

P R E F A C E.

A FEW years ago a society was formed in England, called the "Hanserd Knollys Society,"—so named in honor of a distinguished Baptist minister of the 17th century,—“for the Publication of the Works of Early English and other Baptist Writers.” The first volume issued by this society appeared in 1846, under the title, “Tracts on Liberty of Conscience and Persecution, 1614—1661.” The second volume, issued in 1847, contained “the Records of a Church of Christ, meeting in Broadmead, Bristol, 1640—1687.” Since then have appeared successively, a reprint of the first editions of the first and second parts of the “Pilgrim’s Progress,” by John Bunyan, the “Bloody Tenent,” by Roger Williams, and the “Necessitie of Separation,” by John Canne. These works, all of them of great historical interest and value, are the more valuable for the amount of diligent editorial labor which has been bestowed upon these elegant editions. It is to be regretted, that they have attained no wider circulation in this country. A few copies only have been circulated from the American Baptist Publication Society in Philadelphia. Even our public libraries are generally without them.

The “Tracts,” the “Broadmead Records,” and the “Bloody Tenent,” were edited by Edward B. Underhill, Esq. From the Introductions to these volumes the Historical Survey contained in the following pages has been taken. The introduction to the “Bloody Tenent” is, in strictness, Biographical, but the omission of many personal details not connected with the design of the present publication, gives it sufficiently an historical character, and renders it a fitting conclusion to the volume. It

brings down the survey of controversies to the settlement of New England, from which point a new work should start, illustrating the progress of religious liberty in this country.

The present writer has given some attention to this subject, with a view to such an undertaking. The materials are abundant, and are not wanting in interest. Massachusetts and Virginia furnished the great battle-fields where the contest was most violent, but through nearly all the older states there were strifes sufficiently earnest and significant. The authority of magistrates over the conscience was, both as a doctrine and a practice, too thoroughly a part of English national life, to be expelled from the forming institutions of this Western World, without long debate. Those who suffered for conscience' sake, —who declared steadfastly, through successive generations, the principles of religious liberty which Roger Williams affirmed and illustrated in Rhode Island, and won at last signal and glorious triumphs, most certainly merit a record of their deeds. Such a record, written in a spirit of candor and discrimination, and after a full examination of all available sources of information, it may be believed, would be welcomed by our countrymen, as an important contribution to our history. The present writer is not prepared to pledge himself to such an attempt; but should no abler hand undertake it, and should Divine Providence give him life and leisure, he may, at some future period, present such an offering to the public.

INTRODUCTION.

WHOEVER looks abroad over these American States observes the workings of institutions such as have never before blessed the world. Not till the darkness of the Middle Ages had yielded to the rising dawn of the new and better Ages succeeding;—not till Feudalism was giving place to doctrines and actual developments in which Human Rights were recognized, did it please God to discover to the civilized world this Western Hemisphere, and to lay here the foundations of new Empires. How marked too was the presence of his guiding Hand in partitioning this Hemisphere among those who struggled for the prize! That portion which lay nearest the Old World was unquestionably the most important;—it had not indeed mountains whose bowels yielded silver, nor streams whose waters washed out gold, but it had a genial clime and a productive soil, capacious harbors and far-reaching inland water-courses, with a broad, unmeasured, and unimagined interior, capable of sustaining the population of Europe five times told. Into whose hands should it fall? By what people should it be settled, and whose institutions should find here opportunities for boundless development? It was a critical period in the history of the world. Suppose for one moment that Spain had won the prize,—Spain, rich, proud, the first of European States in material possessions and in rank, but at the same time most bigoted of all in obsequiousness to Rome,—dry, like Gideon's fleece, amid the dews of the Reformation,*—and sworn to an everlasting war against civil and religious freedom! Or suppose that this portion of the Continent had become the possession of France, which, standing for a while poised between the Reformation and the Roman Apostasy, at length fell back to the latter, and wedded herself anew to the work of human enslavement! Both sought the coveted acquisition. Spain planted her standard amid the luxuriant flowers of the South, and France believed that the lilies of Bourbon would grow on the cold shores of the St. Lawrence. Spain sent her pioneers along the Gulf of Mexico to the Mississippi, and France with equal zeal established posts along the

* Macaulay.

Northern Lakes, and far down the same great river of the West. These powers had belted the Eastern half of the Continent, and its partition between them was the only prospect which opened to the human eye. Alas for the world if such had been the fate of America! But Divine Providence was at this very time training another people to become the possessors of this wide domain. The Reformation had stirred the English mind to its depths. Looking back now upon the history of England for centuries preceding the period of which we are speaking, we are able to see in the commingling of races and of institutions, and specially in the demands for a purer worship which had often sprung from the people, and in the recognition and settlement of great and immutable principles of law which had agitated Parliaments and Courts, the progress of a Providential discipline which prepared England to become Protestant. True, she did not become so without long struggles in Church and State. Parties of the Old Learning and the New contended violently for the mastery, and through successive generations confessors and patriots bore their dying testimonies at the stake and on the scaffold. But the principles of civil and religious liberty had found a place in the English mind from which they could not be dislodged. Every struggle, whatever the immediate issue, was a triumph on the side of freedom. Principles are more powerful than arms, and the contest is never doubtful. When England accepted the Reformation,—and England, as God had trained her, could not do otherwise,—she committed herself to the glorious destiny which she has fulfilled. She became the Mistress of Nations, and under God the Regenerator and Hope of the world.

To England, pledged to such a mission, God gave for the time this Western domain. His purposes, however, could not then be foreseen. Those whom the mother country sent hither, some as exiles and some as adventurers, brought with them the agitations which rent society at home, and out of which were to be eliminated the principles and the institutions of freedom. The scenes amid which they planted themselves, the occupations to which their necessities gave rise, the opportunities for popular government which their Charters secured and their condition rendered indispensable, all conspired to carry forward the developments of freedom more rapidly than was possible in the land which the colonists had left. And now the purposes of Providence became apparent. The Reformation was not more a necessity to England, than was the Revolution to the Colonies. That Revolution lay along the path of inevitable destiny. It gave to a Continent the institutions of which the Reformation in England was the prophecy and the pledge. It consecrated this wide and glorious domain to the illustration of civil and religious liberty.

It requires an effort of attention, and a comparison of our condition with that of the people of other countries, to estimate justly the blessings of our freedom. It is a freedom limited and regulated by law, but the limitations and regulations lie just at those points beyond which freedom becomes anarchy and a curse. It is the inalienable right of every American citizen to seek his own happiness in his own way, provided only that he shall not invade the equal rights of his neighbors. Every sphere of life is open to every man. The largest wealth, the highest stations, are the fair prizes for which all are the equally protected competitors. As matters of fact, our merchant-princes and our Senators and Presidents are often from humble spheres of life, and have worked their way to wealth and rank by the force of talents exercised where opportunities were free. Our institutions are precisely in harmony with man's nature, and meet his conscious wants. They invite him to progress, and have their best illustration when he avails himself most of the privileges which they furnish.

It is not so in the older nations. There are seats of power which it would be treason to attempt to reach even by honorable means. The avenues to wealth and even to knowledge are obstructed by oppressive restrictions, and society is divided into castes by barriers which it is scarcely possible to surmount. And this whole frame-work of oppression is held together by the presence of a military force, which, under the pretext of defending against invasion from abroad, really is maintained to preserve the thrones of tyrants and the ascendancy of privileged classes at home. The foreigner coming to our shores finds it difficult to put himself fully in sympathy with his new condition. Our equality of rights and opportunities is to him a new experience, and amid the absence of a military force he wonders what holds our society together. At length he learns that the conservative forces of American society are spiritual,—that the spirit of freedom is likewise the spirit of law,—that an intelligent and virtuous community of free-men will maintain social quietness and order, by a law WITHIN as un-failing as that law of the material world which holds the planets in their steady pathway around the sun. There may be, there are, crimes against peace and order, and there must be laws and constabulary forces for the lawless and disturbers of the peace, but it is not these laws and forces which maintain the quietness of our great family of free citizens. Never was there a government where so little outward force was seen,—never one where so little was needed. The secret lies in the fact that here man has attained and understands his rights; he has attained true freedom, the very spirit of which is reverential to law.

But it was not our purpose to speak at length of *civil* freedom. Our *religious* freedom is even more our distinction and honor. It is FREEDOM. Other lands may boast of TOLERATION; we boast of FREEDOM. None with us has the right or the power to *tolerate*. There is neither magistrate nor priest of their great clemency to *permit* A to be an Episcopalian, or B to be a Presbyterian, or C to be a Baptist, or D to be a Roman Catholic. They are the one or the other because as FREEMEN they are so persuaded, and because, under responsibility to God only, they so CHOOSE to be. Such is the religious liberty of these States. No denomination is patronized,—none is proscribed. The State confines its jurisdiction to civil affairs only, and so long as its peace is preserved, leaves the domain of Conscience to the unshared supremacy of its rightful Lord. With us the State and the Church have learned respectively their spheres, and each confines itself within its own realm. Our institutions can boast no higher honor than the solution of this problem. To many foreigners it is a marvel that the State can preserve order without the organized alliance of the Church as a moral police, and not less a marvel that the Church can thrive without drawing patronage and aid from the State. To us it is no marvel. The State derives aid from the Church unquestionably, but derives that aid only as the Church untrammelled and free promotes sentiments of piety and virtue among the people. Purer because she is free, she for that reason thrives best and accomplishes most. Her very freedom quickens thought, and awakens energy, and incites to prayer, and her power to conserve the State can be illustrated and known only when the last link which binds her to the State is sundered. She demands the right to declare a free gospel to free consciences, and having that she demands no more. The support of her ministry and worship she will derive from the willing offerings of those whom her teachings bless.

How happy our lot is in respect to religious freedom is seen, as in the former instance, by comparing our condition with that of the people of other, and even the most favored nations. The rising Baptists of Germany, for no other crime than their faith, have been subjected to fines, imprisonment and banishment, and even while we write are enduring these vexations and wrongs. Baptists have shared the same fate in Denmark, and the banishment of a Baptist minister from Sweden is fresh in the recollection of the reader as an item of recent news. France has belied her clamorous boasts of republicanism as much by petty persecutions at home as by crushing the rising liberties of Italy. But it is not necessary to seek out special instances of persecution to illustrate the wide differences between our condition and that of nations where the Church is connected with the State. The

whole system of religious establishments is evil only ; and when it ceases to be a persecution it becomes a bribe. Under such establishments religious freedom in its broadest and truest sense is an impossibility, and the compulsory taxes which wring from Dissenters the stipends with which priests whom they never hear, and whose doctrines they do not believe, are paid, are among the minor evils of such a connection. It is not necessary to allude to Catholic countries where penalties follow the slightest indications of free thought, or to recur to the history of those times when the Inquisition sought victims for the rack, and the souls of martyrs ascended to heaven amid the flames by which their bodies were consumed.

It is perhaps sufficiently plain, and is generally recognized, that our institutions are a growth of many ages,—the fruits of contests carried on through successive generations. It may be doubted, however, whether the stages of the growth, and the histories of particular contests, are as well understood as is desirable,—whether indeed we should not prize far more highly our “goodly heritage,” and render a warmer tribute of gratitude for it, if we more distinctly recognized the actors and the incidents in the Struggles and Triumphs of Religious Liberty. Our special liability is to overlook the earlier struggles, and the noble bravery of the earlier combatants. We venture to say that it is a limited number, of even intelligent readers, who are accustomed to trace the progress of civil freedom farther back than the Revolution of 1688, or at farthest than the period of the contests with Charles I. and the overthrow of the monarchy. True, they carry in their recollection the testimony borne in general phrases, as in Hume, that England is indebted for the liberties of her people, more to the Puritans than to any other class or party, but a search into the grounds on which such testimony is borne,—an inquiry into the circumstances of the rise of the Puritans,—the principles which they affirmed,—the parties into which they themselves were divided,—their relations to the State,—the struggles through which they passed in their earlier collisions with the ruling powers,—their sufferings as patriots of whom the world was not worthy, and the steady triumphs which prepared them for the more notable events of the seventeenth century ; these are matters too often regarded with indifference and overlooked.

It is so likewise in relation to religious liberty. There are multitudes who, though they may have read of earlier demands for the rights of conscience, have nevertheless no distinct apprehension of hard contests for religious freedom previous to those which brought the Pilgrims to Plymouth Rock. The first great shock, in which the inalienable rights of free consciences were fully and distinctly affirmed against the remnants of tyranny which still lingered among the best

of English Protestants, is most generally supposed to have occurred *on these shores*, when Roger Williams confronted the powers of Church and State in Massachusetts. Even Bancroft, in his warm eulogy of the Baptists as the true champions of intellectual freedom, accounts Roger Williams as a discoverer of principles, and writes his name by the side of those of Kepler and Newton.* The truth, however, is that the contest in the colony of Massachusetts Bay was an imported contest; it came, with all its distinctly recognized principles, across the Atlantic in the breasts of men who had fought the same battles in Holland and England. John Cotton and Roger Williams had had their teachers in such men as John Robinson and Thomas Helwys. Indeed, the whole series of struggles in behalf of religious freedom which had occurred in England since the Reformation, had been marked by developments of similar character. While the far greater part of those who claimed for themselves the right to worship God according to the demands of their own consciences, clung still to partial and inconsistent views, there were others, fewer in numbers perhaps and less influential, who had attained to clearer perceptions, and were the true lights of their times. The discussions which sprung up between these parties, and their common resistance to the tyranny of the State, had been steadily preparing the way for the developments of a later period. The course of human events is never accidental—never capricious; it is a connected series, and the men and events of one age are as the excitations and causes of preceding times have made them. The issues of the reign of James I. had been long in course of preparation; and John Robinson and John Cotton, Thomas Helwys and Roger Williams, were but the exponents and representatives of the long progress of opinion. It was the glory of the two last named, that the one gave full form and expression to the rights of conscience as an article of religious belief, and maintained his views with singular personal boldness and magnanimity—and of the other, that he stated and defended the doctrine of “soul-liberty” with great skill and force in his writings, and honorably illustrated it in the planting of a civil State where consciences, however diverse or eccentric, were never oppressed. That small territory, scarcely noticeable upon a map of the great confederacy of States of which it is now a part, has furnished the example of religious freedom which that confederacy has copied; and across this wide continent the millions of our people account it as their highest distinction and happiness to dwell under institutions

* Bancroft says, “He was the first person in modern Christendom to assert in its plenitude the doctrine of the liberty of conscience, the equality of opinions before the law, and in its defence he was the harbinger of Milton, the precursor and the superior of Jeremy Taylor.” [Vol. i., p. 375.]

which had their first illustration around the shores of Narragansett Bay.

The historical contributions herewith presented to the reader will be found of special value in relation to the point under notice. They illustrate those struggles for the rights of conscience which lie back of the more familiar contests of later times, and which had effected the indispensable preparations for the triumphs finally won. They recount the names and the deeds of the men who were in advance of their fellows in recognizing with clearness the principles of religious freedom, as they were likewise in advance in sufferings for their testimony. There will be found in these pages many interesting facts, brought to light by patient investigation, and a thoroughness of historical analysis which will aid in dispensing praise and blame in just measures. The reader will be able both to note with great distinctness the general progress of opinion, and to trace the movements of particular parties down to the time when the English nation was ripe for the Commonwealth, and prepared to plant on these Western shores the germs of those glorious institutions under which we live.

Though we are reluctant to detain the reader from the volume to which these remarks are only introductory, we think it not unsuitable to dwell for a moment upon the period immediately preceding the settlement of Massachusetts and the controversy with Roger Williams, in order to show, as we have before affirmed, that that controversy was no new one, but was essentially the same with that which the same parties, Baptists and Independents, had waged on the other side of the water.*

In the year 1611, the present English version of the Holy Scriptures was given to the world. The event constitutes an era in the world's history. That year has however another distinction which will make it ever memorable. In 1611 the Baptists issued a Confession of Faith in which they say, "that the magistrate is not to meddle with religion, or matters of conscience, nor compel men to this or that form of religion, because Christ is the King and Lawgiver of the Church and Conscience." The gift to the world of that version of the Holy Scriptures which has shed the light of salvation wherever the spirit of Anglo-Saxon adventure has borne the English tongue, and the announcement by a Christian denomination of that true liberty of conscience under which each man, as his inalienable birth-right, interprets that Word for himself and follows freely its biddings, were worthy to be contemporaneous events.

The tyranny of the English Establishment had driven a large num-

* Some of these thoughts were expressed by the writer in the *New York Recorder*, of which he was then editor, in February, 1848.

ber of worthy men into exile in Holland. Some of these were Baptists, some Independents,—fellow-sufferers for their testimony to the truth. Prominent among the former were John Smyth, a learned man, and once a clergyman of the Establishment, many years afterwards, and without any known authority, spoken of in derision by his enemies as a Se-Baptist,—that is, one who had baptized himself,*) and Thomas Helwys;—prominent among the latter was John Robinson, renowned over the world as the “father of the Pilgrims.” Mr. Smyth very soon died,—not however till he had written largely in favor of his new views, and with so much ability, that Bishop Hall tells Mr. Robinson: “There is no remedy; you must go forward to Anabaptism or back to us; all your Rabbins cannot answer the charge of your rebaptized brother. * * * He tells you true,—your station is unsafe; either you must go forward to him or come back to us.” That Mr. Smyth was a man of superior abilities is further indicated by the fact that Bishop Hall spoke of Mr. Robinson as no more than his “shadow.” Mr. Smyth was succeeded by Mr. Helwys. And what then do we hear of this Christian pastor and his brethren? Do they remain in their exile? No. Do they migrate to distant portions of the world to find a spot in the wilderness, where they may both assert and enjoy the rights of conscience in quietness? No. They determine “to challenge king and state to their faces, and not give way to them, no, not a foot.” Accordingly, hanging out their flag in the Confession to which we have referred, THEY RETURN TO THEIR OWN COUNTRY, to assert there their rights of conscience, and to suffer for them if need be. They believed that a conflict for the rights of conscience was imminent, and they were ready to participate in its dangers. Englishmen they were born, and Englishmen they would die. But in this movement they had not the sympathy of Mr. Robinson and his associates. So strong was the opposition from this source which they encountered, that in the year 1612, Mr. Helwys felt called upon to defend the return of the Baptists in a book which he published at that time. Among the considerations put forth in justification of their course, we find the following:—

“1. That fleeing from persecution hath been the overthrow of religion in this island; the best able and greater part being gone, and leaving behind them some few who, by the others’ departure, have had their afflictions and their contempt increased, hath been the cause of many falling back, and of their adversaries rejoicing.

“2. Great help and encouragement would it be to God’s people in affliction, imprisonment, and the like, to have their brethren’s presence to administer to their souls and bodies; and for which cause Christ

* This calumny has been of late successfully refuted by E. B. Underhill, Esq.

will say, 'I was in prison, and ye visited me; in distress, and ye comforted me.'"*

It would be difficult to find heroic conduct justified by more honorable motives.

If now we advance a little further, (1615,) we find these Baptists sending forth a volume entitled, "Objections: Answered by way of Dialogue, wherein is proved, By the Law of God, By the Law of our Land, and By his Majesty's [James I.] many testimonies, That no man ought to be persecuted for his religion, so he testify his allegiance by the Oath, appointed by Law." And what does the reader imagine to have been a special occasion for the production of this work? If not already aware of the fact, he will be surprised to learn that Mr. Robinson had put himself in opposition, not only to the return to England of the Baptists, but likewise to *their sentiments on the rights of conscience*. Though an exile himself for conscience' sake, his mind still held fast the doctrine of the magistrate's jurisdiction over spiritual matters; and he was ready to defend this doctrine against his Baptist brethren who at that very moment were "challenging king and state to their faces."

Let us then leave the Baptists contending for the rights of man, on their own soil, and amid the perils of persecution, and turn to the writings of Mr. Robinson here alluded to, which were sent forth from his more quiet asylum in Holland. His book, published in 1614, is entitled, "Of Religious Communion, Private and Public, With the silencing of the Clamours raised by Mr. Thomas Helwisse against our retaining the Baptism received in England; and administering of Baptism unto Infants. As also, A Survey of the Confession of Faith, published in certain Conclusions, by the remainder of Mr. Smyth's company."

The latter part only of the book concerns our present purpose. We are indebted for the extract to the Hanserd Knollys Society's edition of the "Objections" above named.† Mr. Robinson knows too well the perfect loyalty of his opponents, and their quiet and conscientious demeanor as good subjects and citizens, to indulge in the common calumny which charged them with insubordination and rebellion, but he insists that the Baptists are wrong in denying to the magistrate authority in matters of religion. He says:—

"They add, 'that the magistrate is not to meddle with religion, or matters of conscience, nor compel men to this or that form of religion, because Christ is the King and Lawgiver of the church and conscience, James iv. 12.'"

And will the "father of the Pilgrims" put himself in direct and

* See Benedict's *History of the Baptists*, Colby's ed. p. 330.

† Page 92.

formal opposition to this sound and comprehensive statement of the rights of conscience, and the prerogatives of Christ? He proceeds:—

“I answer, that this indeed proves that he may alter, devise, or establish nothing in religion *otherwise than Christ hath appointed*, but proves not that he may not use his *lawful power lawfully* for the furtherance of Christ’s kingdom and laws. The prophet Isaiah, speaking of the church of Christ, foretells that kings shall be her nursing fathers, and queens her nursing mothers; which, if they meddle not with her, how can they be? And where these men make this the magistrate’s only work, ‘that justice and civility may be preserved amongst men,’ the apostle teaches another end, which is, that we may lead a peaceable life under them in all godliness. It is true they have no power *against* the laws, doctrine, and religion of Christ; but *for* the same, if their power be of God, they may use it lawfully, and *against the contrary*. And so it was in special foretold by John, that the kings of the earth should make the whore desolate, and naked, and eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.

“This Mr. Helwisse frivolously interprets ‘of their spiritual weapons;’ which are no other than the spiritual weapons of all other Christians. Besides that, it is contrary to the clear meaning of the Holy Ghost, which is, that these kings should first use their civil power *for* the beast and whore, and after *against* them to their destruction.”

Thus wrote John Robinson,—not at this time only, for we have before us passages from other works of his in which kindred sentiments are held forth. Will the reader carefully examine what we have quoted? The magistrate may “use his *lawful power lawfully* for the furtherance of Christ’s kingdom and laws.” Magistrates “have no power *against* the laws, doctrine, and religion of Christ; but *for* the same, if their power be of God, they may use it lawfully, and *against the contrary*.” Was ever license for tyranny over souls granted in broader terms? Who but the magistrate himself shall determine the lawful use of power, what are the laws and kingdom of Christ, and what the contrary? And then how significant the illustration which Mr. Robinson cites from “the kings of the earth,” with the protest that “spiritual weapons” are *not* intended! “These kings should first use their civil power *for* the beast and whore, and after *against* them to their destruction.” In other words, if Mr. Robinson’s views of prophecy were such as the use of the illustration would indicate, it was designed and authorized by the Almighty, that as the civil authorities had built up Mohammedanism and the Papacy by persecuting the saints, so now the civil authorities might turn around and burn Mohammedans and Papists, and—which was the doctrine to be deduced

—by a fair inference inflict penalties on all varieties of heresy! The persecutions of New England were but the practical exemplification of these teachings.

Let not the reader, however, imagine that we determine our estimate of the character of John Robinson by his opinions on the authority of magistrates. He was a good man,—an honor to the noble race who hail him as a spiritual father. If it were our purpose to vindicate his character,—as certainly it is not our purpose to defame it,—the materials are abundant. Few men have made a deeper impression on the world; fewer still an impression so largely beneficent. We say only that on the point under notice he was in error, and at a time when the antagonists whom he affected to despise as “ignorant” and “frivolous,” were pouring upon him a flood of light which he strangely failed to recognize. From him we turn to the testimony of those antagonists, referring the reader to a few striking passages in the book which the Baptists sent forth in reply to this animadversion upon their faith. How wide the difference! How honorable to them the contrast!

“The power and authority of the king is earthly, and God hath commanded me to submit to all ordinances of man, and therefore I have faith to submit to what ordinances of man soever the king commands, if it be a human ordinance and not against the manifest word of God; let him require what he will, I must of conscience obey him, with my body, goods, and all that I have. *But my soul*, wherewith I am to worship God, *that* belongeth to ANOTHER KING, whose kingdom is not of this world; whose people must come willingly; whose weapons are not carnal, but spiritual. (Hanserd Knollys Society’s edition, p. 107.)

“I acknowledge unfeignedly that God hath given to magistrates a sword to cut off wicked men, and to reward the well-doers. But this ministry is a worldly ministry, their sword is a worldly sword, their punishments can extend no further than the outward man, they can but kill the body. And therefore this ministry and sword is appointed only to punish the breach of worldly ordinances, WHICH IS ALL THAT GOD HATH GIVEN TO ANY MORTAL MAN TO PUNISH. The king may make laws for the safety and good of his person, state, and subjects, against the which whoever is disloyal or disobedient, he may dispose of at his pleasure. The Lord hath given him this sword of authority, foreseeing in his eternal wisdom, that if this, his ordinance of magistracy were not, there would be no living for men in the world, and especially for the godly; and therefore the godly have particular cause to glorify God for this, his blessed ordinance of magistracy, and to regard it with all reverence.

“But now the breach of Christ’s laws, of the which we all this while speak, which is the only thing I stand upon; his kingdom is spiritual, his laws spiritual, the transgression spiritual, the punishment spiritual, everlasting death of soul, his sword spiritual, NO CARNAL OR WORLDLY WEAPON IS GIVEN TO THE SUPPORTATION OF HIS KINGDOM. (Ib. pp. 121, 122.)

“Magistracy is God’s blessed ordinance in its right place; but let us not be wiser than God to devise him a means for the publishing of his gospel, which he that had all power had not, nor hath commanded. Magistracy is a power of this world; the kingdom, power, subjects and means of publishing the gospel, are not of this world. (Ib. p. 133.)

“If I do take any authority from the king’s majesty, let me be judged worthy my desert; but if I defend the authority of Christ Jesus over men’s souls, which appertaineth to no mortal man whatsoever, then know you, that whosoever would rob him of the honor which is not of this world, he will tread them under foot. Earthly authority belongeth to earthly kings; but spiritual authority belongeth to that one spiritual King who is KING OF KINGS.” (Ib. p. 134.)

Well spoken all,—and we commend to the special attention of all those who think it necessary to defend the Puritans by decrying the early Baptists as ignorant, fanatical, and disturbers of the civil peace, the unanswerable argumentations by which these positions were supported. We regret to say that Mr. Robinson was not convinced, for we find him at a later day (1625,) affirming still the authority of magistrates in matters of religion.

Such were the relations of the Baptists of that early period to the party which most nearly sympathized with them. They had taken bolder strides,—they had attained the true idea of religious freedom, and had thus clearly and vigorously stated it to the world. But the days of their suffering for conscience’ sake were not yet ended. The followers of John Robinson crossed the Atlantic, and they and the Baptists soon met again on the shores of New-England. The sword of the magistrate was now held by those who held Robinson’s principles, and the Baptists at an early day felt its edge. The struggle was a protracted one, but truth was mightier than the sword, and in the end the principles of religious liberty, which were a part of Baptist faith, triumphed and became the crowning glory of our institutions.

SEWALL S. CUTTING.

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