

A STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF PURITANISM
UPON THE FORMATION OF COLONIAL
EDUCATION IN MASSACHUSETTS BAY

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of Foundations of Education
University of Houston

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Education

by
Elizabeth de Volin Tebeaux
May 1970

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Puritanism, as an attitude of mind, a moral force, and ultimately a movement, grew out of man's recognition of the sovereign majesty of God. From such a belief came reverence for the Bible as the absolute Word of God. Because of these initial ideologies, Puritanism became the desire to purify the Established Church of its human orientation, or to separate from the Church to worship by forms so purified. This definition germinated in the teachings of Wycliff, who not only questioned Papal suzerainty but upheld the efficacy of an educated priesthood of all believers. Wycliff's educational idealism developed deeper roots in the fermenting social soil resulting from the New Learning and from Henry VIII's political, ecclesiastical, and financial split with Rome. Puritanism achieved full blossom in the subsequent reigns of Edward VI, Mary, and finally Elizabeth I, whose emphasis upon building an independent, tolerant, educated, unified nation allowed Puritanism the opportunity to fully develop and focus its defining doctrines.

Massachusetts Bay was founded by Puritan intellectuals at a time when reform doctrines, withstanding siege from both Catholicism and Anglicanism, had attained consummate articulation. Thus Massachusetts Bay was founded to show protestants at home how the Reformation should be perfected. The result was a biblical polity based upon the covenant theology--i. e., by becoming a partner with God, where man promised to obey God, God then granted man salvation, worldly success, and happiness. Because fulfillment of

the civil covenant demanded fulfillment of the personal covenant, education of the young became the important means of assuring that the highly articulate concepts of the Bible State were correctly perpetuated. Otherwise, Puritanism would cease to exist, and the reformers' attempt to build "a city upon a hill" would utterly fail.

Thus the Salem Puritans created an education which, even in the face of wilderness severity, was designed according to the profoundly intellectual traditions of their rich religious and historical heritage. Puritan education, based upon stringent philosophies, advocated humanistic education--the Arts. Puritans believed that Adam's fall had resulted in all men's inability to reason correctly. Yet, the ability to attain regenerate reason was present in every man. Since God was defined as Perfect Logical Ability, the Perfect Mind, then man, created in God's image, retained the ability to approach God through regenerate Logical ability. Thus salvation was not prostration but intellectual elevation. Although complete logical regeneration could never be fully attained or even begun except by God's Grace--distributed upon his elect--education prepared the child for the salvation experience. The Arts were seen as emanating from the Mind of God. That is, the Arts (ectype) reflected God (entype). Mastering the Arts enabled one to approach God, to perceive the Universe, the Mind of God in action, once Grace was bestowed. Hence education became an essential preparation for the salvation experience. In Massachusetts Bay,

books like The New-England Primer, The Day of Doom, The History of Genesis were used to make the child aware of his fallen state. The trivium, the quadrivium, and ultimately technologia (the meaning and essence of the Arts) prepared youth to comprehend, through the Arts, God's ultimate Truth.

Puritanism has been acknowledged as one of the continuing factors in the development of American attitudes, because it was the first ingredient in the American experience to be rigorously articulated. The motivation behind this legacy was largely due to the church-state concept and the belief in government as God-sanctioned, which existed in Europe long before the Reformation. These ideas passed intact through the Reformation and were not only rigorously upheld but combined and rigidly particularized by Puritan theorists. The result was that the Puritan Commonwealth was organized on a God-state concept, where the inward covenant was logically reframed as a federal covenant. Thus spiritual well-being was interpreted as civil welfare and order, social stratification, and obedience to the God-state. Maintenance and perpetuation of this Puritan state demanded education. Thus, children were taught the fear of breaking God's (hence the Commonwealth's) laws and a fear of the dreadful social and spiritual consequence of sin.

The result of this teaching was that even after Puritanism as an orthodoxy died, the conviction and intensity remained alive to infect the consciences of succeeding generations. Thus, the doctrine that man was not a free agent

provided a powerful stimulus to extreme effort. The result was that New-England Puritans not only made themselves physically secure, but immediately began to lay the foundations of government, education, thought, and literature which greatly exceeded the achievements of any other colony and established New England as the intellectual and educational leader of the nation for generations to come.

PREFACE

The roots of the American education system emanated from the colonial period. The strongest influence originated in colonial New England, where life was characterized by an austere sobriety absent in the other early colonial settlements. The essence of this austerity was Puritanism, generated in the religious ferment of sixteenth and seventeenth century England and purposefully, carefully, and diligently planted and cultivated in New England soil.

Until 1630, New England was anybody's country. The little band of Pilgrims, who washed ashore at Plymouth Rock ten years earlier, were too few to impress their philosophy upon a hostile wilderness. But once the Massachusetts Bay colony was founded, the Fate of New England was sealed. In fact, the spirit of American Puritanism originated in the Bay colony and from there disseminated into the other New England colonies. In Massachusetts Bay, Puritan intellectuals had freedom to build New Jerusalem precisely according to the plan which they were confident God had made for them. The goal (which they for a time achieved) was to create an earthly Kingdom of God: a new church and state, family and school, ethic and conduct. The broader goal was to complete the Protestant Reformation, which was not yet accomplished in England and Europe, but which would be (they thought) if only the saints had a perfected working model to guide them.

The purpose of this thesis was to study the effects

of Puritanism, as it ultimately developed through the Massachusetts Bay culture, upon the formation of colonial education. More specifically, the aim was to show how Puritanism in its historical evolution and its doctrinal finesse was inextricably bound up with education ideals, and how Puritan educational ideologies produced an education of a particular kind in Massachusetts Bay. Chapter I surveyed historic events which led to the rise of Puritanism in England. Chapters II and III discussed the character of Puritanism as it flourished in the rocky wilderness of Massachusetts, emphasizing the importance of the education ideal in the establishment and perpetuation of the Massachusetts Bay Commonwealth. Chapter IV attempted to define the characteristics of Puritanism, with its intrinsic educational philosophy, which made it a potent, preponderant force in the American cultural foundation.

The author wishes to take this opportunity to express gratitude and deep affection to Dr. Laurie Zwicky, whose patience, effort, and faith for two traumatic years made this thesis possible. Sincere thanks are also extended to Dr. June Hyer, who graciously allowed the author the privilege of writing this thesis, and to Miss Judy Wolfe, whose friendship was invaluable during the months of research and writing.

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CHAPTER I

THE RISE OF PURITANISM

IDEOLOGICAL BEGINNINGS

Puritanism, as a recognized descriptive term, came into use, Thomas Fuller recorded, about the year 1564.¹ Yet, as there were reformers before the Reformation, so there were puritans before that time which came to be regarded as the prime era of Puritan emergence. Puritanism was not so much an organized system as a religious temper, a moral force, and an attitude toward life, and as such it entered into varied combinations and alliances. Puritanism could fairly be applied to Wycliff and the Lollards as well as to Wesley and the Evangelical Revival.² It was not necessarily synonymous with nonconformist, for there were Puritans in the Church of England. It was not always Calvinism, for Archbishop Whitgift was a Calvinist but no Puritan, while John Milton was a Puritan but certainly no Calvinist.³

Puritanism began as a movement for reform in religion and was instigated by the successors of Chaucer's parson at the beginning of the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. In fact,

¹Thomas Fuller, The Church-History of Britain From Jesus Christ Until the Year 1648 (London: St. Paul's Church-Yard, 1655), Book II, p. 474.

²John Brown, The English Puritans (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1910), p. 3.

³Hugh Martin, Puritanism and Richard Baxter (London: SCM Press, 1954), p. 13.

no clearer picture of the puritan in his social context was ever portrayed by any of the multifarious writers which struggled with the task during the next two centuries.⁴

The parson, Chaucer announced, was an educated man dedicated to teaching his people and administering to their spiritual needs. Although he was poor, "he caude in little thing han suffisance." The parson's purpose was to see that men's lives were directed heavenward. His method could be scathingly censorious, but he preferred to use patient admonition, discreteness, and Christian example. Above all

This noble ensample to his sheep ye yaf,
That first he wroghte, and afterward he taught; . . .
And this figure he added eek ther-to,
That if gold ruste, what shall iren do?
. . . Christes lore, and his apostles twelve,
He taught, and first he folwed it himselve.

The parson's purpose was to

. . . shewe you the way, in this viage,
Of thilke parfit glorious pilgrymage
That highte Jerusalem celestial.

Ironically, Chaucer, in his own manner, distilled the essence of the mature Puritanism of the next three centuries--its emphasis upon the power of preaching, its attempt to justify God's ways to men, and its determination to lead men to an earthly New Jerusalem. The ultimate power and effectiveness of the Puritan sermon would be reached during the New England theocracy. Yet, even in the fourteenth century Chaucer knew that successful preaching involved

⁴William Haller, The Rise of Puritanism (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957), p. 3.

interesting, careful elucidation, which would lead people to spiritual understanding. The preacher had to live the life he preached and thus show the people that religious living was possible and feasible, that man's main concern in life should be the health of his soul, that temporal affairs must not be allowed to displace the higher spiritual goals. The life of the Spirit began with repentance and confession and perseverance against the wiles of Satan. Man's life was to become a pilgrimage, a war against despair and pride. The ultimate prize was eternal life in heavenly glory.⁵

The puritan, whether narrow or broad, was aiming at obedience to God--which he defined as the Meaning of the Cosmos--and the Universe, which he recognized as being the expression of the Mind of God. From such an auspicious idealism, recognition of the sovereign majesty of God and hence, reverence for the Scripture as the Word of God ultimately evolved as the basis of the Puritan spirit in both England and colonial New England.⁶ Due to this transcendent way of perceiving and ordering reality, Puritanism became the desire to either purify the Established Church from its human usages or to worship separately by forms so purified.⁷ This definition germinated in the teaching of Wycliff, developed roots in the religious atmosphere of Henry VIII's reign, and achieved full blossom in the subsequent reigns of

⁵Haller, op. cit., pp. 4-5. ⁶Brown, loc. cit.

⁷H. Hensley Henson, Puritanism in England (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1912), pp. 8-13.

Edward VI, Mary, and finally Elizabeth I, whose reign marks the advent of Puritanism proper.⁸

Wycliff was perhaps the first real Puritan, for he questioned the spiritual and temporal authority of the Pope and attacked the veracity of the Eucharist.⁹ By abolishing the intercessory power of the Church, Wycliff exalted the individual's interpretation of the Bible. The aloofness of the traditional priesthood was denied, for every man became a priest before God and was forgiven and sanctified by God's calling. Wycliff's belief in the potential of human intelligence, his faith in the capacity of plain men anticipated the major principles of seventeenth century Puritanism--its educational mandates, its cultural strength, and the ultimate American idealism.¹⁰ Wycliff's task was essentially a great educational movement--if men could read, they could seek salvation. Hence, through the teaching of Wycliff and the Lollards, who carried forward his teachings, men began learning a new way of prayer, worship, aspiration, and salvation.¹¹

The English Reformation, when it finally occurred,

⁸Brown, op. cit., p. 5.

⁹Thomas Coming Hall, The Religious Background of American Culture (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1930), pp. 17-22.

¹⁰Henry Hallem Saunderson, Puritan Principles and American Ideals (Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1930), p. 18.

¹¹Ibid., p. 22.

was inspired by the "political ambitions, financial greed, and bodily lusts of King Henry VIII." Primarily, Henry VIII accomplished the deposition of papal supremacy from temporal and spiritual dominion over England, establishing in its stead his own royal supremacy over the church, spoliation of the monastic orders, and confiscation of Church lands.¹² With Henry's reign and subsequent excommunication, Tudor history and Puritan history entered a revolutionary period.¹³ This political reformation, coupled with the spread of the New Learning,¹⁴ precipitated the eruption of a moral, intellectual, economic, and spiritual ferment which had been slowly maturing among both mercantile and academic Englishmen since Wycliff and the Lollards over a hundred years before. This ferment was aggravated by the increasing ignorance, irreverence, and laziness of a majority of the clergy, which resulted in an increasing perfunctoriness in their teaching, preaching, and administering the Sacraments. This religious decadence was an affront to people who were completely untouched by skepticism concerning papal suzerainty and the literal truth of Church ritual. These people accused the clergy, and eventually the Church itself, of parodying rather than interpreting the Word of

¹²John Marlowe, The Puritan Tradition in English Life (London: Cresset Press, 1956), pp. 8-9.

¹³James A. Williamson, The Tudor Age (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1953), p. 72.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 74.

God.¹⁵ Furthermore, the Church's stranglehold upon one-third of English land and the immense wealth that flowed into Roman coffers bothered aspiring, educated young Englishmen, who thus became spiritually as well as economically unable to defend the Church.¹⁶ The forces of the New Learning, therefore, became agents of change. Religious reformers who were too radical for Henry's taste still played an important part in achieving his fondest desire--to be finished with popish harassment. The secular education fostered by the Renaissance developed minds eager for trade, commerce, and wealth--minds that were anti-ascetic, and hence anti-Catholic. Due to the shrewd and selfish politics of Henry VIII and the New Learning, English life (unknowingly nourishing the infant Puritan Spirit) found itself facing the possibility of a surprisingly promising future.¹⁷

Thus men once again turned from the Church and sacerdotalism to the Bible itself, and English Puritanism was further nourished by a study of the Bible, both in the Vulgate and in popular vernacular translations.¹⁸ Because of this turning, the Spirit of English Puritanism as such was first evident in 1524. In that year a young Gloucestershire man by the name of William Tyndale prepared to leave

¹⁵Marlowe, loc. cit.; T. M. Parker, The English Reformation to 1558 (London: Oxford University Press, 1950), p. 2.

¹⁶Williamson, op. cit., pp. 74-75.

¹⁷Williamson, op. cit., p. 121; Parker, op. cit., p. 24.

¹⁸Marlowe, loc. cit.

London for Germany to translate the Bible into English. Tyndale's reason for going to Germany was to escape the disfavor of the law enforcement agencies in England (where ecclesiastical regulations of the day prohibited anyone from issuing a translation of the Bible without the endorsement of his bishop), and to consult Luther, who had been his primary inspiration. By leaving England without royal consent, Tyndale was defying church and state, an action which foreshadowed decades of persistent Puritan insubordination and "'reformation without tarrying for any.'" Yet he was remaining within the bounds of passive resistance. Tyndale intended to flood England with Reformational books, but he did not intend to employ force in spreading his ideas. Even at this early date, passive resistance was the burden of Puritan ethics. Tyndale, continuing Wycliff's work, possessed great devotion for the Bible and believed that to place it in the hands of the common people was the greatest blessing he could provide them. This attitude, along with his antipathy toward mass, penance, sacerdotalism, and popery, marked him as a follower of radical Protestantism.¹⁹

The time for the birth of bibliolatry was indeed opportune. The advent of printing coincided with the dawn of the Renaissance. Intellectual awakening occurred. With English translations of the Bible becoming abundant, the joy of the common people was boundless. "Ability to read was

¹⁹M. M. Knappen, Tudor Protestantism (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1939), pp. 3-4.

looked upon as the most enviable of acquisitions, and knots of people stood all day long to hear read to them in their own tongue the wonderful works of God."²⁰ In medieval and Renaissance times, there was a general belief in the literal inspiration of both the Old and the New Testaments, and access to the Bible by laymen inevitably meant that the Word of God as contained in the Bible and every man's personal interpretation became an authority overriding the pronouncements of priests, bishops, and popes. It was not surprising that the Church was perennially concerned with denying direct access by laymen to Holy Scripture. In the minds of Protestants who insisted upon direct access, the Bible not only began to supersede the Church as the source of spiritual authority, but more important, study of the Bible superseded the Sacraments of the Church as a means of salvation. This belief was to become an intrinsic factor in the government, religion, and education of colonial New England, because as the doctrine of individual responsibility for salvation was accepted, the necessity for educating the believer as to his role became evident.²¹

However, the reformers' hopes for a progressively more anti-Catholic church were doomed. After the death of Edward VI, Mary ascended the throne. The most devout and conscientious of the Tudors, she aimed to restore the old

²⁰J. Gregory, Puritanism in the Old World and in the New (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1896), p. 17.

²¹Marlowe, loc. cit.

religion, undiluted Catholicism, with all its lands, as soon as possible. During her reign, Protestantism was defined as treason, and Catholicism as loyalty. Reformers, to escape execution for heresy, left England as quickly as possible. Yet they did succeed, through the aid of continental reformers, in continuing production of their opposition literature.²² John Knox, at the time living in Dieppe, was attempting to extract and expand the traditional reformers' doctrine of passive resistance as designed by Luther and Tyndale twenty-five years earlier. That useful theory, while condemning the people's use of violence against stubborn rulers, did not leave these rulers unpunished. Their sins were merely judged by a higher court. The omnipresent God would punish them in His own right time, following Old Testament ways. Furthermore, Knox attempted to explain the present time of persecution and to offer hope for a brighter future. People and nations who ignored the preaching of the Gospel were punished. England was now suffering because of her indifference to the godly preachers of Edward VI's time. "The remedy was to repent and stand fast in the true profession." God would then shorten the time of chastisement and instead punish his agent of the present persecution. Wicked rulers whose actions served God's purpose were not excused, and their triumph would not endure.²³ Such a belief in God's

²²Knappen, op. cit., pp. 103-104.

²³Knappen, op. cit., pp. 114-115.

certain vengeance upon the wicked was a veritable force within the Renaissance mind and an inextricable belief of Puritanism as well as Calvinism. One example of how Massachusetts leaders effectively used this fearful tenet would be revealed in their educational theory.

MARIAN ECLIPSE AND ELIZABETHAN SETTLEMENT

In 1558, when reformers were certain of Mary's death, they made plans to return to England to form a united front for the establishment of a church on Genevan terms. It was proposed by reform leaders that past differences and theological squabbles be forgiven in order to "reach and practice the true knowledge of God's word, which we have learned in this our banishment, and by God's merciful providence seen in the best reformed churches."²⁴ Had these reformers been dealing with a second Edward, such hopes might have been possible. But Elizabeth was of different stuff. Quite as well-educated as her pernicious half-sister, she possessed none of her religious scruples. Elizabeth never seemed to have worried about the future life. Self-preservation, personal and national power were her chief objectives, for she fully believed that sovereign and people were two aspects of the same thing--the English state.²⁵ To maintain herself and the health of the English state, she never hesitated in using

²⁴Knappen, op. cit., p. 165.

²⁵Williamson, op. cit., p. 248; Knappen, op. cit., p. 167.

affection, sexual desire, or religion. She had never left England. Elizabeth felt no sense of internationalism and felt no obligation to conform to either German or Swiss religious reforms. Display and ceremony, light and color appealed to her, yet none was more than superficial.²⁶ The candles were lighted or extinguished, the crucifix appeared and disappeared as the political situation demanded.²⁷ "Let an opponent stir as though to make a move on the political chess board, and she no longer had eyes for the style of carving on the pawns." Instantly alert, she sacrificed any and all of these likes to the demands of security and power.²⁸

When Elizabeth came to the throne she was fully aware of the unhappy results of the rule imposed by her father, brother, and sister upon the church structure of England. She clearly saw that she must control it or have her sovereignty ruined.²⁹ The English were divided in church loyalty. The majority were Protestant, but many were still Catholic.³⁰ Several hundred executions a year had become indigestible to Protestant-oriented Englishmen, but it had been far too few to eradicate Protestantism. However, at the same time, pure Catholicism was totally inadmissible.

²⁶Knappen, op. cit., pp. 167-168.

²⁷A. L. Rowse, The England of Elizabeth (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951), p. 395.

²⁸Knappen, loc. cit. ²⁹Haller, op. cit., p. 6

³⁰Haller, loc. cit.

Protestants who had withstood the persecution had established their right to exist and be tolerated.³¹ Practically everyone agreed that the church should be maintained by the state. The existence of a society without the Christian church, and the church in any form but a single institution had yet to enter men's minds.³² For the church was society, and it was given, conditioned, and molded by society. Thus the religious organization invariably became an expression of its social and economic character.³³ Although seventeenth-century Puritans in both England and America would advocate Congregationalism as a tool for founding model churches and hence a means for reform, all Puritans (especially the New England variety) were wholeheartedly devoted to the realization of the one true, ruling church as a social, political, and intellectual guide.³⁴

Since there was heated disagreement as to what religion constituted the true church, the Queen's primary religious policy was one of caution. Although she enjoyed pomp and circumstance and felt that ceremonial promoted discipline,³⁵ she could not be Catholic. Such a move would weaken her claim to sovereignty and the throne. Therefore, for practical purposes she selected a variety of

³¹Williamson, op. cit., p. 250. ³²Haller, loc. cit.

³³Rowse, op. cit., p. 386.

³⁴Knappen, op. cit., p. 151.

³⁵Williamson, op. cit., p. 251.

Protestantism designed to serve her political ends. She either avoided or deleted clear-cut theological definitions which might alienate potential political supporters. A thorough, Calvinist-type reformation would antagonize her Catholic subjects, and it could also provide a foothold to international religious groups which could challenge her supremacy. For specifically Calvinism was synonymous in Elizabeth's mind with the ghastly Puritan doctrine that a woman had no right to govern, and that in certain circumstances subjects might justly rebel against their sovereigns. Her personal feeling of hostility to Puritanism was thus furthered and hardened by her shrewd political instincts.³⁶

What actually transpired was that Elizabeth maintained a type of uniformity. Her main ambition was to be queen and live and to maintain a productive society. She knew that the English populace would allow her to do this provided they were given as little interference as possible.³⁷ Thus, the Elizabethan settlement was designed to provide the greatest amount of freedom and the maximum amount of unity under tortuous circumstances.³⁸ By this act, Elizabeth secured her sovereignty and declared the semi-Protestantism of the English church.³⁹ Through her

³⁶Knappen, op. cit., p. 168. ³⁷Haller, op. cit., p. 7.

³⁸Rowse, op. cit., p. 390.

³⁹Haller, op. cit., p. 7. Cf. Fuller, op. cit. Bk. IX, p. 81.

supreme position as church governor, the Geneva leaders were never permitted a voice in English affairs. When the exiles from the Marian eclipse began returning in droves, only those who were conservatives were made bishops.⁴⁰ Elizabeth insisted upon having loyal, dependable bishops who would rigidly assert her authority. The disobedient were punished when their actions threatened the balance and success of her secular and temporal policies.⁴¹ For example, Elizabeth flatly rejected reformers' demands for an ecclesiastical pattern completely purged of papistry, and in the final Act of Uniformity she forced the acceptance of an Edwardian prayer book which was decidedly Catholic in form.⁴² Furthermore, Knox was refused permission to enter England. Goodman returned from the Continent but remained in hiding. Coverdale openly returned but was denied his former bishopric at Exeter.⁴³

The most odious point of contention for both reformers and Puritans was the Queen's declaring herself head of the church and demanding allegiance and acknowledgement from her subjects. The church had always claimed to be an independent realm of the spirit to which all men, including sovereigns, were subject. Elizabeth made it a symbol of royal authority within her nation. As a result, Puritans, who claimed that "we ought to obey God rather than man," and

⁴⁰Rowse, op. cit., p. 397. ⁴¹Haller, op. cit., p. 7.

⁴²Knappen, op. cit., p. 170. ⁴³Ibid., p. 171.

Catholics, who were religiously, emotionally, and intellectually aligned with papal supremacy, both regarded the Elizabethan church as at best "only a temporary compromise and at worst but one remove, if that, from the church of Antichrist." Elizabeth, disappointing both parties, not only failed to reform the settlement-church, but only "swept the rubbish behind the door."⁴⁴ In a few short months after Elizabeth became queen, the Geneva English were thus reduced from the hope of dictating terms for an alliance with the English government to a rather cheerless choice. Either they had to accept the coalition religion the Queen had designed, or they had to refuse to take office by assuming passive resistance.⁴⁵ Puritanism as a movement sprang to life at the shock of church conditions.⁴⁶ Ultimately, the written and spoken attack were the tools which kept the religious controversy alive and provided an opportunity for the firm outlines of Puritan doctrine to focus clearly. Such a state of affairs was ironically fortunate, as the Queen used her appointive power to sap the strength of reform opposition. Many of the leaders decided "'not to desert our churches for the sake of a few ceremonies.'" Once installed, these men tended to lose their extremism, though occasionally they disputed with the Queen's colleagues. However, the

⁴⁴Haller, op. cit., p. 8. Cf. Fuller, op. cit., Bk. IX, p. 81.

⁴⁵Knappen, op. cit., p. 167. ⁴⁶Haller, op. cit., p. 8.

responsibilities of office made them less effusive in their protests.⁴⁷

Actually, it was Elizabeth who was the greatest anti-Puritan in the country. She never lost sight of their implied challenge to monarchy. She was fully aware of the Scottish Puritans' harassment of James. Furthermore, the Puritans were personally antipathetic as well as politically antipathetic to her.⁴⁸ Puritan ministers refused to officiate in her private chapel because of the presence of crosses and candles, although Elizabeth had permitted the removal of images found in the churches.⁴⁹ In short, as a highly educated woman, Elizabeth despised Puritan cant. As a tolerant person, she was disgusted by their hateful, Biblical intolerance and recalcitrance. With her Renaissance attitude toward life, Elizabeth detested Puritan narrowness, their limitations on others' enjoyment of life, their denial of the glory of earthly pleasures. Furthermore, she seemed personally to have preferred not to disturb people for the supposed good of their souls.⁵⁰ But as a queen, and a great one, she would have no challenge to her role. By the same token, she refused any advances by Rome to again bring

⁴⁷Knappen, op. cit., pp. 179-180.

⁴⁸Rowse, op. cit., p. 473.

⁴⁹Knappen, op. cit., p. 171.

⁵⁰Rowse, op. cit., p. 473.

England under the Catholic canopy.⁵¹

SOCIAL ENTRENCHMENT

Social turmoil provided the prolific soil in which Puritanism as a movement began, but its formal inception was achieved, not within the public, but within the ranks of the academic intellectual class. During the Reformation, Cambridge superseded Oxford as the leader in theological education and intellectual exercise. Numerous radical reformers followed in the footsteps of Protestant thinkers who had fled to Geneva during the Marian eclipse but had returned when Elizabeth became queen. Therefore, frustrated zeal and determination transformed Cambridge into an articulate reform hotbed when Elizabeth failed to build the church in a truly Protestant image. Elizabethan policy, perpetuating inconsistency and disregarding radical opinions as long as they were politically harmless, became the golden opportunity for men to delve into scripture, to acquiesce and promulgate their strange, new ideas--in short, to eat forbidden fruit

⁵¹Fuller, op. cit., Bk. IX, pp. 10-11. "[1563] Pope Pius though unsuccessful in his addresses last year to the Queen, yet was not so disheartened, but that once more he would try what might be effected therein. To which purpose he employed the Abbot of Martinegi with most loving letters unto her, desiring leave to come over into England. But the Queen knowing it less difficult and dangerous to keep him, then to cast him out of her Dominions, forbad his entrance into the Realm as against the Laws of the Land, So that he was fain to deliver his Errand, and receive his answer (and that a deniall) at distance in the Low-Countries."

as long as they did not upset the apple cart.⁵²

Cartwright, the first of many stalwart Cambridge Puritans, left disciples who, unable to accept Elizabeth's compromise, fervently continued to indoctrinate the English people with Puritan ideals and to educate them in the ethics of the Puritan life.⁵³ Elizabeth and her bishops never permitted the transposition of Calvinism into ecclesiastical law, but the Puritans were not prevented from converting the populace to Godliness. Behind the reformers remained the strong heritage of the pulpit. Furthermore, there were the opportunities afforded by the shift of population to the towns, by the increase and diffusion of wealth, by the printing presses, and by the availability of Bibles. At the

⁵²Haller, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

⁵³*Ibid.*, p. 8. "The reformers or Puritans were Calvinists, but we shall fail to understand Puritanism if we conceive of English Calvinism in too narrow or rigid a sense. The dynamic Pauline doctrine of faith with its insistence on the overruling power of God, on the equality of men before God, and on immanence of God in the individual soul had long appealed to the English mind. The struggle of the English people to secure their independence from a foreign power as symbolized to them by the papacy had confirmed that appeal. What Calvinism did for them was to supply a current formulation of historic doctrine in lucid, trenchant terms, strikingly supported by the success of the state which Calvin's genius had created at Geneva. There in Geneva, English protestant churchmen, when driven from home by the vicissitudes of domestic religious politics, had found refuge. There they had seen what appeared to be Utopia founded on the Word of God. They had issued that English version of the Word, which became known as the Geneva Bible and which, completed in 1560, became the Bible of the Elizabethan populace, of the Scottish Reformation, and of the New England Pilgrims. The accession of Elizabeth was expected to be the triumph of Calvinism. John Knox had gone home to impose that pattern upon Scotland. No less was hoped to be accomplished in England. As we have seen already, this hope was not realized."

beginning of her reign, Elizabeth had denounced prophesying and had attempted to conform preaching to the traditional homilies. Elizabeth not only disliked sermons, but she regarded them as a bore. "She heard them from within her closet, often transacting them with the window closed."⁵⁴ But as the next decades would clearly reveal, there were no means that state or church could effectively use to silence pulpit or press. Preaching became more popular with all factions. Increase in Bible circulation was as rapid as the increase in the number of pulpits. Catholics produced an English version, while, at the same time, the bishops organized one to compete with the Geneva Bible. Ultimately, King James approved preparation of the authorized version.

Although reaction to Puritanism began among the Anglicans, Calvinist doctrine prevailed in every quarter. The distinguishing characteristic of the Puritan preachers was not only their doctrinal position but the style and purpose of their preaching. Their assertion that men could be saved solely by faith was not unique. However, they presented their beliefs in ways comprehensible and interesting to common men, in expressive, moving images that were designed to evoke repentance, belief, and desire for new life. Preaching of this variety was called "spiritual" in comparison to the "witty" preaching of more conservative faiths.⁵⁵

Spiritual preaching originated at Cambridge near the

⁵⁴Rowse, op. cit., p. 422. ⁵⁵Haller, op. cit., p. 19.

time of Cartwright's expulsion and grew in popularity and influence for the next two hundred years. It was strongly encouraged by the establishment of two new Cambridge colleges, Emmanuel in 1584 and Sussex in 1596. The two were established explicitly for the purpose of preparing a teaching, preaching ministry. From Cambridge, then, came spiritual preachers in mounting numbers, ready to fill pulpits which an avid public made possible. As a result, long before Laud rose to eminence, the spiritual preachers dominated the pulpits of London, Cambridge, and numerous county parishes. Steadily converting increasing numbers to the Puritan way of life, spreading their influence by publishing their sermons and by living exemplary lives, the preachers became the dynamic motive behind the spread of Puritanism among every class in English society.⁵⁶

Because of the ignorance of the clergy, Elizabeth's bishops actually encouraged preaching, as it afforded a means of edification. The bishops further encouraged the quality of the ministry by recruiting more and more ministers from the universities, which, of course, were the incubators of intellectual reform. Thus, the bishops unknowingly helped the spread of the reform spirit, especially by encouraging these ministers to instruct the people in catechism.⁵⁷ The bishops remained unaware of what

⁵⁶Haller, op. cit., p. 20.

⁵⁷Rowse, op. cit., pp. 422-423.

their tolerance was invoking, because the Puritan intellectuals were loyal members of the English church--deceptively tolerant, patient, and shrewd--with "no more liking for uncharitable image-breakers than for priestly image-makers."⁵⁸

The preachers wanted nothing but freedom to preach the Word. Because of the anomalous conditions of time, they were granted that fond wish without serious interference until they had accomplished too much to be stopped without wrecking England. Only then did the spiritual preachers openly refuse to conform. They could wait.⁵⁹ Because their pulpits were solidly established, and because they had the power of wealth and influence behind them, they used their vantage point to increase popular fervor, which ultimately became the deciding factor in establishing Protectorate rule. This religious temper, which the preachers generated for the sake of the Lord, evolved into a dedication and conviction which displaced royal supremacy and ecclesiastical mandate.⁶⁰ Ultimately, it was the power and tradition behind the Puritan temper which gave the dominant form and character to all aspects of New England culture.

To summarize, English Puritanism, that "spiritual

⁵⁸Williamson, op. cit., p. 268.

⁵⁹Haller, op. cit., p. 20.

⁶⁰Haller, op. cit., p. 21.

outlook, way of life and mode of expression,"⁶¹ which later flowered so magnificently and prolifically in Milton, Bunyan, and Defoe, primarily emanated from the unacceptable conditions Elizabeth forced upon the reform movement within the English church. The Puritans throughout Elizabeth's reign were thwarted but not crushed. "They always had powerful sympathizers at court, who at least found them useful in keeping the political balance among conflicting interests at a working equilibrium." Thus, the compromise policies which halted their efforts to control the church did permit them to continue to propagate their ideals. Because there was no sustained effort to annihilate Puritanism, the reformers gained precious time to develop and strengthen their doctrine, their characteristic attitudes, their determination to triumph in the ecclesiastical war.⁶²

Elizabeth well knew that Puritan opposition was more formidable than Catholic enmity. Ironically, the Puritan, unlike the Catholic, drew his strength from England, which had developed an independence and a distinctive nationality that Elizabeth herself had created. The Puritan who had grown up with the new English nationalism was all English, nationalist, and loyal to Elizabeth. Yet, he was ultimately more loyal to what he dearly believed the Queen should be, and that was a righteous sovereign who would battle

⁶¹Haller, op. cit., p. 9; cf. J. W. Allen, English Political Thought 1603-1660 (London: Methuen and Company, 1938).

⁶²Haller, loc. cit.

Antichrist and rip the vestments of popery from the English church. There was no way to conclude how many Puritans were in England, for there was no definition of what constituted one. A few isolated themselves from the church, but most were loyal church members. The important fact, however, was that they constituted a large segment of the laity, a section of the people whose religious beliefs had a definite and frightening future.⁶³

Thus, Puritanism owed much to the Elizabethan church for the power it achieved during the years of the Stewarts. The economic benefits of halting payments to Rome, the enormous increase of national wealth that resulted from the secularization of Church lands, the simplification of the ecclesiastical fabric--hence, the greater efficiency and achievement of Protestant English Society--served as a moral and mental "toning up." The evolution from a church of the mass and of the heart to a church of the sermon and the mind meant an increase in edification, a stimulus towards education and virtue. The growing demand for preachers, the push for lecturers and lectureships, the thirst for sermons, the voluminous publication of sermons all led to a change in the staple mental diet. In the course of this change, classics like the sermons of Donne and Andrews were written, and there was marked mental advancement and education among the raw masses, who cried out for knowledge. Thus, it was

⁶³Williamson, op. cit., p. 329.

Elizabeth's bishops who set the stage--a self-conscious, aware seventeenth century--on which the Puritan drama was to be played.⁶⁴

JACOBEOAN AND CAROLINE FERMENT

In 1603, the accession of James I, a king who had been reared in the church of John Knox, gave the Puritan reformers renewed hope. They proposed once more to advance their cause by frontal attack:

Great at this time was the Calm in the English Church, the Brethren not endeavoring in any thing in Opposition to the Hierarchies. . . . For they beheld the Queens old Age as a Taper of Virgin Wax now in the Socket, ready to be extinguished, which made them address and apply themselves with all diligence, to JAMES, King of Scotland, the Heire apparent to the Crowne, as to the rising Sun, whom they hoped will be more favourable to their proceedings. Hopes not altogether groundless, whilst they considered the Power of the Presbytery in the Church of Scotland, where Bishops, though lately restored to their place, were so restrained in their Power, that small was their Command in Church affairs, which made the Brethren in England thence to promise Great matters to themselves, but with what successe shall be seen hereafter.⁶⁵

James was hardly across the border when he was presented a petition signed by several hundred Puritan ministers who urged the immediate reorganization of the church. During the first glorious moments of his new prosperity, James promised to consider the Puritans' proposals. The proposals presented at the Hampton Court Conference in 1604 outlined a form of church government that would have removed the

⁶⁴Rowse, op. cit., pp. 434-437.

⁶⁵Fuller, op. cit., Bk. X, p. 2.

entire English ecclesiastical system from the hierarchy of traditional church government and placed it under the jurisdiction of the preachers.⁶⁶

Dr. Reynolds: All things disliked or questioned, may be reduced to these four heads;

- 1) That the Doctrine of the Church might be preserved in purity, according to Gods Word.
- 2) That good Pastors might be planted in all Churches to preach the same.
- 3) That the Church government might be sincerely ministered according to Gods Word.
- 4) That the Book of Common Prayer might be fitted to more increase of Piety.⁶⁷

The Scottish king well knew "what it was to be brow-beaten by godly divines." James could advocate orthodox Calvinism, but Puritan Presbyterianism was out of the question. Therefore, after allowing himself the satisfaction of chopping logic with Puritan leaders for three days, James acidly announced some foolish intention of harrying them all out of England and confirmed the authority of the bishops.⁶⁸ After Knox became strong enough in Scotland, James said that

Then began they [Puritans] to make small account of her [Queen Mary's] supremacy, . . . wherewith . . . they made a farther reformation by themselves. How they used the poore Lady my mother, is not unknowne, and how they dealt with me in my minority. I thus apply it. My Lords the Bishops, I may thank you that these men plead thus for my Supremacy. They think they cannot make their Party good against you, but by appealing unto it; but if once you were out, and they in, I know what would become of my Supremacy, for NO BISHOP, NO KING. I have learned of what cut they have been, who preaching before me, since my coming into England, passed over, with silence,

⁶⁶Haller, op. cit., p. 49.

⁶⁷Fuller, op. cit., Bk. X, p. 10.

⁶⁸Haller, loc. cit. Cf. Fuller, op. cit., Bk. X, pp. 7-19.

my being Supreme Governour in causes Ecclesiastical.
Well, Doctour, have you any thing else to say?

Dr. Reynolds. No more, if it please your Majesty.

His Majesty. If this be all your Party hath to say,
I will make them conforme themselves, or else I will
harrie them out of the Land, or else do worse.⁶⁹

During her reign, Elizabeth had used prelacy as a means of upholding her power and position as supreme head of the church. But to James, there was no conjunction between sovereignty and body politic. In his eyes, he stood above and beyond all human institutions, because God had so decreed. The existence even of Parliament depended upon his grace and favor. Ultimately, Elizabeth's success had been due to shrewd recognition of the absolute necessity of toleration, and the failure of the Stewarts was attributable to their inability to admit the inexpediency of royal authority and intolerance ineffectively applied.⁷⁰

After the Puritans were soundly rebuffed at Hampton Court, James implemented the Convocation to expell about three hundred clergymen for failure to conform. For six years the work of enforcing conformity continued. In 1610 Abbot was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury. He himself conformed to the church ceremonial, but he was a lax disciplinarian and sympathized to some extent with the feelings of the Puritans. Under his management, the rule of the

⁶⁹Fuller, op. cit., Bk. X, pp. 18-19.

⁷⁰Haller, op. cit., p. 48; Allen, op. cit., pp. 3-4.

Church was less strictly exercised.⁷¹ However, by occasional unrelenting demands for conformity (which resulted in the ecclesiastics burning two heretics, the last ever to be burned in England),⁷² James prevented the Puritans from instigating their government. He really agreed with them upon most theological points, and oddly enough Parliament, which at the time was no assembly of Puritans, would have been agreeable to the Puritans' demands, if James had not invoked the power of Convocation. What Parliament wanted was that every possible Christian influence be used to curtail the abounding sin and vice.⁷³ James' chief accomplishment was to persecute the preachers just enough to turn them into staunch enemies and to heighten their power with the public. "The chronicles of non-conformity, of course, still ring with indignation at the tyranny of the first two Stuarts, but the truth is that no persecutors probably ever won so evil a reputation by doing so little harm to the cause of the dissenters and so much to their own." The preachers retained the support of their patrons, remained in the Cambridge fellowships and lectureships, continued issuing their sermons, tracts, and commentaries in print. Puritan aspirations for immediate reform again diminished, but pungent

⁷¹Samuel Rowson Gardiner, The First Two Stuarts and the Puritan Upheaval (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1902), p. 16.

⁷²Haller, op. cit., p. 49.

⁷³Gardiner, op. cit., pp. 15-16.

articulation of a religious temper completely incompatible with Stuart policies did not. The result was that the Puritan preachers' power and prestige grew faster than before. Furthermore, there was an aggressive audience increasingly willing to listen.⁷⁴

The fermenting social soil which was used to implant the Puritan doctrine could not have been better. The Gunpowder Plot indicated the people's loyalty to the crown and also succeeded in exacerbating their lethal hatred of Romanism. People deplored the death of Prince Henry, who was believed to be unflinchingly Protestant.⁷⁵ Bitter disapproval was expressed at the possibility of a Spanish marriage for Charles, and even more hostility was generated at the protracted bungling that ultimately turned the purely political gambit into a humiliating fiasco.⁷⁶

James ultimately forgot that the success of a government depended upon the spirit of the leaders. The Tudor sovereigns were anxious for popular favor and refused to force their dearest wishes upon a hostile populace. James, however, fancied himself above popularity. Puritanism, because of James' compulsory peace, had, it was true, for a short time ceased to be dangerous. James' foreign policy, however, tried the patience of all Englishmen. A Spanish

⁷⁴Haller, op. cit., p. 50.

⁷⁵Gardiner, op. cit., p. 24; Haller, Ibid.

⁷⁶Haller, op. cit., p. 50. Cf. Fuller, op. cit., Bk. X, p. 100.

marriage for Charles meant special privileges for the English Catholics at home. It meant seeing Catholics increase in such numbers as to force their connivance at court upon Protestant Englishmen. It could also mean that Charles' future children would be reared Catholics and some day utilize royal authority in favor of the Catholic church. Thus, when Puritanism again awoke and flung its power at James' almightiness, the cause was placed upon this unfeasible Spanish marriage upon which he had set his pretentious heart.⁷⁷

England had hardly recovered from Charles' Spanish marriage fiasco, when Charles' marriage to the French princess, Henrietta Maria, was announced.⁷⁸ Difficulties with France ensued, and Parliament was not hesitant in divulging its displeasure at the prospect of a Catholic queen. The religious unrest coupled with James' lack of financial and military acumen in planning the war with France to regain the Palatinate further antagonized a skeptical Parliament.⁷⁹

When Charles became king in 1625, the Buckingham debaucheries increased, costing England men and money. General conditions within the government were becoming more and more unfavorable. To begin with, war with France had begun on a full scale.⁸⁰ In addition to those who had skeptical

⁷⁷Gardiner, op. cit., pp. 29-30. ⁷⁸Ibid., p. 48.

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 38. ⁸⁰Gardiner, op. cit., pp. 57-63.

feelings about such an encounter, the number of Englishmen steadily grew who disapproved what they felt was the sickening extravagance and spoliation of James' court, the impudence of upstart favorites like Buckingham, the pretension of the bishops, the corruption of judges, the extortionate practices of monopolists--all maneuvered by the crown. Thus, the Stuarts, their creatures, and the sordidness of court life were slowly but completely alienating subjects from all classes.⁸¹ Englishmen were becoming even more aggressively English. This meant that "they hated Spain, despised France, dreaded the Pope, and embraced Protestantism with greater fervor the more these historic enemies seemed to menace England." Thus, the more the church became controlled by the prelates, the more prelacy was linked with the crown. The more disfavor royal policy incurred, the more intent all elements of the population grew to follow the Puritan preachers.

The nature of the social ferment provided a certain amount of theological argument, but the real function of the pulpit was to encourage all those who were becoming dissatisfied with prevailing conditions. Thus, the most effective persuasion was not polemic against opponents (although that was at times useful), but persuasion that the Puritan ethic

⁸¹Haller, op. cit., p. 51; F. C. Montague, The History of England From the Accession of James I to the Restoration (Vol. VII of The Political History of England, eds. William Hunt and Reginald L. Poole. 12 vols.; New York: Longmans, Green, and Company, 1911), pp. 227-230.

was the only God-sanctioned way that England could be happily maintained. The people asked what to do to be saved, and the preachers admonished them to place their trust in Jesus, put on the whole armor of God, and establish a Kingdom of God on earth.

The Puritan Revolution was gathering momentum.⁸² There had never been such controversy as to the nature of the church. Should state government, in its duty to God or by national expediency force national unity in religion? Or should all men be left free to find their own religion? Should a compromise be drawn; if so, where? From these problems the battle lines were drawn. In a sense it could be said that the New England experiment emanated from this chaos.⁸³

By 1628, the old Puritanism, which had devoted itself to anti-caps-and-surplices campaigns and energetic remonstrances against any vestige of Roman Catholicism, was receding. A new Puritan movement was forming which evolved from the prevalent evil social conditions which arose during the reigns of James and Charles. Essentially, thoughtful Englishmen were more interested in eradicating sin and immortality than they had ever been in the days of Elizabeth. Yet, there was one great danger to which these concerned men were exposed: they were tempted to search for answers only in systems. Systems of theology, law, and politics would

⁸³Allen, op. cit., p. 199.

each, in its own time, seem to provide the solution. Unconsciously these systems would be erected as barriers against surging immorality which was becoming entrenched in English life--against unscrupulous falsehood, such as that of Raleigh; against thoughtless vanity, such as that of Buckingham; against political deceit, such as that of the Spanish marriage scheme. This belief in systems provided further pulsation toward the Great Migration of the 1630's.

Puritanism already seemed to be preparing itself for a high mission. A generation was arising who were devoted to developing and practicing an all-embracing philosophy of life. If they were still anxious to purify the Church of England, they were more anxious to exemplify what God had ordained of the True Church. These Puritans desired that by the directions of the Bible, interpreted by a type of Calvinism, every man should devote himself to preparation for and fulfillment of life after death. The Puritan preached self-restraint, knowledge, and understanding not in terms of medieval asceticism and its renunciation of the world, but in the belief that the world was the Kingdom of God. In the perfected England which they envisioned, the inglorious festivities of Whitehall and the riotous, drunken revelries of the alehouse would be obliterated. Soberness, temperance, and chastity were to be watchwords of God's society.⁸⁴ The

⁸⁴Samuel R. Gardiner, History of England From The Accession of James I to the Outbreak of the Civil War (London: Longmans, Green, and Company, 1886), VII, pp. 241-242.

Puritans experienced a keen sense of responsibility to God for themselves and others. They sought to drink deeply and soberly from the cup of life that God had given. "Puritanism was the creed of men in deadly earnest about human rights and the worth of the soul and its responsibility to God."⁸⁵

It was because of its demand for a pure, simple morality that Puritanism achieved its hold on a laity disenchanted by the debaucheries of the Stuarts. Developing among men was a recognition that there were goals to be achieved very different from those for which their fathers had struggled. They viewed with dismay the mass of men living in heathenism, and they sought to rouse the profligate into a sense of responsibility to God. In proclaiming the close connection between the individual and his God, the strength of Puritanism was to be found. This strength was educating and sending forth armies of Christian warriors who were patiently and steadfastly infiltrating the ranks of high society in which James and Buckingham were playing their catastrophic pranks.

Yet, the exalted nature of Puritanism possessed peculiar dangers. These reformers were often crassly narrow-minded and egotistical. In their battle against vice, they often became intolerant of those who failed to be properly sympathetic with Puritan ethics.⁸⁶ Pluralities, they

⁸⁵Martin, op. cit., pp. 11, 83.

⁸⁶Gardiner, History of England, III, 242-243.

asserted, only propagated corruption. They found it impossible to believe that any man could really deny that congregational church government had been prescribed in the Scriptures. Anyone who could not read Scripture in the "True Light" was obviously ungodly.⁸⁷ If ever Puritans succeeded in acquiring the upper hand in politics, they would find it difficult to refrain from coercing an unsympathetic world into morality.⁸⁸ Yet, such was precisely what Puritan leaders attempted and for a time accomplished in New England government, education, and total way of life.

SUMMARY

In retrospect, it may be claimed that there were two causes which mainly contributed to the rise and spread of Puritanism. First, there was the influence of the Reformation. The Reformation was essentially a religious movement, a revival of New Testament, apostolic Christianity. It shared the fate of all great movements and became afflicted with mean and more inglorious issues--civil, political, and ecclesiastical--and these tended to somewhat obscure its real character. This fate occurred in England, where the Reformation at first appeared to be nothing more than a temporary political squabble, a struggle between king and pope for supremacy. Still the forces which propelled it

⁸⁷Allen, op. cit., p. 144.

⁸⁸Gardiner, History of England, III, p. 243.

onward were religious.⁸⁹ The same desire for human knowledge and worth and for transcendent Truth, which had carried millions away from Rome, continued to carry men in the Protestant direction. As Catholics had become Protestants, so Protestants became Puritans, who, in turn, propelled by a belief in the possibility of spiritual perfection through learning, morality, and grace,⁹⁰ left indelible marks on all aspects of the culture of America. The great danger of Catholicism was that it was piety based upon fervor rather than knowledge. Thus, there was a divorce between religion and morality. The result had been "the paucity of really attractive and saintly characters and widespread moral corruption on either side of the Reformation barrier." It was not that these men were devoid of religious feeling, but they were unable to intellectually associate it with their vices.⁹¹

Furthermore, the Queen was one of the best-educated people in all of England, and she and her statesmen, churchmen, gentry, and merchants realized the necessity of education for coping with the modern world and England's new freedom. The Reformation, to achieve its goal, had to produce educated people as a result of spiritual invigoration.⁹² Thus, as the Spirit of Puritanism was engendered by Renaissance and Reformation ideals, so would New England

⁸⁹Gregory, op. cit., p. 11. ⁹⁰Ibid., p. 14.

⁹¹Parker, op. cit., pp. 17-18.

⁹²Rowse, op. cit., p. 490.

education, built upon the demand for a learned clergy and a literate populace, be spurred by a similar classical tradition of Renaissance humanism.⁹³

The second influence was that of the Bible. The substitution of the Bible for clerical pronouncements arose with the advent of printing and placed a formidable weapon into the hands of those who attacked the abuses, ignorance, and corruption of the Church. Not only was the cause of the Reformation furthered, but the negation of clerical supremacy allowed recognition of the worthiness of the human intellect. The New Learning was advanced. "'It was wonderful,'" said Foxe the Martyrologist, "'to see . . . with what greediness God's word was read, and what resort to places where the reading of it was. Everybody that could bought the book, or busily read it, or got others to read it to them . . . all divers more elderly people learned to read on purpose; and even little boys flocked among the rest to hear portions of the Holy Scripture read.'"⁹⁴ Therefore, the real value of the religious revolution of the seventeenth century lay not in its substitution of one religion for another, but in the new spirit of challenge, the new freedom for thought and learning, and the possibility of establishing a new way of life which were evoked during the process of change.⁹⁵

⁹³John Hardin Best and Robert T. Sidwell (eds.), The American Legacy of Learning (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1967), pp. 7-8.

⁹⁴Gregory, op. cit., p. 17. ⁹⁵Ibid., p. 19.

CHAPTER II

THE THEORY OF MASSACHUSETTS BAY--PURITANISM PERFECTED

CALVINISM TRANSFORMED

In the seventeenth century, Puritanism evolved from an "attitude of mind" into a stringent theological system. Initially it had been an idealism, one of the means of solving social, political, and religious problems. In religion it had emanated from the demand for preaching ministers and for furthering the Reformation in the English church, a task which Elizabeth I had only partially begun. In English society, Puritanism had sought the elevation of morals, which were in a state of shocking degradation. In politics, Puritanism focused into a new national movement which demanded that the people be a power in the state. Essentially, "Puritanism marked the beginning of the rising tide of human aspiration for a way of life better than the world had yet known."¹

Ultimately, the essence of Puritan piety could be best digested in terms of its theological convictions. The Puritan theory of the Christian life derived its peculiar power from its belief concerning the nature of God and His relation to man. Its doctrinal beginning was that of Calvin: "the complete and absolute sovereignty of God over all of

¹Edward Channing, A History of the United States (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1909), I, 271.

life."² Man's goal was to "contemplate with steady, unblinking resolution, the absolute, incomprehensible, and transcendent sovereignty of God," "to stare fixedly and without relief into the very center of the blazing sun of glory." God was consummate perfection, that One who was "at one and the same the embodiment of perfect goodness and justice, perfect power and mercy, absolute righteousness and knowledge." This supreme essence could never be delineated, so that He seemed even momentarily to assume any contour or feature recognizable to human understanding, nor were His activities subjected to the laws of human reason or natural plausibility. Man would never understand how God's attributes existed without inconsistency. Though he were to speculate forever, he could never "conceivably reconcile plenary forgiveness with implacable righteousness." Calvin felt that man's purpose was not to pursue such syncretism. Man's duty was to accept God's Being, His Word, His decrees on faith. God was ultimate mystery, in Whom all mysteries and contradictions were ultimately solved, even though men, the creatures of the world, would never completely comprehend such an ontology.³

Pure Calvinism, which defined God in terms of "an unchained force, an incalculable essence," was entirely

²H. Richard Niebuhr and Waldo Beach (eds.), Christian Ethics (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1955), pp. 298-299.

³Perry Miller, Errand Into the Wilderness (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956), p. 51.

adequate during the period of Protestant germination. Fideistic simplicity minimized endless speculations, simplified thought and meditation, and facilitated action rather than fruitless questionings. The fifteenth and sixteenth century "warriors of the Lord" were convinced that in God's Being all the "cosmic enigmas" which had been argued by Scholastics were settled, that they had no need to seek ultimate metaphysical sense. Through faith and inner spiritual revelation, the ultimate truth could always be ascertained. However, by the early years of the seventeenth century,⁴ Protestant schools had been founded. Warfare with Catholicism was carried onward through skillful debate as well as battle. Logic evolved to the point that it became as powerful a weapon as any sword. Calvinism was forced to become more than the simple dogmatism it had been. It needed "amplification, a concise explication, syllogistic proof, intellectual as well as spiritual focus." In short, Calvinism desperately needed precisely what it basically could not recognize--a rationale.⁵

To understand why men like Ames, Preston, and Perkins should have been driven to articulate formation of Puritan ideologies, one must only remember that the world of the Puritan was also the world of Bacon, Descartes, and Hobbes. Like their intellectual contemporaries, Puritan thinkers were attempting to understand, to formulate explicable laws,

⁴Miller, op. cit., p. 52. ⁵Ibid., p. 53.

to focus and stabilize a seemingly ominous universe and a rapidly deteriorating chain of being. The Puritans could not define the universe as "extension and movement," as Descartes had done. They could not define it atomically as Hobbes so ruthlessly did. Unlike the Newtonians, they could not deify its integral physical construction.⁶ The apparently insurmountable task which seventeenth century Calvinists faced was that of confining God to time and space and reason and regard for human logic, of justifying His ways to men in forms comprehensible to the intellect, of confining and logically defining "the transcendent Force, the inexpressible and unfathomable Being," of performing this gargantuan task without diminishing "the sense of the hidden God," without degrading God to a mechanism and depriving Him of unpredictability, omniscience, and mystery. In the final analysis, this task was one of ascertaining and axiomatically assuming the reliability of human reason and the trustworthiness of the human mind--in short, of comprehending the Universe by lodging it in logical human conceptions.⁷

The solution of this dilemma was that seventeenth-century Puritanism emerged as a rational brand of Calvinism. Hence

even if the specific doctrines of Calvinism were unchanged at the time of the migration to New England, they were already removed from pure Calvinism by the differences of tone and of method. It was no longer a question of blocking in the outlines; it was a question of . . . intellectualizing the faith, of exonerating it from the

⁶Miller, op. cit., p. 92. ⁷Ibid., pp. 55-56.

charge of despotic dogmatism, of adding demonstration to assertion--of making it capable of being 'understood, known, and committed to memory.'⁸

THE COVENANT

A result of this change in tone was that in Massachusetts Bay the Calvinist conception of providence was stringently particularized. Before coming to America, Puritans had become advocates of the covenant theology. They redefined the relationship between the predestined and his God as not merely "the passive reception of grace, but as an active covenant, similar to that between Abraham and Jehovah."⁹ According to the covenant doctrine, man was not redeemed by a spiritual injection of grace administered by God, but by becoming a partner with God, by forming an explicit compact with God, where man promised to obey God and where God was thereby totally committed to grant man salvation.

Beginning with this idea of an inward, individual, personal covenant, Puritan theologians extended its ramifications to church and state. They contended that a nation composed of saints, all of whom had individually established a covenant with God, could therefore establish a covenant with Him as a group, "that as each individual had inwardly subscribed the bond, so a society formed by their regenerate

⁸Miller, op. cit., p. 53.

⁹Perry Miller, "Declension in a Bible Commonwealth," American Antiquarian Society Proceedings, LI (April 16, 1941), p. 42.

action would swear to the covenant in outward unison." Therefore, not solely in the privacy of their individual prayers and meditations but in the government of the New England Massachusetts Bay Commonwealth, they fashioned a binding treaty. God and they stated the terms they would observe toward each other--the Puritans promising to adhere to God's law and He, in turn, to reward their diligent obedience.¹⁰ Ultimately, the doctrine of the covenant became the scaffolding for the entire theological and cultural edifice. It was the essence of the program of salvation. As Peter Bulkeley phrased it, "'whatsoever salvation and deliverence God gives unto his people, his setting them free from this misery, he doth it by viertue of and according to his Covenant.'" ¹¹

The covenant represented the grandest step which Puritanism (or rational Calvinism) made in attempting to transform spiritual verity into eternal reality. The church covenant provided concrete, working form for the covenant of grace, and the civil covenant gave veracity and muscle to the church covenant. New England society was literally organized, as Baxter stated that it well should be, into a Holy Commonwealth.¹² The people of Massachusetts Bay

thus entered into a holy society upon their own volition, inspired by their devotion to the Word of God, their

¹⁰ Miller, "Declension," p. 43.

¹¹ The Gospel-Covenant, or the Covenant of Grace Opened, p. 27, cited by Miller, "Declension," p. 60.

¹² Herbert W. Schneider, The Puritan Mind (The University of Michigan Press, 1958), pp. 24-25.

desire for pure ordinances and holy living . . . Voluntarism was reconciled with authoritarianism, in politics as in private life, by the hypothesis that none should have the benefit of the law but those who had subjected themselves to it. Just as the liberated will of the saint is at once submitted to the rule of the Bible [covenant of grace], so the sovereign power of the holy commonwealth is committed through a national covenant to performing only those actions which God commands."¹³

When a nation established a formal covenant with God, the Master of Creation restricted His awful power to conform to the terms established in the covenant. He was restricted by His divine choosing, but nevertheless He remained restricted. From this time forward, He could punish only when the society, through its action, warranted rebuke. When a nation was fortunate enough to live under His covenant, the society was no longer in danger of experiencing "inexplicable and irrational distress." The welfare of the society depended upon the moral health of its citizens. The good or bad fates of the society would be only what it justly merited.¹⁴ Winthrop told the colonists that they would always be able to discern their position with God. After God ratified the covenant, which He did by bringing them safely to Massachusetts Bay, if the Puritans strictly performed the terms of the covenant, all would be well. But, said Winthrop, if the settlers should "'fall to embrace this present world and prosecute our carnall intencions,'" the Lord would justifiably display His wrath to a "'perjured people.'"¹⁵ If the

¹³Miller, "Declension," p. 45. ¹⁴Ibid., p. 44.

¹⁵Winthrop Papers, Vol. II, p. 294, cited by Miller, "Declension," p. 46.

covenanted people fulfilled their promise, stated Thomas Cobbet, "'God will tender them deliverance as their federall right.'"¹⁶

The covenant of the church of Salem stated that

We covenant with our Lord, and one with another, and we do bind ourselves in the presence of God, to walk together in all his ways, according as he is pleased to reveal himself unto us in his blessed word of truth; and do explicitly, in the name and fear of God, profess and protest to walk as followeth, through the power and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. We avouch the Lord to be our God, and ourselves to be his people, in the truth and simplicity of our spirits. We resolve to approve ourselves to the Lord in our particular callings; shunning idleness as the bond of any state; nor will we deal hardly or oppressively with any wherein we are the Lord's stewards. Promising also unto our best ability to teach our children, and servants the knowledge of God and of His Will, that they may serve Him also.¹⁷

Education, which shall be observed closely in Chapter III was viewed as an essential means by which a chosen people could attain the salvation experience and hence perpetuate the covenant. After 1670, when New England piety began its decline and ministers castigated the cancerous moral rebellion which was sweeping New England, the decay of "public spirit" was the first symptom to be attacked. Degenerate "public spirit" meant a public apathy toward supporting the ministry and education. Learned ministers and Puritan thinkers, seeing the cultural erosion resulting from provincialism, warned that if the "Common Wealth of Learning" were permitted to subside,

¹⁶A Just Vindication of the Covenant and Church-Estate of Children of Church-Members, p. 40, cited by Miller, "Declension," p. 46.

¹⁷Schneider, op. cit., pp. 22-23. Italics mine.

the disintegration of the civil and ecclesiastical commonwealth would follow. Survival of the Bible State depended upon perpetuation of its highly articulate conceptions in its citizens. Thus, unless a supply of learned men be maintained, "'who sees not what ignorance, and Rudeness and Barbarism will come in like a floud upon us.'"¹⁸ "'Should Academical Learning fall in this land,'" warned Mather, "'darkness shall then cover the earth, and gross darkness the people.'"¹⁹ The Fall of education would lead to an irrevocable breaking of the Covenant and literally the obliteration of Puritanism.

Spiritual assurance, which was the prime reason for the covenant, demanded two requirements--moral obligation and the establishment of a strict ethical code. In two respects this goal could be achieved: first, by injecting moral effort as one of the terms of the covenant; and second, by "partial rehabilitation of natural man," which, will be shown in Chapter III, was inextricably involved with education. Therefore, to the Puritan mind, faith became not merely acquiescence in irrational ethics, but the power to believe that which men can also accept intellectually. Faith, then, became not intoxication, but education.²⁰

¹⁸Urian Oakes, New England Pled With, pp. 57-58, cited by Miller, "Declension," p. 66.

¹⁹Increase Mather, Earnest Exhortation, p. 24, cited by Miller, "Declension," p. 66.

²⁰Miller, Errand, p. 74.

Actually, the covenant theory, freeing man from the absolute, complete moral impotence of strict Calvinism, made possible and literally demanded the enlightenment and enlargement of his innate capacities. Second, the covenant became a logical means for immediately utilizing the innate capacities in practicing moral effort, even before they were purified by Grace.²¹ Education, therefore, had two roles: it became an instrument of moral rectitude while, at the same time, it prepared the soul for salvation. Of greatest importance was the observation that Puritans believed that it had been with these considerations in mind that God framed the covenant precisely as He did, and thereby demonstrated His cleverness by devising a scheme to insure the continuation of moral obligation even in a covenant of forgiveness. Hence, in the essence of New England social theory, education was one of the terms of the covenant.

Puritanism, in a broad sense, still encompassed Calvinistic predestination. But where the Calvinist had believed that divine election was not merited by works but only through arbitrary Divine Grace, Puritan divines reshaped predestination to conform to the covenant theory: faith, education, moral rectitude--i. e., the keeping of the covenant--elicited election by God. Good works were the fruit, the result of God's grace, and a sign of election. For by the fruits man was to know the reality of faith. Works did

²¹Errand, p. 82.

not earn Grace. They were not a "meritorious cause but a sure evidence," John Woolton stated that "'the Godly do good works to confirm their faith and to assure and certify their consciousness of election.'"²² This teaching was useful in encouraging the young toward "sober learning"--mastering their catechism and preparing themselves to work in the commonwealth. By the suggestion that delinquency in effort might mean non-election, men were activated toward a higher realm of activity and achievement. "'Hell is full of purposes but nor performances,'" stated Greenham.²³

How to select the proper calling was a matter requiring great deliberation. Greenham's admonition was that the people should not choose a role which would satisfy their pride, but one that would be servicable to God and profitable to their fellow men. Once having chosen a vocation, one was expected to live with it, pursuing it diligently but without attempting to rise any higher in social status.²⁴ In the opening sentence of "A Modell of Christian Charity," John Winthrop revealed that the bases of Massachusetts' political theory were the sovereignty of God, the foreordained inequality of men, and the God-sanctioned power of the "'greate ones.'" Winthrop believed that God

²²Church Manuell of the Life and Manners of True Christians, sig. F, fol. viii, cited by Knappen, op. cit. p. 394.

²³Workes, Vol. I, p. 650, cited by Knappen, op. cit., p. 395.

²⁴Knappen, op. cit., p. 397.

had ordered the inequality, "'all the differences, for the preservation and good of the whole.'" The "'greate ones'" were to manifest the work of His Spirit in restraining the wicked, and in "'exercising his graces'"--"'mercy, gentleness, temperance.'" The "'poor and inferior sort'" were to exercise "'faith, patience, and obedience.'"²⁵ Ebenezer Pemberton warned that

this intends that we keep within the line and place, that providence has set us . . . We must not without God's call quit our post, thrust our selves into another's province, with a conceit that there we may best serve, and promote the good of the world. But herein observe the will of God by keeping to the service that belongs to our station, which providence has made our peculiar business. Thus every man is to serve his generation by moving in his own orb; and discharging those offices that belong to that order that the government of heaven has assigned to him.²⁶

God's ultimate election, His predestination, was always absolute. He chose unmindful of human merit. But because of the covenant He had consented to bless those who kept the terms of the bond. Through this devious fashion, the Puritans were able to skirt conditional election, and hence Arminian heresy, but they were fully able to achieve all that the Arminians sought by advocating a conditional covenant.²⁷

²⁵Stanley Gray, "The Political Thought of John Winthrop," New England Quarterly, III (October, 1930), p. 681.

²⁶Sermons and Discourses on Several Occasions, pp. 212-213, cited by Perry Miller, "The Puritan Way of Life," Puritanism in Early America, George M. Waller, editor (Problems in American Civilization. Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1950), p. 16.

²⁷Miller, Errand, p. 84; Eugene R. Fingerhut, "Were

THE PURITAN MISSION

Upon the Holy Puritan empire of Massachusetts, the Ruler of the Universe had placed an aggressive task. They were not merely to endure "this vale of tears" but to transform it into "the triumphant Kingdom of God"²⁸ and to serve as a living example to the entire kingdom of reformed Christianity how the Reformation should be brought to an ultimate, veritable conclusion.²⁹ What Winthrop had in mind was a pure form of Biblical polity, designed to improve lives by service to the Lord, to increase the body of Christ, to preserve Puritan posterity (by proper education) from the corruption of the world, so that each could in turn achieve salvation under the purity and power of Biblical ordinances.³⁰

Throughout the middle decades of the seventeenth century, 1630-1670, the government experiment by the elect held promise. Throughout the Bay, the social air was electrified with awareness of God's business. Every soul was outwardly emersed in God-inspired activity and inwardly engaged in tortuous self-questioning as to the purity of its faith. "For the purity of one's faith depended upon the purity of its current of consciousness ebbing and flowing

the Massachusetts Puritans Hebraic?," New England Quarterly, XL (December, 1967), p. 529.

²⁸Chard Powers Smith, Yankees and God (New York: Hermitage House, 1954), p. 132.

²⁹Miller, Errand, pp. 11-12. ³⁰Ibid., p. 5.

between the contaminating streams of Error that flanked it." "Am I revelling too self-indulgently in the emotional conviction of Grace, or leaning toward rational separation from God in the Antinomian sense?" Every person, every child in Massachusetts knew these problems.³¹ Among the desolate pages of the Westminster Catechism, which was memorized and chanted by generations of Puritan children, the essence of Puritan ethics was stated:

Question 1: What is the chief end of man?

Answer: Man's chief end is to glorify God, and enjoy Him forever.

.

Question 39: What is the duty which God requires of man?

Answer: The duty which God requires of man is obedience to His revealed will.³²

To be either in Grace or prepared for Grace was the essence of life in the Holy Commonwealth. The God of Grace lived in both individual and community, in every phenomenon of nature. Every act of the week was veritable progress toward truth or error. But with the Spirit's help, the Puritan ultimately hoped to find himself delivered from darkness and uncertainty into glorious light.³³

The hero of the Puritan commonwealth was, therefore, the godly, righteous, sober man. To be godly meant to be God-ruled in every aspect of daily life. The godly man

³¹Smith, op. cit., pp. 136-137.

³²Niebuhr and Beach, op. cit., p. 300.

³³Geoffrey F. Nuttall, "The Holy Spirit in Puritan Piety," The Puritan Spirit Essays and Addresses (London: Epworth Press, 1967), p. 96.

functioned under the surveillance of the "ever present Lord of Life, unto whom, he believes, all hearts are open and all desires known." The yardstick of the godly man's decision was what God wanted him to do.

Furthermore, God demanded absolute righteousness. Therefore, the godly life was synonymous with the righteous life. God demanded unflinching moral rectitude which struggled relentlessly against the poison of Satan.³⁴

Because Puritanism was a discipline and a conscious covenant, it was vulnerable to the pitfalls which always surrounded a legalistic religion. To attempt to strictly follow God's law was commendable, but for one to live as though Satan were not scheming against him was to commit the horrid sin of presumption. Severe warnings against the feeling of false security produced grave doubts as to whether confidence of salvation were justified.³⁵ Education was used not only as a means of attaining piety but of instilling vigilance. It was far from unusual for New England children to have memorized their catechism by age six and to have read the Bible at least ten times by age twelve. Winthrop often emphasized that the morphology of salvation, justification, and sanctification was knowledge, followed by

³⁴James Fulton MacLean, "The Heart of New England Rent: The Mystical Element in Early Puritan History," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XLII (March, 1956), p. 624.

³⁵Edward K. Trefz, "Satan in Puritan Preaching," Boston Public Library Quarterly, VIII (April, 1956), (July, 1956), p. 148.

conviction, faith, combat, and finally imperfect assurance.³⁶ Because of Adam's fall, all mankind was doomed to carry the lasting stigma of original sin, and even the saved carried the lasting stigma of total depravity, vileness, and helplessness.³⁷ It was enough, then, that man continually strove to reject sin, because original sin always prevented him from living the perfect life. The fatal condition was not sinning, but tolerating delinquency and not continuously striving for unreachable perfection.³⁸ Early Massachusetts church records described the slow, agonizing, self-critical approach to God in which a firm hope of success was mixed with a terrible fear of failure.³⁹

In the Puritan daily schedule, time was always allotted for meditation, prayer, thoughtful Bible reading, and attendance (and rapt attention) to the Sunday sermon.⁴⁰ Puritanism began with the belief in the absolute sufficiency and supreme authority of Scripture. Thus, the sermon became the means by which the flock were led through theological pitfalls which always lurked as potential dangers in

³⁶ Edmund S. Morgan, Visible Saints (New York University, 1963), p. 72.

³⁷ Sandford Fleming, Children and Puritanism (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1933), pp. 44-45.

³⁸ Knappen, op. cit., p. 396.

³⁹ Kenneth A. Lockridge, "The History of a Puritan Church," New England Quarterly, XL (September, 1967), pp. 402-403.

⁴⁰ Niebuhr and Beach, op. cit., p. 301.

this religion where every man was licensed to deal directly and individually with God.⁴¹ Because of this belief in the necessity of the spoken word, the sermon, the minister, hence the church, became the pillars of New England society, upon which other cultural manifestations, particularly education, emanated and drew their intrinsic purpose.⁴² Increase Mather decreed that it were certainly better for a man to be damned from Sodom or Gomorrah than from Boston, for in Boston he had abundant opportunity to learn to read, to understand, to hear the Bible clarified--all to ultimately avail himself of God's grace.⁴³

Hence, education became intricately entwined with religious motivations. If the ministers were considered the shepherds of the flock, Satan was regarded as the ravenous wolf. The preachers wanted no man to be condemned to hell, because they had neglected their duty. As they struggled in their work, they interpreted most of their failures as being caused by Satan. Since the sermon was the primary means of presenting the salvation message, the devil would employ any diversion to hinder its effectiveness. To have any attitude toward the sermon other than solemn sincerity was unpardonable. It was believed that one day every man would be held accountable for every sermon he had ever heard. One of the worst fates that could befall a man was for him

⁴¹Gordon Stevens Wakefield, Puritan Devotion (London: The Epworth Press, 1957), p. 23.

⁴²Trefz, op. cit., p. 72. ⁴³Ibid., p. 77.

to go to hell, as Increase Mather phrased it, "'with a load of sermons on his back.'" ⁴⁴ Thus it became an accepted aspect in educational curriculum for ministers to visit the schools each week to test the children's comprehension of the sermon delivered the previous Sunday.

The third characteristic of the Puritan life was its sobriety. When the Puritan enjoined men toward sobriety, he was reminding them that life was a God-given, hence, sacred gift. Yet, temporal pleasures constantly sought to displace the sacred duties in life. People who wasted time and lived unproductive lives failed to grasp life's richest and highest meaning and committed grievous sin against God's will. ⁴⁵ The Puritans gave turgid homiletical expression to their loathing of idleness. It was a well-recognized fact that most of the sins of which men were guilty occurred during leisure time, because during these pleasurable times, spiritual vigilance usually diminished dangerously. "'If thou art not doing some work for God . . . the Devil will be ready to employ thee, to offer some cursed business or other to thee. If you would not fall into vile scandal, then, be diligent in some lawful business,'" warned Wadsworth. ⁴⁶

Because education was considered as an essential component in the journey of the soul toward salvation, it was

⁴⁴Practical Truths Tending to Promote the Power of Godliness, p. 24, cited by Trefz, op. cit., pp. 80-81.

⁴⁵Nieburh and Beach, op. cit., p. 302.

⁴⁶Twelve Single Sermons on Various Subjects, p. 100, cited by Trefz, op. cit., p. 153.

pursued with great intensity and seriousness. In addition, the call to vigilance became a mandate for an educational system which developed not merely spiritual health but economic productivity. Thus, the Puritan definition of the sober life seemed strangely dual. On one hand, Puritan preachers regularly reminded their flocks that the world was a "vile vale of tears." On the other hand, the Puritan attacked the ascetic principle of renunciation. The life of the Christian was not in the monastery but in active society. The Puritan received humbly and gratefully the fruits of God's world as they came to him through the law of nature and through the social structure of family, school, business, and government. In all these institutions opportunities for righteousness appeared.⁴⁷

⁴⁷Niebuhr and Beach, op. cit., p. 303.

CHAPTER III

EDUCATION WITHIN THE BIBLE STATE--PURITANISM ARTICULATED

EDUCATION--FAITH AND REASON

From the preceding chapters it may be inferred that the Puritans were not merely adventurers who, like the Spanish conquistadores, sought a land of fortune. They were not, as were the settlers of New France, ignorant peasants, lured into an ominous wilderness to form the servile basis for a feudal regime. They were not, like the Huguenots, driven from their homes by unbearable tyranny. These Puritans were successful, intelligent English gentlemen, artisans, and scholars--"the consummate flower of English intellect, stimulated by the most eventful centuries in English history."¹ Furthermore, it has been shown that these peculiar English came to the wilderness to construct not merely an English state, but a Puritan state. As closely as circumstances, philosophy, and religious goals would allow, they duplicated their English life. They advocated no elaborate scheme of government, as Locke and Shaftesbury prepared for the Carolinas. Yet they attacked their work in a straightforward manner. They founded home and church and town and school by utilizing those English precedents and ideologies which were congenial to the New England wilderness

¹George H. Martin, The Evolution of the Massachusetts Public School System (New York and London: D. Appleton and Company, 1915), p. 2.

and the Puritan way of life. The result was that they succeeded remarkably in combining the profoundly intellectual² with the severely practical.

Nowhere was this stringent combination more clearly revealed than in the Puritan school. The Puritan educational doctrine was as intellectually and philosophically rigorous as the social, ethical, and religious system from which it sprang. For essentially, Puritan educational beliefs, like the whole Puritan movement, arose from a unified Protestant historical, religious, and cultural milieu. It was the purpose of this chapter to discuss this heritage and the doctrines which provided the form and character of the colonial New England school.

In 1636, three or four thousand emigrants, mostly from the mild southern counties of Old England, were dwelling in sixteen towns and hamlets on the sandy shores of Massachusetts Bay. They were not yet hardened to the fierce extremes of the New England climate. They had suffered and were suffering terribly from the damp, steamy heat of summer, the blustering, chilly winds of spring, and the aching cold and lonely, doleful snow storms of winter in their hastily built log cabins, wretched huts, and hovels, which were no better, in many cases, than the wigwams of the savage Indians. They were the most religious people under heaven; yet their only place of worship in Boston was built with mud walls and

²Martin, op. cit., p. 4.

thatched roof. They had been exposed to scarcity of every kind--sometimes almost absolute famine. When the colony led by Governor Winthrop reached Salem in June, 1630, they found that, during the previous winter, more than a fourth of their predecessors had died, and many of the survivors were ill. Of the new-comers, a fifth fell victims to disease before the end of the autumn.

Yet, in the first volume of the Records of the General Court, it was recorded that

At a Court holden Sept. 8, 1636, and continued by adjournment to the 28th of the eighth month, October, 1636, the Court agreed to give £400 towards a school or college; £200 to be paid next year, and £200 when the work is finished; . . .³

Considering such an act, which was an appropriation "'equal to a year's rate of the whole colony,'"⁴ it was concluded that "It is questionable whether a more honorable specimen of public spirit can be found in the history of mankind."⁵

Oddly enough, for the twentieth-century mind, the Puritan is defined as one who regarded the salvation of his soul as the supreme requisite for a successful life. Therefore the conclusion is often drawn that Puritanism was

³George B. Emerson, Education in Massachusetts. Leg- and History. Lectures delivered in a course before the Lowell Institute, in Boston by members of Massachusetts Historical Society on subjects relating to the Early History of Massachusetts (Boston: Published by the Society, 1869), pp. 465-466.

⁴Josiah Quincy, History of Harvard University (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1840), I, p. 8.

⁵Timothy Dwight, Travels in New-England and New York: (New Haven: Published by Timothy Dwight, 1821), I, 481.

antagonistic to the Renaissance spirit of learning and that Puritans "looked upon philosophy as a sensual indulgence, upon classical authors as contemptible heathens, upon science as a work of the Devil and a hindrance to faith."⁶ Yet one of the most permanent influences of Calvinism was its contribution to education. Calvin and his disciples stressed intellect and will along with feeling and emotion in religion and moral life. Calvin's Institutes directed that "'God has furnished the soul of man with a mind capable of discerning good from evil and just from unjust; and of discovering, therefore, by the light of reason, what ought to be pursued or avoided. . . .'" Yet, "'not only the Divine Word but also the experience of common sense'" enabled man to "'perceive in the mind of man some desire of investigating truth.'" Reason "'being a natural talent, could not be totally destroyed but was partially debilitated,'" and "'smothered by ignorance.'"⁷ The mental potential for such investigation was particularly strong in "'civil polity, domestic economy, all the mechanical arts and liberal sciences.'" Calvin not only appealed to reason. The Institutes and his catechism reflected profoundly cogent reasoning which admonished Protestants in western Europe and Puritans in New England to analyze and revise Calvin's initial ideas in attempting broader freedom

⁶Perry Miller, The New England Mind (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1939), p. 64.

⁷Paul Monroe, A Cyclopedia of Education (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1926), I, 491.

of thought than he had ever dreamed possible. "'Although we yield the first place to the Word of God, we do not reject good training. . . . the Word of God indeed is the fountain of all learning, but the liberal arts are aids to the full knowledge of the Word and not to be despised.'"

Such a background meant that Calvinist premises--"the light of reason, man's desire and capacity for investigating truth, the need of training in the arts to understand the Word and the fundamental authority of that Word,"--developed followers of a distinctly logical temper, who believed that education was expedient to insure "'political administration, sustain the church unharmed, and maintain humanity among men.'" The preceding quotation, drawn from the school objectives designed in 1538 by Calvin, Cordier, and Saunier for Geneva, illustrated the educational aims of fundamental, historical Calvinism.⁸

Unquestionably, their marked bibliolatry led Puritans to exceed Pauline fervor in their castigation of metaphysics and reason. In Pauline fashion they trenchantly asserted that the only way to Life was through revelation and the Spirit. Consequently, they unrelentingly denounced ancient church ritual and convention. A survey of the historical rise of Puritanism revealed that no matter how impressively Puritan leaders wrenched seventeenth century social and philosophical thinking to conform it to religious conclusions,

⁸Monroe, op. cit., 491-492.

they were unable to confine themselves strictly to dogma and to thus leave "the arts and sciences into the keeping of the unregenerate."⁹

Furthermore, the Puritan migration of the 1630's was a segment of the dynamic movement which had emanated from the revival of learning in Western Europe. The most conspicuous feature of this movement during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was the Protestant revolution, of which learning was initially the sword and eventually the shield. Had the New Learning not already affected men's minds, making them more receptive to the New Truth, it was doubtful whether Luther's reform attempts would have met any less tragic fate than Wycliff's. Erasmus had caused men to ridicule the appalling ignorance, before Luther angered them at the corruption of the clergy. When the reformed doctrines were established, reformers everywhere planned to perpetuate their beliefs by educating the people.¹⁰

The ironic conclusion was that the Puritan was both rationalist and anti-rationalist. He attacked with articulate fury the pure zealots who advocated ministers without education, saints and sinners without knowledge of the philosophy and meaning of the salvation experience. The Puritan both pitied the spiritual debility of human reason and praised the potential of the human mind: "'the mind of man

⁹Miller, New England Mind, p. 66.

¹⁰Martin, Evolution, p. 17.

is a vast thing, it can take in, and swallow down Heaps of Knowledge, and yet it greeds after more; it can grasp the World in its conception.'"¹¹

To the Puritan, the seen and unseen worlds were intensely dramatic. All history, all knowledge, all experience constituted God's education of man. Ardently the Puritans sought to interpret the meaning of this education, for thereby God disclosed the means of salvation and the paths of righteous conduct.¹² Hence, the historical and philosophical meaning of Harvard's first motto, "Search the Truth everywhere," became clear.¹³ The criterion of ultimate spiritual perfection promised to the regenerate in Christ was perfect rationality of the world and its creatures, which men "'gather up something of from Arts and Sciences.'"¹⁴ Besides in the world about them, the Puritans believed that God had written His will in the Bible and in His Covenant with them, His chosen people. In these three manifestoes, therefore, they had a guide. And in the Biblical Commonwealth of Massachusetts they planned to establish "a city upon a hill," a proper home for the saints and a model to inspire regeneration of all Christendom.¹⁵

¹¹Miller, New England Mind, p. 66.

¹²David B. Tyack, Turning Points in American Educational History (Waltham: Blaisdell Publishing Company, 1967), p. 1.

¹³Emerson, op. cit., p. 465.

¹⁴Miller, New England Mind, p. 66. ¹⁵Tyack, loc. cit.

The essence of the argument, then, was that a saint must believe first and then endeavor to know. Unregenerate man "'takes these things upon trust, and beleeves them, as others doe, but he doth not much trouble himselfe about them.'" Since no man in a life time could know all he wanted and needed to know, for the regenerate man the business of living became an unending attempt to understand the perplexities of existence, to translate what was known in the heart into what was known in the mind. No one would be spared this rigorous, engulfing exertion: the meanest believer was required to know the eschatology of his belief. Such an attitude suggested the zeal with which learning and education were pursued. For "faith is an act of both the will and the understanding, never of the will alone. The understanding does not assent to a thing merely because the thing is so, 'but because it is enlightened to discern the Truth of it.'" In true Puritanism, faith was never mere spiritual conviction; faith had to be articulated.¹⁶

The articulation of faith, or rather "faith" in the Puritan sense of the word, was adequately exemplified in The New-England Primer, which together with the Bible, was the most common aid to learning in New England until the early decades of the eighteenth century. The New-England Primer was truly "The Little Bible of New England" and accurately reflected the Puritan moods--the need for knowledge to make

¹⁶Miller, New England Mind, pp. 66-67.

man aware of his fallen state, the difficult road to knowledge and to salvation, the fear of the unknown, which was hell in itself. "Salvation from hell was what was promised; and that the terror might be the greater, God was made sterner and more cruel than any living judge, that all might be brought to realize how slight a chance even the least erring had of escaping eternal damnation."¹⁷

The foregoing characteristics of the Puritan creed were amply suggested by excerpts from the twenty-four little pictures with alphabetized rhymes and an "Alphabet of Lessons for Youth," which was a series of moral and instructive sentences so worded and arranged as to begin each paragraph with a successive capital letter of the alphabet:

In Adam's Fall
We Sinned all.

Thy Life to Mend
This Book Attend.
.

7

As runs the Glass
Man's life doth pass.

My Book and Heart
Shall never part.

Job feels the Rod
Yet blesses God.
.

8

Time cuts down all
Both great and small.
.

Youth forward slips
Death soonest nips.
.

10

¹⁷Paul Leicester Ford (ed.), The New-England Primer (Teachers College, Columbia University, 1962), pp. 1-2.

An Alphabet of Lessons for Youth.

.

Better is a little fear of the Lord, than great
treasure and trouble therewith,

.

Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a
Child, but the rod of Correction shall drive it
from him. 12

.

Keep thy Heart with all Diligence, for out of
it are the issues of Life.

Liars shall have their part in the lake which
burns with fire and brimstone.

Many are the Afflictions of the Righteous, but
the Lord delivers them out of them all.

Now is the accepted time, now is the day of
salvation. 13

.

Upon the wicked God shall rain an horrible
Tempest.

Woe to the wicked, it shall be ill with him,
for the reward of his hands shall be given him.

.

Zeal hath consumed me, because thy enemies have
forgotten the words of God.

Choice Sentences.

.

2. Our Weakness and Inabilities break
not the bond of our Duties.

3. What we are afraid to speak before
Men, we should be afraid to think before God. 14

.

VERSES.

I in the Burying Place may see
Graves shorter there than I;
From Death's arrest no Age is free,
Young Children too may die;

My God, may such an awful Sight,
Awakening be to me!
Oh! that by early Grace I might
For Death prepared be.

22

.

From The Shorter Catechism:

Q. What are the Decrees of God?

A. The Decrees of God are his eternal Purpose, according to the Counsel of his own Will, whereby for his own Glory, he hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass.

Q. How does God execute his decrees?

A. God executeth his Decrees in the Words of Creation & Providence.

40

.

Q. What is the Misery of that estate whereunto Man fell?

A. All Mankind by their fall, lost Communion with God, are under his Wrath & Curse, and so made liable to all Miseries in this Life, to death it self, and to the pains of Hell for ever.

44

.

Q. What doth God require of us, that we may escape his Wrath and Curse, due unto us for Sin?

A. To escape the Wrath & Curse of God due to us for Sin, God requireth of us Faith in Jesus Christ, Repentance unto Life, with the diligent use of all outward Means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of Redemption.

68

In this pulsating accentuation of the danger of life and a life of sin lay the strength of Puritanism. Neither mass nor prayer, neither priest nor pastor separated man from his Creator. Each soul became totally responsible for its salvation. This reality demanded that every man think, read, and reason. As the Reformation evolved only when the Bible became readily available, thus Puritanism began the

moment men could study and individually interpret the Word. For unless man could read, spiritual independence remained impossible. Illiteracy compelled them to rely upon other men for scriptural knowledge. "From its earliest inception Puritanism, for its own sake, was compelled to foster education."¹⁸

Even when reason could not be applied, one should turn to knowledge. "'Faith is grounded upon knowledge,'" stated Samuel Willard. "'For this reason it is said, that without knowledge the mind of Man cannot be good, and that a people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.'" Although all issues were to be settled by the Bible, still "'much good use may be made of their writings [human authorities], and by the ablest gifted.'" A minister must have not only grace but "'prudence,'" which included "'both an Acquaintance with the History of former Times, and Ability to Judge between Rational, and either meerly Casual, or Supernatural Events.'"¹⁹

This philosophy of the arts was found structuring the curriculum of the grammar school. The grammar school admitted a boy at eight years of age, if he could read. It was recorded that occasionally a youngster entered the Boston Latin School at six and one-half years of age. Frequently the boys had by that time progressed considerably in Latin. Sometimes even infants were taught by doting parents to read

¹⁸Ford, loc. cit. ¹⁹Miller, New England Mind, p. 67.

Latin as soon as they could read English. Precocity was encouraged, not merely by intelligent parents but by leading New England thinkers, writers, and divines. A good example of the knowledge expected of the little ones could be found in Isaac Watts' The Young Child's Catechism. The first half of it was designed for learners "'three and Four Years Old,'" and the questions for these beginners included such as

Have you learnt to know who God is?
What must become of you if you are wicked?

The answer to the last is,

If I am wicked, I shall be sent down to everlasting Fire
in Hell among wicked and miserable creatures.²⁰

The first books used during the first three years of the grammar included the "Accidence" from which the declensions and conjugations were learned, together with the Nomenclature, a Latin-English phrase book, and a vocabulary called Sententiae Pueriles. Lilly's grammar would usually follow the Accidence. Other books might be the Confabulationum Pueriles, Cato's Distichia, "for construing and parsing,"²¹ the colloquies of Corderius, Vives, or Erasmus. Aesop's Fables, Castillion's Dialogi Sacri were frequently used.

In the Fourth year students began or continued Erasmus' Colloquies, continued Aesop and Latin grammar and read Ovid's de Tristilius. Fifth year curriculum continued

²⁰Clifton Johnson, Old Time Schools and School-Books (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1925), p. 13.

²¹Samuel Eliot Morison, The Intellectual Life of Colonial New England (New York: New York University Press, 1956), p. 105.

Erasmus and Ovid, included Metamorphises, began Cicero's Epistalae, Latin prosody, and composition. The sixth year began Cicero's de officiis, Lucius Florus, Virgil's Aenid, and Thomas Godwyn's treatise on Roman history and antiquities. The boys continued the Metamorphises, wrote Latin dialogues and letters, and began Greek and rhetoric in the seventh year. Cicero's Orations, Justin, Virgil, Juvenal, Horace, and Persius countenanced the seventh year's work. Psalms were translated into Latin "every fortnight." Greek studies included Homer, Isocrates, Hesiod, and the New Testament.²²

After seven or eight years in what Milton called "'the grammatical flats and shallows,'" the boy left grammar school for deeper waters. Unless he had studied with an unusually good master, he could not read English efficiently. There were pupils who at some stage of their early Latin reading and writing studies actually lost the art of reading English entirely.²³ If a boy were weak in English when he left grammar school, he was compensated by knowing how to write Latin themes and verses. Writing Latin verses was really a wooden handicraft. The young grammar student sought his Flores Paltarum for models, and he employed elegant, prefabricated locutions from Buchlerius' thesaurus

²²Morison, op. cit., p. 106.

²³Edward Eggleston, The Transit of Civilization From England to America in the Seventeenth Century (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1901), p. 216.

of poetical phrases. The Sylva Synonimorum was also implemented by "schollars of judgement." When the word needed would not fit properly, "the verse carpenter" could choose another with similar meaning from this collection of synonyms. "Descriptions by periphrases" were available in Holyoke's Dictionary, and "Master Draxe his Phrases" and other books were available "'to see how many wayes they can vtter anything in good phrase.'"²⁴ One Latin verse was admired, because its nine words could be arranged in a hundred and four ways, perhaps all equally prosaic."

A grammar student who was unable to write English fluently was sent to writing schools or common schools. Even boys from upper-class families, who revealed more aptitude for making money than for absorbing Latin, were sent to writing school to learn "'good hands and accounts.'"²⁵ However, until the close of the seventeenth century, such homely and useful schools were rarely if ever endowed. It was only by founding a Latin school that one could win distinction. Such was the faith of Englishmen and of the founders of the early New England colonies in humanistic education. Reading and writing English were of greater value to American pioneers than Lilly, but English lacked the prestige of Latin and thus failed to attract benefactors.²⁶ Perpetuating Lutheran tradition, Cotton Mather solemnly stated that the

²⁴Eggleston, op. cit., p. 217. ²⁵Ibid., p. 218.

²⁶Ibid., p. 219.

human condition and reason had fallen with the use and disuse of languages. Luther had argued that languages threw light upon the Scriptures and imported sound wisdom to rulers. Furthermore, the church had fallen into corruption, because the languages had been lost. God had revived the love of languages for the sake of the Gospel: "'where languages do not abide, there in the end the gospel must perish.'"²⁷

The Massachusetts law of 1647 required the grammar schools of the colony "'to instruct youth so far as they may be fited for ye university.'" The purpose, character, and intellectual direction may be inferred from the Harvard entrance requirements of 1642: "'When any Scholler is able to read Tully or such like Latin Author extempore and make and speake true Latin in verse and prose without assistance, and decline perfectly the paradigms and nouns and verbs in ye Greeke tongue, then may he bee admitted into ye College, nor shall any claime admission before such qualifications.'"²⁸

The Puritan believed that religion was revealed by Scripture and that Grace and Faith came spiritually from God. However, men must believe "'as men . . . judge of the sense and meaning of them, discover their truth, and finding them revealed, acquiesce in the Authority of him by whom they are first revealed.'" This act, called understanding, required

²⁷Martin, Evolution, p. 18.

²⁸Monroe, op. cit., II, 119.

"an intense and industrious exercise of the mind.'" The elect, therefore, had to achieve acumen and keenness, and be able "'easily and speedily to penetrate into the nature and qualities of things.'"²⁹ Educationally it had been long assumed that all facts and principles concerning the world of man and nature, together with all the logic and other methods necessary and relevant to ascertain the truth of man's world, were already established. The student's task was to master these known methods and truths, along with the principles and methods of "right reason" necessary to utilize them correctly.³⁰ Perry Miller remarked that "the Puritan was abject and mute before 'Thus saith the Lord,' but once the Lord had spoken, he was ready [with his classical heritage] to investigate the reasons behind what the Lord had said, and to demand of the faithful that they include such reasons in their quest for salvation. They had not only to fulfill but to understand the will of God.'"³¹ If one source of understanding were spiritual and the other temporal, still to the Puritan mind, the ultimate goal of both was the same--the interpolation of God's decrees. Such logic enabled Puritan educators to propound secular learning in terms of spiritual goals.

If Puritanism was not exactly a rationalism, then it

²⁹Miller, New England Mind, p. 68.

³⁰V. T. Thayer, Formative Ideas in American Education (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1967), p. 7.

³¹Miller, New England Mind, p. 68.

was a reasonableness. Since one of God's attributes was perfect rationality, and since man was created in the image of God, then man, too, was compelled to strive for perfect rationality. An English Puritan in Parliament stated that

God who is abstract wisdom, and delights that his rationally creatures should search after it, and that his Ministers should study to propagate it, will expect that you should be Foster-fathers of knowledge.³²

The rigorously intellectual character of the Puritan doctrine and its resulting stress upon the primacy of education could be seen more clearly in its seventeenth century social perspective. Not only were Puritan leaders forced to defend their faith-reason dual philosophy against the extreme rationalism of Anglicanism on the one hand and the fideism of Catholicism on the other, but they were forced to articulate with vengeance against factions within the Puritan realm itself.³³

The England of the 1640's was characterized by civil war, lack of ecclesiastical discipline, and the resulting emergence of sects of enthusiasts. Despite their differences, the "gangraena" were united in their hostility to universities, college-educated ministers, and the monopoly of religious instruction by the formally educated. These sects attempted to destroy the intellectuality of Puritanism by separating education from effectual, acceptable religion.

³²Miller, New England Mind, p. 69.

³³Ibid., pp. 70-73.

Although Presbyterians and Independents were at the same time engaged in a fierce battle over church polity, they banded together to defend not only orthodox Calvinism, but the belief in the necessity of the alliance of religion and learning.

Massachusetts had already experienced such a movement among the followers of Ann Hutchinson. One of her followers revealingly declared, "'I had rather hear such a one that speakes from the meere motion of the spirit without any study at all, than any of your learned Schollars, although they may be fuller of Scripture.'" Fortunately, however, Massachusetts Bay saved its scholarly traditions by exiting or executing all the enthusiastic mortals who found truth to be amply revealed by "immediate revelation."³⁴ Geographical extremity made it quite possible for New England Puritan leaders to rigidly assert and enforce the tenet that "Puritanism and enthusiasm were as much opposed as Puritanism and Catholicism."³⁵ This doctrinal and cultural fear of anti-intellectualism as a portent for disorder and irrationality, a progenitor of spiritual imperfection, and a subtle tool of Lucifer was reflected in the preface to the famous Massachusetts school law of 1647:

It being one chiefe project of the ould deluder, Sathan, to keepe men from the knowledge of the Scriptures, as in former times by keeping them in an unknowne tongue, so in these latter times by perswading them from the use of it so at least the true sence and meaning of

³⁴Miller, New England Mind, p. 74. ³⁵Ibid., p. 75.

the originall might be clouded by false glasses of saint seeming deceivers, that learning may not be buried in the grave of our fathers in the church and commonwealth, the Lord assisting our endeavors.³⁶

The Puritans were conditioned moral athletes. After enduring an angry sea and outlasting the treachery of the wilderness to build the model society, they had no intention of tolerating sloth and disorder. In 1641, the General Court requested "that the elders would make a catechism for the instruction of youth in the grounds of religion."³⁷ The next year, 1642, a law was passed stating that

This court taking into consideration the neglect of many parents and masters in training up their children in learning, and labor, and other implyments which may be proffitable to the common wealth . . . especially of their ability to read and understand the principles of religion and the capitall laws of this country, and to impose fines upon such as shall refuse to render such accounts. . . .³⁸

The 1648 law stated that

For as much as the good education of children is of singular behoof and benefit to any Commonwealth; and whereas many parents and masters are too indulgent and negligent of their duty in that kinde. It is therefore ordered . . . that all masters of families doe once a week (at the least) catechize their children and servants in the grounds and principles of Religion, and if any be unable to do so much: that then at least they procure such children and apprentices to learn some short orthodox catechism without book, that they may be able to answer unto the questions that shall be propounded to them out of such catechism by their parents or masters or any of the Select men, when they shall call them to

³⁶Martin, Evolution, pp. 12-13.

³⁷Walter Herbert Small, Early New England Schools (Boston and London: Ginn and Company, Publishers, 1914), p. 294.

³⁸Tyack, op. cit., pp. 14-15.

a tryall of what they have learned in this kind. . . .³⁹

A 1654 Massachusetts law stated that

for as much as it greatly concerns the welfare of this country that the youth thereof be educated not only in good literature but sound doctrine, this Court doth therefore commend it to the college and the selectmen in the several towns, not to admit or suffer any such to be continued in the office or place of teaching, educating, or instructing of youth or children in the college or schools, that have manifested themselves unsound in the faith, or scandalous in their lives, and not giving due satisfaction according to the rules of Christ. . . .⁴⁰

These laws clearly revealed three tenets: (1) universal education of children was expedient to the well-being of the commonwealth; (2) the responsibility for education rested with the parent; (3) the state reserved the right to demand this obligation.⁴¹

The enthusiasts' objection to learning sprang from social motivations as well as piety. The Puritan program of university studies seemed to some to consist of "'Popish doctors and pagan, obscene poets.'" Furthermore, revolt against the learned ministry was a prelude to rebellion against tax-supported and state-defended churches. Condemnation of educational curriculum suggested confiscation of academic revenues.

In New England, town councils were not at all hesitant about enacting legislation to procure educational revenues.⁴²

³⁹Tyack, op. cit., p. 16.

⁴⁰Small, op. cit., pp. 90-91.

⁴¹Martin, Evolution, p. 14.

⁴²Miller, New England Mind, p. 79.

The famous 1644 lecture-day notice of Salem illustrated the fact that Puritans were eager for all to be educated:

Ordered, that a notice be published next lecture day that such as have children to keep at school would bring in their names and what they will give for one whole year, and also if any poor body hath children or a child to be put to school and not able to pay for their schooling, that the town will pay for it by rate.⁴³

Due to the unique situation afforded by their "errand into the wilderness," the colonists were left to their own devices in deciding how to support their schools. Although numerous tuition plans were devised, many taxation schemes were extensively used,⁴⁴ and these were designed to equalize the burden as much as possible.⁴⁵ In Plymouth, the Cape Cod fisheries were regulated by law. In 1663 the income from them was designated to support a school in the colony, "'for the training up of youth in literature for the good and benefit of posterity.'"⁴⁶ A Beverly, Massachusetts, school master was required to provide the selectmen with a list of the names of parents and masters, and the number of children and servants belonging to each that was instructed by him. The selectmen levied a tax upon these parents and gave the list to the constable for collection.⁴⁷

The response which the entire school support idea elicited was reminiscent of the rationalist-enthusiast ferment in England. As strong as the Puritan oligarchy would

⁴³Small, op. cit., p. 187. ⁴⁴Ibid., p. 190.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 198. ⁴⁶Ibid., p. 188. ⁴⁷Ibid., p. 192.

have the tie between Faith and education, there were those who were against schools because of their expense as well as their value. Early records were filled with entries demanding the town council to "'call those persons to an account that do either neglect or refuse to pay what they are obliged to by town act, relating to the school in said town.'"⁴⁸ The particular tenor of the anti-intellectual strain in New England most often formed in terms of financial complaint:

That the charge of supporting the several public schools amounted the last year to more than one third part of the whole sum drawn for by the selectmen; but although this charge is very considerable and the number of schools is greater than the law requires, yet as the education of children is of the greatest importance to the community, the committee cannot be of the opinion that any saving can be made to advantage on that head, except the town should think it expedient to come into methods to oblige such of the inhabitants who send their children to the public schools and are able to pay for their educations themselves, to loose the town of that charge by assessing some reasonable sum upon themselves for that purpose.

Later, several inhabitants submitted a petition

praying the town would consider the great expense occasioned by the public schools and determine whether one grammar school and two writing schools are not sufficient for the education of the town.

The petition was promptly overruled.⁴⁹

The Massachusetts school laws certainly placed a heavy burden on small communities. The second part of the 1642 law stated that

It is therefore ordered that every township in this jurisdiction, after the Lord hath increased them to the number of fifty householders, shall then forthwith

⁴⁸Small, op. cit., p. 203. ⁴⁹Ibid., pp. 206-207.

appoint one within their town to teach all children as shall resort to him to write and reade, whose wages shall be paid either by the parents or masters of such children, or by the inhabitants in generall, by way of supply, as the major part of those yet ordered, the prudentials of the towne shall appoint; provided, those that send their children be not oppressed by paying much more than they can have them taught for in other towns; and it is further ordered, that where any towne shall increase to the number of one hundred families or householders they shall set up a gramer school, the master thereof being able to instruct youth so farr as they may be fited for the university; provided, that if any towne neglect the performance hereof above one yeare, that every such towne shall pay 5^s to the next school till they shall perform this order.⁵⁰

It was surprising that more dissatisfaction was not evidenced by the heavy demands for education. However, an election-day preacher announced that "'too many of our unlearned men seem to be possessed with prejudice against schools and their cast.'" Observe that it was the unlearned who were prejudiced. In New England, educational ideas originated with the intellectual elite and percolated downward. More than a century was needed for college graduates, the oligarchy, and the clergy to sell the idea of a tax-supported public education to the rest of the community.⁵¹ A second century had to elapse before this principle could spread outside New England. A revealing complaint of the public's failure to accept and propagate high educational standards could be seen in President Chauncy's Harvard commencement sermon of 1655, entitled God's Mercy Showed to His People in giving them a Faithful Ministry and Schools of

⁵⁰Martin, Evolution, pp. 12-13.

⁵¹Morison, op. cit., p. 73.

Learning. He enumerated various degrees of unthankfulness for educational blessings, exemplified by "'covetous earth-wormes,'" who failed to appreciate "'schools to teach their children, and keep them out of harmes way, or teach them to write and read, but these despise the Angels bread, and account it but light stuff in comparison of other things. . . . Their practice about their children is little better than the merciless unnatural and prophaness of the Israelites, Psal. 106.36 That sacrificed their sonns and their daughters unto Devils."⁵²

The preceding excerpts from colonial records indicated the force with which educational belief was enacted and enforced. So strong was the fear of illiteracy, cultural and hence spiritual degradation, that the Puritan educational rod made its tenacious will felt throughout the next three centuries of rapid transition in American life. "If the Puritan Movement had been simply and solely an outburst of piety and zeal, if it had relinquished for a moment its firm hold upon the philosophical and cultural heritage of the colony, if Puritans had been men whose consciousness had centered exclusively upon the dogmas of original sin, predestination, and irresistible grace, then Puritanism would certainly have gone the way of Dell and Webster [the enthusiasts] and not the way of the champions of the English colleges, and not the way of the founders of Massachusetts

⁵²Morison, op. cit., pp. 74-75.

Bay and Harvard College."⁵³ Harvard, in fact, was never intended to be merely a theological seminary, but a citadel for perpetuating arts, sciences, good literature, as well as eschatology. The New England First Fruits could be read as an affirmation that learning was a helpmate to theology, that reason and religion were to be meshed in indissoluble unity--that piety and intellect were not to be disjoint.

After God had carried us safe to New England, and we had builded our houses, provided for our livelihood, rear'd convenient places for Gods worship, and settled the Civill Government: One of the next things we longed for, and looked after was to advance Learning and perpetuate it to Fosterity, dreading to leave an illiterate Ministry to the Churches, when our present Ministers shall lie in the Dust.⁵⁴

All but one of the colonial colleges, the University of Pennsylvania, were either founded by religious bodies, or were placed under some sort of religious supervision. One of the college's primary functions was, of course, the training of a learned American clergy to serve the colonial churches and people. Yet they all attempted to provide a liberal education in the accepted Renaissance meaning of the word--and education that would introduce the youth to the best thought and literature of the past, sharpen his mind to become a keen instrument for the acquisition of knowledge, discipline his intellect and form his character to enable him to be able and ready to assume a prominent role in society. A colonial education in colonial times was supposed to

⁵³Miller, New England Mind, p. 81.

⁵⁴Ibid., pp. 75-76.

make a young man a gentleman, a member of the governing class; and it generally did.⁵⁵

Ultimately, the Puritan credo stated that because all truth came from God, therefore all knowledge of truth came from God. Although to the Puritan mind Scholastic writers were deficient in true knowledge, they could be used in the search. If Christians could witness "'the continency, justice, temperance, meekness, clemency, and other amiable moral Vertues of Heathen men,'" could not they be reproached into emulation? Adequate knowledge of languages was undoubtedly necessary to discern the true meaning of Scripture, but there was also a necessity of "'Logick to understand the contexture, method, argumentation, and analysis of Scripture.'" Although the Peripatetic writings were full of error, most Puritans, being a part of the Aristotelian stream, saw no need to cast it out.⁵⁶ When enthusiasts charged that worldly learning was really advocated by a designing clergy, Puritan divines vituperatively charged their accusers that "'This hatred of Learning must needs proceed either from ignorance . . . or from Avarice, and out of a sacrilegious desire to divorce those Revenues wherewith the bounty of Benefactors hath from time to time endowed the Schools of learning.'"⁵⁷ Apologists warned against "'making

⁵⁵Samuel Eliot Morison, "The History of Universities," The Rice Institute Pamphlet, XXIII (October, 1936), p. 247.

⁵⁶Miller, New England Mind, p. 82. ⁵⁷Ibid.

our Reason judge of Articles of Faith; or setting Humane learning in the Tribunal against Divine Truth.'" From this statement they castigated the lumping of all knowledge into the category of regenerate knowledge. Puritan divines and educators admonished their flocks to distinguish between "'savoury sense and inward experience and cordiall embracing of the ways of God'" and the "'intellectual, notional, though right knowledge of the truths of Christianity.'"⁵⁸ The educational curriculum of the grammar school, the church,⁵⁹ and finally the college aimed at entrenching this distinction in the follower's mind. To the Puritan thinker, the intellectual knowledge of Christianity was not regenerate but was that which could "'beget that knowledge of the Gospel, which (by the Spirit's assistance) may put the soul upon a further desire of a feeling knowledge and coming under the power of truth.'" "

The success of the Puritan clergy was evident from the erudition of their flock. The proficiency of New England laborers in analyzing and syncretizing the momentous doctrines of free will, predestination, and fate was an unending source of admiration to visitors. It seemed that whenever people were under Puritan influence for any length of time, their information level was raised

⁵⁸Miller, New England Mind, p. 83.

⁵⁹Cf. Bernard Bailyn, Education in the Forming of American Society: Needs and Opportunities for Study (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1960), pp. 15-21.

considerably.⁶⁰ "'It's with an ignorant sinner in the midst of all means,'" said Thomas Hooker, "'as with a sick man in an apothecaries shop, full of the choicest medicines in the darkest night: though these be the choicest of all receipts at hand, and he may take what he needs, yet because he cannot see what he takes, and how to use them, he may kill himself, or increase his distemper, but never cure any disease.'" The humblest Puritan, seeking a knowledge inseparable from faith and a faith inseparable from regeneration had to be able to read and reason forth the truths of God. His ministers needed the sharpest tools of scholarship--logic and Biblical languages particularly--in order to interpret Word and World correctly. The task was for more than mortal stakes.⁶¹

THE POWER OF KNOWLEDGE

The most wretched affliction borne by Post-lapsarian Adam was the truncated state of his reason. Reason, "'that most efficacious instrument for arriving at deeply hidden truth, for asserting it, vindicating it and eliminating all confusion'" was thus darkened by Adam's Fall. However, because God was merciful to fallen men, He gave them, through the laws of the Prophets, revelation and guidance. Hence, if man would begin to raise himself from his fallen state,

⁶⁰Miller, New England Mind, p. 86.

⁶¹Tyack, op. cit., p. 2.

he first had to read and strictly adhere to the Scriptures. Second, God made possible the regeneration of the reason of His chosen people and enabled regenerate mortals to reconstruct, to some degree, Pre-lapsarian Adam's perfect logical ability.

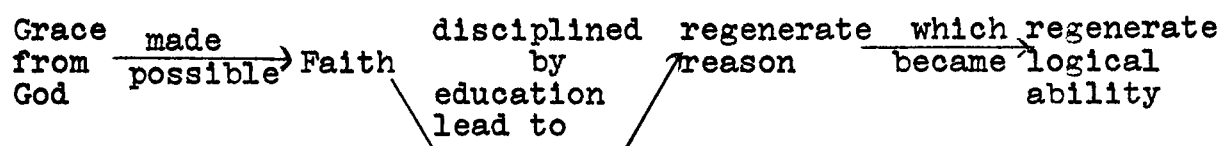
To the Puritan, then, the art of logic was a gift from God, a gift as valuable as Grace. It was the prime tool to be used in man's attempt to perceive the will and the nature of the One True God. The Fall was defined as a lapse of dialectic, or the loss of ability to draw conclusions from given premises. More specifically, innate depravity was defined as the inherent loss of discursive reasoning ability.⁶² Regeneration meant gaining the ability to approach God by correct logical premises. Regeneration (according to Ramus) meant "the formalized or regularized version of natural intelligence,"⁶³ or the act of perfecting the natural inclination.⁶⁴

At this point it may be seen that the realization and practice of learning was not only a philosophical imperative but a spiritual one, for Puritanism assumed three axioms. First, Children were born without knowledge. Second, they had the inherent capacity for attaining knowledge--i. e., they possessed discursive, though unregenerate, reasoning powers. Third, children were inherently evil as well as

⁶²Miller, New England Mind, p. 111. ⁶³Ibid., p. 144.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 145.

ignorant. Willard's admonition against the perils of ignorance stated that uneducated children were destined to commit horrible sins against God, because they lacked knowledge. These sins would not deserve lesser punishment because they were committed by the ignorant. Ignorance did not germinate the evil action but only prevented any effort to restrain it. The act itself indicated unregenerate reason and unregenerate nature.⁶⁵ Ignorance, therefore, meant an unawareness of logical potential and the inability to employ logic correctly. Knowledge therefore implied correct, regenerate logical aptitude. The ultimate goal, true logical ability, was achieved through the following hierarchial events:



This ignorance or unawareness in the child, this inclination to let Satan rule natural reason led, Benjamin Wadsworth said, to hearts that were

a meer nest, root, fountain of Sin, and wickedness; an evil Treasure from whence proceed evil things, viz., Evil Thoughts But beside this, their Hearts (as hath been said) are unspeakably wicked, estrang'd from God, enmity against Him, eagerly set in pursuing Vanities.⁶⁶

The first step in escaping this dreadful plight was to make children aware of their depraved state. Such elucidation of

⁶⁵Edmund S. Morgan, The Puritan Family (Boston: Boston Public Library, 1944), p. 48.

⁶⁶"The Nature of Early Piety," in A Course of Sermons on Early Piety, p. 10, cited by Morgan, Puritan Family, p. 51.

the child's spiritual depravity was to be pursued as soon as possible, as soon as the child developed the ability to understand even the simplest concepts. In spite of their natural wickedness and unregenerate reasoning ability, children were not incorrigible. The Puritans assumed a fourth postulate--that evil as well as ignorance could be overcome by education. "'For although there is a Corrupt Nature in Every Child, in its Infancy . . . Yet Care and Education will much prevail, to keep under that Corrupt Principle, and Promote better Inclinations in them.'"⁶⁷ For people who asserted a belief in predestination, election, and the absolute sovereignty of God, these Puritans attached extraordinary power to education. First of all, by the instruction of parents, they believed, a child could be discouraged from the sin to which he was prone. But if the child were permitted to express his sinful nature habitually by evil actions, his opportunities for salvation would decrease considerably. "'Use or custom is a second Nature,'" asserted Benjamin Wadsworth, "'if we have been us'd or accustomed to a course of outward scandalous wickedness, or inward impenitency, hardness of heart and unbelief; it will be very hard when we come to break off from it.'"⁶⁸ By education the inclination toward righteousness could be partially restored,

⁶⁷Deodat Lawson, The Duty and Property of a Religious Housholder, p. 42, cited by Morgan, Puritan Family, p. 51.

⁶⁸Exhortations to Early Piety, p. 44, cited by Morgan, Puritan Family, p. 51.

and the child could be prepared for the conversion experience.⁶⁹

The Puritans never decreed that good habits could save a child. Increase Mather warned against that presumption when he stated that for many people "'Religion is the meer Impression of a godly Education, without any special work of the Holy Spirit upon their Souls.'" But he hastened to assure his listeners "'that a Religious Education is a great mercy, yea, and to many of the Elect it is the great means of their Conversion.'" ⁷⁰ None of the Puritans perceived any contradiction in affirming the insufficiency of education in one breath and the necessity of it in the next. Good habits would not in themselves produce saving Grace and hence regenerate reason, but they provided a main passageway through which Grace could enter. God alone could decree the infusion of Grace, but when God saved a soul, He often used education. Thus it was mandatory that a child be taught good habits, not because he would be saved by them, but because it was unlikely that he would be saved without them. If his education was neglected, his chance of salvation was small, because salvation meant enlightenment of the discursive reasoning faculties.⁷¹ Education as well as Grace was essential to the complete transformation of the sinner's intellect.

⁶⁹ Morgan, Puritan Family, p. 47.

⁷⁰ Some Important Truths About Conversion, p. 36, cited by Morgan, Puritan Family, p. 52.

⁷¹ Morgan, Puritan Family, p. 52.

The Puritan belief in the necessity of early education countered by the veritably brutal facts of frontier life led to the utilization of the English dame school. Records from early Massachusetts schools revealed that the main purpose of the school was "'the good work of training up of children and teaching children to read.'"⁷² Records further showed that communities set aside substantial sums for the establishment of dame schools, until well into the nineteenth century, when they merged with the public school.⁷³ A few pennies per week brought an abundance of "motherly care, useful knowledge, and salutary discipline."⁷⁴ Emphasis was placed upon various sounds of the English letters, reading, writing, and English grammar. Although intellectual qualifications were required for teachers after 1700, the emphasis was upon finding women who "were of sober life and conversation."⁷⁵

As has been mentioned earlier, children could not attend grammar school until seven years of age and not even then unless they could read with some proficiency. Thus, from about age four, children were subjected to a higher religious interpretation of the alphabet, spelling, and reading, usually augmented by the hornbook.⁷⁶ In his diary, a Norwich farmer stated that his schoolmarm

⁷²Small, op. cit., p. 165. ⁷³Ibid., p. 185.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 176. ⁷⁵Ibid., p. 179.

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 180.

was a lifelong incumber, never going out of one round of performance; always teaching little boys and girls to sit up straight and treat their elders with respect; to conquer the spelling book, repeat the Catechism, never throw stones, never tell a lie;

W. E. Channing in his reminiscences told of an urchin

"'being pinned to the mistress' apron'" during the reading period. Channing also recalled that

At the close of the school on Friday afternoons, we were sent to the vacant room below the stairs where we recited the Commandments, repeated the Lord's prayer, and received commendation or censure according to our good or bad conduct during the week.⁷⁷

Edward Everett stated that when he reached three years of age he began

to attend a child's school in the immediate neighborhood of my father's house. . . . My patient and faithful instructress taught me to read before I could speak plain; considerately mingling the teacher and the nurse, she kept a pillow and a bit of carpet in the corner of the schoolroom where little heads, throbbing from a premature struggle with the tall double letters and ampersand, with Korah's troops and Vashti's pride, were permitted, nay, encouraged to go to sleep.⁷⁸

"Powers of darkness and light were struggling for the possession of the soul of every child; there was no time to lose. Every opportunity must be improved by parents, ministers, and teachers to pluck the children as brands from the burning. Hell with its physical torments, heaven with its no less selfish allurements, stood always in their sight with open doors, and the cries of the lost were mingled in their ears with the song of the redeemed and the music of harpers harping with their harps."⁷⁹

⁷⁷Small, op. cit., p. 183. ⁷⁸Ibid., p. 184.

⁷⁹Martin, Evolution, p. 66.

Essentially Grace brought men to will the truth as well as righteous actions. Then logic was made available to the regenerate reason "'to helpe us the rather by a naturall order, to find out the truthe.'" Logic was the first sphere of heavenly wisdom. Whoever practiced it correctly was able to partially rectify his fallen state and once again approximate the true image of God, which was perfect rationality. Therefore, the saints had to become logical. The Bible, which was God's Book, was constructed in perfect Logic, because it was constructed by the perfect Mind. Thus, the Scripture could not be correctly understood by illogical beings.⁸⁰ Samuel Willard admonished young scholars to grasp grammar and rhetoric, to read Scripture and logic, "'for the analyzing of the Text, and finding out the method of it, and the Arguments contained in it.'" He emphasized that "'logical Analyzing of the Scripture' was absolutely prerequisite to understanding it and 'do require a great deal of Time and study rightly to perform it; yea and whereof is one great reason why the Scriptures are often quoted impertinently, and besides the genuine intention of them.'"⁸¹

In view of the extreme didacticism that was characteristic of Puritan New England, it was ironic to find that Harvard did not employ a single system of Logic. The Liberum philosophandi modum, which Mather defined as a controlling ethic of the college, included Logic as well as the Three

⁸⁰Miller, New England Mind, p. 112. ⁸¹Ibid., p. 114.

Philosophies. Mather remarked that

though the Ramean Discipline be in this Colledge preferred unto the Aristotelean, yet they do not so confine themselves unto That neither, as to deprive themselves of that Libera Philosophia, which the Good Spirits of the Age have embraced, ever since the Great Lord Bacon show'd em the way to The Advancement of Learning.⁸²

Morison noted that

although science until about 1655 or 1660 was wholly medieval and Aristotelian, the Bacon, Descartes, and Copernican Astronomy began to seep in after that. By 1672 the college had a telescope, with which Thomas Brattle, a young graduate, made observations of the Comet of 1680 that were used by Sir Isaac Newton in his Principia.⁸³

These evidences further elucidated what was meant by the first Harvard motto, "Search the Truth everywhere."

The Ramean was the first system of logic by which Harvard students were initiated into the art of thinking.⁸⁴ The elevation of Ramistic thought fit well into the Puritan doctrinal scheme. Like the Puritans, Ramus had strictly associated Logic with correct discourse and refused to admit any formal rule to the realm of Logic that was not a "pure transcript of the laws of thought, as these are displayed in the laws of reasoning." The greatest parallel was that Ramus and the Puritans described Logic as the criterion of truth.⁸⁵

Despite the popularity of the Ramistic books of Logic,

⁸²Samuel Eliot Morison, Harvard College in the Seventeenth Century (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1936), I, 187.

⁸³Morison, History, p. 289.

⁸⁴Morison, Harvard College, I, 188. ⁸⁵Ibid., p. 189.

such as that by Alexander Richardson, Logicians School-Master; or a Comment upon Ramus Logick, the majority of Harvard text books that were used by Harvard students were written by Peripatetic followers.⁸⁶ However, Cartesian logic was fully established at Harvard by the last part of the seventeenth century. Descartes' Meditationes was accessible to students by 1658, and his Opera Philosophica, which included Regulae and Directionem Ingenii, the best exposition of his system, was widely read before 1686. About the same time, a manual of Cartesian logic was given to the students.⁸⁷ In line with Puritan stands upon reason, the Cartesian system, through its primacy of epistemology and its precise mathematical system, unflinchingly decreed that knowledge could be attained and justified through Logic and the infallible intuitions. According to Descartes, the powers of conceiving could become clear and distinct and were hence suitable as a source of knowledge.

There was, then, the permeating and transforming interplay of three distinct systems of Logic at Harvard. Not only did each provide a method of perpetuating Puritan theories, but through Descartes, Puritan youths were provided an organon admirably adapted for approaching the intellectual problems which were destined to appear at the threshold of the eighteenth century.⁸⁸

⁸⁶Morison, Harvard College, I, 188.

⁸⁷Ibid., p. 192. ⁸⁸Ibid, p. 193.

At the young Harvard, it would have been easy for founders to rent a room for lectures and to have the local ministers lecture, but these Puritans knew from their own college experience that education was more than lectures and books. Refusing to erect a barn-like structure similar to the early New England churches, the Harvard founders built a house for their college which was described as "'very faire and comely within and without, having in it a spacious Hall and a large library with some Bookes in it'" and "'convenient chambers and studies.'" If Puritan theories were to be perpetuated, not only was it necessary to construct an education which was extremely logical and adaptable, but an atmosphere had to be provided where scholars could properly absorb and practice Puritan ideologies. A healthy Puritan culture first emanated from the common life of a society of scholars.⁸⁹

THE NATURE OF THE ARTS

After establishing the inchoate deity of logic, the Puritans had to assume the difficult task of explaining "how natural men could arrive so unerringly at divine truth, and how men incapacitated by sin could retain such vigor." First of all, the methods of logic had to be within the bounds of orthodoxy. Second, innate capacities and innate ideas had to be defined and distinguished. The latter had

⁸⁹Morison, "History," pp. 253-254.

to be defined so as to allow some possibility of man's improvement, but at the same time be limited enough to retain the essential fact that God was ultimately unknowable and unintelligible. To the Puritan, the problem was to assure himself that an enfeebled human mind could understand all that an omnipotent God chose to phenomenally or numenally incarnate in the natural world.

Frederick Beurhusius found a solution.⁹⁰ Although man had fallen, his intellectual principle remained divine, because it was divinely infused and was still "'the faculty of perceiving and judging all cognitions, of true from false, consequents from inconsequents, and lastly, of distinguishing order from confusion.'"

For as sight is in the eyes, so is intelligence in the spirit; and as the eyes do not carry the color or the species from the womb of the mother, but the natural power and faculty of comprehending all colors, so the soul does not carry with it the habit of innate ideas but the innate faculties.

An "argument" was formed when reason perceived a color. An argument, then, was "'the image of a thing formed in the soul.'" Arguments were true, because they were placed there by divine power. Arguments were multiple in occurrence and were also aligned by divine power. From this alignment could be deduced axioms, which were also divinely inspired and hence true. The content of knowledge thus became axiomatic. "And where but in the liberal arts could the whole array of these axioms be found?" Classification of these True

⁹⁰Miller, New England Mind, p. 158.

(Divine) ideas was all that remained. Thus, the only problem was to limit the various disciplines. "'Art is comprehension of proper precepts in things eternal and in order of disposition, for usefulness in respect to the purpose of life.'" "Logic was the universal art, because it was methodology showing the method for discovery and arrangements of the materials of the other arts." Such, then, was the Puritans' theory of the arts, "an explanation of the disciplines, a justification of the academic curriculum."⁹¹

From "The Times and Orders of Their Studies" taken from New England First Fruits, it seemed probable that President Dunster was attempting to enact at Harvard the methods recommended by Peter Ramus at the University of Paris in the previous century. Ramus insisted that only one subject be studied every day and that one by a rational procedure.

During the first hour, the teacher would lecture on the topic of the day, giving underlying principles and essential explanations, but little or no dictation. During the next two hours the scholars individually work over the subject matter of the lecture. At the fourth hour the class recite to the teacher, in order to make certain that they understand the lecture. During the last two hours the students discuss and dispute, in order to practice and apply independently what they have learned.⁹²

At eight o'clock Monday morning Dunster began by lecturing to the freshmen on logic. At nine o'clock he

⁹¹Miller, New England Mind, p. 159.

⁹²Morison, Harvard College, I, 140.

lectured to the second-year students on Ethics or Politics; at ten o'clock, to the third-year students on arithmetic and geometry. After lunch, for the entire afternoon, Dunster moderated disputations. This program was repeated on Tuesday.

Wednesday was devoted entirely to Greek. Beginning at eight o'clock, Dunster lectured the freshmen on Greek etymology and syntax; at nine, to the sophomores on prosody and dialects. At two o'clock the freshmen recited Greek grammar; and the second-year men practiced Greek poetry. At three o'clock the third-year men, who had been writing Greek prose and poetry in the privacy of their studies, displayed their creations.

Thursday was devoted to Hebrew and Oriental languages. At eight o'clock, the president lectured to the freshmen on Hebrew grammar; at nine, to the second-year students on Chalee; at ten, to third-year men on Syriac. The afternoon recitations were in the same order: freshmen on the Old Testament; second class on Ezra and Daniel in Aramaic; third class on the Syriac New Testament.

Friday was devoted to rhetoric. Dunster lectured to the entire college at eight o'clock. At nine o'clock there were declamations, where every student spoke once a month. The rest of the day was spent in private study of Rhetoric or reading classical authors.

Saturday was Divinity Day. Dunster lectured to the entire college at eight o'clock. At nine o'clock there were

commonplaces (short practice sermons). The freshmen spent the afternoon in history class.⁹³ The disputations had for their subject matter the several Arts that were studied and were constituted by the rules of logic. This ancient, renowned style of debating was an important part of the curriculum. It represented the finished product of education, while the lectures and private studies provided the infusion.⁹⁴

The second official statement of Harvard's curriculum was the Chauncian Code of College Laws, which appeared in 1655. Once again the perpetuation of ancient learning and the supremacy of the Arts could be seen:

In the first yeare after admission for foure days of the weeke all students shall bee exercised in the study of the Greeke and Hebrew Tongues, onely beginning Logicke in the morning towards the latter end of the yeare unlesse the Tutor shall see Cause by reason of their ripenesse in the Languages to read Logicke sooner. Also they shall spend the second yeare in Logicke with the exercise of the former Languages, and the third yeare in the principles of Ethickes and the fourth in metaphysiks and Mathematics still carrying on their former studys on the weeke for Rhetoricke, Oratory and Divinity.⁹⁵

The first year program of 1723 was described by Tutor Henry Flynt:

The first year the Freshmen recite the Classic Authors Learn't at School viz Tully, Isocrates. Homer, Virgil, with the greek Testament [on Mondays, Tuesday, wenesday's and Thursdays in the morning and forenoon; . . . and on Saturday morning the] greek Catechism and [on Friday mornings] Dugard or Farnabys Rhetoricks, and the Latter part of the year the Hebrew Grammar and Psalter Ramus

⁹³Morison, Harvard College, I, 142. ⁹⁴Ibid., p. 143.

⁹⁵Ibid., p. 145.

and Burgesdicius's Logick [and toward the latter end of the year they dispute on Ramus's Definitions, Mondays and Tuesdays in the Forenoon].

The line "Learn't at School" indicated that the incoming freshmen were expected to have adequate background from the grammar school.⁹⁶

Yet as consistently as the Puritans reached for systematic, logical, intellectual acumen, the piety-mind dualism was rigorously held:

It is appointed that in the teaching of all Arts such Authors bee read as doe best agree with the Scripture truths, wherein the speciall Care of the President and Fellows shall bee used and their direction therein attended.⁹⁷

Richardson stated that "'the purpose of Logick is to direct man to see the wisdom of God.'" It generated accurate perceptions, which were the propositions of the Arts. As did Beurhusius, Richardson believed that earthly wisdom bore reflections of the heavenly, and the Wisdom of God was ultimately the Arts.⁹⁸ He stated further that they were "'holden together,'" unconfused, each in "'his rank according to the generality of the end thereof.'" This feeling concerning the interrelations of the Arts was reflected in a 1670 Harvard thesis, which termed the arts "'a circle of seven sections of which the center is God.'" Therefore, according to Ames and Descartes, "'There is no metaphysics distinct from other disciplines.'" "This characteristic is the true

⁹⁶Morison, Harvard College, I, 146. ⁹⁷Ibid., p. 145.

⁹⁸Ibid., p. 160.

metaphysics of Puritanism and the chief tie between its piety and its intellect. Perhaps we have laid bare the innermost essence of the Puritan mind when we find that its highest philosophical reach was a systematic delineation of the liberal arts." With the liberal arts occupying such an inchoate position, it was not difficult to understand the strong Puritan impulse in educational directions.⁹⁹ Thus were revealed the germinating pulsations, the reason why "from the beginning, to the end where it merged into Wesleyism, the main stream of English puritanism was kept straight by university-educated men; and [why] the two cardinal principles of English puritanism which most profoundly affected the social development of New England and the United States were not religious tenets, but educational ideals: a learned clergy, and a lettered people."¹⁰⁰

From the preceding philosophic delineation was drawn the Puritan doctrine of technologia. When creating the world, God formed a plan which was embodied in the universe. In God's mind the plan was unified, but in the creation it was diversified into concrete objects. Hence in its dissipation it took the form of reason. These temporal segments of the divine order were the various arts. Once the segments were gathered by man through his natural power, they could be placed in a "series of animated propositions"

⁹⁹Miller, New England Mind, pp. 160-161.

¹⁰⁰Samuel Eliot Morison, The Founding of Harvard College (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1935), p. 45.

by logical method. Because God radiated His wisdom for a particular end, so the arts, a segment of that Wisdom, worked toward a preordained end. Man had to find the principles of the Arts by analysis and by discriminating particular aspects within the synthesis. Once this was achieved (and the Puritans believed they had fully delineated the arts), man should imitate God by studying and using the Arts. Ultimately, technologia was the belief that the Arts "direct conduct to ends enunciated by God." Their purpose was identical with God's will:

So that for Arithmetic, Geometry and nature, man was to learn them by the creatures, and he was to learn the knowledge of Logick, Grammar, Rhetorick and Divinity. The reason is this, the Genesis of everything is Gods, and man must see the rules of Art, therefore man must see them from singulars, by analysis; now then if man must learn these, and know them by his senses observation, induction and experience, then he must seek, and find out these, for they are not written in him: again, whereas every thing is in disposition, it is requisite that man find them out, and see them severally, therefore in this respect is this Art of reason called Invention, namely as he is sent by God to find out these things in his creatures; . . . And this teacheth men thus much, that he is to seek out, and find this wisdom of God in the world, and not to be idle; for the world, and the creatures therein are like a book wherein Gods wisdom is written, and there must we seek it out.¹⁰¹

One class of commencement theses, the ones concerning technologia, discussed the Arts in general and provided a clue as to what the Harvard scholars supposed they were doing. This class of theses first appeared on the thesis sheet of August 9, 1653, and continued almost to the end of the eighteenth century, both at Harvard and at

¹⁰¹ Miller, New England Mind, pp. 161-162.

Yale.¹⁰² When theses technologia appeared, metaphysics disappeared as a thesis title.¹⁰³ A 1691 thesis defined technologia as "'the nature (habitus) and foundation (sedes) of the Arts.'" The immediate source of technologia at Harvard was either Alsted's encyclopaedia or an essay by William Ames, which dealt with setting the bounds of the arts--praxis (genesis, analysis, induction and deduction), and prattomena (effect and accomplishments). Although none of the Harvard theses were lifted directly from Ames, the major part of them may be traced to him or to Richardson's Logicians School-Master.

The purpose of technologia was to encourage the students to think of their studies in relation to each other, and as an intellectual entity.¹⁰⁴ When a student began to study a particular Art, he was encouraged to construct a system or synopsis of each Art. What was desired was a neat dichotomy, branching like a family tree, on which the student could hang all knowledge concerning the particular Art.¹⁰⁵ Ultimately, at commencement one or more technological theses were debated, providing a disputation of general public interest, and unifying the separate disciplines.¹⁰⁶ The 1653

¹⁰²Morison, Harvard College, I, 162.

¹⁰³Edward Kennard Rand, "Liberal Education in Seventeenth-Century Harvard," New England Quarterly, VI (September, 1933), p. 533.

¹⁰⁴Morison, Harvard College, I, 162.

¹⁰⁵*Ibid.*, p. 155. ¹⁰⁶*Ibid.*, p. 162.

theses in the technologia category included the following:

2. Art is the rule of the true welfare [εὐπραξία] of the entity from the primal.

3. THE PRECEPTS OF THE ARTS ARE OF ETERNAL TRUTH.

4. As Entity and Good, so art and the true are convertible terms.

5. The unity and the differentiation of art arise from the diversity of its subject.

6. The assumption of a thing [actuality] involves the assumption of the arts.

7. In the precepts of the arts there is no axiomatic contradiction among them.

8. Art is perfected only by its distribution and definition; but is exhibited by its attendant results.

Εὐπραξία [doing the right thing at the right time, welfare, true welfare, right action, success] is the object and end of the arts.¹⁰⁷

Eupraxia, stated Ames "'is carrying on according to effective rules for action. For we are said to do well, when we act in a certain situation fitly according to appropriate rules, in no place in the least departing from them.'" ¹⁰⁸ Ultimately, the world outside technologia was one of horrible irrationality, but within it, all creatures were logically disciplined and ordered by the law of eupraxia.¹⁰⁹ "Piety alone could not always justify the ways of God to man, but technologia established upon a cosmological basis for

¹⁰⁷Rand, op. cit., pp. 535-535.

¹⁰⁸Porter G. Perrin, "Possible Sources of Technologia at Early Harvard," New England Quarterly, VII (December, 1934), p. 720.

¹⁰⁹Miller, New England Mind, p. 166.

Puritans of the seventeenth century what Puritans of later centuries would pay a king's ransom to possess once more, the assurance that the rules by which all authority is exercised are wise and just."¹¹⁰

Hence, in Puritan educational theory God was a "remote, illimitable, and incalculable Being," but His wisdom could be limited and extracted by proper method. It well behooved the earthly saints to learn and diligently practice the proper method, which to the Harvard student and the New England public (through these technologia), was Ramus.¹¹¹ For the Harvard student, technologia was an evident outgrowth of logic. Moreover, logic was a standard for the other studies. It was the only subject that grew and existed by itself and with all the other arts. Perfection of logic led to new proficiency in physics, ethics, and Hebrew. Without logic, grammar was mere "'sound and nothing more.'" This was why logic was picturesquely described by a Harvard student as the "'Mercury of the arts, the Sun of the Microcosm.'"¹¹²

When the divine prototype was dispersed in creation and then unified (by Ramus) in the human mind, it appeared as the trivium and quadrivium and the other arts, such as husbandry, navigation, horticulture, or pharmacy. Thus, no

¹¹⁰Miller, New England Mind, p. 166.

¹¹¹Ibid., p. 169.

¹¹²Rand, op. cit., p. 542.

one was excused from pursuing the arts because of his profession. All work was a part of the Arts and was therefore sanctioned by God.¹¹³ "This Protean manifestation of truth did not disturb the Puritan confidence that truth is one; diversification was obviously a result of physical necessity, and seen in that light, the fact of multiplicity became a positive evidence for unity."¹¹⁴ Thus, through the doctrine of technologia "were the unity of knowledge and the divine authorship of every single particle in it brought home to the occupants of the most inconspicuous pews in the New England churches."¹¹⁵

The most ingenious by-product of technologia was its integrating conduct with knowledge. The system of ordered ideas, of ordered, sanctioned areas of life was not to be merely "an aesthetically satisfying object of silent contemplation," but a call to action, a call to lead a productive life. The occupations in the arts were given by God to be used by man. Ames stated that "'an art is to represent and to rule good action,'" and "that the effigy of divine wisdom achieved in ectypal art is to govern men toward eupraxia." Ultimately, then, the goal of discipline was moulding and guiding the intellect,¹¹⁶ and knowledge lead to results.¹¹⁷ The New England variety of Calvinist

¹¹³Miller, New England Mind, p. 171.

¹¹⁴Ibid., p. 171. ¹¹⁵Ibid., p. 176.

¹¹⁶Ibid., p. 173. ¹¹⁷Ibid., p. 174.

exceeded his intellectual love of premise and conclusion. The Puritan-Calvinist thus developed an indefatigable will, fervent moral intensity, and a practical temper which demanded that he impose principle upon practice, enforce his beliefs upon himself (and others), and embody them in concrete, working institutions. Technologia became God's direct mandate for earthly progress.¹¹⁸

It may therefore be seen how New England education envisioned and pursued a dogmatic, systematic, utilitarian role. The first New England school legislation, the Massachusetts Act of 1642, placed the responsibility for elementary education upon family heads. The motives behind this law were educational, religious, and social. Precautions were necessary to prevent children from becoming ignorant social dependents. Idleness was sin, besides being dangerously outside the bounds of technologia. Ultimately, the 1648 law stressed the imperative utility of technologia: "'Forasmuch as the good education of children is of singular behoof and benefit to any Commonwealth," A New Haven law of the same period was equally explicit: "'For the better trayning up of youth of this town, that through God's Blessinge they may be fitted for publique service hereafter, either in church or commonweale,'"¹¹⁹ Education transmitted knowledge and skill in the arts. Since the Arts were

¹¹⁸Munroe, op. cit., I, 492.

¹¹⁹Morison, Intellectual Life, p. 66.

sanctioned by God, education was essential for the spiritual health and the practical well-being of the commonwealth. An industrious child became a squared stone moulded for use in the social edifice the Puritans were building, so the children would be educated and put to work.¹²⁰ The grammar school was held in highest esteem among schools below the college level, but the English and writing schools were important too. They prepared boys to assume necessary, productive roles in colonial business affairs.

Since technologia implied that knowledge lead to results, and discipline was moulding and guiding the intellect, New England clergy construed this expansive doctrine as a mandate for schools. "Quite naturally they also saw much in the argument that to insure the obedience of good men, good wives, and servants, these must be able to read the capital laws on which rested the rule of the oligarchy and the divinely-sanctioned existence and order of the colony."¹²¹ Puritanism, as an outgrowth of Protestantism, was, in a sense, a liberation of the common man. Although it did free him from many restraints that had been imposed by the Church, Puritanism certainly did not allow him the privilege of thinking what he pleased. Puritanism freed man from social exactions, but it did not allow them freedom from social and ecclesiastical administration. "The New England

¹²⁰Martin, Evolution, p. 9.

¹²¹Merle Curti, The Social Ideas of American Educators (Tatawa, N. J.: Littlefield, Adams & Company, 1966), p. 6.

Puritans carried this facet of Protestantism intact from Europe to America. Thus, the New England 'theocracy' was simply a Protestant version of the European social ideal, and except for its Protestantism was thoroughly medieval in character."¹²²

Furthermore, the doctrine of the elect, which fostered and maintained the power of the oligarchy, provided strong bastions of educational law.¹²³ Cotton Mather, reflecting upon the challenge to Puritan control by the Andros regime, explicitly stated that the schools had been a means of maintaining preeminence of godly leaders. Jonathan Edwards, the most potent eighteenth-century advocate of Puritanism, proposed that the goals of the Great Awakening would best be achieved by endowed schools in poor villages, not only "to bring up children in common learning," but to promote their "conviction, conversion, and training in vital piety."¹²⁴

THE NATURE OF MAN

According to the Puritan theories of man and nature, man had two important sources of truth--the vestiges of God's image within his soul and his outward experience.¹²⁵ Thus, the basic assumption of the Puritan conception of man was that he was a rational creature. Because man's inward being

¹²³Curti, op. cit., p. 7. ¹²⁴Ibid., p. 10.

¹²⁵Miller, New England Mind, p. 209.

was an image of God, it, too, was also a trinity. Puritans were solidly transfixed to the world of medieval cosmology, and the structure of the inward man thus reflected the great chain of being. The higher soul included the lower soul. Plants had a "'vegetative soul,'" which commanded the nourishing and propagating powers. Animals possessed a "'sensible soul,'" which included the nourishing and propagating powers and, in addition, "the senses and animal spirits," the "'interior senses' of common senses, imagination, and memory, the passions and the sinews capable of motion." The "'rational soul'" of man included the animal and vegetable souls and the faculties of the rational creature, reason and will.¹²⁶

Little controversy existed about the animal spirit, which all agreed was "'the tye of union between the soul and the body.'" Common sense, imagination, and memory, the three senses, made possible "the intelligent reactions of animals without necessitating their possession of a reason or a will." The center of controversy was the imagination, because it had the power to present images to the reason, will, and affection and thus sway man's entire being by the effectiveness of its presentation. It not only made significant common-sense images, but judged them, preserved them, and, worst of all, combined "sense-images into synthetic

¹²⁶Miller, New England Mind, p. 240.

phantasms that correspond to nothing in nature."¹²⁷

As a result, educational materials were deliberately directed toward suffocating imaginative thought. An extract from the preface of a text, The History of Genesis, stated that

This Book of Genesis (the antientest Writing now extant) is justly stiled the Epitome of all Divinity. It is indeed a great Blessing of God, That children in England have liberty to read the holy Scriptures, when others abroad are denied it. And yet alas! how often do we see Parents prefer Tom Thumb, Guy of Norwich, or some such foolish Book, before the Book of Life! Let not your children read these vain Books, profane Ballads, and filthy songs. Throw away all fond and amorous Romances, and fabulous Histories of Giants, the bombast atchievements of Knight Errantry, and the like; for these fill the Heads of children with vain, silly and idle imaginations.¹²⁸

There was fear on the part of Puritan parents that children might be too cheerful and carefree. Light-heartedness and flippancy by a child implied disrespect for the fearful state of his soul. The child was warned that he stood on the edge of an abyss, that having God angry with one was the most dreadful of conditions.¹²⁹ Cotton Mather wrote in his journals that

I must think of some exquisite and obliging wayes, to abate Sammy's inordinate Love of Play. His play wounds his Faculties. I must engage him.

What shall be done, for the raising of Sammy's mind, above the debasing meanness of Play!

¹²⁷Miller, New England Mind, p. 240.

¹²⁸Johnson, op. cit., p. 46.

¹²⁹Tyack, op. cit., p. 3.

Entertain Sammy betimes, with the first Rudiments of Geography and Astronomy, as well as History; and so raise his mind above the sillier Diversions of childhood.¹³⁰

Consequently, the didacticism of educational material was adapted to the purposes of education. It was not designed to allow development of individual initiative and creativity. Distortion of ideas usually meant heresy. Let the child therefore memorize and regurgitate his catechism, leaving any originality to the devil.¹³¹ Even what children's literature existed remained highly unimaginative in language and thought:

The History of Master Tommy Fido. . . .

As Goodness and Learning make the Child a Man, so Piety makes him an Angel. Master Tommy Fido not only loved his Book because it made him wiser, but because it made him better too. He loved every Body, and could not see a stranger hurt, without feeling what he suffered, without pitying him, and wishing he could help him. He loved his Papa and Mamma, his Brothers and Sisters with the dearest Affection; he learnt his Duty to God, thanked him for his Goodness, and was glad that he had not made him a Horse or a Cow, but had given him Sense enough to know his Duty, and every Day when he said his Prayers, thanked God for making him a little man. One Day he went to church, he minded what the Parson said, and when he came home asked his Papa, if God loved him; his Papa said yes, my Dear. O! my dear Papa, said he, I am glad to hear it; what a charming Thing it is to have God my friend! then nothing can hurt me; I am sure I will love him as well as ever I can. Thus he every day grew wiser and better. Everybody was pleased with him, he had many friends, the Poor blessed him, and every one strove to make him happy.¹³²

¹³⁰Elizabeth Deering Hanscom (ed.), The Heart of the Puritan (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1917), p. 90.

¹³¹Morgan, Puritan Family, p. 54.

¹³²Ezra Hoyt Byington, The Puritan in England and New England (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1900), p. 90.

Generally, imagination, reason, will, and the affections were categorized as the crucial points of sin, the weak parts in the human spirit through which Satan most frequently entered. Imagination was Satan's favorite entry, because it was not commanded by the sense. Once depraved (and Puritans naturally assumed it was), imagination became lawless and created phantasms of lust to seduce the affections and the will. In The Souls Conflict, Richard Sibbes devoted a ponderous section to the crimes of the imagination. He stated that

The life of many men . . . is almost nothing else but a fancy; that which chiefly sets their wits awork and takes up most of their time is how to please their own imagination, which setteth up an excellency, within itself, in comparison of which it despiseth all true excellency and those things that are of most necessary consequence indeed.¹³³

Because it was free and independent, Reason was the king and ruler of the faculties. Will was queen. Reason approved images if they were true, and will, if they were good. Thus, the purpose of understanding was to separate truth from falsehood and to do so by the acts of logic, of which the imagination was not capable in its mere ability to create and combine images. Reason alone was capable of performing deductively. Hence, it "'lifteth up all the senses of man to the contemplation of the divinity, & of the spiritual & supernatural things.'"

The problem with such an orderly philosophy was

¹³³Miller, New England Mind, pp. 257-258.

ultimately asserting what relation existed between will and understanding. One school stated that "the will, dwelling in the heart, is necessarily blind and can see only what reason sends to it in the form of images." The second school believed that "the will is not often all entirely dependent upon the mind, but is capable of taking the initiative, of actually being the queen of the faculties, of swaying the intellect itself." According to the first school, once reason had been rightly educated, the will had to obey. Hence, men could become virtuous by education. However, the second school held that will was not subordinate. It had the power to force images from the memory and the imagination into the reason. Ames felt that the will could refuse to work upon any phantasm which reason acknowledged, that it could do so "without any foregoing act of judgement." John Cotton, eager to establish autonomy of the will, felt that the will "set the senses to work, forces the mind to understand, instructs the memory to keep whatsoever it chooses." Willard felt that "the will can set the understanding to work by intending a Thing . . . and so the Will is the First Mover."¹³⁴ Thus, Willard's statement, "break its will that its soul may live," and Mather's epigram, "better whipt than Damn'd," expressed a large part of Puritan educational policy. However, the assumption that the birch rod constituted the Puritans' only method of correction was erroneous.

¹³⁴Miller, New England Mind, pp. 247-250.

Bodily punishment was wholeheartedly employed, but John Eliot's praise of chastisement even approached eloquence:

The gentle rod of the mother, is a very gentle thing, it will break neither bone nor skin; yet by the blessing of God with it, and upon the wise application of it, it would break the bond that bindeth up corruption in the heart.

Sewell, like other Puritans, saw all children as creatures of sin, but he did not therefore conclude that a free application of the rod was the way to bring them to perfection. He counselled his listeners to win children to holiness by kindness rather than by severity. John Cotton, in a funeral sermon for Ezekiel Cheever, pictured Cheever as speaking from Heaven:

TUTORS, Be Strict; But yet be Gentle too.
Don't by fierce Cruelties fair Hopes undo.

The Lads with Honour first, and Reason Rule;
Blowes are but for the Refractory Fool.¹³⁵

Nevertheless, discipline by the rod and discipline by knowledge were both highly regarded no matter which theory was followed. The first required act in regeneration was purging the imagination, which meant enforcing phenomenological isomorphism of a thing. For "'while the swarms of vain imaginations keep thoroughfare in our minds,'" there was no hope "'that the power of any meanes should come in upon the soul or prevayl with it for good.'" Thus in life, in religion, in education, in literature, man had to resist the "'natural pronitide in us to give our fansies an

¹³⁵Morgan, Puritan Family, pp. 57-58.

unlimited liberty.'" Above all, in the mysterious mazes of regeneration, the imagination and will had to be watched: "every sinner sets up a fancie in his owne Imagination, that if Christ comes, strange matters will be wrought. Now framing this fancie in his conceit, he will take no other evidence of Christs coming.'"¹³⁶

If duality existed within the realm of Reason and Will, so also did conflict exist in the Puritan theory of emotion. The Puritans felt that since God created affections within the soul, these, therefore, were fundamentally good, even though they, like the soul, were corrupted by sin.¹³⁷ Passions were likely misguided because of their inherent sin, but their existence and function could not be negated, or "man would be constitutionally altered and the great chain of being broken." To prove such a point, Puritans asserted that Christ had assumed the entire human character--reason, will, "desire, anger, hatred, and fear." Furthermore, following their Peripatetic legacy, they asserted that the perfect happiness of man was achieved when he realized his natural functions. Achieving happiness, said Samuel Willard, "'is a congenerate principle of Humane nature and can be no more separate from it than Humanity.'" Such a belief in the rightness of happiness was not to lessen the importance of the religious ideal: "happiness is our

¹³⁶Miller, New England Mind, p. 259.

¹³⁷Ibid., p. 253.

subjective end, the glory of God our objective end, and 'God both tyed these together so inseparably, that man cannot possibly make a separation of them.'" This tedious stand was best stated by Reynolds:

The agitations of Passions, as long as they serve only to drive forward, but not to destroy Vertue; as long as they keep their dependence on Reason, and runne only in that chanel wherewith they are thereby bounded; are of excellent service.¹³⁸

The foregoing conflicts--those in reason and will and those within the doctrines of the passions--articulated the subtleties of the Puritan doctrine. On the one hand, piety and the intellectual heritage demanded that man be humiliated and forced to confess himself contemptible. On the other hand, the anti-stoic heritage demanded that Puritans give at least lip-service to the goodness of human emotions.¹³⁹ In New England, however, the emphasis on depravity won the upper hand. Such was perhaps the case, because New England Puritanism existed in its most trenchant form until the early 1670's. Separated by a belligerent ocean from the more jovial religions--Anglicanism, Latudinarianism, and Catholicism, which tended to dilute some of its intensity--Puritanism possessed and impregnated all facets of its culture with an austerity which continually sought to create all men not in the image of God, but Arthur Dimmesdale:

As to his [the child's] piety, astonishing were his applications of Scripture upon occasion and his sense of

¹³⁸Miller, New England Mind, p. 254.

¹³⁹Ibid., p. 255.

God. He had learned all his Catechism early, and understood all the historical part of the Bible and New Testament to a wonder, how Christ came to redeem mankind, and how comprehending those messages himself, his god-fathers were discharged of his promises.

He would of himself select the most pathetic psalms and chapters out of Job, to read to his maid during his sickness, telling her, when she pitied him, that all God's children must suffer affliction. He declaimed against the vanities of the world before he had seen any. Afterward he would desire those who came to see him to pray by him, and a year before he fell sick to kneel and pray with him alone in some corner.¹⁴⁰

Unregenerate reason properly educated and will skillfully guided might hold affections within bounds, but unless regeneration was achieved, the affections would soon rule. New England education could be said to have been founded on the aim of holding unregenerate human passion in check until the soul was regenerated. Essentially, then, the moral and the educational problem was control, and the essence of Puritanism in colonial New England rang with the chants of pure stoicism:

We should mortifie these our affections; Therefore it stands you upon to keepe them under.

When the passions and Affections of the Soul are broken loose, having shaken off the reins of government, some thrusting the man violently forward to that which is Evil . . . This is the State of the Unregenerate . . . Care then should be taken to Quell this unhappy Tumult, to reduce every affection within its proper bounds.¹⁴¹

When a child had the proper reverence for his parents (which was strictly outlined in The New-England Primer) his attitude

¹⁴⁰Alice Morse Earle, Child Life in Colonial Days (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1899), p. 32.

¹⁴¹Miller, New England Mind, p. 261.

was fear mixed with affection. His parents loved him, and it was the child's duty to love his parents in return. If, however, the child reciprocated with the same kind of affection shown him by his parents, he was considered too familiar. Thomas Cobbett warned parents about becoming too familiar with their children and displaying visible affection. Wise parents would always remain emotionally distant from their children, because "'fondness and familiarity breeds and causeth contempt and irreverance in children.'" ¹⁴² When Jane, the daughter of Benjamin Colman, became too effusive in letters written to her father, she admitted her error and asked his forgiveness. He gave his pardon along with some timely advice for preventing such conduct:

I would have you therefore careful against this Error, even when you say your Thoughts of Reverence and Esteem to your Father, or to a Spouse, if ever you should live to have one. It is easy to be lavish and run into foolish Flatteries. I think you have done well to correct yourself for some of your Excursions of this kind toward me. ¹⁴³

School records were filled with evidences of educators attempting to corral young unregenerates. Lengthy school days were part of the discipline. New Haven records of 1684 revealed

That the masters and scholars duly attend the school hours, viz. from 6 in the morning to 11 a clock in the

¹⁴²Cobbett, Fruitful Discourse, p. 96, cited by Morgan, Puritan Family, p. 60.

¹⁴³Ebenezer Turell, Memoirs of the Life and Death of the Pious and Ingenious Mrs. Jane Turell, p. 16, cited by Morgan, Puritan Family, p. 60.

forenoon, and from 1 a clock in the afternoon to 5 a clock in the afternoon in summer and 4 in the winter.¹⁴⁴

Rigid school rules were the norm:

Orders of the committee of Trustees for the grammar school at New Haven, to be observed and attended in the said school . . .

That the scholars behave themselves at all times, especially in school times, with due reverence to their master, and with sobriety and quietness among themselves, without fighting, quarrelling or calling another or any other bad names, or using bad words in cursing, taking the name of God in vain, or other profane, obscene, or corrupt speeches And if any prove incorrigible in such bad manners and wicked corrupting language and speeches notwithstanding former warnings, admonitions and corrections, that such be expelled from the school, as pernicious and dangerous examples to the rest.

That if any of the school boys be observed to play, sleep or behave themselves rudely or irreverently or be any way disorderly at meeting or the Sabbath days or any other times of public worship of God, that upon information or complaint thereof to the due conviction of the offenders, the master shall give them due correction, to the degree of the offense, and that all correction be with moderation.¹⁴⁵

THE NATURE OF CONVERSION

The doctrine of grace as expounded in New England revealed contagions which could be explained as clear emanations from the doctrine of reason. For example, in one of his metaphors, John Preston stated that in the ruins of a palace the "materials still exist, but the 'order' is taken away. Grace reestablishes the order by rebuilding with the same materials." Grace, then, was the divine power which

¹⁴⁴Small, op. cit., p. 25.

¹⁴⁵Ibid., p. 26.

realigned arguments. Consequently, in the Puritan sermon, conversion was not "prostration on the road to Damascus, but reason elevated."¹⁴⁶ Faith and conversion were not intoxication and ecstasy, but education and discipline.¹⁴⁷

Consequently, God, by His power, could save a soul in the twinkling of an eye, but He usually appealed to men in other ways. "He applies himself in the means to men, as Causes by Counsel, so he proposeth things to them, and works them up to make a deliberate choice, which is not want to be instantaneous." Grace affected understanding, and understanding preceded the act of will. Furthermore, only the regenerate person perceived all truth, and technologia was constructed upon the insight of the regenerate reason: "Rectifie therefore the apprehension, and heale the disease; labour to have judgement informed, and you shall see things as they are."¹⁴⁸

Sermons were logically the best means for salvation, because sermons were constructed by the rules of Logic. God was Perfect Rationality, and man retained vestiges of God's perfect Reason in his own reason. The sermons created phantoms in the senses "'thro' which they are to pass to the Mind and be improved by the Rational and Moral Powers of the Soul."¹⁴⁹ In fact, this Gospel of the Kingdom of

¹⁴⁶ Miller, New England Mind, p. 200.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 201. ¹⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 281.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 292.

Reason was no better illustrated than in the sermon. Cotton explained that the minister "'speaks not the expresse words of the Scripture, but comments and explications of the Scripture.'" Therefore, the congregation was to stay mentally alert to use "'the Scripture as a rule to measure all the Sermon by.'" Sermons, of course, were constructed by the laws of logic, and the rule by which Cotton would have the sermon tested was a logical interpretation of Scripture. Hence, his directive amounted to "the grave advice that logic should be a rule by which to measure logic."¹⁵⁰

The seventeenth-century Puritan intellectual never sensed the danger stalking within his philosophy, particularly the possibility that such descriptions of faith in the terms of right reason and the rational rule of eupraxia could evolve into a naturalistic morality and a belief that education would achieve everything ascribed to Grace.¹⁵¹ The Puritan minister sternly announced that "'to preferre the invention of Man before the wisdom of God were sacrilegious madnesse.'" Yet, at the same time they stated, with no feeling of inconsistency, that "'a just deduct from the Scripture is of equal force with an expresse commande."¹⁵²

The rational approach used by ministers was a deliberate attempt to imitate God. They did not want to utilize emotion: "'we must endeavour their conviction; we must first

¹⁵⁰Miller, New England Mind, p. 204.

¹⁵¹Ibid., p. 202. ¹⁵²Ibid., 204.

deal with their understanding.'" ¹⁵³ Thus, because Knowledge precedes illumination, theology had its place in the liberal arts. Will and passion had to have something upon which to work, for "'knowledg and understanding is the inlet into the soul [,] nothing comes to the heart nor can work upon it but so far as Knowledg makes way, & ushers it in (as it were) into the presence of the wil and leaves an impression thereof upon it.'" ¹⁵⁴ It is "'opposite to all the Rules of Reason and Providence,'" stated Hooker, "'that persons should step from prophaness in the depth of it, unto the height of Christian Piety and Holiness'" before the mind is adequately informed "'in the History, Matter, and Truth of the Scripture.'" In short, "a regenerate heart never throbs a single beat except at the command of an informed mind, an enlightened intellect, or educated reason." ¹⁵⁵

The importance of the sermon and the belief in its saving, rectifying powers was evident in the educational program. As soon as children were old enough "'so as to be benefited themselves and the congregation not disturbed by 'em,'" they were taken to church. ¹⁵⁶ "'Bring them to Church,'" said John Cotton, "'and help them to remember something, and tell them the meaning of it, and take a little in good part, and encourage them, and that will make them

¹⁵³ Miller, New England Mind, p. 292.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 293. ¹⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 294.

¹⁵⁶ Joseph Belcher, Two Sermons Preached in Dedham, p. 12, cited by Morgan, Puritan Family, p. 56.

delight in it."¹⁵⁷ When the services had ended and the family had returned home, the godly householder would question the children to see how well they had paid attention to the preacher and how much they had understood of what he had said. As far as he was able, he would clarify the difficult points and apply the doctrines to the children's lives.¹⁵⁸

The New Haven grammar school records of 1684 stated that "'all the Latin Scholars and all other of the boys of competent age and capacity, give the master an account of one passage or sentence at least, of the sermons the foregoing Sabbath, on the second day morning, and that from 1 to 3 in the afternoon of every last day of the week, be improved by the master in catechising of his scholars that are capable."¹⁵⁹ Such catechizing was interpreted as a rigid logical interpretation. School authorities in colonial Connecticut adopted these rules:

That the masters will select such letters from the Bible for those who read therein as they can best understand, and will frequently explain and inculcate such truths in the course of the reading as lie nearest the level of their capacities, by occasional remarks or a more solemn address, particularly their obligations to honor and obey their parents; to subject to magistrates and all in authority; to revere the ministers of the gospel, to respect the aged and all their superiors; to reverence the Sabbath, the worship of God; of their accountability to Him, of their mortality and of the importance of religion, both as a preparation for death

¹⁵⁷Practical Commentary on John, p. 102, cited by Morgan, Puritan Family, p. 56.

¹⁵⁸Morgan, Puritan Family, p. 56.

¹⁵⁹Small, op. cit., p. 26.

and the only means of true peace, comfort and usefulness in the world.¹⁶⁰

Although colonial children did not receive formal instruction in logic, the catechisms were so logically constructed, as were the sermons they were required to understand, that the form and feeling for Logic as an essential element to life and salvation was enmeshed in young minds at an early age. This subtle inculcation was evident in the title page of The History of Genesis:

An account of the Holy Laws and Actions of the Patriarch; explained with Pious and Edifying Explications, and illustrated with nearly Forty Figures. Fitted for the Use of Schools and recommended to Teachers of Children, as a Book very proper for the learning them to read English, and instructing them in the right understanding of these Divine Historys.¹⁶¹

The minister, as a town officer, was employed for the religious instruction of the people. As the children were an important part of his charge, his visits to the schools were not infrequent. He examined the children in the catechism, their knowledge of the Bible, and their understanding of the sermon the preceding Sunday. As late as 1710, it was still expected of the Boston ministers that they would, on their school visits, pray with the pupil, and "'entertain them with some instructions of piety, specially adopted to their age and education.'"¹⁶² At Springfield, "'the Rev. Mr.

¹⁶⁰Small, op. cit., p. 303.

¹⁶¹Johnson, op. cit., p. 45.

¹⁶²Ibid., p. 24.

visited the schools Saturday mornings, the time set apart for the catechism, and would hear the little ones recite sanctification, justification and election and would have in turn a word or two on the evils of insubordination.'" Dorchester rules of 1645 state that "'every second day in the week he shall call his scholars together between 12 and 1 of the clock, to examine them on what they have learned on the Sabbath day preceding, at which time also he shall take notice of any misdemeanor or disorder that any of his scholars have committed on the sabbath.'"¹⁶³

The Westminster Assembly's Shorter Catechism did perhaps more than any other educational tool to unify the New England Puritans intellectually. The children were drilled in the catechism both at home and at school. Ministers preached about it, and it was actively present in everyone's mind. Its importance during colonial times was indicated by the fact that the largest volume printed in New England before the nineteenth century was Samuel Willard's Complete Body of Divinity in Two Hundred and Fifty Expository Lectures on the Assembly's Shorter Catechism. This ominous volume of nearly a thousand pages was remarkably popular.¹⁶⁴ The catechism was treated as seriously in the schools as it was in the churches, and the teachers drilled their pupils in it as intensely as they did spelling

¹⁶³Small, op. cit., p. 301.

¹⁶⁴Johnson, op. cit., p. 97.

or reading. With the primer so constantly used in church, school and home, the people could not help being saturated in its doctrines, its manner of speaking, its logical construction. No book, except the Bible, did more to form New England character.¹⁶⁵

A book that was second only to the primer in its wide use by children was Michael Wigglesworth's, The Day of Doom. The poem, first published in 1662, consisted of 224 stanzas of eight lines each. It is a fearful portrayal of the judgement scene and the terrors of the damned. It began with a description of the sin and carelessness of men and the coming of the Judge. Fear filled every heart, and many sought escape from the Judgement. There was a graphic account of the conversation that took place between the reprobate infants and the Judge. The children realized that they were condemned for Adam's guilt:

If for our own transgressions,
or disobedience,
We here did stand at thy left hand
just were the recompence:
But Adam's guilt our souls hath split,
his fault is charged on us,
And that alone hath overthrown,
and utterly undone us.

Ultimately, the sentence and its execution were described: the flaming sky dropped around the damned like molten lead, and there was no escape. The transfigured saints witnessed their anguish and suffering, but no pity escaped them. The whole ghoulish scene illustrated the Puritan feeling that

¹⁶⁵Johnson, op. cit., p. 99.

unrepenting man was damned to God's glory.¹⁶⁶

The sermon, of course, was the tool of the church, and ultimately, the church was more explicit in its educational function than either family or community. In addition to its role as educator, exercised through the schools it wholeheartedly supported and sometimes staffed, it performed other important educational functions while promoting the spiritual welfare and guarding the morals of the community. It furthered the introduction of the child into Puritan society by instructing him in the system of thought and imagery which defined the values and aims of the culture. The church provided the most stringent sanctions for the accepted behavior norms, and developed within the child loyalties, the ethos, and the ontologies of his society. In such an educational role, organized Puritan religion provided a powerful, unifying influence. As a mechanism for integration, especially in educational ideals, its movement was centripetal.¹⁶⁷

SUMMARY

And that is in the way of created humane Reason . . . It is impossible for us to know or understand things, but by some rule of reason or other. Reason is nothing else but the manner of a Being, whereby it is acted upon our Understanding. We know nothing of God but by putting

¹⁶⁶Michael Wigglesworth, The Day of Doom (Boston: 1751, seventh edition), cited by Fleming, op. cit., pp. 83-85.

¹⁶⁷Bailyn, op. cit., p. 8.

some Logical Notion upon him. All things are conveyed to us in a Logical way, and bear some stamp of reason upon them, or else we should know nothing of them. Hence God, to fit his discovery of himself to our manner of entertaining it, takes the Rational or Logical Arguments upon himself, admits of a Distinction or a Description, utters Sentences of Action about himself, speaks of himself as if he were an Effect & had Causes; a Subject and had Adjuncts . . . And this tells us how useful & necessary reason is to Faith; it being an instrument which is used to convey the discoveries of God unto it; and therefore Faith doth not relinquish or cast off reason; for there is nothing in Religion contrary to it, tho' there are many things that do transcend, and must captivate it. Religion is the wisdom of God, which cannot cross it self, & reason lisps out something to Faith, though this entertains more than reason is able to express.

This implicative, allusive passage of Willard's reverberated with all the implications of the Puritan theory of logic, of knowledge, and of reason. Founded upon Ramistic dialect, developing out of the technologia penned by Richardson and Ames, it summarized precisely the elusive yet trenchant nature of Puritan rationality. It embodied the characteristic, the inherent conception of divine action, "the sense of an infinite deity who has voluntarily limited Himself, taken upon Himself to be the 'arguments of our discourse,' who has chosen to speak the Word that was with God and that was God in the form of the word of reason." Yet, ultimately, it outlined the ironic, paradoxical consequence of total depravity in real life. It began with the fact that God was forced to reveal Himself to man in order that he might be saved from dissolution. Yet, the passage concluded with "the astonishingly cheerful discovery that once God began speaking with man, He was obliged to declare

Himself in forms of logic congenial to the human mind," God's greatest gift to mankind was not necessarily Grace, but an entype rationality paralleling ectype Reason, which creatures of sin could not obliterate. The passage mainly illustrated, then, that although piety determined the type of thought which characterized the New England mind, the Puritan cultural manifestation, such as education, was determined by the uses of reason and logic.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁸ Miller, New England Mind, pp. 205-206.

CHAPTER IV

THE PURITAN LEGACY

Among American historians, philosophers, and philologists, it has become almost universally acknowledged fact that the Puritanism which was established in colonial New England has left its distinctive etching upon the culture of succeeding generations of Americans. Therefore, Puritanism has been acknowledged as one of the continuing factors in the development of American attitudes. Puritanism as a force has continued, because it was the first ingredient in the American experience to be rigorously articulated.¹ This turgid articulation produced an attitude toward life that was able to survive and surmount inevitable changes on the American cultural frontier.

The motivation behind this legacy emerged primarily from the close relationship between church and state which had developed in Europe long before the Reformation. This relationship was maintained by the view that the welfare of society demanded particular religious doctrines be promulgated by the state, or that the state promote a single established church. Prior to the Reformation three particular cultural ideas existed which ultimately affected Puritanism and its education. The first was the church-state concept. The second was the belief that government had been established

¹Miller, "Puritan Way," p. 4.

by God for the well-being of depraved men; and third, that faith, unquestioning acceptance, and mystic contemplation of God were the primary ingredients of Christianity.

The Reformation, which was aided by the New Learning, became a movement for economic and political advantage as well as spiritual realignment. The strong church-state relationship passed intact through the Reformation, as did the belief in government as God-sanctioned. But the third concept, that of Christianity as fideism, suffered a strange distortion. Secular elements of the Reformation coupled with the New Learning aided in the inauguration of a more realistic, more practical definition of religion. The Reformation-inspired transition from a church of the mass to a church of the mind was propitious for the development of a rational religion. Elizabethan purists, while abhorring the placating compromises which structured the Church of England, solidly maintained the theological basis for the need of government. These Puritans, retaining the church-state concept, decreed that a pure, working Biblical polity was the only true government ordained by God. Attempting by logic and debate to extirpate all the fallacious versions of Christianity in England, these Puritans succeeded in framing a rationale for their views. This rationale axiomatically assumed the reliability of the human mind and defined God as One who had declared Himself in forms of logic congenial to the human mind. Consequently, to the Puritan intellectual the Word of God was clear and explicit on the

form of the church and the purposes of social existence. No one except fools or knaves could refrain from apprehending this logical truth.²

The Puritans then logically redefined the inward covenant in terms of a civil or federal covenant. This meant that the church-state theory and the belief in government as God-sanctioned were united and stringently particularized. A coercive state, they maintained, was necessary to restrain the evil impulses of men. Hence, to the Puritan it was impossible to separate man's spiritual life from his communal life. Massachusetts was settled for religious purposes, but as Winthrop said, these religious purposes included "'a due form of Government both civill and ecclesiastical.'" According to the Puritans, God had decreed that all men should be under corporate rule, that men should submit to their superiors, that no man should live apart from his fellow men, that government should have the power to demand and enforce obedience and inflict just punishment. The New-England theorists thought of society as a unit bound up by inviolable, God-sanctioned ties. Society was not to them an aggregation of individuals, but a stratified organism, functioning for a spiritually foreordained purpose, "with all parts subordinate to the whole, all members contributing a definite share, every person occupying a particular social status." The Puritan state thus became an

²Miller, Errand, pp. 145.

instrument of leadership, discipline, and coercion. It legislated over every aspect of human behavior. It not only regulated misconduct but attempted to inspire and direct all conduct.³

The existence of the Puritan state demanded that its intricate, highly rational church-state concepts be perpetuated by education. Puritanism's controlling tenet--to fulfill the spiritual and civic purposes of the Puritan state--was achieved by instilling in the child the fear of breaking God's (and the commonwealth's) laws and a fear of the dreadful social and spiritual consequences of sin. Education became a means of preparing the child for salvation, an experience useful in preparing him to become an obedient, economically productive member of society. In interpreting the Ten Commandments to children, Cotton emphasized that honoring one's father and mother meant reverence, obedience, and recompense for all his superiors in family, school, church, and state. Good order in the family and in the child, decreed Mather, produced a well-ordered society, but poor discipline would result in chaotic society. Thus church-state authority became, in New England, God-state authority.⁴

How much the use of theocracy and the consciousness of being guided by an omnipotent power had to do with the

³Miller, Errand, pp. 142-143.

⁴R. Freeman Butts and Lawrence A. Cremin, A History of Education in American Culture (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1953), pp. 66-69.

Puritans' success was difficult to estimate. Puritan intellectuals, who defined New England's existence as part of the universal war against evil, interpreted the inevitable struggles of the Bible State as God's signals for increased effort. The elect adopted the conviction that the more New England prospered, the more it would be attacked by the devil and his agents. Therefore, the faith in the Holy Commonwealth could never be refuted. The orthodox Puritan state died, but its theory was never disproved. The conviction and intensity of the Puritan struggle remained alive to infect the consciences of succeeding generations. Herbert Schneider drew the conclusion that

The case of New England is, at least, a significant proof that the doctrine that man is not a free agent, that he is merely an actor in a cosmic drama, playing a predetermined role, may be a more powerful stimulus to extreme effort and a more moral force than any doctrine of human freedom.⁵

Certainly it was little short of a miracle of human discipline and determination that in the face of circumstances that would have discouraged most adventurers, the New-England Puritans not only made themselves physically secure, but immediately began to lay the foundations of government, education, thought, and literature which greatly exceeded the achievements of any other colony and established New England as the intellectual and educational leader of the nation for generations to come.

⁵Schneider, op. cit., pp. 34-37.

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