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VOL. III. NO. 4

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Church and State in Massachusetts
1691 - 1740

BY

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PREFACE.

Six years ago I was working on a brief study of the ecclesiastical development of provincial Massachusetts, to present as a master's thesis at the University of Illinois. In putting together the material I was struck with the fact that there were some broad empty spaces in the story of the gradual encroachments on the old Puritan system by religious dissenters. By the middle of the eighteenth century Anglicans, Baptists and Quakers were all recognized in ecclesiastical law and possessed certain privileges, but the process by which these results had been gained was not clear. Histories of New England Baptists showed that the real work of this sect was practically limited to the second half of the century; local histories of Anglican churches recounted the efforts of the Massachusetts Churchmen; but neither explained the steps by which all three groups gained a fairly comfortable status in Massachusetts law before the middle of the eighteenth century.

A solution of this problem has been found in the early records of the Society of Friends in New England and in London. The best collection of New England Quaker records, the minutes of the New England Yearly Meeting and of the Rhode Island Quarterly, are in the library of the Moses Brown School at Providence. Others may be found at the Newport Historical Society, the New Bedford meeting house and the meeting house at Lynn. All have been used again and again for local and genealogical purposes but rarely for any general study. In every case they show so close a connection between the Quakers of Massachusetts and those of England that the records of the London Yearly Meeting and the London Meeting for Sufferings are essential for a clear understanding of what the New England Quakers of the early eighteenth century were doing. At Devonshire House, Bishopsgate, the records of the London Quakers are preserved in the Friends' Refer-

ence Library and tell a story of astonishing Quaker activity, of which the work done for New England was but a small part.

I wish to express grateful appreciation to the members of the Society of Friends who put their time at my disposal and made it possible for me to use the various Quaker records. Here I would mention especially Dr. Edward T. Tucker of New Bedford, Dr. Seth K. Gifford of the Moses Brown School at Providence, and Norman Penney of the Friends' Reference Library in London.

Aside from the Quaker collections my materials have been found in the State House at Boston, the Massachusetts Historical Society, the New England Baptist Historical Society, the Boston Public Library, the Rhode Island Historical Society, the John Carter Brown Library at Providence, Essex Institute at Salem, Bristol County (Mass.) Court House at Taunton; and in London at the S. P. G. House, the British Museum, Dr. Williams' Library, the library of Fulham Palace, the Public Record Office, and the office of the Privy Council.

I especially want to acknowledge the courtesy and kindness of Mr. C. F. Pascoe who made it possible for me to use the letters and journal of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and the Rev. Sadler Phillips who put at my disposal certain boxes of papers belonging to the library of the Bishop of London.

For constant assistance and advice I am indebted to Professor Evarts B. Greene of the University of Illinois, under whose direction this study has been completed.

SUSAN MARTHA REED.

LAKE ERIE COLLEGE,
SEPTEMBER, 1914.

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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

The year 1691 opens the second period in the constitutional history of Massachusetts. From the coming of the Puritan settlers of the town of Boston in the stirring days of Charles I's reign to the last years of the restored Stuarts, the Bay Colony had nothing more elaborate than the old charter of 1629 as its instrument of government. This was not primarily a document for the governing of a colony but the charter of a commercial company, organized by certain English Puritans with a view of settling the Massachusetts shore, but not then ready to state their purpose of becoming colonizers. With the sudden transformation of the stockholders of the Massachusetts Bay Company into settlers of Massachusetts Bay, this charter, carried across the Atlantic, became the source of authority in the local administration of affairs, and by a gradual process of stretching and adapting its provisions to suit the new conditions it was made to serve as a colonial constitution for over half a century. In this way an unusual degree of independence was maintained by the local authorities, and the spirit of the leaders in this Puritan experiment in government became strongly fastened on the manners of the colony. A governor and council as well as an assembly were elected by the freemen of the colony, and the legislative body kept up the traditions of the first-comers in maintaining a theocratic and exclusive form of government which was fully developed and fairly aggressive by 1660.

This in itself was irritating to the restored Stuarts, who were suspicious of an independent colonial government so thoroly Puritan; but the attack which was begun upon Massachusetts in Charles II's reign was primarily economic. The Navigation Acts of England were fashioned to produce a more efficient commercial system