THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN THE COLONIES.

IN VIRGINIA AND MARYLAND.

SEAL OF THE SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL.

THE Church of England took root in America with the first colony. Among its earliest ministers were some men of ability and unselfish devotion; such men, for example, as Robert Hunt, Alexander Whitaker, and Thomas White. The church had the advantages of a traditional hold on the English mind, the sympathy and support of the home government, and the social prestige conferred by the adhesion of governors and other crown officers. In Virginia, Maryland, North and South Carolina, and Georgia it was established by law; while in New York it had always a legal advantage over its rivals. Yet the history of the Church of England in the American Colonies, though not quite a history of failure, is far from being a story of success. Its ultimate influence upon the character of the colonists was probably less than that of Puritanism or Quakerism, perhaps hardly greater than that of the Presbyterianism chiefly brought in by Irish and Scotch settlers after 1700. This partial default of the English Church in America was largely due to the fact that a main persuasive to emigration in the time of the Stuarts had been English laws for the enforcement of conformity: the stately liturgy lost some of its beauty and dignity when propagated by constables and jailers. But even in the colonies settled chiefly by adherents of the establishment, the church in most places sank into apathy, while unresting, dissenting sects drew life and prosperity from its dissolving elements.

At the time of the planting of the James River settlements, the impulse given by the Reformation to religious devotion in the English Church had not spent itself. There were many men in its priesthood who combined a Puritan strictness in morals with a sentiment of reverence that had a medieval origin. This religious party had from the first laid hold of the scheme of English planting in America as a sort of new crusade for the extension of Christendom and the overthrow of heathenism. Clergymen like Hakluyt and Purchas and Symonds ardently promoted the colony; noble-hearted laymen like the Ferrars and their friends gave time and money with unstinted liberality to the religious interests of the plantation; and there were those, both of the clergy and laity, who, from religious motives, "left their warm nests" in England "and undertook the heroical resolution to go to Virginia," sharing the hardships, and even losing their lives in the perils, of the enterprise.

The line of demarcation between the Puritan and the old-fashioned churchman was not yet sharply drawn, so that the Virginia church long retained some traits which in England had come to be accounted as belonging to the Puritans or Presbyterians. Indeed, some of the parish clergy, in 1647, were so touched with Puritanism as to refuse to "read the common prayer upon the Sabboth dayes." For more than a hundred years after the first settlement of Virginia the surplice appears to have been quite unknown; "both sacraments" were performed "without the habits and proper ornaments and vessels" required; parts of the liturgy were omitted "to avoid giving offense"; marriages, baptisms, and churchings of women were held and funeral sermons preached in private houses; and in some parishes, so late as 1724, the Lord's Supper was received by the communicants in a sitting posture. If we add to these the opposition to visitations and all ecclesiastical courts, the claim of the parishes to choose and dismiss their own ministers, the employment of unordained lay readers or "ministers" in a majority of the parishes, and the general neglect of most of the church festivals, we shall understand how peculiar were the traits of the Virginia church. These had their origin partly in the transitional state in which the Anglican body found itself at the birth of the church of Virginia, and were partly the result of isolation. But while the Church of England in the first half of the seventeenth century drew religious life at the same time from ancient and medieval sources, and from the fresh impulses of the Reformation period, she still suffered from unre-

formed abuses. There were still "dumb parsons" in some of her poorer parishes, who never essayed to preach, and who were incapable of any other functions than those of mumbling the liturgy and receiving the tithes. Many of the clergy were men whose morals were of the most debauched character: a manuscript preserved in the Duke of Manchester's papers gives a horrible description of the state of the clergy in the county of Essex in 1602. One of these Essex parsons carried his diabolism to such an extreme that he was familiarly called "Vicar of Hell," a title which he good-naturedly accepted in lieu of his proper name. During all of the seventeenth and much of the eighteenth century, notwithstanding the learning and virtue of many of the clergy, the altars of the Church of England were in many places beset by men of despicable attainments and depraved morals thrust into the priest's office merely that they might eat of the shew-bread.

From this state of things the colonies adhering to the Church of England were the greatest sufferers. Sometimes a clergyman's abilities and education were so mean, or the ill fame of his bad living was so rank, that even the very tolerant public opinion of the day in England could no longer abide him. In this case his friends would seek for him the chaplaincy of a man-of-war, or pack him off to the colonies. The debauched sons of reputable families, incapable of any other use in the wide world, were deemed good enough to read prayers and christen children in Virginia parishes for sixteen thousand pounds of tobacco a year, with forty shillings for every funeral sermon and the wedding-fees to boot. The cry against the bad lives of some of these emigrant parsons was heard as early as the middle of the seventeenth century. "Many came," says Hammond, in 1656, "such as wore black coats and could babble in a pulpit, swear in a tavern, exact from their parishioners, and rather by their dissoluteness destroy than feed their flocks."

But in the rising against the despotism of Sir John Harvey, the Virginia clergy of 1635 appear to have had virtue enough to take the popular side under the lead of the Rev. Antony Panton, who also, in 1641, appeared in London as "Agent of the Church of England in Virginia." By protests, first to the Commons and then to the Lords, Panton contrived to delay for months the sailing of Sir William Berkeley, who had been appointed governor at the instance of Harvey and his clique. During the Commonwealth time some ministers of a better class sought Virginia as a refuge, and some of the most dissolute of the parish clergy were silenced by the Assembly. There was a general improvement in manners at this time. The pioneer Virginians had been noted from the outset for excess in drinking; but growing prosperous, they now became, "not only civil, but great observers of the Sabbath, and to stand upon their reputations and to be ashamed of that notorious manner of life they had formerly lived and wallowed in." These reformed colonists in 1656 offered a bonus of twenty pounds to every one who should import "a sufficient minister." But with the return of Berkeley to power at the restoration, the governmental influence on the clergy must have been depressing. "The king's old courtier" that he was, Sir William evidently liked best the "dumb parsons," who gave the people no ideas and tyrants no trouble. He expresses his regret that Virginia ministers would not "pray oftener and preach less." When Bacon's rebellion brought Berkeley's career to an infamous close there was no Panton left to take the side of the people; all the parsons in Virginia appear to have been partisans of the governor.

Compton, who came to the see of London in 1675, made the jurisdiction of the Bishop of London over the colonies something more than a name. He appointed Blair commissary of Virginia, and Bray to a like office in Maryland; under his auspices William and Mary College was founded, and the Propagation Society instituted; his influence with his former pupils, Queen Mary and Queen Anne, enabled him to secure at court whatever was desirable for the colonial church, and more than one governor seems to have lost his place through Bishop Compton's displeasure. But in Compton's time, and long after, the lives of many of the colonial clergy were disreputable, even when judged by the standards of that day. The law of the market ruled in these things: what could find no purchaser in England was put off upon the colonies. Morgan Godwyn declares that the meanest curate in England had "far more considerable hopes" than a Virginia clergyman about 1675. Some of the least acceptable of the parish clergy in Virginia were Scotch and Irish adventurers, who thought it better to get an out-of-the-world parish, with or without orders, than to work hard and live precariously as school-masters. The case was rendered worse in Maryland, since, by the constitution of the church in that province, there was for a long time no power on earth that could legally deprive a clergyman when once inducted. "As bad as a Maryland parson," was one of the earliest of indigenous American proverbs. One incumbent of a Maryland parish was described as, "like St. Paul, all things to all men; he swears with

REV. JONATHAN BOUCHER OF MARYLAND.

those who swear, and drinks with those who drink." But swearing and drinking were but the minor faults of these "tithe-pig parsons"; drunkenness was proverbially called the "clergyman's vice." In 1718 Commissary Wilkinson, of the eastern shore of Maryland, forbade weddings in private houses, because of clergymen "being drunk at such times and places." Two Virginia clergymen, in 1723, were given to "fighting and quarreling publicly in their drink" to such an extent that it was said, "The whole country rings with the scandal." It was charged that some of the clergy of this province were "so debauched that they are foremost in all manner of vices." "One Holt, a scandalous and enormous wretch," was deprived by the commissary of Virginia, but he went to Maryland, where he secured one of the best parishes. Another Virginia parson had brought a servant-maid aboard ship, and passed her off as his wife; yet another was an habitual drunkard, who "kept an idle hussy he brought over with him." Clergymen were scarce in a new country, and discipline must needs be lax if any considerable number were to be retained. In the case last mentioned the woman was packed aboard ship and sent home, and the parson was "reformed"; apparently without any interruption of his clerical duties. When, however, we read of two Virginia parishes that, in 1740, had been vacated by the lewdness of the ministers, we have some pain to conceive of the degree of profligacy that had been sufficient to drive these men from the altar. Even in Maryland one man lost his place by adding bigamy to habitual inebriety. Polygamy was, indeed, on more than one occasion the charge brought against a Maryland parson. Commissary Bray found one Maryland incumbent who had forged a certificate of ordination, as a Virginia writing-master had done at an earlier period. This writing-master wore a scarlet hood in the pulpit and called himself a doctor of divinity. The forging of orders seems, indeed, a superfluous villainy when one considers with what facility wretches like these were able in that day to get genuine ordination. At a later period, no man from the colonies was admitted to orders unless he had secured a title to a parish. But shrewd adventurers, who had been brought over sometimes as indentured servants or schoolmasters, would contrive to get a recommendation and a title from a parish that was not even vacant, the vestry taking defeasance bonds from the candidate that he would not claim possession under a bogus title — meant only to deceive the Bishop of London. Discipline was not easy, even in flagrant cases. Brunskill, a Virginia clergyman, was deposed with difficulty, in 1757, though he was, in the words of Governor Dinwiddie, "almost guilty of every sin except murder," and he must have had a stomach even for murder, since he tied his wife to a bedpost and cut her with knives; yet, notwithstanding all, he found two or three of his order to defend him. It was recognized at the time that the rapid growth of dissent and religious skepticism in the Church of England colonies was largely due to the repulsive morals of some of the clergy and the sloth and neglect of others. One good clergyman in Virginia cries out in 1724, that "even miracles could not maintain the credit of the church where such lewd and profane ministers are tolerated or connived at."

But this is only the dark side of the picture. There were always in the Chesapeake colonies clergymen of another stamp, whose character shone the brighter by their proximity to sluggards and drunkards. Bartholomew Yates, of Christ Church parish, in Middlesex county, Virginia, who died in 1734, would have won praise for his virtues anywhere. Anthony Garvin, about the same period, exchanged an easy parish for a destitute one on the frontier, where he preached in widely separated places. He laments that ministers are so much absorbed in farming and buying slaves, "which latter, in my humble opinion, is unlawful for any Christian." Speaking thus, in 1738, in opposition to the doctrine of the pastoral letter of the learned Bishop Gibson, his own diocesan, Garvin showed that in moral judgment he was a century ahead of his time. Thomas Bacon,

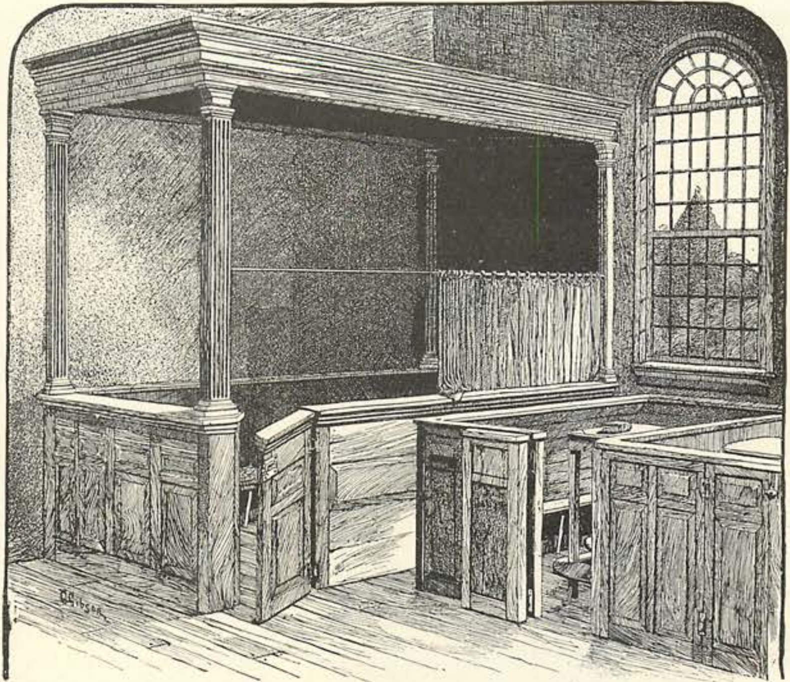
the editor of the Maryland laws, and William Stith, the painstaking historian of Virginia, are examples of clergymen of distinction in literature. One should add to this list the names of Clayton the naturalist, of Blair the theologian, of the diarist Fontaine, and of the versatile Boucher. Devereux Jarratt, a native Virginian of humble birth, was ordained in 1762, and was long illustrious for his useful labors. He was a sort of connecting link between what was best in the colonial church of Virginia and the religious life of our own time. His autobiography is a reflection of the simplicity and disinterested goodness of his nature.

CHRIST CHURCH, SHREWSBURY, NEW JERSEY.

In the later colonial period the character of the Maryland clergy was raised merely by the action of the law of the market. Instead of providing, as in Virginia, a definite salary in tobacco for each incumbent, the law of Maryland gave the clergyman forty pounds of tobacco for every person of tithable age and condition, whether white or black. This tax was felt to be very burdensome, and in 1760 it was reduced to thirty pounds of inspected tobacco. Under this system of payment by a capitation tax, the increase of population rendered some of the parishes valuable; that of All Saints was estimated at one thousand pounds sterling a year. A more desirable class of clergymen sought these good livings, and the proverbial Maryland parson was for the most part driven to the wall by competition. As early as 1718 there was among the "missioners" of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel a proneness to leave their Northern missions for the tempting tobacco parishes of Maryland. Fear was expressed by the impetuous Talbot, of Burlington, that the newly built churches in New Jersey and Pennsylvania would soon be quite deserted by the missionaries, and would become "stalls and stables for the Quakers' horses when they come to market or meeting." Although this catastrophe never befell the mission churches, the character of the Maryland clergy was so far advanced that Edmund Burke, in 1757, could speak of them as "the most decent and the best of the clergy of North America."

In Virginia even "the sweet-scented parishes," as they were called,— those where the minister's salary was paid in high-priced, sweet-scented tobacco,— yielded only about a hundred pounds sterling, and the parishioners sometimes refused to settle a clergyman unless he would consent to serve two parishes

for one salary. The salary was rendered precarious by the prevalent custom of "hiring" a clergyman for a year at a time. Blair, the able Scotchman who was for many years the Bishop of London's commissary for this province, complained that the insecurity of the livings rendered it impossible for the clergy to "match so much to their advantage as if they were settled by induction." A wife with a dower seems to have been regarded as one of the natural and legitimate resources of a settled clergyman.



CANOPIED PEW IN THE OLD CHURCH AT SHREWSBURY, NEW JERSEY.

THE CHURCH IN THE CAROLINAS.

THE proprietors of Carolina declared at the outset of their enterprise that they were moved to it by their great zeal to propagate the Christian faith; but once their charter had passed the seals, their zeal enjoyed a peaceful slumber for forty years. They accomplished the settlement of their provinces under the broadest and most solemn promises of religious toleration; but, in 1704, with characteristic bad faith, and by the use of shameless trickery in the elections, their governor procured the passage, by a majority of one, of an act establishing the Church of England and disabling dissenters — who were about two-thirds of the population — from sitting in the assembly. By the same act it was sought to wrest the ecclesiastical power from the Bishop of London and put it into the hands of a subservient lay commission of twenty members, a majority of whom were not even habitual communicants. The Carolinian dissenters promptly petitioned the House of Lords against the bill on account of its proscription of the greater part of the inhabitants, the Bishop of London and the Propagation Society detested and opposed it on account of the lay commission, the House of Lords addressed the Queen against it on both heads, and the law was repealed by the alarmed proprietors and declared null by royal authority, while the Lords of Trade even took steps looking to the vacating of the lords proprietors' charter. But the matter was so managed by the assembly that their church establishment was retained, though the proscriptive features of the bill and the lay commission for ecclesiastical affairs were given up.

It was the good fortune of the Church of England in South Carolina that nearly all its early ministers were sent out under the auspices of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, for the missionaries of this society were carefully selected and were the most reputable clergymen that came to the colonies. Besides the aid which this body continued to give until 1766, the South Carolina clergy received salaries from the provincial treasury and from money raised by a tax on exported furs and deerskins. They also had glebes, which were in some instances stocked with cows, and even in a few cases with household slaves. South Carolina clergy were thus tolerably independent, their election by the people gave some security for their character, and they had besides the good fortune, after 1726, to be, for about thirty years, under the supervision of Alexander Garden, an efficient commissary. The province thus escaped, for the most part, the church scandals of Maryland and Virginia; and though the adherents of the establishment never constituted a majority of the people, the church was able to hold its own against "the meetners," as dis-

senters were called. Eliza Lucas testifies, about 1740, that the "generality of people" in Charleston were "of a religious turn of mind," a statement sustained by the large congregations that a little later attended even week-day lectures of favorite preachers. But in a society so rich and gay and lax re-

PULPIT OF KING'S CHAPEL, BOSTON.

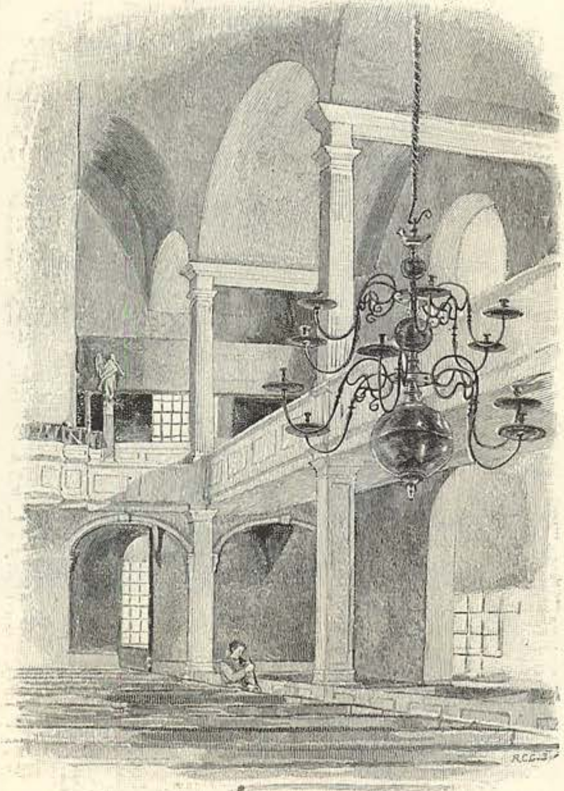
ligion among the upper classes was probably never very intense. Josiah Quincy, who visited Charleston in 1774, was accustomed to the superabounding amplitude of length and breadth and depth of New England ministrations, and he did not estimate highly "the young coxcomb," as he calls him, whom he heard "preach flippantly for seventeen and a half minutes" in a Charleston pulpit. But the South Carolina clergy were not generally flippant, and there were instances of noble disinterestedness and public spirit among them. One of them refused the portion of his salary promised by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and three others left money to public uses. The clergy of South Carolina manifested a genuine interest in the religious welfare of the slaves, whose very multitude made their lot harder than that of the negroes in any other continental colony. Early efforts were made to Christianize them, and an address to the Bishop of London from the South Carolina clergy on the subject was the occasion of Bishop Gibson's pastoral letter and the deliverances of the attorney and solicitor-general, all of which were meant to facilitate the conversion of the negroes.

North Carolina was long a barren field for the Church of England. A church establishment found congenial soil among the landed aristocracy of the Chesapeake colonies and South Carolina; but the early North Carolinians were a rather turbulent democracy, fond of their liberty, holding most of the conventions of society in detestation, and regarding with some impatience almost every sort of restraint. The Propagation Society made some early but not very vigorous efforts to secure a lodgment in North Carolina, but the ministers whom they sent suffered much from their uncongenial environment. The vivacious Colonel Byrd sneeringly declared that North Carolina was "a climate where no clergyman can breathe any more than spiders in Ireland." Large numbers of the people grew up without baptism, and this was regarded in that day as a relapse to heathenism. It was specially lamented by Governor Eden that so many hundreds of the children slain by the Tuscaroras were unbaptized. In 1728 the Virginia commissioners who ran the dividing line between that province and Carolina were accompanied by a chaplain, and whole families of North Carolina people intercepted their march, seeking to be "made Christians" by baptism. Stories were current of reckless Virginia clergymen making junketing trips through the neighboring province, and defraying their expenses by baptizing the people at so much a head. Notwithstanding the laws for the establishment of the church that had been on the statute-book for many years, there was not one clergyman of the English Church regularly settled in North Carolina in 1732. The province was not, however, wholly without religious service. Schoolmasters read the liturgy and Tillotson's Sermons in some places, and the law of the market which was adverse to the Anglican Church acted otherwise upon the over-supply of Puritan divines. "Some Presbyterian or rather independent ministers from New England," says Governor Burrington, "have got congregations"; and he explains that others are likely to come, since there are some out of employment in New England, "where a preacher is seldom paid more than the value of twenty pounds sterling." Even earlier than the Puritans the Quakers had gained a hold among the North Carolina settlers, George Fox himself having visited the province as early as 1672. "The Quakers of this government," says Burrington, "are considerable for their numbers and substance, the regularity of their lives, hospitality to strangers, and kind offices to new settlers inducing many to be of their persua-

sion." But 1732 marked the lowest point in the fortunes of the English Church in North Carolina. In that year Boyd, a resident of the province, went to England and took orders. His six years of ministration made a deep impression. In 1743 Clement Hall, who had been a justice of the peace and a lay-reader in the colony, took orders and returned as a missionary to win for himself, by his self-denying toils, his evangelizing journeys, and his popular eloquence, the title of the "Apostle of North Carolina." Notwithstanding the earlier acts on the subject, several new laws were passed in 1745 and later for the better establishment of the church; for though the adherents of the Church of England were always a minority of the people in both the Carolinas, the maintenance of an established form of religious worship seems to have been generally regarded as an essential part of a fixed and orderly government.

THE EPISCOPAL PROPAGANDA.

ALTHOUGH the Church of England appeared to have lost her moral courage and her spiritual aspirations in the reaction against Puritanism, and even against morality and decency, at the restoration of the Stuarts, there set in afterward a movement that was at first as small as a mustard-seed, and so well hidden that its ultimate importance has hitherto failed, so far as I know, to excite the attention of any student of the religious history of that age. About 1679 there sprang up in England what were known as the "religious societies," and though a great part of the religious history of England and her colonies in the eighteenth century lay in embryo in that movement, we cannot now tell the name of its originator or the source of his inspirations. It is possible that some stray seed from Spener's pietistic meetings in Germany had been wafted across the Channel, but it is more probable that the English societies were indigenous. The members of these obscure associations stirred up one another to devotion, and resorted to the communion of the parish churches in a body. It was the phenomenon so often seen in the world's religious history,—*Ecclesia in Ecclesiâ*,—a church growing within a church that had lost the power to satisfy the aspirations of the human spirit. About 1691, a dozen years after their beginning, some of these associations came under the influence of the reformatory impulse set a-going by the revolution of 1688; and by this means losing their merely pietistic character, they undertook to coöperate for the suppression of the prevalent vices of the time. Three or four years later the hidden leaven of the societies began to make itself felt as a force to be reckoned with, and Queen Mary and Archbishop Tillotson thought it worth while to lend their approval to this new movement, which had grown while sovereigns and prelates slumbered and slept. By 1701 there were twenty allied societies for the reformation of manners in the British Islands, besides forty "devout societies" of the original kind.* The reformatory societies

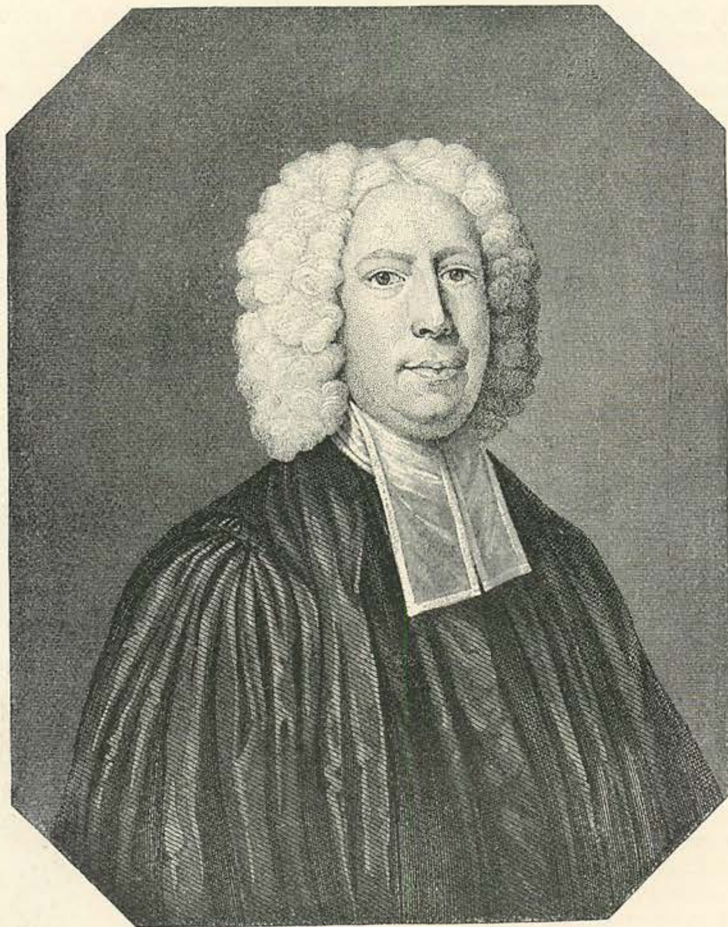


INTERIOR OF CHRIST CHURCH, BOSTON.

* The most conspicuous outgrowth of the devout societies was the Methodist movement of the eighteenth century, though I do not know that the connection has ever before been pointed out. The so-called "Holy Club" of Oxford, from which issued the Wesleys and Whitefield, appears to have been merely one of the religious societies which had already flourished for fifty years, and some of which were still in existence thirty years later. From this same familiar model Wesley doubtless borrowed the outlines of the plan that resulted in the more highly organized Methodist societies out of which in time have come the great Methodist bodies.

spread as far as to New York, and put a new weapon into the hands of waning Puritanism in New England, where they obtained a vogue, even in the country towns, in the early part of the eighteenth century. Meantime, in spite of much unwisdom and misdirected effort, they had acquired such influence in England as to be able to suppress a great number of disorderly houses, and drive many lewd characters from the kingdom. More than a thousand convictions for vice were secured in 1701. The fame of the movement spread over Europe, and the published accounts of the societies were translated into other languages. In England great opposition was awakened, and the promoters of the societies met with the common fate of reformers; they were "balladed in the streets" and "ridiculed in plays and on the theaters."

But in the closing years of the seventeenth century there rose up the Rev. Dr. Thomas Bray, in whose hands the voluntary religious societies found a new development. Bray had a mind of great acuteness, inventive rather than original: he was one of those men whose destiny it is to give an organic body to ideas already in the air. One-sided in matters of opinion, as becomes a propagandist, he was singularly bold and comprehensive in practical affairs. The English Church entirely filled his intellectual horizon; all the rest was in the outer darkness of heresy, schism, apostasy, or damnable infidelity. He combated Romanism and he detested dissent. The regions settled by Quakers were to him hardly better than "so many heathen nations," and he joyfully announced in one of his publications that "many Quakers have returned to the Christian faith." This unsympathetic narrowness gave concentration to his exertions, which for the rest were sincere and disinterested. When he accepted the office of Commissary to Maryland he sold his effects and borrowed money to reach the province, at the same



SAMUEL JOHNSON, D.D., FIRST PRESIDENT OF KING'S COLLEGE.

time refusing eligible benefices at home. But knowing the ignorance of many of the clergy and their destitution of books, he organized, before he set out for Maryland, a society for furnishing the clergy in the colonies and in the provinces with libraries; borrowing his fundamental idea, no doubt, from Tenison, then Archbishop of Canterbury, who, when Vicar of St. Martin's, had founded a library with the view of keeping the thirty or forty young clergymen resident in that court parish as tutors, and in other capacities, from spending their time in taverns. This society, at first merely a new kind of voluntary association, was chartered in 1698 as "The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge." But the schemes of such a man as Bray enlarge as he advances; and every project was swiftly transmuted into an organized association. After his return from Maryland he developed another private society, which had been "formed to meet and consult and contribute toward the progress of Christianity," into the Venerable Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, for which a royal charter was secured in 1701. The chief work of this corporation in the eighteenth century was in the American colonies. To these Dr. Bray added another association, for the special work of promoting the conversion of Indians and negroes. He not only influenced the early history of American religious life, but his societies became patterns and forerunners of all those propagandist and philanthropic associations by which Protestant bodies of every sort have supplied the place of the religious orders of the Roman Church.

The Propagation Society selected for its first missionary George Keith, perhaps one of the most disputatious religionists that ever vexed the souls of his fellow-men. Born in Aberdeen, he left the Scotch Kirk to join the Society of Friends, the most aggressive and the most sorely beset by foes of all the sects of the seventeenth century. He threw himself into the fray for years as their apologist, and endured long imprisonments for the sake of his opinions. While teaching the Friends' School in Philadelphia, he won notoriety by out-quakering the Quakers, assailing the leading members of the society for their sins in keeping slaves, in accepting public office, and in making laws, as well as for divers other departures from what he deemed the primitive Quaker way. He managed to make himself pestiferous, and to rend the little newly planted Pennsylvania world into two parties, leading out in 1691 a sect of those who modestly distinguished themselves as the *Christian* Quakers, but who were popularly known as Keithian Quakers. These he deserted in turn to take orders in the Church of England. Returning as an itinerant missionary of the Venerable Society, he had the satisfaction of bedeviling his old enemies to his heart's content. Thoroughly acquainted with the writings and usages of the Quakers, he thrust himself into their assemblies with the thick-skinned indelicacy of a hardened polemic, assailing their most cherished doctrines and denouncing their most revered leaders in their own meeting-houses. This, it is true, was only rendering measure for measure to the contentious Quakers of that day; but it was a mode of warfare to which the later and more dignified Church of England missionaries would not have resorted, and it is to the credit of the Society for Propagating the Gospel that Keith made but a single brief and bitter campaign. On his return to England he published a narrative of his travels, wherein he related his doughty combats with illiterate preachers, ill-fitted to answer an assailant whose expertness had been gained in warfare on so many sides of the question. Then after all these stormy years of restless disputations, Keith settled down in an obscure English vicarage, where, besides petty religious disputes, he employed his leisure in writing a work on longitude. Some of the "Keithians" in Pennsylvania followed him into the Church of England; many others became Baptists.

One of the chief disadvantages of the English Church in the colonies arose from

ANCIENT SILVER COMMUNION SERVICE BELONGING TO CHRIST CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA.

the fact that many of its ministers held English notions of the church's position and rights. In their view the dissenters could at best claim only the barest tolerance: the church, where it was not established, was the heir-at-law unjustly kept out of an entailed inheritance by usurpers. From their standpoint there was no reason to scruple over the appropriation to their use of meeting-houses

put into their hands by force, as by Andros in Boston. When, in 1702, Lord Cornbury fled to Jamaica, on Long Island, from an epidemic, he accepted from the Presbyterian minister the loan of the parsonage built by the town; but when Cornbury left Jamaica, he politely returned the house, not to its former occupant, but to the Church of England missionary, alleging that since the house had been built by a public tax it ought to belong to the Established Church. He also by mere force, without process of law, put the Episcopal party into possession of the new stone meeting-house of this Puritan town; this they held for twenty-five years. Bigotry was common to all parties in that age: it was not surprising that churchmen should regard Cornbury's transaction as nothing more than the giving back to the church of its own again; but the complicity of clergymen in such acts of arbitrary injustice begot a prejudice against the church.

The "missioners" of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel were generally chosen with care, and there were few scandals among them. The Propagation Society, indeed, was the principal agent in raising the character of the English Church clergy in America. A large proportion of the missionaries of the society were of American birth,

BISHOP BERKELEY'S FLAGON, NOW IN POSSESSION OF DANIEL BERKELEY UPDIKE, ESQ.

and these had a far stronger hold on the colonists than an equal number of men born in England could have gained. There were among them men of distinguished ability and high character. Such divines as Cutler and Johnson and Chandler could not but make the Church of England respected even where it was not loved. To the missionaries of the society is due the great and perennial honor of having been first to undertake, in any systematic way, the education of negro slaves. The very first missionary sent to South Carolina promptly began it, and it was carried forward by those who came after him in most of the parishes in that province. In 1742 Commissary Garden founded a negro school in Charleston, in which slaves were taught by slave teachers; these last, curiously enough, were the property of the Venerable Society, trained for the purpose. That no great result could come among thousands of slaves from the teaching of reading and the catechism to a few house-servants is evident, but the persistent efforts to do what could be done were most commendable. More hopeful was the work of "honest Elias Neau," the society's catechist in New York. Before he engaged in teaching negroes he bore the nickname of "the new reformer," because he was the leader of a little society of eight people "for the reformation of manners," in the rather immoral and very polyglot town at the south end of Manhattan Island. Catechists were afterward employed among the slaves in Philadelphia and elsewhere, but Neau was without doubt the most successful teacher of negroes in the colonies. In order to stir up the planters to instruct their slaves, especially to teach them the rudiments of the Christian religion, the society circulated many thousand copies of a sermon preached by Bishop Fleetwood in 1711, and of Bishop Gibson's letters on the subject, issued in 1727. To this exertion for the slaves must be added, in any summary of the work of this excellent society, the missions to the Indians, which cannot be treated here.*

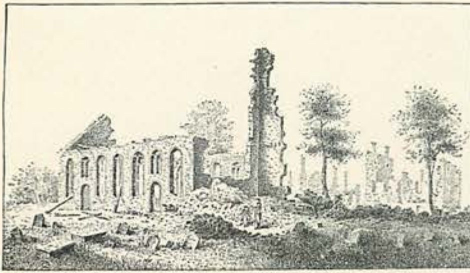
DEAN BERKELEY'S PROJECT.

THE most curious episode in the history of the Church of England in America is the attempt set on foot by the famous Dean Berkeley, afterward Bishop of Cloyne, to convert the Indians and to better the religious condition of the continent. This he proposed to do by founding a college in Bermuda for the education of American savages and clergymen. The proposition, coming from a man of his eminence, attracted much attention; for at the age of twenty-five Berkeley had made a permanent and important contribution to scientific speculation in his "Theory of Vision," and at twenty-six he had printed his "Principles of Human Knowledge," in which

* I am much indebted to the Rev. H. W. Tucker, the present able Secretary of the Propagation Society, for giving me the opportunity to examine the manuscript records of the society and the White-Kennett library.

he pushed idealism to its logical extreme, and placed himself among the founders of philosophic systems. He was not only a philosopher of world-wide fame, but a poet of true inspiration and graceful expression. His renown, his handsome person, and his amiable temper, as well as his wide knowledge and delightful gift for conversation, made him sought after in society and a favorite at court, while the purity and manly disinterestedness of his character gave him a lustrous singularity among the wits of his time. Fortune treated him kindly; he inherited four thousand pounds by the caprice of a lady with whom he had but slight acquaintance, and at forty years of age he was promoted to the best deanery in Ireland. But in the height of his prosperity he published in 1724 his "Proposal for better supplying of Churches in our Foreign Plantations." His plan was to raise up clergymen and educate Indians by means of a training college in the Bermudas, and he offered to resign his deanery and accept a paltry hundred pounds a year as the head of this enterprise. Nothing could have surprised the world of that day more than such an act of self-abnegation on the part of a churchman who saw the highest promotions thrown in his way by the favor of the great. No impulse could well have been nobler than this to plant the seeds of learning and virtue in a new continent, while few schemes were ever so utterly visionary as this one elaborated by Berkeley without any reckoning with the tremendous difficulties and untoward conditions of his task. But it was a "bubble period" in philanthropy as well as in finance; the English world was in a state of hopefulness, and a project was rendered plausible to the imagination of that time merely by its largeness and the ingenuity with which it was constructed. All kinds of social and agricultural projects for America were rife. English felons were to be reformed by filling a Virginia county with them and setting them to raising hemp for a livelihood; proposals had already appeared for planting the extreme south of Carolina with stranded debtors from English jails; Dr. Bray and his associates, and the dissenters as well, were for converting the negroes to Christianity out of hand; Oglethorpe, with his bundle of strange socialistic and agricultural projects, was only just below the horizon; Wesley and

DEAN BERKELEY, AFTERWARD BISHOP OF CLOYNE.
(FROM A PAINTING BY JOHN SMYBERT, IN POSSESSION OF YALE UNIVERSITY.)



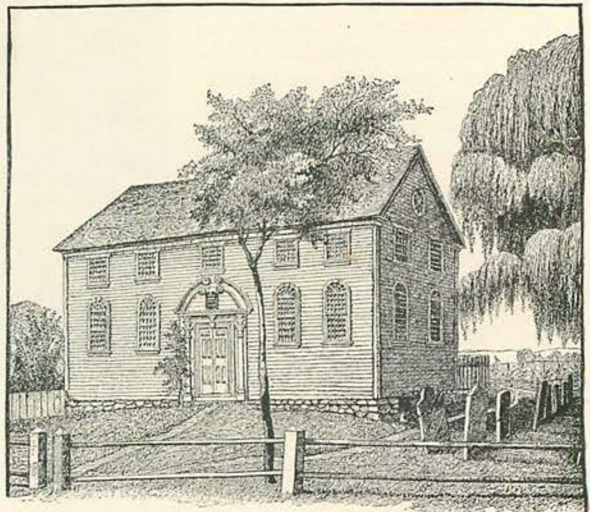
RUINS OF TRINITY CHURCH, NEW YORK, AFTER THE GREAT FIRE IN 1776.

his quixotic Indian mission, and Whitefield and his expensive orphanage, were soon to appear. Even in an age less susceptible, the contagion of Berkeley's refined enthusiasm, supported by his eloquence, might have won over cool heads to such a project. The cynical Swift laughed at him but helped him; the wits of the Scriblerus Club, after rallying him, surrendered to the captivating eloquence with which he defended his scheme and confessed to a momentary impulse to go with him. Statesmen listened to him, and George I. granted him a charter, and, with the assent of parliament, set apart twenty thousand pounds of the proceeds of lands in St. Christopher for the benefit of the new college in the Bermudas. Berkeley also received considerable sums in private gifts for his enterprise.

In order to show to all the sincerity of his intentions, he prepared to set out for America without waiting to receive the public funds promised to him. But he regarded his enterprise rather in the spirit of a poet than in that of a missionary. Along with his first proposals, set forth in plain prose, he had sent to Lord Perceval as early as 1725 a draft of his noble prophetic poem on America, and he persuaded Pope to translate Horace's description of the Fortunate Islands, which he considered applicable to the Bermudas. With these islands he had become enamored without so much as ever having a sight of them. To his bride, who sailed with him in 1728, he presented a spinning-wheel as a token that she was to lead the life of a plain farmer's wife, "and wear stuff of her own spinning."

Instead of going direct to Bermuda he set out for Rhode Island, touching at Virginia. It was only on arriving in America that the absurdity of a scheme of propagandism constructed in thin air, by a speculative thinker in his closet, became apparent. In England, Berkeley had been surrounded by people whose ignorance of America was more dense than his own. He might silence the raillery of the wits of the Scriblerus Club by his eloquent talk, but the wits of Virginia knew the Indians too well to be for a moment beguiled. The attempt to educate young savages at William and Mary under the patronage of Governor Spotswood had but recently proved a failure. Most of the Indian students had died from the change of habit; the rest had relapsed to savagery on their return to their tribes, or remained as menials or vicious idlers in the settlement. Byrd, the brightest of the Virginians, laughed at Berkeley for another Quixote, and wrote to Berkeley's friend, Lord Perceval, that the dean would "need the gift of miracles to persuade" the savages "to leave their country and venture themselves on the great ocean on the temptation of being converted." Colonel Byrd declared his belief that it was Waller's poetic description of the islands that had "kidnapt" Berkeley "over to Bermuda." And indeed Berkeley himself, by the time he was fairly settled for a sojourn at Newport, had begun to see the doubtfulness of the Bermuda part of the project, and to consider the question of translating his college to Rhode Island.

During his residence of two or three years at Newport he made many friends, as a matter of course, for more lovable a man could not well be. Such of the Church of England missionaries as were near enough met from time to time in a sort of synod at his house and came strongly under his influence, but the friendships of a soul so catholic were not confined to his own communion. He waited in vain for the twenty thousand pounds from the Government. When at last his patience was exhausted, Gibson, the Bishop of London,

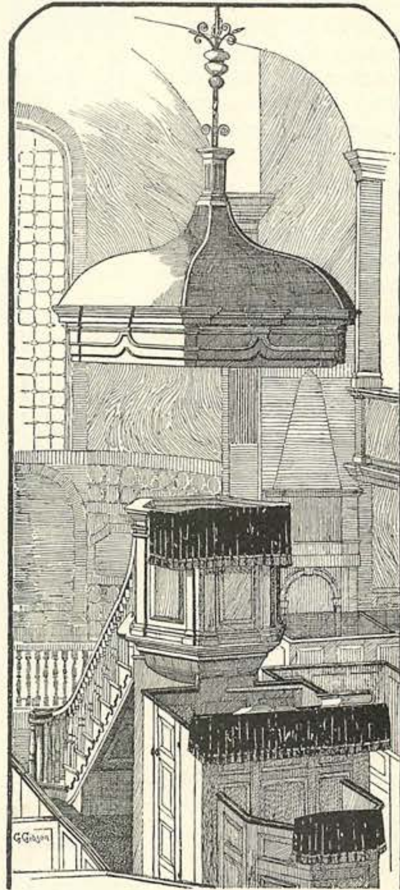


THE OLD NARRAGANSETT CHURCH IN RHODE ISLAND.

demanded on his behalf a categorical reply from Walpole, and the Prime Minister, in diplomatic but unmistakable words, declared that the money would never be paid.

The refusal of Walpole gave Berkeley a pretext to return to England and take up his own proper career once more. It is hard to believe that he regretted it, for his stay in America must have brought him many cruel disenchantments. He found the once comparatively dense Indian population of Rhode Island already in 1730 dwindled to one thousand, and these were "servants and laborers for the English," doomed to extermination by their hopeless proclivity for drink. The rivalry and polemical collisions between the Anglican missionaries and the established Puritan clergy were doubtless repulsive to him; he certainly appears to have done much to soften the religious asperities growing out of the situation. With his prestige, he easily might have secured from private munificence sufficient money to begin his college and to carry it to such success as was possible, had he been made of missionary stuff. Indeed, he afterward wrote to the first head of King's College in New York: "Colleges from small beginnings grow great by subsequent bequests and benefactions." But there had probably come to him in these years of retirement that disillusion which is hardest of all to bear — the discovery that in following an impulse entirely generous, one has misunderstood his vocation, wasted his best years, and spent the never-to-be-recovered forces of his prime. Even while he was at Newport, Berkeley had relapsed into philosophy and passed his time for the most part not as the missionary he wished to be, but as the thinker nature had made him. At Newport he wrote his "Alciphron," and his letters thence show that his chief interest lay in discussing, not the aborigines or the rival ecclesiastical systems of the colonists, but Newton's ideas of space and Locke's notions of matter. It could not have been Walpole's refusal alone that sent him back to Europe, "touched" in "health and spirits." He no doubt felt keenly his mistake, and perhaps recognized some justice in that "raillery of European wits" which he would liked to have despised.

The real value of Berkeley's visit to America he himself probably never fully understood. The simple presence of a man of renown consecrated to intellectual pursuits and inspired by the most genuine philanthropy was of inestimable value in a sordid provincial society where the leaders had been chiefly rich speculators, successful cod-fishermen, Guinea traders in slaves, and rum-distillers,— or at best religious disputants and provincial politicians. To the religious life of the northern colonies the Dean of Derry was a sort of dove from the skies. He impressed upon the church missionaries the loveliness of charity and forbearance, and he embraced in his affections those for whom he invented the title, "Brethren of the Separation." When he left he gave a noble pledge of his good feeling toward those who differed from him, in making liberal gifts in books and land to Yale and Harvard colleges. This was propagating a sort of Christianity that had never been revealed to America before. In a sermon preached before the Venerable Society after his return, he praises its missionaries particularly in that they were at that time "living on a more friendly foot with their brethren of the separation, who on their part are very much come off from that narrowness of spirit which formerly kept them at such a distance from us." Berkeley, by his mere presence, did better for the colonies than he could have done with a college six hundred miles off the coast.



PULPIT OF TRINITY CHURCH, NEWPORT, R. I.

CARICATURE ON THE PROPOSITION TO ESTABLISH AN AMERICAN EPISCOPATE. (FROM A COPY IN POSSESSION OF BISHOP POTTER.)

AN EPISCOPAL CHURCH WITHOUT A BISHOP.

THE most salient fact in the history of the Church of England in America is that in the whole period of its existence — about a century and three-quarters — no bishop of its communion ever set foot in this hemisphere, no church building was ever episcopally consecrated, no catechumen ever received confirmation, and no resident of America was ever ordained without making the tedious voyage to England, exposed to the dangers of the sea and to the tolerable certainty of taking the small-pox upon his arrival in Europe. In 1638 Archbishop Laud, with characteristic directness, proposed to send a bishop to America, and to support him "with some forces to compel if he could not otherwise persuade obedience." But all the means of persuasion at Laud's disposal were soon after in requirement to compel obedience in England and Scotland. Laud's scheme, in its spirit and perhaps in some of its details, was revived in the first years after the restoration, when, in 1662, Sir Robert Carr was thought of for a general governor of all the colonies. He was to be accompanied by a major-general and a bishop with a suffragan; * but this dangerous procession of formidable authorities, by whomsoever proposed, was prudently laid aside after the arrival of delegates who brought the humble, not to say cringing, submission of Massachusetts to the king. In 1672 an attempt was made to establish the episcopate in Virginia with Dr. Alexander Murray for bishop.

In the numerous later efforts to secure a bishop many devices were suggested for overcoming the difficulty about his support. Long before Dean Berkeley applied for part of the proceeds of lands in St. Christopher others had thought of the availability of this source of supply, and it was Queen Mary's design that these should be devoted to the support of four American bishops. Quit rents in that rogue's refuge, the debatable land between Virginia and North Carolina, the rents and revenues from the sale of lands in the Dela-

* This statement is made on the authority of Hutchinson, who cites a letter of Norton's. Dr. Hawks ventured the curious suggestion that 1662 was a mistake for 1672; and Bishop Perry, in his "History of the American Episcopal Church," copies Hawks's suggestion without investigation. It seems strange that a writer so well informed as Hawks should not have known that the famous John Norton's mission to England was in 1662, and equally strange that he should suppose a letter to have been written in 1672 by Norton, who died in 1663.

ware counties, and those derivable from the disputed gore between New York and Connecticut were all suggested. A very considerable fund was raised by private contributions and bequests made at various times for the endowment of bishoprics in America.

From the time of the organization of the Propagation Society, in 1701, the contention for American bishops was almost without intermission. At one time Dean Swift had hopes of receiving such an appointment; if his expectations had been met, the biting pen that wrote the "Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufactures" and the Drapier letters might have found in the abuses of the colonial administration occasions for tormenting more than one government at London. At another time the Bishop of London proposed to take the matter into his own hands and ordain as a suffragan Colebatch, who had been selected by the clergy of Maryland; but the provincial authorities sued out a writ of *ne exeat regno*, and prevented the bishop-elect from going to London for consecration.

The fatal obstacle to the development of the English Church in America was the lien of Siamese twinship that bound it to the prevalent system of colonial government. Religious or moral considerations had small weight with cabinet ministers. "Damn their *souls*, let them make tobacco," said one of these, when appealed to in behalf of the Virginians. "A very great lord," when addressed in favor of Berkeley's project, frankly expressed his belief that it would be impolitic for the English government to do anything to remove the ignorance which made the red men inferior, or the sectarian divisions which weakened the colonists. There were certain political forces always opposed to the setting up of bishops in America. Colonial governors and their friends dreaded it, partly from that jealousy of any rival authority which involved so many governors in quarrels with the Bishop of London's commissaries, and partly because English precedents gave to bishops the fees of marriage license and probate, which were considerable perquisites of the governors. There was also an objection of state-craft: it was believed by English ministers of that time that to give the jurisdiction of the American churches into the hands of resident bishops would tend to unite the colonies and lessen their dependence on the mother-country. But perhaps the most formidable obstacle of all was offered by the untiring opposition of non-conformists in America and their friends in England.

It is impossible not to sympathize with devout and zealous adherents of the English Church who desired to complete its organization in the colonies according to its proper and essential principles. While it had no bishops, there was, as Bishop Sherlock intimated, only "the appearance of an Episcopal Church in the plantations." Fair-minded dissenters, such as President Davies in America and Dr. Doddridge in England, conceded the justice of the demand for American bishops. On the other hand there is much to be said for those who so zealously opposed an American episcopate. The Episcopal Church never renounced its claim to be established by law and supported by taxation in all the English dominions; and there were not wanting clergymen in America imprudent enough to suggest that the English parliament should fix the stipend of incumbents even in dissenting colonies like Pennsylvania. So long as parliament insisted on its paramount right to legislate for the American provinces, no safeguard or proviso could be devised by human ingenuity strong enough to allay the apprehensions of non-conformists that the ordination of American bishops would add another to the authorities in America responsible only to England, and thus add another to the powers adverse to the liberties of the colonists. Bishops Sherlock, Secker, and Butler gave the most solemn, and doubtless sincere, assurances of the harmlessness of their intentions; but there was no way by which they could go bail for those who should come after them. It was urged that the common law of England vested a great deal of power in the bishops, and that if bishops should be set up in America without limitations of their powers by statutory enactment of parliament they would be a perpetual menace to liberty.

It must be confessed that the heavy and aggressive hand of the church, where it had power, did not tend to quiet the fears of the colonists. The non-churchmen in the province of New York greatly outnumbered the churchmen: they claimed to be fourteen-fifteenths of the population; but the assembly strove in vain to release the dissenters of New York City and its neighborhood from paying taxes for the support of the English churches. The Episcopalians in Connecticut complained, with reason, that they paid tithes to support the Puritan clergy, and in later times they were able to evade it; but the Episcopal clergy in New York resisted every effort of the members of other religious bodies to relieve themselves from a like injustice, and the dominance of churchmen in the governor's council enabled them to defeat the will of the representative assembly. Propositions to allow Presbyterians to make oath without kissing the Bible, and laws to enable one and another of the non-Episcopal bodies to hold property, were at different times defeated in the same

way. The dissenting churches could not even gain the power to hold their burying-grounds. Against a law to enable the Presbyterian churches to hold real estate, the rector and wardens of Trinity Church appeared by counsel in 1720; and when another act of the same kind was sent to England for confirmation, in 1766, the Bishop of London appeared twice before the Board of Trade to compass its rejection. Even the charter of a Boston missionary society intended to propagate Christianity among the Indians was defeated in 1762, as was alleged, by the influence of the primate; and the Archbishop of Canterbury's objection to the liberality of the scheme overthrew Whitefield's project for getting a charter in England for a college at Bethesda. All the assurances, solemnly and repeatedly given, that bishops in America would meddle with nobody but their own clergy went for nothing, so long as prelates in England and churchmen in America used the authority of the crown to prevent dissenters, even where they were in an overwhelming majority, as in New York, from attaining an equality of legal standing with the English Church. When the Episcopal clergy in the Northern and Middle colonies combined to secure a bishop, they were confronted with a union between the Presbyterians of Pennsylvania and the Puritans of Connecticut, who opposed their request unless the appointment should be accompanied by a statute strictly limiting the power of American bishops. Some were unwilling that bishops should come even under restrictions. There was much bigotry, no doubt, but there was also, under the circumstances, an appearance of reason in the resolutions of the more violent dissenters to keep bishops "from getting their feet into the stirrup at all."

The protracted struggle over this question at length became part of that great conflict which was formed by the confluence of many tributary rills of minor exasperation, and which resulted in precipitating the independence of the British settlements in America. When once party passions were inflamed to a white heat by the aggressions of the British parliament, every proposition for the establishment of bishops in the colonies added to the violence of the convulsion that was soon to overthrow not only the English Church, but the English power in America.

There were prudent churchmen who saw that the times were inauspicious. Dr. Terrick, Bishop of London, sent a paper to the Board of Trade, in which he intimated a doubt that it might not be "consistent with the principles of true policy" to appoint a bishop for America under the existing circumstances; and he suppressed the addresses to the throne sent to him by the English Church clergy of Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey. In these exigent times political considerations came to outweigh religious preferences, and Whig churchmen looked on the American episcopate as a Tory measure. Many even of the Episcopal clergy in the Southern colonies, sympathizing with the struggle for liberty, were opposed to the establishment of an American episcopate. In 1771 few of the Virginia clergy could be persuaded to advocate the appointment of bishops for America; four of them signed a declaration that the establishment of an episcopate so unseasonably "would tend greatly to weaken the connection between the mother-country and her colonies, . . . and to give ill-disposed persons occasion to raise such disturbances as may endanger the very existence of the British Empire in America." For this the patriotic clergymen received the thanks of the Virginia assembly, which was largely composed of churchmen.

One of the most grievous of the evils resulting from the lack of bishops was that every American who would have orders must go to London for them, and it was estimated that about a fifth of all who crossed the sea for this purpose lost their lives by disease or shipwreck. The preponderance of Englishmen, or rather of Scotchmen and Irishmen, among the clergy; the dependence of a part of them on English contributions for support; as well as the derivation of ecclesiastical authority from a "bishop at one end of the world and his church at the other," as Bishop Sherlock forcibly put it, prevented the church from becoming rooted in America. In the Southern colonies one of the results of the Revolution was the disestablishment of the church. In the Middle and Northern colonies, where the clergymen were missionaries sustained from England, and always on the defensive against the dominant religion, churchmen in disproportionate numbers were driven to side with England in the Revolution, and clergymen were expelled from their cures by violence, or forced to close their churches because they could not in conscience omit the prayers for the king. So that what befell the Anglican Church in America at the outbreak of the Revolution was little less than sheer ruin.

Edward Eggleston.