

Aquidneyk, made means to purchase it¹ for themselves, and those that should see cause to remove their families thither, upon occasion of the troubles they met with at Boston. There were several² of them men of estate and quality, who engaged in the business, and had peaceable possession of the island by lawful purchase, as well as free consent of the natives, that inhabited it before. And so, having transplanted themselves, within a few years, by the commodiousness of the soil, with other advantages that attended the planters, they soon raised two flourishing Plantations upon the island; and, not long after, the bounds of the said island proving too narrow, those that were willing to join with them in their way of living and government made purchase of some of those lands that lie upon the main, (where Mr. Williams and his friends had made some beginnings of a Plantation before, Anno 1634 and 1635,³ calling it by the name of Providence;) by whom also was procured another neck of land not far off, in like manner, called by them Warwick.⁴

Their civil government was by way of combination at first, until they had opportunity afterwards to purchase a Patent for themselves. The laws by which they were governed were those of England, unless in some particulars, which those laws could not reach, in which cases they made some orders and constitutions of their own.

CHAP. XLIII.

Ecclesiastical affairs, with other occurrences, at Providence and Rhode Island to the year 1643. Intercourse between them and the Massachusetts.

As to matters of religion it was hard to give an exact account to the world of their proceedings therein, by any who have not been conversant with them from the beginning of their Plantations; yet this is commonly said, by all that ever had any occasion to be among

¹ The deed was signed by the Indian sachems March 24, 1638.—H.

² William Coddington, John Clark, and others, eighteen in all.—H.

³ 1636.—H. ⁴ Shawomet, or Warwick, was purchased of the natives, by Gorton and his adherents, in 1642.—H.

them, that they always agreed in this principle, that no man, or company of men, ought to be molested by the civil power, upon the account of religion, or for any opinion received or practised in any matter of that nature; accounting it no small part of their happiness that they may therein be left to their own liberty, as if they were, in those things, *sine jure*, and not liable to give any account of what they practise or profess in the matters either of doctrine or worship; by which means it hath come to pass that the inhabitants are of many different persuasions, as Quakers, Anabaptists, Familists, Seekers, & etc. § But what tendency that liberty hath had, by so long experience, towards the promoting of the power of godliness, and purity of religion, they are best able to judge that have had occasion to be most conversant amongst them.

Mrs. Hutchinson¹ persisting in her opinions, notwithstanding all the means which had been used both in the Court and in the church to reclaim her, she was at last ordered to remove out of the jurisdiction of the Massachusetts; whereupon, on the 28th of March, 1638, she went by water to her farm at Mount Wollaston, with intent (as was supposed) there to take water with her brother Wheelwright, his wife and family, to go to Pascataqua; but there she changed her mind, and went by land to Providence, and so to Aquidnyk, or Rhode Island, with her husband, who, with the rest of that persuasion, had purchased the island of the Indians, Plymouth men having first refused to grant them liberty to make a Plantation within their jurisdiction, as they had desired. Amongst those, who at that time removed from about Boston, divers inclined to rigid Separation, and favored Anabaptism, and they removed to Providence, purposing to join with Mr. Williams and those of his company. But others, who were the greater number, passed over to the said island, on the account of Mrs. Hutchinson, so as that side of the country, by this occasion, began to be well peopled; they all agreeing fully in one principle, not to trouble one another on the account of religion, although in other principal and fundamental points of civil power there was no small difference between them.

¹ See page 283.—H.

Those who took up their station at the Island, like men that are wandered out of the right way, and know not where to stop, daily invented and broached new errors, which they disseminated in their new Plantation: and since that time they have flourished well in that soil, as to outward things.

Nicholas Easton,¹ a tanner, that removed thither from Newbury, taught that gifts and graces were the Anti-christ, mentioned in the Thessalonians, and that which withheld, &c., was the preaching of the law; and that every one of the elect ||had|| the Holy Ghost, and also the devil, indwelling in him. One Hearne maintained there, likewise, that Adam was not created in true holiness, &c., for then he could not have lost it.

At Providence, also, the devil was not idle; for whereas, at their first coming hither, Mr. Williams had made an order, that no man should be molested for his conscience, men's wives, children, and servants, in that place, claimed liberty thereby to go to all religious meetings, although never so often, and on the week day, or never so private, and, therefore, because one Verrin refused to let his wife go to Mr. Williams so often as she was called for, they required to have him censured. But there stood up one Arnold,² of their own company, (who, though he was bewildered in his notions about some religious points, yet was minded not to go against the very light of nature, and dictates of right reason, no more than the express word of God,) and withstood it, telling them that, when he consented to that order, he never intended it should extend to the breach of any ordinance of God, such as the subjection of wives to their husbands, and gave divers solid reasons against it. Then one Green³ (who had married the wife of one Beggerly,⁴ who was yet living, and not divorced) answered, that, if they should restrain their wives, &c., all the women in the country would cry out of them, &c. Arnold answered him thus: Did you pretend to leave the Massachusetts because you would not offend God to please men, and

|| has ||

¹ Thus originally written; some later hand has substituted a huge O in the last syllable, converting the name into *Eason*.—R.

² Benedict Arnold, afterwards Governor of Rhode Island.—R.

³ John Greene.—R.

⁴ See the case of Richard Beggerly and wife, in Sav. Win. ii. 344.—R.

would you now break an ordinance and commandment of God to please women? Some of the company were of opinion, that if Verrin would not suffer his wife to have her liberty, the church should dispose her to some other man, that would use her better. Arnold then told them it was not the woman's desire to go so aside from home, but only Mr. Williams and others would have them so do. In conclusion, when they would have censured Verrin, Arnold told them it was against their own order, for Verrin did what he did for his conscience. These being the principles they acted by, it is the less wonder that they wandered so far from the truth, since they were separated from their friends in the Massachusetts; and things grew still worse and worse by the increase of their number. For a near relation¹ of Mrs. Hutchinson's, the wife of one Scott,² being infested with Anabaptistry, and going the last year to live at Providence, Mr. Williams was imboldened by her to make open profession thereof, and accordingly was rebaptized by one Holeman,³ (a mean fellow, that went from about Salem.) Then Mr. Williams rebaptized him, and some ten more. They also denied the baptism of infants, and the having of magistrates, &c. But soon after one of their company, of a like capricious brain, started this objection, which none of them could answer, viz. if they renounced their former baptism as well, or because, it was Antichristian in its administration, then what right had Holeman to baptize Mr. Williams; which so gravelled them all, both the baptizers and the baptized, that they turned Seekers, and so continued ever after.

At Rhode Island, also, Mrs. Hutchinson exercised publicly, and she and her party (save⁴ three or four families) would have no magistrates; and soon after sent an admonition to the church of Boston; but the elders would not read it publicly, because she was excommunicated.

By these examples all men may see how dangerous it is to slight the ordinances of God, and the censures of his church; for it was apparent, by these their actings, that God had given them up to strange delusions. Those of the Island, likewise, had entertained two men, whom

¹ A sister, says Winthrop.—H.

² Richard Scott.—H.

³ Ezekiel Holliman, one of the founders of the first Baptist church in America.—H.

⁴ See Sav. Win. i. 293.—H.

the church of Roxbury had excommunicated, and one of them did exercise publicly there ; for which the church of Boston called in question such as were yet their members ; and Mr. Coddington, being present, and not freely acknowledging his sin, (although he confessed himself in some fault,) was solemnly admonished ; yet, for aught ever appeared, went on in the same course.

This is further to be observed concerning the delusions, which this people were taken with. Mrs. Hutchinson and some of her adherents happened to be at prayer when the great earthquake was all over the country, and the house being shaken thereby, they were persuaded (and boasted of it) that the Holy Ghost did shake it in coming down upon them, as he did upon the Apostles. Thus are people apt to be lifted up in their own imaginations. Being thus left to themselves, they grew very tumultuous, as any thing seemed to stand in the way of what they aimed to bring about ; therefore, putting Mr. Coddington and three other magistrates out of their places, they chose Mr. William Hutchinson only for their ruler, a man of a mild temper, yet not of the strongest parts, and guided wholly by his wife, who had been the beginner of all the former troubles, and intended still to drive on the same trade, as she did afterwards to her life's end.¹ But not having, as yet, cast off all shew and form of religion, they gathered a church, but in a very disordered way, taking in some excommunicate persons, and others which were members of the church of Boston, but not dismissed, which was afterwards increased something in number, but never put into much better order ; yet had they afterwards one Mr. Clarke² for their minister, who had been bred to learning.

As for Providence, Mr. Williams soon after grew sick of his second baptism, as was said, and though he was, a few months before, in all haste rebaptized, yet now, not being able to derive the authority of it from the Apostles, otherwise than by the ministers of the church of England, (whom he judged to be all Antichristian,) he conceived God would raise up some Apostolical power.

¹ See Sav. Win. i. 296.—H. ² Rev. John Clark, one of the founders of Rhode Island Colony, a physician and magistrate. He died April 20, 1676.—H.

Therefore he bent himself that way, expecting (as was supposed) to become an Apostle, and having, a little before, refused communion with all, save his own wife, he would now preach, if not pray, with all comers; whereupon some of his followers left him and returned to their former place.

The church of Boston had all this time with patience waited to see whether those, that belonged to their church at the Island, would not bethink themselves; and to that end, the 24th of March, 1639,¹ sent three messengers, viz. Captain Edward Gibbons, Mr. Hibbins,² and Mr. John Oliver, with letters to Mr. Coddington, and the rest of their members there, to understand their minds in divers points of religion, formerly maintained by all, or divers of them, and to require them to give an account to the church of their unwarrantable practices in communicating with excommunicate persons, &c. When they came, they found those of them, that dwelt at Newport, had joined themselves to a church newly constituted there, and thereupon refused to hear them, as messengers of the church, or to receive their church's letters; whereupon, at their return, the elders and most of the church would have cast them out, as refusing to hear the church, but all not being agreed it was deferred.

Things proceeding after this sort, other accidents fell in, about the same time, that strangely concurred to strengthen them in their ways; as persons given up to a reprobate sense are apt to take encouragement from that which, in reality, is but a fuller demonstration of the judgment of God they are left unto.

In the year 1640, there came divers from Christopher's this way, pretending to religion, amongst whom were one Mr. Hales and one Mr. Collins, that were bred up scholars, and, being full of zeal, had applied themselves to preaching, and had thereby brought over many of the said Christopher's people to embrace the religion held forth by them, and, on the account thereof, to remove from thence into these parts, being persecuted and restrained of their liberty there. They met with a bad

¹ Old Style.—H.

² William Hibbins.—H.

market for the commodities (i. e. opinions) they brought from thence, which, it may be, cooled but their zeal to the true religion and love to the place whither they were come. But, to let that pass, they at the first arrived at New-Haven, and from thence dispersed themselves, some here, some there; some went to Ireland; but Mr. Collins (who had been an hopeful professor, and preacher also, privately at Gloucester, in England, till he came to be seduced there, being carried about with one of the female sex, and of Familistical principles,) was entertained first at Hartford, to teach a school. But Mr. Hales (very well conceited of himself and censorious of others) went to Rhode Island, where he soon fell into acquaintance with Mrs. Hutchinson, and became her disciple. His friend Collins, having heard of Mrs. Hutchinson's opinions, wrote to him to beware thereof; but Mr. Hales made such a return as strangely bewitched the school-master, so as *that,* the very next morning, leaving his school, he hasted to Rhode Island, to wait at the feet of the she-Gamaliel there; for coming thither, as Paul speaks of the Galatians, he was so bewitched with their notions, as he resolved to live and die with them, which indeed he did, not long after, by a sad Providence. But in the first place he was so taken with the family, and they with him, as he soon matched himself with one of the daughters of Mrs. Hutchinson, presently after engaging in her quarrel and defence of her religion.

The church of Boston was not willing to give them over yet, but resolved to write to them once again, which accordingly was done, and the letters drawn up by Mr. Cotton, wherein he fully repeated all former proceedings, both of the church and of the Court, and justified both, and condemned their errors and disturbance to the peace here, and also Mr. Wheelwright's sermons, with their remonstrance, (which formerly had by many been justified and commended,) and shewed how the church had been wronged by them. But all wrought no change in any of them; for every year they broached new errors, the issues of their depraved minds, more misshapen

than those monsters, which were credibly reported to be born of the bodies of some of them.

Divers of them had imbibed some other opinions from their neighbors of Providence ; at last turning professed Anabaptists, and denying all magistrates among Christians, maintaining also, that there were no churches since those founded by the Apostles and Evangelists, nor could any be, nor any pastors ordained, nor seals administered but by such, and that the church was to want all these, all the time that she continued in the wilderness, as yet she was. Mrs. Hutchinson's son Francis, a member of Boston church, and this Mr. Collins, her son-in-law, came to Boston soon after, and were there sent for to come before the Council. But they refused to come, except they were brought ; so the officers led them ; and when they were come, (divers of the ministers being present,) Mr. Collins was questioned for a letter, which he sent to one of the Massachusetts Colony, wherein he charged all the ministers and churches there to be Anti-christian, with many other reproachful speeches, terming the King, also, King of Babylon, seeking to possess the people there with evil thoughts of the government and of the churches. He acknowledged the letter and what he had written, yet sought to evade by confessing there was a true magistracy in the world, and that Christians must be subject to it. He maintained also that there were no Gentile churches, (as he termed them,) since the Apostles' time, and that there was none now could ordain ministers, &c. Francis Hutchinson did agree with him in some of these, but not resolutely in all ; but he had reviled the church of Boston, calling it a strumpet. They were both committed to prison. One¹ of the constables of Boston, being required to take Francis Hutchinson into his custody till the afternoon, scrupled whether he might or no, being offended with the Governor for proceeding with a member of the church in the Court, before he had been dealt with in the church ; but being himself like to fall into the same condemnation for his refusal, he was convinced of his error, and gave satisfac-

¹ Anthony Stoddard, by name.—H.

tion. Mr. Collins and the said Francis Hutchinson were fined, the one an £100, the other £50, and to lie in prison till they gave security. Their fines were set the higher, because their family had cost the country some hundreds of pounds¹ before; but they were soon after released, and their own bonds taken for their fines, which were abated, the one to £40, the other to £20.

Other troubles arose in the said Island by reason of Nicholas Eason,² forementioned, a man very bold and insolent, though ignorant, who used to teach at Newport, where Mr. Coddington, their Governor, lived. He maintained that man had no power nor will in himself, but as he is acted by God; and, seeing that God filled all things, nothing could be, or move, but by him, and so [he] must needs be the author of sin, &c., and that a Christain is united to the essence of God. Being shewed what blasphemous consequences would follow therefrom, they seemed to abhor the consequences, but still defended their propositions, which discovered their ignorance, not apprehending how God could make a creature, and that no part of his essence, as we see by familiar instances: the light is in the air, and in every part of it, yet it is not air, but a thing distinct from it. Mr. Coddington, Mr. Coggeshall,³ (a great professor, formerly, in England,) and some others, joined with this Nicholas Eason² in those delusions; but their minister, Mr. Clarke, and Mr. Lenthall,⁴ and Mr. Harding,⁵ with some others, dissented, and publicly opposed, whereby it grew to such heat of contention, that it made a schism amongst them.

Those of Providence, in the mean time, (being all Anabaptists) were divided in judgment; some were only against || baptizing || of infants, others denied all magistracy and churches; of which Samuel Gorton (that had made so much disturbance at the Island before, as brought him under the lash for the same, as is mentioned elsewhere) was their instructor and captain. These, being too strong for the other party, provoked them so by in-

|| baptism ||

¹ "To the value of £500 at least," says Winthrop.—H. ² It should be Easton.—H. ³ John Coggeshall.—H. ⁴ See p. 275.—H. ⁵ Robert Harding. See Sav. Win. ii. 41.—H.

juries, as they came armed into the field, each against [the] other; but Mr. Williams pacified them for the present. This occasioned those of the weaker part to write a letter (under all their hands) to the Governor and magistrates of the Massachusetts, complaining of the wrongs they suffered, desiring aid, or, (if not that yet,) counsel from them. They answered them, that they could not levy any war, &c., without the General Court. For counsel, they told them, that except they did submit themselves to some jurisdiction, (either Plymouth or theirs,) they had no call or warrant to interpose in their contentions, but if they were once subject to either of their jurisdictions, they should then have a call to protect them. After this answer they heard no more of them for a time.¹

In the beginning of the year 1642, Mr. Aspinwall, that had been censured by the Court for joining with these, and having his hand to the remonstrance about Mr. Wheelwright, being licensed by the General Court to come and tender his submission, was, on the 27th of March that year, reconciled to the church of Boston. He made a very free and full acknowledgment of his error and seducement, and that with much detestation of his sin. The like he did afterwards before the magistrates, who were appointed by the Court to take his submission, and, upon their certificate thereof, the sentence of banishment, passed against him with the rest, was taken off.

At a General Court in September, 1642, four of Providence, who could not consent with Gorton and his company, and were continually molested and injured by them, came and offered themselves and their lands to the Massachusetts, and were accepted under their government and protection. This was done partly to rescue those men from unjust violence, and partly to draw in the rest in those parts, (either under themselves or Plymouth,) who now lived under no government, but grew very offensive; and the place was like to be of use to them, if there should be occasion of sending out against any of the Indians of the Narrhagansets, and likewise for an outlet into the Narrhaganset Bay; and seeing it

¹ This was in January, 1641—2.—H.

came without their seeking, and would be no charge to them, they thought it not wisdom to let such an opportunity slip.

As for Mrs. Hutchinson, a woman of an unquiet and restless spirit, she met with something at Rhode Island that disturbed her spirit, and therefore, in or about the year 1642, either out of dislike of the people or place, she, with her family and some others, removed to some place under the Dutch; beyond all the English Plantations, where she had not continued long before she was cut off by the Indians thereabouts. For, in the year 1643, the Indians, taking occasion to quarrel with the Dutch, set upon the English who dwelt under their jurisdiction. The Indians came to her house in a way of friendly neighborhood, as they had been accustomed to do, and taking the opportunity of their inability to resist, or defend themselves, they killed her and her son-in-law, Mr. Collins, with her son Francis, and the rest of her family, with divers others that belonged to Mr. Throgmorton's and Mr. Cornhill's families, sixteen in all, viz. all that were at home; and then putting their cattle into their houses burnt them also. But, by a good providence of God, there was a boat came in there at that instant, to which some women and children fled, and so were saved. But two of the boatmen, going up to the houses, were shot down and killed also; as if it had been matter of great danger to come nigh the tomb of these children of Korah. They that forsake God may expect that God will forsake them in time of their greatest need.

Those people had cast off all ordinances and churches, and now, at last, their own people, and for larger accommodations had subjected themselves to the Dutch, and dwelt scatteringly, near a mile asunder. And some that escaped, and had removed only for want (as they said) of hay for their cattle, (which increased much,) now coming again to Rhode Island, they wanted cattle for their grass, with which that island doth much abound; more than the rest of the country.

Those Indians having killed and driven away all the English upon the main, as far as Stamford, (for so far the Dutch had gained possession by the English,) they passed over to Long Island, and there assaulted the Lady Moodey in her house divers times, so that if there had not been forty men to have guarded her, she might have perished by their hands likewise. For she had not long before removed from Salem, upon the account of Anabaptism, and seated herself towards the westernmost part of that island, under the command, likewise, of the Dutch.

About these times, a door of liberty being opened by the Parliament in London, Familistical opinions began to swarm in many Plantations of the English, abroad in other parts, to the disturbance of the civil government where they came.

In the year 1643¹ the Governor of the Massachusetts received letters from Philip Bell, Esq., Governor of the Barbados, complaining of the distracted condition of that island, in regard of divers sects of Familists sprung up there, and their turbulent practices, which had forced him to proceed against some of them by banishment, and others of mean quality by whipping, &c. ; earnestly desiring him to send them some godly ministers and other good people, that the island might be planted with men of better principles. The Governor imparted this letter to the Court, and to the ministers ; but, considering what little good was like to be done upon persons led away with those notions, and what little encouragement there was like to be in such a Plantation as that was, none were forward to hearken to the motion, and answer was returned accordingly. It may appear by this intimation, that New England is not the only place that hath made use of the civil power to prevent the spreading of erroneous principles, that are like, otherwise, so much to disturb the civil peace. And it was on that account that they suffered under authority, and not for their opinions ; for if men that have drunk in any erroneous principles, would also make use of so much prudence as not to publish them in a tumultuous manner, and to the reproach of the

¹ About September.—H.

religion and worship established in the place where they live, they would not have occasion to complain of the severity of the civil laws.

About the year 1644 the Anabaptists increased much in the Massachusetts Colony of New England. Now because they had found, by sad experience, that those of that persuasion did also usually maintain the unlawfulness either of any civil magistrates, or that the exercising of their power in many matters of the first table was unlawful, they drew up an Order¹ to banish those who did publicly oppose the truth in that point; which notwithstanding, divers that have questioned the lawfulness of baptizing infants, yet have lived in the country ever since, without any disturbance, and might continue so to do; but when men cannot be content to enjoy their own liberty of opinion, or soberly defend it, without reproaching the contrary practice of others, they do justly, in the account of all the civil governments that have been in the world, deserve to suffer; which is all that can be said of any in that place. There was one named Painter,² that had lived at divers places in the Massachusetts, and at New Haven, and had been scandalous and burdensome to them all, by his idleness and troublesome behavior. This fellow, in the year 1644, was suddenly turned Anabaptist, and having a child born, would not suffer his wife to carry it to be baptized. He was complained of for this to the Court, and enjoined by them to suffer his child to be baptized, (which, it seems, his wife, a Christian woman, desired;) but he still continuing, not only to refuse that, but also to reproach their baptism as Antichristian; he was for this afterwards brought to the Court, where he openly professed as much, and for the same, having nothing but his person to satisfy the law, he was sentenced to be whipped, and endured his punishment without any seeming sense of pain, through the obstinacy of his mind. He boastingly said, when it was over, that God had marvelously assisted him; whereupon two or three honest men, that were his neighbors, affirmed, before all the company, that he was of very loose behavior at home, given

¹ It may be seen in Hazard, i. 538. See pages 373 and 413.—H.

² Thomas Painter, "a poor man of Hingham."—H.

much to lying and idleness, &c. Nor was there any occasion for him, or any other in like case, to talk of God's assistance; for many notorious malefactors, and one about that time, at the Court had shewn the like silence, when their punishment was inflicted upon them. It may be that some others, that at that time came down from Providence and Rhode Island, and entering into the assemblies in some places in the Massachusetts, would in time of singing keep on their hats, as it were to brave it out with them, and so occasion disturbance, and breach of the peace; if any such have, by that means, been brought to suffer corporal punishment, they will certainly, in the account of all indifferent and prudent people, have cause to find no fault with any thing but their own obstinacy and folly.

Mr. Roger Williams, of whom there is large mention before, having suffered not a little on this score, taking upon himself a kind of voluntary exile, did now take the opportunity of passing over into England, to promote some designs of his own, or of his friends about Providence; and did, in the year 1644, return again to New England, bringing with him a letter, under the hands of several honorable and worthy personages, (to whom he was either known before, or had now made himself known unto,) wherein they express their compassions toward him, which he might have found from his neighbors here, long before, if the way had not been obstructed by himself. The copy of the said letter, to prevent mistakes or misreports, here followeth.

*To the Right Worshipful the Governor and Assistants and the rest of our worthy friends in the Plantation of the Massachusetts Bay, [in New England.]*¹

OUR MUCH HONORED FRIENDS.

- Taking notice (some of us of long time) of Mr. Roger Williams's good affections and conscience, and of his sufferings by our common enemy and oppressors of God's people, the prelates, as also of his great industry and travails in his printed Indian labors in your parts,

¹ Supplied from Winthrop.—H.

(the like whereof we have not seen extant from any part of America,) and in which respect it hath pleased both Houses of Parliament [freely¹] to grant unto him and friends with him, a free and absolute Charter^a of civil government for those parts of his abode: and withal sorrowfully resenting, that amongst good men (our friends) driven to the ends of the world, exercised with the trials of a wilderness, and who mutually give good testimony each of other, (as we observe you do of him, and he abundantly of you,) there should be such a distance; we thought it fit (upon divers considerations) to profess our great desires of both your utmost endeavors of nearer closing, and of ready expressing [of¹] those good affections (which we perceive you bear each to other) in the actual performance of all friendly offices; the rather because of those bad neighbors you are like to find too near [unto¹] you in Virginia, and the unfriendly visits from the West of England and from Ireland; that howsoever it may please the Most High to shake our foundations, yet the report of your peaceable and prosperous Plantations may be some refreshings to

Your true and faithful friends,

NORTHUMBERLAND,
ROBERT HARLEY,
JOHN GURDON,
COR. HOLLAND,
JOHN [BLACKISTON,]
ISAAC PENNINGTON,

MILES CORBET,
P. WHARTON,
THO. BARRINGTON,
WILLIAM MASHAM,
OLIVER ST. JOHN,
GILBERT PICKERING.

Upon the receipt of the said letter the Governor and magistrates of the Massachusetts found, upon examination of their hearts, they saw no reason to condemn themselves for any former proceedings against Mr. Williams; but for any offices of Christian love, and duties of humanity, they were very willing to maintain a mutual correspondency with him. But as to his dangerous principles of Separation, unless he can be brought to lay them down, they see no reason why to concede to him, or any so persuaded, free liberty of ingress and egress, lest any of their people should be drawn away with his erroneous opinions.

[Blacklistow]

¹ Inserted from Winthrop.—H.

^a Dated March 14, 1643. See it in Hazard, i. 538-40.—H.

He had so much interest sometimes with the people of Rhode Island, as well as Providence, as to be chosen their Governor,¹ (whether before or since his obtaining the Charter, specified in the letter above, is not much material,) but, for the most part, he hath contented himself with a private and retired life; nor will his outward estate admit of any other; on which account he hath many times been an object of charity to divers persons of the Massachusetts, that way disposed. But as to the differing sorts of religion found at Rhode Island; those of the persuasion of the Quakers, as they have had great resort to the place of late years, so are they at present the prevailing party there, or lately were so. They have been strenuously opposed in their damnable opinions by Mr. Roger Williams, who, though himself had vented divers strange notions about Separation, yet, apprehending the danger of the Quakers' principles, which do overthrow the very fundamentals of Christian religion, he stoutly engaged with sundry of their chief leaders in a public dispute, since published by himself, Anno 1677.² But forasmuch as it will be very difficult, in an historical way, to give a particular and distinct account of all the affairs of that Colony, without much reflection upon the persons, or relations yet surviving, of some that were much concerned therein, no more shall be added; only intimating the fear of their *righteous* neighbors round about them, that the Spanish saying of the English nation may not unfily be applied to them of Rhode Island, "bona terra, mala gens."

CHAP. XLIV.

Ecclesiastical affairs, with other occurrences, at Pascataqua and the places adjacent. Contests between Mr. Cleeves and Mr. Vines about the bounds of Ligoniam.

MR. WHEELWRIGHT, as was declared before,³ being sentenced to depart out of the jurisdiction of the Massachusetts, was not so ill grounded in the truth as to be carried away with any dangerous errors of the Antinomian doctrine, therefore, refusing to go along with the

¹ He held the office from 1655 to 1657, being succeeded by Arnold.—H.

² See page 209.—H.

³ See pp. 276, 280.—H.