

CHAPTER. II.

RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES, THEIR HISTORY AND PRESENT CONDITION.

INTRODUCTORY.

Upon the front of the Rhode Island Capitol, in Providence, finished in 1900, is inscribed, in enduring marble, the purpose of Roger Williams in founding the Commonwealth:

“To hold forth a lively experiment that a most flourishing civil State may stand and best be maintained, with full liberty in religious concerns.”

This sentence is the Aegis under whose protection the citizens of the State have dwelt securely, in a spiritual sense, for almost three hundred years. None of her records are stained with laws for the regulation of the worship of God or for the favoring or the oppression of the adherents of any particular form of religion. It is the glory and the boast of Rhode Island that no one, within her boundaries, has ever been disturbed by her legal representatives on account of spiritual convictions. The “lively experiment” has been tried and has fulfilled the most sanguine expectations.

The Royal Charter of Charles II, promulgated in 1663, was but an echo of the utterance of the Standard bearer of Soul Liberty, where it declares:

“No person within said Colony, at any time hereafter, shall be anywise molested, punished, disquieted or called in question for any difference of opinion in matters of religion, who does not actively disturb the Civil peace of our said Colony.”

Rhode Island is thus the *Geographical Expression* of a principle, as old as humanity, but not previously so emphatically stated—the instinct of revolt against spiritual dictation.

England protested against Rome, Massachusetts protested against England, and Rhode Island protested against Massachusetts, but from Rhode Island no protesting colony ever went forth. In her, through the complete establishment of soul-liberty, the spirit of ecclesiastical revolt attained its equilibrium.

It is not to be supposed that there was no religion in the territory around Narragansett Bay until Roger Williams brought it hither. The Red men, after their fashion, were among the most religious races of which there is any record. Roger Williams himself testifies concerning the Indians: "They have plenty of gods. . . . I brought home lately from the Narragansetts the names of thirty-eight of their gods." They worshiped no images. Their religion dealt only with spiritual powers. They had, too, their *superior* gods, one of *good* and one of *evil*. Mr. Williams tells of their "strange relations of one Watucks, a man that wrought great miracles among them and walked upon the waters, with some kind of broken resemblance to the Sonne of God". He remarks, too, "he that questions whether God made the world, the Indian will teach him". When Williams preached to them, in his ardent and loving way, even if they were not convinced, they listened to all he told them with respectful attention. He could never forget that it was among these savages, taught only by the Great Spirit, that he found that favor which Christians had denied him, when they drove him forth in the depth of winter to wander in the wilderness, not knowing "what bread or bed did mean".

Nor is it reasonable to conclude that God had left himself without witness in some form among those children of Nature, who, by no fault of their own, had been destitute for ages of the light of Revelation. Their many noble and generous traits, amidst much natural debasement, forbid the thought. How responsive was the Indian heart to the principles of Christianity, when they had been effectively presented to it, is evidenced by the sachem Thomas Ninigret's utterance of the prayer, in a petition to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel for the establishment of a *school* among his people, a century later, "that when time shall be with us no more, that when we and the children over whom you have been such benefactors shall leave the sun and stars, we shall rejoice in a far superior light."

But, of course, our principal concern in this historical sketch is with the Christian Religion, as professed by the colonists and later inhabitants of Rhode Island, rather than with the aborigines and their obscure pagan faith.

Noble as was the corner-stone of *Religious Liberty*, which Roger

Williams laid for the foundation of his new state, there can be no doubt that evil as well as good followed the pressing of the principle to its extreme results. No wonder Rhode Island became, forthwith, as it was styled, "a harborage for all sorts of consciences". People took advantage of *soul-liberty* to have no religion at all or to embrace all sorts of vagaries. While a considerable number of earnest Christian men and women joined Mr. Williams in the formation of the first church, it is evident that a very much larger number of residents at Providence held themselves entirely aloof. It must thus be explained why the general religious condition of the State was, in early times, somewhat low and why traces of that *chartered irreligion*, which perfect liberty of conscience to a degree encouraged, in certain sections still subsist.

Cotton Mather was not very charitable, but he did not, probably, wander as far as he might have done from the truth, when, after about a hundred years from the settlement of the Colony, he declared that "if a man had *lost his religion* he might find it in this general muster of opinionists" in Rhode Island.

One of the most singular of the religious systems, brought hither in response to the invitation to "persons distressed for conscience", was what was called Gortonianism, as taught by a generally worthy early settler of Warwick, Samuel Gorton, who arrived about 1641. Gorton was a zealous advocate of liberty of conscience and sought here an asylum where he might enjoy it. He was a man of education and ability, but of a radical and crusty turn of mind. It is hard to tell what his religious tenets really were. He rejoiced in turning the Scriptures into allegory and discovering paradoxical double meanings in them, like Origen. In the mysticalness of his theology and his rejection of Ordinances, he somewhat resembled the early Quakers. The notion of visibly instituted churches he vigorously condemned. Yet, strange as were his opinions, he found followers and continued the leader of a religious meeting, at Warwick, for above sixty years.

Of a very different class from Gortonianism, but still illustrating the readiness of the early Rhode Islanders for something new in religion, was what was called the "New Light Stir" in the middle of the eighteenth century. It was not confined to this State, having its apparent origin in Whitefield's preaching throughout New England about 1741, and Jonathan Edwards's "Great Awakening", at Northampton in Massachusetts, about 1735. But it was in Rhode Island that the movement had, perhaps, its most peculiar development. The

state of religion had been very low and, doubtless, there was great need of a revival of interest and true spirituality, such as this excitement, to a certain degree, inspired. But it was also the means of introducing lamentable dissensions and divisions into the established religious bodies of some parts of the State, especially North and South Kingstown, Warwick and East Greenwich, in some cases the churches never recovering, but becoming extinct. An extensive gathering of the "New Light" churches of New England was held in the town of Exeter in 1753 and another in 1754. In many cases the term "New Light" was applied loosely to old, regular organizations which dwelt, more than some others, upon the need of conversion and experimental piety.

A fanatical religious system, of wholly domestic origin, was that started by Jemima Wilkinson about 1773. She was a native of Cumberland in the northern part of the State, reared a Quaker, and, at the age of twenty, after a severe illness, professed to have been raised from the dead and to be able to work miracles. Many converts flocked to her standard, the most distinguished among them being Judge William Potter of South Kingstown, who made large additions to his already extensive mansion to accommodate the new prophetess, the house taking in consequence the name of the "Old Abbey". After a time, the followers of this misguided woman purchased a tract of land, many square miles in extent, in the State of New York, and together with her removed thither, calling it *Jerusalem*, the sect coming to an end with her death.

It is much pleasanter than dwelling on such extravagances to note among the general religious events of Rhode Island, that the *Sunday School Movement* in New England had its beginning in this State, at Pawtucket, in 1796 or 1797, and after a few years extended to Providence and other towns, as will be noted more fully below.

The history of the different established denominations will now be treated in the order of their establishment.

Two of them, the *Baptists* and the *Friends*, date from almost the beginning of the settlement. Two others, the *Congregationalists* and the *Episcopalians* or adherents of the Church of England, belong, in respect to their Rhode Island origin, to the close of the seventeenth century. The *Methodists*, the fifth in order, were introduced near the end of the eighteenth century. The *Roman Catholics* followed them quite closely in the early part of the nineteenth century. Then came the *Christians*, the *Universalists*, and a number of other bodies, consisting in the aggregate of about twenty.

THE BAPTIST CHURCH OF RHODE ISLAND.

The Formative Period—1638-1685.—Never, probably, had a church a more picturesque beginning than had the Baptist Church of Rhode Island. For it may be said to have been embodied in the august personality of Roger Williams, when, in company with Thomas Olney and two or three others, on a June day in 1636, he came sailing in a canoe across the Pawtucket River from Seekonk towards the eastern border of what is now the capital of the State. The greeting of the friendly Indians, as the little party prepared to land on a flat rock upon the shore,—“What cheer, netop?”—sounds like an unconscious prophecy. It was, indeed, a day of *loftiest cheer* to those savage children of the forest, when the long-delayed Gospel of Jesus Christ was thus being brought to their doors. The singular devoutness of Mr. Williams's spirit was shown at the outset by his giving to the locality selected for his settlement, called by the natives Mooshausick, the name it still bears “in testimony,” as he declared, “of God's merciful *Providence*” to him. But it must not be supposed that Roger Williams was a Baptist, by *profession*, at this period. In his native country, England, he had been at first a clergyman of the Established Church and then a Separatist Puritan. Later, in the Colony of Massachusetts Bay, he had found himself unable to enter into fellowship with John Cotton and the other Puritan clergymen, not because they were not Baptists, although they were by no means such, but because they had not, like himself, cut themselves entirely loose from the communion of the Church of England. After he had gone to Salem, likewise, it had been charged against him, not that he was a Baptist, but that “in one year's time he filled that place with principles of rigid separation tending to Anabaptism.” It is maintained by some writers that, before leaving England, Williams had become acquainted with Baptists and been made familiar with their distinctive tenets. Others doubt whether he had already imbibed the peculiar convictions of the English Baptists or whether he even knew of their holding such doctrines, but regard the Baptist Church in Rhode Island as, in a manner, *autochthonous*. Through earnest study of the Scriptures and by means of the spontaneous reduction of their truths in the crucible of his own burning spirit, the *Prophet of soul-liberty* is believed by the latter to have gradually evolved principles analogous to those of the Baptists of the Old World. When, then, about two years after his settlement at Providence, certain refugees, derisively styled by the Puritans *Anabaptists*, emigrated from Massachusetts Bay to the “shelter for per-

sons distressed for conscience", as Williams very characteristically called his little colony, he was entirely prepared to experience a leaning towards them. Under date of March 16, 1639, Governor Winthrop remarks in his Journal: "At Providence things grew still worse, for a sister of Mrs. Hutchinson, the wife of one Scott, being infected with Anabaptistry and going last year to live at Providence, Mr. Williams was taken or rather emboldened by her to make open profession thereof and accordingly was rebaptized by one Holyman, a poor man late of Salem. Then Mr. Williams rebaptized him and some ten more."

Williams had plainly come to question in his restless mind the validity of his original baptism, received, in accordance with the practice of the Church of England, during unconscious infancy, and to hold that only a *believer*, arrived at years of discretion, is a fit recipient of the rite, thus grasping the central distinctive principle of Baptists.

It would be a palpable error to suppose that Christians of the mould of Roger Williams and the other devout men and women, who gladly accompanied him to Providence or soon joined him there, passed the earlier years of the settlement without meeting for common worship. Doubtless they assembled frequently and regularly, in each other's houses, for prayer and the hearing of the Word. But it is not until the record of Winthrop, cited above, made nearly three years after the founding of the Colony, that any trace remains of an *ecclesiastical organization*, although it is reasonable to conclude that the event referred to occurred quite a length of time previously, probably during 1638. The infant church, which at first consisted of Mr. Williams, Mr. Holyman and "some ten others", was soon joined by twelve more. The original recipients of baptism from Roger Williams, beside Ezekiel Holyman or Holliman, are said to have been William Arnold, William Harris, Stuckley Westcott, John Green, Richard Waterman, Thomas James, Robert Cole, William Carpenter, Francis Weston and Thomas Olney. From the association of these Christian people arose the First Baptist Church, still existing in Providence.

The story of the forming of this earliest Baptist organization in Rhode Island, as, also, the first religious body of any kind in the Colony, is all the more engaging, because it is also the story of the making of the great Baptist Church in America, to-day the largest Protestant organization of the New World.

At first the little company met for worship in a grove, except when wet or chilly weather obliged them to take refuge in some private house.

Mr. Williams remained but a brief period—some say six months,

others four years—in communion with the body, which he thus had the chief part in creating. It is, indeed, pathetic to find him soon tortured by doubt concerning the authority of Mr. Holliman, himself unbaptized “in an orderly manner”, to administer baptism to others, and so wandering forth, outside the bounds of any organized fold, to be what he himself styled a *Seeker* for the remainder of his life. While the great-souled man continued and could not help continuing to preach the gospel, which he loved with all his being, on occasion and especially to his beloved Indians, and while he never ceased to cherish a warm friendship for his former church brethren and to be cherished in their hearts in return, it was still his mysterious lot to be always watching for a morning which never fully broke, and finding no rest for his feet until he entered into that Everlasting Rest which is prepared for the people of God. Roger Williams is declared by the historian, Callender, to have been one of the most disinterested men that ever lived and a most pious and heavenly-minded soul.

When Mr. Williams thus left the small congregation of which he had been the acknowledged head, it fell into the hands of men of less genius and culture than himself, it is true, and of no more than equal devoutness of spirit, but yet the possessors of greater stability and sobriety of mind. Chad Brown, William Wickenden, Gregory Dexter and Thomas Olney are the honored names of these leaders of the church. It is, however, very difficult to determine their exact terms of service or how far each was recognized distinctively as a pastor. Mr. Brown, the founder of the well-known Providence family of that name, is commonly regarded as the first *settled shepherd* of the flock.

In 1644, five or six years after the organizing of the *first* church, in Providence, the next Baptist organization in Rhode Island and one which has enjoyed an uninterrupted existence to the present day was established at Newport. The constituents of this were John Clark, M. D., and his wife, with ten others, of whom are named Mark Luker, Nathan West and wife, William Vaughan, Thomas Clark, John Peckham, John Thorndon and William and Samuel Weeden. Dr. Clark, like Roger Williams, a refugee from “the Bay”, was among the first in America to recognize the principle of soul-freedom and the entire separation which should exist between the Church and the State.

The Second Baptist Church in Newport, being the *third* in the Colony, originated in 1656, when twenty-one people broke off from the First Church and formed themselves into a separate body, with distinctive principles, to be cited later.

In 1671 still another Baptist church, differing on one point from V



REV. JOHN CALLENDER.

AUTHOR OF THE CENTENNIAL DISCOURSE ON RHODE ISLAND HISTORY.

FROM AN OLD PAINTING, IN THE POSSESSION OF THE NEWPORT HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

the preceding, was constituted in the same town. In 1685 a Baptist church was organized at Tiverton.

How very largely the Baptist Denomination of the United States, as a whole, owes its origin to Rhode Island, is illustrated by the fact that, out of the *seven* churches of the order existing in the country in the seventeenth century, *five* belonged to the Colony around Narragansett Bay.

The R. I. Baptists in the Eighteenth Century.—The first seventy years of the eighteenth century witnessed a marked growth in the number of Baptist churches in Rhode Island. From 1706 to 1752 at least *ten* were founded, respectively in Smithfield, Hopkinton, North Kingstown, Scituate, Warwick, Cumberland, East Greenwich, Exeter, Westerly and Coventry. In 1764 a new church, formed chiefly of members from the First Baptist, Providence, was established in Cranston, and another, still so vigorous in the middle of its second century, at Warren, with the distinguished Mr. (later Dr.) Manning as one of its constituents and its earliest pastor. The following year, 1765, gave birth to churches in North Providence and Foster, and 1771 to one in Johnston—a branch of the First Baptist in Providence, with some difference of order, adverted to below. In 1774-5 there occurred a potent revival of religious interest and large numbers were led to confess the power of Christ's spirit and seek membership in the churches of the body. As always happens during seasons of political excitement and civil disturbance, the Revolutionary period immediately following saw, on the contrary, little numerical progress among Rhode Island Baptists. Upon the establishment of peace, however, the work seems quickly to have revived, so that by 1790 there were in the State thirty-eight Baptist churches, thirty-seven ordained ministers and 3,502 members.

The two most signal events of the eighteenth century among the Baptists were the erection of the present meeting-house of the First Church in Providence and the establishment of *Rhode Island College*, now *Brown University*. It is most singular that during the sixty years after Mr. Williams organized the Providence church, no building seems to have been devoted to its exclusive use. While the members were dwelling in their "houses of cedar", even if not "painted with vermilion", the ark of the Lord was permitted to remain not, indeed, "in curtains", but under the trees or in any private house which might temporarily receive it. Then at length it was due not to any layman, but to the zeal and personal liberality of the pastor of the day, Pardon Tillinghast, that a rude and in truth unsightly meeting-house,

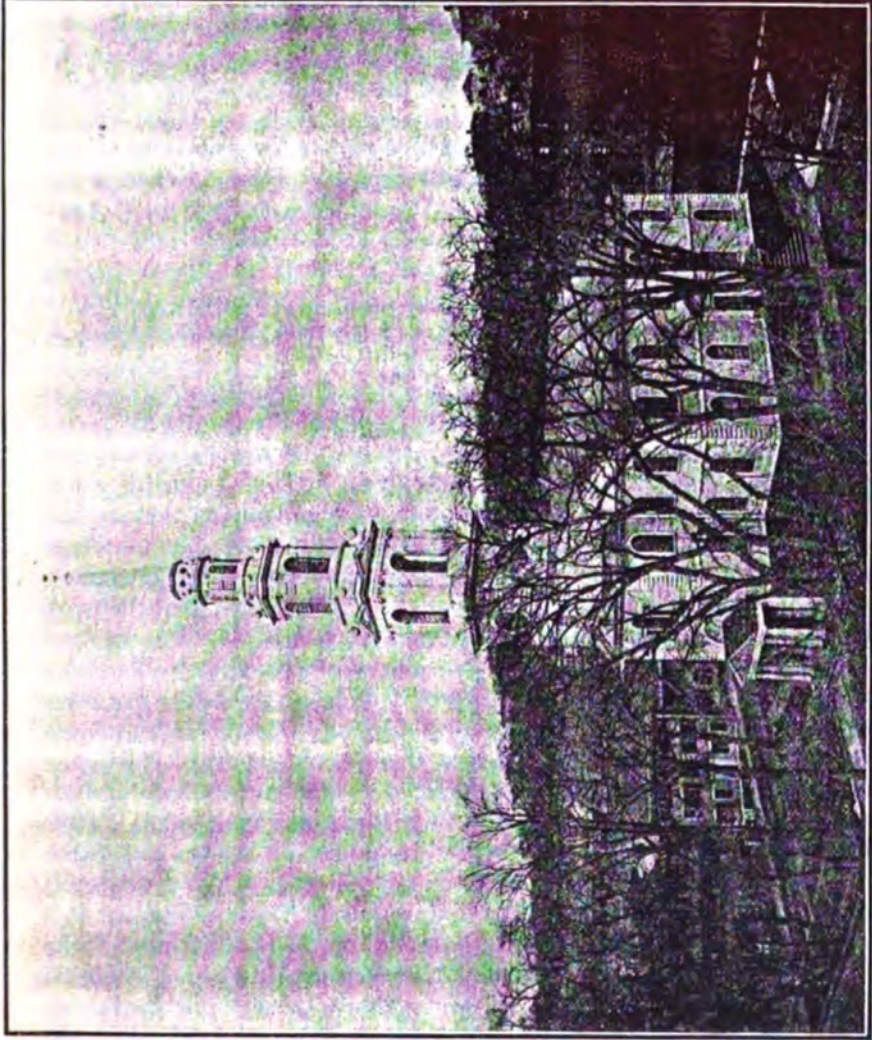
described as "like a hay-cap, with a fire-place in the middle and an opening in the roof for the escape of smoke", was built in the northern part of the city. A worthier sanctuary was, however, constructed close by in 1726, at the northwest corner of North Main and Smith streets, continuing in use until the erection of the present church in 1774-5.

The growth of the congregation in numbers and wealth and the need of a suitable building in which to hold the Commencements of the new College, then furnished an incitement to a marvelous architectural advance upon anything which had gone before. Nearly the whole of the fine block of land bounded by North Main, Thomas, Benefit and President (now Waterman) streets, since entirely cleared of other buildings and comprising more than an acre, was obtained for the new meeting-house, and Joseph Brown, esq., and Mr. T. Sumner were deputed to draw the plan. It is related that the elegant ancient church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, London, supplied a basis for their design, especially in the case of the spire. The floor was laid eighty feet square, giving space for one hundred and twenty-six square pews, while broad galleries afforded room for many more. At the west side was reared a steeple one hundred and ninety-six feet in height, furnished with a good clock and a bell, both made in London. On the latter, which weighed twenty-five hundred and fifteen pounds, was cast the following motto:

"For freedom of conscience, the town was first planted,
Persuasion, not force, was used by the people;
This church is the oldest and has not recanted,
Enjoying and granting bell, temple, and steeple."

This beautiful structure, still after a century and a fourth the pride and admiration of the citizens of Providence, was opened for public worship May 28, 1775, when, it being less than six weeks after the battle of Lexington, the storm-clouds of the Revolution were already breaking. The sound of war was in the land and many prominent families of the town removed for safety into the country. But by the good providence of God stated worship in this House of the Most High was never, as happened in so many cases elsewhere during this dark period, suspended.

The other event—the founding of what is now Brown University—while more fully treated in another part of this work, demands a brief notice here, because its inception grew out of the religious needs of Baptists, and because its whole history has been so honorably identified with that Denomination.



FIRST BAPTIST MEETING-HOUSE IN PROVIDENCE.

Reveries 1774-5

The earlier pastors of the body were almost, if not quite, without exception, men whose lips had been touched with live coals from the Lord's altar and whose earnest ministry had been greatly blessed. But they were not generally men of liberal education. During the first century and a third of the existence of the Baptist church in the Colony there had been, as an old writer quaintly expressed it, "preaching after its kind".

As, however, general culture advanced among the members of the congregations, a difficulty was experienced in procuring acceptable pastors for the growing churches. At a meeting of the Baptist Association, held in Philadelphia, October 12, 1762, it was decided that it was practicable and expedient to found a college in Rhode Island, which should be under the chief direction of the Baptists and "in which education might be promoted, and superior learning obtained, free from any sectarian test".

As a result of this happy decision, the Rev. James Manning, a recent graduate of Princeton College, twenty-five years of age, of a fine, commanding appearance, with pleasant manners and a polished address, proceeded, in the spring of 1764, to Warren, R. I., to begin the work. The College being as yet without funds, it was arranged that, as has already been noticed, he should secure support by taking the pastorate of the church then about to be established in the town. In September, 1765, in accordance with the requirements of the charter that the president of the College shall always be a Baptist, Mr. Manning, being a minister of that order, was elected to the office as well as to the somewhat comprehensive professorship of "languages and *other branches of learning*", and the institution was formally opened with a single student. Four years later the first Commencement was held in the meeting-house, in Warren, September 7, 1769, when seven young men were graduated. The next year the College was removed to Providence, the foundations of the earliest building, now known as *University Hall*, being laid May 14, 1770.

In June, 1771, President Manning wrote: "The College, in this place, consists of twenty-three youths." In 1804 the name of the institution was changed, in honor of a generous benefactor, Nicholas Brown, to *Brown University*. Over against this humble beginning we have now, at the opening of the twentieth century, to set the large and influential establishment into which the nursling has grown, with from eight hundred to nine hundred students, about eighty professors and instructors, a Women's College Department, a property, real and personal, of \$3,025,389.18 in land, buildings and endowment, and a

long and distinguished roll of alumni and teachers. Right nobly has it fulfilled its original purpose of furnishing liberally educated pastors for Baptist churches. Nor while doing this has it failed to educate ministers, in countless numbers, for almost every other Christian body and to elevate the whole community by graduating hosts of highly cultured lawyers, physicians, merchants and manufacturers. Although chiefly under the direction of Baptists, never for a moment has it been open to the charge of swerving from the principle of spiritual freedom on which it was founded, by interfering with the "soul-liberty" of its members. To-day, perhaps more than ever before, its faculty and students represent the whole range of religious belief.

While standing high among the colleges and universities of America in general, it is by far the oldest and best-known of the institutions of learning belonging to the order which founded it, and second among them in present importance and financial resources to only its younger sister, the University of Chicago.

The Baptists of Rhode Island in the Nineteenth Century.—During this century the number of Baptist churches in Rhode Island nearly doubled and that of members more than trebled. In 1805, in the long and able pastorate of the Rev. Stephen Gano, occurred notable colonizations from the First Baptist Church in Providence, to form the *Second or Pine Street Church*, with the Rev. Mr. Cornell as pastor, now known as the *Central Church*, with its handsome brick building on High street, and the *First Church in Pawtucket*, of which the Rev. David Benedict soon assumed charge. Previously to that date there had been gathered at the latter place a congregation of persons still members of the old church in Providence, public worship being maintained by occasional supplies without any formal organization. In 1806 a church was organized at Pawtucket, and in 1811 one in Bristol, consisting at first of twenty-three members. The later additions to the number of churches are too numerous to admit of individual mention. In 1813, when Mr. Benedict published his well-known *History of the Baptists*, he recorded that there were in Rhode Island thirty-six churches, possessing thirty meeting-houses *in good repair* and over five thousand members, of whom four hundred and twenty-five belonged to the First Church in Providence. In 1844 there were forty-one churches with seventy-three hundred and eighty-one members. In 1850 there were about fifty-eight ordained ministers and forty-nine churches with seventy-two hundred and seventy-eight members. During the next decade, in which time occurred the remarkable revival of

1858, the membership increased twenty-two per cent., to eighty-eight hundred and forty-nine, in fifty churches. But the Civil War occurring in the succeeding decade and naturally distracting attention from religion, the growth in that period was but six per cent. In 1890 there were sixty-nine churches with twelve thousand and thirty-nine members. The national census of 1890 gave the value of the church property of the Baptists in Rhode Island as \$1,151,960.

During the nineteenth century there took place the notable events of the incorporation of the *Rhode Island Baptist State Convention*, October, 1826, and the adoption of the *Sunday School*, as an auxiliary in the religious work of the churches.

In its original form, as introduced by Samuel Slater, at Pawtucket, about 1796 or 1797, the Sunday School—the first in New England—was merely a *school on Sunday* for the benefit of his employes in the newly established cotton mill, with paid teachers and elementary secular studies. Although conceived in a highly philanthropic spirit, the undertaking did not profess to be religious. In 1805 David Benedict, then a student of Brown University, and a licensed Baptist preacher, was assigned to the charge of the school. It seems to have been due to his earnest spirit that, at this stage, Bible reading and religious instruction were added to the original curriculum. Eventually this school was divided between the Baptist Church, of which Mr. Benedict became pastor, and St. Paul's Episcopal Church (organized in 1816), as a part of their regular work.

As early as 1815 this movement extended to Providence, and steps were taken for the organization there of an independent Baptist Sunday School for colored women and children. The earliest school connected with the First Baptist Church in that town and the precursor of the notably excellent and enthusiastic organization of later years under Prof. John L. Lincoln and others, was established in May, 1819, with about forty members. By 1833 there were in Rhode Island thirteen Baptist Sunday Schools. The *Rhode Island Baptist Sabbath School Association*, subsequently changed to the *Rhode Island Sunday School Convention*, was organized in 1840, embracing twenty-four hundred teachers and scholars. By 1842 the membership had increased to thirty-four hundred and ninety and by 1852 to forty-one hundred and sixty-three.

The Present Condition (1900) of the Rhode Island Baptists—At the opening of the twentieth century the Baptist Church in Rhode Island, fast approaching the completion of three hundred years of its history, presents itself as a large, vigorous and united body, living up to its

honorable traditions. It is organized under three Associations—Naragansett, Providence and Warren—containing seventy-seven churches, eighty-six ordained ministers, and thirteen thousand seven hundred and seventy-two members. The one little Pawtucket Sunday School of the beginning of the nineteenth century has grown to eighty-six schools, with sixteen hundred and fifty-five teachers and officers, and twelve thousand eight hundred and fifty-four scholars. The total annual contributions of the Denomination, last reported, amounted to \$147,515.83, of which \$118,804.34 went to church expenses. The value of church property is \$1,375,300.

The Rhode Island Baptists have not failed to share in the modern awakening of Christians to the importance of the social element in the promotion of religious life and activity, the *Rhode Island Baptist Social Union* being the pleasant and healthful outcome of the conviction.

The wonderful recognition, too, at the end of the century, throughout all churches, of the value of *young people's* enthusiasm and devotion in building up the Kingdom of Christ, has promptly led to the organization, among the Baptists of this State, of branches of the *Baptist Young People's Union of America*, formed in 1891.

In summing up what the Baptists of Rhode Island have stood for, in their long history, in addition to the cardinal principle of *freedom of conscience*, always from the first constituting the very warp and woof of their being and already sufficiently dwelt upon, there are to be noted *three* other points, viz.:

1. An unswerving devotion to what is generally understood by *Orthodoxy*. While the theological system of Calvin has been held by them with varying degrees of tenacity, yet, as to the fundamental doctrines of grace, as believed to be found in the Scriptures, they have always been immovable. There has never among Baptists been any falling away, as in some other Christian bodies in New England, from their original belief in the Deity of Jesus Christ.

2. An exceptional interest and zeal in respect to *Foreign Missions*, from the beginning of their modern prosecution. Although Adoniram Judson, at the time of his graduation at Brown University in 1807, was not a Baptist and did not become one until 1812, yet his fervor and earnestness in missionary work in India soon came to inspire the whole Baptist church in Rhode Island. The interest in this cause of also the Rev. Dr. James N. Granger, the pastor of the First Baptist Church in Providence, in the heart of the nineteenth century, is well known, leading him to take an arduous journey of missionary inspection to the

East. That church and other Baptist churches in Providence and in the country portion of the State have often been scenes of enthusiastic gatherings in behalf of *Burmese Missions*, while a number of the city pastors have borne witness to their devotion to the evangelization of the heathen by personal service in distant fields.

3. A marked and practical conviction of the indispensableness of *Education*. With peculiar temptations, in its early history, to underrating *book-learning* on the part of its teachers and discountenancing what was deprecatingly styled "*a hireling ministry*", the Baptist church, with singular enlightenment, has ever, for a century and a half, stood up manfully for the propriety of liberal culture for the clergy and the best practical education possible on the part of all. Besides the *monumental* achievements in this field, the foundation of Brown University already described, the *Baptist Education Society*, incorporated by the Rhode Island Legislature in 1823 and 1842, has farther attested the interest of the Church in this cause, by aiding a large number of needy students in securing such training as might fit them for the sacred ministry. During 1893, for example, the Education Society aided twenty-six young men.

Among the distinguished Baptist clergy of Rhode Island, gone to their reward, have been James Manning and Jonathan Maxcy, presidents of the college and pastors of the First Baptist Church in Providence, Asa Messer, Francis Wayland, Barnas Sears, Alexis Caswell and Ezekiel Gilman Robinson, presidents of Brown University, Stephen Gano, James Nathaniel Granger and Samuel Lunt Caldwell, pastors of the First Baptist Church in Providence, David Benedict, pastor at Pawtucket, and William Gammell and Henry Jackson, pastors at Newport.

THE BRANCHES OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH.

As might have been anticipated from the untrammelled liberty of thought which was permitted and encouraged in the infant Baptist Church of Rhode Island, there soon grew up divergences of doctrine and order among its members. At first these were entertained within the limits of the original body. But, in several cases, they led to separate organizations, which, while they have continued Baptist in the sense of accepting as valid baptism, that of *believers* only and that by *immersion* rather than by *affusion*, have on other grounds remained apart to the present day. To *three* of these attention will now be given.

The Six Principle, Old or General Baptists.—The distinctive tenet

of this body is the practice of the Laying on of Hands, as a prerequisite for church membership and admission to the Lord's Supper, in accordance with Hebrews, vi, 1, 2, the other *five* "principles of the doctrine of Christ", mentioned in the passage being, of course, accepted by all Baptists. The name *General* was adopted by these Baptists by reason of their inclining to the Arminian System of Doctrine, teaching the potential redemption of all men by the death of Christ, in distinction from the *particular* redemption of the *elect*, as held by Calvinists.

It appears that, before any separation occurred, many of the members of the earlier churches, in both Providence and Newport, were inclined to a belief in the necessity of the Laying on of Hands. As early as 1653-4 a controversy upon this subject arose in the Providence church, leading to a division. At this time the party of Thomas Olney, one of the original constituents and himself an elder, being opposed to the Laying on of Hands, withdrew and formed a separate congregation. This organization maintained its existence until about 1718, when, being left without an elder, it ceased and its members sought admission into other churches. This Olney congregation, having thus proved comparatively temporary, has not been reckoned above in the list of earlier Baptist churches, being regarded as practically a part of the First Baptist Church in Providence, to which it largely seems to have returned. In Newport a similar division took place in 1656, although here the original church held to the *non-essentiality* of the Laying on of Hands. Twenty-one members, one of them William Vaughan, an original constituent of the First Church, withdrew and formed a Six Principle church, holding to general atonement and a free offer of salvation to all and strictly practising Laying on of Hands. The reasons given at the time for this separation are as follows: "Said persons conceived a prejudice against psalmody and against the restraint that the liberty of prophesying was laid under and also against the doctrine of particular redemption and against the rite of the Laying on of Hands, as a matter of indifference." William Vaughan, Thomas Baker and John Harden were the early pastors of this fold. Later, in 1701, there was ordained to the same office James Clark, a nephew of the Rev. John Clark, the first pastor of the earlier Newport church.

In the first quarter of the eighteenth century, so overshadowing was the importance of those holding "Six Principle" convictions, *thirteen* out of the *seventeen* churches in New England being of that way of thinking, that their influence appeared destined to shape Baptist opinion throughout the territory.

By 1731 the "Six Principle" Newport Church had grown to be the largest of any kind in the Colony, numbering one hundred and fifty members. At this period it was supplied for about two years by the well-known Rev. John Comer, a young minister of education, piety and great success in his profession, who had already, for three years, been pastor of the First Church in Newport and whose Diary has lately been published.

Dr. William Rogers, the first student of Rhode Island College, who was later settled in Philadelphia, was first called to preach in the Second Newport Church, about 1771-2. After the Revolution this church is said to have swerved from its original distinctive faith and practice.



BALLOU MEETING-HOUSE, CUMBERLAND, NEAR WOONSOCKET LINE, ERECTED 1740.

Elder William Gammell, the father of the professor of the same name, was subsequently among its pastors.

The Six Principle Church in North Kingstown is interesting because of the tradition that it was formed about 1666, through the influence of Roger Williams, who had an Indian trading-house in the neighborhood, although the earliest *records* of the organization belong to 1710. Near the first year above mentioned Thomas Baker, one of the pastors of the Second Church at Newport, is known to have removed to Kingstown, and is said to have soon gathered a church of which he continued in charge until his death in 1710, when Richard Sweet became pastor.

Other early Six Principle Baptist churches in Rhode Island were those of Smithfield, Jonathan Sprague, pastor, formed not later than 1706; Richmond, Daniel Everett, pastor, organized as early as 1723; Scituate, Samuel Fiske, pastor, formed in 1725 and growing, in a century, to a membership of two hundred and seventy-six; South Kingstown, Daniel Everett, pastor, established as early as 1729; and Warwick, of which the earliest records go back to only 1741, although the church is known to have been in existence in 1730, with sixty-five members under the pastoral care of Manasseh Martin. The Six Principle Church in Cumberland appears to have been organized in 1732. Although, like several others of the early churches of this order, the Cumberland Church has ceased to exist as an organization, it yet challenges attention by reason of its venerable sanctuary, known as the "Old Ballou Meeting-House", still standing just north of "Iron Mountain" or "Iron Rock Hill", in the northwestern part of the town. The quaint building, with its heavy, narrow gallery, is much resorted to by visitors, it being claimed that it was erected about 1740. The fact that the original deed of the land bears the date of 1749, "in the twenty-second year of the reign of George, King of Great Britain", suggests that year as the time of building the meeting-house.

Still other Six Principle churches were formed later in the eighteenth century. In 1770-1 there arose, in the Providence church, a notable controversy, which led to the secession of the pastor, Samuel Winsor, and a large number of members to form a Six Principle church in Johnston, an adjacent town. The Rev. James Manning, President of Rhode Island College, at that time in the process of removal from Warren to Providence, had been, by vote of the church in the latter town, admitted to the Communion, although, while having himself received the Laying on of Hands, he was not unwilling to join in the Lord's Supper with those who had not done so. Thereupon, April 18, 1771, it being church meeting, Elder Winsor appeared and presented a paper, signed by certain members living out of town, as follows: "Brethren and Sisters,—We must in conscience withdraw ourselves from all those who do not hold strictly to the six principles of the doctrine of Christ, as laid down in Hebrews, vi, 1, 2." Elder Winsor, Deacon John Dyer and eighty-five other members then withdrew and were organized into a separate church, as already stated, Mr. Manning becoming pastor in Providence. In 1774 the Johnston church erected a large meeting-house about two miles west of Providence, Elder Winsor surviving until January, 1802. Towards the close of the seventeenth century a few of the earliest Six Principle

churches united in a *Yearly Meeting*. As early as 1729 this body consisted of twelve churches and about eighteen ordained elders, mostly in Rhode Island, but some in Massachusetts and Connecticut, and one in New York. In 1802 it was composed of twenty-one churches, a number of them apparently outside of this State. In 1813, Mr. Benedict stated that this Yearly Meeting, on account of its making the Laying on of Hands a term of communion and of its inclination to the Arminian System of doctrine, had no connection with any of the neighboring Associations. It then contained thirteen churches and twelve ministers, eight only of the churches being in Rhode Island. By 1827 there were no less than eighteen Six Principle churches in the State and in 1850 nineteen. In 1853 there were twenty-two ministers and seven hundred and sixty-six members. Since that period the Denomination has declined, some of its buildings being closed or used by others. In 1891 there were said to be nine hundred and thirty-seven members, perhaps not all in Rhode Island. In January, 1895, there was incorporated *The General Six Principle Baptist Conference of Rhode Island*. At the opening of the twentieth century there are, in this Denomination, ten churches, with six ordained ministers and six hundred and thirty-four members, and eight Sunday Schools with sixty-four officers and teachers and four hundred and thirty-two scholars. Small as is now the body there is still evident in it a genuine spiritual interest. The quaint titles of two of its organizations, the *Maple Root Church* and the *Knotty Oak Church*, yet in use, illustrate the primitive flavor of this ancient Denomination.

The Seventh Day Baptists.—These, sometimes called also *Sabbatarians*, differ as a body from the Baptists generally, in no other article but as to the day of the week to be observed as the *Sabbath*. They hold that, as the Ten Commandments are still binding on Christians, the *Seventh* day of the week, instead of the *First*, in accordance with the Fourth Commandment, ought to be kept as the Christian Sabbath.

The Seventh Day Baptists of Rhode Island had an origin organically quite independent of the English body of the same name. Sabbatarian sentiments were first brought from England to America by Stephen Mumford, in 1665, and introduced by him into the First Baptist Church in Newport. From this church seven members seceded, in December 1867, and organized in that town the first Sabbatarian church in this country, with William Hiscox as the pastor. A few members of this body, apparently children of Samuel Hubbard, Andrew Longworthy and William Hiscox, original constituents of the Newport church, soon joined the first freemen of Westerly, then em-

bracing, as well as the present township of that name, those now known as Hopkinton, Richmond and Charlestown. This town was, however, by no means, as has sometimes been supposed, a *Sabbatarian Colony*, it having been purchased from the Indians previously to the arrival of Stephen Mumford in America. A Seventh-Day Baptist meeting-house was built about 1680, in that part of Westerly now called Hopkinton, but the first Sabbatarian church in that locality was not organized until 1708, when Rev. John Maxson, who was the first white child born on the island of Rhode Island, having been ordained at about the age of seventy years, became the pastor or "Leading Elder". It is interesting to note that he was succeeded in the pastorate by two of his sons, in order. This church has since enjoyed the services of a long line of faithful pastors and has had an apparently unbroken prosperity. The influence of large revivals upon its life and growth has been most marked. In 1769 Gov. Samuel Ward and about fifteen others were added to the membership, in 1770 there were forty-five additions, in 1779 sixty-five, in 1780 fifty-three, in 1785 forty-one and in 1786 one hundred and forty-six. By 1793, after two hundred and four members had been set off to form three new churches, there were left four hundred and thirty-five. In 1816 the church membership was nearly one thousand, a number probably unparalleled in the case of a rural church, in the history of the remainder of Rhode Island. Soon after the above date several branches were organized into separate churches. The report of the parish for 1900, after an existence of nearly two hundred years, shows three hundred and forty-one members, with two hundred and fourteen officers, teachers and pupils in the Sunday School and contributions of \$2,827.15. From practical considerations, easily imagined, the Seventh Day order appears to thrive best in small places, where the population largely agrees in the practice of observing the last day of the week as the Sabbath. This early settling of a number of adherents of the Newport Seventh Day Church in Westerly seems to have given a permanent Sabbatarian complexion to Southwestern Rhode Island. In 1853 Dr. Jackson reported that there were ten hundred and fifty-five members of Seventh Day Baptist churches in the State, with six ministers. At the opening of the twentieth century there are seven active churches in Hopkinton, Richmond and Westerly, with eleven hundred and forty-seven members, of whom four hundred and seven belong to the vigorous Pawcatuck Church, in the latter town. The original church at Newport, which retained its existence until 1850 or a little later, has since become extinct. The Seventh Day Baptists in Rhode Island, in common with

their co-religionists in other parts of the country, sustain, with characteristic zeal and devotion, a mission in China. They have always been much interested, likewise, in education and assist in supporting high-class denominational schools and colleges in other sections.

A laudable effort and one for which Seventh Day people possess manifestly superior qualifications, by reason of agreement upon the day of the week to be kept as the Sabbath, was, some years since, started by this body for the Christianization of the Jews in New York city and later in Palestine, but unfortunately proved, at least temporarily, impracticable.

After the oversight of the general interests of the denomination had been exercised for nearly a hundred years by the First Hopkinton church, it passed from the control of that church, in 1802, into the hands of the *Seventh-day Baptist General Conference*, which will celebrate its centennial year by meeting with that church in 1902. A popular illustrated history of the Denomination is in course of preparation.

The Free (formerly Free Will) Baptists.—From nearly the beginning of the Baptist Church in America, there have been some members who have opposed a number of the principal articles of the Calvinistic system of belief.

For a long time most of these brethren of Arminian proclivities lived in Rhode Island and its vicinity. It was among these that the Free Will Baptist Denomination had its rise, with its belief in *General Redemption* and its practice of *Open Communion*. In New Durham, N. H., the first separate church of this way of thinking was organized, in 1780, by Elder Benjamin Randall. It does not, however, appear that Mr. Randall was *disfellowshipped* by the regular church with which he was connected, or that he hesitated to call the body which he had created a Baptist church.

Thirty-two years later, in 1812, there came to Rhode Island, to promulgate the principles of Elder Randall, a youthful preacher of great power named John Colby, who found a large number prepared, apparently through previous convictions, to welcome his mission. In Providence, Smithfield, Gloucester and Burrillville, he proclaimed the gospel of *free salvation unto all men* with immense energy and acceptableness. Hundreds and thousands flocked to hear him, and scores upon scores were converted as a result of his tireless labors.

The kindness of feeling entertained towards this young evangelist by his brethren of the regular Baptist connection, notwithstanding differences of belief, is attested by the fact that, during a winter of

sickness, he found a home for many months in the family of Dr. Stephen Gano, the esteemed pastor at that day of the First Baptist Church in Providence. In the last month of 1812 Mr. Colby organized in Burrillville the pioneer Free Will Baptist Church of Rhode Island, now known as the Pascoag Church. For a long period, until the death of its founder in 1817, this church, under the influence of his burning zeal, experienced what seemed like a perpetual revival. Other eminent gospel preachers came to take up the work of Elder Colby, the godly and able Joseph White being his principal successor. For about eight years the Burrillville church remained the only one of the new order in the State. Then, in 1820, one was organized in Smithfield (since conspicuous for its influence, under the name of the Greenville church), also under the pastoral care of Elder White.

A little later there was formed, by the instrumentality of Elder Ray Potter, a Free Will Baptist church in Pawtucket, now the largest outside of Providence. In 1821 there appeared, from Vermont and New Hampshire, Elder Reuben Allen, "a graduate from the anvil", who was destined for more than fifty years to be a man of mark in the church of Rhode Island. But, as an even more signal event, in 1828, in the village of Olneyville, there arose into notice a *young, middle-aged man*, gifted with more than ordinary power and mighty in the winning of souls to Christ, Martin Cheney. At first Mr. Cheney organized in the village a small, *independent* church, which, by 1830, had gathered eighty-four members and was then received into the Free Will Baptist Denomination.

It is, without doubt, largely due to the sanctified genius and burning ardor of Elder Cheney, that the Olneyville church has for more than a half century been second to none of the order in the State, and has become the largest of all in membership, as well as that the whole Denomination has gained its present standing.

The "Roger Williams Church" in Providence was originally organized in 1830, as a Six Principle Baptist church. In May, 1837, however, it applied for admission and was received into the Free Will Baptist body and has since become the second in size and influence in the State. Few churches have enjoyed the services, among other faithful pastors, of such men as two of the ministers of this congregation, the quaint and strong Elder James A. McKenzie, and the saintly and scholarly Dr. George T. Day. In 1831 there were eight Free Will Baptist churches in Rhode Island. By 1841 they had increased to about seventeen.

In 1880, at the period of the centennial anniversary of the Denomination, there were nineteen churches, with twenty-six preachers.

At the opening of the twentieth century there are twenty-nine churches in the State, with about thirty-seven ministers and thirty-six hundred and fifty-two members, and twenty-six Sunday Schools with thirty-seven hundred and forty-seven members. The value of church property is \$252,580.

In 1821 there was formed an association of the Free Will Baptist churches of the State, under the title of the *Rhode Island Quarterly Meeting*. In 1857 the name was changed to that which the society now bears—the *Rhode Island Free (Will) Baptist Association*. The territory covered by this Association is not, however, exactly coterminous with the State, seven of the churches, embraced in it, being situated in Massachusetts, Connecticut and New York. In most of the churches there are branches of the *Free Baptist Young People's Union*, with a total membership in the State of six hundred and eleven. There exists in the Denomination a lively interest in foreign missions, and its Rhode Island members also unite with the general church in sustaining an extensive and prosperous mission in southern Bengal, with more than a dozen stations, about twenty white missionaries and sixty-seven native helpers. In 1853, largely under the inspiration of Dr. Day, there began to be published in Providence an able Review, under the title of the *Free Will Baptist Quarterly*, the place of publication, after three years, being changed to Dover, N. H.

There arose in Rhode Island and Connecticut, during the "White-field Revival" of the later middle of the eighteenth century, a body of *Separates*, who called themselves *Free Communion Baptists*. To these the later organization of the Free Will Baptists offered a congenial home, and by 1841 they had become mainly absorbed into that Denomination. About one-third of the existing Free Baptist churches in Rhode Island were not originally such, some of them being, probably, of the Denomination called *Christians*, but, while of other names, finding themselves in harmony with the principles of the growing new body applied for admission to its fold. There can, too, be no doubt that the discussion aroused by the inception of the Free Will Baptist movement reacted upon the other Baptists, who entered into it, and tended, even where they did not change their position, in some degree to modify their views. Indeed, it would seem to have been one of the Providential offices of this Denomination, in addition to its chief service of saving thousands of souls, to disseminate, also, a spirit of larger Christian liberality among other religious bodies.

THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS IN RHODE ISLAND.

Their Arrival and Organization.—Almost exactly a score of years after Roger Williams had found, in 1636, a secure refuge beside the pleasant waters of Narragansett Bay and proclaimed that all persons who should submit themselves to the civil regulations of the Colony need fear no persecution on account of their religious belief, there began to appear within its borders members of a sect destined to exert a profound and salutary influence upon the community. In 1648 the founder of the *Society of Friends* in England, George Fox, had entered upon his career as a preacher. In 1654 the first *General Meeting* of the Society, of which any account has been preserved, was held in Swannington, Leicestershire. By 1656, to escape the persecution which had broken out in England, members of the Society had emigrated to Massachusetts Bay to meet there, likewise, a reception which would have daunted less determined enthusiasts than they. For refusing to attend Puritan worship and to contribute to the support of its ministers they were subjected to various persecutions. On one pretense or another, if they were not, like the prophets of old, “stoned, and sawed asunder”, they were yet scourged, imprisoned and mutilated. At length, in 1659, two members of the Society were publicly executed on Boston Common. A weakly old man, himself a member of the Puritan Church in Boston, was banished from the Colony for venturing to expostulate with the magistrates for these barbarities. Before the year of their arrival had closed, or certainly early in 1657, some of these unhappy people, hearing of the hospitable asylum beyond the southwestern hills, began to flee from the tender mercies of the Puritans to the friendly “shelter for persons distressed for conscience”, set up by the *Apostle of Soul-Liberty* in Rhode Island. The earliest Friends to emerge, famished and scarred, from the intervening wilderness, repaired to the island of Aquidneck. To this day, during the session of the New England Yearly Meeting in June, not only is there held on First Day a meeting for worship at Newport, where all the business meetings occur, but also one at *Portsmouth*, in the northern part of the island, as if in recognition of the fact that there the forefathers first found rest for their tired and bleeding feet. Later, bands of exiles of the order made homes for themselves in what is now known as Warwick, to give a *Quaker* complexion for two centuries to the western shore of Narragansett Bay. In Massachusetts these peaceable people had been treated as outlaws and subjected to every indignity. In Rhode Island they were allowed to follow their own

convictions and speedily became useful and industrious citizens. During 1657 Commissioners of Massachusetts and Plymouth Colonies, chagrined that the persons they derisively styled *Quakers* had found refuge in Rhode Island, united in a remonstrance.

"We have experienced no difficulty with the people complained of," was the sturdy rejoinder of Roger Williams and the other authorities of the latter Colony.

While Massachusetts was vigorously executing her laws condemning to death any Quaker who should return to the Colony after banishment, Rhode Island stood sternly by the protest of her Assembly, "against the exercise of civil power over men's consciences", and finally appealed to Cromwell, then the Protector, that she might not be compelled to such a course "so long as human orders, in point of civility, are not corrupted or violated".

One of these exiles was Josiah Southwick, who fled to Rhode Island and raised there a family of ten children, of whom one daughter, Cassandra, married Jacob Mott, and became the maternal grandmother of Gen. Nathanael Greene.

In 1659 another Friend, Mary Dyer, was placed upon a horse by the Massachusetts magistrate and escorted to the borders of Rhode Island, where she remained some months. In May, 1660, however, like a moth flying back to the candle, which has already scorched its wings, Mary Dyer returned to "the bloody town of Boston", to protest against the unrighteous laws under which her companions had suffered death, and was herself in turn executed on the gallows, on the first day of June. Mrs. George Gardner of Newport, the mother of several children and a woman of good report, having become a Quaker, visited Weymouth in Massachusetts, with an infant at her breast, and was arrested and taken before Governor Endicott, who ordered her to be flogged with ten stripes and kept in prison for two weeks. Thomas Harris, who had settled in Rhode Island, went to Boston with two other Quakers, where, for denouncing the cruelties practiced on his brethren, he was severely whipped and imprisoned, being for five days of his confinement deprived of food and water. Catherine Scott of Providence visited Boston and saw the right ears of three Friends cut off by the hangman and, for remonstrating against this barbarity, was herself shut up in prison for two months and publicly flogged, two of her children suffering along with her. "You are court, jury, judge, accusers, witnesses and all," exclaimed the Friend, Gov. William Coddington of Rhode Island, at this period, to the Puritan authorities of Massachusetts. Surely human nature would have had to be differ-

ent from what it is, if Quakerism had not thriven in Rhode Island after such a baptism of blood.

There is a good deal of doubt as to the *date* of the earliest organization of the Friends in the Colony as a religious body, the records of the first meetings being said to have been destroyed in a burning dwelling house. Some writers maintain that a General Meeting was held at Newport on the 9th day of the fourth month (June), 1659. But, although this alleged fact lacks confirmation, there can be no doubt that, not long after that year, the earliest organization of Friends in America had been effected on the island of Rhode Island. Nor from that day to the present has a Yearly Meeting ever ceased to be held every June, in Newport, except when, from prudential considerations during the Revolutionary War, their sessions were, from 1777 to 1781 (inclusive), removed to Smithfield in the interior of the State.

The first *positive* intimation of the existence of the Rhode Island Yearly Meeting, so far as at present appears, is found in the Journal of John Burnyeat, a minister of the gospel, who traveled extensively in this country at that day, and relates his attendance at a "Yearly Meeting held on Rhode Island, in the *fourth* month, 1671." As he goes on to speak of it as a "General Meeting, once a year, for all Friends in New England", it is natural to conclude that it had been already for some years established. The initial entry in the books of the Rhode Island *Monthly* Meeting is dated "the 12th of 10th mo. 1676". Subsequent references in the minutes, however, to meetings formerly held, prove that it had been established considerably prior to the above date. Solid ground, indeed, is reached in 1672, for, in that year, no less a person than George Fox himself, the first promulgator of the doctrines of the Society in England, visited Newport and attended the June meeting, of which he inserted in his journal the following description: We "arrived in Rhode Island the thirtieth of the third month, where we were gladly received by Friends. We went to Nicholas Easton's, who was the governor of the island, where we lay, being weary with traveling. On First day following, we had a large meeting, to which the deputy-governor and several of the justices came and were mightily affected with the truth. The week following, the *Yearly Meeting of Friends for New England* and other colonies adjacent was held on this island. . . . This meeting lasted six days. . . . For having no priests on the island, and no restrictions to any particular way of worship, and the governor and deputy-governor daily frequenting meetings, it so encouraged the people that they flocked in from all parts of the island. . . . These public

meetings over, the men's meeting began, which was large, precious and weighty. The day following was the women's meeting, which was also large and very solemn. These two meetings were for *ordering the affairs of the church*. . . . When this great general meeting was ended, it was somewhat hard for Friends to part; for the glorious power of the Lord, which was over all, had so knit and united them together, that they spent two days in taking leave of one another and of the Friends of the island; and then, being mightily filled with the presence and power of the Lord, they went away with joyful hearts to their several habitations." About the same time Mr. Fox held a meeting at Providence *in a great barn*, which, he said, "was so thronged with people that I was exceedingly hot and perspired much".

Tradition narrates, too, that during this visit he preached *under a tree*, in Old Warwick, on land since owned by John Holden, and held also a large meeting at Narragansett, to which people came from Connecticut and other parts around.

Altogether an immense impetus must have been given to Quakerism in Rhode Island by this progress through it of the Arch Prophet of the System. It is a curious commentary upon Roger Williams's just distinction between the discarding of all *carnal* weapons, in combating what he judged to be heresy, and the duty of drawing against it the *sword of the Lord*, that no sooner had George Fox set his foot in the Colony than the "Apostle of soul liberty" promptly sent him a formal challenge containing fourteen propositions to be debated between them. Nor is it hard to imagine the note of victory, with which that prince of controversialists announced that the *fox* had been "digg'd out of his burrows". *Soul liberty*, plainly, did not, in his view, mean immunity from the doughtiest kind of *spiritual* blows. After the departure of Mr. Fox we meet with such entries in the minutes of the meeting as the following, showing that everything was proceeding in the regular order: "It is agreed on and settled at A generall yearley meeting at ye house of Wm. Coddington in Rhoad Island, ye 11 4-m 1683—The yearley Generall meeting of Friends worshiping of God,—Theare assemply at Rhoad Island Begins ye second sixth daye of ye 4th month in Every yeare." "At a Generall yearley Meeting at the house of Walter Newberrys at Newporte in Rhoad Island ye 15th daye of ye 4th mo, 1691, The severall meetings were called over."

In 1699 Rhode Island *Quarterly* Meeting was established by the Yearly Meeting, and comprised, at that time, the Monthly Meetings of Rhode Island, Narragansett and Dartmouth (Mass.). With this

action the period of early general organization in Rhode Island may be taken to have been completed.

The Tenets of Rhode Island Friends.—It was not without Scriptural authority that these plain people adopted their peculiar name, since the Master declared, "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you *friends*." S. John xv, 15.

In their fundamental articles of belief the Friends did not depart from the doctrine of the Church of England, from which most of their earliest members originated. The *Declaration of Faith*, published in 1672 by one of the pioneers of the Society, sounds like an amplified form of the *Apostles' Creed*. "We do own and believe," it declares, "in the only wise, omnipotent and everlasting God, the creator of all things, both in heaven and earth; . . . and we own and believe in Jesus Christ, his only and beloved Son, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary; in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins; and we own and believe . . . that he was crucified for us in the flesh, without the gates of Jerusalem, and that he was buried and rose again the third day by the power of his Father, for our justification; and that he ascended up into heaven and now sitteth at the right hand of God. He it is that hath now come in the Spirit . . . He is our mediator that makes peace between God offended and us offending . . . Concerning the Holy Scriptures, we do believe that they were given forth by the Holy Spirit of God, who, as the Scripture itself declares, through the Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost".

What the Friends discarded were the forms and ceremonies of the Church, its ministry, and government. They disapproved of music, both instrumental and vocal, as an adjunct of worship, marring, as they judged, its strict simplicity. They rejected the outward forms of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, being convinced that the Lord appointed no external rite or ceremony for observance in His church. Acting upon the Sermon on the Mount, they condemned war and fighting, and declined to take oath before a civil magistrate, making a simple affirmation on giving legal testimony. The principal *positive* distinctive tenet of the Friends, at the outset, was an emphatic assertion of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and of His immediate enlightening and guiding operation on the heart, approximating direct inspiration. George Fox used to preface his addresses with such phrases as: "The Lord hath opened to me," "I am moved of the Lord," and

"I am sent of the Lord God of heaven and earth." His followers were often content to sit through a meeting in complete silence, engaged in reflection and self-examination and listening for the "still small voice" of the Spirit. They inculcated simplicity of dress and absence of personal adornment and required great plainness of speech, using, in direct address, the singular pronouns, "thee" and "thou", in the place of the more courtly "you". They also dispensed with all titles and honorary prefixes. As the Puritans had well-nigh exhausted the Old Testament in their search for praenomina, so the Quakers, for the same purpose, turned to the list of abstract virtues, especially in the case of girls, and such names became common among them as Experience Hull, Content Richmond, Desire Greene, Deliverance Reynolds, Thankful Ball and Comfort Boomer, some of them lingering in Rhode Island even to the present day. The Friends discountenanced *revivals* as recognized religious instrumentalities for an extraordinary accession of numbers, and had little faith in rapid and exciting conversions. It was also one of their principles to abstain from active proselytism. Over all their assemblies and to a good degree over all their lives, there brooded a benign spirit of peace, quietness, honesty, harmony and love.

The Polity of the Rhode Island Friends.—In dispensing with the form of ecclesiastical government to which they had been accustomed in the Church of England, the Society of Friends was moved to adopt one of extreme simplicity. The highest and most comprehensive body provided for is the General or Yearly Meeting, which is autonomous and, except as to moral influences, independent. Each Yearly Meeting is composed of several Quarterly Meetings, which, again, contain severally a certain number of Monthly Meetings. Every Monthly Meeting in turn embraces two or more Preparative Meetings and Meetings for Worship, which are the lowest form of organization, corresponding to local churches in other bodies.

Thus the Rhode Island Quarterly Meeting, along with some eight others, such as the Salem Quarterly Meeting and that of Dover, is a member of the *New England Yearly Meeting*, and is itself constituted of five Monthly Meetings, Providence, Greenwich, South Kingstown, Rhode Island and Swansea (Mass). Each of these latter, on the other hand, is composed of several Preparative Meetings, the East Greenwich Monthly Meeting for example, including at present those of East Greenwich itself and Coventry, and formerly those also of Wickford and Cranston.

It is to be noted that the territory covered by the Rhode Island

Quarterly Meeting is not exactly conterminous with the State, Swansea Monthly Meeting embracing Fall River and Somerset, lying in Massachusetts, while on the other hand a small portion of northern Rhode Island belongs to the Smithfield Quarterly Meeting, the far larger part of which extends over Massachusetts. One of the quaintest elements in the administration of the Friends Society is what is styled a *Meeting for Sufferings*, it being a committee, appointed by the Yearly Meeting, consisting of from twenty-five to fifty members of worthy character, sound judgment and exemplary life, to review all manuscripts relating to the principles or testimonies of the Society, proposed to be published, to correspond with other Yearly Meetings and, in general, to represent the Society in all cases where its reputation and interests are concerned. This Meeting originated in New England at a very early period and is believed to have taken its name from the *sufferings* of Friends, who were persecuted for their faith or distrained to do military duty contrary to their principles, and whom it was authorized to advise and, if necessary, assist, *as best wisdom might direct*. In later times the *Meeting for Sufferings* has come to correspond quite closely to the *Standing Committee* of other religious bodies. Each Quarterly Meeting has its own *Book of Discipline* and certain *queries* respecting the purity and consistency of the members are required to be answered periodically. As to the ministry, there is not the same distinction between clergy and laity which prevails in other bodies, but any exemplary persons, male or female, whose public appearance in speaking is favorably regarded and whose remarks are profitable and edifying, are recommended or approved and can *travel in the ministry*, generally without any permanent abandonment of their ordinary calling.

The Quakers during the Eighteenth Century.—The first half of the eighteenth century was the blooming time of the Society of Friends in most parts, if not in all, of Rhode Island. Many of the influential men of the Colony, its governors and judges, were Quakers. For the time it shared with the Baptists the prospect of permanent predominance in the community. In Newport, Quakerism was thriving under the gentle teachings of the calm and persuasive Friend, Samuel Fothergill. But while on the island of Rhode Island, at the very beginning of the century, it had already become so well established that half of the inhabitants were Quakers and about one-third of the houses of worship were theirs, it was not until this period that the system began to expand itself most rapidly upon the main land, meeting-houses being built in quick succession at Greenwich, Lower

Smithfield, Woonsocket and Providence. The first house of worship of any kind raised on the western shore of Narragansett Bay was the Quaker meeting-house at Greenwich, built in 1700 on a site about a mile southwest of the present center of the village, the spot being still marked by the old Quaker burying-ground.

Here Nathanael Greene, the father of Gen. Nathanael Greene, the "Liberator of the South" in the Revolutionary War and the "Friend of Washington", was, after a few years, often the preacher. It is not very long ago that an aged citizen passed away, who distinctly remembered the general mounting his horse on emerging from the old meeting-house. In those early days it was a saying that "the people of Greenwich were either Quakers or *nothing*". A great number of leading families belonged to the Meeting and, for years, the Society continued to increase. Marriages were, during that period, common in the meeting-house, instead of occurring, as at present, at very long intervals, there having been but *one*, it is believed, in Greenwich meeting-house, for about fifty years.

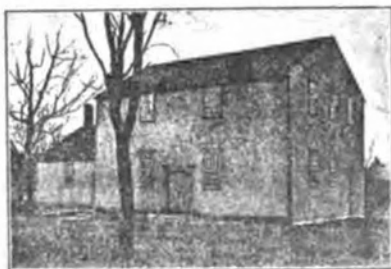
But soon after the middle of the eighteenth century this prosperity began to decline. The number of members of Greenwich Meeting was diminished by the death of the elderly and the tendency of the young to stray away to other places, where more attractive modes of worship were presented.

Another meeting-house built during this period of marked extension was that of Lower Smithfield, now Lincoln. Erected in 1704 by descendants of Thomas Arnold, a well-known coadjutor of Roger Williams, the building is presumed to be the oldest Quaker meeting-house still standing in Rhode Island. A little later, in 1719, other Arnolds of the same stock and members of the Comstock family, together organizers of the Society in the northern part of the State, built a meeting-house at the Union Village, Woonsocket, upon the site of the later one.

In 1718 Providence Monthly Meeting was set off from Greenwich and in 1724 or 1725 a meeting-house was built, through the influence of members of the Arnold family, mentioned above, on Stampers' Hill, in the northern part of the town. This was removed in 1745 to the corner of Meeting and North Main streets and replaced in 1844-5, by the present house of worship. In 1721 a meeting for worship was settled in Warwick, and about 1730 a meeting-house, now used by the Baptists of Oaklawn, was built in Cranston. Such a rapid extension must have justified eventually unrealized expectations of growth.

The Revolutionary War brought heavy trials to many Friends, who, faithful to their previous testimony against the sinfulness of war, were subjected to suspicions of disloyalty and exposed to what at least seemed like persecution. While the Militia Law had been modified in 1730, for the especial protection of the consciences of Friends, public opinion could not, of course, be held in leash. In the case of Nathaniel Greene, indeed, as in that of others, the peaceful principles of Quakerism could not subdue the promptings of a patriotic and adventurous spirit. In taking up the sword they were forced to act against the wishes of those dearest to them.

Moses Brown.—The cardinal event in the history of the Friends of Rhode Island, in the eighteenth century, was the accession to their ranks of Moses Brown. For half a century thereafter Mr. Brown was the most distinguished and influential figure among the Quakers, not only of his own State, but of all New England. Much that was then accomplished was due to his liberality and energy and the momentum of his genius and character. Belonging to a family



OLD QUAKER MEETING-HOUSE
Near Quinsnicket, Lincoln, erected in
part in 1704.

already of importance in Rhode Island and destined to become of still greater prominence, he was able to do for the Society what, probably, no other individual in the State could have done. Up to the age of thirty-five Mr. Brown was under Baptist influence, being a direct descendant of the Rev. Chad Brown, the earliest pastor of the First Baptist Church in Providence, and being surrounded by relatives and friends of that persuasion. The sacrifice, which such a change in all his associations at the threshold of middle life must have cost him, evinced the strength of his convictions and the cheerfulness of his attention to the promptings of duty. It is related that the tender emotions aroused by the death of his beloved wife inspired him with a desire to give liberty to his slaves and the sympathy shown him in this course by those earliest advocates of human freedom, the Friends, appears to have supplied the initial impulse towards causing him to throw in his lot with them.

On April 28, 1774, at his own request he was "received under the care of the Meeting", and it is not too much to say that for sixty-two

years he continued to adorn his profession. The declaration of Mr. Brown when, in 1814, he offered to present land for the site of the Friends School, seems to supply a key to the secret spring of his deeply contemplative nature. "Let us proceed," said he, "in conformity with the Divine mind, that we may hope for His blessing". His whole lengthened life was one consistent effort to frame itself "in conformity with the Divine mind". He was a *leader*, because he was himself *led* by the Spirit of God. Having manumitted his own slaves he was prepared to draw others to a similar course by becoming one of the founders of the *Abolition Society of Providence*.

Being a friend of popular education he was made a member of the first school committee of northern Rhode Island.

Although the establishment of the *Cotton Industry* was by no means primarily a religious or even a philanthropic undertaking, yet the encouragement rendered to Samuel Slater by Moses Brown exhibited the far reaching scope of his vision, "enabling him to see", as has been said, "a hundred years into the future". Mr. Brown was one of the founders of the *Providence Athenaeum*. He was, also, a founder of the *Society for the Promotion of Agriculture in Rhode Island* and of the *R. I. Bible Society*. He was a founder, likewise, of the *R. I. Peace Society*, as well as of the *R. I. Historical Society*, presiding at the organization of the latter.

It is impossible to estimate too highly the force of his vitalizing and enlightening influence, through all these and other instrumentalities, upon the community in which he dwelt for almost a hundred years.

But all of Moses Brown's other activities are eclipsed by the chief achievement—the foundation of the *Friends School*. Nothing else has done so much to consolidate and perpetuate the institutions of the Society in this Commonwealth. The consideration of this undertaking belongs, however, more properly to the account of Quakerism in the nineteenth century. It is mentioned here because the *Yearly Meeting Boarding School in Providence* is the most enduring monument of Moses Brown.

The Quakers during the Nineteenth Century.—The Friends School.—As the conformance of Moses Brown with the Society of Friends was the principal external event in its history during the eighteenth century, so that of the nineteenth was the establishment of the great school, in Providence, under its aegis. But while the final accomplishment of the enterprise belongs entirely to the latter period, the first movements towards it are, just as certainly, to be credited to the former. The training of the youthful members of the Society has

ever been the most important and interesting concern of Friends. From almost the beginning of Rhode Island Quakerism its adherents stood out as friends of Education. "After erecting their Meeting Houses", says Governor Arnold, "the Quakers, from whom flow nearly all the good and perfect gifts in the early history of Rhode Island, proceeded to establish schools in various localities". Early in 1777 a number of gentlemen were appointed to draw up a plan for a Free School among Friends, and thirteen persons, all Quakers, among them Moses Farnum, Moses Brown and David Buffum, were appointed the first School Committee in northern Rhode Island, already referred to. This philanthropic zeal among Quakers awoke such an interest in educational matters that more general measures soon began to be taken to establish *public* schools, *free to all*, which, in their later development, have formed such an important element in the history of the State.

It was during the War of the Revolution, in 1779, when the Yearly Meeting was being held, temporarily, in Smithfield, that the first steps were taken for the founding of a school for higher education, which has grown to be the Friends School. Moses Brown and fifteen other men were then appointed to consider "a method to promote the establishment of schools for the education of youth among Friends". In 1780 a subscription was started for such a school, much of it being the humble contributions of poor people, supplemented, however, by, what then seemed a munificent gift, five hundred and seventy-five dollars from the ever-generous Moses Brown.

It was not, however, until 1784 that the way was opened for the actual starting of the school, in a small room in the old Quaker meeting-house at Portsmouth, very appropriately near the spot pressed by the feet of the first Quaker exiles from Massachusetts, a century and a fourth earlier. The first principal and, it would appear, the *only* teacher was Isaac Lawton, a preacher and a poet, with an annual salary of £50. Although the chief alleged object of the enterprise was "the elevation of poor and helpless children" from remote and rural regions of New England, yet one of the pupils was Moses Brown's young son, Obadiah, who, at his death nearly forty years later, left to the Friends School the largest bequest which had then been made to any school or college in America—one hundred thousand dollars.

The school at Portsmouth was not sufficiently supported, there never being more than about twenty scholars, and after four struggling years was compelled to close its doors, thirty-one years passing away before the enterprise was resumed. In the mean time

Moses Brown continued to be the treasurer, investing the scanty fund of the school to such advantage that, in 1814, he was able to inform the Meeting that it had grown to nine thousand three hundred dollars. At the same time he offered to give to the institution, out of the western part of his homestead farm in Providence, the noble estate of forty-three acres, which the Friends School still continues to occupy. Under this incentive the subscriptions flowed in freely and it became possible, on January 1, 1819, to reopen the doors of the school in the present principal building, with no fear of their again being closed. During the years that remained to Mr. Brown, before his death in 1836, at the age of ninety-eight, he continued to give the school constant care, making it the object of frequent donations and often inspiring it by the benediction of his presence.

As originally constructed, the first edifice built for the school was intended to accommodate one hundred students.

The first two superintendents were Matthew and Betsey Purington, who continued in office for five years.

About a dozen teachers were employed for different lengths of time during this period, Samuel Boyd Tobey being among them. Moses Brown came in his chaise to be present at the start. Only three students appearing, the opening of the school was postponed for three days and even afterwards the number increased but slowly. By the middle of February, however, there were sixty scholars, the average number for 1819-20 being seventy. In 1828 the average for the year had increased to one hundred and twenty-one, with two hundred and seventy-four different pupils. In 1829 the average was one hundred and thirty-five, with three hundred and sixty-five individuals during the year. Thus rapidly did the school grow. *Plain language* was in use and *plain apparel*, with nothing for show in form or color, was enjoined, no rolling collars or extra buttons for ornament on coats being allowed. Among the most distinguished of the instructors in the early history of the Friends School was Samuel J. Gummere, the organizer of the Classical Department, afterwards a distinguished president of Haverford College. In 1832 appeared as literary principal the most eminent man ever connected with the school, Dr. John Griscom. The faculty at this period contained the names, also, of Dr. Pliny Earl, Moses Cartland, Moses Lockwood, Samuel Austin and Elizabeth Osborn, later Mrs. Austin.

Under these able teachers the average number of students rose, in 1833, to one hundred and seventy-two. This was the flowering-time of the Friends School in the first thirty-five years of its history.

After the departure of Mr. Gummere and Dr. Griscom, in 1835, the number of scholars declined for some years. The advent of Joseph and Gertrude (Whittier) Cartland, in 1855, introduced a new era. They succeeded, during the four years of their tarry, in giving a fresh impulse to the cause of higher education among Friends in New England and in making their cultured influence widely recognized.

A long and successful administration was that of Albert K. Smiley and his wife as principals, with Alfred Smiley as associate, from 1860 to 1879. During this period Alumni Hall and the Boys' School Room Building were erected and much was done to open the doors of the school more widely to the public, outside the Society, a greater number of students than ever before being in attendance. It is not too much to say that Mr. Smiley laid the foundation of that subsequent prosperity, which has been so amply enlarged under the efficient principalship of Augustine Jones, now, for more than twenty years, at the head of the school.

During this administration the funds of the institution, already considerable, have been increased by nearly one hundred thousand dollars, and what is even better the former unadorned and sombre atmosphere has been relieved by works of art and the cheering influence of instrumental music, involving little less than a moral revolution in the old time traditions of the school. This period may be styled the era of the recognition of the *beneficent office of the beautiful*. Valuable pictures and examples of sculpture are to be observed on all sides, and even the bedrooms of both the boys and the girls are rendered cheerful by such adornments. Color, instead of the former whitewash and bare boards, abounds everywhere. A tasteful building, lately constructed, for instruction in all branches of art, and grand pianos and other instruments of music in profusion, are constant reminders of the wisdom of the present management. From being a place where music and the fine arts were emphatically tabooed, the Friends School has come to be a spot especially resorted to by those who enjoy gazing on high class paintings, marbles and bronzes and listening to sweet strains. Such a capacity for adapting itself in harmless ways to the developing tastes and convictions of the age is a sign of life, and bespeaks for the school a long continued existence. In 1894 there were two hundred and nineteen students in the course of the year. In 1900 there were about two hundred and seventy different persons under instruction, with about twenty officers.

The history of the Friends School has been thus dwelt upon with considerable detail, because it involves so largely the later history of

the Society itself, and because in recent years it has formed the principal point of tangency between the venerable body and the community at large. Thousands of students from among "the world's people", as well as the youth of the Society, have there been prepared to become a blessing to tens of thousands of others, who have never come within its direct beneficent influence, and thousands more will, without doubt, continue in the future to drink at its pure fountain.

The whole State is under an obligation to those men of old time, who, working in faith and love, laid broad the foundations of the Friends School. The citizens of Rhode Island can never be sufficiently thankful that the two religious bodies, first established within its borders, held Education in such high esteem that they did not rest in those days of small things until they had founded institutions of good learning, which long have blessed and long will go on blessing this Commonwealth. What Rhode Island would have been or now would be without Brown University and the Friends School it is not pleasant to contemplate.

General Condition of the Rhode Island Quakers in the Nineteenth Century.—The general history of the Friends in Rhode Island during the nineteenth century has been one of alternating advance and decline, tending towards the latter. In 1813, when Dr. Benedict published the *History of the Baptists*, he recorded that there were in the State eighteen congregations of Quakers, with the same number of meeting-houses, and eleven hundred and fifty members, apparently a considerable increase upon the number prevailing during the preceding century. In 1836 there were three hundred and thirty-three Quaker families, embracing thirteen hundred and thirty-nine individuals. In 1853 Dr. Jackson, in his *Churches in Rhode Island*, reports a total of nine hundred and fifty members, worshipping in eighteen meeting-houses—one each in Tiverton, Little Compton, Portsmouth, Jamestown, East Greenwich, Warwick, Cumberland, Burrillville, Cranston and Providence and two each in Newport, South Kingstown, Hopkinton and Smithfield. In 1900 there were in Rhode Island Quarterly Meeting, substantially conterminous with the State, twenty-two ministers and nine hundred and fifty-seven members.

The beginning of the nineteenth century witnessed a marked revival of prosperity in the East Greenwich Meeting. In 1804 a new and "more imposing" house of worship was erected on the hill-top, above the village, superseding the *Old Meeting House*, which had never been *disfigured* by paint or plaster during its century of existence a mile

away in the country. Some of the prominent members of this meeting in the earlier part of the century were Sylvester Wickes, Paul Greene, Robert Hall and Benjamin and Thomas Howland, while among the approved preachers were John Casey, Daniel Howland, Thomas Anthony and Rowland Greene. The leading families of the surrounding community were attendants upon the worship, the members of the Society of that day being free and social in their hospitality.

At Quarterly Meeting, in each May, it was the custom for the residents to provide entertainment for all who came from a distance, it not being uncommon, on the occasion, for the meeting-house to be completely filled, with as many as a *hundred* horses and carriages standing in the spacious yard. At present the attendance at the May Meeting, although faithful Friends continue to come by steamer or by rail from Portsmouth, Fall River, Newport and other towns, is much more limited and at ordinary seasons only a little remnant of this once highly favored Meeting continues to worship in the venerable meeting-house.

About 1823 Greenwich Monthly Meeting comprised six Preparative Meetings, or Meetings for Worship, of which now only two remain. The Meeting at Wickford for many years had no speaker and was attended by but two members, Beriah Brown and Howland Vaughan, who were wont to sit together in silence for the usual time and then rise, shake hands and return to their homes. Many years since, the meeting-house there, as in several other places, such as Cranston and Foster, was closed and sold.

The present commodious meeting-house, with its roomy grounds on North Main and Meeting streets in Providence, and its predecessor of a hundred years' standing, have always commanded the respect and affection of the inhabitants of the city. During their long history they have been attended by citizens among the best, socially and morally, in that town, and have for generations enjoyed an added importance from the vicinity of the great Friends School. Such names as those of Moses and Obadiah Brown, William Almy, Annie Jenkins, Dr. Samuel Boyd Tobey and Sarah F. Tobey, Gilbert Congdon and Samuel Austin have enriched the plain structure with pleasant associations.

The well-known Hicksite schism, which rent in twain the Friends in the Middle States, about 1829, is, happily, not known to have perceptibly affected the Society in Rhode Island. But another event, from which the most beneficent results might have been anticipated, worked rather for its injury.

About 1838 John Joseph Gurney, a minister of the London Yearly Meeting, visited and preached in Rhode Island. He appears to have been an advocate of a more liberal interpretation of the doctrines and usages of the Society than had been previously prevailing here.

Hence arose a controversy, one party claiming that the orthodox traditions of the Society had been invaded and the other maintaining that there was no cause for alarm. Painful personal jealousies and animosities were aroused which, in 1844-5, led to actual division. John Wilbur, of Hopkinton, R. I., thought that he had discovered a spirit of worldliness among Friends, inconsistent with the history of the Society. Not being able to convince the majority, he led off a considerable number, who formed what came to be styled "the smaller body".

The schism turned rather upon differences in practices, dress and usages commonly deemed *non-essential*, than in doctrine. So far did the discussion proceed towards proving that even quiet and peaceable Friends are still *human*, that some of them attempted the forcible exclusion of the other party from houses of public worship. At Greenwich two bodies, each claiming to be the Rhode Island Quarterly Meeting, were in session at once, one in the regular meeting-house and other in the Methodist house of worship. The results of such contention could not but be prejudicial to the welfare of the Society.

Especially did the Friends School feel the shock of the conflict, the average number of students, which had been one hundred and seventy-two in 1833, falling, in 1844, to fifty-five and in 1845, so low that it is not recorded. But by 1849 the average had risen to one hundred and seventeen and the wounds of the schism appear to have been largely healed.

At the opening of the new century many signs of activity still distinguish the ancient Society. There is a marked interest in foreign missions, there being sustained, among other efforts, a vigorous and most useful mission at Ramallah, in Palestine. Work among the Freedmen represents the sustained concern which used to manifest itself in the form of anti-slavery exertion. Missions among the Western Indians, at some ten different stations, are supported by the New England Yearly Meeting, with its center of effort at Newport. Perhaps no man in the country has been more honorably identified with the cause of justice to the Red Man than Albert K. Smiley, at whose hotel in the Shawangunk Hills annual national conferences of the friends of the Indian, of various Christian names, have long been held. Nor are the efforts of Friends in behalf of Peace, in connection

with the *Peace Association of the Friends in America*, and for the suppression of the liquor traffic suspended in Rhode Island.

Notable changes, in contrast with a few years since, are seen to have occurred. The quaint costume which used to characterize the members of the Society, has almost utterly disappeared. The *plain language* is rarely heard. Hymns are sung and Scriptural selections are read at the Quarterly Meeting. Bible schools, corresponding to Sunday schools in other bodies, are now connected with several Meetings. There is, also, a general *Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor*, as in some other denominations, with a branch in the Friends School. As in the past, the Quakers are still found on the side of every great reform, civil or political, moral or religious, seeking to accomplish it in a peaceful manner. In them the enslaved African, the wronged Indian, the prisoner condemned to barbarous treatment, oppressed womanhood and the victim of unrighteous war found almost their earliest friends and to them similar unfortunates yet look, nor do they look in vain, for sympathy and help.

In many respects the primitive members of the Society were in advance of their age. They were looking *forward* while most other Christians still stood facing the *past*. The conflicts in Massachusetts Bay, attended by such shocking cruelty on the part of the Puritans, were largely due to the fact that those good people got their practices from bygone ages, while the Friends were, at times somewhat fanatically it is true, anticipating the spirit of the future. It took mankind centuries to grope its way to complete freedom of thought and the Quakers were often far in the van. Says Governor Arnold, the historian of the State: "The spirit of civil and religious liberty, for which Rhode Island has been so distinguished, is due, in no small degree, to the influence which the Quakers exerted in shaping the politics, as well as the religion of the Colony, in which they had sought refuge, and where, for many years, they were its lawgivers".

If, as seems true, the numbers of this venerable Society are declining, at least a partial explanation may be found in the fact that the principles for which they so long stood have extended themselves generally and permeated other Christian bodies in the Commonwealth. Even folding the hands is by no means an ignoble posture for those whose *work is done*. If the world has overtaken the Quakers, they can regard with equanimity the fact that if it has not become just *what* they were, it has, largely, become *as* they were. The memory of a host of saintly Quakers of old time will long linger over Rhode Island like a benediction.

The *last* of the Sect to his fathers may go,
 Leaving only his coat for some Barnum to show;
 But the *truths* which he taught will expand with the years,
 Till the false dies away and the wrong disappears."

—Whittier.

THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

Introduction.—From the nature of the case there were, in the first period of the Colony, no Congregational churches in Rhode Island. While the principles of religious liberty, advanced by Roger Williams and his fellow colonists and applied by them with unimpeachable impartiality, in no manner excluded the Puritan order, yet it was quite natural that those who had banished the founder of the Colony from Massachusetts Bay could not calculate upon a very warm welcome, had they attempted to introduce the system into the territory over which he presided.

It was not, however, without significance that vigorous Puritan churches were, very early, founded in Plymouth Colony, just outside the boundary of Providence Plantations, at Rehoboth, Barrington and Bristol, the two latter towns not then belonging, as they did after 1746, to the Colony of Rhode Island. Nor did these border churches seem very unlike the first line of earthworks sometimes thrown up by an advancing army in front of a city to which it is about to lay siege. Doubtless among the numerous colonists, who soon followed Williams to the head of Narragansett Bay, there was a considerable proportion of those who, without relishing the uncompromising spirit of the Puritan magistrates, in heart still clung to the familiar institutions they had left behind.

It is supposed, with an appearance of probability, that these were accustomed, on the approach of the Lord's Day, frequently to cross the Seekonk and repair for worship to the neighboring "Newman Church", founded in 1643 at Rehoboth, or to that established some twenty years later at Barrington. It was not until, apparently, near the close of the seventeenth century that a movement was set on foot for the introduction of Puritan preachers into Newport and the Narragansett Country, nor until well on into the eighteenth century, when Providence had been settled little short of a hundred years, that a like effort was successfully made in that town.

It will be well to sketch first the early history of the three ancient congregations, which, originally planted on the friendly soil of Plymouth Colony, have long been included within the limits of Rhode Island and then to proceed to examine the quite different methods by

which the Congregational polity was later introduced into places included from the first in the Colony around Narragansett Bay.

The Churches of Barrington, Bristol and Little Compton.—It would be interesting to investigate the origin of the parish at Rehoboth, established, as it was, by Newman, in the tracks of Roger Williams, only seven years after his passing through that then uninhabited wilderness, during the first winter of his exile, and to discover the degree in which its founding may have been expedited by its proximity to that recalcitrant Puritan. But as this town was not transferred with the others to Rhode Island, we must not tarry for that purpose. The earliest Puritan organization within the present limits of the State was formed at Barrington between the years 1650 and 1660 and still lives, after two and a half centuries, in the truth and order of the gospel. Very little is known about the founding of this parish, as no record belonging to the period of organization exists. There is a tradition that the first house of worship stood on Tyler's Point, many years before there was any meeting-house of any kind in Providence. The earliest edifice, however, concerning which there remains any *record* was erected on the main road and was, in 1734, taken down and rebuilt on the site of the present church. The third house of worship, still standing, was built in 1805-6 and remodeled in 1861.

The first minister in Barrington is said to have been the Rev. James Wilson, the date of his settlement, the duration of his ministry and the time of his death being unrecorded. The first minister after the original incorporation of the town by Massachusetts, in 1718, was the Rev. Samuel Torrey, who was called in that year, signified his acceptance at a *town meeting* and was dismissed in 1726. The successor of Mr. Torrey was the Rev. Peleg Heath, elected *pastor of the town of Barrington* in 1728 and dismissed in 1740. It is related that Mr. Heath preached in the dwelling-house of Mr. Edward Bosworth, probably during the time when, as above narrated, the meeting-house was being removed from its original site.

The founding of the Congregational (or as it is frequently called, *Presbyterian*) church at Bristol illustrates very well, as is shown in Munro's History of the town, the mode of establishing religion under the theocratic government of the Colonies of Massachusetts Bay and Plymouth, where the town and the parish came into existence practically together. At the first town meeting, after the organization of the town of Bristol, in 1680, a vote was passed appropriating money for building a house for the minister, religious questions continuing

for a period to be decided by the whole body of the citizens. Before the year was over or the settlement of the territory had been more than begun, Mr. Benjamin Woodbridge, a son of the Rev. John Woodbridge, the first pastor at Andover, Massachusetts, was secured as minister. During the residence of Mr. Woodbridge, from 1680 to 1686, the first meeting-house was built, in 1684, upon the spot where the county court-house now stands, the timber for it being cut on the adjacent common. The *church* was not, however, organized until 1687, the first regularly settled pastor being the Rev. Samuel Lee, born in London, England, in 1625, and at one time a proctor of the University of Oxford. After serving several Independent churches in England, he was constrained by the strong opposition aroused against Puritanism in that country to sail for Boston, in the summer of 1686.

As Bristol had, by that time, become the most important town in Plymouth Colony, the need of a strong man of liberal education to build up a vigorous church there was generally apparent. Attention was accordingly called to the new immigrant, as a man of learning and eloquence, and, having been induced to visit the town, he was received with enthusiasm. So acceptable did he prove, that he was immediately and unanimously chosen pastor, the entire town meeting going in a body to present the call.

Mr. Lee entered upon his pastorate in April, 1687, and, being a man of independent fortune, proceeded at once to build himself a spacious and handsome house. A little later in the same year, under the title of *the Church of Christ in Bristol*, the church was organized, with a membership of eight males, Major John Walley, Capt. Nathaniel Byfield, Capt. Benjamin Church, Nathaniel Reynolda, John Cary, Hugh Woodbury, Goodman Throop and Nathaniel Bosworth. The ministry of Mr. Lee, although very successful and harmonious, was quite brief. Upon the accession of King William III, who was supposed to be more favorable to the Puritans than had been his predecessor, he determined to return to England and, in 1691, resigned his post in Bristol, and sailed with his family on the ship *Dolphin*. After a stormy voyage the vessel was seized by a French privateer, it being a time of war, and carried into a port of France, where Mr. Lee was imprisoned and died of fever before the end of the year.

The first pastor of Bristol must have been a much more than ordinary man. Dr. Stiles spoke of him as "the light and glory of the church in Bristol", and Cotton Mather called him "the light of both Englands".

For two years, until a call was extended to the Rev. John Sparhawk,

a graduate of Harvard College, Bristol was without any regular minister.

Mr. Sparhawk was not installed as the second pastor until 1695. He served the church for almost twenty-three years and died in the harness 1718, after a conscientious and arduous pastorate, during which a strong congregation had been gathered. After the death of Mr. Sparhawk, Mr. James MacSparran, a graduate of Glasgow University, then a young licentiate of the Scottish Presbytery, but subsequently a clergyman of the Church of England and for thirty-six years a rector of St. Paul's Church, Narragansett, acted as pastor for nearly a year.

On the one hundredth anniversary of the Landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth, December 22, 1720, the church at Bristol elected the Rev. Nathaniel Cotton to be its pastor, the town no longer taking the initiative in the case, but contenting itself with the prerogative of ratifying the choice.

Mr. Cotton was a great-grandson of the celebrated Rev. John Cotton of Boston and a graduate of Harvard College, being but twenty-two years of age at the time of his election. The youthful pastor-elect was ordained in August, 1721, and survived less than eight years.

Notwithstanding its brevity his pastorate was eminently fruitful, more than a hundred baptisms being reported in the course of it and the meeting-house being renovated and improved. Mr. Cotton is characterized by a succeeding pastor as "a man of flaming zeal and undisssembled piety, . . . and for the cause of Truth and Righteousness, . . . bold as a lion".

After the pastorate of the Rev. Barnabas Taylor, also a graduate of Harvard College, from 1729 to 1740, the Rev. John Burt was ordained, in 1741, as the fifth pastor of the church at Bristol. He, too, was a graduate of Harvard College, like all his predecessors except Mr. Lee, who was a graduate of Oxford University, even the two temporary ministers having been graduated at Harvard and Glasgow.

When Mr. Burt took charge of the church it numbered seventy-seven members. During his thirty-four years of faithful service, sixty-five were admitted to full communion and one hundred and eighteen to the *half way covenant*, a provision of the Puritan churches of that period, by means of which, without professing conversion or Christian experience, men secured the right of suffrage in town affairs, through their original baptism as infants—a provision which during the succeeding pastorate was abolished. The ministry of Mr. Burt corresponded in its termination almost exactly with that of the pre-revolutionary

period. During the bombardment of Bristol by the British fleet, in 1775, having been for a long time ill and feeble, hearing the roar of the cannon and the whistling of the missiles through the air, he wandered forth in the night, alone and unnoticed, to flee in his affright to the open country. His dead body was found the next morning in a corn field, fallen upon the face, death not resulting from any wound, but only from the strain of terror and excitement. As if he were pursued by the Fates, Parson Burt's house was the first to be destroyed by the British and Hessian troops in the subsequent burning of Bristol, in May, 1778. No wonder it seemed as if the work of a century, in establishing the institutions of Christianity, had been wiped out by war.

Another early church, in the portion of Plymouth Colony afterwards annexed to Rhode Island by royal decree, was that at Little Compton, organized November 30, 1704. It is, however, supposed that for some time previously worship had been maintained in the settlement by various clergymen. The first pastor was the Rev. Richard Billings, ordained on the day of the founding of the church. Mr. Billings was a native of England and a graduate of Harvard College. He continued pastor for forty-four years, dying November, 1748, at the age of seventy-four. During this long pastorate one hundred and ninety-seven were received into the church and five hundred and eighty-six children were baptized. A notable later pastor at Little Compton, although not belonging to the pre-revolutionary period immediately under review, may be mentioned here in passing—the Rev. Mase Shepard. He was educated at Dartmouth College and ordained for this charge, in 1787, at the age of twenty-eight. Mr. Shepard reached the thirty-fifth year of his pastorate and left behind him in the town a vivid impression of his untiring labors and earnest preaching. He was a founder, along with Dr. Samuel Hopkins, of Newport, of the *Rhode Island Missionary Society*.

The neighboring church, at Tiverton, was organized August 20, 1746, three months after the territory in which it is situated had been transferred to Rhode Island, but without doubt the beginning of the enterprise dates backward to the time when the town was a part of Plymouth Colony. The first pastor was the Rev. Othniel Campbell, a graduate of Harvard College. He was installed in October of the year of organization and died in 1778, after a pastorate of thirty-two years.

The Foundation of the Congregational Churches at Kingstown, Newport and Providence.—The earliest introduction of Congrega-

tional churches into what was already Rhode Island territory occurred at Kingstown and Newport, it being difficult, if not impossible, to determine to which the credit of precedence belongs. Governor Arnold, in his History of Rhode Island, in speaking of the Congregational Church at Kingstown Hill, remarks that "this Church and that of Newport are the earliest churches of their order in Rhode Island". There are those who claim that there was Congregational worship in what became, in 1674, "King's Towne", about the middle of the seventeenth century, although the records of the fact are wanting. The beginnings of the church are said by them to date back to about the settlement of the country, in 1641, several of the Pettaquamscutt Purchasers having been Boston Congregationalists. The first Congregational minister, of whom an account is extant, in Kingstown, was the Rev. Mr. Woodward, who came from Dedham, Massachusetts, in 1695. It does not seem to have been the policy of the promoters of this enterprise, or of that at Newport, so much to organize almost at the outset, as was done on Plymouth territory, at Bristol and Little Compton, a *permanent church*, as to occupy the ground with a *missionary*. Mr. Woodward was succeeded by Mr. Henry Flint, and he, in 1702, by the subsequently distinguished Samuel Niles, who came under the auspices of the well-known Judge Sewall, of Boston, himself a Congregationalist and a grandson and heir of one of the Purchasers, John Hull. Mr. Niles was born on Block Island and was the first graduate of Harvard College from Rhode Island. He was only twenty-eight years of age and was unordained when he took charge of the church in Kingstown. He remained eight years and removed, in 1710, to Braintree, Massachusetts, where he was ordained pastor, dying in 1762. His best known work, among a large number, is a History of the French and Indian Wars.

There is evidence that sometime previously to 1711 a meeting-house had been built in Kingstown, doubtless on Tower Hill. After the departure of Mr. Niles no record of Congregational worship in the town appears, until the arrival of Joseph Torrey, about 1731. He was a young man of only twenty-four, being a son of the Rev. Samuel Torrey, a fellow of Harvard College, of which the son was a graduate. On May 17, 1732, a *church*, apparently the first one in the town, was organized at that part of it called Tower Hill, and on the same day Mr. Torrey was ordained and continued in the pastorate, with unswerving fidelity, until his death in 1791, thus completing one of the longest ministries in New England.

In connection with his sacred duties he practiced medicine, and so

was commonly styled Dr. Torrey. It was chiefly during this pastorate that a long legal conflict, previously begun, was waged between the Congregationalists and the Church of England inhabitants, for the possession of three hundred acres of land, which had been set apart by the "Pettaquamscutt Purchasers", in 1668, "for an orthodox person, that shall be obtained to preach God's word to the inhabitants".

At the close of thirty years of litigation, in 1752, Dr. Torrey obtained a final decision of the King and Council in favor of the Congregationalists. After the death of the old pastor the people neglected to repair the meeting-house and, it having become dilapidated, permitted it to be sold at auction. Services were, however, generally maintained, alternately in a school-house at Tower Hill and in the court-house at Little Rest or Kingston Hill, until 1820, when the present Kingston meeting-house was built, the society having been reorganized and incorporated by the General Assembly.

The first Congregational minister to preach the gospel in Newport, so far as any record shows, was the Rev. Nathaniel Clap, who came hither as early as 1695. It is claimed, indeed, with a considerable show of evidence, that there was an inchoate formation of a Puritan church on the island of Aquidneck, at the beginning of the settlement, not later than 1639, the organization soon becoming Baptist. Mr. Callender, in his "Century Sermon", calls the first settlers of the island of Rhode Island "Puritans of the highest form" and asserts that they "depended on the assistance of Mr. Wheelwright, a famous Congregational minister", a brother-in-law of Mrs. Anne Hutchinson, who, however, disappointed them by his non-arrival. He narrates that meeting-houses were built at both Newport and Portsmouth, but never alludes to the organization of a church, as Governor Winthrop has declared was the case, although speaking of the church as having been "gathered in a very disorderly way". As, however, it is conceded that this movement did not result in a permanent Congregational establishment, the honor of being the pioneer of that order in Newport remains with the Rev. Mr. Clap. He was a graduate of Harvard College and had been a resident of Dorchester, Massachusetts. It does not appear that, as in the cases of Congregational ministers of those days in general, Mr. Clap was called or even authoritatively sent. He only came hither, "by the advice of the minister of Boston", and preached here for fifty years until his death. It was not until twenty-five years had elapsed after his arrival that, following innumerable discouragements, a church was organized in 1720, with fourteen male members, Mr. Clap being at the same time ordained and installed as its pastor.

The new church flourished at first under this most zealous minister, but after three years he ceased to administer the Lord's Supper, alleging that the church was not *pure* and that its members were "not of sufficiently holy conversation for the ordinance". It is not strange that, while the people revered their pastor and admired him as a truly evangelical preacher, they were still offended by his rigid and impracticable discipline. Finally the church addressed Mr. Clap a respectful petition praying that he would allow them to have recourse, for sacramental privileges, to other churches, but without eliciting his consent. In response to a remonstrance from some of the members, the sturdy Puritan declared: "I came hither by the advice of the Rev. minister of Boston. I have continued here by his advice. I have preached the Gospel here. As for you who are trying to drive me away, I would have you consider the awful account you will have to give for the damnation of the souls that will be lost for the want of my preaching".

A colleague being proposed, Mr. Clap declined his services. When one was at length pressed upon him and permitted to occupy the pulpit a part of the time, he refused again to preach in it, and withdrawing with a part of the congregation, built a new meeting-house in Mill street, which was subsequently, for many years, used by the Unitarian Society. Notwithstanding the apparent sternness of this singular man, George Whitefield records in his journal that "his countenance was very heavenly", and that "he prayed most affectionately for a blessing on my coming to Rhode Island". "I could not but think", he declares, "I was sitting by one of the patriarchs". Dean Berkeley, who was intimately acquainted with Mr. Clap, remarks: "Before I saw Father Clap I thought the Bishop of Rome had the most grave aspect of any man I ever saw; but, really, the minister of Newport had the most venerable appearance". It was the custom of the old clergyman to walk out in a black velvet cap and a gown with a girdle, the pocket on one side of it filled with books and that on the other with cakes, with which to purchase from the boys in the street their toy tops, to show his disapproval of the vain sport. After his death, in 1745, a barrel almost full of tops was found in his house.

In Mr. Callender's memorial sermon he testifies concerning his beloved friend, Mr. Clap: "The main stroke in his character was his eminent sanctity. . . . He was a public blessing as an able minister of the New Testament, an example of unspotted piety and an honor to religion".

When it became evident, in 1728, that the pastor could not be induced to alter his uncompromising course towards his colleague, the

Rev. John Adams, about half the members withdrew from the First Church, and with Mr. Adams as pastor formed the Second Church of Newport. For several years, as the First Church had abandoned the original meeting-house, the Second continued to occupy it, but, in 1733, it built for itself a new meeting-house in Clarke street.

Some years after the death of Mr. Clap there were ministering, at the same time, to the Newport Congregational churches two of the most able and distinguished divines who ever presided over Rhode Island congregations, the Rev. Ezra Stiles and the Rev. Samuel Hopkins. Mr. Stiles, a graduate of Yale College and afterwards its president, was ordained pastor of the Second Church, in 1755, at the age of twenty-seven. He was one of the most learned men of the day, delivering at Commencement an oration in Hebrew on Oriental Literature, and translating the Psalms directly from the original into Latin.

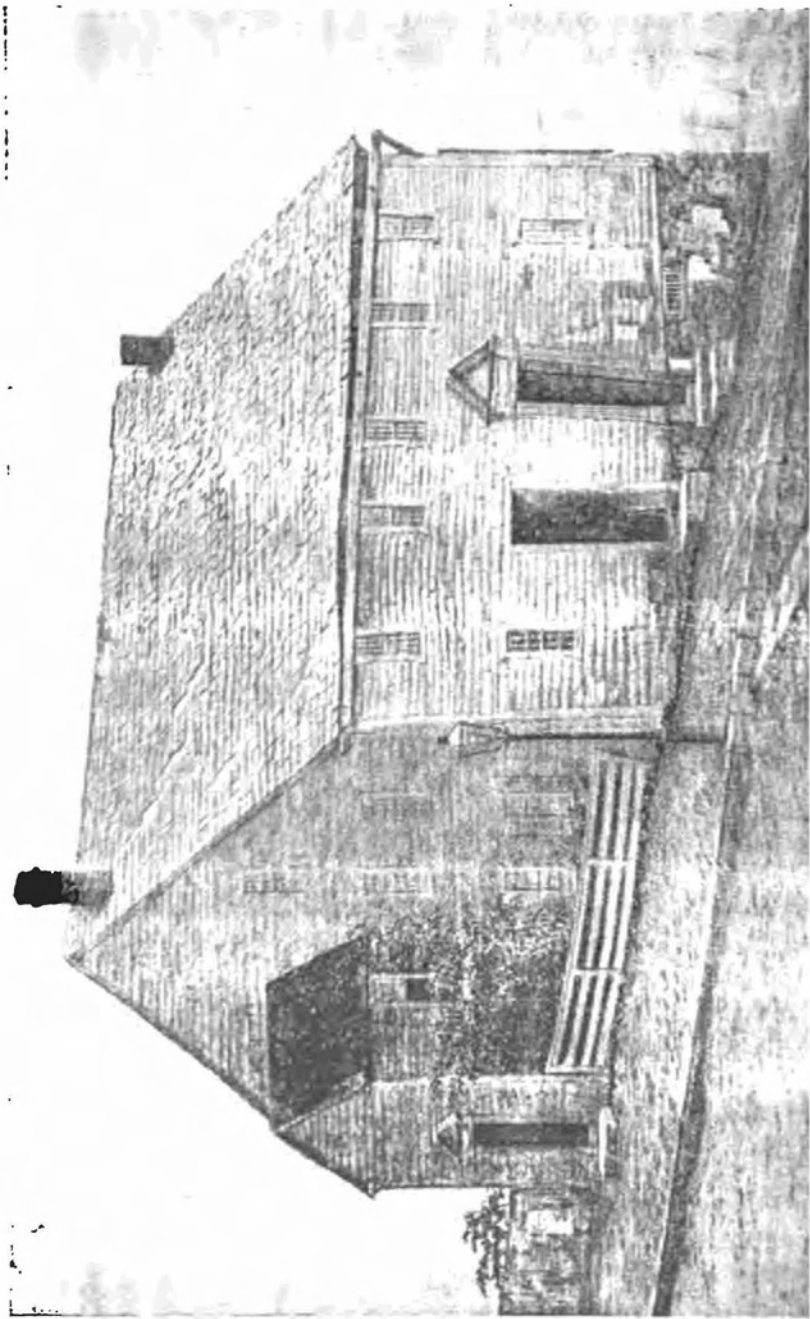
In 1765 he received the degree of Doctor in Divinity from the University of Edinburgh. He was an impressive and eloquent preacher, eminent not only for piety, but for patriotism and philanthropy. Chancellor Kent testifies concerning Dr. Stiles: "He was distinguished for the dignity of his deportment, the politeness of his address and the urbanity of his manners".

Dr. Hopkins, also a graduate of Yale College, having already served a long ministry in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, was installed pastor of the First Newport Church in 1770. In theology he had, in early life, sat at the feet of Jonathan Edwards and was regarded as second only to him among the theologians of that day. His chief work was his "System of Theology", which embodied a modified form of Calvinism, often called "Hopkinsianism". His theories were peculiar to himself and naturally gave great offense. He maintained that a true Christian ought to be willing to perish forever, if it should be necessary for the glory of God and the good of the Universe. By sermons and by his famous "Dialogues", as well as by letters to public men and newspaper essays, he stirred up and organized political action against slavery, so that, in 1774, a law was passed forbidding the importation of negroes into Rhode Island Colony. There was great solemnity in Dr. Hopkins's preaching, carrying conviction to the understanding and the heart. Being a man of large stature, well proportioned and dressed, after the custom of the time, in a full-bottomed wig, he presented a very imposing appearance.

At the settlement of Dr. Stiles and for many years afterwards, up to the early years of Dr. Hopkins's pastorate, both the Congregational churches in Newport were in a flourishing condition and received

frequent additions. But about the year 1774 the difficulties between Great Britain and her American colonies began to give warning of the coming conflict. Newport declined in prosperity. Her commerce diminished. Many dwelling-houses were emptied of their inhabitants and the churches were, naturally, in a great measure, forsaken. Dr. Hopkins sent his family away hoping to be able, remaining alone, to weather the storm, but, finally, in 1776, was forced to withdraw and joined them in a safe retreat in central Massachusetts. In 1775 the remnant of the Second Church met and determined that it was inexpedient to attempt to continue public worship during the winter and in the succeeding spring Dr. Stiles left Newport, both churches then being destitute of pastors and the members scattered far and wide. During the war the two meeting-houses were used as barracks. Although Dr. Stiles never returned, except for occasional ministrations, yet the Second Church was too much reduced by the war to give him a formal dismissal. The long residence of these two uncommon minds in Newport could not but have exercised a permanently salutary influence upon the community.

The quiet introduction of Congregationalism into Kingstown and Newport might be considered an illustration of the truth that "the Kingdom of God cometh not with observation". But the advent of the order in Providence, in contrast to that as well as to the coming of the Baptists and Quakers to that settlement, was, to a large degree, a *demonstration*. The first ordination on Rhode Island soil to the Congregational ministry was that of Josiah Cotton and occurred with considerable outward circumstance and ceremony. It was about the year 1720 when the first efforts were set on foot for the establishment of a Congregational church in Providence. Regard being had to the former attitude of the Massachusetts Bay Puritans, it is not remarkable that the Congregationalists did not sooner organize themselves in Rhode Island, but rather that they felt encouraged to do it so soon. The first movement was made in Massachusetts, Rhode Island appearing to have been regarded there as, in a sense, missionary ground. As an opening, a conciliatory letter was written by the Rev. Peter Thacher of Milton, to the citizens of Providence, proposing to send a preacher to gather a congregation. The response, while not distinctly cordial, was sufficiently encouraging not to hinder an agent being appointed to collect funds in Massachusetts and Connecticut for building a meeting-house in the Rhode Island town. No doubt there was in Providence, as has already been intimated, a considerable number of persons who had not become alienated from the worship and order of their earlier



OLD TOWN HOUSE, PROVIDENCE.

THIS BUILDING FORMERLY STOOD ON THE CORNER OF BENEFIT AND COLLEGE STREETS AND WAS ORIGINALLY THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL MEETING-HOUSE IN PROVIDENCE FROM AN OLD PAINTING IN THE POSSESSION OF THE RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

days and who were prepared to welcome the advent of the Puritan church with gratification. By 1723 a lot was conveyed, at a nominal price, to certain trustees, by Daniel Abbott, one of the patrons of Congregationalism in the town and subsequently deputy governor of Rhode Island. It was situated at what is now the southwestern corner of Benefit and College streets, being a portion of the orchard of Chad Brown, the first Baptist pastor of Providence, and the site of his burial place, the county court-house now occupying the position. Here was erected, in the same year, a spacious but very plain square meeting-house, without a steeple, with two rows of windows, the upper ones serving to light the broad galleries, which extended nearly around the interior. This building continued to be used for worship until 1794, when it was sold to the town and turned first into a town house and later into a police court room. In 1724 the Rev. Samuel Moody, a graduate of Harvard College and a bold, useful and resolute preacher of the gospel, labored for some time in Providence, baptizing sixteen persons, who became the nucleus of the future church. But the first regular pastor was, as has been mentioned above, Josiah Cotton, also a graduate of Harvard and a brother of Nathaniel Cotton, pastor at Bristol, the two being great-grandsons of the celebrated Rev. John Cotton, of Boston. The church was constituted in 1728 with nine male members.

For the ordination of Mr. Cotton as shepherd of this little flock, invitations were sent to twenty-three churches in Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island, eighteen being finally represented at the ceremony by their pastors and elders. About forty *Bandmen*, or mounted attendants upon the ministry, were present, as well as a large number of candidates for the ministry. The arrival of this concourse and of many other visitors called together by the novelty and interest of the occasion, "the like of which", records Mr. Cotton in his Diary, "as to ministers and churches, . . . this North America never saw", could not but have awakened a peculiar sensation in the little town, somewhat jealous, perhaps, at being taken almost by storm by its Massachusetts friends. But, true to its principles of religious liberty, it gave no recorded sign of opposition. After the sermon by the Rev. Nathaniel Appleton, the church was "embodied" by the eminent Rev. Thomas Prince, pastor of the old South Church in Boston and author of the "Annals of New England", whose name is honorably perpetuated in the title of the *Prince Society*. At the close of the public exercises the whole council repaired to the "Great Chamber" of Daniel Abbott, at the foot of the hill, where a very sumptuous

and, after so much spiritual effort, no doubt acceptable, dinner awaited it.

“Oh! that I may ever keep it in the imagination of the thoughts of my heart”, is the pious ejaculation of the young pastor, in closing his account of the day, “the awfulness, the weight and the moment of this most arduous work, in which I am engaged.”

But the immediate result was scarcely commensurate with the augustness of the opening function. For some time the church, although harmonious, continued quite feeble and tardy in striking roots into Rhode Island soil, additions being made rather slowly to its numbers. Mr. Cotton was, undoubtedly, a worthy man of considerable learning, but he appears to have lacked the qualities fitted to arouse enthusiasm. After his departure, in 1747, the Rev. John Bass and the Rev. David S. Rowland ministered to the church until the breaking out of the Revolutionary War.

It was during the pastorate of the faithful, successful and munificent Rev. Enos Hitchcock, in 1795, it may be mentioned here, although not within the period strictly under consideration, that the old meeting-house was abandoned for a new, more spacious and in the estimation of the day more “beautiful” one, on the corner of Benefit and Benevolent streets.

In tracing the history of Congregationalism in Providence, it is now necessary to return to the latter part of the ministry of the Rev. Josiah Cotton. In 1743, fifteen years after his ordination, a portion of the church withdrew and set up separate worship on the western side of the river. It was at about this period that a remarkable revival of spiritual life was manifesting itself throughout New England. In 1735 had occurred, under the powerful preaching of Jonathan Edwards at Northampton, what he himself styled the “Great Awakening”, the influence of which extended far and wide. Indifference and formalism had, previously to this period, to a great extent prevailed, the doctrine of Personal Conversion and the need of a Christian Experience being considerably obscured. It was the time, too, when John Wesley was setting forth the gospel with such flaming zeal and when George Whitefield was summoning in trumpet tones an audience of twenty thousand on Boston Common to repent and believe. A less widely-famed revival preacher of the day, but one of similar sincerity and fervor, was Gilbert Tennent, an Irishman, who came to Providence in 1741 and awakened many souls by his call to amendment of life.

Mr. Cotton did not feel himself able to endorse the course of these

wandering evangelists, nor was he alone, it must be acknowledged, among the settled clergy of New England, in his deprecation of this departure from the regular ministrations of the gospel. Possibly, too, after the manner of his masterful race, he did not approach the consideration of the question in an entirely conciliatory spirit.

There was in Mr. Cotton's flock a young man named Joseph Snow, who was quite carried away by the excitement and enthusiasm of the time. He had become a member of the church three years before, but now believed himself to be first converted by the preaching of Mr. Tennent. His father, of the same name, and others of the devouter people in the church sympathized with him in longing for a higher type of Christian life than had been prevailing. Accordingly, in the year above named, amidst many painful circumstances, such as are inevitable when good men cannot agree, was started the enterprise, which resulted in that happily named organization, the *Beneficent Congregational Church*. Twenty-seven men from the First Church, about half of its membership, united in calling Elisha Paine, a "Separate" of Windham county, Connecticut, to be their minister, a call not, however, accepted. Joseph Snow, sr., was, thereupon, elected a "ruling elder", while Joseph Snow, jr., for two or three years, acted as an exhorter at meetings in private houses and during the pleasant season in groves and orchards.

So great proved the acceptableness of this young man and such confidence did his brethren place in his Christian character, that he was at length induced to be ordained as their actual pastor. But very diverse was the occasion of Joseph Snow's setting apart to the work of the ministry from that which heralded the first entrance of the Puritan order into Providence, with its chief inspiration emanating from Massachusetts Bay. Only five churches were in this case bidden to unite in the simple services, the whole number, apparently, belonging to Connecticut. This fact by no means, however, appears to indicate a drawing of the new church towards the more rigid and Presbyterian-like form of Congregationalism prevailing at that era in Connecticut. Rather was the exact contrary true, for not the Saybrook Platform, but that of Cambridge, with its guaranty of greater independence to the local church, was adopted as the rule of discipline. The especial leaning of the Beneficent Church towards pure independence is vividly illustrated by the fact that for many years, until 1858, it did not consent to join the *Evangelical Association of Congregational Churches in Rhode Island*, established previously to 1823, being represented in it only by its pastors.

The Connecticut inclination of the church was limited to a preference for the cast of religion prevailing particularly in Windham county, where the *Great Revival* had awakened the deepest interest. Already down the newly opened highroad from Western Connecticut to Providence had traveled preachers aflame with the new views of the Word of God. Windham county, so far from representing the general tone of the church throughout the State, was the very hot-bed of the "Separatism" and "New Light" doctrines, which had aroused the thunders of church and state, in Connecticut. Elisha Paine, who was, as has been related, the first choice of the West Side Church in Providence for pastor, had lain in Windham jail for several months on the charge of preaching the gospel without authority. Hence it was not unnatural that the church in Providence to which he had been called should be styled, somewhat derisively, the "New Light Church". Nor does it appear to have been eager to repudiate the title. Under the faithful and devout ministrations of Mr. Snow it grew and prospered and attained the distinction of being known as the "church of the common people".

By 1771 the congregation numbered one hundred and forty families, being the largest in the town. For fifty years, including the first three when he was their spiritual leader by common consent, "Father Snow" went in and out among his people and built up the strong parish, which continues as his monument to the present day. At first there existed a bitter feeling between the two Congregational churches of the town, but, by the cultivation of a conciliatory spirit on both sides and the retraction of mistaken action, a more Christian sentiment grew up, until finally the ordinary courtesies of brethren and mutual kindly affections came to prevail between them. It was not until 1750 that the new church built its first meeting-house, fortunately far away from that of the other parish, on land given by the same Daniel Abbott, who had "for £30 and of his own free bounty" helped the First Church to a lot and whose name is appropriately preserved in the little park, also his gift, adjoining the present church, on Weybosset street.

So different from our own were the customs of those days, that it is recorded that the stalwart young pastor was himself the leader of the party which cut down the necessary timber in the forest and raised the new meeting-house, he having, indeed, begun life as a carpenter. It is not unlikely that Mr. Snow received wages for his work, it not being until later that a slender stipend of sixty pounds in *currency*, worth at that period not much more than a hundred dollars, was allowed him.

It is to be remembered that the size of the meeting-house was such that for three years College Commencements were held in it, as the largest place available before the completion of the First Baptist meeting-house. George Whitefield and Bishop Asbury are said to have preached in the building. Many must have been the exhortations of the pastor and brethren with which the old structure echoed, the church having been noted in the beginning, as well as in later days, for the profitableness of its conference meetings.

As time went on, the excitement and ardor of the first years gave place to a more sedate and meditative turn of thought, with, perhaps, no less valuable fruitage. Two hundred and eighty-three members were added to the church during "Father Snow's" pastorate. In the year 1764 alone there was an increase of eighty-five, it being the year of Whitefield's preaching in Providence. In 1775, when the sound of war was beginning to be heard in the land, twenty-seven new members were reported, sixteen of them being men.

Thus have been reviewed all the Congregational Churches in Rhode Island belonging to colonial times, unless, indeed, there was one at Westerly. In an old record of 1834 appears the statement, that about one hundred years previously Rev. Joseph Park, a preacher, was laboring at Westerly. But if he organized a church there, it long since became extinct, for one was formed in that town, as if it were a new one and not a revival, in 1843.

At the period of the Revolution there appear to have been *nine* Congregational churches in Rhode Island. During the conflict public worship in the one at Bristol and the two at Newport, those towns being exposed seaports, was, as we have noted, wholly suspended. In Providence there was no regular pastor at the First Church from 1774 to 1783, although the Rev. John Lothrop of Boston supplied the pulpit for some parts of 1775 and 1776. Many members of the Second Church, probably among them a goodly portion of the *sixteen men*, who, as we have seen, publicly professed Christ the year before the Declaration of Independence, served in important positions in the army or as honored privates. It is noticeable that the "War Governor" of Rhode Island, who presided over the State for the three years next after the battle of Lexington, was that most patriotic member of this church, Nicholas Cooke.

The Revival of Congregational Churches after the Revolution.—After the Revolutionary War the Congregationalists of Rhode Island lost no time in restoring the churches, which had been wholly suspended, or in infusing new vigor into those which had been depleted and enfeebled.

Shortly after Newport had been evacuated by the British, in the spring of 1780, three years before the final close of the war, Dr. Hopkins, the faithful pastor of the First Church, returned to his parish to find a scene of desolation. With many of the former members dead or scattered, the few that remained were almost too poor or too dependent to face the exertion necessary for the restoration of the church. But, under the inspiration of their brave minister, the effort was made and it succeeded. With the interior of the meeting-house defaced and dismantled by the soldiery, they set about restoring it, but only in the plainest manner. The pews were rebuilt but left without paint, and the dents on the floor made by the British muskets were not removed. A neighboring parish in Massachusetts bestowed upon the ruinous sanctuary a suitable pulpit. All adornment was left for a later and more prosperous generation. It is reassuring to be certified that the graces of the Spirit, soon bestowed on the church, were in an inverse ratio to the outward embellishments.

The Rev. Dr. Stiles, having become, in 1777, the president of Yale College, never, as has been already noted, came back to the pastorate of the Second Newport Church. It was not until 1786 that its returning members sufficiently recovered themselves to secure another shepherd, the Rev. William Patten, who was ordained to the pastorate in May of that year. Mr. Patten was a son of a clergyman of the same name and a graduate of Dartmouth College. He continued in the office for forty-seven years and it is a vivid illustration of the demoralizing influence of the Revolutionary struggle and of the prevailing French skepticism at the close of the eighteenth century, that the additions to the church, during the whole period, averaged but one a year. For a long time the Second Church was destitute of a single male member, deacons for the celebration of the Holy Communion having to be introduced from the First Church. Until the death of Dr. Hopkins, in 1803, there existed the most entire harmony between the two churches. Such affection and esteem bound the old pastor and the young one together that they were accustomed to address each other as *son* and *father*. It is pleasant to recall that, thus joined together in their lives, they now slumber near one another under the walls of the Spring Street Church. It must have been as one of the fruits of this friendship, as well as a result of other causes, that, in 1833, the two parishes, after a distinct existence of more than a century, were again consolidated under the style of the *United Congregational Church of Newport*, with a membership of eighty-nine. In the following year, 1834, there was erected for the united parish a new meeting-house.

At Bristol, when the secular life began to revive after the termination of the war, an effort was promptly made to restore the vigor of the church also. In 1783 a subscription was started towards a fund for the support of a Congregational minister, and in the following year a charter was granted to the *Catholic Congregational Society of Bristol, R. I.* So rapid was the recovery of the town that the old meeting-house, built in 1684, after an existence of exactly a century, was demolished and replaced by a fine and spacious one, on Hope street, dedicated January 5, 1785. On the same day was ordained the new pastor, the Rev. Henry Wight, a graduate of Harvard College. Dr. Wight continued sole pastor until 1815, when a colleague was given him. At the beginning of his ministry he found thirty-six members, but during these thirty years he received into the church two hundred and twenty-eight. For thirteen years more he continued as senior pastor, living in Bristol nine years longer after his retirement. He died in 1837 in the eighty-sixth year of his age, leaving upon the town an indelible trace of his high character and holy influence.

In Providence the depression caused by the war had not been so complete as at Newport and Bristol and the revival was consequently less conspicuously marked. To the First Church, which had been vacant since 1774, the Rev. Enos Hitchcock was called in 1780, not being installed, however, until 1783. His successful ministry was continued until his death in 1803, when he bequeathed to the church a legacy of six thousand dollars.

In the Second Church at Providence, under Mr. Snow, who had continued at his post during the dark days of the Revolution, the ordinances had been entirely preserved, so that the parish emerged from the conflict with unbroken vigor. It was at this period, in 1785, that the organization was chartered as the *Beneficent Society*, the church soon after taking the name of the *Beneficent Church*.

A few years later there occurred a painful breach in the tranquillity of the parish. Mr. Snow, having reached the age of seventy-four, requested the appointment of a colleague, but the election to that post of the Rev. James Wilson did not prove satisfactory to him, Mr. Wilson being a disciple of John Wesley and not a Calvinist. The appointment being insisted on, "Father Snow", after a devoted and fruitful ministry of fifty years, felt compelled to withdraw with a number of sympathizers, and to build a separate meeting-house in Richmond street. There he continued until his death in 1803, in the eighty-ninth year of his age. The new enterprise, although claiming to be the original church and retaining the records, remained for many

years weak and struggling. The Beneficent Church, on the other hand, seemed to have entered on a new career of prosperity.

Mr. Wilson was an Irishman and possessed great power over men, being a very eloquent preacher. With perfect simplicity of character, unaffected devotion and an earnest love for the souls of his people, he left a profound impression upon his church and upon the community at large. In the *Revival of 1804* he was the means of adding to the church nearly one hundred and fifty members, while during his whole ministry of forty-six years about eight hundred made profession of Christ. More than a thousand couples were married by him. It was while he was pastor that, in 1820, the new device of the Sunday School was introduced into the Beneficent Church. Many benevolent societies, also, were established at this period in the parish and great interest was aroused in foreign missions. Governor Jones, one of the founders of the *American Board*, was an earnest attendant upon the worship of this church. The church continued to flourish in perfect union and harmony until the close of Mr. Wilson's life. Between him and Dr. Hitchcock, the pastor of the First Church, there existed a warm attachment, the latter bequeathing him valuable books from his library. It was under Mr. Wilson's ministry, in 1810, that the present large and impressive house of worship was built and dedicated.

The East Greenwich Church.—During the Revolutionary period an effort was made to establish a Congregational church at East Greenwich. As early as 1772 a number of the inhabitants of the town, calling themselves Presbyterians or Congregationalists, presented a petition to the General Assembly, praying that they might be granted a lottery to raise the sum of fifteen hundred dollars to build a meeting-house. The petition was granted and, in 1774, an act of incorporation was passed and a house of worship built, the lottery having provided the necessary funds. There appears to be no record of regular services or of the formation of a church until long afterwards. In the year 1815, the Rev. Daniel Waldo labored in East Greenwich for a period and organized the church. Dr. Benedict, in his *History of the Baptists*, written in 1813, records that there were then in Rhode Island eleven Congregational churches, with not far from a thousand communicants. The fact that it seems to have been necessary in order to make up this number to count the East Greenwich society, would indicate that public worship had been for some time maintained in the meeting-house, although there was strictly speaking no church there. With this explanation, however, the above report of Dr. Benedict appears to have been a correct statement of the condition of the

Congregationalists in this State at the opening of the nineteenth century.

Congregationalism in Rhode Island during the Nineteenth Century.—The middle of the nineteenth century was a period of marked growth among Congregationalists in Rhode Island.

At the beginning of the year 1829, after about one and a half centuries of the existence of Congregationalism in what became the territory of the State, there were still only eleven churches. By June, 1869, forty years later, these had been increased to twenty-five, sixteen having been added and two having disappeared by consolidation or extinction. The number of members grew from about seventeen hundred and fifty in 1833 (no earlier statistics being available) to four thousand and twenty-five on January 1, 1869, an addition of one hundred and thirty per cent. in thirty-six years. In the *Revival of 1857-8* the additions, which had been seventy-two during 1856, rose to one hundred and ninety-five during 1857 and three hundred and ninety-eight during 1858.

The Pawtucket Church.—In 1829 the Pawtucket Church was organized with nine members. At that period the east side of the river, where the society worshiped, belonged to Massachusetts, but the church from the first was included in the Consociation of Rhode Island and, in 1862, upon the annexation of the town of Pawtucket to the latter State, it came to be actually embraced in its territory. The first pastor was the Rev. Asa Hopkins and he was followed by the Rev. Barnabas Phinney. In the summer of 1836 the Rev. Constantine Blodgett became pastor at Pawtucket and remained in that office until 1871, when he resigned on account of the infirmities of age, although he lived until 1879 as retired pastor.

Perhaps no one has done more for Congregationalism in Rhode Island than did Mr. Blodgett, and few preachers have imprinted themselves upon the hearts of their people with such a loving interest. Taking charge of this church in the day of small things, he left it with three hundred and twenty communicants and a Sunday School of two hundred and three.

The High Street Church, Providence.—The High Street Church in Providence, another notable product of this period, was formed in 1834 with forty-one members, coming mostly from the Richmond Street and Beneficent Churches.

The pastorate of the Rev. Mr. Dennen over this church, from 1865 to 1868, was marked by more than a hundred conversions.

The Elmwood Church.—The Elmwood Church was established in

1851, with a very tasteful rural house of worship, in what was then a remote new suburb of Providence but has long been continuously connected with the compact part of the city.

The Central Church, Providence.—The most influential of all the additions of this growing period was the Central Church of Providence, organized in March, 1852, out of members coming chiefly from the Beneficent Church, the Richmond Street, the High Street and the Fourth. The enterprise started under the most favorable auspices. The situation of its handsome brown stone church on Benefit street near College street, as the only one on the east side of the river, while there were then seven on the west side, attracted to it from the outset a large congregation of citizens of standing and substance. The church was most fortunate, too, in the choice of its first pastor, the Rev. Leonard Swain, who continued with it from the beginning until shortly before his early death in 1869. Dr. Swain was a man of strong convictions and great gentleness of heart, while his excessive self-depreciation kept, to some degree, his large intellectual powers from the complete recognition they deserved. During his pastorate the number of members was brought to three hundred and sixty-nine and that of the Sunday School to three hundred and eighty-nine. Dr. Swain was, also, a leading spirit in the general Congregational body of the State.

The Peacedale Church.—Note should be taken, too, of the Peacedale Church, in South Kingstown, formed in 1857 with eight members, the first acting pastor being the Rev. S. B. Durfee. In 1872, during the pastorate of the Rev. George W. Fisher, probably the most beautiful granite country church belonging to the Congregationalists, if not to any denomination, in Rhode Island, was erected, it being entirely the design of the late Mr. Rowland Hazard, of Peacedale.

Nor was the growth of this Denomination less marked in some of the old established parishes during this fruitful period.

The Bristol Church.—The Rev. Thomas Shepard, D. D., was pastor of the church at Bristol at this time, from 1835 to 1879, the year of his death, and, while most quiet and unobtrusive in his manner, was possessed of a winning gravity and dignity of bearing. His faithfulness toward the people of his flock is illustrated, among many other tokens, by the fact that he distributed among them for no less than *thirty* years, "Pastor's Annuals", carefully prepared upon a large variety of practical subjects. At the date of Dr. Shepard's death there were three hundred and seventy-eight communicants in the church and three hundred and twenty-five members of the Sunday

School. During his pastorate, in 1855-6, there was built for the parish a large and handsome Gothic church of stone.

The Newport Church.—The United Church at Newport, having begun its career upon the consolidation of the two old parishes in 1833, with eighty-nine members, had by 1869 raised the number to two hundred and six, chiefly under the pastorate of the Rev. Thacher Thayer, D. D.

The Beneficent Church, Providence.—The Beneficent Church in Providence during this period, from 1829 to 1869, was growing all the time under Mr. Wilson, nearing the close of his long ministry, Dr. Tucker, Dr. Cleaveland, Dr. Clapp and Dr. Vose. The list of communicants indeed was being continually depleted by the formation of new churches, especially by that of the High Street Church, in 1834, the Free Church, in 1843, and the Central Church, in 1852. In the circumstances it is remarkable that it was able, in 1869, to report four hundred and ninety members—a number increased before the end of the century to seven hundred or more.

The Richmond Street Church, Providence.—It should be recalled, also, that in 1840 the Richmond Street Church entered upon a period of prosperity hitherto unparalleled in the record of the parish, the Rev. Jonathan Leavitt being then called to the pastorate.

No sketch of the Congregationalists of Rhode Island would be complete without a reference to the labors of this saintly man. More than four hundred persons were added to the communion list during his ministry. Mr. Leavitt was one of the ablest and most devout clergymen who have ever worked in Providence. His style of preaching was lofty and impressive, being peculiarly calculated to build up the spiritual life of his hearers. In personal appearance he was a very noticeable man, being tall and grave, with a heavenly expression of countenance as if he moved in an atmosphere of holiness. As a pastor and a friend the influence of Jonathan Leavitt will abide in Providence until at least the generation of all who remember him shall have passed away.

The Union Church, Providence.—It was just after the close of the period of emphatic growth in the middle of the nineteenth century, which we have been reviewing, that there occurred the latest radical change in the collocation of Providence churches, through the consolidation, in 1871, of the Richmond Street and High Street Churches, to form the *Union Church*, a costly and elegant new house of worship being built on Broad street, just above Stewart street, for the use of the new congregation. The united membership of the two old

churches gave the Union Church five hundred and eighty-one communicants at the outset, a number which, at the end of twenty years, had been increased to eight hundred and seventy-two, placing the new parish in the most commanding position of any of the Congregational order in the State.

A farther period of rapid increase of churches happened toward the end of the century, a dozen new parishes springing into being in about as many years, from 1878 to 1892. As the former time of marked growth closed with the formation of the *Pilgrim Church*, since become one of the largest in Providence, so this latter period opened with the organization of the vigorous *Plymouth Church* in the same city.

Special allusion should be made, too, among the organizations of this time, to the *Park Place Church*, formed in 1882 on the western side of the river in Pawtucket.

Beginning with one hundred and thirty-four members, mostly coming from the old church on the east side, by 1893 in not much more than ten years the number had increased to five hundred and thirty, while a large and attractive house of worship had been completed and dedicated in 1885.

Congregationalism at the Opening of the Twentieth Century.—At the opening of the twentieth century the Congregational church in Rhode Island possesses forty-two houses of worship, with fifty ministers, nine thousand three hundred and eighty-five members and eight thousand nine hundred and eighty-six teachers and scholars in the Sunday Schools. The total contributions for the year ending January 1, 1900, were \$152,524, of which \$115,503 were for home expenses.

The Services of the Congregationalists to the State.—In estimating the debt which Rhode Island owes to the Congregationalists, that which claims the first place is their example in the early introduction into the State of a fixed and educated ministry. In the first days of the Colony, especially in Providence, as a result, perhaps, of the repulsion excited by the arbitrary clergy of Boston, there was a tendency to deery what was styled "a hireling ministry". It was sometimes difficult to discriminate between the *shepherd* and the *sheep*, the latter being often, no doubt, the losers through the imperfect shepherding. But the border towns of Plymouth Colony, later annexed to Rhode Island, especially Bristol, early set a salutary example of long and settled pastorates, with a liberally educated clergy. In Bristol for a hundred years every clergyman who was installed in the Congrega-

tional church was a collegiate graduate, all of them but one being graduates of Harvard College. The first six pastors, too, averaged in their occupancy of the office considerably more than twenty years each. Mr. Clap, the pioneer of Congregationalism in Newport, was a Harvard graduate. Dr. Hopkins and Dr. Stiles, early clergymen in the same town, were graduates of Yale College. Dr. Joseph Torrey, who inculcated Congregationalism in South Kingstown for sixty years, was graduated at Harvard College.

So, too, when in the fullness of time this order was introduced with so much stately ceremony into Providence, it was a Harvard graduate who was sent to hold up the banner.

There cannot be a question that this persistent illustration of the need of a cultured clergy for planting permanent churches had its effect on the other denominations and helped to stimulate, in the latter half of the eighteenth century, the formation of those excellent institutions of learning already described, which have since distinguished the State.

There was, also, another beneficent result of establishing in Rhode Island the Puritan forms of religion, which had been prevailing in Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay. Previously there had existed in those Colonies and in Connecticut a natural prejudice against Rhode Island on account of her attitude of protest.

Sometimes this antipathy had made itself felt in connection with common action for defense against the savages. There was a danger, too, of the little Narragansett Colony's being divided and absorbed by her more powerful neighbors on either side. But the introduction of Congregationalism created a new and healthful bond of union, which soon became sensible. Rhode Island thus lost to a degree her sturdy, but sometimes perilous, posture of isolation.

While the Congregational church in this State has always borne a large share in all good works along with the other churches, it has been particularly distinguished for its concern for missions, especially foreign missions. No uncertain sound either has its trumpet given, when it has been a question concerning the due observance of the Sabbath.

Prominent Clergymen and Laymen of the Past.—Many honored names of the Congregational clergy have been already mentioned in connection with their particular churches. But one or two others which should not be overlooked may be here recalled.

The Rev. Solomon Townsend, born in Boston in 1716 and educated at Harvard College, was ordained pastor at Barrington in 1743, two or

three years before its consolidation with Rhode Island, and died in 1796. Being thus minister of the town for over a half century, his name was still precious there up to a time remembered by some now living. His pastorate was marked, too, by the abolition of the plan of supporting the minister by a general tax, he being the first one to rely upon the free contributions of the members of his flock.

The Rev. Daniel Waldo, born in 1762, in Windham, Connecticut, and a graduate of Yale College, was a soldier in the Revolutionary army and later became a most devoted home missionary. He organized, as has been mentioned, the church in East Greenwich in 1815. In the following year he formed another at Slatersville and was later settled for twelve years in Exeter. When ninety-three years of age, in 1855, this aged servant of God officiated as chaplain to Congress, not dying until 1864 at the age of one hundred and two.

No chronicle of Congregationalism in Rhode Island could be complete without a reference to the erratic but gifted and devout *Rev. Thomas Williams*. Born at Pomfret, Connecticut, in 1779, he was graduated at Yale College in 1800. Mr. Williams was a theological student all his days, but his only instructor in theology was the eminent Dr. Emmons, of Franklin, Massachusetts, during six weeks of one winter. He began to preach for the "Pacific Church", Providence, without installation, in 1807, remaining in charge until 1816. In 1821 he returned to his Providence church and continued for two years. In 1830 he again removed to Providence, preaching to colored people and others in various parts of Rhode Island until near the close of 1834, when he became for three years acting pastor at Barrington. A list of the places where he subsequently preached, from 1840 to 1868, covers one hundred and ten pages in his own handwriting and records the delivery of twenty-two hundred sermons. After living repeatedly in Providence and for three years in East Greenwich, he died in the former place, without any indication of disease, in 1876, at the age of nearly ninety-seven.

The list of Mr. Williams's publications numbers twenty-four. A sermon which he prepared for the funeral of Dr. Emmons, and read to him a considerable time before his death, evinces the most marked ability. He was the first Scribe of the Evangelical Consociation of Rhode Island and drafted its Articles of Faith.

Among the notable Congregational *laymen* who have not long passed away may be mentioned Josiah Chapin, Parris Hill, John Kingsbury, William J. King and Amos C. Barstow.

THE UNITARIAN CONGREGATIONALISTS.

The First Church, Providence.—The rise of Unitarianism in Rhode Island was a part of the general movement towards what is styled a more *liberal* belief, extending throughout New England and especially over Massachusetts, soon after the opening of the nineteenth century. It was during the pastorate of the Rev. Henry Edes, from 1805 to 1832, that the First Congregational Church in Providence became avowedly Unitarian. It is probable that from almost the first the general cast of theological thought, on the part of the pastors of this church and of its people, had been towards the more moderate type of Calvinism which prevailed in Massachusetts, rather than the severer form more common in Connecticut. The Rev. Dr. Hall, the sixth pastor, remarks that the original Confession of Faith was decidedly Trinitarian and moderately Calvinistic, although not harsh or exclusive. The Rev. John Bass, the second pastor, from 1752 to 1758, who came from Connecticut, left on the Church Register of Ashford a record which sounds more Arminian than Calvinistic. "I was dismissed," he wrote, "from my pastoral relation to the Church and people at Ashford by the Rev. Consociation of the County of Windham, for dissenting from the Calvinistic sense of the *Quinquarticular Points*, which I ignorantly subscribed to, before my ordination; for which, and all my other mistakes, I beg the pardon of Almighty God".

Mr. Bass is said also to have advised his people "to read the Bible themselves and not to take their religion secondhand". Being called before the Consociation and asked, "Don't you believe that some are elected to be damned and cannot be saved"? he sturdily responded, "No. All will be saved, who comply with God's conditions, and all may comply, who will". It would not be surprising if, after his dismissal from a rigid Connecticut church for holding such tenets, he found the atmosphere of Providence much more congenial and experienced no opposition in impressing his convictions upon the members of his new flock.

In any case, the First Church in Providence remained in general sympathy with the more liberal Massachusetts churches, its pastors being mostly Harvard men. When the Unitarian controversy arose that church appeared to be favorable soil for the implanting of the new doctrine and proceeded to change its Covenant into correspondence with it. From about 1815 it came to be known as a Unitarian church.

During the long pastorate of Mr. Edes, the meeting-house having

been burned in 1814, the society built, in 1816, on the same site, the spacious and exceedingly tasteful stone edifice, which still remains as an excellent example of church architecture. The cost of it, over fifty thousand dollars, was a large sum to raise and expend in such a way in those days. The structure was designed by the master-builder and architect, John H. Greene, father of the late well-known judge and poet, Albert G. Greene. Mr. Greene designed also the present St. John's church, in Providence, the graceful Dorr mansion on Benefit street, the Dexter Asylum and a church in Savannah, which was an exact counterpart of the First Congregational edifice in Providence, and which has lately been reproduced, after destruction by fire, largely by reference to the Providence church. The style of this building is that of the Renaissance, as illustrated by the designs of Inigo Jones and Sir Christopher Wren, Greek elements being used in it decoratively. The spire, one hundred and ninety feet in height, is particularly graceful and has formed a landmark in Providence since beyond the memory of men now living.

In 1832 the Rev. Edward Brooks Hall was installed as pastor and remained until his death in 1866. Of his faithfulness, ability and devoutness too much can scarcely be said. The name of "good Dr. Hall" is still a watchword, not simply in Unitarian circles, but among all the older generation of Providence. It is probable that the parish attained its highest point of prosperity under his efficient and acceptable ministrations.

In 1882 the church still farther modified its Covenant by adopting the simple statement, "In the love of the Truth and in the Spirit of Jesus Christ, we join for the worship of God and the service of man". Many representatives of the best families of Rhode Island have been associated with the First Congregational Church, such as the Burrills, Anthonys, Bridghams, Lymans, Bowens, Maurans, Nightingales, Bullocks, Whitakers, Tillinghasts, Lippitts, Owens, Dexters, Metcalfs, Watermans, Earles, Dunnells, William Wilkinson, Sullivan Dorr, Samuel Ames, John Howland and Henry Wheaton. No less than eighty-four young men, feeling the fire of patriotism burning in their bosoms, with Ambrose E. Burnside at the head, went out from this single church to face the perils of the Civil War of 1861-5. The later pastors have been the Rev. A. M. Knapp, the Rev. C. A. Staples, the Rev. Thomas R. Slicer and the present one, the Rev. Augustus M. Lord. There are about two hundred families belonging to the parish.

The Westminster Society, Providence.—The centennial of the formation of the First Congregational Church in Providence, in 1828, was

signalized by an entirely pacific colonization of certain members to start a new Unitarian organization on the west side of the river, the *Westminster Congregational Society*. It consisted at first of eighteen members and built, in 1829, the handsome house of worship of Greek architecture, still standing on Mathewson street. The first pastor was the Rev. Dr. Frederick A. Farley, a man of a lovely and saintly spirit, later long settled over a church in Brooklyn, New York. His successor was the Rev. Augustus Woodbury, who remained many years, not only a faithful and beloved pastor, but also a useful and universally respected citizen. After a period of depression the Westminster Church seems to be entering upon a period of renewed prosperity, so far as is compatible with its situation, at such a distance from the present residential sections of the city.

The Newport Church.—Although Newport was the birthplace and early residence of William Ellery Channing, the eminent divine and scholar and the acknowledged head of the early Unitarian movement in America, it was not until twenty years after he began to advocate the system that an attempt was made to introduce organized Unitarianism in that town. In 1835 the Unitarian Congregational Society was formed there by the Rev. Charles Briggs, and for many years worshiped in the Mill street house, built, as has been already related, by the Rev. Mr. Clap, the first Congregational minister in Newport, about 1728, and afterwards owned by the Fourth Baptist Society. The Rev. Charles T. Brooks, the well-known writer and graceful translator of Goethe's "Faust", of Salem, Massachusetts, was called as the first pastor and ordained in 1837, the church organization being begun immediately afterwards. Mr. Brooks was able and efficient and was especially beloved on account of his amiable qualities of character. He continued in the pastorate of the parish for thirty-five years.

On April 7, 1880, being the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of Dr. Channing, was laid the corner-stone of the *Channing Memorial Church*, of stone, on Pelham street, Newport.

The Olney Street Church, Providence.—A third Unitarian church was organized in Providence in 1878. It is known as the *Olney Street Congregational Church* and is an outgrowth of a mission called *The Ministry at Large*, which had been long maintained by the two older Unitarian parishes, at the corner of Benefit and Halsey streets, when such work among the neglected classes was, by no means, so common as it is now.

The Characteristics of the Unitarians.—Activity in all manner of

practical Christian benevolence has always been a prime note of the Unitarians of Providence. The supporters of the "Benevolent Church," true to their title, have always been found in the forefront of efforts for the relief of the poor and the alleviation of the sufferings of the diseased and infirm. The *Union for Christian Work*, maintained chiefly by them, by means of its *Flower Mission* has brought brightness and sunshine into many dark rooms of the Hospitals, the "Homes" and the tenements of the city. High, too, have stood the names of Unitarians upon the lists of originators and sustainers of the great general public charities, such as the *Children's Friend Society*, the *Shelter for Colored Children*, the *Home for Aged Men* and the *Home for Aged Women*.

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH—THE COLONIAL PERIOD.

William Blackstone.—The Church of England, to which the Episcopal Church in the United States is indebted for its first foundation, in a sense antedated every other Christian body on Rhode Island territory. At least as early as the year 1635, several months before the arrival of Roger Williams at Providence, a regularly ordained English clergyman established himself permanently about six miles farther north, at what is now the village of Lonsdale. This clergyman, the Rev. William Blackstone (or Blaxton), was an exceedingly interesting personage and occupies a unique position in the history of the settlement of this Commonwealth.

He took his degree in 1621 at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, England, and soon afterwards was ordained to the ministry of the Established Church of that country. About 1625 he is found living upon the site of the present city of Boston in Massachusetts, having emigrated from England, probably with the party of Robert Gorges, in 1623, to escape what he considered the overbearing treatment of the English bishops. His house is supposed to have stood between the site of the present State House in Boston and the banks of the Charles River on the west, his claim extending over most of the land finally occupied by the original town and being recognized, through a purchase of his land, by the early settlers.

In 1634 or very early in 1635, Mr. Blackstone appears again upon the move, having found, as he quaintly expressed it, "the Lord Brethren of Boston" quite as objectionable as "the Lord Bishops" of his former residence. This time he set up his home, as the first white settler of Rhode Island, upon the eastern bank of the river which

eventually bore his name, as it does still, in what soon came to be known as the township of Rehoboth but is now Cumberland, and there he remained in great seclusion and tranquillity for forty years.

Mr. Blackstone showed his scholarly taste by the name of "Study Hill", which he bestowed upon his dwelling in the wilderness and by the fact that he transported thither, through the untrodden wilds of Massachusetts, his really excellent library, containing folios in Latin as well as English and some hundreds of quartos and smaller volumes. His more practical enlightenment also was exhibited by his purchasing, with the proceeds of his Boston property, as fine stock as was procurable for his Rhode Island farm.

He is said, too, to have been the first to introduce the culture of fruit trees into the new territory. One of his amiable traits was an extraordinary love for children, and it is related that when from time to time he visited the neighboring town of Providence, he used to come with his pockets full of *apples*, as an unaccustomed treat for the little friends who flocked around him there. A traveler from England who sought the recluse a few years after he had settled at "Study Hill" and conversed with him in his quiet home, narrates of him: "One Master Blackstone, a minister, went from Boston, having lived there nine or ten years, because he would not join with the church; he lives near Master Williams, but is far from his opinions".

It is recorded that this worthy clergyman "used frequently to come to Providence to preach the Gospel".

He had a regular engagement, too, with Richard Smith, the first settler of Wickford, twenty-five miles away, to officiate at his house once in every month.

It is thus easy to trace to Mr. Blackstone a share in the original influence which led to the planting of two of the colonial parishes of Rhode Island, *King's Church*, Providence, and *St. Paul's*, Narragansett. There is, however, no evidence extant proving that he ever organized any work at either place justifying for him the claim of a founder of the Episcopal Church.

But no picture of early Rhode Island can be judged complete which does not introduce this gentle scholar walking under the blooming apple trees of his orchard, with one of his russet-bound folios under his arm and little children clinging to his hand, while his own stream, as yet untrammelled by the demands of industry as it is to-day, ripples in the sunshine beneath his feet. Most certainly in any case the *ecclesiastical* history of the State cannot afford quite to overlook the earnest apostle, who journeyed far over almost unbroken paths to

administer the Sacraments and preach the Word according to the ritual and the doctrine of the venerable church in which he had been reared. It was not until the year 1675, when Mr. Blackstone had reached the age of about eighty, that he was called to his reward.

Such were his prudence and philanthropy that he had succeeded in dwelling on the most amicable terms with his aboriginal neighbors for two scores of years.

It seems a merciful providence that he fell asleep just in time to be spared the sight of the evil days of the Indian War of 1675.

The fierce passions then let loose in the savage breast leave it doubtful whether even his good and tried friends among the Red Men would have been able to protect him from the fury of the mass. In any case it is recorded on the margin of the book containing the inventory of his cattle, household goods and library, "This estate was destroyed and carried away with the Indians". There is a tradition that the house was burned by the savages, with all the owner's dearly loved books and, what would have proved in later times at least, precious manuscripts, and "Study Hill" after forty years of civilization sank into its primeval wildness.

Trinity Church, Newport.—We have to pass on more than a score of years to find the actual foundation of the Church of England in Rhode Island as an institution, although we may be sure that the devout instructions of William Blackstone did not return to him void. When that brave pioneer died there was not in New England or in the whole of the northern portion of what is now the United States a standpoint of the English Church.

In 1689 the first little wooden *King's Chapel* was built in Boston. The original movement towards the formation of what grew to be the initial parish in Connecticut, *Christ Church*, Stratford, was made in 1690. In 1695 *Christ Church*, Philadelphia, the earliest Church of England edifice in Pennsylvania, was built. The opening meeting for the organization of *Trinity Church*, New York, occurred in 1696.

It was, then, no mere isolated incident, but a part of a spontaneous and almost *impersonal* impulse at that period in the ecclesiastical air, when, towards the close of 1698, services according to the English Book of Common Prayer began to be held at the *fifth* point in the northern colonies within nine years, Newport, Rhode Island.

If, however, we look for a *personal* influence in the movement, we find it in Sir Francis Nicholson, credited in ancient documents with being "the original founder and first principal patron of *Trinity Church*". This gentleman, in succession a royal governor or lieutenant-

ant-governor of New York, Virginia and Maryland, is said to have been commissioned by Queen Anne to inquire into the condition of American churches.

In the course of his duties he visited what was then the metropolis of the Rhode Island colony and relatively a much more important seaport than it has continued to be, and appears to have been concerned to find there no gathering for worship according to the forms of the English Church. He seems, thereupon, to have bestowed both time and money on the establishment of such services.

Citizens were not lacking from the very first to lend a hand to the enterprise, such as Gabriel Bernon, the Huguenot refugee, Pierre Ayrault, a physician, also a French Protestant, William Brinley and Robert Gardner, or Gardiner, naval officer and collector of the port, upon whose gravestone, in Trinity church-yard, may be read, "Here lieth interred the body of Mr. Robert Gardner, Esq., who was one of the first promoters of the Church in this place".

The first clergyman to carry out the plans of Sir Francis, probably also having been secured by his efforts, was the Rev. John Lockyer. Whence he came and whither he went are alike unknown. He remained three or four years and was instrumental in arousing such an interest that a church edifice was built before the time of his departure. It stood on the same lot, probably, as the present one, although not on the same spot, and was by the church wardens of the time esteemed "handsome". Mr. Lockyer declares concerning it, "The place wherein we meet to worship is finished on the outside, all but the steeple. . . . The inside is pewed well, although not beautified".

But, faithfully as Mr. Lockyer doubtless labored, his stay was too brief and the field in his day too unprepared to enable him to claim the honor of being the true founder of Trinity Church, Newport. That title belongs of right and, hence, also the title of the real founder of the Episcopal Church in Rhode Island at large, to the Rev. James Honyman, who was the first missionary of the *Society for the Propagation of the Gospel* in this State, the society itself being but three years old at the time of his arrival in Newport in 1704.

Mr. Honyman was a Scotchman and with genuine Scottish tenacity remained at his post until his death in 1750. At the close of his rectorship of forty-six years there was a list of *fifteen hundred and seventy-nine* persons who had been baptized in the parish, a few of them probably in Mr. Lockyer's day, but almost all the fruit of the old pastor's toil. He was a most prudent and conciliatory man and his tombstone, near the principal door of Trinity Church, describes him as

“with the arm of charity embracing all sincere followers of Christ”. The church grew rapidly under his care and many quiet and sedate Quakers and devout Baptists learned to love it, as it was set forth by the rector with no lack of conviction although in the spirit of love.

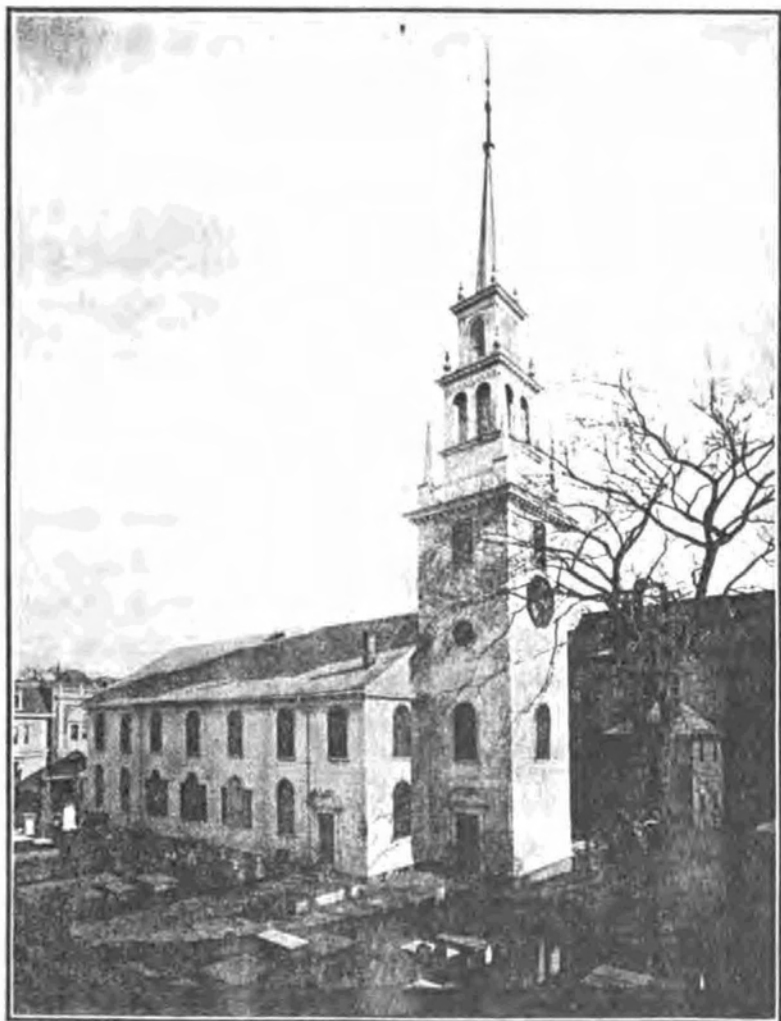
After a few years, when a number of parishes of the Church of England had sprung into existence in New England, Mr. Honyman met his reward by being able honestly to report to the Society in England: “Betwixt New York and Boston there is not a congregation, in the way of the Church of England, that can pretend to compare with mine or equal it in any respect”.

The little church building of 1704 began to be too narrow before twenty years of its use had passed. In 1725 the present beautiful and roomy structure was begun, being completed in the following year. It is fortunate that in the march of taste the ancient lofty pulpit with its overhanging sounding-board, the reading-desk and the quaint clerk’s desk in front of it, then erected, have not been banished from the places they have occupied for almost two centuries. The plans for the church are believed to have been sent from London and largely copied from ancient St. James’s, Picadilly. One of the chief incidents of interest in connection with the edifice in its early days, was the frequent preaching in its pulpit of the eminent George Berkley, Dean of Derry and subsequently Bishop of Cloyne, Ireland, who passed two or three years in Newport at that period.

Here worshiped many of the historical families of the old town, the Malbones, the Wantons, the Cranstons, the Brentons, the Coddingtons, the Bulls, the Ellerys and the Vernons. One of the most notable Churchmen of the parish at that day was the excellent and beneficent Nathaniel Kay, Collector of the king’s customs. Not only the church in Newport, but those in Narragansett and Bristol as well, were the recipients of his bounty. To Trinity he bequeathed his house and land and a generous sum of money to build a school-house in which to “teach ten poor boys their grammer and the mathematics gratis”, and to all the parishes he presented Holy Communion vessels of silver. It is satisfactory to be able to record that the name of this liberal soul is still preserved in the titles, *Kay Chapel* and *Kay Street*, in Newport.

Mr. Honyman was succeeded in 1750 by the Rev. James Leaming, a divine so much revered as to be the first choice of the clergy of Connecticut for their bishop.

The Rev. Thomas Pollen followed in 1754 and the Rev. Marmaduke Brown in 1760, the latter remaining until his death in 1771. At the Christmas service of that year above *two hundred* persons partook at



TRINITY CHURCH, NEWPORT.

ERECTED 1725.

the Holy Communion, showing that "Francis Nicholson, soldier", "buildd better than he knew" when he procured a missionary to "draw around him a *little flock*", in the flourishing seaport town of two generations before. Then, however, came the gloomy years of the Revolution, when the congregation largely fled from their homes and scarlet coated soldiers filled the pews, until, at the time of the evacuation, they and the minister, the Rev. George Bisset, a royalist, disappeared together and for years the church doors were mainly closed.

St. Paul's Church, Narragansett.—The *second* point at which the Church of England was established on Rhode Island soil was the Narragansett Country. Previously to the end of the seventeenth century there had settled in that vicinity a number of families attached to the Church of England, such as the Smiths, at whose house, before 1675, Mr. Blackstone had been accustomed to hold regular services, the Gardiners and, perhaps, the Uplikes. As early as 1702, the year after the founding of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in London, that body recorded its opinion "that a Missionary should forthwith be sent to the Narragansett Country", and requested the Bishop of London to recommend one for the purpose. But it was not until 1706 that a missionary actually arrived upon the ground, in the person of the Rev. Christopher Bridge, who had been, for several years previously, assistant minister at King's Chapel, Boston. Mr. Bridge remained in Narragansett for about two years and was then transferred to New York. It was during his ministry, in 1707, that *St. Paul's Church* was built in Kingstown, Narragansett, falling after the division of the town, in 1722-3, into North Kingstown and having been removed in 1800 to the village of Wickford, where it still stands as a venerable relic of a past age. In 1717 the Society appointed the Rev. William Guy, from Charleston, South Carolina, to the charge of the church, he also remaining a couple of years. For some time after the departure of Mr. Guy, Mr. Honyman came over from Newport, at intervals, to hold divine service and administer the Sacraments.

It was not until 1721 that the new enterprise was placed upon a firm foundation by the arrival of the third missionary of the Society, the Rev. James MacSparran. He proved a devoted and well-learned parish priest, beloved, respected and honored, dwelling among his flock for thirty-six years, until he was called hence after what he styled "labors and toils inexpressible".

The Narragansett planters who constituted his cure were "a people exceptionally cultured, well-to-do, hospitable to a proverb, proud of



**NARRAGANSETT CHURCH, WICKFORD, NORTH KINGSTOWN.
FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN ABOUT 1868 BEFORE THE BELFRY WAS DEMOLISHED**

their pastor, loyal to the Church and secure in the conviction that to be a *Narragansett Planter*, with large estates and troops of slaves, was a sufficient patent of aristocracy". Dr. MacSparran's parish covered all southern continental Rhode Island, so far as it was settled, a territory some twenty miles broad by twenty-five miles long. "Over those within this tract, acknowledging the authority of the Church of England—that is the majority of the people of substance and standing—Dr. MacSparran ruled with a firm if gentle hand, striving, with faithful zeal and large ability, to gather the whole body of the sheep into the safe fold". Sometimes he proceeded to Conanicut Island to hold divine service and preach, and at others to *Westerly Church*, in what is now the town of Charlestown, built upon land presented by the



THE GLEBE, NORTH KINGSTOWN.

The Church of St. Paul's having in 1800 been removed from the site where it formerly stood to Wickford, the Glebe ceased to be convenient as the residence of the rector; and having become dilapidated and injured by continued tenantry, was sold by the Corporation in 1842.

Indian king, George Augustus Ninigret. More regularly and at least once in each month he officiated at Old Warwick and in the *Coeset Church*, which was the original edifice of Trinity Church, Newport, it having been set up about 1726 on the Warwick shore, a mile and a half north of East Greenwich, where it remained until about 1764.

At the first celebration of the Holy Communion after young Mr. MacSparran's arrival at Narragansett, there were only *seven* to partake. Under his energetic administration matters, however, began

rapidly to improve. He was very soon able to acquaint the Society with the fact that the congregation, which was so small at first, numbered about *one hundred and sixty*. A year later it had grown to *two hundred and sixty*, while, in the following one, all the Church people, young and old, amounted to *three hundred*. At the Easter celebration of the Eucharist in 1727, six years after his arrival, the number of communicants present had increased to *twenty*.

Among the laymen connected with the parish were Gabriel Bernon, already met by us at Newport, George Balfour, an Englishman, Col. Daniel Updike, attorney-general of the Colony, Col. Francis Willet, Dr. Silvester Gardiner, for whom the city of Gardiner, in Maine, was named, Moses Lippett, the progenitor of the well-known Rhode Island



THE BIRTHPLACE OF GILBERT STUART, NORTH KINGSTOWN.

Lippitt family, and Judge John Cole. During Dr. MacSparran's ministry the painter, Gilbert Stuart, was born in the parish and baptized by him in the Narragansett church. Seldom has it been granted to a pastor to impress his individuality so deeply upon a community and to leave his name as a household word throughout such a broad section, a century and a half after his death, as did James MacSparran.

The successor of Dr. MacSparran in St. Paul's Church was the Rev. Samuel Fayerweather, a good but eccentric man, who did not arrive

until nearly three years after the death of the old pastor, to find the congregation greatly reduced, the church having been so long closed. He continued to officiate with acceptableness from 1760 to 1774, about which time a controversy concerning the prayers for the king, which he felt compelled to continue to use against the wishes of a majority of the congregation, caused the church to be closed. Upon his death in 1781 Mr. Fayerweather was buried under the Communion table of St. Paul's, beside the body of Dr. MacSparran, where they both still lie, the spot having been marked since the removal of the church by a granite cross.

St. Michael's Church, Bristol, the third colonial parish established in what is now Rhode Island, although then a part of Plymouth Colony, is commonly said to have originated in 1719, although services in a private house were held still earlier in the century.

Among the first settlers of the town there were some attached to the Church of England and movements were made, at least as soon as the above mentioned date, looking to the founding of a parish. By 1720 the Bishop of London had received a letter from prominent citizens of Bristol asking for the appointment of a Church of England minister, and promising that a church should be built for him, nearly a thousand pounds having been raised by the inhabitants.

Accordingly, in the following year the Rev. James Orem was sent out by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel upon a salary of sixty pounds. He found an incomplete church edifice, with a steeple but with no floor. Soon a large congregation was gathered and everything seemed promising, when, after a little more than a year, the missionary accepted a more congenial position and withdrew. It was at about this date that twelve men of the church were imprisoned, under the law of Massachusetts, for refusing to pay toward the support of the Puritan minister of the town, a proceeding which may have helped to dampen the ardor of the new pastor.

The second missionary sent by the Society to Bristol, in 1723, was the Rev. John Usher, a graduate of Harvard College and a son of the lieutenant-governor of New Hampshire. Mr. Usher proved the man for the place and was at once and always successful. He found the parish feeble and dwindling, but by his tireless solicitude built up a vigorous church and to a large degree, by his wisdom and power of conciliation, disarmed the former Puritan opponents of the enterprise. In 1724-5 there were forty-five families reported in the congregation and thirty communicants. In the first vestry, elected in 1724, there were found, among others, Major Ebenezer Brenton, William Munro, William Walker, Obadiah Papillion and Nathaniel Bosworth.

So great was the increase of the congregation that, in 1731, galleries had to be introduced into the church and in that same year Nathaniel Kay, the benefactor of Newport Church, as has been related, bestowed a valuable farm on St. Michael's Church for a school similar to that which he provided for in his own parish. Although now the "ten poor boys" find suitable instruction in the excellent public schools of the town, the parish still derives income from Mr. Kay's liberality.

It is encouraging to the friends of religious freedom to find, in 1744, the town of Bristol, apparently actuated by its own more enlightened convictions, but also, no doubt, somewhat as a result of the liberal sentiment prevailing in the neighboring territory of Rhode Island, petitioning the General Court of Massachusetts to be allowed to arrange that the two congregations may impose, each upon its own adherents, a tax for the support of its minister.

After January 1, 1746-7, Bristol having been annexed to Rhode Island, no more votes upon religious questions were taken in town meeting.

The beloved and revered rector, after a faithful ministry of fifty-two years and at the age of seventy-five, rested from his labors on April 30, 1775, only eleven days after the battle of Lexington, being, like the Puritan pastor, Mr. Burt, spared the sight of the painful struggle to follow. During his long pastorate Mr. Usher baptized seven hundred and thirteen persons, attended two hundred and seventy-four funerals and solemnized matrimony one hundred and eighty-five times. He made the welfare of the church the whole business of his life. Dr. Henry Caner, "the Father of the American Clergy", after having served as rector of King's Chapel, Boston, for thirty years, was appointed in 1776 *honorary missionary* of St. Michael's by the venerable Society, but does not appear ever to have visited the town, inasmuch as, being a royalist, he fled that same year from Boston to Halifax and thence to England.

Two years later, in May 1778, St. Michael's Church was burned by British soldiers on an expedition from the island of Rhode Island, and the parish seemed to have been almost extinguished.

St. John's Church, Providence.—The last to be established of the four colonial parishes of Rhode Island was *King's Church*, later *St. John's*, Providence. It is believed that as early as 1720, good, earnest Parson Honyman had come up from Newport to preach in the growing town at the head of Narragansett Bay. At about that time he is said to have written to the Society concerning "the want of a missionary at a town called Providence", where "through the want of instruction,

the people were become quite rude, and void of all knowledge in religion, yet," it is gratifying to learn, "they were of a good and teachable disposition". Farther, Mr. Honyman reported how, in the year 1722, he had preached in Providence "to the greatest number of people he had ever had together since he came to America", and how "no house being able to hold them he was obliged to preach in the fields".

Near the same period Gabriel Bernon, who seems to have possessed the gift of *ecclesiastical ubiquity* and who was, as we have noticed, active and zealous in the interests of the church at Newport and in Narragansett as well as at Providence, corresponded with Dr. Mac-Sparran with a view to settling "in our town of Providence one learned minister of good condition—an *Old England gentleman minister*". It appears to have been as a direct result of Mr. Honyman's appeals that the people of Providence started upon the enterprise of raising money to build a church.

Soon they had gathered seven hundred and seventy pounds and on St. Barnabas Day, June 11, 1722, began to build the plain edifice, with low belfry and round-headed windows, which supplied the wants of the parish for eighty-eight years. In 1723 came the first missionary of the Society, the Rev. George Pigot, from Stratford, Connecticut, where he had been previously stationed.

Still earlier Mr. Pigot had served as a schoolmaster in Newport, marrying there, about 1717, Sarah, only child of Francis Carr, a shipwright of that town. Mrs. Pigot inherited from her father extensive lands in Warwick and after returning to Rhode Island from her brief residence in Connecticut built a substantial house upon them for the use of her family. Hence arose the singular anomaly that the first rectory of King's (or St. John's) Church, Providence, should have been situated more than a dozen miles away, in the heart of the primeval forest. Mr. Pigot remained only four years in his office in Providence, becoming, in 1727, rector of St. Michael's Church in Marblehead, Massachusetts, and later returning to England.

The most distinguished of the early rectors of King's Church was the Rev. John Checkley, born in Boston in 1680, and for many years a publisher and bookseller there. He visited England no less than three times to obtain ordination, but, owing to the misrepresentations of his enemies, failed in his object until 1739, when, already in his sixtieth year, he was ordained by the Bishop of Exeter. From that date until his death in 1754 Mr. Checkley was settled in Providence, attending even in advanced age steadily to his duties. He was a noted controversialist and possessed remarkable skill in the Indian language in use



**ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, PROVIDENCE,
AS IT ORIGINALLY APPEARED. FROM A COPPER PLATE ENGRAVING
IN THE POSSESSION OF THE RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY.
THIS PLATE WAS MADE FROM A DRAWING BY ZACHARIAH ALLEN.**

in Rhode Island, enjoying a close acquaintance with the natives themselves.

Mr. Checkley was succeeded by the Rev. John Graves who had been vicar of Clapham, in Cheshire, England, and was sent to Providence by the Society in 1754. Mr. Graves remained through the troublesome times of the Revolution, refraining, however, from officiating after the Declaration of Independence, because not permitted to offer prayers for the king. He continued to be regarded as a missionary of the S. P. G. until 1782 and died in 1785.

The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel.—Nothing is more noticeable, in connection with the colonial Episcopal Church in Rhode Island, than the enormoussness of the debt she incurred to the venerable Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. It is not too much to say that, under God, she owed her existence to that organization. Every one of the four early churches, except Trinity Church, Newport, was planted as well as nourished by the Society.

While it is true that Trinity by some three years antedated the existence of that organization, it is yet probable that had it not been for the subsequent nursing care of the Society, the feeble enterprise would have proved as shortlived as did similar ones in other places. At the critical point when, after the departure of the first minister in probable discouragement, the fate of the church was trembling in the balance, there came as a representative of the Society a sturdy and faithful soldier of the Cross, to stand in his lot for almost a half century and place the undertaking on an inviolable foundation. No fewer than *thirteen* missionaries, in all, were sent to the four Rhode Island parishes during the colonial period, and derived from it their chief support. Not less than eighteen or twenty thousand dollars were contributed by the Society to St. John's parish alone, and not much less than one hundred thousand dollars, on the whole, to the churches in Rhode Island.

The Transitional Period.—After the independence of the American Episcopal Church had followed, as a necessary result, the establishment of National Independence, there ensued in Rhode Island a period of nearly a half century, during which she did little more than regain her former strength and hold her own.

When Cornwallis's surrender at Yorktown in 1781 substantially terminated the contest between Great Britain and America, there were *four* Episcopal parishes within the State. At the opening of the year 1829 there were still only *five*. The general condition of the church at the close of the Revolutionary War was most pitiable. Trinity,

Newport, was for years without a pastor, her property in a state of dilapidation, her people discouraged, party spirit raging within the parish and the edifice itself being occupied for several years by a minister of the Six Principle Baptist order.

The Narragansett church, too, was unopened for worship for a dozen years or more, having been used as a barrack for the American soldiery during the war.

St. Michael's, Bristol, lay in ashes. King's church, Providence, was closed against its rector, who desired, at the restoration of peace, to resume his public ministrations. To the human eye the Episcopal Church in Rhode Island seemed ready to die.

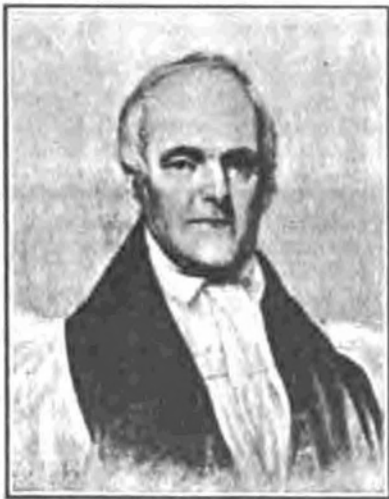
The First Diocesan Convention.—The natal day of the *Diocese of Rhode Island* was November 18, 1790, the date of the first Diocesan Convention. By that time the parishes had begun to revive from their depression, all having for several years enjoyed the services of a rector except Bristol, which, although the church had been rebuilt, was still served by only a zealous lay-reader, a son of the last rector. The Rev. William Smith, the brilliant introducer of chanting into the American church and the compiler of the *Office of Institution* in the Prayer Book, was ministering at Newport, having just closed a pastorate of three years in Narragansett. In Providence the Rev. Moses Badger was in the midst of a rectorate lasting a half dozen years, one of his successors, in 1801, being the Rev. Nathaniel Bowen, later Bishop of South Carolina. During the colonial period there had been frequently held *New England Conventions* of the clergy alone, as for example those of 1743 and 1745 at Newport, and that of 1768 at King's Chapel, Boston. But never, apparently, had there been convened an assembly of both the clergy and the laity of Rhode Island, by itself, before that of 1790, at Newport.

Three churches—those of Providence, Bristol and Newport—were represented in this convention by two clergymen and five laymen, their first action being to approve the use of the revised Book of Common Prayer and to give a unanimous adherence to the Canons adopted by the General Convention, held in Philadelphia in the autumn before.

Previously to the Declaration of Independence the Bishop of London for the time being had exercised ecclesiastical jurisdiction in British foreign plantations, by virtue of an order of King Charles I in Council, renewed by Charles II; Rhode Island, in common with the rest of the American Colonies, being of course and as a fact included under his authority. The most important action of the convention of 1790 was a

declaration that Samuel Seabury, Bishop of Connecticut, was also "Bishop of the Church of this State".

Three years later Bishop Seabury was present in convention, in order to ordain Mr. Usher to be minister at Bristol, and appears to have continued to exercise jurisdiction in Rhode Island until his death in 1796, Bishop Bass of Massachusetts being (in 1798) *chosen* to succeed him. When Bishop Bass died in 1803 the election fell upon



Bishop Moore of New York, but whether or not he accepted and exercised jurisdiction does not appear to be recorded. In 1809 the Rhode Island Convention took action toward a union with Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont, for the formation of the *Eastern Diocese*, resulting in the election of Alexander Viets Griswold as bishop of the four States in 1811.

The First Diocesan Bishop.—The election of Bishop Griswold, who was already rector of St. Michael's, Bristol, formed an era in the history of the Rhode Island church, and was, doubtless, a prime factor

in preparing the way for the period of remarkable growth and prosper-

ity which opened before a score of years had gone by. Bishop Griswold was a man of a most elevated and saintly character, utterly devoted to the duties of his office. While meek and gentle in his demeanor, he was still singularly shrewd and possessed of a good knowledge of men. His mere presence was a kind of benediction.

While, previously, Rhode Island had enjoyed only the nominal and fitful services of a non-resident bishop, whose actual interests were bound up in his own field, she now had dwelling, in the midst of the Diocese, one of the best bishops the American church has ever produced. It happened, likewise, that St. Michael's parish at Bristol was rejoicing in a period of singular spiritual elevation, under the ministrations of Bishop Griswold. When he had removed to the town in 1804, as an unknown clergyman from Connecticut, the church there included only about twenty-five families and an even smaller number

of communicants, although it soon showed signs of decided growth. But it seemed as if the raising of the rector to the highest order of the ministry stimulated, still farther, all that was best and noblest in his nature. Faithful *before* to a high degree, he was thus led to develop an enlarged faithfulness. In 1812, the year after the consecration of Bishop Griswold, there occurred in his church at Bristol a most notable revival of religious interest. It was not the result of any preconceived movement. The "wind blew where it listed" and the Spirit was poured out upon the congregation without stint. The wheels of industry for the time stood almost still in the village, many of the shops were closed and the population flocked day after day to the House of God. One hundred names were added at once to the Holy Communion list of St. Michael's. The parish, feeble and small before, was consolidated and established by that revival into one of the strongest country parishes in New England and the very strongest in Rhode Island, a distinction which the passage of nearly a century has not dimmed.

In 1819, when he who was afterwards the eminent Dr. Stephen H. Tyng of St. George's Church, New York, came to study theology with Bishop Griswold at Bristol, he thought he had then never seen a *more flourishing church*, and when sixty years more had passed he declared that he had never seen one *since*. In 1820 there occurred, under the devout Bishop's administration, a second potent revival, when more than one hundred were confirmed as a result. These movements, starting in St. Michael's Church, extended not only through the town, but to more distant parts of the State. The Rev. Nathan B. Crocker, who had been elected rector of St. John's Church, Providence, in 1807, and under whose pastorate, in 1810, the present stone structure had replaced the old wooden building of 1722, felt the gracious influence of the revival of 1812 and was stimulated to such increased fervor in his preaching that many were converted and gathered into the fold, the rector never again, until his death in 1865, relapsing into the cold, moral discourses of his earlier ministry. Bishop Griswold continued to live in Bristol until 1830, when he removed, for the sake of being nearer the center of his extensive Diocese, to Massachusetts. Besides Stephen H. Tyng, already alluded to, Samuel Brenton Shaw, J. H. Coit, J. P. K. Henshaw, afterwards Bishop of Rhode Island, and other young men to the number of at least a dozen, studied for the ministry with the rector of St. Michael's and drew lifelong inspiration from the heavenly atmosphere diffused around him. The universal estimate of Bishop Griswold was voiced by an honest, although uncultured, countryman—

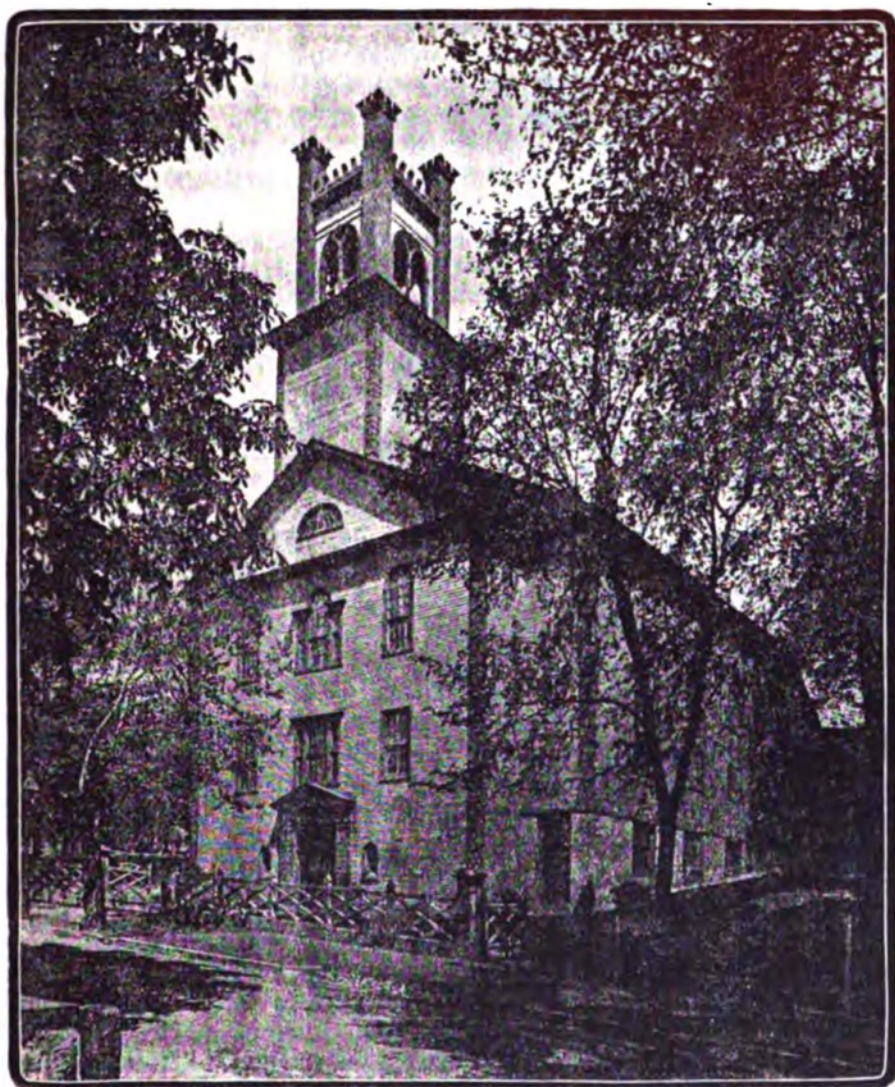
“He was an uncommon *perfect* man. You could find no fault with him no way”.

Trinity Church, Newport.—During the earlier years of Mr. Griswold’s service at Bristol there was ministering at Newport a rector of unusual ability and devotedness, the Rev. Theodore Dehon. Mr. Dehon entered upon the duties of the parish in 1798, finding it considerably divided but proving so acceptable that it was soon reunited in the bonds of harmony and Christian fellowship and flourished and increased to an overflowing congregation. The pews were again all occupied to a degree almost equal to what they had been in Mr. Honyman’s days of pre-eminent prosperity. When Mr. Dehon resigned the charge of Trinity Church in 1810, it was to become the rector of St. Michael’s Church, Charleston, S. C., and soon afterwards, the bishop of that Diocese. He was succeeded by the Rev. Salmon Wheaton, who then entered upon a rectorship of thirty years.

The first parish reports introduced into the Journals of Convention are found in that of 1813. At that time St. Michael’s, Bristol, had about ninety families and *one hundred and forty-eight* communicants; Trinity, Newport, *one hundred and five* communicants; and St. John’s Providence *fifty-nine*, St. Paul’s, Narragansett, not reporting.

St. Paul’s Church, Pawtucket—The only permanent parish added to the diocese of Rhode Island during the period we are reviewing, from 1781 to 1829, was St. Paul’s Church, Pawtucket. In the year 1790 the first cotton mill in America was started at that village by Samuel Slater, leading to a large increase of population and material prosperity. Samuel Greene, David Wilkinson, Edward L. Wilkinson and Mr. Slater himself were among those who were early interested in the establishment of an Episcopal church in Pawtucket. In the Journal of 1816 is found the first report of St. Paul’s Church, with twenty communicants and the Rev. John L. Blake as rector. It was in this parish that was organized one of the first Sunday Schools in Rhode Island, the secular *school on Sunday*, started by Samuel Slater in Pawtucket about 1797, having been, as has been noted above, eventually divided between St. Paul’s and a Baptist church.

Mr. Blake remained only four or five years in Pawtucket and about 1822 the Rev. George Taft became rector, having been previously an instructor at Brown University, and an occasional officiator at a short-lived mission called Christ Church, Chepachet. Dr. Taft thus entered upon a long and most successful pastorate, during which he built up a strong church, so thoroughly identified with his own earnest personality that he and the church seemed one and the same. At the



ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, PAWTUCKET.

DEMOLISHED 1901.

present time the parish, in a renewal of its youth, is building a costly stone church to take the place of the time-honored, but now insufficient, structure of wood.

The Tower Hill Church.—There was one other parochial enterprise, which, although it did not prove permanent, must be mentioned in connection with this period—the *Tower Hill Church*. The Church of St. Paul in Narragansett was erected before the division of the old town of Kingstown into the two towns of North and South Kingstown, in 1722-3, the church falling upon the northern side of the dividing line. The location of the edifice having become inconvenient through the shifting of population, it was, in 1800, removed five miles northward to the village of Wickford, with the understanding that services should be maintained by the rector in both towns. For a long time this was done, the ministers officiating on alternate Sundays at the Wickford Church and at the old glebe house in South Kingstown, where they still continued to live. At length, however, through the enterprise of the Rev. Lemuel Burge, the rector at the time, a church was built for the South Kingstown portion of the congregation at Tower Hill, a couple of miles south of the glebe, and consecrated by Bishop Griswold in November, 1818. It may be mentioned, although not strictly connected with the period under consideration, that it was not until much later that a *parish* was incorporated at Tower Hill, by the name of *St. Luke's Church*, a name changed, afterwards, to *St. Paul's*. For six years, after 1834, the Tower Hill Church enjoyed the services of rectors of its own distinct from those at Wickford. In 1840 the members of the Tower Hill Church united themselves to the just established *Church of the Ascension*, Wakefield, and, subsequently, only occasional services were held in the former, until at length the edifice was altered into a dwelling-house and the parish became extinct.

The Condition of the Church in 1829.—The number of communicants reported at the Convention in 1829, at the close of the period under review, was, by St. Michael's, Bristol, one hundred and sixty-two; St. John's Church, Providence, one hundred and sixty; Trinity Church, Newport, one hundred and twenty-three; St. Paul's Church, Pawtucket, seventy-five; and St. Paul's Church, Wickford, forty-three, making a total of five hundred and sixty-three. In the sixteen years since the first rendering of reports, the earliest point of comparison available, the number of communicants in the diocese had increased by about seventy-five per cent.

The Period of Expansion.—For the first forty or fifty years after

the attainment of National Independence, the American Episcopal Church at large was engaged principally, as we have seen in the case of the particular portion of it in Rhode Island, in a struggle for existence. At about the close of the first third of the nineteenth century, the Church seems, at last, to have become assured of its position and to have attained a fuller consciousness of its nature and capacity. "Up to this moment", says a writer in 1829, "we have but one small infant station among the heathen, and that chiefly for the purpose of education, and not a single foreign missionary on any distant shore".

In 1833 the Board of Missions had the courage to appoint twenty additional missionaries in the domestic field and two to Africa. In 1835 *two* cardinal forward steps were taken—the missionary field was declared to be *the World* and nothing short of it and *every baptized member* of the Church was pronounced, by virtue of his baptism, a member also of the General Missionary Society of the Church. In that year, too, was sent forth the first missionary bishop, the pure, loving and holy Jackson Kemper, a host in himself. This was plainly the era, when the Church, like a young giant, was becoming aware of itself as "a strong man armed".

It was at about this same period that the Diocese of Rhode Island likewise, as a small part of the whole body, entered upon its own period of rapid expansion. In the one hundred and seven years after the foundation of King's Church, Providence, from 1722 to 1829, only one parish which has survived was, as we have seen, established in the Diocese. Had no greater rate of progress been subsequently maintained, it would have taken *five thousand years* to reach the present number of churches.

But between 1829 and 1839, inclusive, there intervened a period of extraordinary growth, such as the Rhode Island Episcopal Church never saw before and has never seen since, as far at least as the number of new organizations is concerned, averaging three in each two years, not quite all, however, proving permanent. But no less than a dozen parishes, still existing, were then admitted to the Convention, while from 1843 to the close of the nineteenth century the number of churches, chapels and mission stations has increased at the rate of one in each year.

Grace Church, Providence.—In 1829 there was felt the need of a church on the west side of the river in Providence, many members of St. John's living too far away to find attendance there convenient. In Dr. Crocker's parochial report of that year, he remarks, not without a trace of deep regret at the breaking of ties of more than a score of

years, "We should do violence to our feelings and incur the charge of indifference to measures which are supposed to promise efficient aid to the cause of piety and Episcopacy, were we not to say that sundry individuals of this church have organized an Episcopal society on the west side of the river. Their Delegates are now here and claim to be admitted as its legal representatives in this Convention. . . . We trust that it will be your pleasure to recognize and honor their claim". A little later in the session, upon a promise of conformity to the Constitution and Canons of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Rhode Island and to those of the Eastern Diocese and of the Church in the United States, *Grace Church* was received into union with the Convention.

The first rector of the parish was the Rev. Samuel Fuller, jr., and the laymen who appeared as its first delegates in the Convention of 1830 were George S. Wardwell, Richmond Brownell, Benjamin F. Hallett and Philip S. Gardner. The number of communicants was reported as about thirty.

Thus was launched upon its distinguished and beneficent career the organization which was destined to become the largest parish in the Diocese, numbering at present more than one thousand communicants and recording among its eminent and useful rectors two of the bishops of Rhode Island. Mr. Fuller remained in Providence only a single year. The true founder of the prosperity, both spiritual and temporal, of *Grace Church* was the Rev. John A. Clark, who assumed the rectorship near the close of 1832. Finding, upon his arrival, *forty-two* communicants in the parish, he was able at his retirement after a little more than two years and a half to leave *two hundred and thirty-six*, thirty-eight having removed or died in the mean time. Almost immediately upon his assumption of the pastorate a deep and increasing seriousness spread over the congregation, due, under God, to his remarkable zeal and spirituality, more than a hundred individuals being added to the Redeemer's Fold between Christmas and the beginning of the following June.

The only drawback to the rapid advance of the parish in numbers was the impossibility of receiving into the church edifice, but then just ready for occupancy, *nearly* all who desired to attend the services.

During the following year also the same happy state of things continued undiminished and a deep sense of the predominance of religious interests filled many hearts. Indeed a most exceptional work of grace, without any unhealthful excitement, lasted throughout Mr. Clark's brief pastorate, such as has never probably been paralleled in

the history of the Episcopal Church in Providence. Six young men had their attention directed towards the Christian ministry through his devoted labors. A Bible Class of more than two hundred members was maintained. The Sunday School was raised from about fifty teachers and scholars to two hundred and forty-three, with an additional *Colored School* of a hundred and nineteen members. The mention of the ministry of the Rev. John A. Clark in Grace Church always awoke an enthusiastic response on the part of the older generation of its attendants, which has lately passed away.

Mr. Clark was followed in the rectorship of Grace Church by the Rev. Alexander H. Vinton, then only in deacon's orders, but afterwards well-known and highly honored throughout the Church. Finding the parish somewhat discouraged by the loss of their late beloved pastor and by a somewhat long period of waiting for a successor, Mr. Vinton succeeded, by means of his ardent piety and moving eloquence, in consolidating and establishing the work previously done and in eventually raising it to a still higher level. He remained a half dozen years and was followed, after an interval, in 1843, by Bishop Henshaw, who continued in the rectorship of Grace Church until his death in 1852. The most signal event of his administration, in addition to marked spiritual success, was the erection, as a result of the rector's devoted assiduity in the collection of means, of the present noble stone church. At the close of Bishop Henshaw's pastorate the number of communicants, in the parish, had been increased to three hundred and thirty.

Bishop Clark filled the same arduous office of rector of Grace Church from his consecration, in 1854, until 1866 or 1867, when the growing duties of the Episcopate compelled him to forego the care of a parish, the change having been made possible by the raising of a fund of about forty thousand dollars towards the bishop's support. In his last parochial report the number of communicants noted was four hundred and eighty. William T. Grinell and Edward Walcott were among the most prominent laymen in Grace Church at this period.

St. Mark's Church, Warren.—In 1829, a little after the establishment of Grace Church, Providence, there was founded another parish which has gained an honorable record, *St. Mark's Church, Warren*. The enterprise owed its origin to the Rev. John Bristed, at that time assisting Bishop Griswold, rector of the adjacent parish, *St. Michael's, Bristol*. In 1828 Mr. Bristed began to hold services in Cole's Hall, Warren, and by his energetic efforts soon built up a church, an edifice being erected in the following year. The first rector was the Rev.

George W. Hathaway and at the time of the earliest parochial report, in 1831, the communicants numbered *twelve*. At the close of Mr. Hathaway's faithful service in 1851 there were *one hundred and forty* communicants registered in the parish.

In the Convention of 1832 three new parishes were admitted, *St. Paul's Church, South Kingstown; Trinity Church, Pawtuzet; and St. James's Church, Smithfield.*

St. James's Church, Woonsocket.—Only the last of these three, under the above title, has survived to the present day. The first rector, the Rev. Joseph M. Brown, was succeeded in 1835 by the Rev. Henry Waterman, whose name is held in conspicuous honor in the Diocese of Rhode Island and whose work in Woonsocket, until his departure in 1841, availed, with that of succeeding faithful rectors, to build up the vigorous parish now existing there. The church was built in 1833 and has since been extensively remodeled. The growth of the parish is indicated by the fact that at the time of the earliest report in 1833 there were about *twenty* communicants, while in 1900 there were *five hundred*.

St. Luke's Church, East Greenwich.—One of the three parishes founded in 1833 was St. Luke's Church, East Greenwich. As early as 1823 church services had been begun by the Rev. Charles H. Alden, deacon, who was then the principal of an academy in the town. No permanent organization, however, resulted at the time, and the services appear to have been suspended after the retirement of Mr. Alden in 1825. It was through the missionary labors of the Rev. Sylvester Nash that a church was organized in the year above mentioned and an edifice erected in 1834. Mr. Nash continued rector until 1840, when he was succeeded by the Rev. William H. Moore. In December, 1841, there entered upon the rectorship of St. Luke's the Rev. Silas A. Crane, who by reason of his long continuance in the office and of his holy and uplifting influence upon the parish seems more closely identified with it than any other. Dr. Crane continued going in and out among the people, in all gentleness and humility, for nearly thirty-one years until his death in the summer of 1872. Dr. Charles Eldredge, Joseph J. Tillinghast, Daniel Green and Wanton Casey were among the laymen identified with St. Luke's in its earlier history. In 1875, during the rectorship of Dr. Crane's successor, the Rev. George P. Allen, the first church of wood was replaced by a handsome and spacious one of stone. Dr. James H. Eldredge was the leading layman in St. Luke's at this time.

Christ Church, Lonsdale.—Another of these three parishes, *Christ*

Church, Lonsdale, is among the most important in the Diocese. The inception of the movement there was due to the Rev. Mr. Taft, rector of St. Paul's Church, Pawtucket, who officiated at Lonsdale once every Sunday for several months during 1833. The Rev. Mr. Nash, also, who was, later, rector at East Greenwich, did missionary work there for about two months. But it was the Rev. James W. Cooke, who, coming to the village in the latter part of 1833, really founded the parish. A year before the admission of Christ Church into the Convention of Rhode Island the people of Lonsdale were almost wholly unacquainted with the services of the Church, and there was not to be found in the whole neighborhood a single communicant. In December, 1833, a meeting of the inhabitants of the village was held, at which the parish was organized. Mr. Cooke remained only two years in charge of the church, but the period was long enough for him to impress upon the people his own earnest Christian spirit and to gather fifty communicants. During his rectorship a neat and spacious wooden church was built and consecrated, which gave place, some years since, to a tasteful one of stone.

Christ Church, Westerly.—Of the two parishes established in 1834, *Christ Church, Westerly*, is of marked prominence. In that year the Rev. Erastus De Wolf, as a missionary of the Rhode Island Convocation, officiated in that village for about seven months. At the request of the Convocation the Rev. James Pratt visited Westerly, in September of the above year, and held services, a church being organized under his auspices in the ensuing November. In 1835 a commodious edifice was erected.

One of the succeeding rectors, from 1844 to 1858, was the excellent and polished Rev. Thomas H. Vail, afterwards the first Bishop of Kansas. Within the last few years a beautiful stone church has been built in the parish. In 1900 the number of communicants was three hundred.

St. Stephen's Church, Providence.—Passing several other parishes organized at this period we note the formation of the very important *St. Stephen's, Providence*, in 1839. As early as 1837 the zealous young rector of Grace Church, the Rev. Alexander H. Vinton, established a Sunday School in the southern part of the city, on the east side of the river. It numbered as many as eighty scholars and its teachers were communicants of Grace Church. This school proved after a year or two to be the fruitful germ of a new parish, which was admitted to the Convention under the name given above, with the Rev. Francis Vinton, a brother of the rector of Grace Church, as its first rector. The

number of communicants was then from fifteen to twenty, most of them having been transferred from the parent church. From this small beginning has grown up the large and highly honored parish, now including more than nine hundred communicants and abundant in good works. Mr. Vinton remained but a short time, being followed by temporary pastors, the first to devote himself heart and soul to the building up of the parish sufficiently long to accomplish any considerable amount of good being the Rev. Henry Waterman, of blessed memory. Mr. Waterman entered upon his duties as rector, November 7, 1841, and was on the Sunday following instituted into his office by Bishop Griswold. A few months previously a neat church had been consecrated for the use of the parish, at the corner of Benefit and Transit streets. Dr. Waterman remained rector of St. Stephen's until 1874, with the exception of five years, from 1846 to 1851, when he had charge of a church in Andover, Massachusetts. He secured an unusually large place in the affection and esteem of his parishioners in Providence and ministered in a high degree to their spiritual advancement. It was during his rectorship, in 1862, that there was consecrated the elegant and spacious stone edifice, on George street, which nearly forty years of use has so much endeared to the congregation.

All Saints Memorial Church, Providence.—A Providence parish which has grown to be a very important and prominent one was begun in 1847 as *St. Andrew's*, in the southern part of the city, on the west side, and is now known as *All Saints Memorial*. For several years this parish did not flourish in its original position, but after the assumption of the rectorship by the Rev. Daniel Henshaw and the removal of the church edifice to Friendship street, where it was enlarged and improved, it soon entered upon an encouraging and healthful period of growth. It was into this church that the first *boy choir* in Providence was introduced in 1858, the arrangement having continued, with ever increasing acceptableness, to the present day. About 1870, the old church proving too small for the enlarging congregation, it was decided to erect a large and costly Gothic structure of freestone, at the corner of High and Stewart streets, in memory of the late Bishop Henshaw. The new church was accordingly opened for worship at Easter, 1872, and consecrated in 1875, it being particularly notable for the beautiful memorial gifts it contains. After many years of active service Dr. Henshaw has retired and been made *rector emeritus*.

The Church of the Messiah, Providence.—Another interesting parish in Providence is the *Church of the Messiah*, which was founded in

1856, through the self-sacrificing labors of the Rev. Benjamin B. Babbitt, and has been later brought into great prominence through the remarkable work among the poor and afflicted of the much lamented Rev. Thomas H. Cocroft, who passed away in the midst of his toils and apparently as a result of them in 1897. It was during the rectorship of Mr. Cocroft that a stone church of tasteful design was erected for the use of the parish, as a memorial of Arthur Amory Gammell.

Among the fast increasing number of parishes founded in Rhode Island during the last forty-two years, all interesting and useful, there is space for a mention of only one more, the *Church of the Redeemer, N. Main Street, Providence*, organized in 1859, distinguished as the first free Episcopal church in the city. For many years this parish was identified with the name of its first rector, the gentle and devoted Rev. Charles H. Wheeler, a man much beloved. It is now a vigorous and active church with three hundred and fifty communicants.

The later Growth of the Four Colonial Churches.—During the period of expansion of the last seventy years the four ancient colonial churches, also, have shared in the general prosperity. Trinity Church, Newport, which at the beginning of the period was, as we have noted, enjoying the ministerial services of the devoted servant of God, the Rev. Salmon Wheaton, has since had nine rectors, of whom the first was the Rev. Francis Vinton, D. D., the fourth the Rev. Alexander Mercer, D. D., the seventh the Rev. Isaac P. White, D. D., and the eighth the Rev. George J. Magill, D. D. A building called Kay Chapel has been erected for week day services and the use of the Sunday School, as well as a convenient parish-house adjoining. At the beginning of the period, in 1829, there were one hundred and twenty-three communicants. In 1900 there were four hundred and ninety.

St. Paul's, Wickford, continued to use the old Narragansett church building until 1847, when a plain but neat and comfortable church was erected on the Main street of the village, through the efforts of the rector at that time, the Rev. John H. Rouse. The new church was enlarged and received the addition of a spire about twenty-five years later. The old church edifice is kept in good repair, as a time honored relic, and is regularly opened for public services in the latter part of each summer. In 1829 St. Paul's had forty-three communicants, in 1900 one hundred and ninety-eight.

In the parish of St. Michael's, Bristol, during the rectorship of the Rev. John Bristed, in 1834, a handsome Gothic church of wood was erected. During the same pastorate there was a season of unusual spiritual interest with an addition of more than one hundred com-

municants to the church as a result. In 1858 the church was burned, and during the following year the present substantial structure of brown stone was erected. It is a most honorable fact in the history of St. Michael's that it has contributed three bishops to the Church, and a number of clergymen too large to enumerate. At one time, in 1880, there were said to be twelve living ministers connected with the parish and there are, probably, not less at the present time. In 1829 St. Michael's had one hundred and sixty-two communicants, and in 1900 four hundred and thirty.

St. John's Parish, Providence, the *fourth* of the colonial churches, passed the earlier portion of the period we are considering under the faithful and fruitful pastorate of the Rev. Dr. Crocker, already alluded to as its rector for more than twenty years previous to 1829. Dr. Crocker survived until 1865, when he died on October 19th at the age of eighty-five, having been rector of the parish for over fifty-eight years and being the senior presbyter in the United States. The whole term of his service with the parish was sixty years, inasmuch as before his rectorship he had ministered in it temporarily in parts of 1802, 1803 and 1804. He was succeeded by the Rev. Richard B. Duane, D. D., a man of consecrated and delightful spirit, during whose rectorship the church edifice was much enlarged and the rectory built. The Rev. C. A. L. Richards, D. D., has just closed a long and useful pastorate at St. John's and been elected its *rector emeritus*. During the last few years of his rectorship a spacious and handsome parish house has been erected to accommodate the growing activities of the church and extensive improvements have been made in the sacred edifice itself. In 1829 the communicants of St. John's Church numbered one hundred and sixty, and in 1900 four hundred.

The General History of the Diocese from 1829 to 1900.—The general history of the Diocese at this period shows us Bishop Griswold, passing the thirteen closing years of his life, from 1830 to 1843, at Salem, Massachusetts, and in Boston, but continuing as faithful in his Episcopal ministrations in Rhode Island as during his residence within it. When he died in the latter year, in the place of the four parishes which first greeted him as bishop, there were twenty-one, of which four have become extinct. Where there were not over two hundred communicants at the time of his consecration, there had come to be about twenty-one hundred and twenty-five. The whole Church throughout the United States mourned Bishop Griswold's death and not least of all the small Diocese where he passed the first nineteen years of his life as a chief pastor of the flock.

After the decease of the Bishop of the Eastern Diocese, it was felt that the time had come when Rhode Island should enjoy the exclusive services of a bishop. A Special Convention was accordingly called to meet at St. Stephen's Church, Providence, on April 6, 1843, for the election of such an officer. It consisted of eighty members, of whom twenty-one were clergymen—nearly twelvefold as many as took part in the first Convention, a half century before. The almost unanimous choice fell upon the Rev. John Prentiss Kewley Henshaw, D. D., rector of St. Peter's Church, Baltimore, who was accordingly consecrated during the ensuing August. Bishop Henshaw served the Diocese with eminent ability, energy and devotion until his death in 1852. His brief Episcopate was a period of enthusiastic home missionary interest and activity, many new points, especially in the manufacturing districts of the State, being occupied, at least tentatively; not less than six, which grew into parishes, surviving to the present day, as permanent stations of the church. Bishop Henshaw has left upon the Diocese the impression of a *man in earnest*.

The present venerable bishop of Rhode Island, the Rt. Rev. Thomas March Clark, D. D., was elected to that office at a Special Convention, on September 27, 1854, ninety-five members, of whom twenty-four were clergymen, being present. During Bishop Clark's Episcopate the number of parishes in the Diocese has become twice and a fourth as large as at the beginning, and besides nearly twenty new chapels and mission stations exist as a fruit of his labors. In the same time the number of communicants has quintupled. It has been a period of solid growth, not only in numbers but in public estimation, until the Episcopal Church in Rhode Island in its influence and dignity is inferior to no other religious body, in marked contrast to its lamentable condition at the close of the Revolutionary War. Another feature of the present happy administration has been the marked decline in party spirit and the attainment of a high degree of charity and tranquillity.

On the 6th of December, 1894, there was held, amidst the most impressive surroundings, the Fortieth Anniversary of the consecration of Bishop Clark. The only elements marring the pleasure of the occasion were the great feebleness of the aged Diocesan, who was, however, able to be present, and the reflection that of all the twenty-four clergy who participated in the election two score years before, only one, the Rev. Dr. Henshaw, remained connected with the Diocese, almost all of them having passed from the earth, notably Dr. Crocker, Dr. Taft, Dr. Crane, Dr. Vail and Dr. Waterman. One of the aus-

precious enterprises of this Episcopate, almost wholly due to the energy and self-sacrifice of the bishop himself, has been the raising of an Episcopal fund of one hundred and seven thousand dollars, sufficiently large to make sure that the head of the Diocese will always be supported without serving a parish as its rector. Another notable incident has been the presentation to the Diocese, by Mrs. Henry G. Russell, of the noble estate on Brown street between Power and Charles Field streets, Providence, to be forever the residence of the Bishop of Rhode Island, with a large fund for its maintenance.

In 1897 Bishop Clark, by reason of the infirmities of age, was obliged to ask for the election of a *bishop coadjutor*, and accordingly at a Special Convention, held at the Church of the Redeemer, in Providence, on October 19th of that year, the Rev. William Neilson Me-Vickar, D. D., was chosen for that office.

The Condition of the Episcopal Church at the Opening of the Twentieth Century.—At the opening of the twentieth century the Episcopal Church in Rhode Island embraces fifty-three parishes, fourteen other churches and chapels, in which services are held during a portion or the whole of the year, and six mission stations. There are two bishops and sixty-eight other clergy. During the last conventional year one thousand and sixteen persons were baptized and six hundred and seventy-one confirmed. The marriage service has been used four hundred and fifty-three times, and nine hundred and seventy-one persons have been buried by the clergy of the Church. There are twelve thousand three hundred and seventy-two communicants and nine thousand eight hundred and eighty-one teachers and scholars in the Sunday Schools. During the year there was contributed for all purposes the sum of \$247,748.32, of which the sum of \$193,381.46 was for parish purposes.

The estimated value of real estate belonging to the Church is \$1,233,440, and of invested funds \$178,853.68.

The Episcopal Church in Rhode Island, in common with several other Christian bodies, stands for the Ancient Faith, as contained in the *Apostles' Creed*, for the acceptance of the *Scriptures* as the Word of God and of the two *Sacraments of Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*, and, more distinctively, for *Three orders of the Ministry, Bishops, Priests and Deacons*, and a ritual form of worship. Perhaps its chief note is Conservatism. It is especially instant in benevolent work, as shown by its institutions of charity—*St. Mary's Orphanage*, the *St. Elizabeth Home for Incurables and Convalescents*, and *St. Andrew's Industrial School for Boys*. It is active in mission work throughout

the State and contributes liberally to support missionaries, in the United States at large and in the foreign field.

THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

After the foundation of the Baptist Church and its branches and the Society of Friends in Rhode Island in the middle of the seventeenth century, and that of the Congregational and Episcopal Churches near its close, about a hundred years passed by before any additional religious body was introduced permanently into the State. Entirely through the tranquil first portion of the eighteenth century and the stormy second part until almost its very end, these four organizations stood side by side, in unchallenged possession of the ground.

Then entered upon the scene the vigorous young Society, founded by the *Apostle of Methodism*, John Wesley, in England, earlier in the century. There is something most interesting in the introduction of the Methodist Church into Rhode Island, because of its mode, so diverse from that of its predecessors and so singularly in literal accordance with the injunctions of the Master to his disciples, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature," "And as ye go, preach, saying, the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand".

The watchword of early Methodism was "Go!" Its genius was Itinerancy. The system was brought hither by an *Itinerant*, who preached as he went and whose footsteps were marked by a series of Methodist churches which have continued unto this day. The name of this pioneer of "The Gospel according to the Methodists" was Jesse Lee, a man whose soul was all aflame with the love of God and of his fellowmen. Mr. Lee was born in Virginia in 1758. When only twenty-one years of age he began to preach and at twenty-six accompanied Asbury on an extensive tour.

In 1789 he was sent to New England, where he traveled for six years unceasingly, preaching in private houses, in barns and on the highways, forming new circuits and directing the labors of his assistants. In September, 1789, he recorded in his Diary: "Thursday 3d, I passed through Stonington and crossed the Pawcatuck into Rhode Island State and went to Mr. Stanton's, who kept the coffee-house in Charlestown, Washington County". Here or in the vicinity, apparently on that very day, Mr. Lee delivered what is asserted to be the first Methodist sermon ever preached by an itinerant in this State. Shortly afterwards he is said to have spoken in East Greenwich and the following year, without question, in Newport, Bristol and Warren.

Later Mr. Lee preached in Cranston, Providence and Cumberland, as well as in Wickford.

Other distinguished and useful early preachers in the State were Daniel Smith, Bishop Asbury, Lemuel Smith, Bishop Coke and Ezekiel Cooper. It is asserted, on apparently good authority, that Charles Wesley, one of the originators of Methodism along with his brother John, once preached in Newport. Ten churches were the fruit of the early zeal of Methodism in its first fifteen years in Rhode Island.

Bristol.—The Methodist Church in Bristol claims to be the first of the order formed in this State and the second earliest in New England; to that at Lynn having been, it would seem, generally conceded the honor of being the choir-leader east of New York. It is asserted that George Whitefield preached in Bristol in 1740, but, if so, no outward result appears to have been produced. There exists in an old letter a curious reference to "Love Feasts" held in the town as early as 1787, but by whom and under what auspices is not recorded.

When the evangelist already referred to, the Rev. Jesse Lee, was traveling from Newport to Boston, at the beginning of July, 1790, his course lay through Bristol. He does not, however, seem to have contemplated making any tarry there. But a certain Capt. Daniel Gladding had heard of the power and unction, with which he preached the gospel, and in some way coming to suspect that one of two horse-men, who were passing out of the north end of the town, was Lee, was seized with such a desire to hear him that he went in pursuit and actually brought him back. Like Jacob wrestling with the angel at Peniel, he declared, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me", and as a result there was established one of the strongest and most fruitful churches in Rhode Island.

At that visit Mr. Lee preached in the court-house on July 2d. In 1791 he came again to Bristol and preached in a private house where a class of about sixteen was formed, including Capt. Gladding, John Gladding, William Pearse, Allen Wardwell, Jonathan Peck, Nathaniel Munro, Sylvester Munro, and William Throope Waldron, the way having, in the mean time, been farther prepared by the labors of the Rev. Menzies Rainor and the Rev. Lemuel Smith, who became in the following year the first regular preacher in the town.

These events in 1791 appear to have resulted in the foundation of a church. The First Quarterly Meeting of the society was held in 1792. The first presiding elder to visit the Bristol Church after its formation was the Rev. Ezekiel Cooper, who on Sunday, December 1, 1793, administered for the first time in the town the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper. Bishop Coke visited Bristol in 1803.

In the earlier days of the Methodist services they were held in the court-house, "not", it sounds strange to us now to hear, "without much annoyance from the rabble".

But in 1805 the infant parish was able to build, upon a lot conceded to it by the town authorities upon the Common, a plain but comfortable church, with galleries on three sides. In 1812 a remarkable revival of religious interest, begun under Bishop Griswold in the Episcopal Church, was awakened in the Methodist Church likewise, about one hundred members being as a result added to it, more than four hundred uniting at that season with the connection at large in the State. Again in 1820 another period of spiritual quickening occurred, when more than two hundred expressed a trust that they had been converted. Indeed periodic seasons of powerful religious revival have been, throughout its history, characteristic of the Bristol Church, many of the most eminent and worthy of the preachers of the order having ministered at its altar. But in 1832 there occurred an event which crippled the organization for years. The minister, for the time being, was tried for the crime of murder.

In 1856 the Bristol Church completed and dedicated its present large and handsome house of worship, with a spire that is visible over all parts of Narragansett Bay. When the church was formed in 1791 it consisted of eighteen members. In 1880 there were three hundred and twenty-seven, with three hundred and ten persons in the Sunday School. In 1900 the number of members was two hundred and twenty-one. Beside the preachers, who have served in Bristol already mentioned, there should not be forgotten the Rev. Joseph Snelling, about 1800; the Rev. Asa Kent, at the time of the Revival of 1812; the Rev. Thomas W. Tucker at the time of that of 1820, who found the church comparatively weak and left it strong; and the Rev. Isaac Bonney, who *five times* was stationed here. The famous "Father Taylor", the eccentric but devoted "Sailor Preacher", ministered in Bristol in 1826.

Warren.—It must be recorded at the outset that the Methodist Church in Warren, like that at Bristol, lays claim with considerable reason to being the first society of that denomination formed within this State and therefore the "mother church" of the order in Rhode Island. Indeed it regards itself, also, as the earliest organization within the bounds of the New England Southern Conference. The first Methodist service in Warren was held in a private house in 1789 by the Rev. Lemuel Smith. In the summer of 1790 the Rev. Jesse Lee, on his way from Newport and Bristol to Boston, preached at Warren, repeating his visit several times during the following years.

In 1791, whether under the inspiration of Mr. Lee or of the Rev. Ezekiel Cooper cannot now be ascertained, there was formed the Warren Methodist Society, with twelve or fourteen members, the majority of them having been Free Will Baptists worshipping formerly in Rehoboth. On September 24, 1794, Jesse Lee dedicated for the parish its new house of worship, the first building of the kind in Rhode Island and the third in New England, the other two having been built at Redding, Connecticut, and at Lynn, Massachusetts. Some idea of the vigor of this young church may be gained from the statement that after an existence of nine years it possessed, in 1800, one hundred and twenty-three members. Then followed a period of depression, during which the hope of its continued existence caused great searchings of heart. But from this trial the Warren Church emerged in triumph and, with occasional times of adversity, has remained generally prosperous and always beneficent in its influence to the present day. The dignified church edifice is one of the most spacious belonging to the order in Rhode Island, holding easily one thousand people. The time is within the memory of worshipers now living when this edifice used to be filled. But the town, in common with many other manufacturing places, has seen its native inhabitants to a considerable degree supplanted by those of foreign birth, attached to a different form of religion, and the Methodist Church of Warren has been in consequence somewhat depleted, while still nobly sustaining its ancient traditions.

Like the other Rhode Island churches of the connection, it has enjoyed the services of many godly and able ministers, whose labors have been blessed with gracious out-pourings of the Holy Spirit. In 1897 the number of members was one hundred and sixty-two, and it continued at substantially that point up to 1900.

East Greenwich.—There seems little doubt that the church in this town is entitled to the *third* place in order of organization among those in Rhode Island. Although Jesse Lee is believed to have preached here in 1789, East Greenwich does not appear upon the list of circuit appointments until 1792, when the Rev. Lemuel Smith was the pastor.

Seven ladies composed the first class, among whom were Mrs. Ruth Mumford, Mrs. Joseph Greene and Mrs. James Sweet. In 1797 and 1799 and for several years afterwards East Greenwich was connected with the Warren Church, the circuit being visited in 1800 by Bishop Asbury and Richard Whatcoat. In 1822, when Lewis Bates and John E. Risley were the circuit preachers, the church enjoyed a revival with

an addition of some forty, who professed conversion. Up to about 1831 the Methodists of East Greenwich had no place of worship except the court-house, but at that date they felt able to erect a building, which still stands upon the Main street of the village, although repeatedly enlarged and improved. The original trustees were Oliver Wickes, Daniel Greene, Ezra Pollard, Robert B. Hall, Thomas G. Allen, F. J. Hill and David W. Hunt. Soon after the erection of the church an extensive revival was enjoyed, and in 1850 and 1851, during the pastorate of the Rev. Richard Livesey, one hundred and twenty were gathered into the fold, the interest, with large additions, continuing through the following two years under the ministrations of the Rev. William Cone. The number of members in 1897 was one hundred and thirty, little change having occurred since.

The East Greenwich parish has always possessed an added prominence from the presence in the town of the Conference Academy, to which farther allusion will be made below. This fact has caused some of the most acceptable preachers to be stationed here and the congregations, during the sessions of the school, are naturally much larger than the ordinary reports of membership would indicate. The church music, also, has generally been exceptionally good, by reason of the aid coming from teachers and pupils of the academy.

Portsmouth.—Although there is no record of the preaching of Jesse Lee at Portsmouth on his journey through Rhode Island in 1790, yet the speedy establishment of a Methodist church there may well have been one of the results of his earnest setting forth of the gospel in the neighboring city of Newport and, in any case, he must have passed directly by the spot where the house of worship now stands.

In the first two or three years of its existence as a preaching station Portsmouth was a part of the "Providence Circuit", it being claimed that services were held there as early as 1791 or even 1790. It was in 1792 that it first appears upon the list of appointments, with the well-known Rev. Lemuel Smith as the preacher.

A Methodist society was formed in the year 1793, the house of Matthew Cook, who, with his wife, was one of the organizing members, being used as the place of assemblage. Soon Bishop Asbury, Jesse Lee, John Chalmers and Zadok Priest were numbered among the occasional preachers in Portsmouth and the people began to feel the need of a church. The first house of worship was a building altered about 1798 from an unfinished dwelling-house. In 1838 the prosperity of the society was such that a larger church was needed and the present neat and appropriate structure, lately enlarged and improved, was

erected. As is the case, perhaps, more commonly in the Methodist Denomination than in others, by reason of the periodic large additions through revivals with intervening seasons of comparative spiritual inaction, this church has been subject to great changes in its interest and membership. But it was never larger than in the closing portion of the nineteenth century, after an existence of more than a hundred years, and its future seems promising. In 1900 there were seventy-four members reported, with one hundred and seven teachers and scholars in the Sunday School.

Phenix.—The beginnings of Methodism in this vicinity are among the most engaging of the chronicles of the order. As St. Paul, in sending his greetings to the Roman Christians, Priscilla and Aquila, speaks of "The church that is in their house", so at first the church in the Valley of the Pawtuxet was confined to a single devout family. Gen. Christopher Lippitt, whose attention had been turned during his service in the Revolutionary War to the spirituality and enthusiasm of the Methodists by his brother in New York, made his house in Cranston a center of hospitality for all the preachers of the order who passed that way. As early as the autumn of 1791 Jesse Lee was led to the house of General Lippitt and preached to him and his family, from this time on the place being one of the best known homes of traveling ministers, Bishop Asbury speaking of the General as one who kept "an open house for Methodists".

F. G. Garretson, Daniel Smith and "Black Harry" were others who were gladly entertained there. In 1794 Mr. Lee again visited General Lippitt's and found Mrs. Lippitt and her daughter inquiring the way of salvation, having been awakened by one of his previous sermons. At that time a class was formed, a few from outside having become interested, and the three Lippitts all became members. In 1800 the General built a chapel for the use of the Methodists upon his own estate, it becoming a favorite place for the holding of Quarterly Meetings. Sometimes at such gatherings Mrs. Lippitt is known to have lodged as many as thirty guests in her spacious mansion. At one time in 1802 Bishop Asbury and Richard Whatcoat ordained in that little chapel several preachers.

On Sundays, when no minister could be procured to hold the services, General Lippitt himself led the congregation in its devotions and read a sermon, generally from those of John Wesley. So profound was his reverence for sacred places that he was accustomed, before entering the desk, on such occasions, carefully to remove his boots, in literal accordance with the angel's injunction to Moses at

Horeb, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground". With his long white hair and silvery beard and his deeply devout manner, the venerable man looked in the eyes of the listeners like one of the Old Testament prophets.

As population increased in the Valley, services began to be held in some of the villages, where more people could be gathered than at General Lippitt's chapel. In passing through Lippitt and Phenix, in 1813, Bishop Asbury exclaimed, at the sight of the numerous houses, "What a population and what a good place to preach Christ!"

In 1824 a class was formed at Lippitt and in 1830 the first Quarterly Conference was held there, a Sunday School being organized in the following year.

In 1839 a Quarterly Conference was held in Phenix. In 1842 a board of trustees was organized, with Daniel Greene, Elisha Harris and Nathaniel Arnold as the officers. An old "Six-Principle Baptist" house of worship at Phenix, known as the "Tatem Meeting-House", from the name of an early pastor, was procured and used by the Methodists for several years. At length, in 1859, the present very tasteful and commodious structure was built. In the years between 1870 and 1880 the Methodist Church in Phenix attained its highest prosperity, attendance somewhat declining since, on account of the substitution of a larger foreign element for the original American population. As lately as 1897 great improvements were made in the edifice. The church has enjoyed frequent seasons of revival. In 1900 it had one hundred and twenty-five members.

Wickford.—The history of the Methodist Church in Wickford embraces an early period of considerable activity and the so far brief duration of a recent organization, separated from the former by years of apparent suspension of vitality. As we have already noted, Jesse Lee preached in the village in 1793. Peter Phillips, chancing to be in Bristol, heard Mr. Lee preach and was so delighted with him that, although himself one of the principal patrons of the Narragansett Episcopal Church, he invited him to visit Wickford. Mr. Phillips's house was the handsomest one in the village at that time, fronting the water and being surrounded by well-kept grounds. It was here that the first Methodist sermon was delivered.

The eccentric Lorenzo Dow also preached in Wickford for a number of times at that early period. In 1794 a class was formed and from that time for several years there were regular appointments for the village as a part of the Warwick Circuit. In 1815, among a number of other converts, a young man named Gideon S. Hunt, about twenty-

five years of age, became a devout Christian and continued as a class-leader for nearly fifty years, coming to be called "Father Hunt". He and other earnest members, often for long periods without any public services, kept the lamp burning through many otherwise dark days of feebleness and struggle for existence.

In 1882 fresh life came into the society. A new class was formed and hired a little store where services were maintained whenever a preacher could be secured. The church at one time had only nine members, but in 1884, under the ministrations of the Rev. J. E. Fischer, thirty-five additions were made. Thereafter a hall was occupied for worship until in January, 1886, a neat and convenient new building of its own was dedicated and occupied by the society. By 1897 the membership had risen to ninety-five. In 1900 it was eighty.

Chestnut Street, Providence.—The first Methodist sermon in Providence is said to have been preached by Freeborn Garretson in 1787. At intervals other distinguished preachers, such as Bishop Asbury, Dr. Coke and Jesse Lee, visited the town and a class was formed in 1798. From 1792 Lemuel Smith and other circuit preachers served the embryotic church, but it was not until more than a score of years had passed that a fuller organization was attained under the inspiration of the Rev. Van Rensselaer Osborn. Mr. Osborn, chancing to be passing through the town, was invited to preach to the handful of Methodists who met in a school-house on Middle street, doing it with so much power that an ardent revival followed. He immediately resigned his charge in Massachusetts and began regular services in Providence on September 14, 1815.

In the following year, as a result of Mr. Osborn's zeal, a small house of worship was built, on the southeast corner of Aborn and Washington streets, and dedicated on the 1st of June. So rapid was the growth of the society that in five years the corner-stone of a new church was laid on the corner of Chestnut and Clifford streets, it being dedicated January 1, 1822.

Thus was begun the honored *Chestnut Street Church*, which has become the mother of many others and has long remained one of the strongest Methodist societies in New England, with a membership in 1886 of four hundred. Frequently the meetings of the Conference have been held with this church and several times the building has been altered and beautified. Marked revivals have occurred under the ministries of Otheman, Merrill, Patten, Allen and Goodell, and the church has enjoyed the services of such other distinguished preachers as A. D. Sargent, A. D. Merrill and Mark Trafton.

Among the well-known Providence families which have been identified with the Chestnut Street Church are the Lewises, the Fields, the Wardwells, the Anthonys, the Snows, the Potters and the Manchesters. It cannot but be a matter of regret that, after such a noble career, it should have been found expedient, in 1898, that this old society should be merged with that of the far newer *Trinity Church*, the two henceforth to be known as *Trinity Union*. But the removal of many of the members to the western part of the city and the surrender of the vicinity of the old site to trade and manufactures seemed to compel such a change. Nor can there be any doubt that a most useful and even brilliant career is opening before it in its new form.

Arnold's Mills.—As in so many other cases, the first impulse towards this church was given by that chosen instrument of the Holy Spirit, Jesse Lee. In 1791 an inhabitant of the town of Cumberland, named Hathaway, attended a camp-meeting in Massachusetts and was so fascinated by a sermon of Mr. Lee's that he straightway invited him to cross the State line and preach in his house near the site of Arnold's Mills. In 1799 there was there a society sufficiently formed to be received into the Warren Circuit. Some of the itinerants who visited Cumberland in those days of small things were Joshua Hall, Thomas Norris, Van Rensselaer Osborn and Joshua Soule.

For many years services had to be maintained in private houses, especially that of a Free Will Baptist, Deacon Bishop, in a vacant Baptist church and in a school house. In 1827 the present house of worship was dedicated and twice since, after extensive repairs, it has been rededicated. Among those active in promoting the building of the church were the Walcotts, the Arnolds, William Sweetland and Columbia Tingley. From 1827 there has been a series of regular pastors, numbering not less than forty, and much activity, both spiritual and material, has been maintained. In 1900 there were eighty members.

Newport, First Church.—In 1790 Jesse Lee preached in Newport and gained a respectful hearing, no immediate outward result, however, being apparent. A little later the town was included in Greenwich Circuit and afterwards in that of Warren, formed in 1794. In 1800 Joshua Hall preached in Newport and organized the first class. The real beginning of the Newport Church was in 1805, when the Rev. Reuben Hubbard came from Boston and preached in the First Baptist Church and later in the State House. So great was the interest awakened by Mr. Hubbard that a church edifice, the one still in use, was built in 1806 and dedicated in 1807. It was the first

Methodist meeting-house in America to be furnished with a *tower and bell*, the fact exciting many searchings of heart. Bishop Asbury is said to have prophesied grave disaster as a retribution for introducing such novelties. But the tower still stands in its original form and the church, after nearly a century, remains vigorous and hopeful.

Among the laymen prominent in the earlier history of the society were the Hon. Dutee J. Pearce, Jeremiah Hazard, John Allan, John C. Braman, William R. Pitman, J. C. Powell and Benjamin Mumford. In 1827 the Sunday School was organized and in 1829 the Rev. James Porter, subsequently distinguished as a writer and preacher, became pastor.

The pastorate of the Rev. Joel Knight in 1842 was marked by a potent revival, the number of members of the church rising above three hundred. In 1843-4 the pastor was the Rev. Robert M. Hatfield, who became such a favorite and eminent preacher and who was ordained at the time of the Annual Conference of 1844, held in the Newport Church.

In 1856, while the Rev. Dr. Upham was ministering to the society, a mission was founded which has since developed into the robust and healthy *Thames Street Church*, a sketch of which appears below. After a somewhat disastrous fire in 1881, the First church was thoroughly rebuilt and adorned, it being reopened in the following year, during the pastorate of the Rev. Dr. Whedon. One of the peculiar arrangements of this parish is the leasing of the seats of the church at a uniform rate of one dollar each, thus removing the distinctions of pecuniary ability from the house of God. The present number of members is two hundred and thirty.

Centreville.—All that can be confidently asserted concerning the date of the origin of this church is that it was sometime previously to 1806. A private record describes a quarterly meeting held in September of that year in Centreville, showing that a society had been already established. This record was made by Lovwell Spalding, whose family has continued prominent in this parish, and is carefully preserved among the papers of the church. It shows that Thomas Branch and Mr. Smith were present at the quarterly meeting as preachers, eight persons being baptized. So excited was the meeting held on Sunday evening, on this occasion, that the authorities sent a warning that unless a greater quiet were preserved the school-house where it was held would have to be vacated. Warwick Circuit, on which the Centreville society was situated, was very large, extending from Wickford to Plainfield, Connecticut, and embracing thirteen

places. In 1824 the Rev. Moses Fifield removed to Centreville and immediately took a deep interest in the affairs of the Methodist church. In 1831, largely through his leadership, the edifice still standing was completed, the services, up to that time, having been held in a school house.

On August 5th, of that year, the society was incorporated under the rather peculiar title of the *Methodist Episcopal Church and Proprietors' Meeting-House in Centreville, Rhode Island*. In 1853 the church became a station by itself, falling out of the circuit. From 1810 to the present time there have been regular preachers at Centreville, but while it was on the circuit they came at long intervals, and for more than thirty years Mr. Fifield preached, without remuneration, much more frequently than the pastor, with great acceptability. From time to time large sums have been spent upon the improvement of the church and there has been a good degree of prosperity. The membership in 1900 was one hundred and twenty-six.

This completes the list of the ten churches which were formed in the early days, when the first wave of Methodism swept over New England. It was about fifteen years before another, at least one that has been preserved to the present time, was established, the initial impetus and what may be styled the *spiritual romance* of the system having somewhat passed away. In the last eighty years many new societies have been organized, all of them interesting in their origin and history, and many of them among the largest and most important in the State, but there is space only to allude to a few of them in passing.

The *Little Compton Church* was the first to mark the revived activity in the extension of the system. It began to have stated preaching services in 1820 and was really a branch of the First Church at Newport, the interest having been carried thence by Mr. Lemuel Sisson. He settled in Little Compton in 1816 and dwelt there with his wife and eleven children, forming a good-sized congregation in themselves, when, at long intervals during the first four years, the pastor of Newport came over and ministered to this devoted Christian household, although always joined by enthusiastic friends and neighbors. Their first regular minister was the Rev. Daniel Dorchester, who was stationed at Portsmouth. The earliest quarterly meeting was held in September, 1821. Such has been the growth of the society that three church edifices have been built for it, the last one at a large cost for such a rural point, in 1872. In 1900 there were seventy-three members. The Little Compton Church enjoys the distinction of being the only one in Rhode Island belonging to the *New Bedford District*.

The *First Church at Pawtucket* had its beginning in a class formed in 1822, its first preacher being the Rev. Onesiphorus Robbins, who took charge in 1827.

The distinguished Robert M. Hatfield was stationed at Pawtucket in 1841-2 and a second church edifice was built under his pastorate, the first one having been erected in 1830.

The third and present expensive building was raised in 1894, when the Rev. P. M. Vinton was pastor. In 1886 there were two hundred and fifty-six members, in 1900 three hundred and eleven.

The *Hope Street Church* (first known as the *Power Street*), was organized in Providence in 1834, being the second Methodist society in the city. Daniel Field, Hezekiah Anthony, Levi Webster and the four Captains Hall were among the first promoters of a Methodist church on the east side. In 1874 the new church was dedicated on Hope street, just forty years from the dedication of the first one at the corner of South Main and Power streets. This society has been subjected to unusual fluctuations of prosperity, sometimes being encouraged and sometimes being greatly depressed. In 1900 it had one hundred and forty-five members, with a fine Sunday School of two hundred and eight teachers and scholars.

The *Woonsocket Church* began to have regular preachers in 1834, but was probably supplied with services somewhat previously to that time from a Massachusetts circuit. The edifice was built in 1836-7. The membership in 1900 was one hundred and sixty-three, the Sunday School embracing two hundred and twenty-eight members.

Grace Church, Westerly, lies in the line of Jesse Lee's famous first visit to Rhode Island in 1789 and may have been connected with his first sermon at Charlestown, near by, in some dim, traditional way. But its known existence dates from its organization in 1847. For many years its place of meeting was the old Union meeting-house and different halls, the society being very feeble, but in 1873 a new building of its own began to be used, it not being completed until 1881. Since that time the church has become very prosperous, with a large congregation and, in 1900, two hundred and thirty-five members. Westerly, with three other small churches in the northwestern part of the State, belongs to *Norwich District*.

The *Mathewson Street Church* was the third society to be formed in Providence, in 1848, the first membership being made up mainly from persons transferred from the other two parishes. The services began in Hoppin Hall, on Westminster street, the Rev. Robert Allyn, from East Greenwich Seminary, being the first preacher. From the

beginning, the new enterprise was favored in a marked degree. On May 28, 1851, a handsome church edifice was dedicated for the parish on Mathewson street, the first pastor in the new building being the ever welcome Robert M. Hatfield, multitudes attending his ministrations. At least four of the later Methodist churches in Providence have been indebted for their origin or effective nursing care to the generosity and missionary spirit of this noble organization. Under the pastorate of Dr. Whedon, in 1873, the church celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary. In 1897 the first edifice was replaced by a costly and elegant new stone building, erected upon the *institutional* plan and embracing parlors, gymnasium, reception rooms and vestry, as well as a spacious and imposing auditorium. The front forms a new departure in ecclesiastical architecture, resembling a chaste and tasteful Renaissance business building, rather than the conventional form of a church. It is pleasant to see signs that the inner house, as well as the outer tabernacle of this church, is being richly renewed. The membership in 1900 was three hundred and eighty-eight.

The Thames Street Church, Newport, began, as has been noted above, with efforts of the First Church in the southern part of the city. In 1854 services were held in an old school-house and a vacant store. In 1855 a minister was sent to labor in the region and in the following year a new church was organized by twenty-seven members of the old parish. In 1865 a building was erected and dedicated. The society has enjoyed the ministrations of several of the ablest Methodist clergymen in the Conference and has prospered accordingly. In 1900 it had one hundred and eighty-three members.

Even this very partial list of the Methodist churches of Rhode Island would be quite incomplete without a reference to *Trinity Union Church, Providence*. The first movement towards the formation of this parish was made in January, 1859, the services being continued for three months, with ever increasing interest, under the charge of the able Rev. Dr. McKeown. At the end of that time a church was organized with the Rev. William McDonald as the first pastor. In May, 1865, a new church edifice was dedicated in a commanding location on Trinity Square, the number of members quickly becoming the largest in the State. In 1898 it was found expedient, as has been already noted, for the old Chestnut Street Church to remove from its long established site and become consolidated with this parish, under the title of the *Trinity Union Church*, there being thus opened before the combined organization a prospect of enlarged prosperity and usefulness to which it would be difficult to assign any

limits. With the united zeal of the two bodies and the massing of their ample resources, such a work for God can be accomplished as has seldom fallen to the lot of a society in Providence. In 1900, after a revision of the list of members, the number was seven hundred and seventy.

Even with this consolidation the Methodist churches in the city numbered eleven at the close of the nineteenth century, in the place of the single one of the first third of the century, and two thousand six hundred and forty-seven members, where there were only about thirty in the early days, *twelve* communicants only being present at the first celebration of the Lord's Supper in Providence by a Methodist minister, the Rev. John Finnegan, August 22, 1801.

The State of Rhode Island, at the close of the nineteenth century, contains forty-one Methodist churches, with five thousand eight hundred and ninety-six members.

The Characteristics of the Methodists.—Methodism in this State, as well as elsewhere, has always represented, in an emphatic manner, the *joyous* and *wakeful* elements of the Christian religion. It might be said to have *sung* itself into the hearts of great multitudes of people. It has made the largest use of any body of the *Revival System* and has been most successful where the revivals have been most continuous, the alleged evil of the plan consisting, of course, not in the *revival* but in the *reaction*.

In many forms of good works the Methodist church has been pre-eminent. Its care for the support of its superannuated and infirm clergy is a model for other denominations, not always imitated. In consistency with its wide-awake spirit, it has been most active in respect to church extension, the strong upholding the weak and the old parishes gladly conceding the claims upon them of the young and struggling stations.

Flourishing missions are maintained among the Swedes in Providence, Newport and Pontiac. An interesting form of work has been lately entered upon in Providence under the name of the *Deaconess Home*. The Methodists pay particular attention, also, to the promotion of the cause of Temperance.

The faithful *women* of the church are, as a rule, much more prominent in their organizations than in most Christian bodies, it not being uncommon for them to assume the superintendency of Sunday schools and the presidency of mixed societies. There is, also, in this connection, a commendable zeal for home and foreign missions. One of the hopeful signs of the times, promising great things for the future of

the Church, is the general introduction of branches of the *Epworth League*, with their large membership made up of the brightest and most devoted young men and women of the Church. Nor is the social element in abeyance, the *Providence Methodist Social Union* being effective in bringing together many of the members of the Denomination around the festive board three or four times a year. The religious instructor at the State Institutions, at Cranston, is a Methodist, the Rev. J. H. Nutting.

Since 1841 the *East Greenwich Academy* (founded in 1802 as the *Kent Academy*) has been the property of the Methodists and has done an excellent work in educating both sexes, at rates within the reach of all. Its alumni list contains many honored names of those prominent in church and state.

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

The Rev. Dr. Mather, of Boston, speaking of Rhode Island nearly two hundred years ago, in the charitable way so characteristic of the Puritans of "the Bay", declared: "It has been a *Colluvies* of Antinomians, Familists, Anabaptists, Antisabbatarians, Arminians, Socinians, Quakers, Ranters, everything in the world but *Roman Catholics* and true Christians". How astonished would the good doctor have been to be permitted to look forward to the present time and see Roman Catholics, of whom there were none in his day, in Rhode Island, or, indeed, for a century later, now numbering from one hundred thousand to two hundred thousand in the State and amounting to at least double the number of any other Christian body.

The Beginning of the Church.—The beginning of the Roman Catholic Church in Rhode Island centers around the attractive and picturesque figure of Bishop Cheverus. He was a French ecclesiastic, who, in 1795, at the age of twenty-seven, joined the Roman Catholic Mission in Boston, Massachusetts, and was in 1808 appointed its first bishop. After Bishop Cheverus had lived in that city for nearly thirty years, King Louis XVIII recalled him to France and named him in 1823 to the Bishopric of Montauban. In 1826 he became the archbishop of Bordeaux and a peer of France. In 1836, the year of his death, Cheverus was elevated to the Cardinalate.

It was this prelate, destined to become so distinguished, who was the first, so far as is known, to minister to Roman Catholic residents of Rhode Island. There were a few French families of that faith permanently fixed in Bristol in the early part of the nineteenth century.

To them Bishop Cheverus came, first in 1811, in company with the Rev. Dr. Matignon, a French missionary also living in Boston, to celebrate mass for them and baptize their children, the visit being once or more repeated.

It was on the occasion of one of these missionary journeys to Bristol that Bishop Griswold, at that time rector of St. Michael's Episcopal Church in the town, cordially invited the Bishop of Boston to preach to his congregation in the parish church, on a Sunday afternoon, an invitation which the latter as cordially accepted.

Notice having been duly given, a large number assembled and were exceedingly edified and gratified by the excellent gospel sermon of the French prelate, as he stood in the pulpit, not commanding in stature but highly winning and dignified in mien. Indeed Bishop Cheverus and Bishop Griswold were men, in many respects, of a like sweet and humble spirit, both abounding in charitable words and works.

No doubt a peculiarly beneficent influence was exerted in the town by ministrations conceived and carried out in such devoutness and simplicity of heart.

At the same period, but a couple of years later than the first visit of these faithful missionaries in Bristol, the two, in 1813, came also to Providence on a like service.

When, in that same year, the Rev. Dr. Benedict wrote his *History of the Baptists* and enumerated the eighty-five to ninety religious societies then existing in Rhode Island, the name of the Roman Catholics did not appear among them. What there were of the adherents of this church in the State were still too inconspicuous and too destitute of any organization to attract the attention of the historian. But yet at almost that very hour the apostolic Bishop of Boston was offering the Bread of Life, after the traditional forms of his ancient church, to a little colony of Roman Catholics in the town of Roger Williams.

From 1813 onward for a decade, likewise, these two pastors continued to visit at intervals their "few sheep in the wilderness", in Providence. Not in some stately edifice, like the present SS. Peter and Paul, on Cathedral Square, were these primary services solemnized. It was only in an old school house of wood, in Sheldon street, that they began. But even that plain and bare refuge was somehow, presently, denied the bishop, or voluntarily surrendered by him, for subsequently for years we find him celebrating mass only in private houses, in an old police station, or at length in the quaint "Tintop Meeting-House", at the corner of Richmond and Pine streets.

The First Pastor of Rhode Island.—In 1820 there had been gained so little advance in numbers that there were said to be, all told, only seven Roman Catholics in Providence. By 1827, however, there had occurred such an improvement, numerically and in respect to courage, that Bishop Fenwick was petitioned to send a priest to minister steadily in Providence and other towns of Rhode Island, the Rev. Robert D. Woodley, a native of Virginia, being accordingly appointed first pastor of *Rhode Island and Connecticut*, to officiate in the former State at Providence, Pawtucket, Woonsocket and Newport. What a contrast is this outlook with the aspect of the same territory after less than three-fourths of a century has passed, when, in place of the single lonely missionary for six thousand square miles, there are at least one hundred priests at work in Rhode Island alone.

The First Public Service.—It was in April, 1828, that Bishop Fenwick held the first public Roman Catholic service in Providence, by celebrating mass in Mechanic's Hall, preaching and confirming five candidates. This occasion may, therefore, be regarded as the formal presentation of the Church to the inhabitants of Providence, about fifteen years subsequent to the earliest services.

The Beginning of the Newport Church.—To Newport must be accorded the third place, in order, where the services of the Roman Catholic Church were held.

In 1825 were begun by the United States government the works of Fort Adams, leading to an extensive immigration of laborers who found employment and became residents there. Many of these being attached to the Roman Catholic Church, a priest, soon after the above date, occasionally visited the town to look after their spiritual interests. The Rev. Mr. Woodley, mentioned above, was the first to organize a regular congregation of the church in Newport.

In 1828 he purchased, for the accommodation of his people, a school-house, where divine service was maintained for several years, this being said to be the first Roman Catholic church edifice in Rhode Island. In 1833 a subscription for the erection of a spacious and well-finished building was opened by the pastor of that date, the Rev. John Corry. By 1836 the new edifice was completed at an expense of about \$4,000, the whole sum being contributed by the faithful members at Fort Adams. On the 24th of August, in the succeeding year, the church was dedicated under the title of *St. Joseph's*, by the Rt. Rev. Bishop Fenwick of Boston, the Rev. Mr. Corry, under whose superintendence it had been built, resigning his charge of the mission on the following day. Mr. Corry was succeeded by the Rev. Constantine Lee.

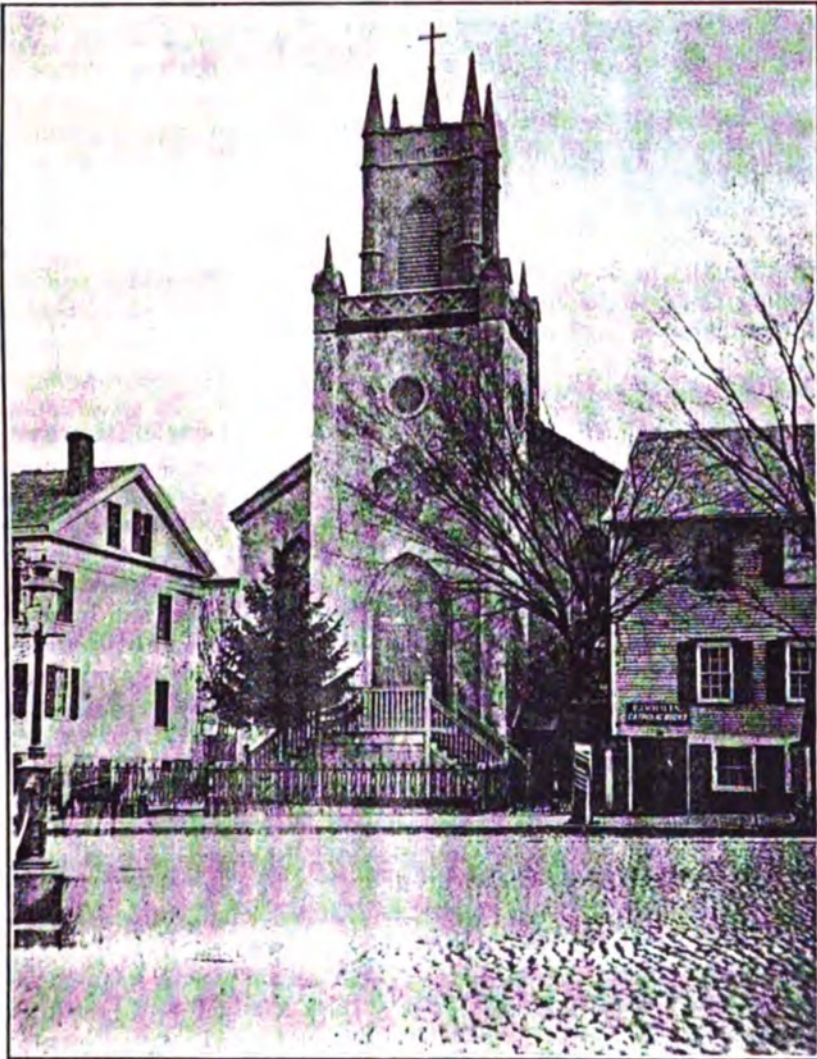
In June, 1849, the Roman Catholic population of Newport then numbering about five hundred, the corner-stone of a costly stone church was laid on Spring street, under the name of St. Mary's, the structure proving one of the most beautiful and striking features of the city and being consecrated in 1853.

To complete what is to be said about the Church in Newport, it should be noted that, in 1885, the parish of St. Joseph purchased the old Zion Episcopal church, built in 1834 on the State House Parade, and fitted it up for their worship.

The Pawtucket Church.—The fourth point in the State at which Roman Catholic services were instituted appears to have been Pawtucket. After the introduction of cotton manufactures by Samuel Slater and the Wilkinsons a foreign population began naturally to be drawn to that village. David Wilkinson, a very enlightened and liberal-minded man and one of the chief promoters of *St. Paul's*, the first Episcopal Church in Pawtucket, recognizing the desirability of a place of worship for the operatives of the Roman Catholic faith, presented them a suitable lot for a church. This was built upon in 1828 and the edifice was called St. Mary's, the people, for whom it was intended, numbering from one hundred and fifty to two hundred. The first mass in Pawtucket was celebrated by the Rev. Mr. Woodley.

The Church of SS. Peter and Paul, Providence.—In the town of Providence, the Roman Catholic population having increased to near three hundred, the resident priest, the Rev. Mr. Corry, who succeeded Mr. Woodley in 1830, soon after that date determined to build a church. The site which he purchased in 1832, under considerable difficulties, was a part of the present cathedral land and extended from High street to Pond street. The price paid for this lot, fifteen hundred dollars, contrasts somewhat strangely with the cost of land purchased only some fifteen years later for the addition of two transepts, twenty-nine thousand dollars.

About 1835, when the railways between Boston, Providence and Stonington were constructed, the Roman Catholic population was soon raised to one thousand by the influx of the *army of industry*. This was the time selected for the beginning of the building of the *Church of SS. Peter and Paul*, on the land which had been waiting for three years to be occupied, the structure being made somewhat available for use at the end of 1837. It was not, however, until 1838 that it was fully ready for consecration, on November 4th. Although the church was built of only rough slate stone, covered with cement, it must have seemed beautiful and welcome after the quarter century



SS. PETER AND PAUL'S CATHEDRAL, PROVIDENCE.

ERECTED IN 1835. THE LAST SERVICE WAS HELD IN THIS EDIFICE SUNDAY, MAY 5, 1878. SOON AFTER THIS, IT WAS DEMOLISHED TO MAKE ROOM FOR THE PRESENT CATHEDRAL.

of waiting since the first visit of Bishop Cheverus. When, a few weeks later, the Christmas services were heralded by the Spanish bell, presented by Philip Allen & Son, it must have been felt that little was left to be desired. How imperatively the church was needed was attested by the fact that during the first ten years there were solemnized in it five hundred and ninety-four marriages, while twenty-two hundred and fifty-nine baptisms were administered there.

St. Patrick's Church, Providence.—The second church in Providence was built on State street, Smith's Hill, and dedicated July 3, 1842, by the name of *St. Patrick's*. It is now the oldest Roman Catholic house of worship in the city and has generally been attended by the wealthiest congregation of that faith. The first pastor was the Rev. William Wiley. By 1886 the constituents of St. Patrick's Parish numbered about four thousand.

The Diocese of Hartford.—During 1844 the Diocese of Hartford, consisting of the States of Rhode Island and Connecticut, was formed, with the Rt. Rev. William Tyler, D. D., as its first bishop. At this date there were said to be five thousand one hundred and eighty Roman Catholics in Rhode Island, three priests and four church edifices. Bishop Tyler chose Providence as his *see city*, making the church of SS. Peter and Paul his cathedral. His labors and burdens were very heavy, having only six priests to assist him in both States. He died in 1849. At this time adherents of the church in Providence alone attained the number of five thousand. It was at about this period that work was established more securely at several points outside of that city.

Warren and Bristol.—The Rev. Michael McCallion was appointed, in 1854, pastor of Warren and Bristol by Bishop O'Reilly of Hartford. In Warren a small church had been built some time previously, and supplied by a succession of priests, who had also ministered occasionally at Bristol, although without any settled congregation. Father McCallion selected Warren as his residence, the church there being the better established of the two. In 1855 a plain church was built at Bristol, under the title of *St. Mary's*, since enlarged and beautified at a considerable expense. The Rev. Father C. J. Rogers succeeded his uncle, Father McCallion, in charge of this parish, taking up his residence in the town. In 1874 the Bristol parish became independent of Warren, the latter town now possessing two churches, one of them being devoted exclusively to the French Canadians.

South Kingstown.—In South Kingstown there were very few adherents of the Roman Catholic Church before 1852, when a priest,

Father Tucker, assembled as many as there were at a private house in Peacedale, to be present at the first mass ever celebrated in the town. Subsequently regular visits were made there by Father Lanahan of East Greenwich. There was, however, no fixed place of worship in the village until 1854, when a small church was built. In 1860 a disused Baptist meeting-house near by was purchased and refitted for use by the Roman Catholics, under the direction of Father Sherry, who came from Westerly to visit this congregation.

East Greenwich.—In East Greenwich the *Church of Our Lady of Mercy* was built about 1853 during the pastorate of Father Patrick Lanahan, the same site being occupied at a later date by the present much larger and handsomer edifice.

Phenix.—Services were begun at Phenix, in the town of Warwick, in the same year as at East Greenwich, in a small building called *Rock Chapel*, built by the Episcopalians. A half dozen years later a larger and more commodious structure was bought of the Baptists. At the present date there are at least six churches in the town of Warwick.

Additional Churches in Providence.—But even more rapid was the growth of the church between 1850 and 1860 in Providence than in the country. *St. Mary's*, Broadway, was opened for worship in 1853, with the Rev. John Quinn as pastor. It should be noted, in passing, that the noble new stone church, with its lofty tower, was occupied by this parish in 1869. By 1886 it had grown to be the largest parish in the city, the congregation numbering eight thousand. The edifice of *St. Mary's* was consecrated by Bishop Harkins, Trinity Sunday, June 2, 1901.

Another important new parish of this period was *St. Joseph's, Hope Street*, organized in 1851 by the Rev. James K. O'Reilly. The fine stone church was consecrated in 1853. This church was in 1877 placed by Bishop Hendricken in charge of the Jesuits. In 1886 its congregation was fifty-five hundred. The Parish of the *Immaculate Conception* was founded in 1857 and that of *St. Michael's, Prairie Avenue*, in 1859.

The Diocese of Providence.—A great change was wrought in the status of the Church in Rhode Island, when, in 1872, it was erected into a Diocese by itself under the name of the *Diocese of Providence*, with the Rt. Rev. Thomas F. Hendricken as its bishop, his charge embracing twenty churches and thirty-five priests. Bishop Hendricken was a native of Ireland, having been born there in 1827. He had already served as a curate at *St. Joseph's* and in the cathedral and was, there-

fore, well acquainted with the requirements and capabilities of the field. In his short episcopate of fourteen years, with his untiring energy and great devotion to his work, he gave an excellent account of himself. In six years after his consecration he had established thirteen new parishes in the little Diocese. During his whole bishopric he more than doubled the number of clergy and formed thirty-five new parishes. At about the time of the close of his career, in 1886, he estimated that in Providence alone, in place of the little handful of seven Roman Catholics in 1820, there had grown to be fifty thousand, with thirteen churches, twenty-seven priests, five parochial schools, six academies and seven chapels, while in the State there were sixty-five churches and one hundred priests.

The Cathedral.—But remarkable as was this record of the result of the unceasing toils of Bishop Hendricken, there can be no doubt that the crowning achievement of his episcopate was the building of the present cathedral. From the very beginning he must have felt the need of a larger and more adequate edifice, such as the increased numbers and ability of his people warranted, and early he shaped his plans in that direction. It was not until Thanksgiving Day, 1878, when the old cathedral had stood for forty years, that the corner-stone of the substitute was laid. Its front, on Cathedral Square, is one hundred and twenty feet in breadth and its length on Fenner street one hundred and ninety-eight feet, there being in it twenty-five hundred seats. The two massive square towers are one hundred and fifty-six feet in height, the lofty site of the building rendering them visible over a large part of the State. The cathedral is built of brown stone and had cost three hundred and sixteen thousand dollars up to New Year's Day before Bishop Hendricken's death. There seemed an almost tragic pathos in the time of this event, inasmuch as it occurred on June 11, 1886, within a fortnight of the date when he hoped to reap the fruit of so much effort by seeing the splendid structure consecrated to the worship of Almighty God.

Later Churches in Providence.—The churches which were formed after 1859, in Providence, are St. Edward's, Wanskuck; St. John the Evangelist's, Atwell's avenue; Church of the Assumption, Elmwood; St. Charles Borromeo's, for the French, Harrison street; Holy Name, Jenkins street; St. Theresa's, Olneyville; Our Lady of the Rosary, for the Portuguese, Wickenden street; St. Augustine's, for colored people; St. Boniface's for the Germans; and the Church of the Blessed Sacrament, Academy Avenue. Among the institutions connected with the church, are the Sisters of the Order of Mercy, introduced in

1851; the Asylum of St. Aloysius for Orphans; St. Xavier's Academy, and St. Mary's Seminary; The Little Sisters of the Poor, Woodlawn, with a building given by the late Joseph Bannigan at a cost of eighty thousand dollars; the Academy of the Sacred Heart, Elmhurst; Order of the Sisters of Charity; the St. Vincent de Paul Society; St. Mary's Academy, Broadway; and St. Joseph's Hospital.

The office of the Roman Catholic Church in Rhode Island has been, almost totally, to minister to the vast foreign population and their descendants. Its influence in making them the industrious and orderly citizens they have so largely become entitles it to the high appreciation and respect of the State.

At the opening of the twentieth century, the number of Roman Catholic churches in Rhode Island may be given at eighty, of clergy at about one hundred and twenty-four and of members of congregations at 200,000. Bishop Harkins thinks that very nearly half (49 per cent.) of the population of Rhode Island is Roman Catholic.

THE LATER FOUNDED AND SMALLER DENOMINATIONS.

In addition to the four early introduced Christian bodies, the Baptists and their branches, the Friends, the Congregationalists, both Orthodox and Unitarian, and the Episcopalians and to the much later founded but extensive ones, the Methodists and Roman Catholics, already treated at length, there are several smaller and more recently organized Denominations, for whose extended history there is not sufficient space remaining, but which still demand a respectful notice. To these attention will now be given.

THE CHRISTIANS.

The origin of this body is somewhat involved in uncertainty. The Rev. Dr. Benedict, in his *History of the Baptists*, writing apparently about 1812, remarks: "In Virginia and the Southern States, there had been a great schism in the Methodist Church. A large party has come off which denominate themselves *Christians*, . . . and a great number of these *Christian* people have lately been buried in baptism". This statement indicates that one of the grounds of the schism must have been a difference of conviction upon the subject of Immersion. A little later in his book, in enumerating the religious organizations then existing in Rhode Island, Dr. Benedict speaks of "A few churches of those who call themselves *Christians*".

Of these few then existing we can now identify only one with

certainty, that at Rice City, in Coventry. It is related that in the year 1813 an itinerant of the *Christians*, Douglas Farnum by name, visited Coventry and was invited to preach in the gambling-house of a certain "Sam Rice". From this occasion a great revival resulted, Rice himself being among the converts. As a consequence of this movement there was organized the *Rice City Church*, which still continues in existence, the event forming the introduction of the *Christian* Denomination into Rhode Island. The society at Rice City continued for many years a large one, there being several hundred members. In 1900, however, it reported a membership of only seventy-five and was without a pastor.

It is probable that several other *Christian* organizations were formed in the vicinity of Coventry at about the same period, as, for example, perhaps those at Foster Centre and Moosup Valley in Foster and that at Rockland in Scituate. The Foster Center Church reported sixty-nine members in 1900, and was without a pastor, and that at Moosup Valley fifty-two, it also being without a pastor. The Rockland Church reported in that year a membership of ninety-eight, with no pastor. It is likewise probable that societies were early gathered between 1813 and 1825 through the ministrations of Elder Mark Fernald, a pioneer of the *Christian* body, in Tiverton and Little Compton, where churches of the Denomination are known to have existed but have now disappeared.

The earliest *Christian* church of whose establishment we possess definite information after that at Rice City, was the one organized at Middletown, October 14, 1828, with the Rev. Harvey Sullings as its first pastor. This society possessed a neat house of worship about three miles from Newport, but appears now to have become invisible, as it makes no reports to the Rhode Island and Massachusetts Conference. There was also, at one time, a second church of this order in Middletown, its site being upon the East Road, about three miles from Newport, this since having disappeared.

In 1833 there was organized at Bristol what was called the *South Christian Church*, with a membership of fourteen and the Rev. Mr. Sullings as its first pastor. After occupying the court-house for its services during the first year, the parish built a respectable and commodious house of worship in 1834 on High street, and appeared for a period to flourish. But about twenty-five or thirty years since, the society decided to disband, its edifice being sold for a lodge room.

The *Broad Street Christian Church*, in Providence, was formed in 1834. In 1850 there were two churches of the Denomination in the

city, and it is believed that the one which has disappeared dated back in its origin to a period before the beginning of the present one, but definite information is lacking. The Broad Street Church began with twenty members and had the Rev. Elijah Barrows for its first pastor. It has had a series of excellent pastors, who have met with good success in their work. Its house of worship is a neat structure of wood, built in 1841, and is valued with the lot at twenty-five thousand dollars. In 1900 the church reported one hundred and seventy-one members.

The *Portsmouth Church* was organized on October 16, 1834, the Rev. Salmon Tobey being its first pastor. It occupies as its house of worship a building originally erected in 1821 as a Union meeting-house, about six miles from Newport on the East Road. The society still continues prosperous with a regular pastor, and reported in 1900 one hundred and two members.

The *Westerly Church* was established in 1842 or 1843 and has the largest *Christian* constituency in the State, reporting in 1900 two hundred and seventy-seven members, with a settled pastor and a house valued at fifteen thousand dollars.

A church was organized in 1869 at Summit, in the town of Coventry, where the denomination had its rise, with Elder Caleb Tillinghast for its first pastor and a house of worship erected at an earlier date. It did not report in 1900 to the Conference.

The *Christian* body is a flourishing one in Massachusetts, especially in New Bedford, where there are four churches, and in New York State, Ohio and Indiana.

THE UNIVERSALISTS.

Universalism began to attract attention in America about one hundred and fifty years since. After the arrival from England in 1770 of the Rev. John Murray, known as the "Father of Universalism in America", the system spread with great rapidity. As Mr. Murray is known to have preached in some parts of New England and as, in the spring of 1775, he held the office of chaplain of the three Rhode Island regiments at Boston, it may be taken for granted that he proclaimed his belief in this State at an early period.

There is evidence, also, of the preaching of the Universalist doctrine in some parts of Rhode Island in the first quarter of the nineteenth century by Hosea Ballou, David Pickering, Thomas Whittemore and others. But it was not until 1821 that the system was promulgated here in an organized form. In the early part of that year was founded the pioneer organization of the order, the *First Universalist Society*

in Providence, the parish very soon entering upon the work of building a house for public worship. This edifice, known as the *Universalist Chapel*, stood upon a most desirable site at the corner of Westminster and Union streets, where the "Boston Store" now stands. After about three years of existence, the chapel was burned, on May 24, 1825, but was replaced before the end of the year by a second, and for the time very handsome structure. At that period the Rev. David Pickering was the pastor of the society. From that time until the present the First Universalist parish has maintained a vigorous and beneficent existence.

In the year 1871 its very valuable lot on Westminster street was sold for business purposes and the building of the present large and handsome edifice, on the corner of Greene and Washington streets, was begun, it being completed, at a cost with the land of one hundred and thirty thousand dollars, before the close of 1872. Upon the occasion of the dedication of the structure, on November 17th, the sermon was preached by the Rev. E. H. Capen, D. D., then the pastor, but now president of Tufts College in Massachusetts. The organization of the church, as distinguished from the society, took place in 1823.

At the close of the nineteenth century the First Universalist Society in Providence included two hundred and twenty-three families, two hundred and twenty-five church members and a Sunday School of two hundred and fifteen members. The Rev. H. I. Cushman, D. D., is the pastor.

The *High Street Universalist Society* at Pawtucket, now known as the *Church of Our Father*, is the second in order of the existing organizations of this Denomination in Rhode Island. There was occasional preaching in that town by ministers of the order during the first fourth of the nineteenth century, in the "Old Red School House", the "Old Free Baptist Meeting-House", and the "Catholic Baptist Church", but the First Universalist Society was not founded until 1827, when a house of worship was erected by it on High street. The first pastor, in 1827 and 1828, was the Rev. Stephen Cutler. During the pastorate of Mr. Cutler's successor, the Rev. Jacob Frieze, in 1829, financial disasters overtook many of the members, the building erected only two years before was sold to the Baptists and the society, for a time, disbanded.

In 1840, however, under the ministrations of the Rev. J. N. Parker, the movement again showed life and in the following year a new house of worship was raised on Exchange street.

It was during the pastorate of the late devout, upright, pure-hearted



FIRST UNIVERSALIST CHURCH, PROVIDENCE.

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN IN 1866. THIS EDIFICE FORMERLY OCCUPIED THE LOT AT THE CORNER OF WESTMINSTER AND UNION STREETS, NOW OCCUPIED BY THE "BOSTON STORE." IT WAS DEMOLISHED IN 1872.

and learned Rev. Massena Goodrich, that the present church on High street was built and dedicated on January 30, 1868.

At the close of the nineteenth century the parish numbers two hundred and ninety families with two hundred and thirty-five church members and three hundred and eighteen teachers and scholars in its Sunday School. The present pastor, who has been with the society since 1895, is the Rev. E. L. Houghton.

The Universalist Church at Woonsocket, which dates from a time previous to 1840, appears to be the third among existing parishes and is the largest one belonging to the denomination in the State. At the close of the nineteenth century it embraces three hundred and seven families, three hundred and fourteen church members and a Sunday School of four hundred and three teachers and scholars. The Rev. Charles J. White, D. D., is the pastor.

The *Second Universalist Society of Providence* is the fourth in the order of formation, it having been organized in 1840, with the Rev. J. N. Parker as pastor or stated supply. The society maintained services in the old "Town House" and in "Mechanic's Hall" for several years. In 1845 it appears to have been reorganized with a view to representing an advanced movement towards larger liberty of thought. A little later the Rev. James S. Cook, a young man and a very gifted preacher, became pastor, the society flourishing greatly under his leadership.

In 1848 it was determined to build a house of worship at the corner of Broad and Eddy streets, the neat brick structure, still standing and used in part by the Union for Christian Work, being the result. This edifice was dedicated April 6, 1849, and continued to be used for about twenty years for public worship.

In 1868, under the vigorous pastorate of the Rev. Henry W. Rugg, D. D., the building of a new church was begun on Cranston street, the parish having changed its name to the *Church of the Mediator*. The new edifice, which is the large and handsome one still used by the parish, was dedicated December 22, 1869, the principle being carried out that there should be no individual proprietorship, the pews being the property of the whole society.

The church, being the body constituted by the communicants, was not organized until October, 1849, nearly ten years after the formation of the society, and celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in October, 1899, under inspiring circumstances. The Church of the Mediator closes the nineteenth century with one hundred and seventy-five families, two hundred and seventy-two members and a Sunday School of one

hundred and seventy-five teachers and scholars. The Rev. Willard C. Selleck is the present pastor.

Several other Universalist societies, organized about the middle of the nineteenth century, survived but a short period. The Year Book of 1854 mentions, in addition to the four well established parishes just enumerated, eight such ephemeral organizations without pastors and, except in a single instance, without any church property. Since that period there appears to have been a more healthy growth with permanent results, there being now ten societies, all possessing houses of worship and resident pastors of their own, save that one of the latter serves at two points. The newest of these enterprises is the interesting young "Ballou Church", on Capitol Hill, Providence, possessing a tasteful little edifice of brick, completed in 1898. While no new work looking to the establishment of parishes has been undertaken for several years, yet commendable efforts for the extension of mission Sunday schools and occasional preaching have been made by the Rev. Dr. White, in the vicinity of Woonsocket, and the Rev. Mr. Eaton, in Burrillville.

At the close of the nineteenth century, the Universalist Denomination in Rhode Island embraces in its ten parishes thirteen hundred and forty-three families, twelve hundred and twenty-nine members, thirteen hundred and sixty-seven teachers and scholars in eight Sunday Schools and \$317,000 in church property.

The General Universalist Organizations.—The Rhode Island Universalist Convention was organized in 1838. The Young People's Christian Union is a beneficent instrumentality for enlisting the enthusiasm and vitality of the youthful adherents of the Universalist Church in Christian work. Although the Denomination possesses no educational institution within the State, it is yet proper to point to the excellent Dean Academy, just over the border of Massachusetts, in Franklin, with its noble endowment in land, buildings and money, of three hundred and thirty thousand dollars, as occupying a large place in the hearts of the Rhode Island Universalists and depending considerably upon their patronage.

The general foreign missionary work of the church in Japan has always secured a liberal share in the interest of the Denomination in this State, a single parish, at the outset of the enterprise, making a free-will offering of \$1,500 towards the mission.

In addition to the honored names of Universalist clergymen now passed away, already mentioned, such as Cook and Goodrich, remembrance should be had of the venerable Hon. Latimer W. Ballou, a most

devoted layman, who lately died at Woonsocket at the age of eighty-nine years. The Universalist Church in Rhode Island, although a small body, strives to help all who come within its influence to realize in faith and practice the best type of Christian life. As it faces the new century it studies to have its full share in the enlarged work on which the Church of Jesus Christ is now hopefully entering.

THE PRESBYTERIANS.

The Presbyterian Denomination, as distinct from the Congregational, with which it used often to be confounded, at least in name, has never been extensively represented in Rhode Island. There are, however, three or four societies belonging to this body in the State.

The *First Presbyterian Church of Providence* was organized in 1872 and built a house of worship on Clifford street in 1875 and 1876. The first pastor was the Rev. John Dixon and the membership has reached three hundred or more.

There is, also, a Presbyterian Church in Newport.

The Presbyterian Church at Narragansett Pier was erected in 1875, the first pastor being the Rev. C. H. Morrill. The attendance is largely made up of summer visitors at the Pier.

There is, also, a *United Presbyterian Church* in Providence, understood to be attended by Scottish people or those of Scottish descent. This society occupies a house of worship built in 1848 near the foot of Broadway, at the corner of Hicks street. The church contains two hundred and fifty or more members.

THE ADVENTISTS.

The *Adventists* embrace from fifteen to twenty societies in Rhode Island, chiefly small and in the country. They are divided into *Evangelical Adventists*, *Christian*, and *Seventh Day*. The principal society is the *Church of the Yahveh* in Providence. It was organized in 1850 with the Rev. N. Hervey as first pastor, and had a place of worship on Broad street, now Weybosset. Its present edifice was dedicated in 1878. This church has attained a membership of nearly, if not quite, four hundred. There are other societies at Bristol, Scituate, Warwick (two), West Greenwich, North Kingstown, Hopkinton, South Kingstown (two) and Charlestown. The *Advent Christians* have churches in Providence, Exeter and South Kingstown and the *Seventh Day Adventists* in South Kingstown and Westerly.

THE SWEDENBORGIANS.

There are two or three societies of the *Swedenborgian* or *New Jerusalem Church* in the State, the most important one being in Providence. The latter was organized in 1839 with the Rev. T. D. Sturdevant as first pastor and only nine members. For many years the congregation worshiped in a tiny but very pretty Gothic chapel, on Pine street, below Richmond street, but in 1870 to 1872 the society built a more commodious house of worship on Trinity Square, at the corner of Broad and Linden streets, at a cost of thirty thousand dollars. The membership has arisen above one hundred.

A *New Jerusalem Church* was organized in Pawtucket in 1854 and one at Lippitt, in Warwick, about the same period, worship at the latter having for some years been suspended.

OTHER RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES.

Several vigorous and flourishing *Swedish Lutheran* churches have been founded of late years in Providence, East Greenwich, Pontiac and other places, for the use of that very numerous and useful foreign portion of the community.

There are also several churches belonging to the *African Methodist Episcopal* body, to the *Primitive Methodists*, and to the *Wesleyan Methodists*. As a matter of historical interest, reference should be made to a church of the *Moravians* or *United Brethren*, which used to exist in Newport, it having been constituted there as early as 1758. Previously to this date, some of the brethren had come "two and two", in the Scriptural manner, from Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, the headquarters of the order, and held occasionally very welcome services for the preaching of the Word. The first pastor at Newport was the Rev. Richard Utley. The sixth pastor, from 1803 to 1819, was the Rev. Samuel Towle, a man universally beloved by his own people and by the inhabitants in general of the town. The tenth and last pastor, the Rev. Charles F. Seidel, entered upon his position in 1837. Now, for many years, the sheep have been without a shepherd and have become scattered or have entered other folds. But the salutary influence of this most devout and spiritually minded body still lingers in the community.

In the earlier part of the eighteenth century there were not less than sixty families of *Jews* living in Newport, the leading ones being those of the names of Lopez and Touro. In 1762 they built a synagogue, dedicated in the following year to the God of Abraham with great pomp and magnificence. After enjoying a high degree of prosperity the Jews nearly all left the town during the Revolutionary

War, which utterly paralyzed the trade of Newport, and the synagogue for many years was closed. A large fund, however, was left by Abraham Touro, who died in Boston, in 1822, for keeping the building in repair and for the care of the Jewish Cemetery near by. After sixty years of disuse the synagogue was reopened in 1850 with services held on the Jewish Sabbath by an eminent rabbi from New York.

Of recent years a large Jewish population has gathered in Providence and spacious synagogues have been built for their use on Orms street, Chalkstone avenue and Friendship street.

CONCLUSION.

The survey just completed of the various religious bodies of Rhode Island shows with how complete an equipment for its entire evangelization and reformation the State enters upon the twentieth century.

What is needed for the regeneration of the whole population is not, so much, additional machinery as the spirit and energy to evoke the best possible results from that thus seen to be already existing.

There are in the State from three hundred and thirty to three hundred and forty places of Protestant worship with about three hundred and ninety ordained ministers, fifty-four thousand five hundred members, fifty-one thousand five hundred teachers and scholars in Sunday Schools, and church property to about the value of \$5,390,000. In addition, the Roman Catholics have not far from eighty churches, with rising one hundred priests and more than one hundred and fifty thousand members of the congregations.

Leaving out of view the Roman Catholics, who amply provide for their very large constituency by holding numerous services for different congregations in each church, on Sundays and Festivals, there appears to be a house of worship for about each seven to eight hundred of the Protestant population with, probably, in the aggregate, one hundred and fifty thousand seats for the approximately two hundred and fifty thousand people of that class. Inasmuch as many aged and infirm persons, invalids and children are not able to attend worship, it is likely that the whole Protestant population, who can attend, could be fairly accommodated with seats at one time in existing sacred buildings, were they evenly distributed according to the population. Even taking into account the fact that quite a number of these houses of worship are situated in sparsely settled communities and are, therefore, not available for their proportion of the aggregate inhabitants of the State, it is still likely that there are ample seating accommodations for all whom it is practicable to gather at any one hour. There is, then, more need of stirring up the wills of the neglect-

ers of religion to recognize the duty of public worship than of materially increasing the buildings devoted to the purpose.

In comparing the religious atmosphere of the present era with that of colonial times or that of even only a half century ago, great changes will be seen to have intervened. While the ancient, inbred passion for *soul-liberty* continues, as ever, a peculiar distinction of Rhode Island, and while the complementary attitude of *individualism* sometimes seems almost to draw in its train a certain refractoriness to due ecclesiastical authority and lack of docility under instruction, yet a much lovelier spirit now breathes through the churches than has prevailed in past times.

The days of the old Denominationalism, with its antipathies and rivalries, are happily numbered.

Hardly farther away seem the persecuting ages of Nero and Diocletian than the period when it was possible for a sturdy Roger Williams, while deeply imbued with the spirit of religious freedom, to bait a George Fox with such keen zest for religious controversy and to "dig him out of his burrowes" so gleefully, or when, much later, grave deacons could rejoice in the calamities of less orthodox but still Christian neighboring churches and worthy pastors could warn their congregations not to attend during their absence the ministrations of saintly men not of their own name. The Christians of Rhode Island appear to be cordially set on dwelling upon the things which *unite* them rather than upon those which *divide*. Although *union* seems as far away as ever, yet *unity* has approached with rapid strides and is already before the door. Christian charity is no longer conspicuous by reason of its rarity. The clergy of widely differing names are not averse to meeting together in harmony and discussing questions of public interest with good will.

Where, a few years since, the conviction, "I am holier than thou", often forbade those of one denomination to meet as brethren those of another, now the two classes are often found rejoicing together or weeping together in fraternal sympathy. At the great University where, formerly, seldom was a voice heard at chapel worship, except one of a particular religious order, in the latter years those of several different names have been selected to preside for a season over the daily devotions and clergymen of the most different beliefs have been invited to share in the courses of university sermons. Indeed the swing of the ecclesiastical pendulum indicates that the present danger is rather the "Charybdis" of an amiable indifferentism than the old "Scylla" of theological rancor, although most Christians can be trusted to steer the safe middle course.

If the present rarity of the unction and devoutness of the fathers is to be deplored, it is a source of genuine congratulation that there was never a time when Christianity had so nearly universally permeated society and was so generally diffused as it is now, when it had produced so orderly, law abiding and philanthropic a tone in the community, or when the *prophet with a message* was listened to with a more lively eagerness. If, too, it must be acknowledged that public worship among Protestants is not attended upon so generally as in the past, yet consolation can to some degree be found in the interest with which sermons and religious intelligence in newspapers are welcomed by increasing multitudes of readers, while books on living religious questions, by authors who are themselves alive, meet a ready market. If there may be to-day less *religiousness* than in the past, it is to be hopefully trusted that there is more *religion*. Nor are there wanting signs of a great reaction towards attention to the things pertaining to the life of the Spirit. The closing events of the nineteenth century stimulate the Christians of Rhode Island to nobler achievements in the twentieth, now opening.

In the new century things are not to proceed just as they have done in the old one. There is already to be heard, as of old, "the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees", impelling Christians to bestir themselves. If the church at large is to become set upon the evangelization of the *whole earth* within a generation, the Christians of Rhode Island will awake to the readiness for the harvest of their own *home field* and to the splendid outfit with which they are supplied for its reduction to the sway of Christ. At the end of the twentieth century the religious condition of this portion of the vineyard will no more be like the worldly and placid state of the church, now at its beginning, than does the latter resemble the still colder and more unspiritual demoralization of the post-revolutionary period, a hundred years ago. Whether or not the year of our Lord 2000 in Rhode Island, or even some one anterior to that, shall witness the blessed vision of *an ideal church in an ideal state*, is largely dependent upon the courage and devotion with which the men of to-day face the problems so thickly pressing for solution. The history of the nearly three hundred years, which we have just been considering, is fraught with inspiration to new endeavors and fresh triumphs.

Daniel Goodwin.