those of Dorchester settled upon a place called by the Indians Mattaneaug, or Cufchankamaug, after whom Mr. Wareham and the rest of the church engaged to follow, and so likewise did² the next year, and called it Windsor. Those that went from Watertown (whereof not above seven were members of the church, and Mr. Smith³ was afterwards their minister,) pitched upon a place known to the Indians by the name of Pauquiaug, which was afterwards, by the English, named Weathersfield.

The place which these Weathersfield men settled their Plantation upon, was a very desirable tract of interval land, which those of Hartford intended for themselves, purposing to stretch one of the wings of their Plantation over it; but the other were too quick for them, and seized it to settle their own Plantation upon, being situate about three miles from Hartford. In such kind of possessions the *premier seisin* is the best title; they, therefore, being found the first occupants, could not be dispossessed by the pretensions of their neighbors. However, it was said that this preoccupation of theirs had no small influence (directly or indirectly) into those contentions, which for many years (soon after the first planting) disturbed that place, before they could be healed; of which there may be more occasion to speak afterwards. Much of the trouble was said to arise from Mr. Smith, aforesaid, the minister, and one Mr. Chaplin, the ruling elder. If they did answer the Apostle's qualification, 1 Tim. v. 17, of ruling well, and laboring in the word and doctrine, they were not, as the text requires, rewarded with double honor.

||Suckiang||

¹ May, 31, 1636.—H. ² In September, 1636.—H. ³ Rev. Henry Smith.—H.

Those that went from Roxbury (the principal of whom were Mr. William Pynchon, and one John Burr, a carpenter) settled, at least, laid the foundation of a Plantation, higher up the river, called by the Indians Agawam, but, by the English, afterwards named Springfield, in remembrance of the said Mr. Pynchon, who had his mansion house at a town of that name, near Chelmsford, in Essex, before he removed to New England; but this Plantation was afterwards found to fall within the line of the Massachusetts Patent, and so was always after left to their jurisdiction.

These new Plantations were reduced to great extremity the first winter, by reason of the early setting in of the hard weather, which detained their provisions (that came by sea) at the river's mouth, near sixty miles off from them, (the stream being frozen up all the way between them,) so as the several companies were dispersed; some repairing towards the mouth of the river, the rest returning back through the woods, with the peril of their lives, leaving some few behind them, (which was of necessity to look after the cattle they carried up,) with whom they were forced to leave all the provisions they could spare, scarce reserving enough for them that were to travel back, insomuch as one or two of them, for want of relief, perished by the way. Many of their cattle, also, which they left upon the place, were lost that winter, for want of looking after; on all which accounts the first planters conflicted with much hardship and many sorrows, before they were fully settled.

But for the better managing of affairs, (as to the government,) in those first beginnings in the year 1636, several gentlemen, that removed thither, were appointed, by some kind of commission from the Massachusetts, to take care of the government of the place, viz. Roger Ludlow, Esq., Mr. John Steel, Mr. William Phelps, Mr. William Westwood, Mr. Andrew Ward, and some others¹ that were joined with them in the same commission, for the government of the said Plantations. As for the mischief they sustained by the Indians, which occa-

¹ The others were, William Pynchon, Esq., William Swain, and Henry Smith. See their Commission in Hazard, i. 321-2.—H.

sioned the war with the Pequod Indians, near adjoining to them, it is particularly described in the history thereof.

Soon after the setting up of these Plantations, the inhabitants being fully satisfied that they were all or most of them without the limits of the Massachusetts, (of which they had no small presumption before,) and therefore not belonging to their jurisdiction, they entered into a combination¹ among themselves, and so became a body politic by mutual consent, and framed such laws and constitutions as were necessary for the foundation of a civil government; choosing some prudent and meet persons yearly to be both magistrates and representatives of the people in some General Assembly, empowering them as well to enact new orders as to put the former in execution, so far as was needful for the welfare of the people; which, possibly, was the occasion, that those of that Colony took a larger compass, as to their freemen, than the Massachusetts had done before them; not restraining the freedom of their civil government to the membership of their churches; for where a government is founded on the consent of the people, it will be necessitated to extend the favor of a civil freedom to many, who otherwise might be looked upon, [as] not so capable, at least, not so worthy, thereof.

In this way of government the Plantations of Connecticut continued until the year 1644, within which time George Fenwick, Esq.,² a worthy and pious gentleman, came over thither, and, in the behalf of sundry Lords and gentlemen, took up much land about the mouth of Connecticut River, and there began another Plantation, which was called Saybrook, in remembrance of those two noble Lords, the Lord Say and the Lord Brook, claiming the government and propriety of those places by virtue of a Patent, granted to the foresaid Lords and other gentlemen, and their associates, by the right honorable Robert, Earl of Warwick; although it is since known that there was a grant made, of lands containing sixty miles in length and breadth betwixt the River of Connecticut and the Narrhaganset country, to the Marquis Hamilton, by the

¹ See this compact, dated Jan 14, 1638-9, in *Tromball*, i. 498-502.—H.

² See page 279.—H.

Grand Council of Plymouth, bearing date¹ in the eleventh year of King Charles the First; but whether the Patent aforesaid, granted by the Earl of Warwick, were of a more ancient date, must be determined by them that have power assigned them for that end, seeing the heirs of the said Marquis still challenge an interest therein. But for the extent of the Patent, granted by the Earl of Warwick, it reaches unto, and takes in, "all that part of New England, in America, which lies and extends itself from a River, there called Narrhaganset River; the space of forty leagues upon a straight line, near the sea shore, towards the southwest, west and by south, or west, as the coast lieth, towards Virginia, accounting three English miles to the league; and also all and singular the lands and hereditaments whatsoever, lying and being within the lands aforesaid, north and south in latitude and breadth, and in length and longitude, of and within all the breadth aforesaid, throughout the main lands there, from the Western Ocean to the South Sea."² &c.

December 5, 1644, they made their purchase of Mr. Fenwick. The troubles and unnatural wars breaking forth, and increasing in England, the good people of the Colony of Connecticut rested contented with what they had, and did not seek for a confirmation of their purchase of the then prevailing powers in England; but as soon as the times were changed, and our gracious King, Charles the Second, (whom God preserve,) was restored to the quiet possession of his crown and dignities, the General Court of that Colony saw reason to make their application to his Majesty, to procure a royal stamp and confirmation upon the former purchase, conquests, and improvements; and the design being of great importance, for the managing of it they improved their honorable Governor, John Winthrop, Esq., a man eminently qualified with all suitable endowments for such a service, and exceeding ready to spend and be spent in what would advance the public good. Upon their desires manifested in Court, May 16, 1661, he readily complied with the motion, and went for England, addressed himself to the

¹ April 20, 1635, says Trumbull.—H.

² See the Patent, in full, dated March 19, 1631, in Trumbull, i. 495-6.—H.

service, and God (who hath the hearts of Kings at his dispose) was graciously pleased to incline the heart of the King towards them, so as he was not unwilling to grant them a gracious Charter, and therein many great privileges, and a large tract of land, viz. all that part of his Majesty's dominions in New England, in America, bounded on the east by Narrogancit River, commonly called Narrogancit Bay, where the said river falleth into the sea, and on the line of the Massachusetts Plantation, and on the south by the sea, and in longitude as the line of the Massachusetts Colony, running from east to west, that is to say, from the said Narrogancit Bay on the east to the South Sea on the west part, with all the islands adjoining, &c., as by his Majesty's grant, dated in Westminster, the three and twentieth day of April, in the fourteenth year of his reign, will appear.¹

Sometime after the Charter of the Colony of Connecticut came over, and the government was established according to the Charter. The Plantations of New Haven, (who began to settle soon after the Pequod War,²) being comprised within their Charter limits, (according to the desire of Connecticut, and the honorable William Leet, Esq., then Governor of New Haven, as by his letter to Governor Winthrop, then going for England, may appear,) did (soon after Colonel Nicols's arrival at New York, viz. in the year 1664,) conjoin themselves with the Colony of Connecticut, about the latter end of the year; and all the privileges of the Charter were confirmed upon them, and four of their honored magistrates, at the next Court of Election at Hartford, May 11, 1665, were by the freemen of the Colony chosen to be Assistants to the Governor, in the management of the government, according to the Charter.

May 10,³ 1666, at a General Court held at Hartford, for the better government of the people of the Colony, and administration of justice, according as occasion should require, they divided the Colony into four Counties, viz. the County of Hartford, in which are these Plantations, Hartford, Windsor, Weathersfield, Farmington, Middle-

¹ See it in Hazard, ii. 597-605.—H.

² In 1637-8.—H.

³ May 11th, says Trumbull.—H.

town, Simsbury, and Haddam, in which towns, except it be the two last, are churches already settled, in the two last also are preachers of the Gospel settled and now abiding there.

There is also the County of New London, in which are these towns, viz. New London, Saybrook, Norwich, Stonington, Kenilworth, and Lime, in which towns are churches settled, only the last hath not yet so far attained, although they have a reverend and able minister settled there.

There is also the County of New Haven, in which are these towns, viz. New Haven, Milford, Guilford, Brandford, Wallingford, and Derby, in which towns, except the two last, are churches already gathered and settled: in the two last are ministers of the Gospel settled, and Wallingford are preparing for gathering themselves into a church fellowship: and lastly,

There is also the County of Fairfield, in which are these towns, viz. Fairfield, Stratford, Norwalk, Standford, Greenwich, Rye, and Woodbury, in which are churches already gathered, except in the three last; and there is a church settling in the last of the said three, and had been upon the place, but the fury of the last war prevented their settlement for the present.

In each County are two County Courts annually to be held at the County-towns, where justice, for the ease of the people within the County, is to be administered by the persons appointed, and commissioned to that work, by the General Court yearly.

In the Narrhogsanet Country there is a town called Wickford, who were to have recourse to New London for justice, but the fury of the Indian war, 1675, hath demolished that place; yet now it is again beginning to be inhabited.

By what hath been said in the premises it doth appear, that the foresaid Colony of Connecticut hath had experience of a double settlement, the first by combination and consent among themselves, the other by right of a royal Charter or Patent from the King; in both which the

constitution of the civil government hath in some things always differed from that of the Massachusetts, as was hinted before, especially in reference to the persons entrusted with the choice of their Governor and magistrates, who are not determined by church membership, as in the other Colony, but by some other qualification.

But as to their ecclesiastical affairs in that Colony, it is to be noted that the two principal towns, viz. Hartford and Windsor, were peopled with such as were settled in their church state before their removal thither, conformable in all things to the churches in the Massachusetts; and so lived in great peace together all the days of Mr. Hooker, for about eleven years space; although at Weathersfield the case was much otherwise; for there was scarce men enough removed thither to constitute a church; neither were they supplied with a minister before they removed, and he whom they called to that function among them, after their removal, was not so happy in his conduct, or in his colleague, (who bore the ruling elder's place,) as to maintain the place in any tolerable degree of unity and peace, insomuch that they were looked upon as a people, by a kind of fatal necessity, destined to contention for many years after. Whether there were any indirect means used in a kind of surreptitious seizure of the land, (which made the Plantation,) that of right belonged to their neighbors of Hartford, as some have said, or any other secret occurrence, they were not so blessed in the enjoyment of it, as was to be desired: for it might have been said, not only (as they about Jericho said to Elisha) that the situation was pleasant, and the land also very fertile, but for want of agreement amongst themselves they had not much comfort therein, for a long time after. For about the year 1639 it was found, not only that the church was divided, but that the rent grew greater, notwithstanding the great pains which had been taken for the healing thereof: and the church was not only divided from the rest of the town, but of those seven, which made the church, four fell off, so as it was conceived that thereby the church

was dissolved, which occasioned the church of Watertown (which had divers of their members there, not yet dismissed) to send two of their church to look after their members, and to take order with them; but the contention and alienation of their minds one from another was such, as they could not bring them to any other accord than this, that the one part must remove to some other place, (which they both consented to,) but still the difficulty remained; for those three, who pretended themselves to be the church, pleaded that privilege for their stay, and the other four alleged their multitude, as being the greater number, so as neither would give place; whereby it seemed, that they either minded not the example of Abram's offer to Lot, or else they wanted Abraham's (and indeed the Christian) spirit of peace and love.

This controversy proceeded so far that it occasioned the calling in of Mr. Davenport, with others of New Haven, by way of mediation; but they, not according with those of Connecticut about the case, gave some advantage to the enemy to sow some seeds of contention between those Plantations also; but, being godly and wise men, on both parts, things were the more easily reconciled not long after. But as to the church and town of Weathersfield, some of the inhabitants chose rather to remove elsewhere, and to live in a cottage in a wilderness, than to abide any longer in the fire of contention in a beautiful habitation. But after the removal of some, those that stayed behind lived not so peaceably together as they should neither: and some time after Mr. Chaplin, the ruling elder, removed back again to England, but did not carry away all the matter of contention; but there was enough left to maintain the old quarrel, or new fuel was afterward gathered together to rekindle the same fire. But some years after there was an appearance of great unanimity, upon the choice of another minister, one Mr. Russell,¹ who was called to take upon him the pastoral office there, which he faithfully discharged for some time, till another occasion of trouble arose at Hart-

¹ Rev. John (Trumbull says Jonathan) Russell.—H.

ford, soon after Mr. Hooker's death, when the said Russell removed to another place¹ higher up the river; for that town of Hartford being the centre and chief town of that Colony, any leaven of division arising there did the more easily diffuse itself over the whole Colony, or a great part thereof. If there were any notions or principles tending that way before, latent in the minds of any persons of interest there, they never had discovered themselves during the time of Mr. Hooker's life, and if there had any such thing appeared, his interest and authority would easily have suppressed it.

But after the removal of him and some other of the principal persons out of the jurisdiction, by death or otherwise, some of the inhabitants, holding more strictly to the former principles of discipline, could not well bear that any, in whose real piety they were not satisfied, (as not being confirmed members in the church,) should partake of any higher privileges, civil or ecclesiastical, than formerly belonged to non-members. The first appearance of disturbance, which on that account happened amongst them, was at Hartford, occasioned on the call of a person to supply the place of Mr. Hooker, who deceased in the year 1647,² and that being the principal town of the Colony (as was said before) the trouble there easily diffused itself into the body of the Colony. Discords upon such an occasion have, upon experience, been found to make way for sad breaches, in many of those churches that have embraced the Congregational Way, which yet cannot be said to arise from any defect in the persuasion itself, but the perverseness of some men's tempers, together with their unacquaintedness with the practice, that are unwilling to submit to the remedy, which is in that way provided for, as well as in any of the other Reformed Churches, where any ecclesiastical subordination is supposed the only means to prevent or redress such grievances; for the best sort of government, like the best complexion, may, in case of mal-administration, be as soon, or sooner, overthrown,

¹ Hadley, in 1660.—H.

² July 7th.—H.

as any other that may be judged more remote from the case. But that point is not now to be debated here.

And not long after there arose another difference in that Colony, which was occasioned through the endeavors of some of their ministers for enlarging of Baptism, and extending the right of membership to children, before their admission into full communion; which notion, first started in that Colony, produced a kind of Synodical meeting and dispute of sundry ministers at Boston, Anno 1657,¹ managed by twenty-six of the chief ministers of that and the other Colonies, the result of which was not long after published in print, and the substance of it weaved into the answer of the Synod at Boston to the two questions propounded and discussed, Anno 1662, as shall be more particularly declared in its proper place.

But the aforesaid differences, in the years 1656, 1657, 1658, arose to such a paroxysm that it ended in the removal (yet orderly and peaceably) of one part of the churches and towns of Hartford, and Weathersfield, and Windsor to another Plantation or two up higher, upon Connecticut River, the one of which was called Hadley, the other Northampton; and since that time other towns have been erected there.

Thus was the particular difference between Paul and Barnabas of old overruled by Divine Providence, for the advantage of the church in general, that it might be further propagated and enlarged thereby.

But when once the fire of contention hath begun to kindle, it is hard to say when it will be quenched. Happy, therefore, are those societies, which, attending the counsel of Solomon, leave off contention before it be meddled withal, seeing the beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water. For the following differences, that arose in that jurisdiction, about the enlarging of Baptism, or such like accounts, ended rather in the dividing, than multiplying, of some of their churches and congregations, cohabiting still within the bounds of the same parish, which was the product of an act of their General Court, granting liberty for "distinct walking;" (for

¹ June 4th. See pages 562-71.—H

how can two walk together unless they be agreed?) but whether such a ||concession|| hath, or is like, much to advance the honor of God, the peace and purity of his church, there or elsewhere, future time will declare. However, it may truly be affirmed, that no difference in their civil matters hath been occasioned thereby. The sudden and unexpected (as some say) incorporating of New Haven Colony with that of Connecticut, (which was about the nineteenth year of his Majesty, Charles the Second, now reigning,) being by this time pretty well digested, and all supposed inconveniences, probably feared to arise therefrom, healed and composed (though it could not be wholly prevented) by a wise and timely condescension on all hands, there seems now to be such a perfect coalescence of all minds and spirits, as leaves no remembrance of the former distinction of two Colonies.

CHAP. XLII.

The first planting of New Haven. Some of the most remarkable passages concerning that Colony, as also of Rhode Island, Providence, and the places adjoining, near the Narraganset Bay, in the years, 1637, 1638.

THE same grounds, that stirred up the spirits of many in all parts of England, did also prevail with Mr. John Davenport, the then famous minister in Coleman Street, and sundry of his eminent hearers, with many other their friends in and about London, to join in the design of coming over into these parts. Accordingly Mr. Davenport, more secretly, as being then under a cloud by reason of his non-compliance in ecclesiastical matters, and Mr. Theophilus Eaton, more manifestly, in behalf of their friends, took part in the Patent for Massachusetts Bay, then in designation, which [was] obtained in the season by Providence presented. They passed over into these parts of the world, as many had done before them, and, according to their primitive intention, endeavored to settle themselves within the proper precincts of the said Patent;¹ which was also desired by the magistrates, and

[commission]

¹ See page 269; Sav. Win. i. 227, 237, 259.—R.