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STEPHEN. HOPKINS
A
RHODE ISLAND STATESMAN.

A
STUDY IN THE POLITICAL HISTORY

OF THE

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

BY

WILLIAM E. FOSTER.

—
PART ONE.
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PUBLISHER'S NOTE.

It was the intention of the publisher to bring the First Series of the Rhode Island Historical Tracts to a close with the 20th number, in which Tract it was his intention to have made correction of such errors and omissions as had been printed or left out, and which was also to have contained an index to the entire series. The very great enlargement of Mr. Foster's monograph making it far too large for a single number, necessitates the printing of it in two parts. It will thus form numbers 19 and 20 of the present series, and the index and other papers referred to will be issued in a closing Tract. It is the further intention of the publisher to begin the publication of a second series of these Tracts immediately after the close of the present series.

PREFACE.

There are several reasons why a publication like the present one is a desideratum. The study of Stephen Hopkins's career shows it to be connected in a very marked degree with the whole political development of the century in which he lived. At the same time, scarcely one of his contemporaries is a less familiar character to the young men of this generation. Yet there are the best of reasons why this is so. Not only has no published biography of him been accessible, — beyond the most meagre of sketches,¹ — but the historical student is deprived² of the opportunity of access to his papers and memoranda. Nor is this deprivation by any means a slight one. Stephen Hopkins, like his distinguished compatriots, Franklin, the Adams's, and others, was constantly busy with his pen during the greater part of his life. He left behind him, at his death, an invaluable collection³ of papers and discussions, not merely in the form of

1 See Appendix A, for mention of the most important of these.

2 These papers were lost in 1815. In the great storm of September in that year, says John Howland, "the tide swept through the house where they were lodged, and they were carried off and lost in the multitude of waters." (Stone's "Life and recollections of John Howland," p. 47).

3 "He left," says John Howland, "a large trunk of papers, connected with the transactions of his public life." (Stone's "John Howland," p. 47).

correspondence,¹ but of reports, memoranda, and notes, bearing on such topics as the stamp-act discussions, the Albany congress; the various plans of union subsequently discussed; the gradual progress towards armed resistance on land and sea; and the equally gradual assumption of national powers, by the colonies acting together. Some small portion of this material, not collected with the rest, remains to us.² The greater part is a total loss. It is not to be wondered at that "the oblivion which," says Mr. Edmund Quincy,³ "is so swift to swallow up American reputations," should have seemed to be in a fair way to await Stephen Hopkins's name.

Yet, though late, it may not be too late, approximately to counteract this tendency. That which is now possible is, merely to construct from the widely scattered material of his time, something which shall serve as a partial representation of his

1 These letters comprised correspondence with Washington and Jefferson, John Adams and Samuel Adams, Patrick Henry, Richard Henry Lee, and Benjamin Franklin;—in fact, with most of those who were leaders in the stirring events of his time. With most of these men his intercourse dates back several years before they met in the Continental Congress, during which time they were in active connection with the committees of correspondence. With Franklin his intimate association dated back to at least as early a point as the Albany congress, in 1754.

2 See Appendix B, for a memorandum of such writings of Stephen Hopkins as are now accessible.

3 Mr. Quincy, in the preface to his father's Life, says that, "having met with well-educated persons who had never heard of Fisher Ames, and even with gentlemen of the law whose notions of Samuel Dexter were nebulous to the last degree," he nearly despaired of his father's name surviving. (Quincy's "Life of Josiah Quincy," p. iii).

life and work. To bring together, in their proper relations and in consecutive order, the incidental allusions to him,—in official documents, in state papers, in the general and special histories of his time, in verbal tradition when it can be relied on as trustworthy, and in the lives and writings of his contemporaries,—is the object of the present publication. That this work should not have been left until our own generation, to be thus inadequately accomplished, needs no argument to show. It should have been executed when his career was still fresh in the minds of men who were contemporary with him. Nor should it have been left to be undertaken by one who, like the present writer, is not a native of Rhode Island. Fully recognizing the fact that few not-born and brought up in Rhode Island can adequately appreciate in all their bearings, the nearly unique conditions of society characterizing the earlier history of this colony, the writer has gratefully availed himself of the valuable assistance so courteously afforded him by those whose acquaintance with the details of various portions of the subject is intimate and comprehensive.¹ Late as it is, however, and necessarily limited as are the opportunities for treating the subject, the present work will serve to render somewhat tardy justice to a man whose services to his colony, and to the nation, as well, were such as entitle him to no unimportant position among the founders of the republic.

No apology, certainly, is needed for the minuteness of the references in the foot-notes. More, perhaps, than in any other work of similar scope, it is important that the reader should

1 See the "Acknowledgment of obligations," on pages xvii.—xx.

have "chapter and versè" as the authority for the statements which he here finds. The field is very nearly "virgin soil;" and these citations will serve, to quote from another writer, "to help others in testing" his own statements, "and in prosecuting similar studies for themselves."

The subject is not wholly a new one to the author, but has engaged his attention, to a considerable extent, for several years past. While he has endeavored to treat his subject in the spirit of a judicial inquirer, rather than of an advocate, yet the result of his researches has been to heighten his respect for a man who, with many limitations, and with marked faults even, was nevertheless an influence and a power for good, in so many directions.

PROVIDENCE PUBLIC LIBRARY,

December 1, 1883.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF OBLIGATIONS.

The author in the prosecution of his researches has found himself at every step placed under indebtedness by the courtesy and thoughtful interest of others. It would be impossible here to mention all the instances of this kind, but some of them require special acknowledgments.

For original papers and letters, he has been constantly placed under obligation to the following members of Governor Hopkins's family and of allied families: James Tillinghast, Esq., Miss Sophie L. Tillinghast, Miss Ruth Hopkins Smith, and Mr. Albert Holbrook. The two last mentioned have rendered especially valuable co-operation. He is also largely indebted to Mr. C. W. Hopkins and Mr. E. S. Hopkins, of Providence, and Professor Samuel M. Hopkins, of Auburn, N. Y. Valuable papers also have been placed in his hands by Mr. Sidney S. Rider, his publisher, whose familiarity with the history of this state has been of constant service, and whose invaluable Rhode Island collection of papers, pamphlets, reports, etc., has been placed freely at his disposal. He is also deeply indebted for copies and originals of other important papers, to Hon. William P. Sheffield, Mr. William P. Sheffield, Jr., and James

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the authorship of some of the publications attributed to Governor Hopkins. The Hon. John R. Bartlett, whose acquaintance with the early history of Rhode Island is minute and comprehensive, has in repeated instances most courteously allowed the author the privilege of consulting the John Carter Brown Library, that pricelessly valuable depository of the materials of American history.

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Mr. Henry C. Dorr, whose "Planting and growth of Providence" has placed so many readers under obligation to him by its fascinatingly vivid reproduction of the life of this town in its early years, has repeatedly laid the present writer under still farther and especial indebtedness, by valuable suggestions, information, and council.

In all other cases not here expressly enumerated, the author begs that those who have so generously forwarded his undertaking will receive his sincere thanks.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE changes which the eighteenth century witnessed in America were essentially in the nature of a political development. Nowhere was this development more striking than in Rhode Island. Between the Rhode Island, indeed, of the year 1700, and the same territory in the year 1799, there is a difference that is well-nigh fundamental. It is a difference between a feeble and sparsely populated colony on the one hand;—and, on the other, a prosperous, populous, well-administered state, in a national union of local governments.

In 1700 is to be seen a community with but slight communication¹ of any kind with the other North

¹ Their "highways," says Mr. Dorr, "had been with a view to prevent the escape of cattle, rather than to offer any temptations to travellers." (Dorr's "Planting and growth of Providence," R. I. Historical Tract, No. 15, p. 123.)

American colonies;¹ a settlement which, with its thin shell of territory formed around Narragansett Bay, was persistently encroached upon on three sides; scarcely even united in itself;² with but the embers of government at home;³ and with but a shadow of influence abroad; with only the slightest commercial or fishing or trading interests, which would contribute to the formation of closer relations with its neighbors;—in short, with every tendency to nationality suppressed, and every tendency to separatism emphasized and intensified.

In 1799 is to be seen a locally administered government, yet holding its equal and symmetrical position under a central authority; with its boundary

1 It had not been admitted to the New England confederacy, which had come to an end sixteen years before, (1694), after an existence of more than forty years.

2 Only as recently as 1686, the advent of Sir Edmund Andros, to quote the language of a witty secretary of state, "had acted as a solvent, to throw the Rhode Island composition back into its original elements." (See also Arnold's "Rhode Island," I. 487-88.)

3 In the State Paper Office at London is a letter written in 1699 by the Earl of Bellomont, the royal governor, describing the government of Rhode Island as "the most irregular and illegal in their administration that ever any English government was." Compare Arnold's "Rhode Island," I. 551. That the colony "was not utterly crushed," Mr. Arnold adds, "is the greatest marvel in the history of Rhode Island in the seventeenth century." (p. 652.)

lines at last so fixed and determined that all the years which have since elapsed have wrought but slight changes¹ in them; with a population² increased nearly seven-fold during the century; with rapidly growing wealth; with flourishing foreign and domestic commerce;³ with a system of manufactures still in their infancy, but giving abundant promise for the near future;⁴ with the public interest in public edu-

1 The last step in the settlement of the boundary questions of the last two centuries was taken on the 22d of March of the present year, (1883), when an act was passed by the Rhode Island General Assembly, which provides for straightening the northern boundary line, by the transfer of a trifling quantity of land to Massachusetts. (Public laws, Jan. sess., 1883, chap. 342).

2 The population of Rhode Island was estimated at 10,000 in 1702 (Report of Society for the Propagation of the Gospel); and in 1800 the United States census made it 69,122. The population of Providence is given as 1,446 in 1708, and 7,614 in 1800. ("Manual of the state of Rhode Island," 1882-83, p. 78-80).

3 Some commercial statistics are cited in Arnold's "Rhode Island," II. 558; among others, those of the River Machine Company, of Providence, stating that "there is a greater number of vessels belonging to this port than to New York," and "that it is a place of more navigation than any of its size in the union." This was in 1790, and the number continued to increase until just previous to the war of 1812. The figures given in this petition should, however, be compared with Tables I. and II., in Pitkin's "Statistical view of the commerce of the United States," p. 435, 438, 441. These tables show that in 1793, the shipping of this state was decidedly devoted to the coasting trade.

4 In 1812 there were 53 cotton factories within a circuit of 30 miles around Providence, some of them being in Massachusetts. White's "Samuel Slater," p. 188.

cation newly awakened ; with a college¹ drawing to itself and to the state at the same time, the always attendant consequences of literary and general culture in the community ; with a spirit and an outlook no longer narrowed to the petty concerns of a single colony, but breathing a grateful pride in the historic achievements of a nation of Americans ; with cordial relations now established between this state and its sister states, relations which had been cemented by the bloody resistance to a common foe through which they had together passed ; finally, with a common interest in that national government under whose protection all the states, with their peculiar traditions and varied individual history, were now together content to flourish.

The progress is a striking one ; and the progress in this colony towards nationality is almost wholly without a parallel elsewhere ; for in no other colony were there such difficulties to be overcome as in Rhode Island.

When we seek to ascertain the causes and tendencies underlying this development, we can by no

¹ Founded 1764.

means leave out of account the operation of natural and political laws ; for these had their due weight. But at the same time we cannot fail to recognize the direct, positive, personal influence of individual public men. Not wholly a creation, yet not wholly a natural growth, this political phenomenon is adequately considered only when we recognize both phases of the subject. And if we look for names of individual men, whose careers were intimately associated with this development at different stages of its progress, we shall find more than one noteworthy instance.

The name of Samuel Ward,¹ whose strong, ardent, effective interest in bringing different sections of the country to unite in a general government was a living force ; that of Nathanael Greene,² whose intimate association with Washington, and commanding influence at home must be recognized as a most effective agency in bringing his native state into con-

1 His career has been lucidly traced by Professor William Gammell, in his "Life of Samuel Ward," (Sparks's "Library of American biography," 2d series, IX. 231-368).

2 His services have been recounted in the fascinating pages of his grandson, ("Life of Nathanael Greene," by George Washington Greene).

certed action with the others; that of his kinsman, Governor William Greene, the second of the name; that of Nicholas Cooke, the "war governor" of the revolution, who, in the words of a well known writer, "seemed to rise with the spirit of the day,"¹ and in the performance of faithful service to his own colony, reached a better conception of the general welfare of the United Colonies; and that of William Ellery,² the devoted representative of Rhode Island in the Continental Congress throughout the entire war, with the single exception of the first year;—these are the names which are at once suggested. Nor should the public spirited efforts of Manning³ be overlooked, nor those of the men who with him contributed to the final result of bringing Rhode Island into the union;—the intelligent counsel of Bradford; the effective influence of Jabez Bowen; the fiery eloquence of Varnum, whose argument in the case of

1 The late John Howland. (See Stone's "John Howland," p. 42.)

2 See his life, by Professor E. T. Channing, of Harvard College. (Sparks's "Library of American biography," 1st series, VI. 85-159).

3 President Manning, though not born in Rhode Island, was the means of rendering the state more than one distinguished service. (See Gull's "Life, times, and correspondence of James Manning," p. 377-82, 390-407, 416-19).

Trevett versus Weeden had a profound effect; the patriotic exertions of the Browns, the "four brothers," whose name was a synonym for public spirit; the faithful efforts of Benjamin Bourne; and the well-directed and untiring services of Theodore Foster, destined to be Rhode Island's senator in the first national congress, for thirteen years of continuous service. It was under the impetus of their united efforts that Rhode Island was tided over her last and most critical danger, and brought finally into the union. Nor should the name of Governor Samuel Cranston be omitted, that seventeenth-century governor, whose period of office, by twenty-eight successive re-elections,¹ extended far into the eighteenth; and to whose firmness and sagacity are perhaps to be ascribed the first of that series of influences which made the eighteenth century in Rhode Island a period of development.

But any consideration of this kind which should fail to include the name of Stephen Hopkins would be conspicuously incomplete. His service was ren-

¹ First elected, May, 1696. Died in office, April, 1727. ("Records of the colony of Rhode Island," etc., III. 383; IV. 387.)

dered for a longer time¹ and was more wide-reaching in its influence, than that of any other man. He was the contemporary of all these men, as he had been of the fathers of most of them. More than one of them looked to him as a political instructor as well as an intimate friend. And, as will be more particularly shown hereafter, although his own life closed five years before the adoption of the United States constitution by Rhode Island, the conclusion is not an unwarranted one that in a peculiar sense that act was the crown of his work and influence. When we consider his unusually prolonged life, (from 1707 to 1785), and see how he touched the life of the colony at the beginning of the century, in the middle, and near the close, we need scarcely hesitate to pronounce him the representative Rhode Islander of the eighteenth century.

¹ He was actually in public life, from 1731 to 1780, nearly fifty years.

CHAPTER II.

ANCESTRY AND FAMILY CONNECTIONS.

Stephen Hopkins was born in Providence,¹ R. I.,

¹ It is proper to cite the grounds for this statement as to Governor Hopkins's birthplace; varying as it does, from every other printed statement which has come under the observation of the writer. Of the writers mentioned in Appendix A, as giving the facts of his life and career, all but two say that he was born "in Scituate, Rhode Island." One, (Spaulding), says "Scituate, Mass.," an evident error. The remaining writer, Mr. Albert Holbrook, the painstaking author of the "Genealogy of one line of the Hopkins family," repeatedly referred to in this volume, says (p. 12, 13), "in Cranston." He does not, however, indicate more definitely what the locality is. Fortunately we are not without the testimony of Governor Hopkins, himself, in this matter, in a record of his family. Moses Brown, as he tells us, found "among his papers, in his own handwriting a manuscript record of his family, (the Hopkins family), dated Feb. 3, 1764," (Letter of Moses Brown to Robert Wain, in 1823). The original of this paper is not in existence, but a copy of it, in the handwriting of Senator Theodore Foster, is preserved in the archives of the Rhode Island Historical Society. (Foster Papers, VI. 12). Governor Hopkins here makes the distinct statement: "Stephen Hopkins, of Providence, in the county of Providence, was born in Cranston," by which of course he means to designate some portion of the early town of Providence included in the territory set off under the name of Cranston only four months later, (June 14, 1764), and even then

March 7,¹ 1706-7.² He is, moreover, not merely a native of what in 1707 was the hitherto undivided³ town of Providence, but of a portion now within its corporate limits; though for a time included within a neighboring town.⁴

Through his father, William Hopkins, and his mother, Ruth Wilkinson, he was descended from the families of Hopkins, Arnold, Whipple, Wilkinson, Smith, and Wickenden,—Rhode Island families with-

familiarily so called, no doubt. It is next necessary to determine in what part of this territory his father, William Hopkins, was living with his family, at the date of his birth, March 7, 1706-7. This locality by the examination of various deeds and wills (fully detailed in Appendix D), appears to be identified beyond reasonable doubt, with that portion of South Providence, (in the 9th ward of the city of Providence), lying west of Broad Street, and north of Roger Williams Park. It is a satisfaction to be able to claim so distinguished a citizen as a veritable native of Providence; this territory having been restored to the mother town in 1868.

1 Governor Hopkins's language, in the family record already cited, is: "on Monday, the 24 of February, old stile, or in the present new stile, the seventh day of March, 1707." (Foster Papers, VI. 12).

2 In dates previous to 1752, the double form will be given, as above.

3 The town of Providence corresponded nearly to the present county of Providence, until Feb. 20, 1730-1, when the first division was made. (R. I. Col. Records, IV. 442-45).

4 The estate in question belongs to a territory included in the incorporation of the town of Cranston, June 14, 1754, (R. I. Col. Records, V. 388), but re-annexed as the 9th ward, June 10, 1868.

out exception; families, moreover, which were connected in three¹ of these instances with the settlement as originally made under Roger Williams.

His paternal ancestor,² Thomas Hopkins,³ was born in England in 1616.⁴ The precise locality has not been ascertained, yet his [Thomas's] mother's⁵ family were residents of Cheselbourne, in Dorsetshire,⁶ where her ancestors, for several generations

1 Arnold, Wickenden, and Hopkins. (R. I. Col. Records, I. 21, 24).

2 Three generations back. Thomas Hopkins,¹ William Hopkins,² William Hopkins,³ Stephen Hopkins.⁴ See Appendix C.

3 Thomas stands in the foregoing list as of the first American generation. His father, William Hopkins, never came to this country. No connection is known to exist between this family and that of Stephen Hopkins of the Plymouth Colony, (Assistant, 1638-36), or that of Governor Edward Hopkins of the Connecticut Colony.

4 He was "baptized, April 7, 1616." The record of his birth is not found. He had two sisters, Frances and Elizabeth. (Arnold family records, *New-England Historical and Genealogical Register*, XXXIII. 428).

5 Joanna Arnold.

6 It is interesting to notice that in the case of Providence, as in that of what may almost be called its parent town, Salem, some of the best known of the original settlers were from the southwestern counties of England,—Dorsetshire, Wiltshire, Somerset, and Devonshire. This locality was the home of the Endicotts, the Woodberrys, the Dodges, and the Balchs, of Salem, and of the Greenses, the Carpenters, the Arnolds, and possibly the Hopkins's, of Providence. (See "Historical collections of the Essex Institute," XVII. Gleanings from English records about New England families. Also, Savage's "Genealogical dictionary.")

had held estates.¹ The paternal line of Thomas Hopkins has been traced no farther back in England than to the bare name of his father, William Hopkins.² Of the family of his mother, Joanna Arnold,³ more is known; her line having been followed back through five generations of Arnolds in Dorset and Somerset, to Roger Arnold,⁴ in the fifteenth century, who appears to have been of Welsh origin. The Arnold family became, on removing across the Atlantic, one of the best known families of Rhode Island, identified with its history in each successive generation.⁵

¹ *N. E. Hist. Gen. Reg.*, XXXIII. 434-35.

² Hopkins genealogy, p. 7.

³ Joanna Arnold, "baptized the 30^o of November in the yeare 1577" married William Hopkins, sometime before 1614. *N. E. Hist. Gen. Register*, XXXIII. 427.

⁴ Roger Arnold;¹ Thomas Arnold,² married Agnes, daughter of Sir Richard Warnestead, Knt.; Richard Arnold,³ of Street, in Somerset, married Emmote Young; Richard Arnold,⁴ of Milton Abbas, Dorsetshire; Thomas Arnold,⁵ (Cheselbourne), married Alice Gulley, daughter of John Gulley, of Cheselbourne; Joanna Arnold,⁶ baptized 30 Nov., 1577. (*N. E. Hist. Gen. Reg.*, XXXIII. 434-35.) The family record just cited indicates also the supposed Welsh line of descent; (p. 433-34).

⁵ In the 8th generation from the Thomas Arnold, just mentioned, (the father of Joanna), is the late Samuel G. Arnold, the distinguished historian of the state.

Authentic records are silent as to the circumstances of Thomas Hopkins's life in England. They are no less silent as to the time and manner of his removal to America;¹ the first information that we have of him locating him at Providence as early as 1638.² Whether he was married on the other side

1 Savage's statement, ("Genealogical dictionary," II. 462):—"Thomas, Providence, 1641, had foll.[owed] Roger Williams in 1636 from Plymouth," is strangely beside the facts; nor does it appear who furnished him with this information. See Appendix E for the examination of other statements of Savage.

2 At the assignment of the fifty-four home lots in 1638, (from the territory now bounded by Olney, Hope, Wickenden, and North and South Main Streets), the entry of his name shows him to have been already on the ground. (R. I. Col. Records, I. 24). With him at Providence at the same assignment were his brother-in-law, William Man, (husband of his sister, Frances), and his cousin, William Arnold. Also, Arnold's son, Benedict Arnold; his son-in-law, William Carpenter; and John Greene, whose grand-son married his grand-daughter. As already indicated, they were mostly from the same quarter of England. Whether they all came in the same vessel with William Arnold, (who "sett sayle from Dartmouth in Old England, the first of May, * * * 1635," arriving in New England, June 24 of the same year), there is nothing to indicate. The entry just cited is from a manuscript record of Benedict Arnold, printed in the *N. E. Hist. Gen. Reg.* XXXIII. 428. From this and other accounts. It would appear that he first settled at Hingham, near Boston, but came to Providence in the spring of 1636. (*N. E. Hist. Gen. Reg.* XXXIII. 436, 428).

of the Atlantic or this,¹ the name and family of his wife,² the dates of his marriage and of the births of his children,³ can be only matters of conjecture. His children appear to have been three in number; two sons, William³ and Thomas;³ and a third, probably a son,³ whose name is not preserved. His "home lot," as indicated by the assignment in 1638³ occupied the territory now partially traversed by Williams St. But he soon afterwards acquired an estate at Louisquisset, in what is now Lincoln,⁴ and here he lived, in all probability,⁵ until the outbreak of King Philip's war,⁶ in 1675. Here, doubtless, his children were born, but of this there is no record. Were it not for the occasional entries of his name on

1 Mr. Holbrook's conjecture is that "he married, probably about the year 1648," at Providence. (Hopkins genealogy, p. 9). The records are silent.

2 See Appendix E.

3 R. I. Col. Records, I. 24.

4 The exact neighborhood was known as Louisquisset very early. See deed from Major William Hopkins to his brother, Thomas, Dec. 27, 1692, (Providence deeds, IV. 11); also the "lay-out" of additional land to Thomas, April 10, 1704, (Providence land records (old books), III. 213); see also Foster Papers, XIII. 18.

5 It by no means follows that the "home lot" received in the assignment of 1638, was in every instance the "home" of the owner.

6 See *Newport Historical Magazine*, III. 259.

the colony records, the knowledge we have of this emigrant ancestor would be even more shadowy than it is. He was one of the 39 inhabitants, who signed the compact¹ of July 27, 1640, memorable as being the action with which the town organization virtually began.² His name occurs in the list of six "commissioners" from the town of Providence to the General Assembly, which met at Providence, October 28, 1652,³ during the period when Portsmouth and Newport were carrying on a government apart from that of Providence and Warwick.⁴ He served also as commissioner under the re-established government, in 1659⁵ and 1660;⁶ and was a member of the General Assembly under the charter, in 1665⁷ and 1667.⁸ In 1668 his name is signed to that unique "letter missive," entitled "The fire-brand discov-

1 R. I. Col. Records, I. 31; Staples's "Annals of Providence," p. 43.

2 Staples's "Annals" p. 44-45.

3 R. I. Col. Records, I. 245.

4 See Arnold's "Rhode Island," I. ch. 8. In the Colony Records, (I. 248-49), there is printed a letter addressed by the members of this General Assembly, to Roger Williams, then in England.

5 R. I. Col. Records, I. 408.

6 Ibid., I. 431.

7 Ibid., II. 130.

8 Ibid., II. 200.

ered,"¹ sent by a committee of the town of Providence, to the other towns, in relation to William Harris. In 1667 and 1672 he was a member of the town council.² His name, of course, disappears³ from any Rhode Island records after 1675, and nothing more is heard of him until his death. He died at Oyster Bay, N. Y., 1684, (perhaps in August).⁴

Major William Hopkins, his eldest son, was now probably about thirty-four⁵ years of age, and by far the best known and most positive character among the three children. He had married shortly before

1 Staples's "Annals," p. 143-45.

2 Ibid., p. 664.

3 A "Thomas Hopkins" was a member of the General Assembly from Providence in 1672. (R. I. Col. Records, II. 449). This may have been he, but it may also have been his son, Thomas, who was now of age to serve in this office. Two additional entries of his name will be found in Staples's "Annals," p. 76, 106.

4 At any rate, at some time not long previous to September 6, 1684, when he is spoken of as "lately deceased." (Oyster Bay town records, book B., p. 14). Savage's statement, ("Genealogical dictionary," II. 462), is that he "d[ied] 1699" But this confounds him with the "Thomas Hopkins of Mashan-tatut," (perhaps within Cranston or Warwick limits), whose will, (dated Oct. 20, 1698), was probated Feb. 25. 1698-9. (Providence Wills, I. 279).

5 See Holbrook's remark as to the probable date of birth. (Hopkins genealogy, p. 9).

this,¹ the daughter² of Captain John Whipple,³ one

1 "About 1660," says the Hopkins genealogy, p. 10.

2 The name of this daughter, Abigail, is not included in the list of baptisms of John Whipple's children at Dorchester, (Foster Papers, VI. 9). The inference is, therefore, that she was born after his removal to Providence in 1660. (Savage's "Genealogical dictionary," IV. 506). The entry of her birth, however, is not found on the Providence records. The account of the "Descendants of John Whipple," (*N. E. Hist. Gen. Reg.*, XXXII. 404), says that she was born "1665." Yet she had married Stephen Dexter, and was the mother of two children by him (named in her will of Aug. 16, 1725, (Providence Wills, II. 237), as John Dexter and Abigail Field), at the time of his death in 1678, (Dorr's "Providence," p. 30). She was therefore a widow at the age of 13 (!) And she is said to have married Major Hopkins about 1660. That one of the statements cited above is incorrect seems very evident. Possibly the date of her birth should be carried farther back.

3 John Whipple, like John Smith, "the miller," was from Dorchester, Mass., and the "registry of baptisms" of eight of his children, copied from the church records of the First Church in Dorchester, in 1708, and "attested" in the handwriting of the then minister of Dorchester, Rev. John Danforth, is preserved in the Foster Papers, VI. 9. He was for a time in the employ of Israel Stoughton, the father of the future Governor Stoughton, of Massachusetts; and Savage, ("Genealogical dictionary," IV. 605), intimates that he may have come from England in the same year with him, 1632. Dorchester, at this early day extended nearly to the Rhode Island line, (Clapp's "History of the town of Dorchester," p. 26), and it is by no means certain in what portion of this territory he lived. His name occurs once on the Dorchester town records, in connection with a grant of land, of trifling extent, "about the mill," Jan. 2, 1637. (Fourth report of Boston Record Commissioners, 1880, p. 27). The home of John Smith, however, (whose son John married his daughter Sarah), was at Ponkapog, near the southern base of the Blue Hills. (Manuscript notes of Job Smith). John Whipple received an allotment of land at Louisquisset, June 27, 1669. (Foster Papers, XIII. 18). His inn

of the prominent figures in all phases of Providence life, from 1660¹ to 1685, as inn-holder, surveyor, carpenter,² member of the town council,³ and member of the General Assembly.⁴ He was also the principal trader, and a principal legal practitioner in the town, while he lived.⁵ Traits of this energetic seventeenth-century public character will be found to

stood on the Town Street, at the foot of the present Constitution Hill, (the site of 309 North Main Street). "From the staid and sober character of the old Whipple inn," says Mr. Dorr, "as well as from its central position, it became the favorite place of meeting of the town council and court of probate." (There was no Colony house in Providence until 1731). Dorr's "Providence," p. 184, 185.

1 He removed to Providence about 1659. His will is dated May 16, 1685. (Foster Papers, VI. 3).

2 He had been a carpenter in Dorchester. (*N. E. Hist. Gen. Reg.* XXXII. 403). See also Dorr's "Providence," p. 68.

3 In 1600. Staples's "Annals," p. 654.

4 In 1600, 1609, and 1675-6. *R. I. Col. Records*, II. 180, 241, 532.

5 In the sixteen bound volumes of manuscripts known as the Foster Papers, (in the possession of the Rhode Island Historical Society), are preserved a large number of John Whipple's papers, public and private, together with some of John Whipple Jr.'s. They were inherited by Governor Hopkins, and were by him placed in the hands of Senator Foster between 1776 and 1785. They comprise deeds, depositions, writs, warrants, returns of surveys, several instances of "power of attorney," and letters.

There is also one curious seventeenth century bill of lading, dated July 3, 1684, (Foster Papers, XIII. 22).

characterize his son-in-law, Major Hopkins, to some extent; but they certainly reappear with marked force, in the Major's grandson, Governor Hopkins.¹

Major William Hopkins was admitted a freeman of the colony, April 30, 1672.² The business to which he was brought up was undoubtedly farming, but he is early known also as a surveyor; and, says Holbrook, "numerous accounts of his labors in this profession abound in the records."³ The advent of King Philip's war, in 1675, would seem to have scattered the Hopkins family very completely. William's father, with his sister-in-law⁴ and her children, appear to have gone, at this time,⁵ to Long Island. His brother Thomas remained on the Louisquisset estate.⁶ He himself, being a military man,⁷ not only

1 See page 33.

2 E. I. Col. Records, II. 450.

3 Hopkins genealogy, p. 10.

4 Her name was Elizabeth. See Appendix E. The name of this third brother whom she married, remains unknown. See p. 14.

5 See *Newport Historical Magazine*, III. 250.

6 See Hopkins genealogy, p. 15-16. See also deed of Dec. 27, 1692, (Providence Deeds, IV. 11), which mentions it as the "lot on which he now dwelleth."

7 He was a "captain" as early as 1668, (E. I. Col. Records, III. 243); and "major" in 1696.

remained in the town, (being one of the twenty-seven "that stayed and went not away" in King Philip's war, as recorded in the town meeting records)¹ but performed military service. A less creditable record is associated with his name in August, 1676, when he was one of those appointed by the town, to sell the Indians taken captive in the war.² In the neighborhood of 1680, as has already been stated,³ occurred his marriage with the young widow, Mrs. Dexter; and from this time he is frequently found in association with his father-in-law.⁴ Mrs. Dexter had by her first husband two

1 Printed in Staples's "Annals," p. 164-65. There is a copy in the Foster Papers, I. 3. Among other names in this list are Roger Williams; Daniel Abbott; Valentine Whitman; James Angell; Hopkins's cousin, Abraham Man; and Captain John Whipple.

2 Staples's "Annals," p. 170. See Foster Papers, I. 6. See also Arnold's reference to this transaction as "in fact a true apprenticeship system." (Arnold's "Rhode Island," I. 419).

3 See pages 16-17.

4 Captain John Whipple. He probably lived in "The Neck" for some years after the war. ("The Neck" was frequently used as a designation before the division of the town in 1730-1 to distinguish the settled part).

5 Her husband, Stephen Dexter, was the son of Rev. Gregory Dexter, at first a printer in London. His imprint is on the title page of Roger Williams's volume, "A key into the language of America," (1643). Gregory Dexter came to Providence about 1644. Here he was "for several years town clerk," (Nar-

children, John and Abigail Dexter.¹ The date of birth of William Hopkins, Jr., the only son of the Major and his wife, is not on record.² Their grandson Stephen's birth, however, occurring only twenty-seven years later,³ renders it probable that their son was born soon after 1680. In 1684 the death of Major Hopkins's father occurred, on Long Island.⁴ As surveyor⁵ of lands, Major Hopkins was conversant with the good qualities of much of the land in the "Plantations;" and he appears to have found so early as 1689⁶ a piece of property⁷ which pleased him

ragansett Club Pub., I. 71); was president, (of Providence and Warwick), in 1653-54; was named in the charter of 1663; and about 1650 acted as pastor of the church (now the First Baptist church), in Providence. His great granddaughter became the wife of Governor Hopkins's eldest son, Rufus, in 1747. Whether Stephen Hopkins owed his Christian name to this Stephen Dexter, whose widow became his grandmother, does not appear. He had a somewhat remote kinsman, Stephen Arnold, from whom it may have come.

1 These children are named in her will. (Printed in Hopkins genealogy, p. 69-71.

2 The provoking incompleteness of the early records will have already been noticed. It is due partly to original neglect, but partly to the loss and injury of certain volumes.

3 March 7, 1706-7. 4 See page 16. 5 Hopkins genealogy, p. 10.

6 Feb. 20, 1688-9, is the date of the deed by which he acquired ownership of a portion of this property. (Providence Deeds, I, 186). But it is apparent that this was not his original purchase in this locality.

7 It is not improbable that this property, which only a few years before had

so well that he made it his home for the rest of his life,¹ dying there in 1723. Here, in 1707, his son and his wife appear to have been living also; for it

been in the possession of Robert Coles, (see Appendix D) one of the four Pawtuxet owners, had come into Major Hopkins's hands through the interested suggestions or efforts of his kinsman, William Arnold, himself also one of the four Pawtuxet owners. His father, Thomas Hopkins, had apparently been on the most intimate terms with his cousins, the Arnolds; and mention is made on the Providence town records, (April 10, 1704), of their joint ownership in certain land near Louisquisset. ("A half right of Thomas Hopkins, senr., now deceased, and a half right of William Arnold, deceased"). Thomas Hopkins, it may be added, was a member of the town committee appointed April, 1661, "to meet three of Pawtuxet men and run the line" "up into the country, beginning at the tree at Mashapaug." (Staples's "Annals," p. 579-80). This committee ran the line only as far as the "Pawcha-sit river," and reported to the town in January, 1668. (Staples's "Annals," p. 580). The same committee reported in 1683. (Staples's "Annals," p. 580). Being thus connected, by interest at least, with the fertile Pawtuxet lands, it is not strange that Major Hopkins should have made his permanent home in this desirable location, not far removed from them. Certain land had been earlier "laid out" to Robert Coles, "by the thirteen proprietors of Pawtuxet for his Pawtuxet share of meadow in those fresh meadows where it lieth;" and had been by him sold to Valentine Whitman, (whose name stands next to that of Roger Williams in the Indian deeds of Dec. 27, 1661, Feb. 1, 1662, and June 24, 1662; Staples's "Annals," p. 574-75); and this land was by him transferred to Major Hopkins in the deed of Feb. 20, 1688-9, already alluded to, (Providence Deeds, I. 180), thus adding to the estate already in his possession.

¹ In his will, July 1, 1723, he calls it his "homestead;" ("all that my homestead, meadows, and tenements where I now dwell"). (Printed in Hopkins genealogy, p. 65).

was on it that their son, the future Governor Hopkins, was born,¹ in that year. This land, referred to by Major Hopkins in his will² as "near to a place called Massapaug,"³ and by Governor Hopkins thirty-one years later,⁴ as "in Cranston,"⁵ is, as has already been shown,⁶ in that part of the present city of Providence known as South Providence, near Broad, Sackett, and Hamilton Streets. His father had died intestate⁷ in 1684, and by the law of primogeniture⁸ the whole property had now come into his own hands. But, in order to remedy this inequality of legal provision, he executed in 1692 a "gift deed"⁹ to his brother, transferring to him the homestead of their father at Louisquisset,¹⁰ on which,

1 March 7, 1705-7. For the evidence as to the identity of this place, see Appendix D.

2 July 1, 1723.

3 Hopkins genealogy, p. 65.

4 Feb. 3, 1754.

5 See Appendix C.

6 See p. 9.

7 Oyster Bay (N. Y.) town records, Book B, p. 11.

8 Not repealed until June, 1718. (Public laws of Rhode Island, 1719, p. 95-98).

9 December 27, 1692. (Providence Deeds, IV. 11).

10 There is great lack of uniformity in the spelling of this Indian name. The above is the form in which it is usually found on modern maps. Its present form, says Dr. J. Hammond Trumbull, "is corrupt beyond conjecture of its original Indian sounds." An examination of land records shows this

in fact, Thomas now lived.¹ His first service under government was during Andros's occupation of New England, when he attended as a member of the "grand jury," at the "quarter sessions" of September, 1688.² During Governor Cranston's long administration, however, his attendance in the General Assembly was frequent; and ten terms³ of service as assistant are recorded, in the eight years, 1700-1707. His duties as surveyor made him a pre-eminently useful citizen in those early days. Besides repeatedly exercising this accomplishment, in the laying out of the up-country⁴ lands, he was appointed on a committee⁵ in 1705 and 1709, to rectify the northern and eastern boundaries of the colony; and in 1708 to cor-

locality to be farther north in the present town of Lincoln than the school district which goes by this name.

1 The deed mentions it as the "lot on which he now dwelleth."

2 During the suspension of the charter, no meetings of the General Assembly were held. The record of these quarter sessions will be found in R. I. Col. Records, III. 243.

3 1700, 1701, 1702, 1703, 1704, 1705 (May, June, and October,) 1703, 1707. R. I. Col. Records, III. 408, 429, 443, 472, 511, 523, 531, 549, 563; IV. 3.

4 From the time that the seven-mile line was established, in 1660, (Staples's "Annals," p. 592), the land west of it came more and more into the hands of settlers.

5 R. I. Col. Records, III. 529; IV. 83.

rect the northern line¹ of the King's Province.² Only one child is mentioned in his will,³ (dated July 1, 1723), namely, William Hopkins. The "Massapauge" homestead he bequeathed to his grandson, Colonel William Hopkins,⁴ his son having for ten years or more been settled on a home of his own, west of the seven-mile line,⁵ which his father's will now confirmed to him.⁶ Major Hopkins died July 8, 1723.⁷

Among the families which had settled along the Moshassuck river, but outside the original home-lot tract, were those of Christopher Smith and Lawrence⁸ Wilkinson. The latter had removed to Providence,

1 R. I. Col. Records, IV. 42. It is now the northern line of North Kingstown and Exeter.

2 In 1717-18, also, a survey was ordered of the land on the west side of the Town street from the Mill, over the summit of Stammers Hill, to the farther end of the hill. In this "last division of house lots," as he terms it in his will, he received land in his father's name opposite the present Church of the Redeemer. (Plat of Providence proprietors, 1718).

3 Providence Wills, II. 139.

4 Hopkins genealogy, p. 65.

5 The present eastern line of Burrillville, Gloucester and Scituate. (Staples's "Annals," p. 593).

6 Hopkins genealogy, p. 67.

7 Ibid., p. 10.

8 Frequently spelt "Lawrance."

from Lanchester,¹ in Durham, England, perhaps as early as 1657;² the former as early as 1655.³ Christopher Smith was perhaps a companion of Wilkinson, the latter having married his daughter Susannah⁴ before 1652,⁵ and therefore before they are known to have reached Providence.⁶ His land, like that of the family of John Smith, "the miller," was in the vicinity of the present Smith's Hill;⁷ and this circumstance has caused the naming of that locality to be claimed⁸ for him, as well as for the miller's family.⁹ Possibly

1 Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 33-35.

2 Providence Deeds, etc., transcribed, p. 110. He may have been here earlier. He received a lot, in the quarter-right distribution, to which the date "the 19th of 11 mo. 1645, is affixed." (See Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 35-36; Staples's "Annals," p. 60).

3 Admitted freeman, 1655. (R. I. Col. Records, I. 299). His previous history is unknown.

4 Wilkinson, (Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 45), maintains that the correct spelling of her mother's name is "Aloe," and not "Alice," as Savage has it.

5 Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 47-48.

6 See, however, the Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 48.

7 Providence Deeds, I. 113, 39.

8 Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 45; which refers to Providence land records, etc., (old books), I. 39.

9 Wilkinson is, however, wrong in making the expression "brow of the hill" refer to Smith's Hill itself. It refers rather to a small but then precipitous eminence, southeast of the present bridge over the Moshassuck at Nash Lane.

there are even others of this certainly not uncommon name who have an equal claim.¹

Lawrence Wilkinson's first residence appears to have been southeast of the present North Burying Ground.² In 1666, however, possibly about the time at which Thomas Hopkins³ settled in the same locality, he received a grant of land⁴ in the vicinity of Louisquisset, and this remained his home for the rest of his life. He acquired much additional land, however, amounting before his death, to "about 1,000 acres."⁵ He was a member of the General Assembly in 1673.⁶ He died August 9, 1692,⁷ leaving three sons and three daughters.⁸

The eldest son of Lawrence Wilkinson was Samuel, born not far from 1650.⁹ In 1672¹⁰ he married Plain Wickenden, one of the Rev. William Wickenden's three daughters. Mr. Wickenden's "home lot,"

1 No relationship has been established between the two Smith families above named.

2 Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 37, 43.

3 See page 14.

4 Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 38.

5 Ibid., p. 42.

6 E. I. Col. Records, II. 482.

7 Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 48.

8 Ibid., p. 47.

9 Ibid., p. 47.

10 Ibid., p. 325.

named thirteenth in order in the "revised list" of the early settlers, was in the southern part of the town, (the present corner of South Main and Power Streets marking its southwestern limits).¹ Mr. Wickenden's connection with the colonial government was long and intimate. He is said to have come from Salem in 1639.² He signed the agreement of 1636³ and the compact of 1637;⁴ he served on the committee which organized the government under the patent in 1648;⁵ and served as commissioner for Providence in 1651, 1652, 1653, 1654, and 1655,⁶ and as deputy in 1664.⁷ He was one of the ministers of the church in Providence, during some part of this time.⁸ He died February 3, 1669-70.⁹

1 Staples's "Annals," p. 35.

2 This is the statement of the Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 325. Savage says, more cautiously, "perhaps of Salem, 1639." ("Genealogical dictionary," IV. 537).

3 R. I. Col. Records, I. 14.

4 Ibid., I. 31.

5 Ibid., I. 209.

6 Ibid., I. 235, 239, 241, 250, 258, 267, 271, 277, 281, 304.

7 Ibid., II. 38.

8 "History of the First Baptist church in Providence, 1639-1877," p. 7.

9 Savage's "Genealogical dictionary," IV. 537-38.

One of the first¹ of Stephen Hopkins's ancestors to embrace the doctrines of Friends appears to have been the public spirited farmer of Louisquisset, Samuel Wilkinson. He was growing up to manhood when the long continued discussion² of their views took place, and the home of Richard Scott³ and his family, among the most active of the promoters of these doctrines, was not far from his own neighborhood.⁴ Through his daughter, the governor's mother, the principles of this body of believers were handed down to Stephen Hopkins himself.⁵ Though not residing in "The Neck," he engaged very largely in public life. He was a justice of the peace, and many of the marriages of that day were performed by him.⁶

1 Samuel Wilkinson's grandfather, Christopher Smith, is said to have been a Friend.

2 See Arnold's "Rhode Island," I. 260-70, 350-62.

3 See Fox's "New-England-fire-brand'quenched," Appendix.

4 At what is now Lonsdale. (Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 325).

5 A great-granddaughter of this same Richard Scott, whom Stephen Hopkins must doubtless have seen occasionally at the Friends' Meeting in this neighborhood, (Staples's "Annals," p. 431), became his wife, (by his first marriage), in 1726.

6 "In his younger days" he "was constable." Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 49.

"On one page¹ of the public records," says the family annalist, "are recorded thirty-one couple who were married by 'Captain² Samuel Wilkinson justice.'³" He was a member of the General Assembly in 1707 and 1716.⁴ Like Major William Hopkins, with whom he was certainly brought into close association,⁵ he was a surveyor.⁶ This fact was doubtless the occasion of his appointment in 1719 on one of the boundary commissions, to determine the north line of the colony.⁷ He lived to see a numerous family of children and grandchildren, growing up around him. Among the latter was Stephen Hopkins, who enjoyed to a marked extent the opportunity of his companionship and influence,⁸ and who

1 Providence Record of births, marriages, etc., I. 77.

2 The title of "Captain" appears to have dated from King Philip's war. (Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 334).

3 Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 50.

4 R. I. Col. Records, IV. 3, 29, 212.

5 They were neighbors. He was appraiser of Major Hopkins's brother's estate, (his near neighbor), at his death in 1718. Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 50.

6 "His name," says Wilkinson, "appears more frequently than any other man's as surveyor, administrator, appraiser of estates, overseer of the last will and testament." (Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 49).

7 R. I. Col. Records, IV. 252.

8 "Surveying," says Wilkinson, "he undoubtedly acquired of his grandfather." (Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 361).

was twenty years of age at his death. He died August 27, 1727,¹ leaving six children,² having survived his friend Major Hopkins four years.³

The marriage of his daughter Ruth with William Hopkins, Jr., occurred soon after 1700.⁴ The first years of their married life were passed, as has already been indicated,⁵ at the Massapauge⁶ homestead. But these were the times when great interest attached to certain lands west of the seven-mile line. The father of both were surveyors, and naturally familiar with the ground. Moreover, Ruth's youngest brother, Joseph Wilkinson, had received in 1700 a grant of 137½ acres of land,⁷ near Chapumiscook.⁸

1 There is a discrepancy in Wilkinson's statements as to this date, (1726, at page 337; and 1727, at page 51). The latter appears to be the correct date.

2 Ruth, the mother of Governor Hopkins, was the youngest but one, and was born Jan. 31, 1685-6. (Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 64).

3 Major Hopkins died July 8, 1723.

4 The records in connection with William Hopkins's family are surprisingly meagre.

5 See pages 22-23.

6 The modern spelling is Mashapaug.

7 Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 76-77.

8 This is the common spelling in the records of the last century. It is abbreviated on modern maps, to "Chopmist." Parson's "Indian names of places in Rhode Island," p. 12. It lies near the present northwest corner of Scituate.

It was not long¹ before he went with his wife to this farm in the forest, and settled there. Within a few years² William Hopkins followed, with his wife and two children,³ and became a resident of Chapumiscook. His farm was not far from his brother-in-law's estate, and was "on high land, overlooking a wide extent of country."⁴

Here, remote from the settlement at "The Neck," in the heart of an almost unbroken forest,⁵ in a house doubtless of uncomfortably small dimensions,⁶ he brought his farm to a high state of cultivation.⁷ He at the same time brought up a family of children⁸ of whom any parents might well be proud;⁹ one of

1 "About the year 1703." Beaman's "Scituate," p. 14.

2 Soon after 1707, probably. See the Hopkins genealogy, p. 12, (list of births).

3 William and Stephen.

4 Beaman's "Scituate," p. 18.

5 Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 359.

6 Beaman's "Scituate," p. 16.

7 "It," says Wilkinson, "when in possession of the Hopkins's, was exceedingly fertile, producing excellent crops of corn, rye, oats, and potatoes." (Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 358).

8 Their names will be found in Appendix C. There were six sons and three daughters; two of the latter of whom married into the Harris and Angell families. (Hopkins genealogy, p. 12, 20, 27).

9 William, the eldest son, the namesake and legatee of his grandfather, the Major, was among the earliest of Rhode Island sailors to extend the commerce of Providence. A curious mass of traditionary anecdote appears to have

whom was destined to reflect honor on his state and nation.

In Stephen Hopkins may be discovered, no doubt, something of the energetic, spirited nature of his paternal grandfather, Major William Hopkins,¹ and of the shrewd sagacity of Captain John Whipple.² But it is to his mother's side of the house, after

accumulated about his name; (see, for instance, the *Wilkinson Memoirs*, p. 350-51, 353); but there is enough that is authentically recorded to show his activity and enterprise. (For his connection with the war with Spain of 1744-48, see the "Public letters," 1731-41, p. 67; and 1742-45, p. 21, etc. on file, in manuscript, in the office of the secretary of state, at Providence). A granddaughter and a great-granddaughter married sons of Governor Nicholas Cooke. Another son, Stephen, became the most eminent Rhode Islander of his time, in civil life. Another son, Esek, became, in 1775, commander of the first fleet of the United Colonies, and later commodore. A granddaughter became the wife of Abraham Whipple, another early commodore of the United States navy. Another granddaughter became the wife of President Maxcy, of Brown University. A great-grandson, the late Hon. John Hopkins Clarke, represented Rhode Island in the United States Senate, 1847-53, being the last Whig member returned to the Senate from this state. Whether the three brothers who died young would have eclipsed the careers of William, Esek, and Stephen, can never be known. But, says Beaman, the record of these descendants should cause their parents to "be gratefully and honorably remembered." "What a family were William and Ruth Hopkins rearing," he adds, "in their small and rough-boarded farmer's house, among the wooded hills, in the first quarter of the eighteenth century!" ("Historical collections of the Essex Institute," II. 123).

1 See pages 16-25.

2 See pages 17-19.

all, that he may be said to owe most. In him there were to be seen, throughout life, something of the gravity¹ which may have come to him from his ancestor, Rev. William Wickenden; but especially the intelligent, earnest interest in, and capacity for efficient public service, which characterized his Quaker grandfather, Captain Samuel Wilkinson.² He is one of the first instances of a type which has since furnished numerous examples of good citizenship,—a public spirited Quaker.³

1 See Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 326, p. 82. Mr. Whittier himself states, however, in a letter to the author, that the Hopkins of the poem quoted by Wilkinson, is not Governor Stephen Hopkins of Providence, but Rev. Samuel Hopkins of Newport.

2 See pages 29-31.

3 No record exists, however, showing any connection of Stephen Hopkins with the Society of Friends, as a member, until the year 1755.

CHAPTER III.

EARLY INFLUENCES.

The first twenty¹ years of Stephen Hopkins's life, in which, if at all, he was acted on by the formative influences in his surroundings, lay entirely within the long term of service of Governor Samuel Cranston.² As has been briefly indicated already,³ the life of that period was in its most rudimentary stages. Nor was there, to quote the language of General Greene's biographer, even so late as 1742, any "very material difference between town and country;"⁴ much less in 1707. The Providence settlement⁵ was a collection of straggling dwellings on the east side of the river; access to the outside world

¹ 1707-27.

² 1698-1727.

³ See p. 1-2.

⁴ "Life of Nathanael Greene," by G. W. Greene, I. 6.

⁵ A census taken in 1708 showed the population of the undivided town [*i. e.* county] of Providence to be only 1,446. (R. I. Col. Records, IV. 59).

being by a ferry at Weybosset¹ and another at "Narrow Passage,"² and the "Old North road,"³ leading from the upper end of the Town Street. If these "roads," moreover, which were understood to lead somewhere, were little more than the "widening of the old bridle-path through the woods,"⁴ fenced across at intervals with gates,⁵ it could hardly be expected that the forest pathways, stretching out to the various settlements west of the "seven-mile line," which were no thoroughfare to any point beyond,⁶ would be any better. Efforts were made in 1706 and 1710 to authorize the laying out of some road, communicating with Plainfield and Woodstock in the Connecticut Colony.⁷ Yet these needed highways waited sixty years for completion.⁸

In reaching Stephen Hopkins's early home, at

1 The bridge was not completed until 1712. (Dorr's "Providence," p. 107).

2 The present site of "Red Bridge." See Dorr's "Providence," p. 78.

3 Dorr's "Providence," p. 74-75.

4 Ibid., p. 79.

5 Little regard, as Mr. Dorr shows, "was paid to the convenience of travelers toward Massachusetts." In 1720, the town meeting voted that the highway "to Pawtucket, be fenced for five years." (Town meeting records, 1720).

6 Up to 1706 no attempt was made to render them a "thoroughfare," even to these Rhode Island settlements.

7 Dorr's "Providence," p. 125.

8 Ibid., p. 127-28.

Chapumiscook,¹ (now Scituate), travelling was done chiefly on horseback. There was no regular conveyance for passengers. If any man would travel, he used his own horse. Merchandise was taken home at the charge of the purchaser in ox-teams. Nor was any "country store" opened at the Scituate settlement until a later period.² There was no regular postal route into this region; for there were no daily or weekly newspapers published in Rhode Island, to be sent there;³ and there were few letters written and was little occasion for any. Not until several years later does any building for religious purposes appear to have been erected in this Scituate neighborhood.⁴ Not until well into the present century did it give any support to public schools.⁵ The town itself received its separate incorporation and name in 1731, when Providence County was

1 Though born at the Mashapaug homestead, as has been shown, (see p. 9-10), his early life was spent at the Chapumiscook farm, to which his parents doubtless removed before he was two years of age.

2 In early times the tavern served an almost universal purpose. (See Beaman's "Scituate," p. 33).

3 The first newspaper was the *Rhode Island Gazette*, Newport, 1732.

4 Beaman's "Scituate," p. 47.

5 1834. *Ibid.*, p. 49.

divided into four townships¹ by two lines intersecting almost at right angles near Moswansicut Pond. Some emigrants from the Plymouth Colony² had settled here in 1710, and it was from their home in that colony that the new town received the name of Scituate. It doubtless remained, down to the time when Stephen Hopkins left it in 1742, as much a "frontier settlement" as are the border towns of Dakota and Montana to-day.

What is known of the people of this period? They were the third generation from their English ancestors, and in no one of the New England colonies had the modifications introduced in the successive decades since 1640 been less favorable to steady, symmetrical advancement than in Rhode Island.³ To appreciate their situation, we need only attempt to realize what a community of to-day, planted in the wilds of New Mexico or Arizona, would become, without the active agency of civilizing institutions.

1 R. I. Col. Records, IV. 442-45.

2 Beaman's "Scituate," p. 10.

3 "The persecutions," says Colonel Higginson, "and the delusions, belong generally to this later epoch." (Article on "The second generation of Englishmen in America," *Harper's Magazine*, July, 1883, LXVII. 215).

The settlers of New England had left their homes in old England, surrounded with the civilization which had been maturing for centuries, and had taken the responsibility of rearing their children in a wilderness; and as Cotton Mather in an eighteenth-century ode expressed it, it was due only to the influence of the schools, that any civilizing elements were present:—

“That thou, New-England, art not Scythia grown.”¹

They entered thus in some cases upon measures designed to counteract the deteriorating tendency, and yet it was hardly to be expected that the second and third generations would compare favorably with the first. The Adam Winthrop and Wait Still Winthrop, of the eighteenth century,² would suffer by comparison with their distinguished ancestor, John Winthrop; Cotton Mather furnishes a type by many degrees inferior to his grandfather, John Cotton; Rev. Mr. Parris, of Salem Village, in 1692, is

¹ Cotton Mather's "Corderius Americanus," p. 28. Printed also in *N. E. Hist. Gen. Reg.* XXXIII. 188.

² Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, 5th series, VIII. 219. Yet see Mr. Robert C. Winthrop's timely remarks in the preface to the same volume, (p. XVII.), as to a needful discrimination to be made.

almost repulsive by the side of Higginson or Hooker. In Rhode Island, the aged Providence Williams, with whom Dr. Stiles talked¹ in the last century, was but a sorry representative of his grandfather, the richly endowed founder of the colony; nor were those who, in 1700, were bearing the names of Arnold, of Greene, of Clark, of Olney, or of Angell, in any danger of eclipsing the record of their emigrant ancestors.

It should never be forgotten, moreover, that the conditions of life in Rhode Island were strikingly peculiar, and indeed unique. Working out what to us is an invaluable experiment of rigid separation of the civil and religious functions in administration, to their logical extremes, the colony suffered from the inherent difficulties of the problem.² In the other

1 President Stiles's "Itinerary," [manuscript], year 1763.

2 "It is impossible," says Professor Diman, "to read the history of Rhode Island, and not to recognize the fact that those who drank of this great cup of liberty were compelled to pay a heavy price." "The complete separation effected between church and state, by remitting the support of religious institutions to a community divided, beyond all previous example, in religious sentiment, deprived them of the inestimable benefit of an educated clergy." Oration at "200th anniversary of Bristol," p. 47.

colonies the people in the various towns could appropriate money for churches and schools; and, in fact, by the year 1649, every other New England colony had made public education compulsory.¹ In Rhode Island the exaggerated form in which the doctrine of separation had come to be held gave the public a succession of religious ministers "without special training,"² and successive generations of children with no opportunities for education. Indeed, the case of a child brought up in this colony at that time would seem to have been well nigh hopeless so far as education was concerned. His parents had not the ability to give him an education; few indeed had means sufficient for that. And the colony and the town had no willingness to do it.³ His own persistent,

1 Tyler's "History of American literature," I. 99.

2 The ministers, says John Howland, "were generally farmers, and had no salary or any other means of support but their own labor." (Stone's "John Howland," p. 30).

3 The exceedingly infrequent instances which do exist in which some attempt seems to have been made at public provision for education become all the more striking by contrast. See, for instance, the vote of the town of Newport, Aug. 6, 1640, the vote of the proprietors of Providence, May 9, 1663; the petition of John Whipple, Jr., to the town of Providence, Jan. 28, 1684; the petition of John Dexter, Major William Hopkins, and others, to the town of

personal efforts might, if urged on by an unconquerable desire, secure for him this advantage. But naturally, this "unconquerable desire" became, under these circumstances, a very rare phenomenon.

Yet while the general condition of society in which, as already indicated, Stephen Hopkins was now growing up, was far from favorable, we need to look more closely at those particular conditions by which he was affected. His father was plainly a man of by no means the commanding qualities, or familiarity with public affairs,¹ which had characterized his grandfather and earlier ancestors. But from his mother he not only inherited strongly marked traits but also received opportunities for mental training and development which were really noteworthy in the colonial society of that time. Though there were no public schools to which he could be

Providence, Jan., 1696. (Staples's "Annals of Providence," p. 492, 493, 494; Bernard's "Report on public schools," 1848, p. 33-34, 145-46). They resulted in very little in either instance.

¹ Only one instance appears in which there is a probability of his having held public office. The "Mr. William Hopkins" who served as a deputy from Providence in the General Assembly, May, 1710, (R. I. Col. Records, IV. 87), may perhaps have been he, but even this is not certain.

sent, his mother's careful instruction appears from the slender accounts which have come down to us to have been thorough and comprehensive.¹ Her grandfather, Rev. William Wickenden, is said to have been not only a man of strong character, but a possessor of books² which may have descended to his granddaughter and her household. Within a few miles' distance³ was his uncle, Joseph Wilkinson, one of the earliest settlers west of the seven-mile line, "a surveyor, and much employed in this work in the town."⁴ That the young man received repeated lessons from him as well as from his grandfather in that practically useful accomplishment has been suggested,⁵ and is not improbable. About ten miles to the north-east, near the Wilkinson homestead⁶ by the banks of the Blackstone,⁷ lived until 1768, William Wilkinson, who is called "the most talented of the sons of Samuel Wilkinson, Senior, a minister among the Friends;"⁸ "a man of more than

1 Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 360.

3 Ibid., p. 359.

5 Ibid., p. 17.

7 Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 78.

2 Ibid., p. 78.

4 Beaman's "Seituate," p. 14.

6 See page 27.

8 Ibid., p. 73-76.

ordinary ability,"¹ and with "a mind well stored with knowledge."² But there is little doubt that Stephen's grandfather, Captain Samuel Wilkinson, already alluded to, who did not die until 1727, and who apparently had the vigorous and unimpaired intellect of a man in the prime of life even then,³ was an important factor in the shaping of the young man's career. Mention has already been made⁴ of Captain Wilkinson's prominence as a public man and of his experience gained in public affairs. But light is thrown on some other attainments of his in a letter written in 1722, by Gabriel Bernon, one of the founder of King's Church, Providence, (now St. John's), declaring that he "deserves respect for his erudition in divine and civil law, historical narrative, natural and politic."⁵

Captain Wilkinson was a Friend, and it is evident that the general sentiment among the Quakers of that day was not one of very hearty liking for wide

1 Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 73.

2 Ibid., p. 336.

3 Though he must have been between sixty and seventy. (Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 48).

4 See pages 29-31.

5 Printed in Updike's "Church at Narragansett," p. 53.

culture or literary training. Even in religious matters they held strongly to the all-sufficiency of the "inward light." Washington's favorite general, Nathanael Greene, has left on record a bit of his own experience in the Rhode Island Quaker training of thirty-five years later. He says: "I was educated a Quaker, and amongst the most superstitions sort. My father was a man of great piety." "But his mind was over-shadowed with prejudice against literary accomplishments."¹ His biographer adds that "the little book-shelf in the sitting-room corner," in the early home of the future General Greene, did not "contain anything to awaken a desire of knowing more;"² and he states in general that—"Literary culture was not in favor with the Quakers."³ In contrast with this, — which may be taken to represent the general condition at that time — it is interesting to find that in the early home of the future Governor Hopkins, and in that of his grandfather, — an undoubted Quaker, — whose influence upon him was continuous

1 Quoted in the "Life of Nathanael Greene," by George Washington Greene, I. 10.

2 Greene's "Nathanael Greene," I. 10-11.

3 *Ibid.*, I. 10.

and marked, an important feature was a "circulating library." That this library was at first¹ merely for the use of these associated families, is undoubtedly true; but there are circumstances which have led to the supposition that another "circulating library," known to exist in this same general locality in 1776,² and again in 1796,³ was its lineal successor. "The origin" of this, says one writer, "may have been from the family library of Ruth's parents;"⁴ (Governor Hopkins's grandparents). And another writer remarks;⁵ "It may, however, be considered certain that this⁶ public library was among the

1 How early, there is nothing to indicate with certainty. Certainly if used by Stephen Hopkins, as Wilkinson seems to point out, as early as 1710-20. ("Memoirs of the Wilkinson family," p. 78). A great-grandson of Captain Wilkinson, William Wilkinson, of Providence, was one of the early librarians (1785-88), of Brown University, of which he was a graduate in the class of 1783.

2 July 6, 1776. See "The diary of Thomas Vernon," (Rhode Island Historical Tracts, No. 13), p. 19.

3 "James Wilkinson," it is said, remembers "said library," about 1796. (Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 78).

4 Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 78.

5 Note by Sidney S. Rider, in R. I. Historical Tract, No. 13, p. 20.

6 That is, the one mentioned in 1776, by Thomas Vernon, and possibly identical with the earlier one.

earliest, if not the earliest in Rhode Island."¹ What

¹ "Among the earliest," in fact, in the country, as well as "in Rhode Island." The instances are not frequent in which such "public," or semi-public libraries are found to have existed early in the last century. There is an indistinct allusion, as early as 1653, to a "town library" in Boston. (Shurtleff's "Topographical and historical description of Boston," p. 400). In 1672 the town of Concord, Mass., instructed its selectmen, "that care be taken of the * * * bookes, that belong to the towne, that they be kept from abusive usage, and not be lent to persons more than one month at a time." ("Catalogue of the Free Public Library of Concord, Mass.," 1875, p. v.). In Philadelphia, a "parish library," under the control of Christ Church parish, was probably established in 1695. (Perry's "Historical collections of the American colonial Church," II. 6), [Pennsylvania]. At Annapolis, in Maryland, there is mention of "one and probably two public libraries as early as 1696-7;" and concerning one of these the request was made that "all persons desirous to study or read the books" might "have access thereto under proper restrictions." (Ridgely's "Annals of Annapolis," p. 92). At New York a "public library," "for the use of the clergy and gentlemen of New York and the neighboring provinces," existed in 1729;—perhaps in 1700. (Mr. Horace E. Scudder's chapter in the United States government report on "Public libraries," 1876, I. 14). Franklin's "subscription library" at Philadelphia was "founded in 1731, and incorporated in 1742." (Bigelow's "Benjamin Franklin," I. 222.) The Newport "subscription library," though started by an association formed for literary purposes under Bishop Berkeley's auspices in 1730, (King's "Historical sketch of the Redwood Library and Athenæum," p. 3), was as Mr. Hunter thinks a suggestion of Redwood himself, (*Newport Historical Magazine*, II. 86-88), and was incorporated as the Redwood Library in 1747. (See Records of the colony of Rhode Island, V. 227). Governor Hopkins's "subscription library" at Providence, was begun probably in 1750, (Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 366), was known as the Providence Library soon after 1754, (Records of the colony of Rhode Island, V. 378-79), and was incorporated 1798. Assuming that the last named institution, (still in exist-

these books were, it would be of uncommon interest to know, but we are debarred from that pleasure.¹ As would naturally be expected from this early bent given to his development, the taste for reading, and the faculty of using books to the best advantage, were characteristic of him throughout life.² He himself began early to collect a library of his own, which, says one who was able to examine it, "was

ence as the "Providence Athenæum"), is the earliest Providence library whose origin can be located with entire certainty, only six towns appear to have preceded this in the establishment of a similar library; — Boston, Concord, Philadelphia, Annapolis, New York, and Newport. It is hoped, however, that more light can be thrown on this earlier library, above alluded to.

1 "The writings," says the author of a short sketch of him, "of Spenser and Shakespeare, Milton, Jeremy Taylor, John Bunyan, Dean Swift, Addison," and others were extant. (Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 360-61). His own writings show a familiarity with more than one of these authors.

2 "He was a close and severe student, filling up all the spare hours of his life with reading." (Beaman's "Scituate," p. 21). "He attached himself in early youth to the study of books and men, and continued to be a constant and improving reader, a close and careful observer, until the period of his death." (Sanderson's "Biography of the signers," VI. 248). The same writer dwells upon "his habitual deep research, and the indefatigability with which he penetrated the recesses, instead of skimming the surface of things," (p. 248). President John Adams, who knew him late in life, says of him: "He," [Governor Hopkins], "had read Greek, Roman, and British history, and was familiar with English poetry, particularly Pope, Thomson, and Milton, and the flow of

large and valuable for the time."¹ And he had not been a citizen of Providence many years² before he found kindred spirits³ willing to unite with him in sending to England for such books as they found desirable.⁴ This was the origin of the Providence Library,⁵ the second public library in the colony, (for the Redwood Library at Newport antedated it by several years ;)⁶ and the fifth in New England.⁷

his soul made all of his reading our own, and seemed to bring to recollection in all of us of all we had ever read." (Works of John Adams, III. 12). He "was," says William Hunter, of Newport, "a man of deep and original thought and persevering reading." (*Newport Historical Magazine*, II. 141). Mr. S. S. Rider, in the note already cited, (R. I. Historical Tract No. 13, p. 20), says in connection with this library of Governor Hopkins's boyhood: "In these early years there came from this region very well educated and very able men; may we not reasonably infer that it was from this source that their learning came? They had not schools, they must have read these books, and thinking did the rest." His "close application to books" is cited among other circumstances, by Mr. Dwight, in connection with his "application to study," as accounting for his success. (Nathaniel Dwight's "Sketches of the lives of the signers of the Declaration of Independence," p. 69).

1 Beaman's "Situatue," p. 18. See also Mr. Beaman's article in the *Providence Journal*, May 26, 1855, where he mentions some of them.

2 As early as 1754.

3 Some of them are named in the R. I. Col. Records, V. 378.

4 Records of the colony of Rhode Island, V. 378-79.

5 See also Chapter IV.

6 The Redwood Library dates from 1747.

7 These five are: (1) the Boston library, variously known as the "town library," the "public library," etc., as early as 1653, ("Memorial history of

And yet all this is beside and apart from the question of his lack of educational advantages. The result in his case was that, to quote the language of President Manning, "possessing an uncommonly elevated genius, his constant and assiduous application in the pursuit of knowledge"¹ rendered him distinguished. But with less highly endowed minds this would not have been the case.² Even in his case, one can but reflect that if he attained such distinction without the discipline and aid of that training which John Adams³ not long after was enjoying as a Braintree boy in the schools of that town, and later at Harvard College; or Jefferson⁴ as a student

Boston," IV. 278); (2) the Concord town library as early as 1672; (3) King's Chapel Library (Boston) as early as 1608, (Greenwood's "History of King's Chapel," p. 55); (4) the Redwood Library, at Newport, 1747; (5) the Providence Library, at Providence, as early as 1754.

The Prince Library and the New England Library, in Boston, were not established until 1758. (U. S. Government report, I. 32-33).

¹ Printed in the *Providence Gazette*, July 16, 1785.

² It was only, to quote from Mr. Dwight, cited above, "the power of a strong mind, and application to study, by which a want of enlarged means for acquiring an early and systematic education," was, in his case, in a wholly exceptional manner, "overcome." (Dwight's "Signers," p. 69).

³ John Adams's Life by C. F. Adams. (Works, I. 13-14).

⁴ Morse's "Thomas Jefferson," p. 5-7.

at Williamsburgh in 1760;—the brilliancy of his career would have been even greater. No one realized this more than Stephen Hopkins himself. A self-educated man, he was conscious of the inevitable limitations and defects of the "self made man." "Having himself felt the want," says Wilkinson, "of instruction in early life, and afterwards realized the advantages of extensive attainments in knowledge by his own efforts, he was desirous that others should possess and enjoy the means for cultivating and improving their minds, on a liberal and broad foundation." To use his own language, "nothing tends so much to the good of the commonwealth as a proper culture of the minds"¹ of its youth. This was a doctrine for the application of which there was a wide field open in Rhode Island; and it is very much to be regretted that the pre-occupation of his energies by calls in other directions prevented his pressing it to an effective issue. Had not the revolutionary struggle been precipitated when it was, and had it not thus engrossed the universal attention, it

¹ Printed in Sanderson's "Biography of the Signers," VI. 261.

is by no means improbable that a public school system might have been secured in Rhode Island nearly half a century earlier than the time at which it actually was instituted. Nor is it less probable that Stephen Hopkins would have been the efficient actor in the movement.¹

These early years, however, were by no means unoccupied and unimproved. At the time when children in our day would be at school Stephen Hopkins was doubtless helping his father on his farm. At a later period he was putting in practice the principles of surveying which he had learned of his grandfather and his uncle. It is impossible not to see that, as in the case of the young Virginian surveyor, George Washington,² a little later, this

1 For a brief mention of the few and scattered efforts to establish schools in various parts of Rhode Island, from 1640 to 1828, see Barnard's "Report of public schools in Rhode Island," 1848, and Stone's "Manual of education," (Providence, 1874), p. 6-16. The "act to establish public schools" was passed at the January session, 1828.

2 In land surveying, says Irving, Washington "schooled himself thoroughly, using the highest processes of the art; making surveys about the neighborhood, and keeping regular field books." He adds that this occupation made him acquainted also with the country, the nature of the soil in various parts, and the value of localities." (Irving's "Life of Washington," ch. 3).

was an occupation sure to result in extending his acquaintance with different portions of the colony, and with men¹ as well as affairs. Not only did it bring him in contact with the various outlying localities, in such a way as to give him that intimate familiarity with the affairs of the colony at large, which is at all periods of his career very apparent; but it had the certainly no less important effect of bringing him into consultation and communication with the representatives of other colonies, when as was natural, his skill as a surveyor caused him to be appointed on the commissions to determine boundary questions.²

While but scanty light is thrown upon these years of his life by any records now accessible, it is apparent that another factor is to be recognized as entering into the careers of his brothers, and into his own as well, from a somewhat early period in this century,—namely, interest in commercial enterprises.

¹ It is significant that his early attention to quote from Sanderson's account, (VI. 248) was directed to the study not only "of books," but "of men." This never ceased to be true of him.

² E. I. Col. Records, IV. 559, 500; V. 15, 27, 35, 252, 255, 333, 348.

No such tendency had manifested itself in the generations preceding his, in his own ancestry. But not only was he himself very early interested in mercantile operations, (as early as 1740, probably, employing several vessels in constant service),¹ but his eldest brother, William, had even before this "engaged in a maritime life."² A younger brother, Samuel, became commander of a vessel early in life, and in the course of one of his voyages in 1744, died at Hispaniola, in the West Indies.³ But his brother Esek, still younger than Samuel, had "in the summer of 1738," "in the twentieth year of his age," bade "adieu to the old homestead." He "journeyed to Providence and became a sailor, soon rising to the position of captain."⁴ "He had found his place," says Mr. Beaman,⁵ the annalist of the Hopkins family, "and soon rose through all the grades of office to be the master and owner of vessels. He made Newport, then a place of considerable

1 In that year he was in partnership with Godfrey Malbone, of Newport, in the ownership of several vessels.

2 Hopkins genealogy, p. 12.

3 Ibid., p. 20.

4 Beaman's "Scituate," p. 16-17.

5 "Historical collections of the Essex Institute," II. 121.

commerce, his residence ;"¹ marrying² into a family already intimately identified with the striking development of that seaport. Stephen Hopkins himself was engaged in active co-operation not only with his brother, but with other Newport merchants.³ The tendency towards commercial enterprises which had thus manifested itself so strongly in this generation, was no less apparent in the next. Of the four sons⁴ of Stephen Hopkins who reached maturity, every one followed the sea, and all except Silvanus⁵ became commanders of vessels. The same is true of his nephews, Captain Christopher Hopkins,⁶ Captain John B. Hopkins,⁷ and Captain Esek Hopkins, Jr.⁸

This is a noteworthy record.⁹ That the govern-

1 He removed to Providence, however, in 1765. (Hopkins genealogy, p. 24)

2 He "married, Nov, 28, 1741, Desire, daughter of Ezeiel Burróugh's, of Newport." (Hopkins genealogy, p. 24).

3 Malbone, Whipple, Redwood, and the Wantons. See Chapter IV.

4 Rufus, John, Silvanus, and George. (Hopkins genealogy, p. 18, 28-33).

5 And he died "at the age of eighteen," when he "had advanced to the position of second-in-command." (Hopkins genealogy, p. 31).

6 Hopkins genealogy, p. 28.

7 Ibid., p. 35-36.

8 Ibid., p. 41-42.

9 See also Moses Brown's statistics, cited in Chapter V.

or's family should have thus identified itself so thoroughly with commercial pursuits is, of course, partly to be accounted for by the fact that the early manhood of Stephen Hopkins was contemporaneous with that long-delayed awakening on the part of the Providence community to the exceptional natural advantages of its position at the head of its admirable bay¹. It seems certain, also, that the mathematical training received from his grandfather and uncle, on which Moses Brown² dwells in more than one place, had a tendency to stimulate the study and practice of navigation,³ as well as surveying.

One other element in his early training remains to be noted; namely, its moral and religious side.

1 "Very slowly," says Mr. Dorr, "the old-farming town awakened to a perception of the commercial value of the Bay." "Until the seventeenth century was waning to its close, no sloops or schooners, save those of Massachusetts and New York, enlivened the waters of the bay." (Dorr's "Providence," p. 99).

2 See his letter to Robert Wain, in 1823, (in several places).

3 "There seems," says Wilkinson, "to have been a passion for this branch of mathematics, [surveying], which has been handed down from father to son." "No branch of study," it was maintained, "would be more useful. After surveying, navigation was recommended, as these two branches gave a person ascendancy on land and water." (Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 361).

There is nothing to indicate positively the religious predilections of his father. We have only the negative probability that he was not a Friend. A Friend, however, his mother was, as has been noted;¹ and Governor Hopkins himself, later in life,² identified himself very completely with that body of Christians, even to the extent, to quote from Moses Brown, his constant co-laborer, (and himself a Friend), of his having the Friends' meetings "sometimes held in the winter at his dwelling-house."³ It is hardly probable that his early life was passed as a member of the Friends' society. In fact, various occurrences in the early lives of William, Stephen, and Esek,

1 See page 29.

2 How late in life is not quite certain. His first and second wives were both Friends, but his second marriage only was solemnized in Friends' Meeting. ("Historical collections of the Essex Institute," II. 120). It was at this time, says the same account, (p. 120), that "he connected himself with the 'Friends.'" Yet his first wife was of unbroken Quaker ancestry, whether herself a Friend or not. His first marriage was by a justice of the peace, and appears to have taken place "at the house of the bride's father." (Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 363). Governor Hopkins severed his connection with the Society of Friends in 1773. (Records of Smithfield Monthly Meeting of Friends, 1773). For the circumstances of this occurrence see Chapter VIII., of this work.

3 Letter of Moses Brown to Robert Wain, in 1823.

render it very improbable that they were in membership with this most unworldly body of believers. With Stephen it seems clear that the rigorous and unremitting demands of the public service, — in itself a discipline, — had a natural tendency to sober him and regulate his life. From the time that its grasp was tightened on him, not to be relaxed until extreme old age, there is good reason to believe that his private life presented a high standard of blamelessness ; and his public life, if judged in the light of the times, suffers not very much by comparison. It would be strange indeed if the seething political distractions of the years 1755–68, should not have furnished detractions of the bitterest nature.¹ But there are other sources of testimony than these,² and in the simplicity of his demeanor, the hearty frankness and the calm dignity of manner which were generally characteristic of him, he reflected no undeserved credit on the training of his intelligent Quaker mother.

1 For a consideration of this point in detail, see Chapter VII.

2 Among others, Moses Brown, and President Manning, already cited.

He married¹ early,² however, before entering to any extent on public life. His wife, Sarah Scott, was, like him, of Quaker stock, her great-grandfather, Richard Scott,³ having been the earliest⁴ Rhode Island man to embrace the doctrines of Friends. On her mother's side she was the granddaughter of that Major Joseph Jenckes,⁵ who, in 1655, came from Essex County, Massachusetts, and

1 October 9, 1726. (Providence Record of births, marriages, etc., I. 48). They were not married in Friends' meeting, but by Sarah's uncle, William Jenckes, justice of the peace.

2 At the age of 19. His wife was of the same age. (Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 362).

3 Richard Scott, arriving among the "second-comers" in 1634, signed the well-known "compact" of Aug. 20, of that year. (R. I. Col. Records, I. 14). See the *Historical Magazine*, 2d series, VI. 225-29; also the "Proceedings of the Rhode Island Historical Society," 1880-81, p. 15.

4 "The first Quaker there," is the language of Governor Hopkins's family record. (Foster Papers, VI. 12). His wife, Catherine, was the daughter of Rev. Edward Marbury. (Winthrop's "History of New England," I. 293). Her sister Anne, was the celebrated Mrs. Hutchinson, of Boston and Newport. (See Palfrey's "New England," I. ch. 12).

5 The father of Major Joseph Jenckes settled at Lynn, Mass., and is named as "the first founder 'who worked in brass and iron' on the western continent." (Lewis's "History of Lynn," p. 208). Among his descendants are Governor Joseph Jenckes, named on the next page; Judge Rufus Hopkins, the son of Governor Hopkins; Nicholas Brown, the founder of Brown University, and John Carter Brown, his son; and the late Hon. Thomas A. Jenckes.

set up a forge near Pawtucket Falls.¹ Her mother's brother, Joseph Jenckes, a man of uncommon abilities, had been serving as Deputy-governor with the aged Governor Cranston, (who was now nearly seventy years of age), since 1715, with the exception of a single year.² At the very next election³ he was chosen Governor of Rhode Island. He was thus the first man, not a resident of Newport, who had ever held that position under the charter; and the only one, with one⁴ exception, until this young man who had just married his niece, was elected to the same position in 1755.⁵ Her father, Major⁶ Sylvanus Scott, occupied the homestead estate on the Blackstone river, at what is now Lonsdale,⁷ not very far from the Wilkinson and Hopkins homesteads.

1 See Goodrich's "Historical sketch of the town of Pawtucket," p. 18-30.

2 1721-22.

3 1727.

4 Governor William Greene, of Warwick, 1743-46, 1746-47, 1748-55. Also, afterwards, 1757-58.

5 Stephen Hopkins was elected to succeed Governor Greene, in May, 1755

6 "Major Sylvanus Scott" is the language of Governor Hopkins's family record in 1754. (Foster Papers, VI. 12). He is previously referred to as "Capt. Sylvanus Scott" in the list of members of the General Assembly, May, 1709. (R. I. Col. Records, IV. 67).

7 Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 61.

Sarah, the Governor's first wife, was the mother of all of his seven children; none having been born to him by his second wife.¹ These children, (whose names will be found in the Appendix),² were all born at his Scituate home, with the exception of the eldest.³ Rufus, the eldest, and John, the second son, were apparently named for the two younger brothers of their father. Silvanus (or Sylvanus), received his name from his maternal grandfather. Ruth received her grandmother's name. Seventy acres of land, at Chapumiscook, were immediately made over to Stephen and his wife by his father;⁴ which amount

1 "He was twice married, living with each of his wives just twenty-seven years." ("Historical collections of the Essex Institute," II. 120). His affection for the three children of his second wife, (his own step-children), appears to have been very marked. One of them writes: "Never was father kinder than he was to us children." ("Historical collections of the Essex Institute," II. 120).

2 See Appendix C.

3 Governor Hopkins's entry in his family record, (Foster Papers, VI. 12), with regard to Rufus is that he "was born in Cranston," — doubtless at his own birthplace at the Mashapaug homestead. This had been, since 1723, the home of Stephen's elder brother, Colonel William Hopkins. (Hopkins genealogy, p. 11).

4 Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 363.

was gradually increased from other sources;¹ and he was apparently destined to settle down in life as an up-country farmer.

1 From his grandfather, Samuel Wilkinson, he received ninety acres more, about the same time. (Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 363). This land was situated at Chapumiscook, in the vicinity of his father's residence. In 1723 his grandfather, Major William Hopkins, had died at his Mashapaug homestead; confirming this valuable estate, in all, about 200 acres, to his grandson, Col. William Hopkins, the elder brother of Stephen, but confirming the Chapumiscook property to Stephen's father. (See his will, printed in the Hopkins genealogy, p. 65-66). Two years later, 1725, his widow died, making this same grandson, William, the executor of the remainder of the property. (See her will, printed in the Hopkins genealogy, p. 71). In 1727, Capt. Samuel Wilkinson died, leaving no will. (Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 51). By the settlement of the estate, under his son Joseph as administrator, doubtless some portion came to his grandson, Stephen Hopkins. Stephen received by deed his father's Chapumiscook farm. (Essex Inst. Hist. Coll. II. 121). In 1738, William Hopkins, Stephen's father, died at Chapumiscook, dividing the remainder of his estate, by his will, equally between his two sons, Stephen and Esek. (See his will, printed in the Hopkins genealogy, p. 78). Mrs. Ruth Hopkins, their mother, had died sometime between 1721 and 1731. (Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 86). Esek relinquished his portion to Stephen not long after 1738, and left for sea. ("Essex Inst. Hist. Coll." II. 121).

CHAPTER IV.

ENTRANCE ON PUBLIC LIFE AS A COUNTRY MEMBER

The expectation that Stephen Hopkins would, like his father, quietly continue to till his fields in the seclusion of Chapumiscook was destined to disappointment. For five years nothing is heard of him,¹ but soon after attaining his majority he manifested a decided bent for public life. There can be little doubt that the disposition was an inherited one; and that he was following out the lines indicated by the careers of his two grandfathers, Major Hopkins² and Captain Wilkinson,³ in their earlier, though less active generations. When in 1731,⁴ the town of Providence, hitherto intact, was summarily divided⁵

¹ He was, however, no doubt, practising his duties as surveyor in various parts of the colony, as occasion might arise.

² See pages 16-25.

³ See pages 20-31, 34, 44.

⁴ Feb. 20, 1730-1.

⁵ R. I. Col. Records, IV. 442-45.

into four, William Hopkins's neighborhood at Chapumiscook was included within the town of Scituate, the south-western one of the four towns as then organized.

The first official action of the newly fledged township, in its first town meeting, was to choose a moderator; and the young man, "Stephen Hopkins, then only twenty-four years of age," was immediately chosen.¹ "This fact," says Mr. Beaman, "is significant of the very high opinion entertained of him in his native town,² as a man of business and competent to preside over public meetings."³ When the next annual town meeting came around,⁴ he was chosen town clerk of Scituate.⁵ The duties of this office, so important in a newly constituted town, from their comprising the registration of deeds, and other land records, were labors for which his training as a surveyor had eminently fitted him,⁶ and he

1 Beaman's "Scituate," p. 19.

2 "His native town." It was not his native town, though as is stated elsewhere, it has been widely so considered. See pages 9-10.

3 Beaman's "Scituate," p. 19.

4 March 20, 1731-2.

5 Letter of Moses Brown to Robert Wain in 1823.

6 "The town records of Scituate," says Beaman, (p. 21), "attest that he was familiar with drudgery."

held this place for ten years ; in fact until his removal from the town in 1742.¹ Meanwhile, however, his fellow-townsmen were exacting from him other service. At the annual town meeting in 1735,² he was chosen president of the town council.³ This position also he held by successive re-elections, until his resignation on account of removing to Providence.⁴ In 1736, he became one of the justices of the Court of Common Pleas,⁵ and also justice of the peace.⁶

The records of the town of Scituate for these ten years, in his handwriting, are still in good preservation, and are of interest from their legibility and neatness. Written before the nervous difficulty⁷ of his

1 Beaman's "Scituate," p. 19.

2 March 15, 1734-5.

3 Letter of Moses Brown, 1823.

4 Sanderson, VI. 227.

5 Records of Providence County Court of Common Pleas, I. 163.

6 See Appendix F.

7 "For a number of years previous" to 1776, writes Mr. Wain, (on the basis of Moses Brown's information), "he had been afflicted with a nervous affection," and when he wrote at all, which was seldom, he was compelled to guide the right hand with the left. The venerable Moses Brown, of Providence, has, on various occasions, acted as his amanuensis." (Sanderson's "Signers," VI. 245). "From my boyhood," says another writer, "in looking at the Declaration of Independence, I imagined the autograph of Stephen [Hopkins] indicated a poor penman." "What was my surprise," he adds, "in examining the records of the town of Scituate." (Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 365).

later years had begun to affect him, "every page of the first and succeeding books," says Mr. Wilkinson, "bears ample evidence of penmanship excelled by few, even masters of the art. At first for a few pages his recording lacked boldness, being a hair mark, but improvement manifests itself until the beautifully shaded letters are a close imitation of neatly engraved copper plate."¹ In 1734 and 1735, Stephen Hopkins, with two other citizens, secured from the General Assembly the action long needed, establishing the Plainfield road through Scituate on a new and improved location.² In 1737, the proprietors of Providence had occasion to prepare new maps and plats of the estates. Stephen Hopkins was therefore engaged "to revise the streets, and project a map of Scituate and Providence, which work required no little knowledge of mathematics, and was executed to the entire satisfaction" of the proprietors.³ In 1740, Stephen Hopkins "was

¹ Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 365.

² R. I. Col. Records, IV. 492, 512.

³ Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 365-66. The records of the proprietors also show that in 1738 a committee on revising the highways was appointed, (Stephen's brother being chairman), perhaps in continuation of the survey of 1737. (Dorr's "Providence," p. 139).

appointed surveyor of the proprietor's lands, and also acted as clerk to the proprietors."¹ He was thus closely identified with improvements in connection with the now rapidly advancing seaport, which "were most valuable, and mark a stage in the development of the town."²

But during these ten years Stephen Hopkins's services had been found useful not merely by his townsmen and the Providence proprietors, but by the colony. In 1731, when Scituate for the first time chose representatives to the General Assembly, Stephen Hopkins's uncle, Joseph Wilkinson, appears to have been the sole Representative for the first year.³ But in the next year⁴ the people of Scituate turned to their energetic young town clerk, Stephen Hopkins, and elected him one of the two representatives.⁵ From this time until 1738, inclusive, there was but one year,⁶ when he was not one of the Scituate representatives in the General Assembly, though with

1 Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 366.

2 Dorr's "Providence," p. 240.

3 R. I. Col. Records, IV. 440. The entry under 1731 in Beaman's Scituate, (Appendix, p. 1), is apparently an error.

4 1732.

5 R. I. Col. Records, IV. 468.

6 1734.

a new colleague in each new year.¹ In 1739 and 1740 he is named first on the list of justices of the Court of Common Pleas for Providence County,² having been first chosen one of the justices of that court three years before;³ but in 1741 he was again chosen representative from Scituate,⁴ and at this session he was chosen Speaker⁵ of the General Assembly. In 1741 he was appointed clerk of the Court of Common Pleas.⁶

The time of Stephen Hopkins's entrance into public life, and participation in the government of the colony, it will be noticed, was in the administration of Governor William Wanton;⁷ the first of the four⁸ members of the Wanton family⁹ who served the colony as governor. At more than one point it will appear that there was a cordial understanding be-

1 R. I. Col. Records, IV. 480, 507, 527, 534, 543. 2 See Appendix F.

3 See Records of the Providence Court of Common Pleas, I. 163, 201, 224, 256, 277, 303, 319, 341, 370, 384.

4 R. I. Col. Records, V. 21. 5 Ibid., V. 21. 6 See Appendix F.
7 1732-33.

8 William Wanton, 1732-33; John Wanton, 1734-40; Gideon Wanton, 1745-46, 1747-48; Joseph Wanton, 1769-75.

9 See Bartlett's "History of the Wanton family," (R. I. Historical Tract No. 3), for an extended account of this influential family.

tween this Newport family and Mr. Hopkins's supporters.¹ By no means the least distinguished of the four was the above-mentioned Governor William Wanton, who died in office in December, 1733. Dean Berkeley, one of the most distinguished of the long line of eminent men who have honored Newport by their residence there, says Mr. Bartlett, "dined every Sunday with Governor Wanton."² He was a most useful man and one to whom the commerce of Newport and of the colony in general may be considered to be largely indebted.³ Of his brother, Governor John Wanton, unfortunately, not so much can be said. The action by which he is best remem-

1 A son of the last mentioned Governor Wanton was deputy-governor in 1764-65, 1767-68, during Stephen Hopkins's governorship. (See Bartlett's "Wanton family," p. 80). Their commercial transactions were necessarily frequent. (See chapter V.) One circumstance which may have had some influence in this matter is, that the first three of them were, like Governor Hopkins, Friends. In the prolonged Greene and Wanton contest, 1743-55, it seems probable that Wanton had the support of Providence. This attitude of the Wantons is attributed, on the authority of the late Stephen Gould, of Newport, to a quarrel between the Wanton and Ward families, very early in the century.

2 Bartlett's "Wanton family," p. 34.

3 See Governor Cozzens's address at the "Dedication of the school-house erected by the trustees of the Long Wharf," Newport, 1863, p. 25.

bered is his opposition, as Deputy-governor, in 1731, to the eminently judicious disapproval¹ by Governor Jencks,² of the "act for emitting £60,000 in public bills of credit"³ in consequence of which the "hard money party" went out of power.⁴ A course of paper money emission, already found to be ruinous in its tendency, was thereupon pursued with an added impetus and recklessness which made the subsequent attempts of Rhode Island to establish a secure system of finance a most difficult undertaking.⁵ The name of Stephen Hopkins is found signed to a report presented to the General Assembly, February 27, 1749,⁶ which, with abundant opportunity for observ-

1 See R. I. Col. Records, IV. 466. The charter gave the governor no actual "veto" power.

2 Stephen Hopkins had married his niece in 1726. See pages 59-60.

3 See R. I. Col. Records, IV. 464. (Also IV. 466-61). The act is printed in the "Public laws," 1731, p. 231-34.

4 See Potter's work, "Some account of the bills of credit or paper money of Rhode Island," (R. I. Historical Tract, No. 8), p. 30.

5 "An attempt" was made in October, 1760, says Arnold, "to settle up the paper money office created at the time of the early bank issues." (Arnold's "Rhode Island," II. 224). But this was not done, and the exigencies of the war of independence found Rhode Island unprepared. Potter's "Bills of credit," above cited, examines the operations of the ten issues of this ruinous currency from 1710 to 1786.

6 At this same session he served on another committee in relation to the settlement of the outstanding issues. (R. I. Col. Records, V. 262-63).

ing the operation of this folly, remarks that the tendency is, to "daily sink the value of paper bills."¹

These were years of peace.² The home government had not been at war with any European power since 1713. Hostilities with Spain, however, were threatening,³ and this colony thought it necessary in 1732 to pass an act⁴ for strengthening Fort George, on Goat Island.⁵ This was made the excuse in 1733 for the issue of £104,000.⁶ The particular spot at which the ever vigorous boundary disputes were now agitated was the eastern line of the colony, comprising the "Attleborough gore," now Cumberland.⁷ At the May session, 1736, Stephen Hopkins

1 Potter's "Bills of credit," p. 188.

2 The "war of the Spanish succession," ("Queen Anne's war"), closed in that year.

3 The "war of the Austrian succession," (King George's war), in which England and Spain were again pitted against each other, actually broke out in 1744, twelve years later.

4 R. I. Col. Records, IV. 475-76.

5 This fort which seems to have changed its name with the accession of a new sovereign was originally created in Queen Anne's reign, in 1702, (Arnold's "Rhode Island," II. 5), and was known as Fort Ann in 1706. (R. I. Col. Records, III. 524).

6 Potter's "Bills of credit," p. 40.

7 At first a part of Rehoboth, in the Plymouth Colony, but from 1694 to 1746-7, included in Attleborough, Mass.

was appointed one of the committee of three,¹ (his brother, Colonel William Hopkins,² being another member,) to procure certain much needed evidences.

The sessions of the General Assembly at this time were held successively at Newport, Providence, Warwick, East Greenwich, and South Kingstown, but Newport was universally regarded as the metropolis of the colony, and by far the greater number of the sessions were held there. The Superior Court also, of which Stephen Hopkins was to be chosen only a few years later (1747)³ Assistant-justice, had been held exclusively⁴ at Newport.⁵ To a young man⁶ of

1 R. I. Col. Records, IV. 522.

2 Only occasional glimpses of Colonel Hopkins in his native town are to be found during this period. During much the larger part of the twenty years, 1730-50, he was at sea. (Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 350, 352).

3 R. I. Manual, 1882-83, p. 134. Records of the R. I. Superior Court, I. 1.

4 The plan of holding the sessions of this court in succession at the several court-houses in the colony dates from 1747. "Acts and laws," 1752, p. 28.

5 "The salutary influence of Newport," says Chief-justice Durfee, in the work already cited, "on the early history of the state, has never been fully appreciated." "The citizens of no other town," he elsewhere says, "understood so well or cultivated so assiduously the amenities of every day life. Its flourishing commerce put it more fully *en rapport* than was any other town, with all that was best in the intellectual life of the old world." (Durfee's "Gleanings from the judicial history of Rhode Island," p. 18; p. 17-18).

6 An interesting picture of the impression made by Newport in a few years

his marked capabilities, his quick instincts, and his lively appreciation of all phases of human life, there can be no doubt that the two or three occasions¹ in every year when his duties called him to Newport, were opportunities which he would by no means allow to pass unimproved. This, it must be remembered, was the Newport of Dean Berkeley,² and of the genial divines, Rev. Mr. Honyman³ and Rev. Dr. MacSparran;⁴ of Smibert, the painter,⁵ and a little later of the youthful Gilbert Stuart;⁶ of such

after, on the mind of a much younger man than Stephen Hopkins at this time, may be found in the life of General Greene:—"As the little sloop rounded Long Wharf, he caught his first glimpse of ships that but a few weeks before had been lying at a wharf in London or Bristol; * * * as he walked up Church Lane, he saw the steeple of Trinity rising high over Berkeley's organ, and farther on, the Corinthian portico of the Redwood Library, opening upon more books than it seemed possible to read in a lifetime." (Greene's "Nathanael Greene," I. 19).

1 As member of the General Assembly and judge of the Superior Court.

2 Berkeley was a resident here from 1729 to 1731. His "Alciphron" belongs to this period.

3 See Bull's "Memoirs of Rhode Island," 1729; Updike's Narragansett Church, p. 394-96. The spelling "Honeyman" is also rarely found.

4 See Updike's "Narragansett Church." For some communication which passed between Dr. MacSparran and Stephen Hopkins, see Moses Brown's letter to Robert Wain, 1823.

5 See Tuckerman's "American artist life," p. 41-43.

6 Stuart was sketching in Newport from 1769 to 1774. (Updike's "Narragansett church," p. 263-67).

merchant princes as the Wantons, the Malbones, Abraham Redwood¹ and Whipple;² of such accomplished historical scholars as Dr. Stiles³ and John Callender,⁴ and of scientific men like Joseph and Peter Harrison,⁵ and Dr. William Hunter.⁶ It was the period when such families as those of Wanton, Brenton and Vernon, Bull, Coddington, Brinley and Robinson furnished the cultivated society⁷ for which the town became eminent; and when the distin-

1 See Hunter's "Address before the Redwood Library," 1847. In *Newport Historical Magazine*, II. 88-89.

2 Whipple was Hopkins's second cousin. He married Redwood's daughter.

3 Dr. Stiles's voluminous collections remain unpublished. There is a selection from different portions of them (in manuscript) in the possession of the Rhode Island Historical Society. (Foster Papers, IX. 45). It comprises more than 40 pages. There is a reference to Governor Hopkins in a letter to Dr. Stiles, in 1772. (Kingsley's "Ezra Stiles," p. 10).

4 His "Historical discourse," reviewing the century, 1638-1738, comprises the 4th volume of the "Collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society."

5 The latter was the architect of the Redwood Library, and had been, in England, an associate architect in the erection of Blenheim House. (King's "Historical Sketch," p. 4). Both of them served on various committees in behalf of the colony where accuracy of measurement was requisite, (in some instances in association with Stephen Hopkins). (R. I. Col. Records, V. 181, 189, 325, 333, 512; VI. 13).

6 See Dr. C. W. Parsons's sketch of "Early votaries of physical science in Rhode Island." (To be printed in R. I. Hist. Soc. Collections, volume VII).

7 *Newport Historical Magazine*, II. 145-46.

guished literary club¹ which was founded by Berkeley; and "which numbered among its members such men as Callender, Ellery,² Ward,³ Honyman, Checkley, Updike,⁴ and Johnston," was a most potent influence in fixing upon the society of Newport that character for refined and dignified culture which it has since borne. "A similar auspicious influence," says Dr. King,⁵ "on the character, intelligence and public spirit of the town, on her rising statesmen, her lib-

1 *Newport Historical Magazine*, II. 87. Stephen Hopkins was himself a member of this "literary club," and was therefore brought into exceptional intimacy with these men. He was the only Providence man in the club. See the list of its members printed in the "Catalogue of the Redwood Library," 1860, p. 3. It is named as the "Philosophical Society."

2 Afterwards Hopkins's colleague at Philadelphia.

3 Father of Samuel Ward, Hopkins's colleague at Philadelphia.

4 Col. Updike was a colleague of Governor Hopkins at the Albany congress of 1755, which, unlike that of the previous year, confined itself strictly to Indian affairs. (R. I. Col. Records, V. 464). A piece of silver ware presented to him by Berkeley, with whom he was very intimate, on the Dean's departure from Newport, still remains in the Updike family. (Updike's "Memoirs of the Rhode Island bar," p. 63.

5 King's "Historical sketch," p. 5. Among other noteworthy facts, he mentions that the existence of this library at Newport, "attracted many of our literary men in the English colonies who availed themselves of its treasures, while enjoying the delights of our climate. From the Carolinas, from the West Indies, from New York and Boston, they came here as to a paradise on earth to replenish their stock of health and their stores of knowledge." (King's "Historical sketch," p. 5).

eral merchants, her cultured scholars, and her able lawyers, must be attributed to the Redwood Library."¹

While thus drawn more and more into public life, his home life was going on in its own way. His farm was becoming more valuable by increased cultivation as well as by increase in acres;² he was introducing improved means of communication³ between it and "The Neck;" he had by 1740 become the father of seven children;⁴ his uncle (and comparatively near⁵ neighbor,) Joseph Wilkinson, who had built, perhaps in the year before his own marriage,⁶ "one of the finest houses in Scituate,"⁷ had added four more to his already large family of children,⁸ and acquired

1 Stephen Hopkins himself no doubt made frequent and extended use of the Redwood Library. (See Mason's "Newport Illustrated," p. 62).

2 See pages 61-62.

3 See his action with regard to the Plainfield road, page 66. Also compare B. I. Col. Records, IV. 492, 512.

4 Hopkins genealogy, p. 18. In his own family record, (Foster Papers, VI. 12), one, (Rufus), is to have been born "in Cranston," and four "at Scituate," and in the remaining two instances the place is not mentioned.

5 Within a few miles.

6 "Erected in 1725 or thereabouts." (Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 348).

7 "The first one finished off in panel work," Wilkinson adds; and he states that it stood 120 years. (Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 348).

8 He had fifteen in all. (Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 114).

about a thousand acres of land;¹ and his remoter cousins, the Hopkins's, (the descendants of his grandfather's brother Thomas,) had settled in large numbers near his own home in Scituate.² But by 1740 he appears to have become the only member of his own immediate family remaining there. His brother, Colonel William Hopkins, had removed to the Mashapaug homestead soon after 1723.³ His brothers, Rufus, John, and Samuel, appear to have been at sea,⁴ during most of the time, and one of them⁵ was probably dead in 1741. His sister Hope had married in 1736 Henry Harris,⁶ and removed nearer⁷ the Neck settlement. His sister Abigail had married⁸ Nathan Angell,⁹ who was one of the earliest tradesmen¹⁰ in the Town Street, near Angell Street.

1 Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 348.

2 Hopkins genealogy, p. 15-16.

3 See pages 61-62.

4 See page 64.

5 Rufus. See Hopkins genealogy, p. 19.

6 Hopkins genealogy, p. 20.

7 What is now Johnston, says Mr. Holbrook, "had probably been her home throughout her married life." (Hopkins genealogy, p. 23).

8 The exact date is not preserved. It was before 1744. (See "Genealogy of the descendants of Thomas Angell," p. 44).

9 In the 4th generation from Thomas Angell, the companion of Roger Williams. (See Angell genealogy, p. 44).

10 Angell genealogy, p. 21, 44.

His brother Esek had, soon after 1738,¹ left Scituate and "having found" at Providence, says Wilkinson,² "a vessel ready to sail to Surinam, he enlisted as a 'raw hand,' having disposed of his gun for a Spanish four-pence." "His practical knowledge of navigation," the same writer adds,³ was what gave him "pre-eminence on the sea," and marrying at Newport in 1741,⁴ the connection of this brother with Scituate was severed forever. Death also had removed from Stephen's companionship his grandfather, Samuel Wilkinson, who had apparently died in less than a year after his own marriage in 1726, (August 27, 1727);⁵ his uncle, Joseph Wilkinson, who died in 1740; his mother at some time previous to March, 1731;⁶ and his father in 1738.⁷ He was indeed left alone, in the neighborhood.⁸ This, how-

1 On the death of his father.

2 Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 381.

3 Ibid., p. 382.

4 Ibid., p. 383.

5 Ibid., p. 51.

6 A quit-claim deed from Colonel William Hopkins to his uncle, Joseph Wilkinson, dated Feb. 23, 1730-1, speaks of his "deceased mother, Ruth Hopkins." (Printed in the Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 354).

7 Hopkins genealogy, p. 11.

8 His kinsmen were now chiefly in Newport and Providence. At Newport, Joseph Whipple, Jr., deputy-governor in the next year, and his brother, Cap-

ever, may not be the only reason for his removal to Providence in 1742. He had, it is true, been applying himself to farming¹ with that energy which invariably characterized him; but the conviction appears to have been gradually forcing itself upon him, that commercial enterprises offered a field for his best efforts. His relations with Crawford and Angell in Providence,² and with Malbone,³ Redwood,⁴ and Whipple⁵ in Newport, engaged as they were in the

tain Esek Hopkins, with his family. At Providence, his father's cousin, Col. Joseph Whipple, one of the founders of King's Church, in 1722, and his brother-in-law, Nathan Angell, both of them extensively engaged in trade. Several of Col. Whipple's family also had married into the Fenner and Crawford families; one marrying Captain John Crawford, and another William Crawford, "whose inventory" in 1720, says Mr. Dorr, "was the largest that had yet been exhibited to the court of probate." (Dorr's "Providence," p. 167). His wife's kinsmen also were here; the ex-governor, Joseph Jencks, (of what is now Pawtucket), her uncle, and the families of the four brothers, Brown, connected by several intermarriages with the families of Scott and Jenckes. With all these Stephen Hopkins's relations were close and intimate from this time forward.

1 A bit of light is thrown on his success by the record of payment of bounties offered by the General Assembly for the heaviest crops of flax. From these it appears that in 1733, Stephen Hopkins raised 945¼ lbs. of flax, and manufactured 104 lbs. of hemp. (Potter's "Bills of credit," p. 78).

2 See Chapter V.

3 See page 64.

4 Abraham Redwood was the father-in-law of Joseph Whipple, Jr.

5 His second cousin, Joseph Whipple, Jr., of Newport. Whipple was

flourishing commerce of that time, may have drawn him to the idea, and the strikingly successful nautical¹ experiences of his brothers undoubtedly emphasized the tendency. Perhaps, however, the direct occasion for his decision was his appointment as clerk of the Court of Common Pleas of Providence County in 1741,² preceded by his election as speaker of the General Assembly in the same year.³ To do full justice to the new duties thus imposed upon him, it seemed essential that he should be settled in some more accessible locality than Scituate. The Chapumiscook farm was accordingly offered for sale ;⁴

apparently in the direct line for the governorship, and doubtless would have reached this honor earlier than Hopkins, in 1765, except for his unfortunate but honorable business failure. (Arnold's "Rhode Island," II. 186).

1 Their father, William Hopkins, in penetrating the forest about 1708, and establishing his home a dozen miles from the sea coast, perhaps flattered himself that he was thus making it certain that his "brood" would turn out farmers. Instead of that, they "took to the water like ducks." He had not been in his grave three years, when the last one of them appears to have left the Scituate hills; and within the next forty years his descendants were sailing the ocean in all directions; twelve of them in command of vessels.

2 Records of Providence County Court of Common Pleas, I. 433.

3 E. I. Col. Records, V. 19.

4 "He sold his farm in Scituate in 1742." (Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 366). It was perhaps not entirely disposed of until 1744, in which year part of his

an estate was purchased¹ in Providence, on the Town Street;² and thereupon began that complete identification of himself with the interests of this town, which caused him to be regarded, almost from the very first, as her leading citizen.

homestead was bought by John Hulet. (Beaman's "Scituate," p. 23). On this estate the next owner, Lieutenant Governor William West, built, "in 1775," "the largest and most showy house that had ever been erected in Scituate." (Beaman's "Scituate," p. 25).

1 April 15, 1742. (Moses Brown's letter to Robert Wain, 1823).

2 The present corner of South Main and Hopkins Streets.

CHAPTER V.

A CITIZEN OF PROVIDENCE.

In the preceding chapter¹ allusion is made to the immediate recognition of Stephen Hopkins as a leading citizen of Providence, by his contemporaries. We may go farther than that, at this remove in order of time, and pronounce him the most distinguished citizen to whom she has given birth. Roger Williams first saw the light on the other side of the Atlantic, Nathanael Greene, whose name is held in deepest honor throughout the state, was born in Warwick, and was never a resident of Providence. The great names of Berkeley and Channing have inseparable associations with Newport, but have none with Providence. But Stephen Hopkins was born on her soil, was thoroughly identified with her interests,

¹ See page 61.

and was one of her most assiduous public servants, to whose exertions she is most deeply indebted. The state of Rhode Island has erected a substantial monument¹ over his remains in the now almost historic cemetery² which contains them. It would be a fitting act for the city of Providence to perpetuate his memory by a suitable memorial at the spot which marks his birthplace.

One characteristic of Governor Hopkins stands out with great distinctness, in connection with his tendencies to expansion, already noted,³ which led him constantly to widen the sphere of his duties, and broaden the scale of his operations. It is, that in passing to new surroundings, he did not abandon the old. He was able in almost every instance to retain his hold on what he had once secured, and this goes far to explain the success of his career. It throws especial light on his very noteworthy success as a leader of public opinion.⁴ Thus in removing from the country to Providence, he did not lose his hold

1 For the inscription carved upon its tablets, see Appendix.

2 The North Burying Ground.

3 See pages 52-53.

4 See Chapters VI and VIII.

on "the country element." On the contrary, that element appears as a noteworthy feature in his following, through the whole of his career, up to its very close. Nor in exchanging the duties of a citizen of Providence for those of governor of the colony, did he abandon his direct and intimate interest in the development of Providence. And once more, in passing from the sphere of his colonial duties in the smallest of the original thirteen, to a position of influence in the councils of the United Colonies, he still carried with him an unremitting and devoted attachment to Rhode Island interests.

Yet the student of his career cannot fail to remark the peculiar sense in which he may almost be said to have identified himself with Providence. Although from the period of his first governorship his interest in all parts of Rhode Island was intelligent and constant, and while his candidacy always had strong and earnest supporters in other parts of the colony, yet there is no doubt that he took a peculiar and almost affectionate interest in the development of Providence. It is somewhat significant that one of the most appreciative statements of this fact is found in

an address before the Redwood Library in 1847, by a distinguished native of Newport, the late William Hunter. "Stephen Hopkins," says Mr. Hunter, "taught Providence her capabilities, and calculated, rather than prophesied her future growth and prosperity."¹ This is striking language, but no one who has studied the period in question will fail to recognize its truth and fitness. It is true that natural conditions were powerful aids in the same direction. It is true that the existence of the magnificent inland sea, at the head of which the town had grown up, made it impossible that, sooner or later, the commercial instinct and the habit of sailing with cargoes, should not become almost second nature to its enterprising and adventurous citizens.² The wonder is that she was so late in moving. Newport had

¹ *Newport Historical Magazine*, II. 142.

² Tristram Burges, in 1836, wrote as follows to Moses Brown: "The people of this state must have been much engaged on the sea, before 1772; or your brother John [John Brown] could not at that time have collected fifty young men at Providence in one evening, to embark with him in the destruction of the Gaspee." (Manuscript letter in possession of the Rhode Island Historical Society, Jan. 12, 1836).

many years the start of Providence, as a port in whose waters the trade of distant nations found a harbor.¹ But Providence, to quote once more from Mr. Hunter, was "now beginning to appreciate * * * the safety and superiority of its position at the head of navigation."² And by 1767, to quote from the report of a committee made to the town in a subsequent year :

"The town of Providence was in its most flourishing circumstances. Its trade was open to almost all parts of the world, its navigation extensive and prosperous, its stores and warehouses crowded with all sorts of merchandize, its streets thronged with foreigners who came hither to advance their fortunes by trade and commerce."³

When Stephen Hopkins became a citizen of Prov-

1 So early as Dec. 5, 1706, Gov. Samuel Cranston wrote to the Board of Trade, in answer to a series of inquiries: "About twenty years past, we had not above four or five vessels that did belong to this colony, which hath since gradually increased to the number of twenty-nine," all but "two or three" of which belonged to Newport. He goes on to attribute the reason of this increase "to the inclination the youth" on that island, "have to the sea." (R. I. Col. Records, IV. 58). Moses Brown mentions a bill of lading, dated in 1690, of a cargo of "the good ship, called the *Elizabeth of Mary*," consigned to Caleb Cranston, brother of the governor. (Letter of Jan. 12, 1830).

2 *Newport Historical Magazine*, II. 141.

3 Staples's "Annals," p. 282. John Brown was chairman, and David Howell was probably writer of the report.

idence, in 1742, he found it an inconsiderable settlement¹ of less than 4,000 inhabitants.² It had no custom-house;³ no post-office;⁴ no town-house;⁵ no school-houses;⁶ no college;⁷ no library;⁸ no public market-house,⁹ no "state-house," (Newport being the "Metropolis" of the colony;) no bank nor insurance office;¹⁰ no printing-press and no newspaper;¹¹

1 For several years after this, the colony tax assessed upon Providence was less not only than that of Newport, but than that of the farming town of South Kingstown. (Staples's "Annals," p. 200).

2 Six years later it was 3,452. (Douglass's "Summary," II. 80). Compare also R. I. Public Documents, 1870, No. 6, p. 29.

3 "We never had in this town," says Moses Brown, "a custom-house office until after the revolution;" or rather after the ratification of the United States constitution by Rhode Island, in 1790. (Letter to T. Burges, Jan. 12, 1836).

4 This was not established until about 1758. (Dorr's "Providence," p. 100; Staples's "Annals," p. 614).

5 The town was, however, allowed to hold town-meetings in the county-house, erected 1720-31. (Staples's "Annals," p. 191-92).

6 No mention of a "town school-house" appears on the town records until 1752. (Staples's "Annals," p. 495.)

7 University Hall was built, 1770.

8 The Providence Library was founded at least as early as 1754. (R. I. Col. Records, V. 378-70).

9 None was erected until 1773. (Staples's "Annals," p. 201-2).

10 The first bank was in 1791; the first insurance office in 1709.

11 William Goddard set up his printing-press in 1762, when he began the issue of the *Providence Gazette*. Thomas's "History of printing in America," II. 83. (Am. Antiqu. Soc. ed.).

but four buildings for religious worship;¹ no paved street;² one mill; three taverns; a draw in the bridge at Weybosset; a ship-yard just above it,³ on the west side; a row of wharves just above it on the east side; a little back from these, the Town Street with its pretty continuous line of dwellings and shops, from Weybosset Bridge to the northern slope of Stampers Hill; south of the bridge, dwellings and shops, but much fewer; and beyond the crest of the hill back of the Town Street, wide expanses of fields unbroken by any dwellings except at very rare intervals;⁴ on the West Side and on Smith's Hill a still wilder and less tenanted territory.⁵

1 The old Baptist meeting-house, near the corner of Smith Street, King's Church at the corner of Church Street, the Friends' meeting-house, at Meeting Street, and the Congregational meeting-house, on the site of the present Court-house.

2 There was no paving until 1761. (R. I. Col. Records, VI. 260, 286-87).

3 That of Nathaniel Brown, established about 1711. (Dorr's "Providence," p. 117-18).

4 Benefit Street was not fully laid out until 1758. (Dorr's "Providence," p. 152).

5 No painting or drawing has preserved for us the aspect of this early town. There is, however, a brief, concise and graphic pen-photograph of it in two lines of a printed broadside of this date, preserved in the cabinet of the Rhode Island Historical Society: (Foster Papers, VII. 2).

Stephen Hopkins, in making his home in Providence, had no thought of returning to the Mashapaug homestead,¹ which had furnished him a birthplace. He had left the idea of an agricultural life far behind him, and was now ready to bend all his energies to developing a successful commercial business, and he made his choice of a home with reference to this point. The Town Street below Weybosset Bridge, as we have just indicated,² was at this time much more sparsely settled than above the bridge. Nevertheless, it was here, on what became the corner of a street or lane³ which now perpetuates his name,

" This pleasant town does border on the flood,
Here's neighboring orchards, & more back the wood."

The broadside is entitled "A journal of a survey of Narragansett Bay, made in May and June, 1741, by order of royal commissioners, by one of the surveyors. [W. C.]." (William Chandler, of Connecticut).

1 The Hopkins farm was situated two miles southwest of Weybosset Bridge, on the West Side. (See Appendix D).

2 See page 88.

3 Nearly fifty years later, in 1791, probably, the way which leaves the Town Street at the site of his house, received the name of Bank Lane, (Dorr's "Providence," p. 228), on the establishment at the opposite corner of the earliest bank incorporated in Rhode Island, the second in New England. It is not unlikely that there was no lane when Stephen Hopkins built his house; for "a new way" was ordered here June 11, 1752. See Blue Book, Streets revised, 1771, (Town Records). Yet there may have been a foot-path. The building,

that he proceeded to build his house.¹ He was too far-sighted not to see that it was only a question of time when the draw in the bridge must be abandoned,² when ships could no longer pass through to the wharves of the upper Town Street,³ and when

by the way, is still standing, having been, in 1808, (see Dorr's "Providence," p. 163), moved up the hill in the rear, (the present No. 9, Hopkins Street); and it is a fact of significant interest that the spot which was for more than forty years, the home of the father of the commercial prosperity of Providence, has, since 1806, been the site of the office of the most eminent firm in the commercial history of Rhode Island,—Brown & Ives.

In 1805, by order of the town council, the former Bank Lane was made Hopkins Street, and this name it still most appropriately bears.

1 He "built," says Moses Brown, "the house he lived and died in, in Providence." (Letter to Robert Waln, 1823).

"The entrance," says Mr. Beaman, "was by a flight of steps on Hopkins Street that opened into a good sized entry in which was a fire place, and a large arm chair, leather bottom and leather back." "The garden back of the house * * * ran up to the bounds of the present location of the house." (*Providence Journal*, May 19, 1865).

2 The draw was for the last time rebuilt in 1792, but its removal had been a question very warmly discussed for many years previous. (Dorr's "Providence," p. 224; also p. 223).

3 About the middle of the century, "the lower part of the cove" was "the scene of the greatest commercial activity. On its east side was water deep enough for brigs and barques, making voyages to London and Dublin." Cargoes were unloaded "at the warehouses which were behind the residences or offices of their owners, on the Town Street. At the corner of a long dock or slip of considerable depth and capacity, now filled up and called Steeple Street, was the office of Clark & Nightingale." The house of William Russell was near the foot of Meeting Street. (Dorr's "Providence," p. 198, 199).

the scene of commercial activity would be from the bridge at Market Square,¹ to Fox Point. He lived to witness the most of these changes.

THE COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF PROVIDENCE.

Having forecast, in his own mind, the commercial future which this town had before it, and accurately divined the channels through which it was to come,

1 "Commerce," says Mr. Dorr, "aided the movement of the town towards a new and more convenient centre. When we first gain a clear view of it from the columns of the *Gazette*, [1762], the advance had already begun." (Dorr's "Providence," p. 198). By 1768 the post-office had been removed to what is now Market Square and vigorous efforts were put forth to improve the square and remove certain obstructions. The market-house, combining as in more than one instance in Old and New England, the functions of a commercial exchange and a building for municipal offices, was not erected until 1773. Of the arches under the civic building of Udine, on the Adriatic, Mr. Edward A. Freeman remarks: "The pillared space forms the market-place of the city." And he goes on to add that, as in Southern Europe, so in Great Britain, "Many a English market-town has an open market-house with arches, with a room above for the administration of justice." (Freeman's "Sketches from the subject and neighbour lands of Venice," p. 31, 32). (Compare also *The Nation*, XXXIV. 130). Providence is not the only American town, moreover, where this interesting combination of an arched market-place with a building for municipal purposes has existed. Not to speak of Faneuil Hall, in Boston, the ancient municipal buildings of Salem, Newport, and other New England towns furnish similar instances. The present City Hall of Providence replaced the Market-house in 1878.

Stephen Hopkins proceeded to do what lay in his own power to bring in the new order of things. Mention is elsewhere made of the public spirited citizen, Nathaniel Brown,¹ who had come to Providence about 1711, from Massachusetts, and was engaged in ship-building, on Weybosset Neck,² for nearly twenty years.

"His vessels," says Mr. Dorr, "were among the first which sailed from Providence for the West Indies and the Spanish Main."³ "The first vessels, such as Nathaniel Brown built, (1711-1730,) were sloops and schooners, the largest of some sixty tons burden. These carried the earliest colonial exports,⁴ horses, timber, barrel-staves, and hoop-poles, to the West Indies and the Spanish Main."⁵

The lack of custom-house records is a serious obstacle to the comprehensive tracing of the beginning

1 See the "Historical discourse" on the 150th anniversary of St. John's parish, p. 48.

2 The town granted him "one-half acre on Waybosset Neck, on salt water." (Dorr's "Providence," p. 117).

3 Dorr's "Providence," p. 118.

4 Mr. Dorr says: ("Providence," p. 137) "Upon the fisheries which were sources of the earliest wealth of Massachusetts, the Plantations did not venture." They certainly did not to a large extent, but several allusions to fisheries will be found in the letter of Moses Brown.

5 Dorr's "Providence," p. 136-37.

and growth of the commerce of this seaport. Providence, in fact, never attained the distinction of being a port of entry,¹ until brought under the jurisdiction of the United States government, in 1790.² Until then the Newport collector and the Newport custom-house, were made to serve the purpose of the whole of Rhode Island. "During the first half of the last century, therefore," says Mr. Dorr, such enterprise is only to be traced "in the lengthening rolls of tax-payers, in the ampler probate invento-

1 There seems, however, to have been a local officer, called a "naval officer," so early as 1680, or 1682. (Letter of Moses Brown, Jan. 12, 1036). An ordinance of the General Assembly in 1682, ordered "that there shall be in the towne of Newport (*and elsewhere* the Governor of this collony shall judge meet) * * a navall office." (R. I. Col. Records, III. 110. See also IV. 236, 439; V. 71, 74). This officer was appointed, however, not by the home government, but by the colony. Moses Brown, in the letter just cited, mentions Jeremiah Olney and Ebenezer Thompson as having held this position. An officer appointed by "the commissioner of His Majesty's revenue," in Boston was known as "the surveyor of the King's customs." Though living at Providence, he reported at Newport. "Each new vacancy," says Mr. Dorr, "called forth angry complaints, that none but a Massachusetts man was ever deemed worthy of this royal favour." (Dorr's "Providence," p. 218). Compare also a "Searcher's notice," in the *Providence Gazette*, Nov. 26, 1763.

2 President Washington, in 1790, appointed Jeremiah Olney collector of the port of Providence, and Theodore Foster naval officer. (Stone's "John Howland," p. 166).

ries," and similar instruments, "preserved in the public archives."¹

Fortunately, however, the extensive business of one of the most enterprising families² of this period has secured a record, brief and incomplete, to be sure, but very welcome in the absence of the official custom-house records. Moses Brown, in a letter written in 1836,³ carefully copied a list of "84 vessels before the year '60"⁴ "named [as he said] in our books," and these eighty-four may be taken as approximating very closely to the total then owned here. To this family of "four brothers,"⁵ every one of them

1 Dorr's "Providence," p. 137.

2 The Brown family.

3 This letter has already been cited several times in these pages. See pages 85, 86, 87. It was written Jan. 12, 1836, in answer to a letter of Hon. Tristram Burges, who had been invited to deliver an address before the Rhode Island Historical Society, on the early commerce of Providence; and who turned most naturally to his venerable friend, then 97 years of age, for trustworthy information on that point. Mr. Burges's letter contained eight separate queries, to which Moses Brown replied in a letter of nearly thirteen foolscap pages of manuscript. At the end of his letter he adds the list of vessels above alluded to. Both Mr. Burges's letter, and Moses Brown's answer, copied by himself, are in the possession of the Rhode Island Historical Society.

4 1760.

5 Nicholas, Joseph, John, and Moses.

engaged in mercantile pursuits,¹ as their father² and uncle³ had been before them, the town is not a little indebted for a decided impetus in the commercial advances now going forward. In them Stephen Hopkins found from the very outset the most intelligent of coadjutors, in developing his far-reaching plans. With Nicholas, the eldest, the father of the chief benefactor of Brown University, his intercourse was close and constant, in service on committees for patriotic purposes,⁴ in business enterprises,⁵ and in family relationship, their wives being cousins.⁶ With

1 The firm of Brown & Ives, still in existence, may be traced back through successive changes, to the mercantile partnerships formed by these brothers.

2 James Brown, the great-grandson of Chad Brown, Roger Williams's contemporary and associate, and son of Rev. James Brown, was born in Providence in 1698. "He engaged in active business, and became a successful merchant of Providence, thus laying the foundations of the wealth and prosperity of his descendants." (Guild's "James Manning," p. 156).

3 Obadiah Brown was a younger brother of James, first mentioned. He had died three years before Stephen Hopkins removed to Providence. He became one of the largest ship owners of these earlier years.

4 For instance on the committee of correspondence, appointed in 1704. (R. I. Col. Records, VI. 403).

5 In the management of Furnace Hope. (See Arnold's "Rhode Island," II. 261).

6 Sarah Scott, Governor Hopkins's wife, and Rhoda Jenckes, the wife of Nicholas Brown, were descendants of Richard Scott, and the same time, of Joseph Jencks, the second of the name.

Joseph he was connected in various literary and scientific projects ; and he was associated with him in the observation of the transit of Venus, in 1769.¹ With the energetic and patriotic John Brown,² whose name, as has been pointed out by another writer, receives more "frequent mention" than any other, in the records of the colony from 1776 to 1779, "in connection with important committees and various public services,"³ he was in unbroken and intimate connection. With Moses, the youngest, however, the intimacy was perhaps greater than in either of the other three instances. They were both Friends. They were both deeply interested in mathematical studies. They were both unusually devoted to promoting public education in Providence.⁴ They were both assiduous readers and

1 See Benjamin West's pamphlet, "An account of the observation of Venus upon the sun," Providence, 1769.

2 Also connected by marriage with Governor Hopkins, to whose second wife, Anne Smith, his own wife, Sarah Smith, was niece.

3 Guld's "James Manning," p. 167.

4 See Staples's "Annals," p. 496-500. Sanderson's "Biography of the signers to the declaration of Independence," VI. 251. Guld's "James Manning," p. 174.

students,¹ perhaps among the most widely read citizens of the town. Moses Brown, in fact, retiring early² from active business, with an ample fortune, found abundant leisure for what Governor Hopkins was obliged to dismiss to some spare hour³ snatched from much-needed rest. This abundant leisure, moreover, he frequently devoted with self-sacrificing generosity, to his friend, Governor Hopkins; acting "on various occasions" "as his amanuensis, on committees of the assembly, in the correspondence of the committee of safety, as well as in matters of business."⁴

Moses Brown's commercial review of nearly twenty-five years shows the pre-eminence of his own family throughout the whole period.⁵ So early as 1736, he says, "I find by my ancestors'⁶ books, they

1 Sanderson's "Biography of the signers," VI. 248.

2 Guld's "James Manning," p. 173.

3 In his public life, says Beaman, he filled up "all the spare hours of his life with reading." (Beaman's "Scituate," p. 21).

4 Sanderson's "Biography of the signers," VI. 245-46.

5 "From 1730 to 1748," he says, "I find fifteen," owned by "the Browns," "and from 1748 to 1760 about sixty vessels."

6 Doubtless James and Obadiah Brown. The latter owned the sloop Dolphin, so early as 1733.

owned," (or were principally concerned in) "four sloops that used the West India trade." Of one of these, his father-in-law, (and kinsman),¹ Obadiah Brown, was captain and owner in part. Of these vessels the majority were doubtless among those built by Nathaniel Brown before 1730,² but it is probable that that builder had now been succeeded by Roger Kinnicut.³ Later he cites the sale of a brigantine in 1748, which was owned in shares, by as many as ten owners, to show the prevalence of this custom at first;⁴ which was gradually abandoned as the scale of operations broadened. The years from 1730 to 1756 were mainly years of peaceful⁵ trade and navigation. On the breaking out of the

1 Moses Brown married for his first wife the daughter of Obadiah Brown, the brother of his father.

2 Dorr's "Providence," p. 136. Nathaniel Brown's family was a Plymouth family, and had no connection whatever with that of James Brown, at Providence. (Dorr's "Providence," p. 117; Savage's "Genealogical dictionary," I. 269-70; *N. E. Historical and Genealogical Register*, XXXVI. 368-71).

3 Dorr's "Providence," p. 118. Col. Edward Kinnicut, his brother, was engaged in commerce in Providence, a few years later.

4 Stephen Hopkins was himself at first engaged in many such partnerships on shares. See Sanderson's "Biography of the signers," VI. 248-49.

5 The exception was the short "War of the Austrian succession," (King George's war), 1744-48.

"Seven years' war," in 1756,¹ Moses Brown tells us, some of the citizens determined to secure prizes of war. "In five mo[nths], four days,² from the declaration to fit out, man, and capture the prize," a valuable Spanish vessel re-named the Desire,³ was brought in triumph to the wharves of Providence. The name of the daring captor was Esek Hopkins.

Easily second in fact to the Brown family in commercial pre-eminence, was the Hopkins family, now rising to distinction. In Moses Brown's list of Providence vessels,⁴ seventeen are either owned or commanded by various members of the Hopkins family,⁵ and in still other instances Stephen Hop-

1 This war, (1756-63), was sometimes known in this country as "The old French war."

2 The 30th of January, 1757.

3 The fact that Desire was the name of Captain Hopkins's wife, and later of his daughter, throws some light on the re-naming of this vessel. (Hopkins "genealogy," p. 24, 27).

4 Of these seventy-nine vessels, two are ships, three schooners, twelve snows, nineteen brigs or brigantines, and forty-one sloops; two are undescribed. They are elsewhere referred to as "eighty-four," (see p. 94), but in several instances the same vessel is mentioned twice.

5 Besides "Stephen Hopkins & Co.," (so early as 1746), Esek Hopkins's name occurs as master of a vessel four times, and their nephew Christopher's

kius's interest may be traced. But it was not simply as owner and manager of vessels, that Stephen Hopkins was now engaged in imparting an impetus to the commercial development of the town. His comprehensive intellect was taking in not merely the details of tonnage, the measurement of sloops and brigantines,¹ the storage of molasses and sugar; but was ranging the seas for new markets, was calculating the effect of new or proposed duties to be laid by the home government, was planning the most economical and labor-saving routes for the foreign trade,² and was watching constantly for new feeders

twice. Of the governor's sons, Rufus's name appears as captain so early as 1746; John's so early as 1750; and George's so early as 1760, at the age of 21. It is to be remembered also that in more than a quarter of these instances the name of the owner, or the master, is omitted; and in some of these the probability is very strong that Stephen Hopkins had an interest.

1 "Brigantine." In only one instance in Moses Brown's list, is "brig" used instead of this form of the word. The distinction between the two species of craft is not always observed.

2 One of his vessels, about the year 1751, loaded in the "Seekonk River" with lumber which had been floated down from Massachusetts, sailed to London, was sold with her cargo on board, for goods brought home in another vessel, "which set up three shops," and appears, according to Moses Brown's statement, to have been the beginning of the dry goods business of Providence. "Before this," he says, "shops of dry goods owned by people in Newport,



to the business of Providence, from the outlying country.¹ A commercial town must have docks and warehouses. "With increasing trade," says Mr. Dorr, "deeper warehouses were built, and behind them, wharves of timber, beneath which the tide

principally supplied our county." (Letter of Moses Brown to T. Burges). It was not long before Joseph and William Russell, both of them actively associated with Hopkins in public enterprises, began their eminently successful mercantile career. "On the arrival," says Mr. Dorr, "of a barque or a brigantine for Joseph and William Russell, their advertisement of her cargo often filled an entire page of the *Gazette*." (Dorr's "Providence," p. 199). Joseph Russell, later in life, became a sort of son-in-law to Governor Hopkins, having married, April 28, 1771, his step-daughter, Amey, (daughter of his second wife, Anne Smith). (Hopkins genealogy, p. 75). And in the later years, their nephew, Charles H. Russell, one of the eminent merchants of New York City, and their kinsman, Jonathan Russell, the late head of the mercantile house of Russell & Sturgis, of Manila, have still farther extended the honorable name so early acquired. (Bartlett's "Russell family," p. 23, 28, 34-35).

¹ As has just been seen above, the interior of Massachusetts was "tapped" for its stores of lumber. But it was now beginning to be tapped for its trade no less. "In 1745," says Mr. Dorr, "Providence had through the Blackstone valley, much of the trade of central Massachusetts." (Dorr's "Providence," p. 172). And again he remarks: "At the close of the Seven years' war, [1763], Providence was the centre of a populous region, and possessed much of the West India trade of the interior of Massachusetts." (Dorr's "Providence," p. 207). Nor is it less likely that efforts were made to develop a more active trade with the growing settlements of northern Rhode Island. Stephen Hopkins's intimate familiarity with this region would make this an almost necessary consequence.

ebbed and flowed.”¹ But it was easy to see that this encroachment would before long leave no navigable channel, north of the bridge. The southward movement in which he interested himself,² found its justification when in 1790, his friend, John Brown, “built the first wharves and storehouses in the locality now called India Point.”³ Here was a channel in whose deep waters his ships could lie while unloading their cargoes of teas, coffees, and silks which he, first⁴ among Rhode Island merchants, imported from China and the East Indies.

1 Dorr's "Providence," p. 143.

2 He built, as we have noticed, his own house in 1742, considerably south of what was then the centre of business. His will makes mention of "two lots of land at Tockquotton," (see Appendix N), which he perhaps secured at the same time for commercial purposes. The Hopkins's and the Browns, however, were not the only men to perceive that the movement of business was then in this direction. "Daniel Abbott," says Mr. Dorr, "the chief land-holder of his day," "was a man of enlightened forecast. He had laid out streets at Tockwotton, by a plat which may be seen in the city clerk's office." (Dorr's "Providence," p. 236).

3 Dorr's "Providence," p. 236.

4 His ship, the *General Washington*, Captain Jonathan Donison, 1,000 tons burden, sailed from Providence in December, 1787, arriving at Canton, Oct. 28, 1788, (Staples's "Annals," p. 351; "Journals of Major Samuel Shaw," p. 295), and was not only the first Rhode Island vessel in Chinese waters, but one of

THE QUESTION OF HIGHWAYS AND STREETS.

But a commercial town needed also easy lines of communication with the localities which served as feeders of trade in the interior of New England.¹ Nature had so placed both Newport and Providence, on the outer rim of a small colony, that it was well nigh impossible that they should not become centres of trade, and markets for the exchange of products, for the circle of outlying country, even though it should include Plymouth or Massachusetts Bay territory. But if anything could hinder this beneficent tendency, it was the almost total lack of attention to the roads which connected Providence with Worcester on the north, Rehoboth, Taunton and Bristol on the east, and New London on the south. Attempts had indeed been made to push through two highways

the first ten American ships. A sloop from New York, the *Enterprise*, (see Bishop's "American manufactures," I. 64), was the first American vessel to make "a direct voyage to that country," in 1785; being followed by the ship, *Empress of China*, which sailed from New York, Feb. 22, 1784, arriving at Canton, Aug. 30, 1785. See the "Journals of Major Samuel Shaw," p. 133, 163, 369; also the "Memorial history of Boston," IV. 208.

1 See Dorr's "Providence," p. 172, 207.

on the west, to Woodstock¹ and to Plainfield,¹ in the Connecticut Colony, but hitherto without success. But, says Mr. Dorr,

“The generation which came in with the last century was weary of the seclusion of the primitive town—disowned by its puritan neighbors, and not caring to cultivate intercourse with them in return. The new townsmen applied themselves to the opening of highways, in order to develop their own resources, and to avail themselves of the wealth of their neighbors.”²

Of this new generation, Stephen Hopkins was one of the most conspicuous and thorough representatives.

“Nothing,” wrote one of the representatives of the new order of Providence citizenship, in 1773, “nothing contributes more to the growth of any place, than having the avenues leading to it kept in good order,—and that they be as many as possible.”³ We have already seen⁴ that in 1737, before his removal from Scituate, the duty of re-surveying the Providence and Scituate lands had been laid upon Stephen Hopkins. Taking advantage of the opportunity thus

1 See page 36.

2 Dorr's "Providence," p. 122.

3 *Providence Gazette*, Feb. 13, 1773; in connection with an appeal to the public in behalf of a bridge at India Point. Perhaps written by John Brown.

4 See page 66.

offered, he seems to have from this time taken every means in his power to bring the necessity for a more enlightened policy home to the members of the General Assembly, and the public at large. In the General Assembly he had pressed the necessity for a new and improved route for the Plainfield road, in 1734;¹ and of two new bridges on the same road, in 1735;² and now in 1740 we find the General Assembly taking action for the building of Pawtucket bridge, and keeping open a highway to Boston;³ and similar action again in 1741,⁴ (Stephen Hopkins, speaker); also in 1741 appointing a committee, (Stephen Hopkins, chairman), on a much needed highway in Warwick;⁵ and in 1742 making appropriations for seven bridges in various parts of the colony.⁶ The reluctance to bridging the "Seekonk River," either at the present "Red Bridge" or "India Bridge," was perhaps due to more than one reason. It may have been felt, however, that the towns to the east and south-east, (Rehoboth, Swanzey, Bris-

1 R. I. Col. Records, IV. 492.

2 Ibid., IV. 512.

3 Ibid., IV. 585.

4 Ibid., V. 36.

5 Ibid., V. 37, 52.

6 Ibid., V. 50.

tol), had water communication with Providence, and that that would be sufficient. At all events, the project for a bridge at India Point, though advocated in 1773 with persuasive eloquence, by John and Joseph Brown, Nicholas Cooke,¹ and others, was compelled to wait until 1792, when it was carried through by the enterprise of John Brown, alone.² Above the ferries over the Seekonk, the river could be turned to some slight commercial use, as for instance in floating lumber *down* from the Massachusetts forests;³ but its utility was only in this direction. It was "good only one way." It offered no facilities, like the Connecticut, for the transportation of articles of commerce up, as well as down; dammed as it everywhere was, with natural waterfalls.⁴ This fact ren-

1 *Providence Gazette*, Feb. 13, 1773.

2 Dorr's "Providence," p. 236.

3 See page 100.

4 "The foundation of commerce," says Col. Charles W. Lippitt, in a recent very comprehensive and painstaking survey of the commerce of Providence, "is quick communication." "The rocky hills of Rhode Island furnished an adequate reason for the loss of the commerce that formerly sought her shores. Not a river falling into Narragansett Bay is navigable for any distance from its mouth." "The cataracts common to these rivers that have created Pawtucket, Woonsocket, Lonsdale and Albion, Natick and Arkwright," etc., "stood as impassable barriers that the then known means of transporta-

dered necessary as close attention to the land highways in this direction as towards the west and south.

But a commercial town needed more than easy access from the outlying territory. It needed equally an intelligent development of its internal system of roads and streets. Of this movement also, "the most radical change proposed during the last century,"¹ Stephen Hopkins appears to have been a most effective promoter. It will certainly not be unprofitable to examine the basis underlying this important change, which in one sense may be regarded as the line of separation between the agricultural town of the seventeenth century, (most properly designated "Plantations,") and the commercial and manufacturing town of the last one hundred and twenty-five

tion were unable profitably to surmount." (Annual address of president of the Providence Board of Trade, Jan. 10, 1883, p. 7). No Yankee guess appears to have solved the riddle of this Sphinx of unnavigable rivers, and it was left for the Englishman, Samuel Slater, in 1780, to show what an era of manufacturing pre-eminence, based on these very waterfalls, was open to the well-directed efforts of Rhode Islanders. See White's "Life of Samuel Slater." Samuel Slater married in 1791, a distant kinswoman of Governor Hopkins, Hannah Wilkinson, in the sixth generation from the original ancestor. (Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 226).

¹ Dorr's "Providence," p. 150.

years. The design of the original proprietors¹ was not a close corporation.² But, says Mr. Dorr, "the town was made such, some years later." The tract of land³ which had been split into long, ribbon-like estates, by the "home-lot" assignment in 1638, had scarcely, up to this time, (1742), been penetrated⁴ by any ways for travel, (with the exception of the two⁵ expressly indicated⁶ in the original division), which had been regularly accepted by the town.⁷ The proprietors' own dwellings had been placed on

1 The first "purchasers," in 1638, and the "quarter-right purchasers" of 1646, and previously, (Staples's "Annals," p. 34-36, 60-61), comprised the body of proprietors, admitted from time to time. The whole number, says Staples, "never exceeded one hundred and one persons." ("Annals," p. 60).

2 They had the power, by the deed executed by Roger Williams, in 1661, (confirmatory of that of 1637), to admit others to their fellowship; and their "heirs, executors, administrators and assigns," likewise, were to succeed regularly to their rights in the purchase.

3 This tract was, as has already been stated, that now bounded by Olney, Hope, and Wickenden, and North and South Main Streets. (Staples's "Annals," p. 30-31, 34, 35).

4 And even the "highway at the head of the lots," (the present Hope Street), was fenced across. (Dorr's "Providence," p. 83).

5 Now known as Power Street and Meeting Street.

6 By the words, "a highway." See the manuscript "revised list." (Printed in Staples's "Annals," p. 35).

7 With the "old gangways," says Mr. Dorr, "the town meeting had nothing to do."

the end of their lots which joined the Town Street. A little farther up the hill, their successors had laid out the small family burial grounds,¹ of which there was a continuous though irregular line, from north to south;² and nearer the "highway at the head of the lots,"³ were the pastures. The idea of "a town" thus conceived by these men of the first generation was adopted with little change by their descendants, and the gradual filling up of "The Neck" crowded the houses, the business, and the travel, into the Town Street, and such ways as had branched out from it at the "North End," or even west of the river.⁴ The rest of the land within the purchase

1 There is a comprehensive discussion of these early burial grounds in a paper read before the Rhode Island Historical Society, Nov. 15, 1881, by C. B. Farnsworth. (*Providence Journal*, Nov. 16, 1881).

2 It followed generally the line of the present Benefit Street. (Dorr's "Providence," p. 45).

3 Now Hope Street.

4 "It is," says Mr. Dorr, "a singular illustration of the resistance of the old Plantations to any division of their home lots, or disturbance of their agricultural pursuits, that more than a century from their beginning, the people were widely scattered over the western side of the 'Salt river?'" "while the Town Street was still the only important thoroughfare on the East." (Dorr's "Providence," p. 147).

was regarded as "common land;"—a part of it being the "stated common,"¹ in which each proprietor had an original or inherited right for pasturage,² or else land which was, at the successive meetings of the proprietors, parcelled out³ in shares to each member, or a number of members. Such a thing as land understood to be "in the market,"⁴ as an inducement

1 Such a "stated common" was on Smith's Hill. See the map preserved with the "proprietors' records."

2 It is curious to notice that few early New England communities seem to have more completely reproduced the Old English and Germanic prototype of "a town" than Providence. Such a "town," in its essential features, is thus described by Dr. H. B. Adams, of Baltimore, in a recently published monograph: "A village community of allied families, settled in close proximity for good neighborhood and defense, with homes and home lots fenced in and owned in severalty, but with a common Town Street, and a Village Green, or Home Pasture, and with common fields, allotted outside the town for individual mowing and tillage, but fenced in common, together with a vast surrounding tract of absolutely common and undivided land, used for pasture and woodland, under commercial regulations." ("Johns Hopkins University studies in historical and political science," II. 27-28). In only one of these particulars did the early Providence settlement vary from this prototype. It had no "Village Green;" as it had no common burial-ground, (till 1700), meeting-house, school-house, or town-house.

3 Such was nearly all the land on the west side of the river. Governor Hopkins's grandfather received a "lay-out" of land "in half of his father's right," which comprised a large part of his Mashapaug estate. (Providence Deeds, etc., transcribed, p. 329).

4 "The proprietors," says Mr. Dorr, "held a monopoly of the unsold lands," and "instead of offering for sale their lands on the west side to persons

to strangers to come and settle among them, adding their quota of wealth, energy, and public spirit, was not the end in view. It cannot be regarded as strange that, under these circumstances, wealth and population did not flow in with constant and increasing volume. Such as did flow in came at the more gradual and reluctant rate which required a century for that which might easily have been attained in a decade.¹

The new-comers, though they might never become "proprietors," might readily become "freeholders,"² and did become freeholders; and thus was inserted the thin edge of a wedge which one day was to split and essentially change the original plan of organization. Until the beginning of the eighteenth century,

who would improve them, they, in 1718-19, caused their property in 'Weybossett Neck' to be surveyed, and divided among themselves—to each owner a share." (Dorr's "Providence," p. 115). The plat showing this division is still preserved among the "proprietors' records."

¹ Perhaps there could be no more striking contrast in this respect, than Newport and Providence, in the years previous to 1740.

² The colony charter authorized this. (R. I. Col. Records, II. 9).

³ So early as 1662, the "meetings of the proprietors" became no longer identical with the "town-meetings" of the citizens. (Staples's "Annals," p. 131). They had the same clerk, however, till 1718.

the proprietors had the advantage of numbers, as well as of position and influence.¹ From that time, however, frequent collisions were inevitable, as the "ideas" and "theories" of the newer men were gradually recognized to be irreconcilable with "what had been from the beginning," and what the proprietors intended should continue. Some of the points at issue were the "lands in common"² which were not "in the market;" the fencing of highways, with gates to be opened and shut;³ the question of a bridge,⁴ the location of the "county house";⁵ the building of wharves and warehouses;⁶ new highways, — in short, the question whether the predominating interest was to be commerce or agriculture. And it was a question which, perhaps, a contest between the proprietors on the one side, and the "foreigners" on the other, never would have settled satisfactorily. Fortunately there were in Providence, young men of the fourth generation from the original proprietors, who fully appreciated the situation.

¹ Dorr's "Providence," p. 139-40.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 82-84, 152.

⁵ Staples's "Annals," p. 191-92.

² *Ibid.*, p. 115.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 104-8.

⁶ Dorr's "Providence," p. 94-104.

The very year after Stephen Hopkins became a citizen of Providence, the issue was raised. A petition was presented to the town council, asking for a street, parallel with the Town Street, and to the eastward of it.¹ But this was upon the proprietors' soil. The petition was, of course, unsuccessful. But it was presented again in 1746.² Reluctantly and not very gracefully, the issue was recognized; and one year later, (Feb. 15, 1747), a committee was appointed to inspect it and "make report to the council in some convenient time."³ The report was in favor of it, but so great was the opposition which the measure encountered, that it was not fully carried through as then ordered,⁴ until 1758.⁵ Stephen Hopkins, as the town records⁶ testify, was a princi-

1 The present Benefit Street. The line followed by it continued southward the line of an old "way," not more than twenty feet in width, which had existed at some portion of its extent, (perhaps no farther than from the present Star Street, northward), so early as 1718. See the plat of 1718, preserved with the "proprietors' records." This "way" was upon the Whipple estate.

2 Dorr's "Providence," p. 147-48.

3 Jeremiah Field, chairman. (Dorr's "Providence," p. 149).

4 It was expressly intended to run, at this time, no farther south than Power Street; and its northern end perhaps did not at first connect with the "way" of 1718. "The extensions at either end were afterthoughts." (Dorr's "Providence," p. 150).

5 Dorr's "Providence," p. 152.

6 See the petition of Oct. 27, 1746.

pal mover¹ in this affair. The contest was protracted but the issue was decisive; and "thus," says Mr. Dorr, "the old town yielded to the new."² The "old debates," the same writer elsewhere says, "were ended." "The days of Gregory Dexter and Gorton, had gone by."³ The days of men like Stephen Hopkins were taking their place, and were to be characterized by pluck, energy, and enterprise.

OTHER ENTERPRISES.

The very next year after the presentation of this first Benefit Street⁴ petition, the important question of the bridge at Weybosset came up⁵ for action; and here again the name of Stephen Hopkins is found among the promoters⁶ of the enterprise.⁷ The bridge had not been rebuilt since 1719,⁸ and the opposition which this most necessary step met with

¹ He may have written the petition of 1746, to which his name is signed. So also, Mr. Dorr suggests, may Dr. Gibbs, his connection by marriage.

² Dorr's "Providence," p. 151.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 134.

⁴ The name "Benefit Street," appears to date from 1747. (Dorr's "Providence," p. 149).

⁵ 1744. (R. I. Col. Records, V. 100).

⁶ Staples's "Annals," p. 108.

⁷ The method adopted for securing the funds was a lottery, a practice exceedingly common in the years following this date.

⁸ Dorr's "Providence," p. 108.

can hardly be accounted for except by supposing that the gradual advance of the "West Side"¹ in population and importance was not wholly approved in "The Neck."

A public market was an enterprise which appears to have had the support of Stephen Hopkins from the beginning, and though not finally secured until nearly thirty years later,² was a most natural accompaniment of that enterprise which had rebuilt Weybosset Bridge, had brought the centre³ of business

1 This apprehension with regard to the West Side was well founded. Even so early as this, the present Weybosset Street, with its continuation, had taken a formidable start, as being the direct road from Boston to New York. "Buildings sprang up," says Mr. Dorr, "shops and inns — along the line of travel, and the road to Narragansett became the earliest rival of the Town Street." (Dorr's "Providence," p. 132). Westminster Street, though laid out before 1763, was but slowly built up, and had in 1771, only five houses. (Stone's "John Howland," p. 31).

The definite purpose of the second bridge, says Mr. Dorr, was that "of development and growth," and the highways laid out westward from it "carried forward the same design." (Dorr's "Providence," p. 126).

2 1773. Stephen Hopkins and Joseph Brown were then appointed "directors" to supervise its erection. (Staples's "Annals," p. 202).

3 When in 1729 a "county house" was to be erected in Providence, it was contended with great warmth that the most central location for it was on "land of James Olney, on or near what is now Olney Street." (Staples's "Annals," p. 191-92). But it was finally located on the lot next south of the present site of the State House; (the latter building dating from 1762). Its

from the foot of Stampers Hill to the public square¹ at the bridge, and was gradually transferring the headquarters of the shipping interest to a point below the bridge. The petition already alluded to² as having been probably written by him shows that, even in 1746, the practice of making the Town Street virtually a market place had great inconveniences. It represents³ that the recent increase in population has "much increased the trade and business therein [*i. e.*, in the Town Street] transacted, by which so great a number of carts," and of "horses and people are necessarily employed that the street" is most inconveniently choked up. His foresight was a part of that enlightened policy which had determined "that Providence should have a market of its own, and should be a competitor with its contemporary towns."⁴

"establishment," says Mr. Dorr, "so far to the southward, was a victory of the progressive men of that day." (Dorr's "Providence," p. 155).

1 The name, Market Square, does not appear to have been given it until 1773. The space was, however, laid out by the town in 1738. (Dorr's "Providence," p. 141). The "hayward," or "haymarket," was established here in some year not long subsequent to this. (Dorr's "Providence," p. 157).

2 See page 114.

3 Printed in Dorr's "Providence," p. 147.

4 Dorr's "Providence," p. 134.

No bank¹ nor insurance office² was incorporated in Providence until the last decade of the century. Yet a system of insurance policies, highly appreciated by the merchants of this earlier period, seems to have been instituted by Stephen Hopkins. "Governor Hopkins," says Moses Brown,³ "as early as 1756, and probably earlier, held an office by himself," for issuing insurance policies. Other "fillers of policies," he elsewhere adds, were "John Gerrish and Joseph Lawrence."⁴ The risks taken were doubtless chiefly if not entirely marine, rather than fire risks, and are an interesting indication of the commercial development of the town.

1 The first was the Providence Bank, 1791. (Staples's "Annals," p. 357).

2 The first insurance company regularly incorporated was the Providence Insurance Co., (incorporated Feb. 3, 1799); which on being united with the Washington Insurance Co., (incorporated Feb. 17, 1800), became in 1820, the "Providence Washington Insurance Co.," which is now one of the oldest in existence in Providence and in New England. Compare also the *Providence Gazette*, March 29, 1800; also Elder's *Book Notes*, Providence, Sept. 22, 1863.

3 Moses Brown's letter to Tristram Burges, Jan. 12, 1836.

4 Also Henry Paget. See advertisement in *Providence Gazette*, Nov. 20, 1762. See also an advertisement in the *Providence Gazette*, Dec. 7, 1762. "These is somewhere in being," wrote Moses Brown in 1836, "a list of all the vessels sailing or owned from here, collected by Joseph Lawrence, which contains the tonnage of each, and the owners' names." (Letter to Tristram Burges, Jan. 12, 1836). Unfortunately he was unable to find the list, and it has not been handed down to us.

EDUCATION IN PROVIDENCE.

It will readily be seen that the town had had few citizens,—perhaps none,—more thoroughly attentive to its material interests. But Hopkins's care and solicitude were by no means limited to these. Unlike not a few "self-made" men, he appears at all times in his career to have had a lively appreciation of the other and no less important half of the question of human development. His young friend, Moses Brown, when not quite thirty years of age,¹ at once took up the issue, and throughout the remainder of his long life, was one of the most persistent and effective agitators in behalf of the schools. So early as 1738, the committee appointed "to revise the bounds of the highways," acting under the direction of Stephen Hopkins's brother,² as chairman, and acting, perhaps, under the recommendations of Stephen Hopkins him-

¹ 1767. He was born in 1738. He died in 1836, lacking only a few weeks of reaching his 98th year.

² Col. William Hopkins. In 1696, their grandfather, Major William Hopkins, had been one of the petitioners for a school-house at the North End. (Staples's "Annals," p. 494).

self, in his report of the year before,¹ had designated "a lot opposite the west end of the court-house parade, for a school-house lot."² This recommendation was favorably acted on, and although it does not appear in what year the building was erected, one was standing there so early as 1752. In that year a committee was chosen by the town, (Stephen Hopkins's brother, Esek, being a member),³ "to have the care of the town⁴ school-house."⁵ Among other public spirited citizens⁶ associated during these years with Stephen Hopkins and Moses Brown,

1 "In 1737 he was employed by the proprietors" "to revise the Town Street," says Moses Brown. (Letter to Robert Wain, 1823). With this revision he submitted a map.

2 Staples's "Annals," p. 494-95. It is shown on the "plat of the warehouse lots," dated 1747, in the "proprietors' records." Whether this plat, like that of the proprietors, dated ten years earlier, was drawn by Stephen Hopkins, does not appear. This was the year in which he was successful in his connection with the Benefit Street project. (Dorr's "Providence," p. 147-50). See pages 113-114, of this work.

3 Town meeting records, Oct. 9, 1752. (Staples's "Annals," p. 495).

4 It appears that the extent to which the town went at this time, in its "support" of a public school, was limited to "furnishing a room at a fixed rent." (Staples's "Annals," p. 495). The teacher was paid by the pupils.

5 Staples's "Annals," p. 495.

6 As shown in the record of successive committees appointed by the town. (Staples's "Annals," p. 495-96).

in their unremitting but decidedly up-hill endeavors to establish the system, were Nicholas Brown,¹ John Brown,¹ Daniel Abbott,² John Jenckes, Samuel Nightingale,³ Nicholas Cooke,⁴ Darius Sessions,⁵ and Jabez Bowen.⁶ The last named citizen, almost alone

1 Brothers of Moses Brown, and hardly less interested than himself, in the movement now in hand.

2 He was not only active in securing the bridge at Weybosset, in 1711, (Stone's "John Howland," p. 32), but when, in 1738, the revision of the "warehouse lots" was accomplished, it was apparently owing to his public spirit that "a corner of said Abbott's land" was named as the southern extent of a thus greatly enlarged open space, later known as Market Square. (Dorr's "Providence," p. 141). Eight years later, May 19, 1746, he made over to the town, "the common, so called, [now Abbott Park] for passing and repassing, training and the like, always to be kept clear and free of any building forever." A little more of this enlightened thoughtfulness for the succeeding generations would have placed us under still greater obligations to him.

3 Together with his enterprising partner, John Innes Clark, he did much to develop the importing trade of Providence. "Clark and Nightingale," says Mr. Dorr, were among "the chief importers of English and Irish goods." (Dorr's "Providence," p. 198-99). Their wharf stood where Steeple Street now is.

4 The future governor of Rhode Island during the first three years of the war of independence.

5 Governor Hopkins's associate in various connections during the period of the committees of correspondence. (See Wells's "Samuel Adams," II. 13-17).

6 Jabez Bowen, the younger, (who died in 1815), was a nephew of Daniel Abbott, and was one of the most continuously useful citizens of his day. In the movement for a school system, in the revolutionary struggle, in the resistance

of the citizens of Providence in 1767,¹ was a graduate of a college.² To him is due³ the very comprehensive⁴ report⁵ presented to the town in the next year,⁶ (Messrs. Sessions and Nightingale, with Moses Brown, comprising the other members of the committee). The report was rejected;⁷ after having

to the paper-money madness, in the ratification of the national constitution, and in connection with the foundation and development of Brown University, he was invariably to be depeuded on. See Staples's "Annals," *passim*.

1 Silas Downer, a graduate of Harvard, in the class of 1747, and Rev. Mr. Graves, of King's Church, appear to be the only others. Not until 1769 was the first class graduated from Rhode Island College.

2 Yale College; class of 1757. Chief-justice John Sloss Hobart, of New York, was a classmate.

3 It is, says Staples, "in the hand writing of the late Gov. [*i. e.*, Lieutenant Governor] Bowen." ("Annals," p. 497). Yet it is probable that this report is even more directly the inspiration of Governor Hopkins than has been generally supposed; for there has been preserved among a few miscellaneous papers of Stephen Hopkins, a "preamble" very similarly worded. (Printed in Sanderson's "Signers," VI. 251). "All institutions of learning," says Governor Hopkins's draught, "become so much more useful as they are more free, and within reach of the poor as well as the rich." A comparison of this language with the preamble of Jabez Bowen's committee, (Staples's "Annals," p. 497), will show a decided correspondence. There was undoubtedly some communication between them.

4 It provided for a levy of £520 "on the polls and estates of the inhabitants of this town." (Staples's "Annals," p. 498).

5 Staples's "Annals," p. 497-500. "Neither" this nor one on building a school house, says Staples, "is on file or recorded."

6 Jan. 1, 1768.

7 Town meeting records, Jan. 1, 1768.

been "first voted by the town with great freedom,"¹ and a minute affixed to it by Moses Brown indicates some of the reasons. One cannot forbear sharing his surprise, as he records: "What is most surprising and remarkable, the plan of a free school, supported by a tax, was rejected by the *poorer* sort of the people."² A lack of "public spirit"³ to appreciate and execute a measure which would so surely benefit themselves,⁴ he conceives to be the chief reason. He could not have hit the nail more squarely on the head. A lack of "public spirit," indeed, it was, which not only he but his three brothers,—and no less Governor Hopkins, himself,—found in repeated instances thereafter, lying like a senseless log across the path of some needed improvement or public enterprise. It was the inevitable outcome of the enforced ignorance in which this same "poorer sort of the people" had for generations been coming up to citizenship and to a control of the town's policy; as well as of the years of placid indifference to any

1 The language of Moses Brown, (Staples's "Annals," p. 500).

2 Staples's "Annals," p. 500.

3 Ibid., p. 500.

4 The movement, says John Howland, "met with the most opposition from the class it was designed to benefit." (Stone's "John Howland," p. 139).

but the narrowest interests, on the part of the main body of the proprietors. These eighteenth century citizens, however, at the head of whom were Hopkins and Bowen, were men of pluck as well as enterprise, and they did not rest until they had carried their point. Stephen Hopkins ended his long life before the final result was reached ; but Jabez Bowen lived to serve as a member¹ of the school committee of the town under the act of the General Assembly passed in 1800,² since which the town of Providence has never been without public schools ; and Moses Brown lived to see the re-organized system of 1828³ adopted, since which time the state has at no time been deprived of the same benefits.⁴

1 Staples's "Annals," p. 510.

2 Barnard's "Report and documents relating to the public schools of Rhode Island," 1848, p. 39. It was repealed in 1803, but the system continued in operation in Providence.

3 See Higginson's "History of public education in Rhode Island," p. 38-45.

4 The biographer of John Howland, whose is the distinguished honor of being known as "the father of the free school system of Rhode Island," in citing the names of those whose coöperation and personal exertions were added to his, and who "will ever be held in grateful remembrance for the interest they early exhibited in the sacred cause of education," names, first of all, Stephen Hopkins. (Stone's "John Howland," p. 149).

LIBRARIES IN PROVIDENCE.

An acute observer,¹ in a recent survey of a single phase of the progressive development of Rhode Island, reaches the conclusion that "wherever we see the state or any part of its people, moving in ways higher than the average, there we are sure to find Stephen Hopkins prominent in the movement."² This is conspicuously manifest in his connection with the movements to develop the town's commerce, the town's highways, and the town's schools; yet it is perhaps quite as manifest in another matter, of less commanding prominence, but of no less marked interest,—the establishment of the Providence Library about 1754.³ Occasion has already arisen for noticing the circumstances under which the reading habit was planted in the mind of the boy, Stephen.⁴ It was now bearing fruit. Several characteristics of the man are to be observed in his use of books. It was pursued with constant and unflagging interest. "His public life," says one writer, "made him the

1 Chief-justice Durfee.

2 Durfee's "Gleanings from the judicial history of Rhode Island," (R. I. Historical Tract, No. 18), p. 93.

3 R. I. Col. Records, V. 378-79.

4 See pages 48-49.

servant of all ; and he was a close and severe student, filling up all the spare hours of his life with reading."¹ It was at once thorough and comprehensive. "He was a man," says Chief-justice Durfee, "of extraordinary capacity,"—"omnivorous of knowledge, which his energetic mind rapidly converted into power."² A friend of his later years declared that he had "never known a man of more universal reading, nor one whose memory was so faithful."³ His method of historical research was the correct one. "Holding," says another writer,⁴ "all abridgments and abridgers, in very low estimation, it is cited, in exemplification of his habitual deep research," "that instead of depending upon summaries and concentrated authorities, he perseveringly perused" the original sources⁵ of information.

1 Beaman's "Scituate," p. 21.

2 Durfee's "Gleanings from the judicial history of Rhode Island," p. 92-93.

3 Remarks of Asher Robbins at 200th anniversary of Providence; (in *Providence Journal*, Aug. 8, 1836).

4 Sanderson's "Signers," VI. 248. (On the information of Moses Brown).

5 Among the instances cited is Thurloe's "Collection of state papers;" which, says Mr. Hunter, he "read through and annotated." One can hardly imagine a more absolutely repulsive task than this would have been to more

He made his reading not only a means of culture, but a means of discipline. He was "skilled in many branches of the liberal arts," says one writer.¹ Another testimony pronounces him "a scholar, a man of science and general literature."² His "reading," however, had not merely made him "a full man," to quote Lord Bacon,³ but the mental discipline which accompanied it had made him "a ready man"⁴ and "an exact man."⁵

It was beyond the range of probability that he could long content himself with the meagre collec-

than one of his contemporaries. At the same time, it is easy to see that he could have mined in few directions which would have so thoroughly equipped him for his subsequent labors in advocating the rights of American colonies under the English crown. His antagonists might well find occasion to heed the counsel, "beware of the man of one book," even though Hopkins could not properly be so designated.

1 Sanderson's "Signers," VI. 249.

2 Dwight's "Signers," p. 69.

3 Bacon's Essay "Of studies," ("Essays," No. 50).

4 See the instances given of his retentive memory in Sanderson's "Signers," VI. 248-49.

5 See the interesting account of his participation in the observation of the transit of Venus in 1769. (West's "Account of the observation of Venus upon the sun"). Also Moses Brown's account. (Letter to Robert Waln. 1823). Mr. West dedicated the pamphlet just cited to Governor Hopkins in testimony of "your honour's superior abilities in mathematics and natural philosophy."

tions of books such as were to be found at the Wilkinson library of his boyhood,¹ or were anywhere accessible in Providence before 1750. His visits to Newport, begun as early as 1732,² and continued without interruption, several times in each year,³ had made him familiar, beyond doubt,⁴ with the treasures of the library collected so early as 1730,⁵ under Dean Berkeley's interested supervision; and later organized as the "Redwood Library," in 1747; Stephen Hopkins's own kinsman, Joseph Whipple, Jr., being one of the incorporators.⁶

It is possible that his experience at Providence was somewhat similar to that of Franklin at Philadelphia.

"At the time' I establish'd myself in Pennsylvania," says Franklin, "there was not a good bookseller's shop in any of the colonies to the southward of Boston. Those who lov'd reading

1 See pages 46-48.

2 As member of the General Assembly. (R. I. Col. Records, IV. 468).

3 See pages 72-73.

4 See page 75.

5 Dr. David King's "Historical sketch of the Redwood Library and Athenæum," p. 3.

6 King's "Historical sketch of the Redwood Library," p. 4. His name stands next to that of William Ellery.

7 1723.

were oblig'd to send for their books from England. The members of the Junto had each a few." "I propos'd that we should all of us bring our books to [one] room, where they would not only be ready to consult in our conferences, but become a common benefit, each of us being at liberty to borrow such as he wish'd to read at home."¹

This suggested to Franklin's ever-fertile brain the idea of "a public subscription library," which he accordingly founded; and, he adds, "the institution soon manifested its utility."²

There is a striking resemblance³ between this experience of Franklin, and that of the studious Rhode Islander, who, in the next twenty years, was ransacking all the literary resources of Providence which could serve his purpose. Like Franklin, Hopkins found no "good bookseller's shop" in his town.⁴ Like the Philadelphia associates, he and his

1 Franklin's Autobiography. (Bigelow's "Franklin," I. 220-21).

2 Bigelow's "Franklin," I. 221.

3 It does not fully appear whether the Philadelphia or the Newport experiment had on the whole the most influence in the formation of the Providence Library about 1754. It will perhaps be safest to conclude that the latter furnished the suggestion and inspiration, while the former supplied a model, in most of its details.

4 The first bookseller in Providence appears to have been Daniel Jenckes, about 1763. His book shop was "just above" the Great Bridge, "at the sign of Shakespeare's head." (Dorr's "Providence," p. 197).

friends "raised and sent to England a sum of money sufficient to purchase books to furnish a small library."¹ Like them also, they looked about for "a proper place to keep the books in." Like the Philadelphia company, once more, they soon advanced to the point where they found it practicable to make it "a public subscription library." The year in which the first steps were taken is uncertain, though it may have been 1750.² The associated members were in search of a place to store their books in 1754, when they sent to the General Assembly a petition,³ (Stephen Hopkins's name heading the list), that they might use "the council chamber in the court house⁴ at Providence" as their library room.⁵ The petition was readily granted.

1 R. I. Col. Records, V. 370.

2 Wilkinson says "in 1750," but does not state his authority. (Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 366).

3 R. I. Col. Records, V. 378-79.

4 Erected in 1731. (Staples's "Annals," p. 192).

5 The earlier books were catalogued by Stephen Hopkins. (Letter of Moses Brown, 1823). No copy of this catalogue is known to exist. But there is in the John Carter Brown library at Providence, a neatly printed "Catalogue of all the books belonging to the Providence Library," published in 1768; and in this a star * is used to designate such of the books in the former collection as escaped burning by being in the hands of readers at the time of

Four years later,¹ unfortunately, the building was burned;² and the greater part of the library with it. Some of the treasures³ of the library, however, were at that time in the hands of readers, and were thus preserved.⁴ On the completion of the successor to this building, (the present State House building), four years later,⁵ the library proprietors were again authorized⁶ to make use of it for their newly collected library.⁷ In 1836 its books became the property

the fire. The catalogue is of no little interest, as showing what books Stephen Hopkins and his associates thought it necessary to have at hand. The classics are exceedingly well represented. So also is the standard English literature of that century as well as of previous periods. Milton and Hooker, the Spectator and the Guardian, Bacon and Locke, are on the library shelves. History is well represented in Thucydides, Plutarch, Sallust, Tacitus, Clarendon, Burnet, and many others; but Prince's "New England chronology" appears to be the only work of American history comprised, except Herrera and La Hontan. These last entries show that there were critical scholars among their readers. Political science and international law were represented by Coke, Vattel, Puffendorf, Grotius, and the "Lex mercatoria rediviva." The library also contained a copy of Franklin's work on "Electricity," in quarto form.

This catalogue is an exceedingly rare pamphlet.

1 December 24, 1758.

2 Staples's "Annals," p. 534.

3 It had now become, to use the language applied to it in 1750, "a very valuable collection of books." (R. I. Col. Records, V. 215).

4 These are designated by a star * in the catalogue of 1768.

5 1762. Staples's "Annals," p. 193.

6 R. I. Col. Records, VI. 215.

7 Stephen Hopkins, says Moses Brown, was "active in securing another library, which arrived" soon after. (Letter to Robert Wain, 1823).

of the Providence Athenæum,¹ (incorporated 1831), which is thus its lineal successor. It was not until more than forty years later² that a "public library" was established in Providence, on such a basis as to become, to use Stephen Hopkins's own language,³ "so much the more useful as" it is "more free, and within reach of the poor as well as the rich."

The end contemplated by these founders⁴ of the

1 Staples's "Annals," p. 534-36. Its building was opened to the public, July 11, 1838. See the "Discourse delivered at the opening of the Providence Athenæum," by President Francis Wayland, of Brown University. This library was, in 1876, the tenth in size in New England, and among the most carefully selected in the country.

2 Opened to the public Feb. 4, 1878. "First annual report of the librarian of the Providence Public Library."

3 Used with reference to public schools. Quoted in Sanderson's "Biography of the signers," VI. 251.

4 Some of these were Stephen Hopkins, Chief-justice Cole, Judge Jenckes, Colonel Ephraim Bowen, and Nicholas Brown. Most of them were also members of that "political club," which was a very noteworthy factor in the development of a patriotic spirit during the years 1763-74, and in whose society, perhaps at Stephen Hopkins's house, John Adams's friend, Daniel Leonard, passed a very agreeable evening in 1766. ("Works of John Adams," II. 181). Judge Cole, though long a resident of Providence, was a native of the Narragansett country, and was a son-in-law of Daniel Updike. (Updike's "Memoirs of the Rhode Island bar," p. 122-30, 35-64). Judge Jenckes, (of the Providence County Court of Common Pleas), opened about 1763 the first bookstore in Providence. (See p. 128). He was a nephew of Governor Joseph Jencks; his wife was a cousin of Governor Hopkins's first wife; and one of his daugh-

library was, to quote their own language, "to promote useful knowledge."¹ Looking to the indirect as well as the direct results of their enterprise, it is plain that their purpose was abundantly realized.² Its influence may be traced in a wider outlook and more comprehensive grasp of public questions, on the part of those who were the leaders at this period, and who made use of its treasures. But it is no slight honor to Stephen Hopkins and those associated with him, to have established this public subscription library here at so early a date. Aside from these two³ in this small colony of Rhode

ters married Governor Hopkins's nephew, Captain Christopher Hopkins. Another daughter married Nicholas Brown. Could these two eighteenth century library proprietors, (Jenckes and Brown), have looked into the next century, and seen the wealth of that private library collected by their descendant, and known as the "John Carter Brown library," they would doubtless have felt amply repaid for their pains and labor. In the affluence of its treasures this stands to most other collections of works on America, somewhat in the relation in which the sign of infinity stands to ordinary numbers. Instead of rendering it necessary now to "send to England" to supplement it, it has on several occasions been necessary for English historians to send to it for material. (See Rogers's "Private libraries of Providence," p. 69-70. See also p. 104-5).

1 R. I. Col. Records, V. 378.

2 In one instance the benefit was very direct. "No man," says Moses Brown, "knew better or improved more by reading" these books, than Stephen Hopkins. (Letter to Robert Waln, 1823).

3 Newport and Providence.

Island, there was at that time only one¹ other "public library" in New England, outside of Boston.²

HIS LITERARY LABORS.

How early in life Stephen Hopkins began that almost continuous use of his pen which characterized the years from 1750 to 1770,³ does not appear. One of the earliest papers of his of which we know, aside from official documents, is the "family record," already alluded to,⁴ dated February 3, 1754. Whether he made farther genealogical researches is also unknown. His position as a public officer,—aided, of course, by a very pronounced natural disposition for historical inquiries,—caused him to collect such papers as

1 The Concord Public Library, Concord, Mass., established 1672. "It is probable," says a statement of the trustees in 1875, "that a library, more or less public, has existed in Concord for a longer period of time than in any other town in the United States." ("Catalogue of the Free Public Library of Concord, Mass.," 1875, page v).

2 See pages 47-48, 49-50. Stephen Hopkins's connection, fifteen years later, with the gathering of the volumes which have grown into the valuable Library of Brown University, is described farther on in this work. See Chapter IX.

3 It was in the neighborhood of this date that his nervous affection began to disable him. After this, says Sanderson, ("Signers," VI. 245), "when he wrote at all," "he was compelled to guide his right hand with the left."

4 See page 9. Compare also Appendix C.

came in his way that were of historic interest and value; and by the year 1762, he was doubtless in possession of an important historical collection. From these papers, and from the intelligent study¹ which he brought to bear upon them, together with such collateral historical publications as he was able to consult in Providence, Newport, and Boston, resulted his "Historical account of the planting and growth of Providence,"² which unhappily is left a

1 A somewhat remarkable degree of critical research and judicial fairness of temper, are plainly observable in his historical writings. These are qualities not altogether common among writers of his time. The mental discipline which he acquired is perhaps as fully apparent in his prose style as anywhere else. It has not, to be sure, all that is to be looked for in the best English prose style of to-day. That is to say, it had the defects of its time. But it had great excellences, both in spoken and written discourse. He was, says Moses Brown, "always to the point, clear, concise, pertinent, powerful, sometimes energetic, generally calm, rational, and convincing; — never lengthy, but often short and pithy." (Letter to Robert Waln, 1828). Any one who will take the trouble to examine such of Governor Hopkins's state papers as are printed in the Colony Records, will be less likely to find them tedious than to be attracted by the transparency and lucidity of their style. (See for instance, R. I. Col. Records, VI. 378-83, 414-16, 416-27. Compare also Chapter VIII. of this work). The same qualities are manifest in his "Historical account of the planting and growth of Providence."

2 Printed in the *Providence Gazette*, in 1762 and 1765; also in the "Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society," series 2, IX. 166-203; also in the "Collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society," VII.

fragment.¹ His other writings² are, almost without exception, political in their nature ; and have a most important connection with the formation of public opinion, traced in subsequent chapters.³

To a subsequent chapter⁴ belongs also the consideration of Stephen Hopkins's connection with the foundation and support of the earliest Providence newspaper.⁵ The motive for its establishment at that time, (1762), was largely, perhaps predominatingly,—political. It, however, played no unimportant part in the gradual advance of the now thoroughly awakened town, along its various lines of commercial, educational and social progress.

SEVERAL FRANKLIN IDEAS.

The student of Governor Hopkins's career cannot fail to remark the repeated instances in which he is in some way brought into connection with Benjamin Franklin. The noteworthy resemblance in the circumstances under which their "subscription libra-

1 It stops at 1663. There can be little doubt that he had material for carrying it farther.

2 See Appendix B.

3 See Chapters VI., VIII., IX.

4 See Chapter VIII.

5 The *Providence Gazette*.

ries" were established, has already been mentioned.¹ The establishment of this newspaper in 1762 is more than likely to have grown out of Hopkins's opportunity for observing Franklin's pre-eminent success in forming public opinion by his newspaper at Philadelphia,² and also, perhaps, from correspondence³ with him regarding it. Only six years later (1768) the management of the *Providence Gazette* passed into the hands of John Carter,⁴ a native of Philadelphia, and one of Franklin's best tried and most approved apprentices. The master in this case certainly had no occasion to feel ashamed of his apprentice's work.⁵ Two other "Franklin ideas" appear at Providence in or about 1754, the year from which

1 See pages 127-29.

2 See chapter VIII.

3 No letters of this period are preserved, however.

4 He was a constant coadjutor of Hopkins and the Browns, and his daughter married the son of one of these four brothers, (Nicholas Brown, Jr.).

5 "The *Gazette*," says Staples, "under the editorship of Mr. Carter, is such a monument as the firmest patriot and the best citizen might honestly desire. He prided himself on the typographical correctness of his paper, and the public relied on the correctness of its contents. It would be difficult to find an error in either department, justly chargeable to Mr. Carter." (Staples's "Annals," p. 544-45). This testimony is abundantly confirmed from other sources. John Carter Brown, son of Nicholas Brown, the younger, was a grandson of John Carter, and was named for him.

the intimacy between Franklin and Hopkins probably dates. These are the post-office and the fire department. "No trace," says Staples, "can be found of the first establishment of a post-office in Providence."¹ It is certain, however, that it existed in 1758,² and in all probability earlier. Franklin's appointment as deputy-post-master-general of the American colonies dates from 1753,³ though he had been appointed postmaster of Philadelphia, as early as 1737.⁴ A systematic fire department, first put in practice by Franklin in Philadelphia in 1736,⁵ was organized in Providence in 1754;⁶ Hopkins's frequent

1 Staples's "Annals," p. 614.

2 Some attempt at postal service had existed since 1691, (Staples's "Annals," p. 614), and as Providence was on the route from Boston to New York and the southern colonies, it gained the benefit of it. It was provided in 1693, (R. I. Col. Records, III. 313), that the king's post should cross the ferry at the present Red Bridge, with no hindrance. Thence it passed through Olney's Lane, and the Town Street, crossing by the ferry at Weybosset, and thence through Warwick and New London to New York. (Arnold's "Rhode Island," I. 527). But no postmaster was appointed until the place was filled by Samuel Chase (or Chace), in one of the years, 1753-58. (Staples's "Annals," p. 614; Dorr's "Providence," p. 199).

3 Bigelow's "Franklin," I. 307.

4 Ibid., I. 261.

5 Ibid., I. 263-66.

6 Staples's "Annals," p. 199-200; R. I. Col. Records, V. 401.

associates in many an enterprise, Obadiah Brown¹ and James Angell,² being the committee in charge of it.

FAMILY CONNECTIONS.

During these years, moreover, his business, social, and family connections had been gradually but steadily widening the scope of his interests, and bringing him into relations not only with Providence and Newport society, but with some of the best known families of Boston. His brother Esek, marrying in 1741 into a Newport family, had become at once a resident of Newport.³ At about the same time⁴ his brother John married the daughter of William Turpin, the inn-keeper⁵ and town treasurer.

1 One of the earliest merchants in the foreign trade; uncle of the "four brothers;" father-in-law of Moses Brown, and of Jabez Bowen, Jr.

2 Cousin to Governor Hopkins's brother-in-law, Nathan Angell; brother-in-law of Rufus Hopkins; father-in-law of William Goddard, the printer; and grandfather of the late Professor Jacob Whitman Bailey, of West Point. James Angell was town clerk for seventeen years, 1758-75.

3 He married Desire Burroughs, Nov. 28, 1741. He was a resident of Newport until 1755. (Hopkins genealogy, p. 24).

4 The record of the date is not preserved. (Hopkins genealogy, p. 19).

5 He had succeeded his father, (William Turpin, senior), in 1709, as proprietor of the principal inn in the place, which was, says Mr. Dorr, "appar-

His son Rufus married in 1747, Abigail Angell,¹ whose father still dwelt on the original home lot, at the foot of Angell Street. A few years later, his son John married Mary Gibbs, whose father, Robert Gibbs,² was a native of Boston, and descended from the well known colonial families³ of Gibbs, Sheaffe,

entirely the largest structure in the town until the building of the present State House." Dorr's "Providence," p. 187). Until that time (1731) the General Assembly, as well as the courts, met in this building. (Staples's "Annals," p. 607). It stood on the west side of North Main Street, nearly opposite Bacon Street. William Turpin, senior, was, says Staples, "the first school-master in Providence, of whom any memorial remains. (Staples's "Annals," p. 493).

1 Her relationship with the Hopkins family was already somewhat complicated. James Angell, her father's cousin, had married Susannah Wilkinson, the aunt of Governor Hopkins. Her cousin, Nathan Angell, had married Abigail Hopkins, the sister of Governor Hopkins. Through both her father and her mother she was descended from Rev. Gregory Dexter, (and through her father from Roger Williams). (Angell genealogy, p. 9, 20, 21; Wilkinson Memoirs, p. 84, 86; Hopkins genealogy, p. 27, 29).

2 "Dr. Gibbs," says Mr. Dorr, "was of Boston, a man of education, and rendered useful service by his activity in public affairs." He also mentions him as one of the "physicians of ability and note." (Dorr's "Providence," p. 178, 179). Dr. Gibbs was born in Boston about the year 1700.

3 These four are among the most prominent Boston families of the seventeenth century. (See Mr. Bynner's and Mr. Whitmore's chapters in the "Memorial history of Boston"). Mrs. Hopkins's great-grandfather, Robert Gibbs, was, says Mr. William H. Whitmore, "a noted merchant" of Boston, in that century. ("Memorial history of Boston," I. 586). His expensive house on Fort Hill is mentioned with admiring comment by several early chroniclers.

Shrimpton, and Oliver, while through her mother she was descended from Captain John Whipple.¹ In 1750, Stephen Hopkins's nephew, Captain Christopher Hopkins,² married Sarah Jenckes,³ daughter of Judge Daniel Jenckes,⁴ Governor Hopkins's life-long friend.

But during these same years a crushing series of

Her great-great-grandfather, Peter Oliver, was another eminent Boston merchant, and one of the founders of the Old South Church. His descendants contemporary with Stephen Hopkins were the well known loyalists, Lieutenant-governor Andrew Oliver, and Chief-justice Peter Oliver. Still another distinguished merchant was Mrs. Hopkins's great-great-grandfather, Jacob Sheaffe, who died in 1669. "He seems," says Savage, "to have had the largest est[ate] of any that had hitherto died at Boston." (Savage's "Genealogical dictionary," IV. 66). His brother-in-law, Rev. Henry Whitfield, was an ancestor of Senator Theodore Foster. Mrs. Hopkins's great-grandfather was Jonathan Shrimpton, whose family were noted landholders. His cousin, Colonel Samuel Shrimpton, was the owner of the land on which the Province House was built, and also of that on which the present State House of Massachusetts stands, as well as of the greater part of Beacon Hill. ("Memorial history of Boston," I. 527).

1 John Whipple;¹ Joseph Whipple;² Amey Whipple,³ m. Robert Gibbs; Mary Gibbs.⁴ Her husband's descent was as follows: John Whipple;¹ Abigail Whipple,² m. William Hopkins; William Hopkins;³ Stephen Hopkins;⁴ John Hopkins.⁵

2 Son of Colonel William Hopkins.

3 Her sister, Rhoda Jenckes, married Nicholas Brown, one of the "four brothers." Her mother was a cousin of Governor Hopkins's first wife.

4 See pages 131-32.

bereavements had fallen on him. In 1744, his brother, Captain Samuel Hopkins, died¹ at Hispaniola, in the West Indies, during one of his voyages. About six months later, his brother, John Hopkins, likewise died² at sea. His youngest sister³ died a few months later in the same year. But the most overwhelming blow came in 1753, when "with- in a period of six months," says the family annalist, "he was called upon to part with two sons⁴ in the early prime of their manhood, when their prospects for a creditable career of usefulness were of the most flattering character,"⁵ and also as a last and most crushing blow, with his wife,⁶ whose death resulted from the mental distress induced by the aggravating circumstances of these bereavements. Early in 1755 his brother, Colonel William Hopkins, died.⁷ The brothers Stephen and Esek now appear to have been

1 Hopkins genealogy, p. 20.

2 Feb. 1, 1745. (Hopkins genealogy, p. 19).

3 Susanna. (Hopkins genealogy, p. 12, 27).

4 John and Silvanus. (Hopkins genealogy, p. 30, 31-32, 18).

5 Hopkins genealogy, p. 32.

6 Silvanus died April 23, 1753; John died July 20, 1753; their mother died Sept. 9, 1753.

7 Feb. 17, 1755. (Hopkins genealogy, p. 12).

the only survivors of their father's family of nine children, still bearing the name.

POLITICAL CONNECTIONS.

More than was usual with the average citizen of Providence, Stephen Hopkins had, during these years, identified himself with the commercial, the educational, and the social life of the town. But he had by no means withdrawn himself from that political connection with public life which he had so strikingly developed previous to 1742.¹ In 1741, just before his removal to Providence, he was holding the position of clerk of the Court of Common Pleas, of Providence County;² and at the same time was speaker of the General Assembly,³ (being deputy for Scituate);⁴ and also served as town clerk of Scituate⁵ and president of the Scituate town council.⁶ These two latter positions he resigned December 24, 1741;⁷ and he probably resigned his seat in

1 See Chapter IV.

2 See Records of the Providence County Court of Common Pleas, I. 433.

3 R. I. Col. Records, V. 19, 21.

4 Ibid., V. 21.

5 Beaman's "Scituate," appendix, p. 7.

6 Letter of Moses Brown to Robert Waln, 1823.

7 Ibid.

the General Assembly not long after.¹ But his name appears again on the roll of members in 1744,² this time as deputy from Providence, and he was immediately re-elected speaker.³ It was doubtless this unwillingness of the colony to relinquish its hold on his services which prevented his ever serving as a member of the Providence town council, but, says Beaman, "no man was so often chosen moderator of town meetings in Providence."⁴ As has been already seen,⁵ he was so constantly raising issues for the town council to act upon, that he may well have been excused from actual service in that body. The term of service in the General Assembly, which began in 1744, was continued, by subsequent re-elections, in 1746, 1747, 1748, 1749, 1751, and 1752.⁶ In 1749 he was again speaker.⁷ These were the years of the third Governor Wanton

1 He appears to have been a member at the October session, 1741, but not at the session immediately preceding the election in May, 1742. (R. I. Col. Records, V. 33-37, 42). At the session beginning May 4, 1742, a "Stephen Hopkins" appears among the freemen admitted. (R. I. Col. Records, V. 42)

2 R. I. Col. Records, V. 84.

3 Ibid., V. 85.

4 Beaman's "Scituate," p. 19.

5 See pages 103-16.

6 R. I. Col. Records, V. 166, 214, 266, 327, 344. (Staples's "Annals," p. 650).

7 Ibid., V. 266.

and the first Governor Greene, and were characterized by a party spirit sufficiently bitter, but by no means to be compared with that of the next thirteen years. The eastern boundary question was now approaching a partial settlement. Stephen Hopkins had been appointed in 1741 a member of a committee to represent the colony at the hearing which was to take place before commissioners.¹ Some needed impetus appears to have been given to the matter by his committees; and by the end of the year 1747, the five towns² whose existence on the border line of Massachusetts and Rhode Island had for years been one of uncertainty, were fully installed into the functions of Rhode Island towns.³ The northern boundary next required attention. Various

1 For his connection with this matter, see the R. I. Col. Records, V. 15-16 29-30, 32-33, 35.

2 Cumberland, Warren, Bristol, Tiverton, and Little Compton.

3 The royal decree establishing the new boundary lines is dated May 28, 1746; the report of the Rhode Island commissioners, appointed in consequence of the decree, is dated Jan. 6, 1746-7, (R. I. Col. Records, V. 199); the five towns received incorporation from the Rhode Island General Assembly, Jan. 27, 1746-7, (R. I. Col. Records, V. 204-6); they were assigned to their respective counties, by vote of the General Assembly, in February, 1746-7, (R. I. Col. Records, V. 208-9).

commissions were appointed in 1748,¹ 1750,² and 1751.³ But there seemed to be no definite point reached, and at the June session, 1751, the matter was placed⁴ in the hands of Stephen Hopkins and two others for thorough examination. They conferred with commissioners from Connecticut,⁵ and in 1752 reported⁶ that the "skillful artists,"⁷ Woodward and Saffery, who, in 1642, had said they knew where this line struck the Connecticut River, were several miles out of the way.⁸

1 R. I. Col. Records, V. 255.

2 Ibid., V. 281, 290.

3 Ibid., V. 322-25.

4 Ibid., V. 333.

5 One of the Connecticut commissioners was Roger Wolcott, Jr., afterwards Stephen Hopkins's associate in the Albany congress.

6 April 4, 1752. (R. I. Col. Records, V. 346-48. Bowen's "Boundary disputes of Connecticut," p. 62-63).

7 What the Massachusetts government meant, says Mr. Clarence Bowen, "by calling these surveyors 'skillful artists,' seems a matter of conjecture." (Bowen's "Boundary disputes of Connecticut," p. 19).

8 The Massachusetts government appointed as surveyors of this line in 1642, Nathaniel Woodward and Solomon Saffery. "They started the line," says Mr. Bowen, "from the point they thought was three miles to the south of the southernmost part of Charles river, and instead of extending the survey across the country, they sailed round Cape Cod, and up the Connecticut River, to the point they supposed was in the same degree of latitude with the starting point." This was more than *four miles* too far south. They were thence sarcastically called "the mathematicians." (See Bowen's "Boundary disputes of Connecticut," p. 19, 63, and Map IV.) In this case, though Stephen

During Governor Greene's first administration¹ the war with France and Spain² broke out. Stephen Hopkins's friend, Jabez Bowen, the elder, was a colonel in the Rhode Island line, at the time of the reduction of Louisburg, and shared in the glory of that campaign.³ After the close of this year's active military operations,⁴ Stephen Hopkins waited on Sir

Hopkins did not personally survey it, no doubt his careful training as a surveyor, in his youth, served him in good stead. He was frequently called to put this training in practice even until "advanced in life," says Moses Brown. The same writer says: "To illustrate his skill, I will mention that I was with him about the year 1769. We were laying out and surveying a piece of land in Scituate for the use of our furnace, [Hope Furnace], when we had to pass through a very thick, shrubby plain. When we got through, he felt for his watch to see the time of day, and it was missing. It occurred to us that probably it caught by the bushes and was hauled from his fob. He set the same course back, and found the watch hanging in the bushes." (Letter to Robert Waln, 1823).

1 1743-45.

2 The "War of the Austrian succession," 1744-48; known in America as "King George's war."

3 "When the expedition against Louisburg was projected," says Sir William Pepperrell's biographer, "Rhode Island entered heartily into it, and raised three companies of one hundred men each, [and] paid them more liberally than any other colony." He adds: "The troops failed of reaching Boston in season to embark with Pepperrell. They, however, proceeded early in July, and proved a valuable reinforcement in preserving the conquest." (Parsons's "Life of Sir William Pepperrell, p. 135).

4 Most of the New England troops appear to have returned in 1746. The reduction of Louisburg took place in 1745.

William Pepperrell, at Boston,¹ at the request of the General Assembly, and was successful in having the really very creditable participation of this colony in the war properly placed on record.² During this period two issues of bills of credit took place, the second one being made the occasion of a vigorous interference by the home government. The General Assembly, on receiving a letter³ from the English secretary of state, containing inquiries as to these successive issues, voted to place the matter in the hands of a committee (Stephen Hopkins and three others), to make examination and report.⁴ The committee possessed too much intelligence to present a defence of the practice, and their report was almost wholly limited to a statement of the bare facts. But this occasion presented a good opportunity for the committee to emphasize the ruinous tendency of the course to which Rhode Island had

1 R. I. Col. Records, V. 302.

2 See also General Wolcott's letter in testimony of the service of the Rhode Island troops, (dated Nov. 15, 1745). (R. I. Col. Records, V. 155).

3 Dated July 19, 1749. Printed in the R. I. Col. Records, V. 278-79.

4 Their report is dated, Newport, Feb. 27, 1749-50. (Printed in R. I. Col. Records, V. 283-86).

been committing herself, and by an appeal to the intelligence and sense of honor of the colony to procure the arrest of the tendency by its own action, without waiting for the home government to act. That the committee did not do so may perhaps have been due to timidity ; perhaps also to an impression that their words would produce no effect. This action is less excusable in Stephen Hopkins than in the other members, for it had already been made clear that his influence was equal to nearly any emergency, where public opinion was to be shaped. The opportunity was lost ; and the very next year witnessed another of the insane issues of paper money by the General Assembly, to the amount of £25,000.¹ The long suffering merchants of Newport, convinced that there was no farther ground for believing that this body would act intelligently in the matter, resolved to appeal to the King. This they did, in a petition² dated September 4, 1750,

1 Potter's "Bills of credit," p. 72-77.

2 Printed in R. I. Col. Records, V. 311-13.

and signed¹ by seventy-two of their number ;—praying that the General Assembly “may be prevented and effectually restrained from making or emitting any more bills of credit upon loan.” The appeal appeared to be effectual, and a bill² passed the House of Commons, in 1751, prohibiting any farther issue. But in one sense even this beneficent interference came too late. The expenses of the Louisburg campaign, in 1745, had left all the New England colonies financially embarrassed ; and an appropriation of £800,000 was made by parliament in 1747,³ to reimburse these colonial outlays. Upon this, the colony of Massachusetts Bay, seizing the favorable moment, imposed a sufficiently heavy tax in addition, for this special purpose, and was able to redeem every one of her outstanding bills.⁴ There appear

1 Among the names signed to this petition are those of Abraham Redwood, Joseph Harrison, Peter Harrison, Henry Collins, Henry Bull, John Cole, and George Gibbs.

2 Potter's "Bills of credit," p. 84-86.

3 See Sumner's "History of American currency," p. 34.

4 This action of Massachusetts is to be credited largely to the intelligent exertions of Governor Thomas Hutchinson, at that time a member of the General Court. (Sumner's "History of American currency," p. 34).

to be several reasons¹ why the Rhode Island colony did not take the same action; but she did not take it, as she had abundant reason subsequently to regret.

CONNECTION WITH THE COURTS.²

It was in the year just mentioned (1747), that Stephen Hopkins, who, in 1736, became justice of the Court of Common Pleas of Providence County,³ was now made one of the assistant justices of the Rhode Island Superior Court.⁴ This position he held only two years, but in 1751 he was made Chief-justice of the Superior Court.⁵ This latter position he held at the time of his election as governor, in May, 1755.⁶ First and last, Stephen

1 See Potter's "Bills of credit," (p. 67), where it is pointed out that Rhode Island at this time received from the home government only £7,800, out of her share of the funds, amounting to £16,467; and that a tax adequate to discharge the obligations at this time "would have amounted to nearly £14 per capita."

2 Compare Appendix F.

3 See Records of the Providence County Court of Common Pleas, I. 163.

4 Records, (Ms.) of R. I. Superior Court, I. 1.

5 Ibid., I. 81.

6 Governor Hopkins, no doubt, at once resigned the office of Chief-justice, on assuming the executive chair; for Francis Willet was elected Chief-justice at the May session of the General Assembly in 1755. ("Acts and resolves," May, 1755, p. 8). But owing to the failure, probably, of Mr. Willet to qualify, a new election took place at the August session of the General Assembly in the same

Hopkins had considerable to do with the courts, and with lawsuits; but he had never "studied law," in the sense in which this language is used of an educated lawyer of our day. It is therefore at first sight somewhat singular that he should have gradually risen to the highest attainable position in this as well as in each one of the other lines of advancement open to him. The truth is, that until long after this date, (to quote from Chief-justice Durfee), "the regular lawyers were few, and must have been imperfectly trained and slenderly equipped."¹ An elective judiciary was the established practice in this colony; and in the annual choice of judges the preferences of the citizens lighted now on some active farmer, now on some tradesman who had risen to

year, (1755), at which the Assembly chose "His Honor the Governor Chief-justice of the Superior Court of Judicature," etc., etc. ("Acts and resolves," August, 1755, p. 36; see also p. 44). Governor Hopkins served under this election from August, 1755, to May, 1756, when John Gardner was elected his successor. ("Acts and resolves," May, 1756, p. 7). This certainly very unusual occurrence is pronounced by Arnold "a union of the highest executive and judicial powers in the colony, as rare as it would, at this day, be thought dangerous. It attests the confidence of the people in his integrity and uncommon mental attainments." (Arnold's "Rhode Island," II. 194).

¹ Durfee's "Gleanings from the judicial history of Rhode Island," p. 66.

mercantile prominence in the Town Street,—and at rare intervals, on some thoroughly equipped lawyer, like William Ellery or David Howell. The wonder is that these annual choices of the General Assembly resulted so well. "For the ordinary run of judicial business," Judge Durfee remarks, "honesty, good sense, diligence, and fair-mindedness," were "tolerable substitutes for professional learning."¹ From this point of view, Stephen Hopkins can easily be believed to be a satisfactory public officer. "Though not a lawyer," says Judge Durfee, he "was doubtless a good judge."² Little remains to throw light on the cases³ which came up before him for decision. The one best known is the curious case of *Mawney vs. Peirce*,⁴ in 1752, in which the "omnipotent"⁵ General Assembly pronounced⁶ upon the validity of the court's rulings, as it assumed to do thirty-four years later in the case of *Trevett vs. Weeden*,⁷ and

1 Durfee's "Gleanings from the judicial history of Rhode Island," p. 91.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 93.

3 For the case of *Angell vs. Belknap*, see Appendix F.

4 See Records (Ms.) of the R. I. Superior Court, I. 86, 92, 99-100, 106.

5 See Arnold's "Rhode Island," II. 526.

6 R. I. Col. Records, V. 358-59.

7 Arnold's "Rhode Island," II. 526-28.

as it repeatedly claimed the right to do even into the present century.¹ It was during Stephen Hopkins's first chief-justiceship, that suitable court houses² were provided at East Greenwich and Kingston, for the accomodation of the court.³

HIS INFLUENCE.

The thirteen years during which Stephen Hopkins had now been a citizen of Providence,⁴ had been years of the closest application and unremitting attention to public business. It was impossible that

1 Durfee's "Gleanings from the judicial history of Rhode Island," p. 61-65.

2 R. I. Col. Records, V. 349-50. (Arnold's "Rhode Island," II. 185).

3 The following memorandum shows the official connection of Stephen Hopkins with Rhode Island courts during his life. ¹Justice of the Inferior Court of Common Pleas for Providence County, 1736-40, (Records, C. C. P., I. 163, 201, 224, 256, 277, 303, 319, 341, 370, 384); ²Clerk of the same, 1741-44, (Records, C. C. P., I. 433, 436, 529, 606; II. 1, 31, 93, 169, 217); ³Clerk of the same, 1746, (Records, C. C. P., II. 363); Assistant-justice of the Superior Court of Judicature of Rhode Island, 1747-49, (Records, R. I. Superior Court, I., 1, 22; R. I. Manual 1882-83, p. 134); Chief-justice of the same, 1751-55, (Records, R. I. Superior Court, I. 81, 87, 94, 101, 109, 116, 127, 187); Chief-justice of the same, 1755-56, (Records, R. I. Superior Court, I. 149, 163); Chief-justice of the same, 1770-76, (Records, R. I. Superior Court, II. 36, 53, 67, 96, 125, 155, 200, 265, 323). Metcalf Bowler does not appear to have succeeded him until March, 1776. He also acted as justice of the peace, from 1736. (See Appendix F).

4 For his later connection with town interests, see Chapters LX, XI.

such a citizen should fail to make his personality, his influence, and his efforts felt; and as a consequence, neither the town of Providence nor the colony of Rhode Island was the same community at the end of this period as at the beginning. The town was wealthier, more enterprising, more influential; the colony was more united, more aggressive, more disposed to defend and develop its commercial facilities. The new issues which were now forming, and which are to be considered in subsequent chapters grew in part out of this fact. The growth of Providence, at first unnoticed and dismissed from attention, was now seen to be giving Newport a rival in the internal control of the colony; and this fact soon made itself manifest in Rhode Island politics.¹ The commercial growth of this, with other American colonies, likewise, when once recognized by the home government, led to the more literal and stringent enforcement of those repressive measures which precipitated the war, and eventually resulted in the independence of the colonies.²

¹ See Chapter VII.

² See Chapter VIII.

CHAPTER VI.

THE STATESMANSHIP OF THE ALBANY CONGRESS.

There were few, doubtless, among the industrious burghers of that quaint old town in which the Albany congress of 1754 held its three weeks' session,¹ who looked upon it as anything but one more interview with the Indian chiefs whose favor it was constantly necessary to secure. Nor was it until within the present century that this conference was seen to have been a most important step in the gradual progress towards a national government on this continent.

This progress was anything but a simple and uninvolved tendency. There are four political ideas which are at once seen to underlie the successive movements of the eighteenth century;—Local self-government; Union; Independence; Nationality.

¹ It assembled June 19, 1754; and was dissolved July 11, 1754.

Yet any attempt to treat these tendencies otherwise than as interlacing with each other; and as now coming to the front in this shape, now in that, is met with insurmountable difficulties.

The tendency to local self-government was, no doubt, the earliest to manifest itself. It was inherent in the very charters which furnished the basis of colonial organization; and if it had not been, it would have been evolved from the essential spirit of the asserted rights of the colonists, as Englishmen. Independence, however, particularly in the form into which the idea finally developed, was not in the letter of the colonial charters; nor was this stage reached until after a century and a half of political agitation. Long before this was attained, the idea of union had become one of the most familiar and significant, in the thought and discussion of the colonists.

More than one scheme of union¹ is to be found, from which the veriest suggestion of independence is conspicuously absent. Yet it was not until inde-

¹ For a reference to some of these schemes, see Appendix G.

pendence had been secured, that the problem of union became in truth a vital one; and a most perplexing question of method and detail. And with this last stage of progress came, as the latest and the consummate development of this new world political growth, the nationality of the American people;—a nationality in which, as a whole, each subordinate centre of local self-government finds its harmonious adjustment.

From the nature of the case, the current at first set most strongly away from the centralizing tendencies, and in the direction of isolation, and the most pronounced self-government. There is of course a difference in degree to be noticed, in comparing one colony with another; yet in general this was true of all. Nowhere, however, was it more completely the case from the first; and nowhere did the tendency continue longer, than in Rhode Island. Self-government in fact could safely be pronounced the essential principle in its political theory and practice. When, at some future time, the Rhode Island town governments of the seventeenth century shall receive

the comprehensive study which so fascinating a field invites, it will be found that they were scarcely less than little "states," in the functions which they exercised;¹ and that the successive steps by which they were brought to unite in the first General Assembly in 1647,² and later to accept the more rigid restraints of the charter of 1663,³ may as truly be described as concessions "extorted from the grinding necessity of a reluctant" people,⁴ as in the case of the great political event⁵ of which these words of John Quincy Adams were written.

The appearance and re-appearance of this early trait has already been noted in these pages.⁶ It was manifested in the long neglect of communication between this colony and its neighbors; in the failure to open highways into the adjoining colonies; in the

1 Some of these may be studied from the record of their proceedings, in R. I. Col. Records, I. 1-140.

2 See the late Judge Staples's pamphlet on "The proceedings of the first General Assembly," with notes historical and explanatory. 1847.

3 See Arnold's "Rhode Island," I. 285.

4 Address of John Quincy Adams, on "The jubilee of the constitution," 1839, p. 55.

5 The adoption of the United States constitution.

6 See pages 2, 110-12.

long and surprising absence of commerce, for which this Bay was so perfectly adapted ; in the bitterness with which the early generations nursed their remembrance of wrongs and injuries received from Massachusetts and Connecticut ; in the fact that "the old townsmen," to quote from Mr. Dorr, "gave no cordial welcome to emigrants, and offered them no invitation by the establishment of schools, or other means of improvement." ¹

Yet the momentum of nature was too strong for the permanent continuance of even these deep-rooted tendencies and sentiments. Even before Stephen Hopkins entered on public life,² these barriers were beginning to come down. Commercial connections³ were, of course, a most important factor in this transformation. The natural market which such a

1 Dorr's "Providence," p. 135.

2 1731.

3 The position of this port, at the head of navigation, with a productive outlying neighborhood depending on it for supplies, not only in Rhode Island, but outside the colony limits, lying moreover, in the direct path between the two constantly growing commercial centres, Boston and New York, on the route over which the King's post was obliged to pass, is of significance in this connection.

town as Providence afforded, formed one of the intermediate steps by which it was transformed from an isolated, agricultural community to a trading town, and later to a commercial port and manufacturing centre. When cargoes began to be interchanged with distant seaports; when outside merchandise was introduced,—outside customs, outside ideas, and outside visitors,—there came also permanent settlers, whose fathers and grandfathers were not Rhode Island men, but whose sons and grandsons were to have a hand in modifying some of the fundamental ideas of the Rhode Island colony.¹

There can be no doubt, also, that the very boundary disputes,² whose existence and successive settlement would appear to have constituted an almost ever-present source of difficulty, had no unimportant

1 A comparison of the names most largely represented in the directories of Providence and Newport of to-day or of those connected with the business and society of both those cities, with the early records, will show that there are many such "representative names" which were not "Rhode Island names" earlier than 1740, and which are borne by families originally identified with Windham County, Connecticut, Worcester County, Massachusetts, Norfolk County, Massachusetts, or some one of the counties of the "Old Colony."

2 See pages 24, 71-72.

influence in rubbing off some of the projecting corners of Rhode Island individualism. And when in 1747 the last important one was settled, and the five towns¹ on the eastern border of the colony were definitely added to its territory, there was then introduced into Rhode Island society, and into its political organization, a population which for more than a century had been under the jurisdiction of the Massachusetts and Plymouth governments,—identified with the interests, the history, and the traditions of Massachusetts.² This new element has not failed to contribute its share of noteworthy and influential characters to Rhode Island history, both in that century, and in our own time.³ It is sufficient to cite

1 Cumberland, Warren, Bristol, Tiverton, and Little Compton. A sixth town, Barrington, was in 1770 formed from the territory of Warren. See p. 144.

2 In fact, the union of the characteristics of both colonies in these border towns seems to have produced a somewhat felicitous result. A sentiment which can be heartily approved is that of Colonel Thomas Wentworth Higginson, at Bristol in 1880. ("Celebration of the two-hundredth anniversary of Bristol," p. 75).

3 For instance, the late Professor Diman, certainly the most distinguished historical scholar that the state has produced; the late Hon. Thomas A. Jenckes, whose name is associated with more than one noteworthy instance of constructive statesmanship; and the late Chief-justice Durfee of the Supreme Court of Rhode Island, whose son now occupies the same position on the bench.

William Bradford,¹ Benjamin Bourne,² and James Manning,³ among Stephen Hopkins's contemporaries. And when the stress of British hostilities,⁴ of paper-money madness,⁵ and of opposition to the constitution,⁵ called for the best energies and the best intelligence of Rhode Island men, no towns were more steadfast in the defence of correct principles than were these.

1 He was born at Plympton, near Plymouth, was a descendant in the fifth generation of Governor Bradford, whose name he bore, and became a resident of Bristol about 1758. He was deputy governor, 1775-78, and United States Senator, 1793-97.

2 He was a native of Bristol, a graduate from Harvard College in the class of 1775; served in one of the Rhode Island regiments during the war, and was elected the first representative in congress from Rhode Island, 1790. His name is found in the "Acts and resolves," with the spelling, "Bourn," like that of the present governor of the state (1863-84).

3 He was a native of New Jersey, and a Princeton graduate, but a resident of Warren, R. I., from 1764 to 1770, being identified with Rhode Island College as its head, from the very first, and president until his death in 1791. See his "Life," by B. A. Guild.

4 See Cowell's "Spirit of '76 in Rhode Island." One of the most distinguished names of the late civil war also—that of the late Major General Burnside,—belongs to one of these towns (Bristol), as that of an adopted citizen, though not as a native.

5 A record of the votes of the towns on these two important questions shows the intelligent position generally taken by these five towns. See Arnold's "Rhode Island," II. 520; Staples's "Rhode Island in the Continental Congress," p. 589, 627; Munro's "History of Bristol," p. 245-46.

Undoubtedly, also, the gradual establishment in Newport and Providence, of institutions such as the printing press; the post-office;¹ the custom-house,² and the insurance agencies;³ gave a very appreciable impetus to this liberalizing tendency. Even more is to be said for the libraries⁴ of Newport and Providence, which at once laid open to those who used them a world of thought and activity, by no means circumscribed by the narrow limits of the colony. And the successive movements towards a system of public education,⁵ though long-delayed, may be considered to have broken down the last barrier of isolation.

Another such tendency may be traced to what, like the boundary disputes, was apparently an evil and only an evil,—the successive wars with the European enemies of Great Britain. These rendered necessary among the American colonies constant association for military defence. Indian foes there had been, from the beginning, but since 1689 the

1 At Providence so early as 1758.

2 At Newport, 1681.

3 At Providence so early as 1756. See page 117.

4 Redwood Library, 1747; Providence Library so early as 1754.

5 From 1767.

ever-active aggressions of the French on this continent had complicated the situation.

The English colonies were a mere crust, along the Atlantic coast, under the constant, steady pressure of these allied foes. Yet the same pressure which crowded them thus to the seaboard served also to crowd them into closer connection with each other. So early as 1643, four New England colonies were forced to take united action for protection against their foes; and the "New England confederacy"¹ was formed. King Philip's war made heavy demands upon their energies, and it was within the limits of Rhode Island, itself not a member of the confederacy, that the decisive campaign² occurred. In 1703 the assistance of this colony in furnishing troops was asked for in behalf of Massachusetts and New York.³ The war of 1744-48 called out the utmost available force of all the New England colonies, and Rhode Island troops bore a distinguished part in the Louis-

1 Its proceedings are comprised in Hasard's "Historical collections," volume 2.

2 The Narragansett Swamp fight, Dec. 19, 1675. Arnold's "Rhode Island," I. 408-6.

3 Arnold's "Rhode Island," II. 13.

burg campaign.¹ The "Seven years' war,"² also, which was one of the episodes of Stephen Hopkins's governorship, made constant demands on the resources and military spirit of Rhode Islanders. In Rhode Island, moreover, the commercial instinct had now become so fully developed, though so late in manifesting itself, that the service of its citizens was quite as frequently and as forcibly rendered on the seas as on the land.³

From 1763 onward, no French, nor Spanish, nor Indian foe longer molested the colonies. But the colonists had formed the habit of acting together. They possessed officers and men, trained in the actual experiences of war. The foundation had been laid, unwittingly, so far as the home government

1 Not at the siege itself, but as a most "valuable reinforcement in preserving the conquest." (Parsons's "Sir William Pepperrell," p. 136).

2 Referred to in many colonial records as "The Old French war."

3 For the achievements of the privateer *Tartar*, see Sheffield's address on "The privateersmen of Newport," p. 15-17. "While Louisburg," he says, "was besieged by the ships of Sir Peter Warren in front, and by the army of Sir William Pepperrell in the rear," nine hundred French and Indians under command of M. Marin, were crossing the Bay of Fundy as reinforcements, and were successfully repulsed by the *Tartar*. "This expedition" of the *Tartar*, says Sheffield, "probably decided the fate of Louisburg." (p. 16, 17).

was concerned, which was to serve as a basis for the "continental" army of 1775, under the command of that same Colonel Washington, whose military experience had been acquired in Braddock's campaign, in 1755; in the support of which, moreover, Stephen Hopkins was to find pre-eminently serviceable that familiarity with military organization which the duties of his administration¹ had rendered necessary during the "Seven years' war."

But military experience was not the only thing for which the colonists were indebted to the danger from French aggressions. To this same source they owed the institution known as the "congress of delegates." This political agency, regarded by the home government with complacency and even approval, so long as it served merely for local military defence, became at last the medium through which were reached successively, remonstrance against measures touching political rights, determined resistance to those measures, and finally, political independence.

The New England confederacy of 1643 to 1686, as has been already indicated,² did not include

¹ See Chapters VII., X., XI.

² See p. 2.

Rhode Island. An ill-considered letter of William Coddington, applying for admission in 1648,¹ brought only a refusal from the commissioners. Whatever sentiment of union might have been developing in Rhode Island, either at Newport or Providence, was very effectually extinguished by this action. Yet the existence of this confederacy for forty years was a most important and significant fact in American political development; and there is no doubt that it prepared the way² for that intensity of sentiment in favor of colonial union and co-operation which, in the next century, was strong enough to sweep Rhode Island along also.

Rhode Island was not, however, represented in the earliest of the nine congresses³ which preceded that of 1754. In some instances, no doubt, she was not invited.⁴ In others, the importance of the prin-

1 Printed in Hazard's "Historical collections," II. 99-100.

2 See Frothingham's "Rise of the republic," p. 72.

3 1684, 1693, 1694, 1709, 1711, 1722, 1744, 1748, 1751. See Frothingham's "Rise of the republic," p. 118-20. There were also "interviews of governors," of less importance than these, as for instance in 1746 and 1747.

4 The invitation was certainly received in 1746 and 1747. (R. I. Col. Records, V. 157, 168-69, 219).

ciple had not impressed itself on the minds of her public men. Indeed it was not until Stephen Hopkins's influence had already become a power in the colony that Rhode Island delegates were chosen, in 1746, 1754, 1755, 1757, and 1758.¹ No reported utterance of his, earlier than the year 1755,² in relation to this system of congresses, remains. The probability, however, that the representation of Rhode Island in the first four of these is to be connected with his active influence, is strengthened not only by the fact that in each of these instances the General Assembly chose him as one of the delegates;³—but also by the fact that both by correspondence and by personal intercourse he had by this time laid the foundations of that wide acquaintance in all the colonies which subsequently served him so

1 R. I. Col. Records, V. 168-70, 384-86, 463-75; VI. 10-11, 13, 117-19; Gammell's "Samuel Ward," p. 251-54. The delegates were, in 1746, Stephen Hopkins and William Ellery; in 1754, Stephen Hopkins and Martin Howard, Jr.; in 1755, Stephen Hopkins and Daniel Updike; in 1757, Stephen Hopkins, James Honyman, and George Brown; in 1758, William Greene, John Andrews, and Samuel Ward.

2 His pamphlet, "A true representation of the plan formed at Albany for uniting all the British northern colonies." Providence, 1755.

3 See note 4.

well as a member of the committee of correspondence.¹ He was therefore, even at this time, a man of wider outlook and less provincial spirit than the great body of his associates.

An examination of the specified purposes for which these successive congresses were called² shows that in only one instance,—that of 1754,—was a plan of union mentioned or hinted at. In all the other cases, the simple fact of danger from French or Indian hostilities is cited as the occasion of convening the delegates. That element, in fact, characterized the congress of 1754, in common with the others. The last preceding congresses, (those of 1748 and 1751), had found the threatened defection of the Six Nations to be a cause for serious apprehension.³ That also was a no less distinct cause of solicitude in the debates of the Albany congress.⁴

1 See Chapter VIII.

2 A summarized record of their proceedings is given in Frothingham's "Rise of the republic," p. 118-20.

3 See Frothingham's "Rise of the republic," p. 119-20.

4 It probably was more or less in view throughout all the discussion. See the official record of the proceedings of the convention. There is an original

But so early as the previous August, the Earl of Holderness¹ had written² to Governor Greene, indicating with somewhat unwonted liberality a system of co-operation among the colonies; and this was followed by a letter³ from another of His Majesty's secretaries,⁴ which, although it failed to arrive until after the congress,⁵ is significant as showing that the home government had just then,—or thought it had,—the idea of co-operation on its mind. And while these expressions of their wishes were chiefly in the

certified copy of this record, in manuscript, in the office of the Secretary of State of Rhode Island. It is declared to be "A true copy. Examined by me, Peter Wraxall."

1 One of the Secretaries of State for the colonies.

2 Printed in R. I. Col. Records, V. 397.

3 Printed in R. I. Col. Records, V. 397-98.

4 From Sir Thomas Robinson. It was this same Sir Thomas Robinson who, thirteen years before, had been placed in a most embarrassing situation at Strehlen in Prussia, at an audience granted him by Frederick the Great, as the diplomatic representative of England. The interview is picturesquely and dramatically described by the latest historian of Frederick and Maria Theresa, the Duc de Broglie. "It was the evil chance," he says, "of the unlucky diplomatist, to find himself between two imperious natures." ("Frederick II. and Maria Theresa," ch. 4).

5 It was written during the session of the congress, July 5, 1754. (R. I. Col. Records, V. 397-98).

form of a "circular letter,"¹ forwarded to all the colonial governors at the same time, the Lords of trade,² in letters to those more immediately in their confidence,³ named more specifically as one of the objects of the congress, "to enter into *articles of union and confederation* with each other."⁴ Nor should it be overlooked, moreover, that the congress itself was to be a body of delegates, chosen by the respective colonial legislatures, on the basis of representation.⁵

Here, certainly, was a plan marked out, which must have appeared an infinitely suggestive one to any American who had looked far enough into the future to forecast and calculate the American development which was possible. (One such American there was, at least; and he had been elected a mem-

1 As appears by the Earl of Holderness's statement. (R. I. Col. Records, V. 397).

2 The full title of this body was "The Right Honourable the Lords of the committee of trade and plantations."

3 Lieutenant-governor DeLancey, of New York, was in more direct communication with the home government than the other colonial officials. He also took occasion to stir up the other colonies. See his letters of March 19, and April 22, 1764, in R. I. Col. Records, V. 383-86, 383-84.

5 See Frothingham's "Rise of the republic," p. 132.

ber of this congress. Benjamin Franklin had come to Albany¹ with a specific plan in his pocket, for securing the "union and confederation" thus hinted at. This was an idea which had lain developing in his mind for months,² gathering suggestiveness and clearness; and the appearance of it in the semi-official recommendation of the home government must have almost startled him with its appositeness to his own thoughts. He had advocated it, both by direct argument and by indirect implication, in his newspaper at Philadelphia,³ and had freely talked of details of the plan to his friends at New York,⁴ on his way to the congress.

1 He was one of the delegates from Pennsylvania.

2 "There are evidences," says Sparks, "that Franklin's thoughts had been for some time turned to a union of the colonies." (Note in Franklin's "Works," III. 25). Mr. Bancroft prints, ("History of the United States," IV. 91-92, ed. of 1852), an anonymous letter, which he believes to have been Franklin's, advocating "a voluntary union, entered into by the colonies themselves," (Letter of March, 1752).

3 The *Pennsylvania Gazette*. It was in this paper that he had published only a month earlier, (May 9, 1754), the article in which he introduced the wood-cut "Join or die," (the figure of a snake, cut into thirteen pieces), which became a very effective device, ten years later. This same article forcibly pointed out "the very great advantage of being under one direction, with one council, and one purse."

4 Lieutenant-governor Colden; Archibald Kennedy, who in a pamphlet,

When the members assembled at the Court House in Albany on the 19th of June,¹ it was found that Pennsylvania was not alone in appointing a distinguished citizen to represent her. On the roll of the congress were the names of Lieutenant-governor De Lancey,² of New York, who presided; and from the same province William Smith, the historian,³ and the future Sir William Johnson,⁴ not yet made a baronet. From the proprietary provinces of Pennsylvania and Maryland were the well known officials, John Penn, grandson of the founder;⁵ Rich-

*not, nor was
historian*

published in 1752, had proposed a scheme of union, (Frothingham's "Rise of the republic," p. 116); and Mr. James Alexander. (Bigelow's "Benjamin Franklin," I. 308). See also Sparks's "Works of Benjamin Franklin," (III. 27-32), for some of their suggestions.

1 The congress was called for the 14th of June (Letter of DeLancey, in R. I. Col. Records, V. 386), but it did not convene until the 19th.

2 See Sabine's "American loyalists," (Ed. of 1864), I. 367-70.

3 His account of the congress is in his "History of the late province of New York," [1608-1762], II. 219-25. Besides Stephen Hopkins (and Franklin in his "Autobiography"), Hutchinson is the only other member of the congress who has left in print any account of its proceedings. (See Hutchinson's "Massachusetts Bay," III. 19-23). Hopkins's account is much the fullest.

4 See the "Life of Sir William Johnson," by W. L. Stone. (Albany, 1866).

5 He became governor of Pennsylvania in 1763. See Sabine's "American loyalists," II. 159-64.

ard Peters;¹ and Benjamin Tasker.² From the province of New Hampshire were her future governor, Meshech Weare,³ and Theodore Atkinson;⁴ and from the province of Massachusetts Bay, the late Lieutenant-governor, Thomas Hutchinson, Colonel John Chandler, of Worcester,⁵ and Oliver Partridge,⁶ a man of commanding influence in western Massachusetts.⁷ Lastly, the two colonies⁸ which had so tenaciously preserved their charter governments through the vicissitudes of more than a century,—Connecticut and Rhode Island,—had acceded to the repeated solicitations of the home government,⁹ and with unfeigned reluctance, we may be

1 Secretary of state of Pennsylvania.

2 Of Maryland. He had, says Frothingham, "a high legal reputation." ("Else of the republic," p. 138).

3 1776-84.

4 At that time Chief-justice.

5 The second of three judges of the name, in three successive generations. He was judge of the Worcester County Court of Common Pleas, 1754-62, and served as "special justice of the Massachusetts Superior Court of Judicature," 1766. (Whitmore's "Massachusetts civil list," p. 118, 73).

6 He was also a member of the stamp-act congress of 1765.

7 For the complete list of delegates, see Appendix H.

8 The only two. No other colony had been in possession of a charter since 1684; although two, (Pennsylvania and Georgia), were governed as provinces under charters, with very restricted powers.

9 For something bordering on a threat, see a letter of Governor Shirley in 1747, (printed in R. I. Col. Records, V. 235).

sure, had sent as representatives men of such wide experience in their colonial concerns, as Roger Wolcott, Jr.,¹ and Stephen Hopkins. "America," says Mr. Bancroft,² "had never seen an assembly so venerable for the states that were represented, or for the great and able men who composed it." They were detained in this hospitable old Dutch town for more than three weeks, and it is by no means to be supposed that the seventeen stated sessions of the congress embodied all the discussion which the occasion called forth. There were, no doubt, amidst the social tea-drinkings, or the frequent tête-à-têtes of these members from distant colonies, much quiet discussion, much earnest argument, much determined canvassing of the methods and details of the plans of union. For it was found that Franklin was not the

1 He was at this time a justice of the Superior Court. It will be remembered that he had been associated with Stephen Hopkins in the correction of the Woodward and Saffery boundary line, two years before, (see page 145). His father was a distinguished general in the Louisburg campaign. (see a letter from him in R. I. Col. Records, V. 155). His brother, Oliver Wolcott, was a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and his no less distinguished nephew, Oliver Wolcott, Jr., was Secretary of the U. S. Treasury, 1796-1801.

2 "History of the United States," IV. 121-22. See also Hutchinson's "Massachusetts Bay," (III. 20), which pronounces it "an assembly the most deserving of respect of any which had been convened in America."

only member who had a plan to offer,¹ and it was the superior merit of his which caused it to be accepted by the vote of the congress. That there was a strong sentiment existing among some of the members against the supposed tendency of such a plan was soon found to be the case; and as will be seen on reflection to be natural, this sentiment was most marked in the case of such colonies as had charter governments.

To understand the position of Rhode Island, for instance, as related to this movement in the direction of union, it is absolutely necessary to remember that, side by side with this, another tendency had been developing itself, which was destined in the years from 1764 to 1774 to be the grievance uppermost in the minds of the colonists. This was the start which the home government was now taking, in enforcing the most objectionable of the commercial regulations.² In fact this had already begun. The strictly commercial colonies like Rhode Island

1 "It then appeared," says Franklin, "that several of the commissioners had form'd plans of the same kind." (Bigelow's "Franklin," I. 306).

2 See Chapter VIII.

were of course the first to feel the effects of it, and to realize how it was destined to modify and perhaps undermine the status of their charter governments. Any one who will look through the correspondence which since 1748 had passed between Governor Greene of Rhode Island and the home government,¹ will not have much difficulty in seeing that with each new proposition and suggestion from that quarter, he and those who from their official and social connection with him through many years, had come to think as he did, must have become more and more thoroughly alarmed and distrustful. It is easy now to say that a critical examination of the plan of union upon which the Albany congress reported favorably, reveals nothing which can be construed as impairing the colonial charters.² While that is perfectly true, it is also certain that their minds were in no condition

1 R. I. Col. Records, V. 257-59, 278-79, 313-16, 350-56, 359-60, 396-98. (In some instances, Governor Greene's letters are to the colony's agent in London requesting him to act for the colony).

2 "Each colony," the "plan" distinctly stated, was to "retain its present constitution, except in the particulars" thereafter named. It is evident that the people in each colony would have precisely as important rights under this plan as formerly.

for a critical examination. It was their misfortune that they were unable to look at the subject with that breadth of vision which took in all its bearings. Indeed there was now transferred¹ to this ominously regarded idea of "union," all that bitterly narrow spirit in the colony which up to this time had expended itself upon the attempts to introduce communication with the neighboring colonies for trade and commerce. The war for independence, while it smothered this feeling, did not extinguish it, and it is the self-same spirit which flamed up in a final, yet intensely fierce blaze, thirty-five years later, on the question of adopting the United States constitution.² In Connecticut there was in 1754 a similar jealousy³ of any movement affecting the charter (though it

1 Compare Arnold's "Rhode Island," II. 191.

2 See Staples's "Rhode Island in the Continental Congress."

3 "The commissioners from Connecticut," says Trumbull, "were wholly opposed to the plan. They imagined that it was dangerous to the liberties of the colonies." (Trumbull's "History of Connecticut," II. 355). See also the statement of "Reasons" published by the General Assembly of Connecticut; (reprinted in Mass. Hist. Soc. Collections, 1st series, VII. 210-14). The Connecticut members, besides Wolcott, were Elisha Williams, rector of Yale College, 1726-30, and William Pitkin, at this time Chief-justice of the colony.

subsided¹ many years earlier than in Rhode Island); and it is not improbable that the three delegates from that colony based their opposition to the plan chiefly on this ground.² That the ground taken by Stephen Hopkins, though a Rhode Island delegate, was diametrically opposite to this, will shortly be apparent.³

But this was not the only element of opposition represented in the congress. There were men in every colony who had watched with an interest and earnestness equal to that of the colonial leaders above referred to, the widening breach between the colonists and the home government on the question of charter rights; and their convictions in many cases, their interests in others, and later their active co-operation, were with the government. Such an

1 Connecticut was one of the earliest states in support of the new constitution; ratifying it in January, 1788, in less than four months after the adjournment of the convention.

2 It was certainly a not unnatural ground to take, when it is remembered that (as Franklin stated in a letter to Governor Shirley), "the powers proposed by the Albany plan of union * * * are not as great as those which the colonies of Rhode Island and Connecticut are intrusted with by their charters." (Franklin's "Works," III. 61).

3 See pages 183-91, 194-96.

one was Thomas Hutchinson of Massachusetts, the judicial temper of whose invaluable history has laid all succeeding historical scholars under deep obligation to him;¹ such was also De Lancey² of New York, who presided at this "congress." Their conscientious opposition as "loyalists,"³ or "tories," to the measures of the colonists ten years later, does not greatly diminish the respect felt for them. They acted from their convictions. The utmost desire to

1 "To the student," says Mr. Charles Deane, "who seeks for the sources of our history, his work will always be indispensable." (*Historical Magazine*, I. 102).

2 See Sabine's "American loyalists," p. 245-52. A letter from John Jay, Jan. 2, 1778, printed in Sabine, I. 369, shows that De Lancey retained his warm friendship.

3 It is interesting to notice that, out of the twenty-five members of the congress, about one fourth became loyalists. (See Sabine's "American loyalists;" articles, De Lancey, Howard, Hutchinson, Johnson, Penn, and Smith.) It does not appear that all took the same view of it. Hutchinson and Smith, as appears from their *Histories*, warmly supported it. The truth is, that the question of executive authority, coming thus early in the development of the American progress towards nationality, was one which could not fail to be an embarrassing element. It was this which, from its making the president subject to appointment by the crown, was apparently the strongest recommendation of the plan in the eyes of the loyalists; it was this which for the same reason was its strongest condemnation in the eyes of the defenders of the colonial charters; and it was this which the statesmanlike forecast of such men as Franklin and Hopkins accepted under protest, knowing that it must be superseded with the growth of public sentiment.

do full justice to the tory delegate from Rhode Island, (Howard), who acted with them, does not authorize the use of the same language in his case. Neither by patriot nor by loyalist,¹ in the authentic testimony of his own time, is any such flattering testimony bestowed. He was, however, a man of more than average ability, and his influence, if not counteracted, would have been a very marked hindrance to the colonists.

Franklin's own plan, fully outlined in his papers collected by Mr. Sparks,² is worthy of the most careful study, especially in comparison with that actually adopted,³ as shown in the official record of the congress. The difference, and it is an essential difference, is that Franklin's original and decided prefer-

1 "His reputation," says Sabine, "does not appear to have been good; nor does it seem that the calm and moderate respected him." "Careful pens," he adds, "speak of his profligate character, and of his corrupt and wicked designs." (Sabine's "American loyalists," p. 360). A remark of his, some years after, (quoted in Updike's "Narragansett Church," p. 221), shows that he took a somewhat mercenary view of his enforced removal from this colony.

2 Franklin's "Works," III. 26-27.

3 This also is printed in Franklin's "Works," III. 36-55; also in R. I. Historical Tract, No. 9. ("A true representation of the plan formed at Albany," by Stephen Hopkins, edited by S. S. Rider), p. 32-39.

ence was for an executive officer who would possess actual executive powers.¹ The congress in several instances curtailed and hedged in this power.

As was natural, the deep-seated measures of Franklin met with warm opposition ;—"almost every article," as he states, "being contested by one or another."² But the result of the fortnight's debate was, that after being modified in some important particulars, his plan was "agreed to"³ by the delegates, as expressing their views ; and it was resolved that the commissioners from the several governments be desired to lay the same before their respective constituents, for their consideration ;"⁴ and this is all that the congress was in reality authorized

¹ Compare the provisions of the 1st section, in each instance.

² Letter of July 21, 1754. (Cited by Bancroft; "United States," IV. 124).

³ This language is that of the official "Record of proceedings," July 9, 1754. It seems that there was a very vigorous opposition, particularly on the part of the Connecticut delegates. Hutchinson's statement, therefore, ("History of the province of Massachusetts Bay," III. 23), that it was "unanimously voted," cannot be correct. The error, perhaps, arose from confounding this vote with that passed earlier in the sessions of the congress, (June 24, 1754), when the commissioners did vote "unanimously" that "a union" is "at present absolutely necessary." As to the specific method, there was not unanimity.

⁴ Record of proceedings, July 10, 1754.

to do.¹ Franklin's persuasive powers and unrivalled tact had in this instance achieved a striking success; but it is to be feared that some of the delegates,—to judge from their attitude after they returned home,—were but "convinced against their will," and could never be depended on to support the plan. If one glances over the roll of the delegates,² it will be difficult to find many names of those who could have had very hearty sympathy with it, from the considerations already noted. In fact, there is only one member of the congress who appears to have had the same power of political prescience as Franklin in this matter. That member is Stephen Hopkins.

It has been more than once remarked that these two New-Englanders had many characteristics in common. They were almost exact contemporaries. Franklin was born only one year earlier than Hopkins,³ and survived him less than five years.⁴ Both were Americans of a very noteworthy type and of

1 See the instructions given by several of the colonial governments, printed in R. I. Historical Tract, IX. p. 3-8.

2 See Appendix H.

3 Franklin was born Jan. 17, 1706-6; Hopkins, March 7, 1706-7.

4 Hopkins died July 13, 1785; Franklin, April 17, 1790.

strongly marked individuality. In both instances, native ability and talents went far towards counterbalancing the lack of early opportunities for education. Both, in after life, were deeply impressed with the necessity for public education, and endeavored to secure its blessings for others.¹ Both were deeply interested in scientific studies and pursuits.² Both had a homely, but often forcible style.³ Both were fortunate, to an exceptional degree, in possessing the power of lucid statement; and their language was "good English," in the sense of being clear. Both took pains to educate public sentiment,⁴ by

1 See Bigelow's "Franklin," I. 288-92; also pages 50-52, 118-23 of this work.

2 See Bigelow's "Franklin," I. 274-78; also page 126 of this work. Hopkins was, in 1768, elected to membership in the American Philosophical Society, perhaps on the suggestion or nomination of Franklin himself. (Records of the American Philosophical Society, April 1, 1768).

3 See Tyler's "History of American literature," II. 251, which speaks of Franklin's style as a "pure, pithy, racy, and delightful diction." Compare also page 134 of this work.

4 Of Franklin, Theodore Parker remarks: "He knew how to deal with men, leading them to accept his conclusions." "He did not drive men, but led them, and that often with a thread so delicate that they did not see it." ("Historic Americans," p. 44).

Of Stephen Hopkins, Arnold says: "Very few, of any state, exerted so wide an influence upon the destinies of the country. Franklin was perhaps the only person who equalled him in this respect." (Arnold's "Rhode Island," II. 514).

discussion of public topics in the newspapers, in pamphlets, and in their correspondence. Both were distinguished by a constant tendency to expansion, and in any given year their position was sure to be one of broader outlook and more comprehensive intelligence, than in the previous year. Both were far in advance of the majority of their contemporaries in perceiving the ultimate issues of the political tendencies then in progress.¹ Both of them were from this time forward the closest of friends, and constant correspondents.² Both met once more in the Continental Congress, and together signed the Declaration of Independence. Franklin alone, however, survived to witness the adoption of the Constitution in 1787.

It is from the mouth of a political opponent, (the

1 Franklin, says William Cullen Bryant, "saw further into the true province and office of a free government, and the duties of its legislators, than any man of his time.") "Address on the 168th anniversary of the birth of Benjamin Franklin," New York, 1874, quoted in Bigelow's "Franklin," I. 12). See also pages 180; 183; 188-89, note; 194-96; of this work.

2 Probably one of the last letters of Hopkins to Franklin is that of May 11, 1784, now in possession of Mr. Henry T. Drowne, of New York. It is signed, "Your affectionate old friend, Stephen Hopkins."

one signing himself "Philoletes"),¹ that we are informed of Stephen Hopkins's desire that the Rhode Island General Assembly should give its approval to the plan. Yet even if we had not this testimony we should still have important evidence as to his true sentiments. It was just ten years later² that he wrote :

"Although each of the colonies hath a legislature within itself, to take care of its interests, and provide for its peace and internal government, yet there are many things of a more general nature, quite out of the reach of these particular legislatures, which it is necessary should be regulated, ordered and governed."³

And this, let it be remembered, was not merely an abstraction of his. It was a conclusion which he had had an opportunity of forming by personal

1 "A short reply to Mr. Stephen Hopkins's vindication," 1755. (Reprinted in R. I. Historical Tract, IX. 47-65). The authorship of this anonymous pamphlet still remains unsolved. The peculiar form of this name is such as to attract notice. Instead of "Philoletes," one would naturally expect "Philoletes," and it is not impossible that this latter form is the one intended by the writer. Whether the writer or the printer was responsible, does not appear.

2 1765.

3 "The rights of colonies examined," p. 10.

observation, in his attendance upon successive congresses, so early as 1746.¹

The congress at Albany adjourned July 11, 1754. The Rhode Island General Assembly was not at that time in session; but one of the earliest matters brought before the attention of that body, on its re-assembling at Newport, in August, was the report of the two commissioners, dated August 20, 1754, and signed by them both; — Stephen Hopkins and Martin Howard, Jr.² This simply stated the facts in the case, presented a copy of the proceedings of the congress, with the "Representation" reported by the committee, and the plan of union itself; submitting the whole, as they say, "to the consideration of this Honourable Assembly." This would certainly appear to be the very least that they could do. The General Assembly therefore "accepted" the report;

1 That he was a supporter of the plan also seems probable from the statement of one of his colleagues, Smith of New York, that "the eastern colonies were most ardent for the union, except Connecticut." "Each colony," Smith adds, "took a copy under a promise to exert their influence upon their constituents." (Smith's "New York," II. 225). Stephen Hopkins is the only one who went so far, however, as to publish a pamphlet in its behalf.

2 R. I. Col. Records, V. 393-94.

"reserving to themselves a farther consideration, whether they will accede to the general plan proposed."¹ Yet in various written and spoken charges of the time, Mr. Hopkins is denounced as having

"presented to the General Assembly, a number of sheets in folio, in which were contained a variety of matters, and the plan of union artfully tack'd to the rest, which being read in the Lower House, the report was received, and, in consequence all their doings, &c."²

It is sufficient to say that these assertions are entirely at variance with the official records, cited above.

It will be observed that the language of the above charge shows evidence of excitement. That such a plan of union should be brought into Rhode Island did in fact, produce no little excitement. Almost its very first provision was that there should be "a president-general, to be appointed and supported *by the crown.*"³ And this in a charter colony⁴ like

¹ R. I. Col. Records, V. 394.

² R. I. Hist. Tract, IX. 68.

³ Printed in Franklin's "Works," III. 37.

⁴ This feature certainly goes far to explain the popular excitement against the plan. Those could easily condemn it on this ground who had not looked beyond this to observe the very democratical system of representation embod-

Rhode Island! A letter¹ was sent to the General Assembly, early in 1755, by Governor Greene, in which the subject was urged upon the immediate attention of that body. Among other things, he pronounced it "a scheme which if carried into execution, will virtually deprive this government, at least, of some of its most valuable privileges;" and he suggested that instructions be sent to the agent of the colony, "that he exert himself to the utmost, in order to prevent the said plan of union" "being carried or passed into an act of the parliament of Great Britain."² At this session therefore it was voted that a "letter to be sent to the agent" should direct him:

"To be upon his watch; and if any thing shall be moved in parliament respecting the plan for an union of his Majesty's northern colonies projected at Albany, which may have a tendency to infringe on our charter privileges, that he use his

led in it. But what other method of choosing a chief executive officer was open to them? Certainly not that of election by the colonies themselves. The time was not ripe for so radical a measure of independence; and this Franklin and Hopkins knew very well.

1 Printed in R. I. Hist. Tract, IX. 60-61, where it is cited by "Philoletus."

2 R. I. Hist. Tract, IX. 61.

utmost endeavors to get it put off until such time as the government is furnished with a copy, and have opportunity of making answer thereunto."¹

It was after the subject had thus been pretty well turned over and canvassed, that Mr. Hopkins himself entered the field with a pamphlet,² dated March 29, 1755.³ This pamphlet has none of the elevated qualities of style observed in his historical writings⁴ and discussions of the rights of colonies,⁵ subsequently published, nor has it anything in common with his electioneering pamphlets, issued within the next few years.⁶ Its interest lies in its lucid, business-like statement of facts, carefully sifting from them the erroneous and unwarranted assertions then current. He ingeniously refrained from a single syllable of direct argument in favor of the plan;⁷ but

1 R. I. Col. Records, V. 424.

2 "A true representation of the plan formed at Albany, for uniting all the British northern colonies, in order to their common safety and defence." By Stephen Hopkins. Providence, March 29, 1755. Reprinted in R. I. Hist. Tract, IX. 1-46.

3 The month and day as well as the year, are occasionally given in imprints of pamphlets belonging to this period.

4 See page 134.

5 See Chapter VIII.

6 See Chapter VII.

7 R. I. Hist. Tract, IX. 40-46. His opponent somewhat unreasonably finds fault with this. (R. I. Hist. Tract, IX. 65).

by printing the instructions of the home government to the colonial assemblies,¹ the instructions of some of these assemblies to their respective commissioners,² the proceedings of the congress in relation to the "plan of union,"³ and the text of the plan itself,⁴ he effectually confuted the misrepresentations which had been made by his opponents.

This pamphlet was followed by another, in reply to it, and issued over the signature of "Philolthes,"⁵ which is a wonderfully good specimen of the pamphlet literature of that day, repeating mis-statements which had already been exposed, and even reckless in its misrepresentations. It appears to have overshoot its mark, for though it was issued just in time⁶ to bring an influence to bear on the election in May, Stephen Hopkins was then found to be elected governor; with an assembly prepared for the most part to listen to whatever measures he might bring to their attention. Yet although at the October session

1 R. I. Hist. Tract, IX. 8-13.

2 Ibid., IX. 3-8.

3 Ibid., IX. 16-31.

4 Ibid., IX. 32-39.

5 The full title has already been given. See page 187, *note*.

6 It is dated, "April 10, 1766."

in 1755, the members of this body readily appointed¹ His Honor the Governor one of the commissioners to another of these colonial congresses, it was perhaps because they believed that no "plan of union" was to be, or was likely to be, called up for action at its sessions.

For Rhode Island was not the only colony which turned the cold shoulder to Franklin's plan. That plan was not approved by a single one² of the colonial assemblies before which it was brought; and when the matter came in due course to the attention of parliament in September or October, 1754, that very home government which had been so strenuous in urging upon the colonists the idea of "union and confederation," suddenly found that the colonists were taking the recommendation not only too liter-

1 R. I. Col. Records, V. 464. This congress appears to have been held at Albany in December. See letter of Stephen Hopkins to Mrs. Anne Smith, dated "December 5th, 1755," in the possession of Miss Ruth H. Smith.

2 The General Court of Massachusetts Bay had specifically instructed its delegates on the matter of entering into "articles of union and confederation;" and this was the only government which did give these instructions. (Sparks's "Works of Benjamin Franklin," III. 23). But a Boston town-meeting held after the adjournment of the congress vigorously denounced the plan. ("Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society," 1st series, IV. 85).

ally but too liberally. No action was ever taken on it in England.¹

Yet there is no contribution to constructive statesmanship preceding the year 1776, which had a profounder effect on the subsequent growth and development of the idea of American nationality. Even in the amended form in which it was "approved" by the congress, it was, says a recent writer, "in advance of the Articles [of Confederation] in its *national spirit*, and served as the prototype of the constitution itself."² There was to be a central authority,³ self-sustaining,⁴ and obligatory upon the component members of the government. The separate colonies were not to be represented⁵ equally, but in proportion to population; and it was the

1 "The Board of trade," says Franklin, "did not approve of it, nor recommend it for the approbation of His Majesty." (Bigelow's "Franklin," I. 309).

2 "The articles of confederation vs. the constitution," by L. Bradford Prince, (since Chief-justice of New Mexico), p. 19.

3 Franklin's "Works," III. 37. The ill-considered departure from this principle, in the Articles of confederation, is noteworthy.

4 But not self-perpetuating.

5 As printed in Franklin's "Works," III. 40.

general government which had the power to lay taxes,¹ and to raise and pay soldiers.² Every one of these features re-appeared in the constitution³ of the United States, thirty-three years later ; and after a most disastrous trial had been made of an opposite method.⁴ Franklin was in advance of his time, it is true ; but he had examined and forecast, says Mr. Sparks, "with an almost prophetic sagacity, the habits, wants, temper, and other characteristics of the people."⁵

Yet while the statesmanship of the Albany congress is Franklin's beyond a question, some part of the credit of it must be considered as justly due to that man who had the clearness of vision and enlightened forecast, to see farther than those around him in his narrow colony ; and who not only upheld

1 As printed in Franklin's "Works," III. 50-51.

2 *Ibid.*, III. 49.

3 Compare Art. 2, Sect. 2 and 3; Art. 1, Sect. 2, No. 3; Art. 1, Sect. 8, No. 1; Art. 1, Sect. 8, Nos. 12-16.

4 In the Articles of confederation. Compare Art. 9, 10; Art. 5; Art. 9, 1st and 5th paragraphs.

5 Sparks's "Works of Benjamin Franklin," III. 57.

the plan of union in the congress,¹ but advocated it against overwhelming odds, among a people bitterly opposed both to it, and to the principle on which it rested.² And this was not all. It was "the proper reception of" the principles developed by the leaders of the Albany congress, says Chancellor Kent, "in the minds of their countrymen," which "prepared the way for their future independence and our present greatness."³ It was the reception of these principles by the people of Rhode Island, pressed upon their attention with the most persistent industry, and with the aid of every agency of tongue, pen, type, or personal influence, during the next twenty years, which prepared the least interested of the thirteen colonies to take a spirited and distinguished part in the contest which followed. The history of

1 Whether Hopkins was one of those who, as Franklin says, "had form'd plans of the same kind," (Bigelow's "Franklin," I. 308), does not appear. He was, however, a member of the special committee of seven appointed "to prepare and receive plans or schemes for the union of the colonies, and to digest them into one general plan." ("Record of proceedings," June 24, 1764); a committee which is pronounced by Frothingham "a rare combination of character, intellect, learning, and experience in public affairs." ("Rise of the republic," p. 140).

2 See pages 176-79.

3 Kent's "Commentaries on American law," Ed. 1873, I. 204.

no other colony, perhaps, presents such an instance of a public man deliberately setting himself to shape public opinion, and to develop a public sentiment which should sustain and heartily approve the measures to be undertaken. "Every statesman," says Mr. Lecky, "who is worthy of the name, will carefully calculate the effect of his measures upon opinion," and "will esteem the creation of a sound, healthy, and loyal public spirit one of the highest objects of legislation."¹

The creation of such a public spirit is what most strikingly characterizes Stephen Hopkins; and it is upon this ground that a statesmanship of the most enlightened character may justly be ascribed to him.

¹ Lecky's "Leaders of public opinion in Ireland," p. viii.