CHAPTER I.

EARLY VOYAGES AND THE INDIANS.

If we are willing to rely upon documents, chiefly based on tradition, we can assert that the first white people to set foot on the shores of lower New England were the hardy Norsemen of the tenth century. In the year 875 A. D. a body of Norwegians, under Ingolf, started a settlement in Iceland, and within half a century a promising colony of nearly 70,000 inhabitants was established almost under the Arctic circle. By the end of the tenth century many had emigrated to Greenland, where they founded a new settlement and introduced Christianity. In the year 986, according to the sagas,[1] one Bjarni Herjulfson, in sailing from Iceland to Greenland, was driven far out of his course by stress of weather, and on his return to his native land, reported that he had come upon a strange country, away to the southwest. Fourteen years later Leif, son of Eric, sailed from Greenland in quest of the land seen by Bjarni. He found a barren shore stretching back to ice-covered mountains, and on account of the slaty rock there called the region Helluland. Proceeding farther south, they came to a level territory, with a sandy shore lying near the water, and inland a forest country, because of which it was named Markland. Again sailing southerly, in two days they came to an island which lay to the eastward of the mainland. Proceeding beyond this farther south and westerly, they finally ascended a river and brought the ship to anchor in a large lake, on the shores of which they built huts to lodge in for the winter. Leif sent out many exploring parties, and

[1]The text of these sagas are given in full in Danish, Icelandic, and Latin in Rafn, *Antiquitates Americanae*. The most important of them are given in English in E. B. Slafter, *Voyages of the Northmen;* B. F. De Costa, *Pre-Columbian Discovery;* and in E. Horsford, *Discovery of America by the Norsemen*. There are bibliographies of the subject of Norse exploration in the *Library Journal*, vi, 259; R. B. Anderson, *America not discovered by Columbus;* 1883 ed.; F. W. Horn, *Hist. of the lit. of the Scandinavian North*, p. 413; and in E. B. Slafter, *Voyages of the Northmen*, p. 127. There is an excellent critical summary of the subject in Winsor, *Narrative and Critical History*, i, 87.

on one of these an abundance of grapes was found, which induced him to call the country Vinland.

During the present century numerous attempts have been made to identify the Vinland thus mentioned in Leif's voyage and in a few subsequent expeditions, with various spots on our eastern coast. Judging by the inexact accounts of the directions in sailing, by the very general descriptions of the country, and by the length of the shortest day in Vinland, writers have placed this almost mythological locality all the way from Labrador to North Carolina. The first advocate to identify the region surrounding Narragansett and Mount Hope Bays as the site of the ancient Vinland was Carl Christian Rafn, an eminent Danish scholar, who, in 1837, published his *Antiquitates Americanae*, containing a mass of original Norse documents, with comments and conclusions respecting them. He averred that the river opening into a lake was the Pocasset River flowing from Mount Hope Bay; reconciled the descriptions of climate and of native inhabitants to what he knew of the climate and aborigines of southern New England, found Norse linguistic elements entering into the composition of many Indian names, and by a delightfully convenient interpretation of language, represented that the shortest winter day of Vinland meant 41 degrees 30 minutes—the latitude of Newport. He also attempted to show that the stone tower now standing at Newport was the work of Northmen, and inserts a description of certain rocks situated in Tiverton and Portsmouth Grove. The above conclusions, with many others not relating to Rhode Island, soon became the theme of fruitless discussion throughout the country. Many writers, some of high historical ability, came to widely differing judgments respecting this shadowy locality,[1] until finally the best scholars realized that the descriptions of the sagas were too general and too contradictory to be relied upon. The attempt to adduce monumental evidence in the form of archaeological remains and runic inscriptions have invariably brought ridicule upon these pretended discoveries. When a man brings forward that which is impossible to support a thing that is improbable, he is liable to somewhat weaken his claim. Scarcely had Professor Rafn's article attributing a Norse origin to the old mill appeared, when his views were speedily controverted, and the structure was clearly shown to have been what Newport people had always supposed—a wind-mill

[1]Among those who favored Rafn's identification of Rhode Island as Vinland were Haven, *Archaeology of the U. S.*, 1856; Gravier, *Decouverte de l'Amerique*, 1874; Goodrich, *Christopher Columbus*, 1874; Anderson, *America not discovered by Columbus*, 1874; and Farnum, *Visits of the Northmen to R. I.*, 1877.

built by Governor Arnold about 1676.[1] In like manner the Tiverton and Portsmouth rocks, so carefully described in Rafn's volume, proved to be covered with Indian rather than Norse inscriptions, perhaps made by the same tribe that cut those on Dighton rock.[2] There is not the slightest archaeological evidence existing in Rhode Island or in New England to prove that the Northmen ever visited our coast. Bancroft's statement, made in 1834, that "the soil of the United States has not one vestige of their presence"[3] is just as true to-day as when first written. The most that we can safely assert is that, according to historical tradition, the Northmen visited several points in the eastern coast of America; but that we can identify the locality of any one of these visits is not proved by any documents yet adduced.

The first European to set foot on the shores of what is now Rhode Island, was probably a French navigator, named Verrazano. A Florentine by birth, in 1521 he begins to appear in Spanish history as a French corsair, under the name of Juan Florin. Gaining the notice of the French king, he was commissioned to set out on the discovery of Cathay by a westward route, and after a somewhat disastrous start, finally proceeded on his voyage with one ship, the Dauphine. In this vessel Verrazano sailed, January 17, 1524, from the Desiertas Rocks, near the Island of Maderia, having fifty men and provisions for eight months. After a voyage of about fifty days he came in sight of land, the latitude of which he placed as 34 degrees N. On approaching the land, which appeared to be inhabited, he sailed south fifty leagues in search of a harbor; but finding none, turned and coasted along the shore to the north. For several days Verrazano's narrative[4] carries him steadily northward, carefully

[1]All the facts concerning the structure are given in C. T. Brooks's *Controversy touching the old stone mill*, 1851, and are well summed up in Palfrey, *New England*, i, 57. See also G. C. Mason in *Mag. Amer. Hist.*, iii, 541. Professor Rafn never saw the tower himself, but relied upon letters written to him by Dr. Thomas H. Webb, and published with comments in a supplement to the *Antiq. Amer.* in 1841. In 1847 there was perpetrated in the Providence papers a remarkable hoax concerning the tower, the details of which are given in Mr. Brooks's pamphlet.

[2]When Dr. S. A. Green visited the region in 1868, some of these rocks had disappeared. See *Proc. Amer. Antiq. Soc.* for Oct. 1868, p. 13.

[3]Bancroft, *United States*, iii, 313.

[4]His narrative is contained in two Italian translations of a letter written by him to the king of France, July 8, 1524, on his return from the voyage. One was printed by Ramusio in 1556, English translations being given in the Hakluyt Society's editions of Hakluyt, *Voyages*, p. 55, and *Principal Navigations*, iii, 357; and in *N. Y. Hist. Soc. Coll.* i, 45. The other was first printed in the *N. Y. Hist. Soc. Coll.* 2d ser., i, 37; an English translation is in the same volume and also in Asher, *Henry Hudson*, p. 197, H. C. Murphy, *Verrazano*, and C. Robinson, *Discoveries*, p. 303.

describing the coast and relating many interesting encounters with the Indians, until he finally comes to anchor in a large bay, which, from his description, is evidently New York Harbor. After a short stay here and on Long Island, he proceeds on his course. But let him tell the story in his own words.

"Weighing anchor, we sailed fifty leagues toward the east, as the coast stretched in that direction, and always in sight of it; at length we discovered an island of a triangular form, about ten leagues from the mainland, in size about equal to the island of Rhodes, having many hills covered with trees, and well peopled, judging from the great number of fires which we saw all round its shores; we gave it the name of your Majesty's illustrious mother.

"We did not land there, as the weather was unfavorable, but proceeded to another place, fifteen leagues distant from the island, where we found a very excellent harbour. Before entering it, we saw about twenty small boats full of people, who came about our ship, uttering cries of astonishment, but they would not approach nearer than fifty paces; stopping, they looked at the structure of our ship, our persons and dress, afterwards they all raised a loud shout together, signifying that they were pleased. . . . Among them were two kings, more beautiful in form and stature than can possibly be described; one was about forty years old, the other about twenty-four. . . . This is the finest looking tribe, and the handsomest in their costumes, that we have found in our voyage. They exceed us in size, and they are of a very fair complexion [?]; some of them incline more to a white [bronze?], and others to a tawny colour; their faces are sharp, their hair long and black, upon the adorning of which they bestow great pains; their eyes are black and sharp, their expression mild and pleasant, greatly resembling the antique. . . . We formed a great friendship with them, and one day we entered into the port with our ship, having before rode at a distance of a league from the shore, as the weather was adverse. They came off to the ship with a number of little boats, with their faces painted in divers colours, showing us real signs of joy, bringing us of their provisions, and signifying to us where we could best ride in safety with our ship, and keeping with us until we had cast anchor. We remained among them fifteen days.

"We often went five or six leagues into the interior, and found the country as pleasant as is possible to conceive, adapted to cultivation of every kind, whether of corn, wine or oil; there are open plains twenty-five or thirty leagues in extent, entirely free from trees or other hindrances, and of so great fertility, that whatever is sown there will yield an excellent crop. On entering the woods, we observed that they might all be traversed by an army ever so numerous; the trees of which they were composed were oaks, cypresses, and others unknown in Europe. We found also apples, plums, filberts, and many other

fruits, but all of a different kind from ours. The animals, which are in great numbers, as stags, deer, lynxes, and many other species, are taken by snares and by bows, the latter being their chief implement; their arrows are wrought with great beauty, and for the heads of them they use emery, jasper, hard marble and other sharp stones, in the place of iron. They also use the same kind of sharp stones in cutting down trees, and with them they construct their boats of single logs, hollowed out with admirable skill, and sufficiently commodious to contain ten or twelve persons; their oars are short, and broad at the end, and are managed in rowing by force of the arms alone, with perfect security, and as nimbly as they choose. We saw their dwellings, which are of a circular form, of about ten or twelve paces in circumference, made of logs split in halves, without any regularity of architecture, and covered with roofs of straw, nicely put on, which protect them from wind and rain. There is no doubt that they would build stately edifices if they had workmen as skilful as ours, for the whole sea coast abounds in shining stones, crystals and alabaster, and for the same reason it has ports and retreats for animals. They change their habitations from place to place as circumstances of situation and season may require; this is easily done, as they have only to take with them their mats, and they have other houses prepared at once. The father and the whole family dwell together in one house in great numbers; in some we saw twenty-five or thirty persons. Their food is pulse, as with the other tribes, which is here better than elsewhere, and more carefully cultivated; in the time of sowing they are governed by the moon, the sprouting of grain, and many other ancient usages. They live by hunting and fishing, and they are long-lived. If they fall sick, they cure themselves without medicine, by the heat of the fire, and their death at last comes from extreme old age. We judge them to be very affectionate and charitable towards their relatives, making loud lamentations in their adversity, and in their misery calling to mind all their good fortune. At their departure out of life, their relations mutually join in weeping, mingled with singing, for a long while. This is all we could learn of them.

"This region is situated in the parallel of Rome, being 41 degrees 40 minutes of north latitude, but much colder from accidental circumstances and not by nature, as I shall hereafter explain to your Majesty, and confine myself at present to the description of its local situation. It looks toward the south, on which side the harbour is half a league broad; afterwards, upon entering it, the extent between the coast and north is twelve leagues, and then enlarging itself it becomes a very large bay, twenty leagues in circumference, in which are five small islands, of great fertility and beauty, covered with large and lofty trees. Among these islands any fleet, however large, might ride safely, without fear of tempest or other dangers. Turning towards the south, at the entrance of the harbour, on both sides, there are very

pleasant hills, and many streams of clear water, which flow down to the sea. In the midst of the entrance, there is a rock of freestone, formed by nature, and suitable for the construction of any kind of machine or bulwark for the defense of the harbour."[1]

The above description, as we can clearly see, applies to Newport Harbor and Narragansett Bay. The triangular island which he first saw and named Luisa in honor of the mother of Francis I, was Block Island, which appears under this name in the maps of many subsequent voyagers. Its interior is hilly, and at that time was covered with thick woods, which have long ago disappeared on account of the necessity for fuel. The bay itself is fairly well described by one who saw it for the first time and who penned his whole narration from memory. The latitude as given is practically correct, which, coupled with the fact that the bay looked toward the south, insures the identification of the position. The rock at the entrance of the harbor is evidently meant for Goat Island, long since put to the use which Verrazano had so prophetically suggested. His description of the manners and habits of the Indians is consistent throughout, and tallies to a remarkable degree, as we shall later perceive, with the writings of colonial observers. Their "tawny" complexion, the taking of wild animals in snares, the hollowing of logs for canoes, their circular dwellings, their migratory habits according to season, and the method of curing disease by the fire's heat—all are peculiarities of the Narragansetts which we find mentioned in like manner by Roger Williams over a century later. Finally, we should remember what some detractors of Verrazano[2] have failed to recognize—that the account was written at Dieppe on his return from the voyage.

Although we have no record that any other early voyager touched at Rhode Island as did Verrazano, yet Narragansett Bay, with its wide mouth and beautiful harbor, appears on many of the first maps of the New England coast. In nearly all of them, from 1527 to the close of the century, it is called the "Bay of St. Juan Baptist", although

[1] *N. Y. Hist. Soc. Coll.* 2d ser., i, 46-49.

[2] The narrative was generally credited until about twenty-five years ago, when Buckingham Smith and H. C. Murphy, in their desire to refute everything that detracted from the claims of Spanish voyagers, attacked its authenticity. Its genuineness was quickly asserted by several prominent scholars, the researches of B. F. De Costa and his bringing to light the Verrazano map doing much to re-establish general credence in the voyage. Subsequent writers, with scarcely an exception of note, have not questioned the narrative. The Verrazano map, hitherto unknown in complete form, was first published in *Mag. Amer. Hist.* ix, 449. It is also in De Costa's *Verrazano*, together with a bibliography and comments on the letter and voyage.

Verranzo and one other cartologist term it the "Bay of Refuge".[1] The Narragansett region was known by these names until the advent of the Dutch into the field of American exploration. In 1614, five years after Hudson had discovered the river that bears his name, Adriaen Block built a little vessel of sixteen tons and proceeded to explore the coast to the eastward as far as Cape Cod.[2] Passing through Long Island Sound and leaving Montauk Point, he next visited the little three cornered island which Verrazano had seen and named. This he called "Block Eylandt", which, although the legal name is New Shoreham, survives in common use to this day. Following the path of Verrazano, the Dutch captain entered Narragansett Bay, which from its noble proportions he called "Nassau Bay". The western entrance was named "Sloop Bay", and the eastern "Anchor Bay". The inhabitants Block described as being "strong of limb and of moderate size, but somewhat shy, since they are not accustomed to trade with strangers". In the lower part of the bay dwelt the Wapenocks, while on the west side were the Nahicans, with their chiefs, Nathattow and Cachaquant. The Dutch captain went carefully into an account of distances and soundings. Nassau Bay was full nine miles in width and extended east-northeast about twenty-four miles. "Towards the northwest side there is a sandy point with a small island, bearing east and west, and bending so as to form a handsome bay with a sandy bottom. On the right of the sandy point there is more than two fathoms of water, and farther on three and three and a half fathoms, with a sharp bottom, where lies a small island of reddish appearance.[3] . . . From the westerly passage into this bay of Nassau to the most southerly entrance of Anchor Bay, the distance is twenty-one miles."

The Dutch names in Rhode Island influenced all the map-makers, and are found on the charts until the end of the century, when they were supplanted by those of English origin.[4] The names originally

[1]See B. F. De Costa's article on "Cabo de Arenas" in *N. E. Hist. and Geneal. Reg.* xxxix, 147.

[2]Block's voyage is described in De Laet, *Nieuwe Wereldt*, English translations being found in *N. Y. Hist. Soc. Coll.* 2d ser., i, 293. A map prepared probably from Block's data and known as the "Figurative Map" was made in 1614, fac-similes being given in *Doc. rel. to Col. Hist. of N. Y.* i, 13, and in O'Callaghan's *Hist. of New Netherland*.

[3]This little island ("een rodtlich Eylandken") was propbably Hope Island, the only island lying near the extremity of a sandy point jutting from the western side. At any rate, the description applied originally to a small island situated in the western part of the bay, and not to Aquedneck, as has been generally supposed.

[4]This subject of the early cartology of Narragansett Bay has never been mentioned by any historian of the State, either in connected works or in

applied to localities by the Indians were seldom recognized by the early settlers, who preferred the more easily pronounceable ones of their own tongue.

Unlike the colonists at Massachusetts Bay, the early settlers of Rhode Island planted themselves in a region which was not depopulated of its former inhabitants by pestilence and war, but which contained a tribe that were accounted "the most potent princes and people of all the country". The Narragansetts[1] belonged to the family of Algonquins, a great race whose territory extended all the way from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to the Savannah. A difference in dialect forms the basis of dividing the New England tribes into those of Maine and those of southern New England. Around the Narragansetts dwelt the Massachusetts on the northeast, the Wampanoags in the Plymouth and Mount Hope region, and the Pequots and Mohegans in Connecticut. The language of all these neighboring tribes differed but little, and there was considerable affinity in speech throughout the whole Algonquin group.[2] It is useless to attempt here any mention of the various guesses as to the origin of these tribes—whether they descended from the Jews or the Greeks or the Norse. Little more is known to-day than when Roger Williams wrote, "From Adam and Noah that they spring is granted on all hands." A subject more profitable to us and decidedly more vital to our ancestors was the question as to their numbers. The fortunes of war and other circumstances had rendered the Narragansetts the most numerous and powerful of the New England tribes. General Gookin, writing in 1674, said that "the Narragansetts were reckoned, in former times, able to arm for war more than five thousand men", and a safe estimate

monographs, and is yet to be adequately treated. Much information regarding the Dutch nomenclature can be found in Asher's *Bibliographical Essay on New Netherland*. The many early navigators, like the Zenos, Gomez, Rut, and Champlain, who may have coasted along the New England shores, but are not known to have visited Narragansett Bay, are not referred to in this chapter. A connected account of the early cartography of Massachusetts Bay by Justin Winsor, is in *Memorial Hist. of Boston*, i, 37.

[1]Our chief knowledge of the Narragansetts and their mode of life is derived from Williams's *Key to the Indian Language*, 1643; reprinted as v. i of the R. I. Hist. Soc. Coll. and again as v. i. of the *Narragansett Club* edition of Williams's writings. In addition to the books mentioned in the bibliography at the end of this work, the following references are of value: Arnold, *Hist. of R. I.*, i, 72; Palfrey, *Hist. of N. E.*, i, 19; Bull's *Memoir of R. I.*, in *R. I. Hist. Mag.*, v. 6; and Pilling's *Bibliography of the Algonquin languages*, p. 371.

[2]Our chief authorities for the dialects in New England are Roger Williams's *Indian Key*, John Eliot's *Indian Grammar*, and Josiah Cotton's *Indian Vocabulary*.

would place the number at fully two thousand at the beginning of the English settlement here. All the lesser tribes in Rhode Island were subsidiary to or formed a portion of the Narragansetts—the Aquednecks[1] on the island of that name, the Nyantics[2] in the eastern half of the present Washington county, the Cowesetts of Greenwich and Shawmuts of Warwick, and the wandering Nipmucs in the northwestern part of the State. The Massachusetts and Wampanoags[3] paid them tribute, as did also the Montauk Indians of Long Island. Such was this great tribe at the time of the arrival of the English. By the aid of the newcomers, the tributary tribes, with the Wampanoags in the van, started to throw off the yoke, and the gradual decay of this once proud nation began.

The Narragansett tribe, like all other New England aborigines, stood low in the scale of civilization. Their mode of living was of the rudest kind. Their houses, or wigwams, were round cone-shaped structures, formed of poles set in a circle and drawn nearly together at the top, leaving a hole to serve for both window and chimney. They were covered without and lined within with mats and skins, and were furnished with little besides the rudest utensils of earthenware. Everything was put together with the idea of being easily taken down, as they removed their habitation at nearly every change of season, the whole process of removal and rebuilding frequently taking but a few hours. Their dress was as simple as that of an African savage, merely a girdle around the loins, and occasionally a mantle of skin for winter use.

For food the Indians had fish and game, nuts, roots and wild berries. They raised a few uncultivated vegetables, such as squashes, beans and corn, the last of which, when pulverized and boiled, formed their staple article of food. Nearly all the natives took tobacco, sometimes as a medicine and again as a luxury. The chief occupation of the men was hunting and fishing, in which they were very proficient. Fish were taken on lines with hooks of sharpened bone, or else in nets. Although the natives were very accurate in their use of the bow and arrow, they took many of the wild animals in cleverly laid traps, and

[1]Aquedneck formerly belonged to the Wampanoags, and passed under the Narragansetts probably at the time of the subjection of Massasoit. Tradition still points out the place where the contest for supremacy occurred, and also the residence of the Aquedneck sachem, Wonnumetonomy. See Bull's *Memoir in R. I. Hist. Mag.* vi, 252.

[2]For historical notes on this tribe, see Parsons's "Indian Relics" in *Hist. Mag.* vii, 41.

[3]See W. J. Miller, *Notes concerning the Wampanoag tribe of Indians.*

even captured fowl by stealing them from their nests on the rocks during the night. Having no salt, they preserved their meat by a process of tanning, which doubtless did much to bring forth from Roger Williams the appellation of "filthy, smoakie holes" to their wigwams.

Their inventive skill and knowledge of the arts was of the lowest

INDIAN WAMPUM AND STONE IMPLEMENTS FOUND IN RHODE ISLAND.

From the collection of the Rhode Island Historical Society.

grade, all of their tools being of stone until after the arrival of the English. Axes, chisels, gouges, arrow and spear heads, were brought to a sharp edge by constant friction upon hard stone. They also fashioned pestles, mortars, and ornamental pipes. They showed the most constructive skill, outside of the weaving of cordage, baskets and

mats, in the hollowing of logs into canoes. This was done by an alternate system of charring and gouging, and it is said that a single Indian could finish a long boat of this kind in three weeks time from the felling of the tree. To the English the most useful Indian art was the manufacture of wampum-peage, or Indian money, of which the Narragansetts were the principal coiners. It consisted of cylindrical pieces of black and white shell, drilled through the center to be strung upon threads like beads. For a long period after the first settlement this was the currency of the colonists themselves, the white being accepted at six pieces to the penny, and the black at three pieces. By the Indians wampum was also used as an ornament, serving as necklaces, bracelets and girdles.

The natives were described by Roger Williams as of two sorts—the most of them sober and grave, yet cheerful, a few rude and clownish. He accords to them the greatest affection in their households, even to unwise indulgence. Although no fixed custom forbade polygamy, the Indian generally had but one wife. While she remained in his cabin, she was his drudge and his slave, doing all the household work and planting, tending and harvesting the corn. Every English traveller noted especially the rude hospitality of the savages. They invited strangers freely, gave up their own comforts for the sake of their guests, and never forgot a service rendered. The proportion of deaths at infancy was larger than among the English, owing to their ignorance of medicine. Their chief treatment for disease was a sweat bath, followed by a plunge into cold water. If death ensued from sickness, the neighbors indulged in loud lamentations, and often smeared their faces thick with soot. The burial service was equally accompanied by free indulgence in grief. The corpse, wrapped in mats and accompanied by personal effects, was placed in the grave, and often some article of clothing was hung upon a nearby tree, there to decay from the influence of time and weather. If any man bore the name of the dead, he immediately changed his name; and so far was this idea carried, that if one tribe named a warrior after the departed sachem of another tribe, it was held as a just cause of war.

The religion of the Narragansetts was one of the earlier forms of nature worship. They imagined that every natural object, phenomenon of nature, and locality, contained a god. Roger Williams counted thirty-seven of these deities, all of whom in their acts of worship they invocated. All unnatural circumstances in their life—sickness, drought, war, famine—they ascribed to the anger of certain gods. Gathered together in great assemblies they strove, with loud bewailing

and outcry to make atonement, and implored health, peace and prosperity. Their doctrine of immortality was similar to that of other barbarian nations. They believed that the souls of the good went to the southwest, the abode of their great god, Cautantouwit, whereas the souls of murderers, thieves and liars wandered restlessly abroad.

Not belonging to an advanced scale of civilization, the Narragansetts did not require intricate political institutions. There is no evidence to show that they ever possessed any code of laws or any set of customs having the force of legal obligation. Their government was monarchical, the supreme leadership being vested in the sachem. Under him were several lower sachems, who paid him tribute and voiced the action of their particular followings. We do not know how the chief sachem was chosen; heredity was certainly a qualification for office, although unpopularity or incompetence would have outweighed this. Not being vested with the accompaniments of power, the sachem was dependent for the carrying out of his will upon the acquiescence of the people, and accordingly seldom took action upon important matters until he had heard the opinion of the people expressed through the great council. There was that same confusion of judicial and executive powers common to barbarian nations, which enacted that the sachem should punish most crimes with his own hand. Assassination, however, was sometimes tried, where a public execution might provoke a mutiny.

The social side of life appealed very little to the savage's unemotional and irresponsive mind. Gambling with dice and occasional games of football were about the only sports to which he was addicted. He had none of the comforts or luxuries of life, and even after he had acquired knowledge of them, he rejected everything that involved a change in his manner of living. Continually dwelling in the midst of evils which he had no desire to alleviate, the Indian cultivated a sullen fortitude under suffering which is often called stoicism. This brave endurance of torture, however stolid and scenic it may be, is one of the brighter parts of his character. His vices far outnumbered his virtues. Whether through association with the English, who schemed to displace them and get possession of their land, or through natural degradation, the Narragansetts inspired in the breast of their friend Roger Williams great distrust as he began to know them better. Begging, gluttony and drunkenness were undoubtedly acquired through contact with the settlers, but craftiness and falsehood seem always to have been present in their character. In the latter part of his life, after he had received personal experience of their duplicity,

he says, "All Indians are extremely treacherous". While recognizing the better qualities of the more worthy, he describes the lower Indians as wallowing in idleness, stealing, lying, treachery and blasphemy. The methods employed so often by the English to incite them to tribal warfare and to get possession of their lands cannot be too severely condemned; yet that so degraded a nation should live side by side with a people favored with all the comforts and advantages of a modern civilization is as undesirable as it is impossible. The fittest must survive.

CHAPTER II.

THE PURITANS AND ROGER WILLIAMS.

When Roger Williams arrived at Massachusetts Bay in the ship Lyon in 1631, he found New England in the beginnings of settlement. The whole territory, now so populous, was then little more than a primeval wilderness, whose silence was broken only by the voice of the savage, and the cry of the wild beast. Eleven years before, a little band of non-conformists, exiled from England into Holland, had resolved to emigrate to America, and, securing a grant from the Virginia Company, had embarked from Plymouth, England, on one vessel, the Mayflower. In December, 1620, they arrived off Cape Cod and began a settlement at Plymouth. Basing their form of government on a political compact formed in the cabin of the Mayflower, and entering into a communal system of sharing work and supplies, they began their infant settlement. During the first few years the little colony barely survived the hardships of famine and the attacks of the Indians, but by the time of Roger Williams's arrival had increased its number to over three hundred people.

To the north of the Plymouth Colony was the Massachusetts Bay Colony. This was the outcome of a small fishing settlement begun by John White, a rector from Dorchester, at Cape Ann, and removed to Salem in 1626. Two years later it was augmented by a party of emigrants under John Endicott, who had obtained a patent from the Council of New England granting them all land between lines three miles to the north of the Merrimac and three miles to the south of the Charles. These men formed the nucleus of a colony to which, in 1629,