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THE  
HISTORY  
OF  
NEW ENGLAND

FROM THE YEAR 1620 TO THE YEAR 1680.

BY WILLIAM HUBBARD,

MINISTER OF IPSWICH.

*At the foot of the preceding titlepage Governor Hutchinson wrote the following addition:—*

**“WHO DIED SEPT<sup>r</sup> 14<sup>th</sup> 1704, ÆT. 83.”**

## THE PREFACE.

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H. E. L. . . .  
c. 1680

THE consideration of the words of the wise man — “as cold water to the thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country” — gave the first life to these endeavors; not any ambition to increase the number of those that make books, of which, says the same Divine Author, there is no end.

It is now near fifty years since a great number of sober and religious people attempted the transporting themselves and their families into America, with intent as well to propagate the gospel amongst the heathen and enlarge his Majesty's dominion there, as to provide for the quiet of their own minds in some things pertaining to the external rites of worship and regiment of the church, wherein they could not without offence to others profess or practise according to their own apprehensions; and did, at their departure, by a public declaration beg the prayers of their brethren and friends which they left behind them in the nation to which they belonged.

It cannot but be expected that, after so long a time, some account should be given of the success of that enterprise, which, although it hath long since been in part endeavored and in some particulars performed, yet a general discourse of the whole affair hath never before this been taken in hand; which may in some measure excuse the imperfection of the present work,

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the whole design of which is only to render a just account of the proceedings of that people, together with the merciful providences of the Almighty towards them, they being — though not everywhere, yet in some places — spoken against, yea condemned also, before they have had liberty to speak for themselves; although he that passes a judgment of things that are misrepresented or misreported may be as much mistaken in his opinion or censures as one that pronounces about an object which he never looked upon but through a false glass or wrong medium.

It is granted on all hands that the principal intendment of that plantation, from the very beginning thereof, was religion and liberty of conscience; and the civil government there established by the royal charter was so contrived as to be most suitable thereunto, and accordingly adapted to the laws and constitutions of the towns or corporations within the realm of England,

but as the prop and pillar

obtain the other.\*

The changes that have there fallen out are likewise distinctly minded and distinguished into their several classes, with the difficulties the people have undergone in the one for the enjoying the privilege of the other.

Notice is also taken of the severe dispensations they have all along been acquainted with from the very beginning of their designs; wherein they have been many ways humbled and proved, yet not without comfortable expectation of receiving good in their latter end. For ever since they forsook their fathers' houses and the pleasant heritage of their ancestors they have by solemn providence been ordered, not into the fields where the mandrakes grew, — the portion of them to whom the

\* There are spaces like these in the Preface to Hubbard's MS. History, from which this is copied.

privilege of the older brother belongeth,— but rather into the barren wilderness and remote deserts, to the care of the concerns of the great Shepherd, who may have sheep which are not yet of that fold to which the other nations have belonged.

It is hoped the church of Great Britain will not be unwilling to be put in mind of her little sister, which as yet hath no breasts, and to take care what shall be done for her in the day when she shall be spoken for. To build upon her a palace of silver, or enclose her with boards of cedar, is not now asked on her behalf: entreaties that she may have the continuance of all due means and encouragements for her building up in knowledge and faith, repentance and holiness, is all that is aimed at.

The intendment of those that first adventured on that great enterprise of forsaking the place of their fathers' sepulchres, to dwell in a cottage of the wilderness, was not so much to dwell alone and separate from their brethren as to enlarge the Pomœria of the church (if it might be), and to bring in more guests to the wedding-chamber, and farther to enlarge their nation's empire. And probably their adolescent plantation, if it might be let alone and left only to their usual and wonted pulse, would in the experience of a few years more be found of better liking and more promising complexion than by the portion of the king's meat, which others that have always been accustomed thereunto may thrive better withal.

As for the sad occurrences that of late have happened amongst them, wherein they have been buffeted by the messengers of Satan (lest they should be exalted above measure by their privileges), and so have been called to make use of the sword as well as the trowel, an account hath formerly been given thereof: which

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hath occasioned some that were concerned in the publication of that business to search more narrowly into the beginning of things relating to that plantation, tracing them to their first original; the series and order of which is here presented that it may appear to the view of all from what beginning and by what steps and degrees they have been carried on to the state wherein they now stand. Truth and faithfulness with plainness of speech are attended by them who have had any hand in the compiling thereof: nor is any thing material, that might help to a right and full understanding of the state and condition of that place and people, willingly by them omitted and not taken notice of, or recited to a contrary end than it was intended; for they having had no small advantage by many years' experience to attain unto a full understanding of all the principal and most considerable passages, with the several circumstances that have there fallen out (many of which were heretofore known but to few, and never before this time published by any), that more credit belongs to the report.

The experience of half a century does now fully evince, whatever hath heretofore been by any differing-minded persons alleged to the contrary, that the discipline and government of the church, which they have delineated to themselves out of the Word of God, may, by the help of the civil magistrate, be carried on with purity and peace in the way which they have walked, as well as in any other received by the rest of the reformed churches of Europe; which yet is not mentioned in the least to lessen the esteem or weakening the authority of those churches which are in the regiment of them ordered after another method. If the judgment of King James of famous memory, as it is quoted by a learned man of the former age, may by virtue

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of its royal stamp pass for current in our own as well as in other countries, it will cast the seal of charity, if not of favor, much on their side. His words are to this purpose, — “that such an external form of church government should be established in every kingdom or province by the rulers thereof, as will best suit with the civil government.” According to which principle, where things in the civil jurisdiction are carried in a more popular way, as they are in the corporation of New England, it is the less to be wondered at if the consent of the people be more expressly required in things pertaining to the ecclesiastical state, so as to take in the consent of the people in all the more solemn and public administrations; which is not disowned as to an implicit or tacit consent, in the polity of the English church both in the case of ordination and excommunication, as may be seen in the platform thereof according to the judgment of Cyprian in his time, to act nothing of moment \* *renuente Plebe*. If it be more practised in some churches than in others, it should be remembered that *magis et minus non variant speciem*, which consideration makes the difference less between them and others, and gives no allowance to an unjust and needless separation further than the express letter of the Scripture and the approved canons of the church in all former ages will allow so to turn aside from them only that walk disorderly or, having only a form of godliness, openly deny the power thereof; and possibly, on cooler thoughts, it will be found that the form of the church, thus long conceded and practised there, is as suitable to that place and people as any other is to the place where it hath been always accordingly practised. Alterations and changes, whether civil or ecclesiastical, when they cannot be judged essentially necessary to

\* Space in Hubbard's copy.  
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the well-being of the people are by all former as well as latter experiences proved to be unsafe and full of hazard and danger; wherefore, if what hath been so difficultly procured, and so long without prejudice or detriment to others peaceably enjoyed, may yet quietly be continued, many thanks and much honor will belong to all those who have been ready to promote the same. But for those that can take no rest but in distressing others, or think they are never well employed but when they are removing foundations, let them take heed lest by removing stones themselves be hurt thereby, and lest a serpent bite them while they are breaking the hedge that should secure others' liberties, whether civil or sacred. God's Jerusalem hath been wont to prove a troublesome stone to those that are forward to alter the foundation thereof, in what part of the earth soever it is laid. "My son, fear God and the King, and meddle not with them that are given to change," saith the Wise Man.

Many complaints have indeed of late been brought in against them; but what is here or in the following discourse presented is not intended in the least to justify any thing found amiss there, but to represent things as they are or have been all along managed, by which a right judgment may by others be passed thereon. But if a strict inquiry should be made into the proceedings of the complainants, it is much to be feared that their unwillingness to bear the yoke of a strict government and wholesome laws — without which it cannot be possible for that plantation, whose seat is in so barren and rocky and desert a part of the world, long to subsist — is the main and principal, if not the sole, cause of their finding fault. But as for the objection of their denying that liberty to others, that either arise or occasionally come amongst them, which themselves removed thither

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to enjoy, they cannot be blamed for endeavoring to secure themselves from being undermined, as well as from being imposed upon therein. No man or society of men there, was ever denied the liberty of a peaceable dissent from what is there established, orderly professing or practising according to their own persuasion in things wherein the substantial points of religion are not concerned; but to grant liberty for an open profession of that which directly tends to overthrow the very foundation of the Christian religion, it is hoped no sober man will expect or plead that it should be granted. The sincere desire and aim of those who were called to the managing of their affairs hath always been to maintain faith and order, sound doctrine, and purity of worship in the church, without toleration of error or heresy; authority or impartial justice, without anarchy and confusion in their civil government. If at any time or in any thing they have missed the direct and right way to attain those ends, their endeavors to promote the general good of the place may plead their excuse, if not their pardon; seeing they never pretended to that perfection which should secure them from all mistakes, and also were the first colony that ever issued out of their nation with intent to plant the gospel.

To conclude: if every one would forbear to fling a stone at them but they that are without sin themselves, they might pass quietly and untouched through the world, notwithstanding the great noise that some have raised about them; and, as for any late complaints put in against them, or any controversy between them and others as yet depending before sovereign authority, the issue it is supposed will in a little time give satisfaction to all that shall concern themselves to be acquainted with those affairs, which is all that at present is thought convenient to mention with reference hereto.

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If any thing need be added, either in reference to the Author or authenticness of the work, this only shall be said, that the compiler of this History was first carried into the country of New England about forty-eight years since, all which time he hath spent in that part of the world, save two or three years when he was absent in his native country ; and, being of years able to observe many passages of providence when he was first transported thither, it is probably to be supposed he could not be ignorant of the most important affairs that were transacted during the whole time of his abode there. And, for other things, he hath not wanted the best advantages to be acquainted with all such matters as may be thought were worthy to be communicated to posterity, either by the original manuscripts of such as had the managing of those affairs under their hands, or were related by the very persons themselves concerned in them, being upon the place at the time when such things were transacted, and so were eye and ear witnesses thereof, and not taking up things from the uncertain reports of persons that were either strangers to the things themselves or such persons that acted with a spirit of prejudice or partiality against the designs of persons concerned in it.

For the matter of the History, plainness and truth are more attended to therein than elegance of wit or any sophistical garnish and affected strains of rhetoric ; truth always appearing more beautiful and lovely in its own native dress than in the affected attire of pedantic language, and therefore is everywhere accommodated to the capacity of the meanest readers as not intended to gratify the humor of critical minds, but rather to satisfy the sincere desires of them who are studiously inquiring after the series of providences in that great undertaking of a sober and religious people, that were

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willing to run all hazards and adventures that they might see the going of God in his Sanctuary and enjoy the liberty of worshipping him according to his own institutions. Many solemn occurrences have attended them in that their enterprise, of which some persons of good understanding have long since desired to receive an account, that so, by observing the various dispensations of the Almighty towards them, they may be encouraged to follow their example in things commendable and praiseworthy, and continue their prayers for their continued success and prosperity, or else be warned by their example to take heed of any action wherein they have been overtaken.

[WILLIAM HUBBARD.]

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