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Origins of the movement for the separation of Maine from Massachusetts

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ORIGINS OF THE MOVEMENT FOR THE SEPARATION OF MAINE FROM MASSACHUSETTS

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ORIGINS OF THE MOVEMENT

FOR THE SEPARATION OF MAINE FROM MASSACHUSETTS

I

"No evidence has ever been presented, so far as I am aware, that a sentiment in favor of separation (of Maine from Massachusetts) existed before the close of the Revolutionary War."[1] So runs Stanwood's introduction to the only complete discourse on the separation in print. In 1784 and 1785, many articles favoring the separation appeared in the Maine newspapers. Among the first of these, we note a statement which flatly contradicts that of Mr. Stanwood. "A Farmer" writing in the Falmouth Gazette for March 5, 1785, inquires, "How is it possible to accomplish (the welfare of the District) in any other way so well as restoring to the Province of Maine her ancient privileges?"[2] Ancient privileges! Tradition summoned to sanction a new idea! The suggestion implies an absolute and impossible contradiction of terms. Abandoning Stanwood, then, we turn back toward the dawn of Maine history in quest of the real origins of the movement for separation.

Throughout colonial days, we find wide differences between the province of Maine and all others; including and especially Massachusetts. We will endeavor to establish the thesis that these differences were exceedingly complex; that they permeated all life in Maine; that they represented vital and fundamental distinctions between that District and Massachusetts; that they acted continuously as insurmountable obstacles in the way of any

1. Stanwood, Separation of Maine from Mass. in Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll. June, 1907
   II, 125
2. Moody, Notes, manuscript.

spiritual union; and as strongest, as an irrisistible factor in the ultimate separation. The "when" and "how" of the division might be determined by accident, by politics, by lofty ambition and so forth; but the fact was made possible---inevitable, by the early history of the state.

Although divergent elements in the population of colonial Massachusetts were not only present, but numerically superior to the original Puritans; yet, so strong was the personality of the minority, so utterly coherent and dynamic, that its dominance in the Bay was absolute and continuous. Harmony, adequate and awesome, was maintained throughout the state. (Irreverent, one is reminded of the potency of the one rotten apple, in the barrel of sound fruit.)

Such cohesive power was altogether lacking in colonial Maine. Whether in geography or history; in motives and origin of settlers; in their mode of living; in their attitudes on questions moral, religious, and educational; always there was discord and confusion. Contradictions within her borders were at times as numerous as those she presented to her neighbor without. Ultimately, these contrasts were to form a composite alien to Massachusetts at innumerable points. Separation of the two sections was assured as early as 1650, and reaffirmed with each passing year. Its consummation merely awaited the occasion.

As prerequisite to an understanding of this fundamental incompatibility, which was to become the core of the movement for separation, a rather detailed analysis of the chief elements in Maine provincial society, is indispensable.

II

That the population of Maine was conglomerate to a degree beyond even that of the central colonies, the facts leave little room for doubt. Under the feeble but aristocratic direction of English royalists, immigrants from all parts of New England--- especially Massachusetts; from many parts of Europe (including Scotland, Ireland, France, Germany, and Holland); together with negroes from the West Indies, jostled each other for a foothold on the barren coasts and hills of Maine.

Throughout the period, immigrants were arriving constantly from all New England. From 1759-76 Massachusetts supplied most of the settlers. Maine was the "most accessible" "West" for the people of the eastern part of the state.[3] In the last years before the separation, immigrants crowded in from New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Connecticut as well.[4]

In the early part of the 18th century, many settlers arrived from Ireland.[5] These were apparently all Presbyterians of Scotch descent. Many had been induced to leave for the new lands by the efforts of one Dunbar; whose activities were matched by those of general Waldo, operation in Germany.[6] Both of these groups suffered socially and economically in the new land.[7] Some of the Germans deserted it entirely within a few years.[8] In 1686 several French Protestant families, driven from the homeland by

3. Matthews, Expansion of New England pp. 114, 115
4. Dwight, Travels in New England & N. Y. II, 232
5. Willis, History of Portland, II, 17
6. Williamson, History of The State of Maine, II, 284
7. Eaton, Annals of Warren p. 53, 60
7. Jernagan, Epochs of American History, I, American Colonies p.310-11
7. Varney, Brief History of Me. p. 215
8. Eaton, op. cit. pp. 65, 66, 88

the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, settled at Portland.[9] About the same time (1688) some Dutch organized a flourishing settlement at Pemaquid and the west bank of the Damariscotta; but were apparently driven away by the Indian wars of the following period.[10]

By 1702 Williamson notes that "colored people, increasing in numbers, had become increasingly obnoxious and despicable."[11] By 1823 there were enough negroes in Waldoborough to warrant their separation into a special school district.[12]

Over this polyglot population---like a bewildered hen with a brood of ducklings---ruled the royalist proprietors. The most influential persons at the beginning of the 17th century were of the Anglican faith, and of the social and political group which such faith has come to connote.

No less than the sources of the settlers of Maine, do their chief motives for immigration illustrate their differences from each other and from Massachusetts. "When the first settlers planted themselves in Maine, their object was not husbandry, but commerce and fishery. Fishermen and casual traders, are never, in the proper sense, Colonists. Neither their views, nor their habits qualify them to convert a wilderness into a permanent residence. Men accustomed to patient labor, of persevering firmness, and superior even to the real ills of life; men influenced by some great and commanding motive, connected with a settlement on the

9. Willis op. cit. I, 185
10. Eaton, op. cit. p. 29
11. Williamson op. cit. II, 74
12. Eaton op. cit. 214

soil, such as the hope of civil or religious freedom, or the necessity of providing for an increasing family; are the only persons, fitted to subdue forests, encounter frost and hunger, and resolutely survey the prospect of Savage incursions. Traders and fishermen will stay in any place, while they can trade, and fish, with advantage; but they commence their business with an original intention of retreating as soon as their gain is acquired, or the acquisition becomes hopeless. From the first settlers, as they are called, of Maine, all that could be rationally expected was that which actually took place. They traded, caught fish, and went home."[13] "The existence led by the inhabitants in their solitary shacks or little villages was that of a rough border life in which the monotony of the hard, bitter winters and the routine of planting, fishing, or bargaining for furs, was punctuated by an occasional murder among themselves, and by quarrels, sometimes bloody, with the Indians and French."[14]

The movement to Maine was an "essentially western movement, especially in the social traits that were developing. Even ....the Maine coast, under frontier conditions, and remote from the older counties of New England, developed traits and a democratic spirit that relate them closely to the Westerner, in spite of the fact that Maine is 'down east' by preeminence.... That long blood-stained line of the eastern frontier which skirted the Maine coast was of great importance, for it imparted a western tone to the life and characteristics of the Maine people which endures to this day."[15]

13. Dwight, op. cit. II, 233
14. Adams, Founding of New England, p. 177
15. Turner, Frontier in American History pp. 52,3, 79

Meanwhile, in the rest of New England, "the discontented, the poor, the radical, all such elements moved to the frontier.....whether the discontent were for social, political or religious conditions.....Maine settlers moved least of all; probably because there have always been vacant lands in their own state, at low prices, and within easy distance."[16] To the origin of Vermont, for instance, every other colony in New England, "contributed many families."[17] To the population of the states of the Old Northwest (Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michegan, and Wisconsin) New England contributed a total of 224,230 immigrants. Of this number, Maine, representing over half the total area of the section, sent 22,458----or about one tenth.[18] In short, the "radical and discontented" elements were not only being drained out of the other states and into Maine; but once in Maine, stayed permanently. The effect on Maine society could hardly be negligeable. With such material, a separation politically from a government slowly congealing into a rigid conservatism, was naturally not difficult to fashion.

III

In no phase of Maine society was diversification more marked or more potent than in the field of religion. Anglicanism at the start; marked indifference during most of the colonial period; criticism and compulsion by Massachusetts; and later evolution towards the Baptist and Methodist (typical frontier) faiths --- at every point there is a high degree of incompatibility with the contemporary Massachusetts theology; and never

16. Matthews, op. cit. 259
17. ibid. 115
18. ibid. Appendix B

anything like unity within.

The establishment of the Anglican Church in the newly organized colony of Maine was inevitable. The most influential men were decidedly Episcopalian. "The officers of the crown and some of the more opulent citizens usually attended worship in the Episcopal churches." "The principal settlers had brought with them from England the religious forms which prevailed there, and did not come to avoid them as was the case in Massachusetts and Plymouth."[19]

This "gentlemen's church" was as unlikely to survive on the frontier as were his manners or manicure. At the same time, the religious convictions of the average pioneer were either too varied or too weak to have much greater survival value. The subsequent era of irreligiousness and immorality is noted by all students of the period. "These people... come together from different parts of the country, with different educations, views and opinions. Hence, when these settlements become sufficiently advanced to support a minister, they find themselves split into several sects; each too small and poor to maintain a minister for itself; and all too discordant to unite in maintaining one for the whole. These divisions generate unkindness, bickerings and separation from each other; and end in alienation from Religion, and dissoluteness of manners. Wearied by such contentions, and seeing religion in no other form than that odious one of party zeal, some of them at least, become persuaded that party zeal is the real ob-

19. Willis, op. cit. p. 44, 45

ject, and Religion only the name. Hence the transition is easy to mere Nihilism, and a total disregard of moral obligations."[20]

Evidences of this "moral desolation" were apparent to Thomas Gorges as early as 1640. He observed that; "Being removed from the power of an enlightened civilization, and from the restraints of law, some of them had given themselves up to the dominion of passion, and vice was ruling with unlimited sway. Even those who had previously sustained characters which had drawn to them the respect and esteem of the best part of the settlement had indulged in iniquities of the most disreputable sort and destructive of the peace and good order of all society.[21]---There was lamentable profanation of the Sabbath during the whole period anterior to the first Indian War,....Licentiousness was everywhere rampant. The sanctions of religion were disregarded, and men were for the most part heedless of the law, and those moral obligations a regard for which is essential for social and civil progress."[22] "Instead of the Christian sympathies, the mutual charities, and the graces of forbearance, which are the soul of all social felicity in a youthful community; the churches in Wells, in Saco and in Cape Porpoise were disquieted by new-fangled doctrines, or rent in pieces by turbulent spirits, self-willed noisy disputants, or disorderly communnicants."[23]

Even after the Revolution, this situation persisted. Holmes notes, as late as 1790, that "the counties of Hancock

20. Dwight, op. cit. II, 238
21. Bourne, History of Wells & Kennebunk p. 5
22. ibid. p. 103
23. Williamson op. cit. I, 354

and Washington, in the District of Me.....(contained) 21 incorporated towns, and 8 handsome plantations. In all these towns and plantations there were but 3 ordained ministers."[24] In 1807 Portland contained "three Presbyterian, one Episcopal, one Baptist and one Methodist Congregations. Such a collection of inhabitants, gathered by business, and by accident from many quarters, must be supposed to bring with them a corresponding mixture of principles; and, in many instances, may easily be believed scarcely to have formed any principles at all. Persons of the latter description seat themselves on commercial ground, to amass property; not to find the way to heaven; and of such persons will no small part of such an aggregation ordinarily consist."[25]

A score of years later, Lapham observes regretfully, "As to the religious concerns of the town, (Rumford) there is nothing at the present time (1826) very encouraging. There are two religious orders, but they are not properly separated into distinct societies....There is a meeting house in the center of the town erected several years ago, but it was never finished and it is much fallen into decay."[26]

This laxness in matters religious, made the colony a rival to Rhode Island in attractiveness to New England's "derelicts." Maine was "frequently an asylum for those who had been excommunicated....The opinion generally prevailed, that Me. was peopled by those who were too immoral and irreligious to be allowed to remain in other colonies; and it used to be taunt-

24. Holmes, American Annals II, 484
25. Dwight op. cit. p. 209
26. Lapham, History of Rumford, p. 93

ingly said; When a man can find no religion to his taste, let him remove to Me.....It not only protected those who were banished from Mass. on account of what were called their dangerous heresies, but it became a place of refuge for the immoral and licentious. Altho' the population was considerably increased by this state of things, yet it tended to make the people disorderly and corrupt."[27] "They were generally friends to religious toleration; and Me. became in some degree an asylum for persecuted fugitives....a single instance of persecution....expulsion merely, is all that can be found to stain her records."[28]

Massachusetts afforded tremendous contrast to Maine's general carelessness. She gave her closest attention to matters religious. Her conclusions, as the product of profound thinking, were rigidly right. Bourne, rather tactlessly asserts that "These Massachusetts pioneers....were remarkable for that selfishness and conceit which aim at magnigying one's own importance and assuming all that is valuable of tho't, opinion, and religion. They had imbibed certain views in theology, which they believed were the sure and only therapeutics whereby the soul was to be healed from the diseases of sin, and fitted to enjoy the privileges of their association."[29]

Any amount of corroboration of such statements can be found in commentators on the period. Nothing can compare, however, with Winthrop's terse comments in giving us a glimpse

27. Bradbury, History of Kennebunk, par. & pp. 40, 41
28. Williamson, op. cit. I, 385
29. Bourne op. cit. p. 51

of the really superb assurance of Massachusetts in her own position as God's chosen community, and in the utter futility of any a-Puritan endeavor. "One Captain Mason of London, a man in favor at Court, and a professed enemy to us, had a plantation at Pascataquack; which he was at great charge about, and set up a sawmill, but nothing prospered. ....Sir Ferdinand Gorge also had sided with our adversaries against us, but underhand, pretending by his letters and speeches to seek our welfare; but he never prospered. He attempted great matters, and was at large expenses about his province here, but he lost all[30]....Three fishermen of a boat belonging to Isle of Shoals were very profane men, and scorners of religion, and were drinking all the Lord's day, and the next week their boat was cast upon the rocks at the Isle of Shoals, and they were drowned."[31]

This situation acted not only as marked contrast between Maine and Massachusetts, but also served as a specific cause for wrangling throughout the early period. As early as 1643, Massachusetts hostility on this account was shown in her refusal to include Maine (as well as Rhode Island) in the New England confederacy. Williamson explains that, "The province of Maine could not be admitted a member of that confederacy; being subject to rulers of episcopal tenets, and not unfrequently an asylum of excommunicants from the other colonies."[32] Winthrop's explanation is quite definite: "Those of Sir F. Gorges his province, beyong

30. Winthrop, History of New England, II, 14
31. ibid. II, 187
32. Williamson, op. cit. I, 293

Pascataquack, were not received nor called into confederation, because they ran a different course from us both in their ministry and civil administration; for they had lately made Acomentious a poor village a corporation, and had made a taylor their mayor and had entertained one Hull an excommunicated person and very contentious, for their minister."[33]

A few years later, in her preliminary efforts to control Maine, it is evident that Massachusetts appreciated the significance of these differences as stumbling block in way of the desired union.

In the first years of her attempted rule in Maine, Massachusetts opposition to the religious conditions there, was given legal form. In 1653 the General Court undertook to "legislate very freely in regard to the religious belief and action of the people. In that colony no man had the right of suffrage who was not a member of the church. In Maine such membership had not been necessary.... Other legislation....attempted to control the religious views of the settlers by severe enactments against freedom of opinion, and thus to declare that 'to affirm that a man is justified by his own works, and not by Christ's righteousness or to deny the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, the authority of magistracy, should be heresy, and the person.....(doing so) had not the right of suffrage. Baptists also denying the validity of infant baptism were declared incendiaries in the church and state."[34] Laws were also

33. Winthrop, op. cit. II, 121
34. Bourne, op. cit. p. 61

passed forbidding Jordan to act as Episcopal clergyman.[35] It was made "penal for anyone to preach or prophesy without being first approbated by four neighboring churches, and also required each town to provide means to support a pious ministry."[36] "On this subject, Massachusetts exercised her power with no little severity, and notwithstanding her guaranty....'that civil privileges should not be infringed upon for religious differences,' she did proceed to enforce her own doctrines, regardless of the religious principles which prevailed here."[37] "Believing that Episcopalianism was at the root of the revolt from her gov't, new enactments were made to restrain its progress, providing that, 'whoever keeps Christmas day is to pay - 5.' Mr. Jordan had been imprisoned for baptizing children in the Episcopal mode."[38]

Maine reciprocated. "The Episcopalians were very much opposed to the submission of the Province of Maine to Massachusetts, proposed in 1652, because it would prevent the general adoption of their liturgy."[39] Sullivan corroborates this with the statement that "The Episcopalian party dreaded the tyranny of the Massachusetts Puritanism," and adds the interesting comment that they "wished to get the Province to themselves, that they might plunder it as they pleased."[40] "Jordan persisted in acting as an Episcopal clergyman, although forbidden to do so by the laws of Massachusetts."[41] "Among the complaints against Massachusetts made to the king's commissioners in 1665, (we note) 'They will not admit any who is not a

35. Southgate, History of Scarboro' p. 64
36. Williamson. op. cit. I, 356
37. Willis, op. cit. I, 62
38. Bourne, op. cit. p. 66
39. Hanson, History of Gardiner, p. 245
40. Sullivan, History of The District of Me. p. 321
41. Southgate, op. cit. p. 64

member of the church to communion, nor their children to baptism."[42] We are inclined to the belief that religious differences were not the least of the causes of disaffection to the Bay government which prevailed in the province."[43]

As time went on, continuous association with Massachusetts inevitably increased the number of Congregationalists in Maine. By 1820 there were only 3 Episcopal churches in the state, and 136 Congregationalist. This seeming approximation of harmony, vanishes before a further examinat on of the facts. During these same years, Maine had swung even more solidly to Baptist and Methodist theology the latter equalling the Congregationalists: the former outnumbering them three to two.[44] In any case, by this time Massachusetts was herself tending away from Congregational to Unitarian faith. East was east and West was west; never the twain did meet.

In the matter of religion, we find that Massachusetts and Maine have always differed. In the early years this difference gave rise to bitterness which operated as an important factor in accentuating the political disputes. As a source of anti-Massachusetts sentiment, where perpetual difference would keep alive a vague hostility long after the actual wrangling had ceased, the religious question had few equals.

42. Willis, op. cit. p. 100
43. ibid p. 108
44. 2 Williamson op. cit. II 691,2,3

IV

Less marked than in the case of religion, but significant still, is the contrast between Maine and Massachusetts in industry. Rigidly restricted by topographic and climatic factors, the economy envolved in the northern province was for 200 years after the first settlement still of a distinct frontier type. Although conditions in Maine were similar in general to those further south, in Massachusetts alone was agriculture of sufficent importance to make its stabilizing, civilizing influence distinctly felt. The very real gulf created by this distinction was emphasized by the proximity of the two states, as well as by their long political connection. This relationship, with its concommitant antagonism, recalls the difficulties between the highlands and lowlands of Scotland.

Nature fairly outdid herself in the number of ways she safeguarded Maine against human invasion. Broad river mouths made difficult communication by land. High tides increased the risks of travel by sea. The level shoreland she depressed beneath the ocean, so that the mountains might join forces with the sea. The few level fields remaining, she sowed with glacial drift or covered deep with snow. Then with siren glee she crammed the waters with gleaming fish; wrapped the hills with timber; and breathed into the whole the breath of beauty. Maine's barricade in fact, was made a trap. Unquestionably, an attack

is the best defense. "All the evils of climate, and all the discouragements of soil and surface, were in a high degree felt by these people. The winter is sufficiently cold to terrify, at first, any European educated South of the 52nd degree of North latitude, unless born on the sides of the Alps or Pyrenees; and much more, men accustomed to the mild winter of England. The soil of the coast is generally lean and cold; and the surface by no means inviting. ....until the close of the Revolutionary War, Maine was considered as little more than an immense waste unfit for the habitation of man...."[45] "In the northern part of Maine, where the mountains descend to a low water-shed, enormous forests, with no easy river-route facilitating peaceful or warlike travel formed (an) effective barrier.....In this section....there are many good harbors, particularly that of Portland, but the coast is so greatly dissected as to make land communication along it very difficult; while the small boats which partially served the needs of commerce and travel in early days, were seriously interfered with by the great rise and fall of the tides. Both these conditions tended to isolate the colonial settlements and hinder their development. The upland country, with its poorer soil and more difficult conditions of life also approaches nearer to the sea in Maine and New Hampshire than farther south.. .. so that....those states have always been more thinly settled than the others...."[46]

45. Dwight. op. cit. p. 233
46. Adams, op. cit. pp. 3, 5

In such conditions, extractive industries would naturally furnish not only the first and chief occupation (as in all pioneer communities) but would tend to be for many generations the sole source of livelihood. Products of sea and forests, with ships to carry them, long comprised the sum total of Maine industry. "Diffused along the coast line....but never penetrating far inland, the settlements of Maine were devoted to the industries of fishing, and the production of naval stores."[47] Until the revolution "almost all the inhabitants were merchants, land-jobbers, sawyers, lumbermen or fishermen."[48] "Hunting, fishing, lumbering, seafaring, shipbuilding,....are the objects of business and pursuit....cod and mackeral fisheries have been pursued with great profit on our coast, as the salmon, shad, and alewife fisheries have been in our rivers. Lumbering has, thru a period of two centuries, employed an immense number of mill-wrights, axemen, sawyers and other laborers; such has been the infinite quantity of it taken from our forests and exported from our harbors.... the greater part of our young men are mariners. Our tonnage has always been beyond proportion large, compared with our population."[49] "Considerable quantities of fish were annually taken from the rivers and coasts of Maine, but our forests formed the great store-house of eastern wealth. Lumber of different kinds bore a fair

47. Paxson, History of The American Frontier, p. 12
48. Dwight, op. cit. p. 234
49. Williamson, op. cit. II 700

and uniform price, and commanded a ready market and prompt pay.."[50] As early as 1678 Governor Andros mentions in a trade report that "Pemaquid affords merchantable fish masts."[51] Three quarters of a century later (1749) Williamson reports the same sort of products as still leading in Maine exports. "The articles which the country afforded (were) lumber, potash, pitch....furs and fish...."[52] "She has always ranked among the foremost in maritime operations. In ship-building she took the lead at the very start, and has never lost supremacy, but has left her competitors still further behind....In the fisheries, Maine holds the second rank; in the gener- aggregate of tonnage, the third;"[53] "Milling business was most profitable."[54]

Various other forms of industry were attempted which although occasionally successful did not bulk large in the District's economy. Mr. Waldo, for instance, in the earliest days, "having made experiment upon the limestone found near the (St. George's) river, and finding it good, he caused a lime kiln to be erected by Robert McIntyre who commenced the burning of lime in considerable quantities for the Boston market."[55] "Soon after the year 1631, one Mr. Williams came over from England, sent also by Gorges and Mason to take care of their salt works"[56] ....Less successful, but illustrative of the exhaustive efforts of the unusually energetic proprietors to make

50. Williamson, op. cit. II p. 188
51. Jernagan, op. cit. p. 226
52. Williamson, op. cit. II, 264
53. Coolidge & Mansfield, History & Description of New England, p. 18
54. Bourne, op. cit. p. 183
55. Eaton, op. cit. pp. 52, 56
56. Hutchinson, History of Mass. I, 101

profitable their northern venture, was the work of one William White, skilled miner from Derbyshire. He labored to "turn the imperfect ores of York into good metal," but discovered that "the spirit of solidity and fusion was not in them."[57]

Far greater catastophe, and greater contrast to Massachusetts, lay in the failure of efforts in agriculture. The province of Maine had few agricultural attractions.[58] "Except in some small tract, principally in the county of York, scarcely any husbandry was pursued.... both corn and meat....were imported from Connecticut and some other states."[59] The inevitable result of this failure, in a day of even greater hap-hazardness in exchange than the present, is illustrated by an episode of April 1737. "Owing to short crops abroad, fewer vessels were freighted with supplies to Maine during the winter.... and ere the spring opened there was a scarcity, which was little short of a famine. Some had no corn nor grain for several weeks; in April the hay was generally expended; indeed there was nothing to spare of any eatable article, not even potatoes;"[60] Bourne relates similarly, that in 1775 "The corn crop had been an almost entire failure in Wells and vicinity....Mr. Lyman had two small coasters which had been employed in bringing corn from Salem and some of the southern ports, and at this time he had on hand a large quantity. Like most men,

57. Weeden, Economic & Social History of New England, I, 186
58. Paxson, op. cit. p. 12
59. Dwight, op. cit. p. 234
60. Williamson, op. cit. II, 193

with whom the accumulation of property is the ruling object of life, he took advantage of the necessities of the public, and demanded an exorbitant price, - two dollars a bushel. Few persons were able to pay that sum. But there was no alternative. It must be bought. So great was the demand and such the rush for it, that he was obliged to close his door, and permit but one person to enter at a time, it being impossible to deal it out in the pressure of the multitude."[61]

This almost exclusive extractive economy, with no balancing agriculture, prolonged the frontier life and characteristics of Maine; and afforded a major contrast to contemporary Massachusetts.

V

Fairly indicative of the quality of Maine's early civilization, is her attitude on the subject of education, which so early reached a paramount plane in Massachusetts. To the advantages of books and libraries the inhabitants were "in a great measure strangers."[62] Late in the 19th century, (in Rumford) Lapham records that, "There has not been public spirit enough in the town to establish a social library. Several attempts have been made to effect such a source of useful knowledge. The people seem to have but little taste for reading. It is hoped that this state of things will not last long."[63] In

61. Bourne, op. cit. pp. 499-500
62. Dwight, op. cit. p. 238
63. Lapham, op. cit. p. 95

Portland, in 1729, Willis finds that "the selectmen were requested to look out for a schoolmaster to prevent the town's being presented." Their consideration was then aroused, it would seem, rather from fear of the law than (anything else)"[64] Bradbury's caustic comment is no less illuminating. "Even their extreme poverty was no sufficient excuse for this gross neglect in educating their children. If their poverty kept them ignorant, their ignorance in its turn kept them poor. If they had shared in the intelligence and information of other towns, they would likewise have vied with them in enterprize and wealth....If they had taken proper interest in education, it would have led to more frequent intercourse with enlightened men of other towns, and could not but have had a salutary effect in their business concerns."[65] Whatever the cause, as a contributing factor in the evolution of a community apart; as an active agent in the development of the separate spirit which was at once to forecast and foreordain the ultimate separate statehood, this contrast in affairs educational, is unmistakeably significant.

VI

Nothing was more typical of Maine life than general disorder. Nothing presented a greater contrast

64. Willis, op. cit. II, 46
65. Bradbury, op. cit. pp. 175, 177

to the comparatively serene Bay Colony. Of the factors responsible for confusion, most potent were the countless colonial wars; the disputes over land titles; and the prolonged altercation over the government of the whole. Minor contributions to the same end were made by the judiciary and currency difficulties. Each of these five problems represents per se a contrast to Massachusetts surpassed only by their combined effect. Their analysis is indispensably prerequisite to a comprehension of the separation.

Maine's geographic situation made her peculiarly open to danger throughout colonial times from the two most pregnant sources: the Indians and the French. Later, with the same stage and similar plot, but with the villain recast, she was to suffer once more in an exceptional way, at the hands of the British. "Never was a country more open and exposed to the incursions of an enemy (than that),....between Piscataqua and Nova Scotia. The inhabitants, scattered and defenceless, were without fortifications, without arms or military stores, and without even any common bond of union. All the settlements were upon a seacoast, 200 miles in extent, were situated near the best harbors, tempting in every thing except poverty, to the visits of invaders. The enemy on their rear, who had by this time acquired a singular missionary influence among the jeal-

ous savages, hated the puritan planters, and especially coveted this eastern region."[66] "Owing to their scattered character and the difficulty of inflicting any telling blow upon the savages, who could disappear into the limitless forests, and were supplied by the French with arms and other necessities, Maine suffered proportionately even more severely than its more populous neighbors to the south."[67]

In the struggles with the French, she was to find herself not infrequently the stake as well as the field of war. "The French in the neighborhood of whom Englishmen have hitherto never been able to live peaceably, began early a settlement on the Eastern shores of this District.....the French, though repeatedly driven off, renewed their settlements; and the inhabitants of both nations experienced the usual distressing vicissitudes, attendant on the frequent wars between the English and French, and peculiarly felt by the Colonists of the contending nations bordering on each other. No habitation was for any length of time safe from the flames; and no person from plunder, captivity or death. In this hazardous situation the people of Maine continued for a long time. You will not wonder that the settlement of the country did not proceed."[68]

Such parts as the French controlled even during intervals of peace failed to make anything like

66. Williamson, op. cit. I, 426
67. Adams, op. cit. p. 361
68. Dwight, op.cit. p. 335

proper progress. Williamson felt that; "Since this region has been in the occupancy of the French, neither the settlements at Penobscot, or Mt. Desert, at Machias, at St. Croix nor the places eastward, had flourished. Most of the French emigrants were ignorant, poor and unenterprising; the gov't was of a despotic character; and the commanders, as we have seen, were perpetually contending. The social regulations were under the direction of the ecclesiastics; rights and wrongs were not treated nor regarded in a proper manner; and no man of good sense and intelligence dwells contentedly where life and property are insecure."[69]

The influence of the French wars can be seen nowhere better than in the effects of the permanent peace of 1763. "A new and favorable impulse was given by the conquest of Canada, and the prospects of a perpetual peace with the Indians to every specie of enterprise.....Ship-building, trade and settlement, were promoted."[70] Williamson believes a similar result can be credited to the settlement of the eastern boundary dispute a generation later. "At Providence, October 25, 1798, the commissioner made a report.... This report being ratified by the high disputants, established the easterly line of Maine... and greatly served to encourage settlements in this vicinity."[71]

Indian wars, inordinately severe and prolonged, reinforced the French, to retard Maine progress. "From the time

69. Williamson, op. cit. I, 324
70. ibid, I, 348
71. ibid, II, 579

of King Philip's war, commenced in 1675, the inhabitants of Maine were extreme sufferers in six Indian wars, in which the Indians displayed their implacable resentment and proverbial ferocity."[71] "It is appalling, to read the narratives of the deeds of slaughter which were then perpetrated, and which gave to three successive generations no secure rest upon their pillows. Every twentieth person in the colony, was either slain or carried into captivity to return no more....Not a few of them withdrew to the more protected towns of Massachusetts. Casco was deserted....and the shores further east entirely devastated.....The ravages of these Indian wars checked, for a whole generation, the advance of the civilizing power of commerce, tillage, and education. It is hardly possible to paint too strongly the disastrous fruits of the harassing strife. Scarcely a foot was won from the forest. On every spot where settlements had been attempted, nothing but the smouldering ruins of habitation and the bleaching bones of their recent occupants reached the eye."[72] "In this distressing war of ten years, Maine lost more than one fourth, perhaps a third part of her inhabitants. Numbers of them, full of discouragements, left the country, to see it no more. Some families had become entirely extinct;---and all the others were in mourning for friends....The slender habitations of survivors, if not utterly destroyed, had decayed and become miserable. Their outer fields wholly laid waste, or neglected, were overgrown and full of wild shrubbery. There was now remaining scarcely a vestige of the fur trade, the lum-

71. Kilby, Eastport & Passamaquoddy, p. 41
72. Coolidge & Mansfield, op. cit. pp. 16;15

ber business, or the fisheries. What men call enterprise, excited no emulation."[73] "The losses that the colonies suffered were enormous. Maine did not recover for half a century, and there was not a white man left in Kennebec County."[74] "Until the fall of Quebec, the whole eastern section remained a wilderness."[75] "The cost of the war in Maine to the colonial government was £8,000 besides incidental losses."[76] "Providence did not seem to second the exertions put forth" to crush the enemy."[77] "Not a single new town had been founded in Maine from 1675-1715."[78]

Several special causes operated to increase the difficulties with the enemy. The combined force sent to Maine's aid by Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Plymouth, at the beginning of the war was so carelessly "outfitted and officered, that it was only when unexpectedly forced into action that the unhappy soldiers discovered that the ammunition did not fit their guns."[79] Shortly after,---Andros organized an expedition of several hundred men, and himself marched with them into Maine, destroying many of the Indian settlements, and capturing much of their ammunition and supplies. Randolph claims, however, what is confirmed by other documents, that Boston merchants sent the enemy a vessel of forty two tons, loaded with powder, shot and food, and so undid much of Andros' work."[80] "In addition to the reverses of fortune.....since the war commenced; we are constrained to mention the 'great sickness' which spread and prevailed among the soldiery, and gave a surprising damp to military enterprise."[81]

73. Williamson, op. cit. II, 68
74. Adams, op. cit. pp. 362, 3
75. Matthews, op. cit. p. 113
76. Williamson, op. cit. I, 553
77. Bourne, op. cit. p. 181
78. Junagan, op. cit. p. 341
79. Adams, op. cit. p. 437
81. Williamson, op. cit. II, 122

Williamson estimates that at the end of this period the militia was "completely trained for active service; every man of forty having seen more than twenty years of war."[82] One could hardly accuse him of overstatement. He notes further that enlistments were effected here (for wars with the French) so "much in disproportion to the number of eastern inhabitants."[83]

Even the distant English Civil War had a peculiar effect on the Maine colony. No sooner had the Maine colonial government been "placed on a respectable footing, and to have afforded hope of permancy; but in 1642 the civil war broke out in England, the influence of which extended to the colonies and destroyed all that Gorges had so long labored to establish."[84] When the Commons gained control in England, immigration and business ceased completely. Numbers returned to England.[85]

In one way or another, war contrived to play an overlarge part....and a disastrous one....in Maine history. Massachusetts, of course did not escape similar influence; but influence it was for her---no more. For Maine, War was Master and Destroyer for an entire century. As contributor to the special separate-feeling Maine society of the post-revolutionary period, few forces were more vital.

VII

Short of actual warfare, nothing surpassed the feuds and wranglings to which questions of land-titles gave rise. The

82. Williamson, op. cit. II, 151
83. ibid, II, 326
84. Willis, op. cit. I, 48
85. Beadbury, op. cit., p. 25

ordinary difficulties attendant upon most of the colonial land allotments were all present in Maine; confusion between grants from Indians, proprietors, and king. Added thereto, we find in Maine several special difficulties. A rather large proportion of absentee lords who "adventure little,"[86] and whose main "interest would be in land titles and taxes"[87] was in itself an undeniable evil. Combined with an uncertainty in the public mind as to the nature of the distinction between crown lands and royal domain (the latter alone could be sold); and with the fact that much Maine timber had been separately marked for the king's navy,[88] this absenteeism contributed further to the evil of squatting.

"In New England, squatting occurred, particularly in Maine. East of the Kennebec, settlers were cutting timber from trees designated as masts to be sent to England. ....the King was thus paying a bounty on his own timber. He wanted (Gov. Hutchinson) to declare all such timber forfeit, but found that it would take away the means of support of from 1,000 to 1500 families."[89] "Altho' Litchfield was incorporated in 1795, and contained in 1800, 1,044 inhabitants, not one of them has a legal right to the land, on which he lives; all of them being what in the customary language...are called Squatters..... Large tracts of the country, recently settled in these States have been occupied in this manner...this evil has been followed by various acts of violence done to the proprietors, and to the ministers of justice; a deplorable proof of inefficiency in the government in defiance of which they had done."[90]

86. Winthrop, op. cit. p. 277
87. Adams, op. cit. p. 317
88. Williamson, op. cit. II, 380
89. Junagan, op. cit. p. 344
90. Dwight, op. cit. p. 221

That these squatters were bona fide victims of circumstances, rather than deliberate criminals was early recognized by the public, and in 1807 by the law. "Distinction was made....between the greedy trespassers who entered the forests merely to fell and plunder; and the enterprising actual possessor, whose motives were settlement and culture[91].....Later, (by the Betterment Act of 1807), the proprietor had the choice, either to abandon the land to the tenant at the price set by the Jury, and receive the money within a twelve month, or to sue out a writ of possession at the end of the year;---Or if he did not of record so abandon, he was bound to pay the tenant in one year the price of his improvements as appraised by the Jury, or lose the land. The proprietors of large tracts were highly displeased with this law; and several entertained sanguine expectations that the Supreme Court would pronounce it unconstitutional. But they were altogether disappointed."[92]

Grants in Maine were further confused by the dispute as to proprietary authority. "While the large proprietors were contending for the title to the lands lying between the Presempscot and Fore rivers, the tenants and other inhabitants were not free from trouble attendant upon the controversy.....

"To the Honorable Massachusetts General Court, --30 May 1660. the humble petition of some of the distressed inhabitants of the town of Falmouth;

.....in respect of the pretended patenes and clame that Mr...Jordan and Mr...Cleaves laies clame to, so that much trouble cometh to us, suing men to Cortes....so that we are much destract-

91. Williamson, op. cit. II, 500
92. ibid, II, 607, 608

ed in our afares and know not what we shall doe in thes our trobles, only our proyers ar to God and you....."[93]

In a pioneer community, it would hardly be expected that such disputes would be carried on without venom or rancour. The feeling in Portland about 1689 is typical. "The town at this period was agitated by a violent internal commotion .....respecting titles to land, on which the inhabitants took sides.....the town was kept in a ferment by it....(among other things, the question was raised whether) "Indian grants are.... sufficient to eject a present possessor.""[94]

Powerful were the effects of such undue confusion of land titles on progress of civilization and character of the population. "Colonists..met with endless perplexities in the numerous, interfering, and contradictory grants, made in England, of these lands; distracting those who were in possession and bringing upon them the litigation and distress, produced by the claims of other grantees, who had, or pretended to have, as good or better titles than themselves. Disputed titles will effectually prevent the regular settlement of any country."[95] "Confusion, lawsuits, and expenses were the evils naturally flowing from such a source, evils which retarded the settlement of the country, and rendered the inhabitants indigent and discontented. In no other portion of New England were legal regulations more needed, or the want of them more manifest. Without them, all intelligent and discreet people saw, that neither life nor property could be secure; titles to estates were

93. Willis, op. cit. pp. 84, 5
94. ibid, pp. 188, 189
95. Dwight, op. cit. p. 234

not sound nor permanent; the interests of piety and education were not promoted; nor the benefits of society in any wise enlarged or established. If the lower orders of people lose all reverence for civil authority, and are filled with distractions, by reason of numerous political changes which are needless; what fond expectation of prosperity and success could be entertained by a people, under merely the faintest shadows of government? Certainly very few"[96]....The Lieutenant Governor in his speech June 12, 1753, to the Massachausettes General Court stated that "the two principal and perhaps only material obstacles to the settlement of the eastern country, were its exposed situation to the Indian enemy.....and the great controversy about titles, by reason of different claims to the same tracts of land.""[97]

The effect of this confusion of land-titles and wars on the interest in and occupation of the lands of Maine, may perhaps best be seen in the contrast afforded by the period which followed the cessation of both these evils. With secession from the British empire confirmed by the Peace of Paris (1783), Maine entered upon an era of uniform peace and adequate government unequalled in all the generations preceding. Tremendous efforts by competent authorities, combined with unusually satisfactory conditions in Maine itself, led to a veritable boom in eastern lands. With generous terms to soldiers and immigrants in the law of 1784,[98] and lottery devices two years later,[99] the General Court made available lands now rendered unqualifiedly desirable. Williamson asserts that this furor remained at a high pitch for a full score of years. "There were no subjects which commanded more lively and universal attention than the settlement, the con-

96. Williamson, op. cit. I, 331, 332
97. ibid II, 289
98. ibid II, 507
99. Varney, op. cit. p. 213

ditional grants, and the timber of the eastern lands....There was a passion for obtaining settlers' lots, mill sites, and water privileges"....The State surveyor found applications for land and surveys so numerous that he had an assistant appointed.[100] "The rage for multiplying municipal towns, and new settlements---for entering upon wild lands, and lumber speculations appeared to admit as yet (1792) of no abatement."[101] He reports the same for 1795;[102] and in 1801 states that "The public lands were uniformly in some way a subject of interest."[103] That this argument is open to the charge of fallacy, as asserting a "post hoc ergo propter hoc" we cannot deny. We believe, however, that the facts warrant the assumption of a causal as well as temporal connection between the coming of order and the coming of settlers to Maine.

VIII

Of all elements in the whirlpool of Maine's colonial days, none contributed more to her perplexities or to her sensitiveness regarding her separate identity, than the interminable bickerings over the government. The English, French, Indians, royalists and puritans, the Bay and Plymouth colonies---each stoutly claimed rights of government in Maine and each was ready to fight therefor, in the easily exhausted courts, or on the ever-fresh field of battle. Succeeding years of controversy, in which the needs and interests of Maine were seldom either seen or heard, left indelible impressions on her political consciousness. The goading of long continued pain, renders a diseased man acutely sensitive to <u>health</u>. Long before the dawn of the nineteenth cen-

100. Williamson, op. cit. II, 514
101. <u>ibid</u> II, 555
102. <u>ibid</u> II, 569
103. <u>ibid</u> II, 591

tury, political sensitiveness bulked large in the social heritage of Maine's people.

"This eastern country, during the first period, was perpetually subject to political changes, or revolutions; owing to a succession of different claimants and the zeal of bold competitors. United by no common bond, the parts afforded each other no considerable aid, and presented few allurements to attract the accession of numbers."[104] "The frequent changes of government, and the fear of the Indians greatly retarded the growth of Maine."[105]

Special hostility between Maine and Massachusetts is in evidence politically from earliest colonial times. Gorges, most active of proprietors, who "had probably done more towards colonizing Maine than any other individual,----was a firm royalist and Episcopalian, which made him unpopular in Massachusetts and also in England after the republicans had gained the ascendency."[106] Together with Mason of New Hampshire, he had "been at more expense and taken more pains than any other members of the grand council of Plymouth, and perceiving no prospect of any equivalent return, and fearing from the great clamour in the nation against monopolies that they should ere long be forced to resign up their grand charter, they entered this year upon a new project, viz. to procure a general governor for the whole country of New England to be forthwith sent over; and because the

104. Williamson, op. cit. II, 680
105. Bradbury, op. cit. p. 49
106. ibid, p. 26

Massachusetts charter stood in their way, they endeavored a revocation of it....(1635)[107] "Gorges....and Mason.... preferred a petition to the lords of the privy council against us, charging us with many false accusations; but through the Lord's good providence, and the care of our friends in England....their malicious practice took not effect."[108] Trivial in fact, this episode assumes titanic proportions as prophesy of future relations.

Serious difficulties date from the time of the extension of the claim of Massachusetts to include Maine. "The charter gave the Bay colony "all those lands and hereditaments whatsoever, which lie and be within the space of three English miles to the northward of the said river called Monomack, alias Merrimack, or to the northward of any and every part thereof....(including) all lands and hereditaments whatsoever lying within the limits aforesaid north and south in latitude and breadth, and in length and longitude, of and within all the breadth aforesaid, throughout the main lands there, from the Atlantic and Western sea and the ocean on the east part to the South sea on the west part;"....(interpreted by Massachusetts to make) the northern boundary of the colony a straight line east and west from a point three miles north of the source of the Merrimac river."[109]

Reasons given for this extension of her north-

107. Hutchinson, op. cit. I, 50
108. Winthrop, op. cit. p. 119
109. Burrage, Beginnings of Colonial Maine, p. 364

ern and eastern boundary vary with the writer. "In this advance into Maine territory ambition on the part of Massachusetts is not to be denied. But it was not a low, sordid ambition. It was an ambition that sought fairly and squarely the betterment of existing conditions, and aimed to give to Maine settlers the same measure of prosperity that the Bay colonists themselves enjoyed..... she guided her measures by maxims of prudence, and manifested great assiduity and zeal for the good of the inhabitants she so eagerly adopted."[110] "It was necessary that Massachusetts should provide for self defence, and for growth and expansion."[111] "Massachusetts became determined to subjugate the colony. This they considered necessary for divers reasons.....amongst which was that of preventing the natives from learning the use of arms....if there was no government rule or order....the people there, and all strangers who should visit the country for the purpose of trade, could furnish the natives with the means of extirpating the white people entirely."[112]

The general court affirmed that they had saved Maine from "utter ruin" and that "The distracted condition of the people of Yorkshire required....their protection and assistance"[113] Again the "government of Massachusetts seeing the disordered state of affairs in Maine"[114] and "finding a restoration of political order, and a settled

110. Williamson, op. cit. I, 356
111. Burrage, op. cit. p. 366
112. Sullivan, op. cit. p. 323
113. Williamson, op. cit. I, 415
114. Willis, op. cit. I, 56

administration of justice, to be anxiously desired by that people, thought it was a religious as well as political duty, they owed both to the king and to the Province to enter immediately into a consideration of the interesting subject."[115] In prosecuting the claim, the General Court was quickened, "by reason of late reports that several provincials in Maine had petitioned Parliament for a charter of government; and that others, probably the majority, had expressly given a decided preference to be connected with Massachusetts. There was no time to be lost....the commodiousness of the river Piscataqua, and the irreparable injuries to be sustained, if it were in the possession of any other than her friends, were urged as arguments against delays."[116]

Whether this extension of her claim were due to greed, generosity, or expediency, there can be little doubt concerning its reception. Massachusetts had already earned no inconsiderable reputation among Gods unelect for her arbitrary behavior. "All the colonies charged the Bay with an arbitrary and harsh spirit in its intercourse with the sister governments."[117] "Massachusetts, with a perseverance and ingenuity never exceeded, baffled all the efforts of her numerous and powerful enemies at home to annul her act of incorporation."[118] The assertion of right to Maine is classed by many as simply another

115. Williamson, op. cit. I, 431, 2.
116. ibid, I, 334
117. Weeden, op. cit. I, 187
118. Willis, History of the Law, the Courts, & the Lawyers of Maine, p.1

arbitrary act no different from many already committed. One writer comments on the "unwarranted interpretation of her charter."[119] Another regrets that "Massachusetts most unjustly laid claim to the western part of Maine as belonging to her jurisdiction."[120] Willis believes that "Massachusetts was evidently desirous of getting possession of the territory, and relied upon her own strength and the weakness of her adversary for the final issue."[121]

As a sample of this spirit in Massachusetts' dealings with Maine, the following description might be considered fair. Urged by the Bay's commissioners to acknowledge her government in Kittery, "The inhabitants at length proposed to subscribe to the jurisdiction of Massachusetts provided certain articles and conditions prepared and offered by them, could be the terms of union. "No," replied the Commissioners, "for according to our instructions you must first submit; and then you shall have from us a guaranty of your rights and of ample privileges." The Court being determined----all farther debate was evidently useless."[122]

Resentment in Maine, though impotent, was none the less deep, widespread, and abiding..."A state of party existed here at that time as virulent and bitter as has been witnessed in any subsequent stage of our history."[123] "There was a strong opposition to this claim of Massachu-

119. Junagan, op. cit. p. 148
120. Bradbury, op. cit. p. 27
121. Willis, op. cit. II, 58, 59
122. Williamson, op. cit. I, 344
123. Willis, op. cit. I, 83

setts and much controversy with the commissioners upon the subject."[124]

Appeals to London were earnest and numerous, but brought no response until the Puritan regime had given way to the Restoration. In a protest of 1652,...."signed by Godfrey and each of the Council, they raised their voice to a high note of remonstrance against the minatory and despotic treatment received;---lamenting their fate that after living 20 years in contentment, spending £35,000 in money and enduring innumerable hardships, for the sake of rational civil liberty, they must submit to the dictation and control of others, against the principles of right and justice, and against their own consent."[125] In regard to the appeal of 1651 for separate government, "It was well known and no doubt strongly represented, that this petition, however respectfully it might be worded, was originated by the adherents to the royal cause, and it was as well known that the government of Massachusetts was devoted from principles of religion and politics to the parliament side of the question, and therefore there was no attention paid to the petition."[126] "When Charles II ascended the throne in 1660 the royalists were filled with hope and energy....they became less careful to conceal their ill-feelings towards the existing government. Soon they threw off all restraints and openly declared themselves unfriendly to it."[127]

124. Bourne, op. cit. p. 29
125. Williamson, op. cit. I, 340
126. Sullivan, op. cit. 323
127. Southgate, op. cit. p. 51

Three years later, "commissioners (in 1665) brought orders under the sign manual of the King to restore to Gorges his patent, which the Massachusetts government had "shamefully encroached upon in the time of the Civil Wars."[128]

But what chance had the king's commissioners against the children of God? A decade later we find Massachusetts still maintaining her "groundless claim" "against the rights of the Gorges proprietor; so that, though some had come into the town with the purpose of abiding, they did not find the location satisfactory, and soon abandoned it for New Hampshire or some other place west, where political agitations were not so rife, and where titles were more securely fixed.....though.... Wells had for a while, acquiesced in the authority of Massachusetts, there was now again springing up among them some disaffection, which was the cause of disorder and ill-feeling among the people."[129]

Even the purchase of the Gorges claim by Massachusetts by no means closed the subject. "This overture and change enkindled resentments, among the defeated party, which they were ill disposed to suppress. In their complaints and invectives, they were extravagant; ----some continued obstinant, and few left the Province."[130] "The people did by no means relish the subordination in which they were...placed by the sale of the Province... and many of them were inveterately opposed to the Mass-

128. Sullivan, op. cit. p. 285
129. Bourne, op. cit. p. 123
130. Williamson, op. cit. I, 438

achusetts government."[131] "In 1680 a petition, signed by 115 of the residents in the Province, was sent to King Charles II asking for the restoration of his immediate authority over them. Amongst the signers of this were men of the highest respectability whose character and position gave them much influence with the inhabitants of the Province."[132] Godfrey declared that the few who were in favor of Massachusetts rule were criminals and men of "little worth."[133] "England contended that the jurisdiction over a colony or province was inalienable, and that by the conveyance, altho' Massachusetts might have acquired a right to the soil, she acquired none to the government which....reverted to the crown. The subject was continually agitated until it was finally settled by the charter of 1691 which...included the Province of Maine.....and the more remote Sagadoc....Now a local and proprietary government" was established by Massachusetts.[134]

Although this opposition to the Massachusetts regime was at no time unanimous, and was at length effectively over-ruled; there is no indication of any real change in Maine's attitude. The very reasons for the ultimate acquiescence, reveal a well-developed feeling of aloofness. This is further accentuated by the fact that there can be little doubt, objectively, that Massachusetts rule was far superior to any Maine's wide experience had included. Williamson is particularly explicit on this point. "The General Court re-

131. Sullivan, op. cit. p. 385
132. Southgate, op. cit. p. 129
133. Bourne, op. cit. p. 19
134. Willis, op. cit. pp. 158, 159

solved,...that the people of the Sagadahoc territory, be protected and treated with the same kindness and care, as if they were inhabitants within any other part of the Province; also that the same law and justice be administered to them, through the medium of the Courts in Yorkshire, of which they were a constituent part[135]....The civil and judicial regulations established by the Massachusetts commissioners;----it must be acknowledged were liberal and judicious. Though they, as a Board, possessed sovereign power and authority, they used and exercised it without abuse; and yet extended their acts and measures to matters prudential, judicial, executive and ecclesiastical[136]...."Maine and Sagadahoc, not only united with Massachusetts by the charter, but by the stronger ties of community and attachment, were objects of her unremitting care and protection. Tho' she herself was in a distressed condition, her treasury exhausted, her public credit low, and her expenditure great;.....she constantly exercised a provident liberality toward this eastern country. In the new and equal administration, she extended to it and its inhabitants, where any remained, all the favors of a good, a protective, and a watchful government....[137] She endeavored to secure their contentment, and win their respect by acts of kindness, care, and equal favor. Indeed, they enjoyed some peculiar privileges, for they were made freemen on taking the oath, without the prerequisite of church membership----contrary to the law in usage in Massachusetts.

135. Williamson, op. cit. II, 177
136. ibid, I, 353
137. ibid, II, 24

They were also exempt from all general and public assessments, their county and town taxes being all they were required to pay[138]...It must be acknowledged, that Massachusetts was always as ready to aid and protect, as to tax and govern[139].....The Governor...was not unmindful of this eastern country, its people, its interests, and its safety. He visited it almost every year.[140] ....The benefits of good government in the Province, enjoyed now for more than twenty years, were extensively felt and duly appreciated. The evils of sectional conflicting jurisdictions, and the discrepancies of anomalous rulers, formerly so perplexing to the people of Maine and Sagadahoc, were all lost in the unity of a settled and vigilant administration."[141]

So superior a government could hardly fail, under the circumstances, to prevail at last in Maine. It is worthy of note, however, that in her acquiescence this element is so often emphasized. Always the acceptance of Massachusetts rule seems to result from an acknowledgement (civil enough, but entirely mental) of the competence and relative disinterestedness of the Bay Colony. The motif of expediency is unmistakable. Never does Maine welcome Massachusetts rule as natural. However good, it remains a thing apart.

"The harsh treatment of the opposition leaders by Massachusetts...and the frequent calls for submission, plainly showed a determination on the part of the claimants to enforce their pretended right of jurisdiction. In view of this

138. ibid, I, 356
139. ibid, I, 448
140. ibid, II, 200
141. ibid, II, 73

firm resolution, backed by so great party power, their own began to waver, and they seriously to consider whether after all they might better their condition, so far at least as mere civil rights were concerned, by submitting themselves to a power they could not long withstand. Many of them now ceased to regard the matter as one in which cherished principles were involved, and chose to look at it in the light of expediency....In thus deciding against their preferences, and for their temporal interests, they cannot be said to have made even a pleasure of their necessity, much less a virtue."[142]

"The people of Wells were becoming more united in their feelings in regard to a connection with that colony. They were wearied with the strife and uncertainties which had so long retarded the settlement, and destroyed the peace of the inhabitants..... ...Such also had become the views and desires of most of the people who had any property imperiled by the existing state of things approaching almost to anarchy. Tho' it was rather humiliating to acknowledge their error, yet these leading men came to the conclusion that their only safety was in confessing their mistake, and requesting to be again received into the care and under the protection of Massachusetts....It was manifest to all that...further continuation of the struggle was fraught only with injury to their estates. They accordingly subscribed and forwarded the following petition; "To the Honorable General Court of Massachusetts now assembled in Boston, New England....our humble request and desires are to this honorable court that our case now may

142. Southgate, ibid, pp. 43, 45

be taken under your tuition and government, that so your honorable care of justice may be exercised among us as formerly, for the preventing in falling into disorder and divisions among ourselves'.....Some of the people of the county were in a great rage; so much so that they would not abide under the rule of Massachusetts, but moved out of the province."[143]

"At the end of three or four years, after the king's Commissioners were recalled, the affairs of Gorges' Province relapsed into lamentable confusion....Many hearts beat high for a return of the prosperous days enjoyed while under Massachusetts; and the principal men besought her government to reassume the jurisdiction of the Province."[144] "The people of the province, in the posture of affairs, jaded by the anxiety and trials of the wars, were content for the present to have this matter rest."[145] "In our union...with Massachusetts....we have found by happy experience...that her maxims and policy, prudence and moderation and her principles of amity and justice, so much the causes of her own eminence, have, since our short connection with her, been the means of contentment and prosperity, far beyond what we have enjoyed during any former period of the same length."[146] Bourne's comment is that the people did not "acknowledge the claim which had been set up, but as a matter of expediency yielded to it.....unanimity...was the result of the exigences of the hour. The Indian war was upon the settlers; and of themselves, they were entirely unable to protect their families and possessions from impending devastation.....[147]

143. Bourne, op. cit. 68, 69, 70
144. Williamson, op. cit. I, 431
145. Bourne, op. cit. p. 181
146. Williamson, op. cit. I, 419
147. Bourne, op. cit. pp. 179, 180

In a petition to Oliver Cromwell, the advocates of Massachusetts rule list the reasons why they prefer that government. "First: Because of ourselves, we have small power to carry on government, being a people but few in number, and those not competent persons to manage weighty affairs, our weakness occasioning distraction, our paucity, division, our meanness, contempt, as our former experience hath fully evinced, to the subverting of all civil order among ourselves....Thirdly, because changes in these times may prove dangerous, where discontented spirits wait for such opportunities, which have been not the least part of that small number among us, who were professed royalists, whose breathings that way since our subjection to their authority, have been so farre stifled as that ye activitie of such spirits cannot find any or the least opportunity of motion....Fourthly: changing may throw us back into our former estate, to live under negligent masters, ye danger of confused anarchy, and such other inconveniences as may make us a fitt shelter for the worst of men, delinquents and ill-affected persons, to make resort unto, thereby to exempt themselves from justly deserved punishment.....Those gentlemen who are now so solicitous for government over us...did not...afford us the least assistance in government, the want thereof let us sink into great distraction; for our recovery, several among us petitioned for government under ye colony of ye Massachusetts, who after some debate with us, and confirmation of some articles of agreement to us, took us under their authoritie, unto which we

subjected ourselves, under whose protection to continue we account it not the least part of our security and happiness."[148]

General expediency---to procure government both strong and just,---was supplemented, as might be expected in many cases, by special advantages. At Wells, the "men who submitted were generally those who had taken lands by possession, and wished an assurance of the same from some power who did not expect a very valuable consideration. The commissioners quieted all who submitted in possession of their lands, and gave aids to the inhabitants for public purposes, and by that means obtained a majority in favor of the Massachusetts government.[149] ....The inhabitants of Cape Porpoise could not submit consistently with the tenor and obligation of their church government. The commissioners in the plenitude of their power, dissolved the church connexion, and thus relieved the consciences of those who were laboring under those scruples[150]....The republican party in the province of Maine, who were within that line supported the claim."[151] "The inhabitants of York, Kittery, Wells, Saco, and Cape Porpoise presented their memorial to Lord Cromwell, October 27, expressive of the satisfaction they felt in the government as administered by Massachusetts, with a request for its uninterrupted continuance. 'Our numbers, said they, are few and our dissensions which have been many, owing principally to malcontent royalists, are happily quieted by wholesome laws and watchful rulers. Through their provident care, godly per-

148. Bourne, op. cit. pp. 58, 59
149. Sullivan, op. cit. p. 355
150. ibid, p. 367
151. ibid, p. 314

sons have been encouraged to settle among us, our affairs have become prosperous, and a barrier is opposed to an influx upon us of 'delinquent and other ill-affected' persons, the fugitives of justice.' "[152]

Having experienced worse evils, a probable majority of Maine thus appears ready to tolerate Massachusetts rule. In the light of its well-established superiority, symptoms of an "I won't like it even if it's good" attitude are unmistakable. Recent history abounds with such spirit where one government extends its rule over another---but only when the element of Nationalism is present. Such a suggestion in connection with two neighboring English colonies is not necessarily fantastic. The 13 colonies were separate "countries." In the years between the separation from Britain and the adoption of the Constitution, their complete independence was altogether too manifest. Even the union of 1789 strong as it certainly was, was of necessity federal. Statehood was in the consciousness of Americans. So it was, though for the time inarticulate, in Maine.

IX

The difficulties involved in Maine's judiciary and currency questions, while contributing less to the confusions of the colony than the foregoing, can scarcely be ignored.

"The profession of law made slow progress, as well in forms as in the persons who ministered at its altars. The Province had not been permitted, for more than a century af-

152. Williamson, op. cit. I, 396

ter its colonization, to enjoy a period of repose sufficiently long to allow any institutions of civil government to become settled and consolidated."[153] "The administration of justice was exceedingly loose both before and after the revolution; the public mind was not corrected and enlightened as it has since been both by the press and the general diffusion of information. The country was new, population thin, and that delicate regard for public and private rights, was not so strictly observed as it is at this day."[154] In spite of the low condition of the courts, they were used more than in most colonies. Massachusetts made use of the judicial power to coerce her antagonists.[155] In the perpetual turmoil over deeds, etc., "strong feelings were engendered...and as is the case, invariably, with ignorant excited men, they were ready in their exasperation to harass and vex each other in every possible way, but especially through the aid of judicial proceedings."[156]

In respect to currency, Maine was probably little worse off than Massachusetts proper; except as, in general, rural sections suffered most. As contributor to the extreme difficulty of life in Maine it must not be overlooked. The state's first issue of paper money was made to pay for an expedition against Canada. "The facility of raising money in this manner made it popular with the government, who frequently resorted to it in cases of emergency....The people also preferred it, because it saved them from direct taxation."[158] "The paper money

153. Willis, (History of the Law, etc.) p. 79
154. Willis, (Portland) II, 206
155. Bourne, op. cit. p. 63
156. ibid, p. 60
158. Willis, (Portland) II, 101

which had flooded New England and now (1714) since the war exhibited the many and complicated evils of a fickle depreciating currency, connected with every pecuniary transaction of life. All agreed, that improvement was indispensable, while different projects excited unhappy divisions..." it divided towns, parishes and particular families."[159] "The paper currency was now reduced to nearly 70% discount (1733-4); and as it remained a legal tender at its nominal value, it produced great confusion in business, and to some extent discouraged new settlements."[160]

Specie redemption took place in 1748. "But the people without doors preserved their prejudices, in a great degree, in favor of the old tenor money. Even the alteration of the nominal value of the currency, was held up as an object of odium; and when the specie arrived, it rather occasioned gloom than joy. The operation of the act for one of the most important and righteous measures in society was commenced with doubts, murmurings, and even attempts at forcible resistance, instead of universal pleasure and applause."[161] "Redemption... produced great embarrassment...serious deficiency in the circulating medium, and an advance in price of all the articles of necessity...it was a time of great perplexity and distress...of terrible clamor...The true cause of the difficulty, however, altho' extravagance and luxury may have inflamed the evil, was an actual deficiency in the circulation...riots took place in Boston and other towns in consequence of real and imaginary evils.... But these at length, all yielded to the steady and salutary

159. Williamson, op. cit. II, 85
160. Eaton, op. cit. 53
161. Minot, Continuation of the History of the Province of Mass. Bay I, 102

progress of a sound currency, which diffused its blessing on rich and poor alike...people came to entertain an unconquerable aversion to paper...the colony...obtained the name of silver money colony."[162]

That the blessings of this sound money were perhaps limited is suggested by a law of 1760 which authorized, "any two justices of the quorum to discharge poor debtors from imprisonment upon their taking an oath of their inability to pay the debt."[163]

With the revolution came the continental currency. In 1778 among the "greatest occasions of present discouragement was the alarming depreciation in value of the paper currency, which was almost the only circulating medium in the State (1778) ...a deterioration which wronged and disheartened the bravest soldier, and yet the wisest men could administer no adequate relief or remedy."[164] "A material change was not produced until 1781, when a bright glow was thrown over our...operations... from the French....which brought large supplies into the country."[165] "Some probably found its way among the inhabitants from the enemy, through the medium of Tory emissaries, and considerable sums were taken on board the prize vessels captured by the Americans."[166]

This influx of specie was a mere flash in the pan. The following year the old story was resumed. "The evil effects of an unsound currency were now (1782) severely felt."[167] "Every-

162. Willis, (Portland) II, 101, 102, 103.
163. Williamson, op. cit. II, 349
164. ibid, II, 466
165. Willis, (Portland) II, 172, 3
166. Williamson, op. cit. II, 499
167. Eaton, op. cit. p. 216

body was in debt, and everybody had claims."[168] "Such was the scarcity of money in 1784-5 that a man who had occasion to borrow $5.00 could not obtain it."[169]

X

It appears that the movement for the separation of Maine from Massachusetts was as old as the District itself. Its origin is to be found in the origins of Maine; its growth in her development. From its first settlement, Maine's history was peculiarly, utterly her own. That this fact should eventually be recognized politically was inevitable. In support of this thesis we have submitted details illustrative of the fact and nature of her consistent individuality.

Homogeneity of population was not a marked characteristic of Maine. There were many diversities of race, religion, and motive for settlement. Coming from many parts of Europe and North America, the immigrants represented many cultures and many faiths. Further, there was no single group sufficiently strong to assert any dominance over the others. Neither by composition nor compulsion were the people of Maine unified or stabilized in her colonial days.

The limits of Maine's industry were very sharply defined by her geography. Agriculture, as a basic industry, was impossible. Efforts had to be permanently concentrated on extractive industries---with a consequent deepening, psychologically and sociologically, of frontier traits.

168. Williamson, op. cit. II, 510
169. Thurston, A Brief History of Winthrop, p. 68

These frontier characteristics were manifest in the relative indifference of Maine settlers to religion and education. The latter developed very slowly. Religion, in the opinion of her Puritan neighbor, developed not at all. Early Episcopalianism, alternately scorched by bickerings and frozen by indifference, dwindled away. Massachusetts, fastidiously gloved, tried to legislate the district into her own respectable faith. Her dismay at Maine's preference for Baptist and Methodist theology---once a taste for religion was acquired---was probably tempered by the fact that she herself, meanwhile, had seen a new (Unitarian) light.

Many factors conducive to undue disorder tended likewise to prolong the frontier period in Maine, and mark her off as a District apart from others. Wars with the French and Indians were probably more prolonged and severe than in any other colony. The retarding effects of such long-continued fighting on settlement, culture, progress, etc., is obvious. Even reverberations from far-off Naseby and Marston's Moor were most distinctly felt in the eastern district.

The defeat of the Cavaliers in England, especially affected the problem of politics. The government laboriously established by royalists, fell ripe into the humble but skillful hands of the Bay Puritans. Impelled by a triple duty (to King, God, and the Maine District) Massachusetts brought the Province, ungrateful, happier days. Duty, prevailing in spite of resentment evoked and voiced in countless memorials to London, met

at length a grudging, wearied assent: like a forced confession to be denied with the first free breath.

This melee of wars and doubtful authority, was especially conspicuous in, and increased by, the state of the currency, judiciary, and land titles. Claims and counter claims in bewildering profusion seriously delayed settlement and helped prolong the frontier era. Currency trouble, no worse as such than in Massachusetts, contributed its mite to the district's distractions. The judiciary, overworked and incompetent because of the disorders, rendered back, perforce, confusion for confusion.

In 1781 Maine was as definitely a separate 'countrie' as any of the 13 recognized states. The tradition of a common and exclusive past; a history containing many of the elements out of which sagas of glory might grow; habit of vague but persistent hostility towards the governing group; all the standard constituents of Nationalism were well developed before the organization of the Federal Union. Orators, journalists, and politicians, with their conventions and lists of grievances[170]..... stereotyped paraphernalia of propaganda....crowded the years between the revolution and the separation. All of this served merely to crystallize or precipitate into solid form the substance of separation which had long been present. One earnest but uncomprehending inhabitant of Massachusetts, complained that there were no real reasons for a separation; that Maine had no

170. Moody, op. cit
Stanwood, op. cit.

grievances. He was right. The independence of Maine was no more a reasoned matter than was that of the United States. Independence is never a matter of fact---but of feeling. It is born out of desire---which need not be right, or wise, or even very ardent; provided only it endures. At the very dawn of Maine's history we find the roots of the separation which flourished and matured through colonial and revolutionary days. In 1784 (the date set by Stanwood as the beginning of the movement) it was already accomplished.

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