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### THE MANOR OF GARDINER'S ISLAND\*

THE first English settlement within the present limits of the State of New York was founded under circumstances of peculiar and romantic interest. Its site was an island, four miles from the eastern extremity of Long Island—a little woodland gem in a wilderness of waters. It was nine miles long by one and a half miles wide, containing some three thousand five hundred acres. This entire island was purchased by Lion Gardiner from the Indians, with all the usual ceremonials of such transactions, and the purchase duly confirmed by the agent of Lord Stirling on the 10th of March, 1639. The new land-holder proceeded at once to erect a comfortable dwelling-house, of which he took possession, with his wife and two children, the younger an infant daughter, in the early summer of the same year. This well-considered and deliberate choice of a permanent private residence, full thirty miles from the nearest European neighbor, reads upon the truthful records, as we are well aware, like the fanciful castle-building of the writers of fiction.

Before tracing the growth and development of the picturesque island into a productive manorial property, the fact is worthy of notice that it has been longer in possession of one family than any other individual estate on this continent, having had twelve proprietors in the direct line, even to the present hour. Its early history is rich in Indian legend and old-time tales of love and sacrifice. No portion of our country was so persistently frequented by pirates and ocean rovers. No point so completely exposed to foreign enemies in times of war. The manor-house now standing upon the island was built in 1774 by David Gardiner, the sixth proprietor, one hundred and thirty-five years after the original settlement. The estate had then become a garden of beauty. From eighty to one hundred dependents kept it trimmed and blooming. Great fields of oats, wheat, and other grains, made graceful obeisance to the sickle. Some two thousand loads of hay were stored in its barns every autumn. Three hundred or more cattle grazed in its sunny pastures; and five times as many sheep—with

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## PURITANISM IN NEW YORK

### ITS ORIGIN AND GROWTH UNTIL THE MIDDLE OF THE XVIII CENTURY

Puritanism is the great religious force which wrought a second Reformation in Great Britain. The Reformation of the 16th century was restrained by the vast power of the monarch and his prelates. It assumed a form differing from the two great branches of the Reformation which flowed from Wittenberg and Zurich. The British Reformation was directed by civil power, so as to carry the nation as a mass in the Reform movement. It was a conservative reformation compromising with the past and designed to be an Anglo-Catholicism rather than a Protestantism. But the Protestant party was not satisfied, still less was the Papal party willing to submit. Hence the religious conflicts which have been the chief forces in the history of Great Britain and her colonies. The Protestant and the Papal parties were restrained but not conquered. They were constrained by persecution to become more earnest, devout and zealous. The Protestant party urged a thorough Reformation. It advanced beyond the Protestantism of the Continent to higher and grander principles of Reform. It gave British Protestantism the characteristic name of Puritanism.

It is common to think of Puritanism in connection with the Congregationalism of New England, or the Nonconformity of England. Puritanism is rather the reforming party in the churches of Great Britain which eliminated itself from the Papal party on the right and the Anglo-Catholic party in the center, and pressed for the complete reformation of the national churches. The struggle of parties continued with varying fortune in the successive reigns from Henry VIII. to Charles I., when the folly and madness of Archbishop Laud brought on the life-and-death struggle which gave the Puritans the control of Great Britain for twenty years. The Puritans strove to reform the national churches of England, Scotland and Ireland, and unite them in one church government with the same forms of worship and doctrine. This was the great aim of the Long Parliament and the Westminster Assembly of divines. They failed owing to the development of three antagonistic parties among the Puritans themselves, namely, Episcopal Puritans, Presbyterian Puritans and Congregational Puritans. The majority of these Puritans in the 17th century were Presbyterians, and they produced their platform in the Westminster symbols.

But they were prevented by Cromwell and the Congregationalists from putting their church government in operation. And there was no inconsiderable number of Puritans who preferred the Episcopal form of government and a liturgical worship. These conformed to the established Church of England at the Restoration. In New England, Puritanism tended to Congregationalism, although there was no inconsiderable amount of Presbyterianism mingled with it.

Puritanism is easily recognized by its principles. It insists upon the Protestant doctrine of Justification by faith *alone*. It maintains the Calvinistic doctrine of salvation by grace *alone*. It recognizes the principle of Wicklif and Tyndall; the authority of the word of God *alone*, in matters of religion. The Puritans urged reformation in doctrine, worship, church government and life, in accordance with the word of God *alone*. The Puritans also maintained the principle of a National Church. The Separatists were of a different stock, carrying on the Anabaptist movement of the period of the Reformation. It was not until the Restoration that Presbyterian Puritanism and Congregational Puritanism were excluded from the Church of England and forced to separation.

The Restoration and the conflicts terminating in the Revolution of 1688 established the Episcopal Church of England and Ireland, the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, and in a certain sense the Congregational Church of New England. It was the irony of the situation which led the Presbyterians of Scotland and the Congregationalists of New England to speak of the Episcopal separation, as they themselves were named Non-conformists in England and Ireland.

New York had been settled by Hollanders. The Reformed Church of Holland was the national church of the colony. Holland in the 17th century distinguished herself above all other lands for religious toleration. Here the exiled Puritans of the several sorts found a home, and from thence they migrated singly and in bands to America. Presbyterian Puritanism was nearest of kin to the Reformed Church of Holland. The Puritans gave to the Hollanders their Pietism and Covenant Theology, and made a poor exchange in accepting so much of Dutch Scholasticism. From Holland the Congregational type of Puritans migrated to New England; Presbyterian Puritans sought refuge with the Dutch in New Amsterdam.

Queens and Suffolk Counties, Long Island, and Westchester County on the borders of Connecticut, were settled by Puritans from New England and from Old England. These seem to have been chiefly Presbyterian in their tendencies, although they employed their township organizations for the

calling and support of their ministers, in accordance with their views as to the union of Church and State.

The earliest Puritan minister in the State of New York seems to have been John Young. He settled at Southold, L. I., and organized a township church, October 21, 1640. He had been ordained in the Church of England. He remained at Southold until his death, February 24, 1672.\*

The second Puritan minister was Abraham Pierson, a Yorkshire clergyman, who settled at Lynn, Mass., and from thence removed to Southampton, L. I., with his flock in 1641. In 1644 he removed with a portion of them to Branford, Conn., and again, in 1667, to Newark, N. J., where the first Puritan church in New Jersey was established.†

The third Puritan minister was Francis Doughty. He had probably been vicar of Sodbury, Gloucester, England, where he was silenced for nonconformity. He emigrated to Taunton, Mass., in 1637. When the church was gathered in that place, Doughty maintained the Presbyterian doctrine of infant baptism, over against the Congregational, and "opposed the gathering of the church there, alleging that according to the covenant of Abraham all men's children that were of baptized parents, and so Abraham's children, ought to be baptized, and spoke so in public, or to that effect, which was held a disturbance, and the minister spoke to the magistrate to order him. The magistrate commanded the constable, who dragged Master Doughty out of the assembly. He was forced to go away from thence with his wife and children."‡ He and Richard Smith, an elder, and their adherents, were forced to exile by the Congregational majority. They found refuge among the Dutch. Doughty secured the conveyance of Mespat (near Newtown), L. I., with the view of establishing a Presbyterian colony there. The settlement was begun in 1642, but the Indian war broke up the colony in 1643, and the minister and his flock went to Manhattan Island for shelter during the war. He became the first Puritan, and, indeed, Presbyterian minister, in our metropolis. He ministered here from 1643-48, and was supported by voluntary contributions from the Puritans and the Dutch of the city.§ He also preached at Flushing for awhile. The Dutch ministers, Megapolensis and Drusius, report August 6, 1657, to the Classis of Amsterdam: "At Flushing they heretofore had a Presbyterian Preacher who conformed to our church, but many of them became endowed with divers opinions, and it was with them *quot homines tot sen-*

\* E. Whitaker, History of Southold, 1881, p. 113.

† It still lives, vigorous and strong, as the First Presbyterian Church of Newark.

‡ Thomas Lechford, Plain Dealing, 1642, p. 40.

§ Doc. Hist. N. Y., I. pp. 305-6, 311, 331, 334-5, 341, 426, 553; II. 93.

*tentia*. They absented themselves from preaching, nor would they pay the preacher his promised stipend. The said preacher was obliged to leave the place and to repair to the English Virginias." \* His daughter married Adrien Van der Donck, a prominent lawyer of the city. Owing to the failure of the colony, Govs. Kieft and Stuyvesant sought to recover the claim upon Mespat, but Doughty declined to restore it. He was at last glad to escape from the wrath of Stuyvesant, and fled to Maryland, where he preached to the Puritans for many years.

The fourth Puritan minister was Richard Denton, minister at Halifax, England, settled at Wethersfield, Conn., in 1630. He removed to Stamford, Conn., in 1641, and in 1644, with a portion of his flock, to Hempstead, L. I., where he remained until 1658, when he returned to England. Denton was a Presbyterian. He is so recognized by the Dutch pastors of New Amsterdam, who wrote to the Classis of Amsterdam in 1657: "At Heemstede, about seven Dutch miles from here, there are some Independants; also many of our persuasion and Presbyterians. They have also a Presbyterian preacher named Richard Denton, an honest, pious, and learned man. He hath in all things conformed to our church. The Independants of the place listen attentively to his preaching, but when he began to baptize the children of such parents as are not members of the church, they sometimes broke out of the church." † He also ministered to the Puritans in our metropolis in an English Puritan church. This was not a separate church building, but the band of Puritans to whom Doughty ministered. They worshipped alongside of the Dutch and the French, in the same church building within the fort, and at different hours of service. The evidence for this service of Denton in our city is derived from an ancient book of records handed down in the author's family:

"Sarah Woolsey was born in New York, August ye 3d, in ye year 1650. Aug 7, she was baptized in ye English church by Mr. Denton, Capt. Newtown godfather. George Woolsey was born in New York, October 10. 1652; October 12 he was baptized in the Dutch church, Mrs. Newtown godmother. Thomas Woolsey was born at Hemsted, April 10th 1655, and there baptized by Mr Denton. Rebeckar Woolsey was born at New York Feb 13. 1659. Feb 16 she was baptized in the Dutch church, Mr. Bridges, godfather, and her grandmother, godmother." The distinction is clearly drawn between *English* church and *Dutch* church. The connection between New York and Hempstead is manifest. The minister, Mr. Denton, baptized one child at Hempstead, another in the English church in New York. Mr. Denton did not baptize Rebecka in 1659, because he

\* Doc. Hist. N. Y., III. p. 106.

† Doc. Hist. N. Y., III. p. 107.

had just left Hempstead for England in 1658. Denton was therefore the second Presbyterian minister in New York city.

From this time forward Puritan ministers settle in New York State with greater rapidity and in greater numbers. Joseph Fordham settled at Southampton, L. I., in 1646, Thomas James at Easthampton, L. I., in 1648, and John Moore at Middleburgh, L. I., in 1652.

There is an interesting description of a Puritan service at Westchester conducted by two laymen, Robert Bassett and a Mr. Bayley, probably ruling elders, in 1656,\* the one reading a sermon, the other leading in prayer.

William Leverich settled at Huntington, L. I., in 1658; Jonah Fordham at Hempstead in 1660; Zechariah Walker at Jamaica, in 1662. We do not know whether Fordham and Walker ministered to the Puritans in New York City. It is more than likely, in view of the previous connection through Doughty and Denton, and the subsequent connection through Vesey, McNish and Makemie. Thus when the colony of New Amsterdam was surrendered to the Duke of York, September, 1664, there were within the present bounds of our State 6 Puritan ministers settled with their flocks. There were Puritan bands in New York City and at Rye and Westchester without pastors.

The colony was recaptured by Holland July, 1673, and finally surrendered to the English October, 1674. Edmund Andros became governor under James II., and at once entered upon a struggle with the Dutch and Puritan population in civil affairs, but, so far as New York is concerned, seems not to have troubled the Puritan churches. John Bishop, Puritan pastor at Stamford, writes to Increase Mather, July 10, 1677, that there had been "two churches lately gathered in the island, viz., at Jamaica and Huntington, with the Gov.; good and free allowance, as soon as asked, and that in the way of New England Congregational churches, which liberty I doubt not but he will readily grant to any people, and able ministers if desired." † Gov. Andros reports in 1678, "There are religions of all sorts, one Church of England, several Presbyterians and Independents, Quakers, and Anabaptists of several sects, some Jews, but Presbyterians and Independents most numerous and substantial." ‡ During these times, the Puritan churches lost many of their veteran pastors, but continued to increase in numbers:

*Nathaniel Brewster* settled at Brookhaven and supplied Eastchester in 1665; *John Prudden*, supplied Jamaica, 1670; *Eliphalet Jones*, Rye, *Ezekiel*

\* Doc. Hist. N. Y., III. p. 557.

† Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll. VIII. 4th Series, p. 302.

‡ G. H. Moore, Hist. Mag. 1867, p. 325.

*Fogg*, Eastchester, and *Joshua Hobart*, Southold, in 1674; *John Harri-man*, Southampton, and *William Woodruff*, Jamaica, and *Peter Prudden*, Rye, in 1675; *Thomas Denham* settled at Rye, 1677, and *Morgan Jones* at Jamaica in 1678. Thus, at the time when Gov. Andros made this report 8 Puritan ministers were at work in the province of New York. During the reign of James II. Puritans flourished in the province. The only difficulty was to secure a sufficient number of ministers. The great charter of 1683-4 granted liberty of conscience and protected the religious rights of the Puritans as well as the Dutch.

The Revolution of 1688 brought toleration to the Puritans of Great Britain, but brought the Puritanism of America into graver perils. After the disorders of the Revolution, Gov. Sloughter, "a profligate, needy, and narrow-minded adventurer," took charge of the Province, and the troubles of the Puritans began. In the meanwhile, *Joseph Taylor* settled at Southampton in 1680; *Jeremiah Hobart*, at Hempstead, 1683; *Warham Mather*, at Westchester, *John Woodbridge*, at Rye, 1684; *Dugald Simson*, a Scotch Presbyterian, at Brookhaven, 1685; *Joseph Whiting*, at Southampton, 1687. Thus in 1691 there were 9 Puritan ministers at work in the Province. In 1691 the Puritans of the metropolis desired to have *Edward Slade* as their minister, but it is probable that Gov. Sloughter would not consent.\* Gov. Fletcher, a "covetous and passionate man,"† took charge August, 1692, and exerted himself to overthrow the Puritanism of the Province and establish the Church of England.

In 1693 an Act of Assembly was passed to enable townships to settle ministers and provide for their support. The Puritan towns availed themselves of the Act, and chose vestrymen and church-wardens to carry it into effect. February 12, 1694, the Vestrymen of New York City assembled, all members being present.

"Upon reading an Act of Gen<sup>l</sup>. Assembly entituled an Act for settling a ministry and raising a maintenance for them in the city of New York, & it was proposed to this board what Persuasion the person should be of by them to be called to have the Care of Souls and officiate in the office of minister of this Citty, by Majority of Votes itt is the opinion of y<sup>e</sup> board that a Dissenting Minister be called to officiate and have the care of souls for this Citty as aforesaid." ‡

But the Governor would not give his consent to a Dissenting minister.

As Dr. Moore says: "There can be no doubt that it was the intention of the Assembly to provide for the maintenance of the Dissenting clergy.

\* G. H. Moore, *Hist. Mag.* 1867, p. 326. † Bancroft, *Hist. U. S.*, II. p. 38.

‡ G. H. Moore, *Hist. Mag.* 1867, p. 330.

Such had been the manifest tendency of the previous legislation on the subject. All the Assembly but one were Dissenters, and the Church of England was hardly known in the Province. . . . In fact, it was arbitrarily and illegally wrested from its true bearing, and made to answer the purpose of the English Church party, which was a very small minority of the people who were affected by the operation of the law."\*

The Governor desired to secure the place for *John Miller*, chaplain of the British forces, but in vain. This same John Miller reports in 1695 that there were at least forty families of English Dissenters in the city.

January 26, 1695(6) the Puritan Vestrymen elected by the people, chose *William Vesey* to be their minister. *William Vesey* was born in Braintree, Mass., 1674, graduated Harvard 1693. He was trained by Increase Mather, and sent by him to strengthen the hands of the Puritans in New York. Vesey began preaching at Hempstead, and, as so many of the pastors of Jamaica and Hempstead before him and after him, also ministered to the Puritans of our metropolis in the year 1694-5. He was thus the fourth Puritan minister known to have been connected with our city.

The Church of England men were now determined to take matters in their own hands without regard to the Vestrymen. Accordingly ten principal men, led by Cols. Heathcote and Morris, March 19, 1695-6, petitioned Gov. Fletcher for leave to purchase ground and erect a church. This was granted, and they were permitted to collect funds for the purpose, and received aid in every way from the authorities.

Col. Heathcote also made a bold and successful stroke of policy. He prevailed upon the Puritan minister to conform to the Church of England and to sail to England for orders.

August 2, 1697, Vesey was ordained by the Lord Bishop of London, and returned to become the first rector of the Episcopal Church in this city, and its most zealous advocate against his former friends and associates. The conformity of Vesey to the Church of England was the most unfortunate event that could have happened to Presbyterian Puritanism in New York State. It gave the Episcopal Church the primacy in the city, which by right belonged to the Presbyterian Puritans. We have a Presbyterian view of it from a letter of *James Anderson*, the first Presbyterian pastor, December 3, 1717. He says: "After the English had it, endeavors were used by the chief of the people who understood English, toward the settlement of an English Dissenting minister in it, and, accordingly, one was called from New England, who, after he had preached some time here, hav-

\* Hist. Mag. 1867, p. 328.

ing a prospect and promise of more money than what he had among the Dissenters, went to Old England, took orders from the Bishop of London, and came back here as a member of the Established Church of England. Here he yet is, and has done, and still is doing what he can to ruin the Dissenting interest in the place."

The Rev. Alex. Campbell, a missionary of the Society for Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, who was severely, but, as we believe, justly dealt with by Vesey, says in bitterness: "He was a bigot for the N. E. Independency before he came over to the church, and now a bigot for the church against the Dissenters." "In the height of his zeal for non-conformity the Hon. good-natured Col. Heathcote, admiring the greatness of his memory and the volubility of his speech, by the prospect of a much better settlement at New York than what he had at Hempstead, prevailed with him to go to England and receive orders."\* In our judgment these were not the motives which influenced Vesey to conform to the Church of England. At this time there was a strong tendency on the part of the Presbyterian type of Puritans to conform in England, on account of the liberality of the leading bishops and their antagonism to the Jacobite High-Churchmen. There was the feeling among Presbyterian Puritans that the Episcopal form of government was preferable to the Congregational. The Low-Church Episcopalian and Low-Church Presbyterian of England were scarcely different. The leading Presbyterians of England were willing to accept Archbishop Usher's model, and a little reasonableness on the part of the returning bishops would have swept the entire Presbyterian party of England into the Established Church. One can readily understand that a man like Vesey, with such tendencies, could easily have been prevailed upon to see the advantages of combining the Presbyterian and Episcopal parties of our metropolis in one church organization.

We have still another view of this from an address of the friends of Gov. Hunter to the Lord Bishop of London (circa 1714). "In the year 1697, Col. Fletcher, the Governor, by his example and countenance, promoted the building of Trinity Church in New York by voluntary contribution, and placed in it the present incumbent, Mr. Vesey, who was at that time a dissenting preacher on Long Island. He had received his education in Harvard College under that rigid Independent, Increase Mather, and was sent from thence by *him* to confirm the minds of those who had removed for their convenience from New England to this province, for Mr. Mather having advice that there was a minister of the Established Church of England come over in quality of chaplain of the forces, and fearing that the

\* Protestation, N. Y., 1733.

Common Prayer and the hated ceremonies of our church might gain ground, he spared no pains and care to spread the warmest of his emissaries through this province, but Col. Fletcher who saw into this design took off Mr. Vesey by an invitation to this Living, a promise to advance his stipend considerably, and to recommend him for holy orders to your Lordships predecessor, all which was performed accordingly, and Mr. Vesey returned from England in Priests orders." \* Whatever the motive of Vesey may have been, there can be no doubt that the mass of the English speaking people of the metropolis were Presbyterian Puritans, and that he was called to be their pastor. The Church of England party consisted of a few new comers in the army and civil government. Vesey betrayed the Presbyterians who had chosen him as their leader. We are not surprised that his treachery was in part successful. The Presbyterian vestrymen were not allowed to call another minister. Instead of the legal vestrymen of the act of 1693, an extraordinary vestry, composed of members of the Church of England, and chosen by members of the Church of England, was constituted by authority of the Governor. † The Presbyterians had nowhere else to worship in their own tongue, so that for several years many of them worshiped in Trinity. As the friends of Gov. Hunter say (circa 1714), "We have yet no dissenting congregation in English in the town, which we fear makes ours larger than it would be if there was one." ‡

The Puritans enjoyed a brief rest under the administration of the "kindlier" Earl of Bellamont, who arrived in 1696, but unfortunately he soon died, and was succeeded by the infamous Lord Cornbury, who "joined the worst form of arrogance to intellectual imbecility." §

The able, genial, but crafty Col. Heathcote settled at Scarsdale Manor in Westchester county in 1692. He became colonel of militia of the county, and the most efficient advocate of the Church of England. He did more for its establishment in the province of New York than any one else, or indeed than all others combined. Heathcote tells us something of his own methods in a letter to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, April 10, 1704:

"The people of Westchester, Eastchester, and a place called Lower Yonkers, agreed with one Warren Mather, and the people of Rye, with one Mr. Woodbridge, both of New England, there being at that time scarce 6 in the whole county, who so much as inclined to the church. After Mather had been with them for some time, Westchester parish made

\* Doc. Hist. N. Y., III. p. 438.

† Doc. Hist. N. Y., III. p. 407 seq.

‡ Doc. Hist., III. p. 444; C. W. Baird, Mag. Am. Hist. 1879, p. 605.

§ Bancroft's Hist. U. S., II. p. 41.

choice of me for one of their church wardens, in hopes of using my interest with Col. Fletcher to have Mather inducted to the living. I told them it was altogether impossible for me to comply with their desires, it being wholly repugnant to the laws of England to compel the subject to pay for the maintenance of any minister who was not of the national church, and that it lay not in any Gov<sup>s</sup> power to help them, but since they were so zealous for having religion and good order settled amongst 'em, I would propose a medium in that matter, which was, that there being at Boston, a French Protestant minister, Mr. Bondett, a very good man, who was in orders from my Lord of London and could preach in English and French, and the people of New Rochelle being destitute of a minister, we would call Mr. Bondett to the living, and the parish being large enough to maintain two, we would likewise continue Mr. Mather, and support him by subscription. The vestry seemed to be extremely well pleased with this proposal, and desired me to send for Mr. Bondett, which I immediately did, hoping by that means to bring them over to the church, but Mather, apprehending what I aimed at, persuaded the vestry to alter their resolutions, and when he came they refused to call him, so that projection failing me, and finding that it was impossible to make any progress toward settling the church so long as Mather continued amongst us, I made it my business in the next place to devise ways to gett him out of the country, which I was not long in contriving, which being effected and having gained some few proselytes in every town, and those who were of the best esteem amongst 'em, who having none to oppose them, and being assisted by Mr. Vesey and Mr. Bondett, who very often preached in several parts of the country, baptizing the children, by easy methods the people were soon wrought into a good opinion of the church, and indeed much beyond my expectations."

Thus the artful Col. Heathcote knew how to get rid of the faithful Puritan minister, and to gain over the unfaithful Vesey and Bondett, so as to accomplish his design of transferring the Puritan population into the bosom of the Church of England. This was the condition of affairs when Gov. Cornbury arrived and added his brutal tyranny to the artful schemes of Col. Heathcote.

In the meanwhile the churches of Great Britain were arming themselves for more aggressive work. In 1690 the Presbyterian and Congregational Puritans combined in a union in London, and similar unions were constructed all over England. July 1, 1690, a General Fund was established by the two denominations to aid in educating ministers to supply feeble churches and the extending of the Puritan faith. But unfortunately the

Congregationalists and Presbyterians could not agree, and accordingly they divided their strength and organized a Presbyterian fund and a Congregational fund. The Church of England roused herself to greater activity in behalf of the colonies. Dr. Bray was the prime mover in this. In 1696 he went over to Maryland as commissary of the Bishop of London. In 1698 the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge was founded for the purpose of promoting Christian knowledge in the plantations by furnishing Bibles, prayer books, and religious treatises and erecting parochial libraries. Dr. Bray returned to England in 1701 and presented a noble memorial, in which he says: "My design is not to intermeddle where Christianity under any form has obtained possession, but to represent rather the deplorable state of the English colonies, where they have been in a manner abandoned to Atheism; for want of a clergy settled among them."\* Through his influence the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts was organized in 1701. This Society at once began an aggressive work in the colonies. The first missionary of the Society in New York was John Bartow, who was put in possession of the Puritan churches of Eastchester, Westchester and Jamaica, by the arbitrary power of Gov. Cornbury. The Puritan ministers Joseph Morgan of Westchester and John Hubbard of Jamaica were forced to retire from their church buildings and parsonages.

A letter of Mr. Bartow to the Secretary from W. Chester, N. Y., Dec. 1st, 1707, gives a graphic representation of the struggle from his own partisan point of view. He says that "after winter was over I lived at Col. Graham's, 6 miles from the church; and all the summer preached twice every Sunday, sometimes at Westchester and sometimes at Jamaica on Long Island about 2 miles distant from Mr. Graham . . . and once I met with great disturbance at Jamaica. Mr. Hobbart their Presbyterian minister, having bin for some time at Boston returned to Jamaica the Saturday night as I came to it; and sent to me at my lodgings (being then in company with our chief justice Mr. Mumpesson and Mr. Carter her Maj<sup>ty</sup> comptroller) to know if I intended to preach on the morrow? I sent him answer I did intend it. The next morning the bell rung as usual but before the last time of ringing Mr. Hobbart was got into the church and had begun his service, of which notice was given me, whereupon I went into the church and walked straightway to the pew, expecting Mr. Hobbart would desist, being he knew I had orders from the Governor to officiate there; but he persisted and I forbore to make any interruption. In the afternoon I prevented him; beginning the service of the church of En-

\* Memorial, London, 1700.

gland before he came; who was so surprised when after he came to the church desk and saw me performing divine service, that he suddenly started back and went aside to an orchard hard by; and sent in some to give the word that Mr. Hobbart would preach under a tree; when I perceived a whispering thro the church and an uneasiness of many people, some going out, some seemed amazed not yet determined to go or stay. In the meantime some that were gone out returned again for their seats, and then we had a shameful disturbance, hawling and juggling of seats; shoving one the other off, carrying them out and returning again for more so that I was fain to leave off till the disturbance was over and a separation made by which I lost about half of the congregation, the rest remaining devout and attentive the whole time of service, after which we lockt the church door and committed the key unto the hands of the sheriff. We were no sooner got into an adjoining house but some persons came to demand the key of their meeting house, which being denyed they went and broke the glass window and put a boy in, to open the door, and put in their seats and took away the pew cushion, saying they would keep that honour for their own minister; the scolding and wrangling that ensued are by me ineffable. The next time, I saw my Lord Cornbury he thanked me, and said he would do the church and me justice, accordingly he summoned Mr. Hobbart and the head of the faction before him, and forbade Mr. Hobbart ever more to preach in that church for in regard it was built by a publick tax it did appertain to the established church, which it has quietly remained ever since and now in possession of our reverend brother Mr. Urquhart. My Lord Cornbury threatned them all with the penalty of the statute for disturbing divine service but upon their submission and promise of future quietness and peace he pardoned the offense. Not long after this, my Lord requested me to go and preach at East Chester, accordingly I went (tho some there had given out threatning words should I dare to come) but tho I was there very early and the people had notice of my coming, their Presbyterian minister, Mr. Morgan had begun service in the meeting house, to which I went straitway and continued the whole time of service, without interruption, and in the afternoon I was permitted to perform the church of England service, Mr. Morgan being present and neither he nor the people seemed to be dissatisfied, and after some time of preaching there afterwards, they desired me to come oftener, and I concluded to minister there once a month, which now I have done for about three years, and Mr. Morgan is retired into New England."\*

\* It was not until the year 1727, after many years of strife and litigation, that the Presbyterians of Jamaica gained possession of their church building and other property which had been illegally and violently taken from them, and was at last restored by court of law.

Col. Heathcote represents that Joseph Morgan was ready to conform. But in this case he was hasty in judgment. Morgan was of tougher fiber than Vesey. He resisted all the influence brought to bear upon him and remained faithful. He labored for many years as a Presbyterian minister, and died in New Jersey in connection with the Synod of Philadelphia. Mr. Hubbard continued the struggle at Jamaica for several years, preaching in barns and private houses. Rye was taken possession of by Thomas Pritchard, and afterwards by Mr. Muirson, and John Jones, pastor of Bedford, was forced to retire to Connecticut after arrest and reprimand before the Council.\*

But all this was preliminary to the conflict which was carried on in New York City in the spring and summer of 1707.

Francis Makemie, a Scotch-Irish minister, came to America in 1683, and settled on the Elizabeth River, Virginia. He preached here and there as an itinerant in Virginia for several years. He went to Barbadoes, and was there licensed under the Toleration Act; remained pastor several years, until, in 1698, he removed to Accomac county, Virginia, and established several preaching places which were licensed according to the law of the colony. In 1704 he went to London and appealed to the London Boards for funds and men. The London Puritan ministers supplied support for two missionaries for two years, and he returned with John Hampton, an Irishman, and George McNish, a Scotchman, in 1705. In the spring of 1706 these three united with four Puritan ministers of Pennsylvania and Delaware in the erection of the first American classical Presbytery in Philadelphia. Makemie, in a letter to Benj. Colman, March 28, 1707, states "our design is to meet yearly, and oftener, if necessary, to consult the most proper measures for advancing religion and propagating Christianity in our various stations." The organization of the Presbytery was to consolidate the Puritan forces of the Middle colonies. The Massachusetts ministers combined in 1705 in Associations and Standing Councils. The Connecticut churches in 1708 organized on the Saybrook platform and in consociations. The Puritans of the American colonies realized that they were now to struggle with the organized energies of the Church of England with all the power and influence of the Tory Governors at its back.

After the adjournment of the Presbytery, Oct. 27, 1706, Francis Makemie took with him John Hampton and set out on a journey to Boston, probably to consult with the Boston ministers. They stopped at New York on their way. They were invited by the Puritans of the city to

\* C. W. Baird, *Hist. of Bedford Church*, 1882 p. 36 seq.

preach for them. The consistory of the Dutch Church, in accordance with their generous custom, offered their church edifice for the purpose. But their kindness was frustrated by the refusal of Gov. Cornbury to permit it. Makemie therefore preached Jan. 20, 1706-7 in the private house of William Jackson on Pearl Street.\* William Jackson had been chosen vestryman for several years. He had taken part in calling Slade and Vesey as Puritans. He and the other Puritans of the metropolis were only waiting for an opportunity to secure a Puritan minister. On the same day Hampton preached at Newtown on Long Island. On the following Tuesday Makemie, with Hampton, went to Newtown to preach on the next day according to appointment, but they were there arrested on a warrant from Gov. Cornbury, on the ground that they had preached without his permission. They were detained until March 1st, when they were brought before the Supreme Court on the writ of *habeas corpus*.

The charge against Hampton was not pressed, but Makemie was released on bail to appear for trial June 3d. He immediately returned to Philadelphia with Hampton to the meeting of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, March 22, 1707. From thence he writes to Benj. Colman, of Boston: "Since our imprisonment we have commenced a correspondence with our Rev. Breth. of the ministry at Boston, which we hope according to our intention has been communicated to you all, whose sympathizing concurrence I cannot doubt of, in an expensive struggle, for asserting our liberty against the powerful invasion of Lord Cornbury, which is not yet over. I need not tell you of a pick<sup>d</sup> Jury, and the Penal laws, are invading our American sanctuary, without the least regard to the toleration, which should justly alarm us all."

The New England ministers immediately wrote to Sir Henry Ashurst, Sir Edmund Harrison, and other London agents, April 1, 1707: "Except speedy relief be obtained, the issue will be, not only a vast oppression on a very worthy servant of God, but also a confusion upon the whole body of Dissenters in these colonies, where they are languishing under my Lord Cornbury's arbitrary and unaccountable government. We do therefore earnestly solicit you, that you would humbly petition the Queens majesty on this occasion, and represent the sufferings of the Dissenters in those parts of America which are carried on in so direct violation of her majesty's commands, of the laws of the nation, and the common rights of Englishmen."

\* This sermon was printed under the title: A Good Conversation. A Sermon preached at the city of New York January 19<sup>th</sup> 1706, 7. By Francis Makemie, Minister of the Gospel of Christ. Boston 1707, and was reprinted in Collections of the New York Historical Society, III., 1870, p. 411.

Makemie returned to New York, and sustained his trial. He was defended by three of the ablest lawyers in the Province—James Reigniere, David Jamison, and William Nicholl, and acquitted on the ground that he had complied with the Toleration Act, and had acted within his rights as a Puritan minister. He produced his license to preach under the Toleration Act in Barbadoes, and this was recognized as valid throughout the Queen's dominions. The claim of Cornbury, that it was necessary that he should have a special license from the Governor of New York, was simply ridiculous. But notwithstanding his acquittal, Makemie was obliged to pay the costs of the prosecution as well as the defense, amounting to the large sum of £83 7s. 6d. This trial, followed by the bitter pursuit of the acquitted man on the part of the wrathful Governor, was the culmination of a series of tyrannical acts which aroused the entire Puritan body of the colonies and of Great Britain to action. The arbitrary acts of Gov. Cornbury were indefensible. He had exceeded his prerogative, transgressed the provisions of the Toleration Act, and violated the liberties of the Dissenters, and indeed twisted and perverted the royal instructions to himself. He even intermeddled with the missionaries of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, in Foreign Parts, and gained the hostility of all the better elements in the Church of England. The New York Assembly, in April, 1707, remonstrated against his actions, charged him with bribery, with encroachment on the liberties of the people, and finally expressed their determination to redress the miseries of their country.\* He was recalled, and in 1709 Lord Lovelace took his place, to be followed, in 1710, by Robert Hunter, "the ablest in the series of the royal governors of New York, a man of good temper and discernment."† Under his administration the tyranny ceased, and the struggle of Presbyterianism and Episcopacy in New York was left to its natural development. In 1710 Makemie's friend, Geo. McNish, the Scotsman, came to Jamaica, and at once assumed the leadership of the Puritans in the Province of New York. He was called in a regular way, in accordance with the Act of 1693, by the church-wardens and vestry of Jamaica. He was a member of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, and the Jamaica church now became a part of the Presbytery. Mr. Poyer (missionary of the S. P. G.) was given possession of the church property by the authority of Gov. Hunter. But McNish carried on the battle with great ability. Gov. Hunter declined to put Poyer in possession of the parsonage. He and the chief justice Mompesson, held "that it would be a high crime and a misdemeanor," to do this save by due course of law. His moderation displeased Poyer, Vesey, Bartow, and

\* Bancroft, Hist. United States, II. p. 42.

† Bancroft, Hist. U. S., II. p. 44.

Thomas, who had become accustomed to the arbitrary measures of Cornbury, and they complained to the Bishop of London; but the laymen, Col. Heathcote and Col. Morris, and the good chaplain, Sharp, sustained the Governor, and placed themselves on the side of justice and right. Col. Morris, in his letter of February 20, 1711, comparing the strength of Puritans and Churchmen, says: "There is no comparison in our numbers; and they can, on the death of the Incumbent, call persons of their own persuasion in every place but the city of New York. . . . I believe at this day the church had been in much better condition, had there been no act in her favour; for in the Jerseys and Pennsylvania, where there is no act in her favour, there are four times the number of churchmen that there are in the Province of New York, and they are so most of them upon principle. Whereas nine parts in ten of ours will add no credit to whatever church they are of." Col. Heathcote says, in his letter Feb. 11, 1711: "Many of the instruments made use of to settle the church at Jamaica, in its infancy, were of such warm tempers, and, if report is true, so indifferent in their morals, that, from the first beginning, I never expected it would be settled with much peace or reputation."

McNish became a tower of strength, about whom the Puritans of the Province of New York rallied. With the accession of the House of Hanover in 1714, persecution of Puritans in America ceased. In 1715 Samuel Pomeroy, of Newtown, united with the Presbytery of Philadelphia. In 1716 these two were authorized to join with others in establishing the Presbytery of Long Island. Geo. Phillips, of Setauket, united with them, and these three ordained Samuel Gelston, pastor of Southampton in 1717. In the summer of the year 1717, James Anderson, a Scotsman, preached for a month to a small handful of people in New York City. These sent him a call to Newcastle, Delaware, where he was settled. The Synod transported him to New York, and he began his work in the late autumn of 1717. December 3, 1717, he wrote to Principal Sterling, of Glasgow, for aid. The congregation went to work to erect a church building. In the spring of 1718 they were permitted to worship in the City Hall while their church was in course of erection. They raised £600 by private contributions in the city, and applied for aid to the colony of Connecticut and the Church of Scotland. The Legislature of Connecticut ordered a collection throughout the colony, and it was speedily forwarded. There was some delay in the help from Scotland. The cost of ground and expense of building were unexpectedly great. The church became involved in debt and disputes, and were greatly discouraged.

Nov. 22, 1718, William Tennent settled at Eastchester and began to

rebuild Puritanism in Westchester Co. He removed to Bedford May 1, 1720, and remained till Aug., 1726, preaching with wondrous zeal in the several townships of the country.\* The troubles in the Presbyterian Church of our city grew worse and worse. Two parties developed, dividing the trustees and people. Dr. Nicoll and Patrick McKnight were with the pastor on one side, Messrs. Livingston and Smith were on the other. Sept. 19, 1720, Anderson and his supporters applied to Gov. Burnett for an Act of Incorporation, and they were opposed by a remonstrance of Gilbert Livingston and Thomas Smith, and failed to secure it.

Sept. 26, 1720, Messrs. Livingston and Smith complained to the Synod and questioned the regularity of the proceedings of the Presbytery of Long Island in settling Mr. Anderson; and complained of his sermons. The Synod sustained the Presbytery in settling him, but expressed the wish that the sermons "had been delivered in softer and milder terms in some passages." Dr. Nicoll represented to the Church of Scotland "that some who had hitherto appeared forward to promote the work not only withdrew their assistance, but vigorously opposed the same. . . . A stop was put to this good work for the space of twelve months, during which time the walls, half raised, stood as a monument of ridicule to the enemies of our profession, who were not wanting to make us their daily derision on this account." The real trouble was with the narrowness of the pastor. He pressed his Scotch peculiarities and offended the English in his congregation, and they could not endure him. They withdrew in 1722, and organized a separate congregation, and called Jonathan Edwards as their minister. Dr. Nicoll was obliged to pay these two trustees who withdrew half of the amount of the bond, £175. These trustees were on the church bond for that amount. Anderson writes to Principal Sterling, Sept. 9, 1723:

"We in this congregation are now, by burden of debt and other unnatural oppression, brought to the utmost pinch of necessity, so that if we meet not with speedy relief, we shall in all human probability, be obliged to quit striving and give up our interest in this place."

Patrick McKnight went to Scotland and appealed to the Synod of Glasgow for aid for the Scotch and English Presbyterian Church in New York (as he calls it), April 5, 1722. Dr. John Nicoll went over to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland for aid in the next year. May 16, 1724, it was resolved by the General Assembly to make a collection for the purpose. £401 2s. 6d. were raised and sent over to Dr. Nicoll.

September 20, 1723, a committee of conference with the ministers of Connecticut was appointed by the Synod of Philadelphia, and as a result the

\* C. W. Baird, Hist. Bedford Church, p. 45 seq.

two congregations were consolidated, but the wounds were only partially healed. The difficulties assumed another phase. Dr. Nicoll nobly stood in the breach and assumed the debts of the church, in reliance upon the aid promised by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. This help was tardy. After the principal sum had been paid the balance continued to be a burden for a long time. But Dr. Nicoll now had to defend the gifts from Scotland from the pastor and his adherents, who claimed that a portion of them should be set aside to pay the deficiency in the pastor's salary. But Dr. Nicoll rightly contended that these funds were collected in Scotland for a specific object, namely, the church building, and could not be alienated to another object. In this he was sustained by the Church of Scotland in the prolonged discussion which followed. Dr. Nicoll managed the finances too much by himself, and was not sufficiently considerate of his associates in the trusteeship, so that in 1725 the three united with the pastor in demanding an explanation. They complained of charges of interest, non-cancellation of bonds and other irregularities, and brought these charges before the Presbytery of Long Island and transmitted them to Scotland. But Dr. Nicoll was sustained by the people of the church and by the Church of Scotland, so that at last James Anderson was forced to retire and Ebenezer Pemberton was called from New England. Under his pastorate the church prospered greatly. The good Dr. Nicoll departed in peace October, 1743. As his pastor said in a funeral discourse in the First Presbyterian Church in Wall Street: "These walls will be a lasting monument of his zeal for the house and public worship of God, in the erecting of which he spent a considerable part of his estate. While the Presbyterian Church subsists in the city of New York, the name of Dr. Nicoll will ever be remembered with honour, as one of its principal founders and *greatest benefactor*."\*

The Presbyterian Church of New York City now became the center of Puritanism in the province. In 1738 the Presbytery of Long Island was enlarged by several churches in New Jersey, and received the name of the Presbytery of New York.

In the middle of the 18th century Puritanism gave birth to Methodism. This subsequently divided into several varieties, the chief of which were—Wesleyan Methodism and the Methodism of Whitefield's connection. But Methodism influenced more or less all the churches of Great Britain and her colonies. It was a great religious movement like Puritanism before it, of which indeed it was a revival. The Methodism of America in the

\* Sermon of Eben. Pemberton on the occasion of the death of John Nicoll, M.D. N. Y. 1743. p. 24.

18th century was almost entirely Calvinistic, and it did not result in the organization of new sects. But it unfortunately divided all the churches of the colonies into antagonistic forces. The leaders of American Methodism in New England were Edwards, Bellamy, and Colman; in the Middle States Freylinghausen and Tennent. The Presbyterian, and indeed all the Puritan churches of the Province of New York, were in sympathy with the movement of Methodism, and sustained Whitefield when he came over to be its chief captain in 1739. The churches were greatly enlarged. This is enthusiastically described on the Book of Records of the Trustees of the First Presbyterian Church of New York City thus: "About the year 1739, the showers of heaven began to descend upon the congregation, a large increase of gifts were bestowed upon the minister, and the divine presence manifestly appeared among the people, so that upon our doors it might be truly inscribed *Jehovah Shammah*, the Lord is there. The numbers of the congregation greatly increased and the floor of the building became quite full, which some of us had for a long time scarce hoped to live to see." The revival in New York City was discreetly guided by Pemberton, and in Westchester county by Thomas Smith at Rye, and Samuel Sackett at Bedford, and on Long Island by the ministers generally, except James Davenport of Southold, who with more zeal than discretion was guilty of great excesses, and brought the movement into some disrepute.

This new force of Methodism brought the differences already existing with reference to discipline, subscription, education of ministers, and national traditions, to a head. The Tennents and their adherents were excluded from the Synod of Philadelphia in 1741, in the absence of the entire Presbytery of New York. The excluded Methodists all rallied about the Presbytery of New Brunswick. After several years of ineffectual peacemaking, the Presbytery of New York, 1745, combined with the Presbytery of New Brunswick in erecting the Synod of New York. All the churches of the Synod were in sympathy with Methodism. The Puritan churches of Suffolk county now organized the Suffolk Presbytery, in 1746, and were admitted to the Synod of New York in 1749. In 1752 the Rye church united with the Synod, and thus all the original Puritan churches of New York, organized in the 17th century, were combined in one compact synodical organization.

In 1758 the Synods of Philadelphia and New York combined, after the removal of differences and cooling of animosities and prejudices. Nov. 3, 1759, Elihu Spencer, pastor of the Presbyterian church of Jamaica, writes to Dr. Stiles an account of the Dissenting interest in the Middle States. He represents the Presbyterian strength to be greater than that of all other churches combined. In New York and New Jersey (not separated in his

estimate) there were 46 Presbyterian, 20 Dutch Reformed, 12 Episcopal, 8 Baptist, 3 Independent, 2 Lutheran, and 2 French Protestant.\* Thus Puritanism in our State had battled its way for little more than a century. It was planted in little bands in the wilderness. It was nurtured amid perils and persecution. It was toughened by internal strife. It was finally revived by the new impulses of Methodism, and grew with marvelous rapidity. It combined its forces in one compact Presbyterian organization. It was relatively more powerful in the middle of the 18th century than it has ever been since. It has long needed a fresh revival of religious energy. As Protestantism advanced into Puritanism and Puritanism marched forward into Methodism, Methodism will ere long develop into something higher and better than they all. May we not hope that this will be in some more comprehensive phase of Christianity which shall combine in a truly Catholic Church of the Future all those churches which have been separated by the conflicts of the olden time.

*Charles A. Briggs*

\* Mass. Hist. Collection, II. Series I., p. 156.