

THE PURITAN
IN
ENGLAND AND NEW ENGLAND.



William Pyncheon

THE PURITAN
IN
ENGLAND AND NEW ENGLAND.

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With an Introduction
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To My Wife,

WHOSE INSIGHT AND LITERARY TASTE
HAVE BEEN MY CONSTANT RELIANCE IN THE PREPARATION
OF THESE CHAPTERS,
AND WHOSE EFFICIENT HELP
HAS LIGHTENED THE LABOR OF CARRYING THEM THROUGH
THE PRESS,
THEY ARE NOW DEDICATED.

Preface.

THIS book has had a natural growth. It had its origin in a paper, which I read before one of our historical societies, on WILLIAM PYNCHON, a Puritan, who came to New England in 1630, and who published a book, some twenty years later, which was much talked about. In preparing that paper I found it necessary to read the works of Mr. Pynchon, and the replies to them. The discussions relating to those volumes were found to be connected with the progress of opinion in England, and with the history of the Westminster Assembly. It was only by tracing the history to its sources, that I was able to gain an adequate knowledge of the opinions and the influence of that leading Puritan.

As other historical papers have been called for, from time to time, I have followed the same topical method, because I found it the most fruitful method in the study of New England history. One topic led naturally to another, so that I have prepared papers on The Origin and Development of Puritanism in England; The Two Earliest Colonies in New England; The Social and Family Life of the Pilgrims and Puritans; Their Min-

isters and Modes of Worship; Their Religious Opinions; and The Working of the Union of Church and State, in their Second Century. The fathers of New England have left a large number of journals, and narratives, and histories, with many theological treatises, and discussions, and pamphlets. The literature which has come down from the English Puritans is also abundant. So that there is no lack of fresh materials for the historical student. No other pioneers, of whom I have any knowledge, have left materials so rich and abundant, for those who would study their history. One needs to get their point of view, if he would do justice to them, and he can get their point of view only through their writings.

Two of these papers were published, some time ago, in the "Andover Review." Others have been read before a number of historical societies, and before students, in colleges and seminaries. They have all been rewritten, and reconstructed, so as to bring them into connection with each other. New topics have been introduced, with the purpose of covering, so far as practicable, within our limits of space, the whole field of the history of our forefathers.

I am under great obligations to a number of recent authors, who have cast new light upon the history of the Puritans. John Richard Green, in his "History of the English People," has shown the origin and the meaning of Puritanism, better than any of the earlier English historians. Douglass Campbell, in his two volumes on "The Puritan in Holland, England, and America," has

proved that the influences which moulded the Puritan party came, not only from England, but from the Dutch Republic, and from the other Protestant nations on the continent. One needs to correct some of his extreme statements by referring to Macaulay, and especially to Motley; but, rightly used, his work is of great value. Dr. Henry M. Dexter, in his monumental work on "Congregationalism as seen in its Literature," has uncovered the abundant materials for the history of our fathers, and has shown us how to use them. And—not to mention other recent volumes of great value—Professor Williston Walker, in his book on "The Creeds and Platforms of Congregationalism," has made a rich and original contribution to our history.

This book, in its present form, is offered to the public, in the hope that it may contribute toward a fuller knowledge and appreciation of our forefathers, who, under the limitations of a pioneer life, in the seventeenth century, laid the foundations of this free and progressive nation.

EZRA HOYT BYINGTON.

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Some Important Dates in Puritan History.

- 1324 John Wyclif born. Died 1384.
- 1380 Wyclif's New Testament.
- 1525 Tyndale's New Testament.
- 1531 Henry the Eighth acknowledged as Supreme Head of the Church of England.
- 1535 Coverdale's Bible.
- 1547 Edward the Sixth ascends the throne.
- 1553. Mary becomes Queen.
- 1555 Persecution of Protestants begins.
- 1558 Elizabeth becomes Queen.
- Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity.
- 1564 The name Puritan first used.
- 1565 The Dean of Christ Church, Oxford, imprisoned for Non-conformity.
- 1572 Massacre of St. Bartholomew.
- 1575 John Robinson born.
- 1580 Separatist Church in Norwich under Robert Browne.
- 1583 Whitgift, Archbishop of Canterbury.
- Ecclesiastical Commission receives new powers.
- Two Puritans hung for Non-conformity.
- 1588 Defeat of the Spanish Armada.
- 1588-89 Martin Mar-prelate tracts.
- 1593 Barrowe, Greenwood, and Penry publicly executed for their Non-conformity.
- 1602 The Separatist Church at Gainsborough.
- 1603 Death of Queen Elizabeth. James the First ascends the throne. Millenary Petition.

- 1604 Hampton Court Conference.
- 1605 Three hundred Ministers expelled from their parishes for Non-conformity.
- 1606 Church formed at Scrooby.
- 1607-08 The Pilgrims removed to Amsterdam.
- 1609 The Pilgrims Settled at Leyden.
- 1611 Authorized Version of the Bible.
- 1618 Thirty Years War begun.
- 1620 The Pilgrims land at Plymouth.
- 1621 Death of Governor Carver. Bradford chosen Governor.
- 1625 Charles the First ascends the throne.
- 1628 Endicott lands at Salem, with a colony.
- 1629 A Charter granted for the Massachusetts Company.
- Agreement to settle in Massachusetts signed, in Cambridge, by Winthrop and others.
- Re-enforcements sent to Salem, with Higginson.
- Puritan Church formed at Salem, August 6.
- 1630 Governor Winthrop arrives in Massachusetts with a large colony of Puritans.
- Boston settled. First General Court in Massachusetts.
- 1633 Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury.
- 1635 First Settlement in Connecticut.
- 1636 Harvard College founded.
- 1637 The first Massachusetts Synod.
- The case of John Hampden tried, in England.
- 1639 The Constitution of Connecticut adopted.
- 1640 The Long Parliament met.
- The Bay Psalm Book, printed.
- 1643-48 Westminster Assembly.
- Confederacy of the colonies of New England.
- 1644 Death of Elder Brewster.
- 1646-48 Cambridge Synod. Platform of Church Government.
- 1649 Execution of Charles the First.
- 1651 Hugh Parsons tried in Springfield for Witchcraft.
- 1653 Oliver Cromwell, Lord Protector.
- 1656-62 Persecution of the Quakers.
- 1658 Death of Cromwell.
- The Savoy Synod adopts a Confession of Faith.
- 1660 The Restoration of the Stuarts.

IMPORTANT DATES IN PURITAN HISTORY. xxxiii

- 1662 The Boston Synod adopts the Half-Way Covenant.
1673 The first Church organized in Maine, at York.
— The Act of Uniformity re-enacted in England.
1679 The Reforming Synod.
1680 The Synod adopts the Savoy Confession.
1691-92 Witchcraft in Salem and elsewhere.
1691 Charter of the Province of Massachusetts.
1701 Yale College founded.
1708 The Saybrook Platform adopted.
1709 The General Association of Connecticut Ministers organized.
1716 Yale College located at New Haven.
1727 Jonathan Edwards ordained, Northampton.
1734-40 The Great Awakening.
1738 The Methodists appear in London.
1740 Whitefield preaches in New England.
1750 Jonathan Edwards dismissed from Northampton.
1754 Edwards' Work on The Freedom of the Will.
1758 Death of President Edwards.
1762 Church in Bennington, Vt., organized.
1769 Dartmouth College founded.

Introduction.

BY ALEXANDER MCKENZIE, D.D.

THE design of this book is a large one. While many books have been written about the Puritans, a continued study of the men and their work is demanded, and will have an ample reward. The time seems to have come when they can be studied intelligently and impartially; and there is good reason to believe that the better they are known, and the more accurately their work is estimated, the more thorough will be the admiration which is the result. It is difficult for one to set himself back two or three centuries, and there rightly to judge the events which are around him. Yet it is the grateful and patriotic duty of every person in this country to gain for himself a distinct knowledge of the forces which made the beginning of our national life. We shall be helped to carry on the incomplete work, if we know the method and meaning of its origin. The very word origin presents a broad and inviting field for research. Whence came the name Puritan? "The Church of the Purity" is an old phrase; and if the name grew out of an ancient sneer, as has been suggested, it is well to know by what means, and by what men, it has justified

itself, and changed a term of scorn to one of honor. Where shall the study of the Puritans begin? Certainly not on the coast of Massachusetts. Nor can it begin in England; nor in Holland. We are led back to events which concerned the entire history of Europe, as we follow the Puritan idea towards its inception. But what period of modern history is more helpful, and what historic line can be more clearly traced than this, as it runs in its unbroken way? It is not strange, but it is interesting to mark that the best account we have had of the earlier Puritanism is given by an English historian. The fine pages of John Richard Green are as instructive as they are delightful. It is a very full and compact sentence in which he describes the transition into which Puritanism was carried: "It ceased from the long attempt to build up a kingdom of God by force and violence, and fell back on its truer work of building up a kingdom of righteousness in the hearts and consciences of men." It is sincere and enlightened testimony which he gives, that Puritanism had made the mass of Englishmen "serious, earnest, sober in life and conduct, firm in their love of Protestantism and of freedom. . . . The history of English progress since the Restoration, on its moral and spiritual sides, has been the history of Puritanism." Surely there is room for diligent study, and no study is more essential here, and at this time, than that which makes us wise in our past that we may be prudent in our future.

There are several questions of interest which arise when the mind turns to this subject. One of these,

and one of the largest, is suggested by the first part of the title of the work now before us,—Puritanism in England. What was this? What was its relation to the government and to the Church of England? What was England then, in itself and in its relation to the continent? There were three parties in the Church: those who were content with things as they were; those who were discontented, but proposed to remain where they were and work out such reforms as were possible; and those who boldly came out, and made a new start according to what they believed to be an older and a better way. Which was the better of the two plans of reformation, which has proved the more effectual, is a question for the student of history, especially the student of English and American history.

But this was not purely an English movement, even in its immediate working. We have always recognized the influence of their life in Holland upon those who sought refuge there from the persecution in England. That Leyden offered not merely hospitality and freedom, but the best school in the world for the training of men in the principles of liberty, and in endurance for the sake of liberty, is beyond question. The siege of Leyden was too near to have lost its influence over any who walked through the streets and among the houses where men and women had starved and died for freedom, or who looked across the fields over which ships had sailed bringing them bread. But of late there is an attempt greatly to magnify the influence of the Dutch upon the English. That the large

numbers who came from Holland, and were associated in many ways with the English, were of great service, not merely in their handicrafts, but in their knowledge of religious liberty, should be promptly acknowledged. But to what extent this influence made Puritans into exiles, and then into Pilgrims, is a question to be calmly considered.

The connection between the Plymouth and the Massachusetts Colony, in men, in spirit, in method, in result, again calls for careful study. It is only by a comprehensive view of these separate, yet allied, movements that justice can be done to either Colony. Nothing can be settled by setting one point against another point. The two spheres of life must be compared, and this will be to the advantage of both.

It will be long before men agree upon the wisdom and justice of the Puritan polity in general, as it was developed here in Massachusetts. That the policy was narrow and strict may be at once admitted. Whether it could have been more lenient and flexible is a fair inquiry. It has been answered in various ways. In the spirit of our own times it is easy to say that a more liberal method of legislation would have been practicable, and in all respects better. On the other hand, some deference must be paid to the integrity and justice of the men who were in charge of affairs at that time. They were not weak, and they were not bigots. They had not made themselves exiles that they might prepare an arena where all kinds of beliefs might disport themselves. They had come three thousand miles, at a great cost of money and of feeling, that they might here

make a better England according to their own convictions of that which was true and right. While, as the work of sensible men, their movement had a commercial quality, they weighed "the greatness of the work in regard of the consequence, God's glory and the Church's good." If others would join them in their enterprise, they were welcome. How far they should tolerate men and women who had different views of truth and duty, and allow them to teach their contrary opinions, in those early and critical days, may be still an open question. It is very likely that a wider toleration would have been less perilous than they supposed. They seem to have interfered with no person's opinions except in so far as these interfered with the things which they deemed essential to the safety of the Colony. If their rules were strict, banishment to Rhode Island does not seem to have been severe. Perhaps it was well that there was near at hand a pleasanter place than this eastern coast. Perhaps Utopia must always have its supplemental Narragansett.

It is not the province of an introduction to discuss these matters. There are many things of less import which are of interest in connection with the Puritans. These relate to the manner of their life here; their method of government; their churches and forms of worship; their homes and their domestic concerns; their books and schools; their charities and their sports; and all which made up their daily life. There is abundance of material for many interesting pages which will make curious and instructive reading.

But for all these things the reader must turn to the chapters from which he has been too long detained. I am confident that he will find here the results of honest and patient study, presented in an attractive way, with a style remarkably clear and strong; so that he is taken from chapter to chapter along pleasant paths, with an increasing knowledge of the Puritan and of all which the name stands for, and with a growing and abiding admiration of the ancestry to which every American owes so much. It will encourage the faithful study of a book like this to remember that the permanence and extension of the Puritan work depend upon us and those who shall come after us. We have a wonderful opportunity, but it is entirely in keeping with our wonderful history. It will encourage us still further if we can believe the generous prophecy of John Richard Green in his *History of the English People*: "In the centuries that lie before us, the primacy of the world will lie with the English People. English institutions, English speech, English thought, will become the main features of the political, the social, and the intellectual life of mankind. . . . In the days that are at hand, the main current of that people's history must run along the channel, not of the Thames or the Mersey, but of the Hudson and the Mississippi."

THE FIRST CHURCH IN CAMBRIDGE,
March, 1896.

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