# KING PHILIP'S WAR,

AND

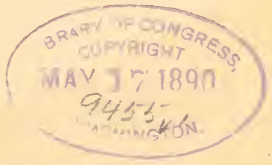
# WITCHCRAFT IN NEW ENGLAND.

BY

THOMAS HUTCHINSON,

THE LAST GOVERNOR OF MASSACHUSETTS UNDER BRITISH RULE.

With Introduction, Explanatory Notes, and Map.

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## Life of Governor Hutchinson.

Thomas Hutchinson, the last governor of Massachusetts under British rule, belonged to a family quite celebrated in the history of that colony. His great-great-great-grandmother was the Mrs. Anne Hutchinson who, with all her family, was banished from Massachusetts on account of her religious opinions in 1637. Captain Edward Hutchinson, his great-grandfather, was prominent in much business with the Indians, and was killed during King Philip's War, August, 1675. His more immediate ancestors also played important parts in the public life of the colony. Governor Hutchinson was born at Boston in the year 1711. At the age of sixteen he graduated from Harvard College, with an excellent reputation as a student. He at first engaged in mercantile business, but soon becoming satisfied that he was not qualified to succeed in this, he gave it up and devoted himself to legal studies. In 1738 he entered political life as a member of the board of selectmen in Boston, and from that time on he was almost uninterruptedly in public office. For ten years he represented Boston in the colonial legislature. For sixteen years he served in the governor's council. During this later period his talent and his activity were so effectively displayed that other offices of great importance were bestowed upon him. At one time he held, in addition to his position as councilor, the offices of judge of probate, chief-justice, and lieutenant-governor. In all his official life his integrity was above suspicion; but the eagerness which he displayed to secure all possible sources of income illustrates a grasping and parsimonious spirit, which manifested itself also in other ways.

When in 1764 and the following years the question of England's right to tax the colonies began to be discussed, Hutchinson, like many of the wealthier and especially of the office-holding classes, took sides with the Parliament. As a lawyer and an officer of the crown, he considered that he had good reasons for his position, and in opposition to James Otis and Samuel Adams he made a sturdy and honest defense of his convictions. But with the development of his loyal opinions all the popularity which he had long enjoyed vanished as if by magic. To the patriots he became the representative of all that they detested in royal tyranny. When the Stamp Act was passed, in 1765, Hutchinson's brother-in-law, Andrew Oliver, was appointed stamp-distributor for Massachusetts. A mob hung Oliver in effigy, totally destroyed one building owned by him, wrecked the contents of his dwelling, and terrified the poor man into resignation. On the rumor that Hutchinson had been instrumental in the passage of the act, the mob, after several minor outrages, finally, on August 26, 1765, broke into his house and thoroughly ransacked it, demolishing all the furniture, and destroying a great amount of valuable historical papers. The manuscript of his History of Massachusetts, from which the narratives in this book are taken, was scattered about the streets, but fortunately was all recovered.

From this time on the dispute between the English Government and the colonists raged almost without interruption, and Hutchinson was the mainstay of the royal cause. In 1769, the governor, Bernard, left the colony for England, and two years later, Hutchinson, who, as lieutenant-governor, had been at the head of affairs in the interval, received his commission as governor. The ability and obstinacy with which he contested every assault of the patriots upon the king's authority, and the rigor with which he applied all available means for enforcing the royal ordinances, which to the people seemed so despotic, made him the object of the intensest hatred. It was his rigid adherence to the strict letter of the law that prevented the teaships from leaving Boston with their cargoes at the demand of

the townspeople, and thus led to the famous "Tea-party" in 1773. The excitement and disorder that followed this affair practically terminated Governor Hutchinson's official career. In view of the warlike aspect of the colony, General Gage was sent to assume control, and Hutchinson sailed for England on June 1, 1774.

He was assured that when the trouble in the colonies should be quelled he should be reinstated in his office. For the best of reasons this promise was never fulfilled. In England he was treated with great honor and esteem, and enjoyed a pension from the crown. He was much consulted by the government as an authority on American affairs, but his opinions were often distorted by his prejudices; as, for example, when he expressed his conviction that the colonists would not fight against British forces, and that a few troops would be sufficient to quell them if they did resist. The loss of all his property in America reduced him to comparative poverty in his later days, which his pension did not adequately relieve. He lived in anxious contemplation of the course of events in his native land, but died in 1780, before the final collapse of the royal cause.

Governor Hutchinson's literary work, outside of the papers which he wrote in his official capacity, was chiefly in connection with colonial history and politics. The "History of Massachusetts Bay" was his greatest work. Of its three volumes, the first two, bringing the history down to 1750, were published between 1760 and 1770. The third volume, completing the work up to 1774, did not appear till after his death. The character of Thomas Hutchinson, both as a statesman and a historian, has generally been underrated in the United States on account of his tory politics. At the present time students are inclined to do more justice to him in both respects.

## Recent Opinions of Governor Hutchinson and his History.

"Hutchinson found time to write a history of New England—a work digested from the most copious materials, with excellent judgment, and presented in a style admirable for dignity, clearness, and scholarly finish."

*James K. Hosmer.*

"For intellectual gifts and accomplishments Hutchinson stood far above all the other colonial governors. His 'History of Massachusetts Bay' is a work of rare merit, alike for careful research, for philosophic acuteness, and for literary charm."—*John Fiske.*

"The first general 'History of Massachusetts Bay' was written by Thomas Hutchinson, afterward governor of the province. The author had rich materials for his work, and was judicious in the use of them. He had a genius for history, and his work will always stand as of the highest authority."—*Winsor's Narrative and Critical History of America.*

"Our second literary period [1676–1765] produced four considerable historians,—William Hubbard, Cotton Mather, Thomas Prince, Thomas Hutchinson: the first two excelling, in popularity, all other historians of the colonial time; the last two excelling all others in specific training for the profession of history, and in the conscious accumulation of materials for historic work."—*Moses Coit Tyler* (*Hist. Am. Lit.*).

# King Philip's War.

## CHAPTER I.


Map of Massachusetts.

The war with the Indians commonly called Philip's War endangered the very being of the colony, and it was a question with some whether the Indians would not prevail to a total

extirpation of the English inhabitants. At the first arrival of the English the Indians were treated with kindness, to obtain their friendship and favor; but they having no acquaintance with fire-arms, the English grew by degrees less apprehensive of danger, finding by means of corselets of armor that they were not much exposed to danger from bows and arrows of so simple construction as those of the Indians.

The quarrels which the Indians had always been engaged in amongst themselves were a further security to the English, who on the one hand endeavored to restrain them from open war with one another, and on the other to keep up so much contention as to prevent a combination, and to make an appeal to the English, as umpires, necessary from time to time. The English before their arrival had such ideas of the sachems[1] that at the first meetings respect was shown them in some proportion to what would have been required by the prince of a petty state in Europe; but the base sordid minds of the best of them, and the little authority they had over their own subjects, soon rendered them contemptible.

At New Plymouth the governor, in the first treaty with Massasoit in 1620, acquainted him that King James considered him as his good friend and ally. This was too great an honor for Massasoit, who was content to acknowledge the king to be his sovereign. The next year the governor caused the petty sachems to sign an instrument in which they owned themselves to be subject to King James. Subject, however, was a word of which they had no precise idea. For nearly forty years together the settlers at Plymouth were under no great concern from neighboring Indians, Massasoit, or Ousamequin,[2] always courting the friendship of the English.

After his death and the death of his eldest son, Wamsutta, or Alexander,[3] Metacom, or Philip, his second son, a man of great

[1] Sachem—the title given by the Indians to a chief.

[2] Ou-sa-me'-quin.

[3] The settlers very early formed the habit of giving Christian names to the Indians, to take the place of the barbarous and unpronounceable words of the native language.

spirit, by his behavior raised suspicion of a design against the English; but appearing before the court in Plymouth in 1662, he expressed his desire to continue in friendship, and promised that he and his successors would always remain faithful subjects to the kings of England, and that he would never alienate his lands and never make war with any other Indians, without the knowledge and consent of the government of New Plymouth.

The Indians within the Massachusetts bounds[1] were not under one general sachem, but were divided into smaller cantons.

KING PHILIP.

These, one after another, were brought to acknowledge their subjection to the Massachusetts government; particularly in 1643, when danger was apprehended from the Narragansetts, five sachems subjected themselves by a single instrument.[2] Besides rules and orders which they were encouraged to make for their own government, for any offense against the English they were punished by the English laws, and so likewise for any capital or heinous offense among themselves. Notwithstanding the laws to restrain all persons from selling guns or ammunition to the Indians, they were generally furnished with both, and were becoming good marksmen.

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[1] **Massachusetts bounds**—that is, the colony of Massachusetts Bay, as distinct from that of Plymouth.

[2] **Instrument**—treaty or written agreement.

In 1670 the Pokanoket or Philip's Indians were again suspected, on account of their frequently assembling together, repairing their guns, grinding their hatchets, and other preparations, and on account of insults offered to the English in different places, to be meditating a general war. The government of Plymouth in March sent messengers to the Indians to inquire into the reason of this behavior, and at the same time wrote to the officials in Massachusetts, acquainting them therewith. The governor and magistrates, always averse to an open breach, immediately dispatched their own messengers to Taunton, to prevent a war if possible, which Plymouth had intimated that they should be obliged to begin if they could not otherwise bring the Indians to reason.

They came to Taunton the 13th of April, where the governor and two other Plymouth gentlemen met them, and whilst they were in conference and examining witnesses concerning the behavior of the Indians, a message was received from Philip, signifying that he was at Three Mile River, and that he desired the governor to come thither to speak with him. The governor returned answer that he was at Taunton ready for a treaty, and expected Philip to come to him, promising security.

Philip refused to move until two of the governor's messengers offered to remain as hostages, and then he declined coming into the town and resolved to go only as far as the mill, with all his men in arms, desiring the governor to come to him there. This return was made to the governor, with the further intelligence that Philip was on the march with all his men in arms. He soon appeared at the mill, and placed sentinels round a hill near to it, but sent no message into the town. Some within the town were for attacking him, but the Massachusetts commissioners were afraid of the event,[1] and would not consent to it. All agreed, however, that the governor should not condescend to go out to him.

At length the Massachusetts commissioners offered to go out

[1] The event—that is, the result, if a battle occurred.

and try to persuade him to come in. At first he was unwilling, and his counselors declared he should not go; but finally he consented, provided his men might go with him, they to be on one side of the meeting-house, and the English on the other. Philip denied that he had any further purpose in bringing his men together and arming them than to defend himself from any attacks which might be made by the Narragansett Indians, some of whom had been engaged in quarrels with some of his people.

Upon inquiry, however, it appeared that he was on better terms with the Narragansetts than ever before; and plentiful evidence being produced of his preparations both of ammunition and provisions, and of parties of his men being destined for the attack of Taunton,[1] Seaconk, and other places, he was confounded, and made a full confession.

Thereupon the commissioners required of him satisfaction for past damages and security against further injuries. The first was not long insisted on, but with respect to the latter he was prevailed on to deliver up what English arms he then had with him, being about seventy guns, and to promise to send in the remainder in a few days. A writing was also drawn up, which he consented to sign, acknowledging his past breach of faith and promising future fidelity.

The loss of so many guns must have been grievous to Philip at a time when he only waited a good opportunity of falling upon the English. His submitting to the acknowledgment in writing was of no consequence. The Indians, in general, will promise anything required of them to remove an impending danger or to procure an immediate benefit; and they regard such promises not a minute longer than it is for their advantage to do it. When Philip was at liberty he thought no more of his engagements. The guns were not brought in, and he himself refused to come to Plymouth when required. Many strange Indians, moreover, resorted to him.

On the 23d of August, Mr. Morton, secretary, in the name of

[1] Point out this place on the map.

the court of Plymouth, wrote to the Massachusetts governor a note, to be communicated to the council,[1] acquainting him that they had summoned Philip to appear on the 13th of September, and that if he did not do it, they had determined on the 20th to send out forces to reduce him to submission, unless better reason should seasonably appear to them, through the advice of Massachusetts, to prevent it. The suppression of Philip, the note said, was a common cause, and they should well accept of assistance; but it was plainly intimated that if aid should be refused they would engage alone.

Philip happened to come to Boston with his counselors the same day the letter was received, and he represented his case so favorably to the governor and council, that, in their answer to Plymouth, they urged that government to refer the difference between Philip and them to commissioners from Massachusetts and Connecticut. Plymouth declined this proposal and insisted on Philip's appearance at the time proposed, but finally Massachusetts convinced them that there did not appear sufficient grounds for commencing hostilities. Plymouth consented to give Philip further time—until the 26th, promised him safe-conduct, and desired commissioners from Massachusetts and Connecticut to be present and to give advice. Whilst Philip was at Boston he engaged that he would not enter into a quarrel with Plymouth until he had first addressed himself to Massachusetts for advice and approbation.

The mediators[2] met at Plymouth, and matters seemed to be accommodated. Philip signed such articles as it was thought reasonable he should do, and which were as follows:

"1st. We, Philip[3] and my Council, and my subjects, do acknowledge

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[1] **The council**—a body of men chosen to assist the Governor in his duties by their advice.

[2] "**The mediators**"—that is, the men appointed by Massachusetts and Connecticut, who were to act as judges upon the charges brought against Philip by Plymouth.

[3] "**We, Philip**," etc. It is usual for kings and other rulers in civilized lands to use the plural number in referring to themselves in

ourselves subject to his Majesty the King of England and the Government of New Plymouth, and to their laws.

"2d. I am willing and do promise to pay unto the Government of Plymouth one hundred pounds, in such things as I have; but I would entreat the favor that I might have three years to pay it in, forasmuch as I cannot do it at present.

"3d. I do promise to send unto the Governor, or whom he shall appoint, five wolves' heads, if I can get them, or as many as I can procure, until they come to five wolves yearly.

"4th. If any difference fall between the English and myself and people, then I do promise to repair to the Governor of Plymouth to rectify the difference amongst us.

"5th. I do promise not to make war with any but with the Governor's approbation of Plymouth.[1]

"6th. I promise not to dispose of any of the lands that I have at present but by the approbation of the Governor of Plymouth.

"For the true performance of the promises, I the said Sachem, Philip of Pawkamuket,[2] do hereby bind myself and such of my Council as are present, ourselves, our heirs, our successors faithfully."

The English have been charged by some writers with acts of injustice to the Indians, which have provoked them and occasioned the frequent wars. There have been many instances of abuses offered to particular persons among the Indians by evil-minded Englishmen, and the inhabitants of some parts of the province which have suffered most by Indian cruelties have been under too strong prejudices, on account of which many offenders[3] when brought upon trial have been acquitted by too favorable juries. We are too apt to consider the Indians as a

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formal treaties. The commissioners by whom these articles were written thought it necessary to follow this custom, though Philip, whom they thus chose to regard as a king, was in fact only a savage, with no understanding of the meaning of the custom. Not being able to write, he signed this treaty by means of a rude scrawl, by the side of which one of the colonists wrote, "Philip's mark." His counselors signed in the same way."

[1] Might this fifth article have been written in more correct English?

[2] **Pawkamuket**—the same as Pokanoket. Indian names are often spelled in different ways by different writers. Why?

[3] **Offenders**—refers here to white men brought to trial for injuring Indians.

race of beings by nature inferior to us, and born to servitude. Philip was a man of high spirit, and could not bear to see the English of New Plymouth extending their settlements over the dominions of his ancestors; and although his father[1] had, at one time or other, conveyed to the whites all that they were possessed of, yet he had sense enough to distinguish a free, voluntary covenant from one made under a sort of duress,[2] and he could never rest until he brought on the war which ended in his destruction. The eastern wars[3] have been caused by the attachment of those Indians to the French, who have taken all opportunities of exciting them to hostilities against the English.

*Give the meaning of the following words:*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Extirpation | Confounded | Servitude |
| Contemptible | Fidelity | Covenant |
| Alienate | Hostilities | Distraction |
| Heinous | Approbation | Corselet |
| Hostages | Rectify | |

## CHAPTER II.

From 1671 to 1674 we meet with no transaction of moment relative to the Indians, but it is affirmed that Philip was all this time using measures to engage the Indians in all parts of New England to unite against the English. The Indians about Hadley confessed such a plot. The Narragansetts had engaged to bring four thousand men; but this could not be done immediately, as the English were upon the watch. Some fire-arms had been taken from the Indians. To provide sufficient arms, ammu-

[1] Who was Philip's father? See page 8.

[2] **Covenant made under duress**— a promise, gift, or sale, which is made not because a person really wishes to make it, but because he fears some harm to himself if he does not.

[3] **Eastern wars** — conflicts with the Indians about the settlements along the coast in the northeastern part of Massachusetts, and in New Hampshire and Maine.

nition and provisions while under suspicion was a work of time. They did not expect to be prepared before the spring of 1676, but Philip precipitated his own nation and his allies into a war before they were prepared. This was evident from the distraction of the Indians in all parts of New England upon the first news of the disturbance from Philip.

They were amazed, not knowing which way to turn—sometimes ready to declare for the English, as they had been used to do in the former contests with Philip; at other times inclining to join with Philip, as first or last most of them did. The war was hurried on by a piece of revenge which Philip caused to be taken upon John Sausaman, a praying Indian.[1] He had been bred up in the profession of the Christian religion, was some time at the college, and afterwards was employed as a schoolmaster at Natick, but upon some misdemeanor fled to Philip, who made him his secretary and chief counselor and confidant.[2] After he had remained some years with Philip, Mr. Eliot,[3] the Indian evangelist, who had been his spiritual father, prevailed with him to return to the Christian Indians at Natick, where he manifested public repentance for his apostasy, became a preacher, and conformed more to the English manners than any other Indian.

In the year 1674 Sausaman upon some occasion went to Namasket (Middleborough), where he fell into company with some of Philip's Indians and with Philip himself. There he discovered by several circumstances that the Indians were plotting against the English. He informed the governor what he had discovered, and told him that if he should be known to be the informer it would cost him his life. It was not long after that Sausaman was met by three or four Indians upon a frozen pond. They knocked him down and put him under the ice, leaving his

[1] **Praying Indian**—the term applied to savages who had been converted to Christianity by the missionaries from the settlements.

[2] **Confidant.** What part of speech? In what other way may it be spelled?

[3] What famous literary work did Eliot accomplish?

gun and hat upon the ice, to make the world believe that he accidentally fell in and was drowned.

When the body was found and taken up the wounds appeared upon his head. An Indian who happened to be upon a hill at

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a distance saw the murder committed. He concealed it for some time but at length discovered[1] it. The murderers were apprehended, tried upon the Indian's testimony and other circumstances, convicted, and executed. Two of them denied the fact

[1] **Discovered.** In what meaning used here? Is this the most common meaning?

to the last; the third, when he came to die, confessed that he was a spectator of the murder committed by the other two. This trial was at Plymouth in June, 1675.

Philip, enraged to see the immediate actors brought to punishment by the English laws, and expecting that it would be his own turn next, being conscious that the murderers were employed by him, took no pains to exculpate himself, but gathered what strangers he could, and together with his own men marched them up and down the country in arms.

The English of Plymouth ordered a military watch in every town, but took no other notice of the Indians' behavior, hoping that when Philip saw no measures were used for apprehending him, the threatened storm would blow over, as it had done several times before. But the Indians coming to him from several quarters gave him fresh courage, and he behaved with insolence, first threatening the English at Swanzey,[1] then killing some of their cattle, and at length rifling their houses. An Englishman was so provoked, that he fired upon an Indian and wounded him. June 24th, in the morning, one of the inhabitants of Rehoboth was fired upon by a party of Indians, and the hilt of his sword shot off. The same day in the afternoon, being a fast, as Swanzey people were coming from public worship, the Indians attacked them, killing one and wounding others, and killed two men who were going for a surgeon. Afterward they beset a house in another part of the town, and there murdered six more.

Massachusetts before this had determined to raise one hundred men for the assistance of Plymouth. Before they marched it was thought best to send messengers to Philip at Mount Hope, to divert him from his design, if possible. But the messengers, seeing some of the Swanzey men lying murdered in the road, did not think it safe to go any farther and returned as fast as they could with this intelligence to Boston. On the 26th, a foot

[1] Was Swanzey in Plymouth or in Massachusetts? Where was Rehoboth? See map, p. 7.

company under Captain Henchman and a troop[1] under Captain Prentice marched from Boston toward Mount Hope. They were overtaken by another company of one hundred and ten volunteers under Captain Mosely, and all arrived at Swanzey the 28th, where they found Plymouth forces under Captain Cudworth. They made the house of the minister, Mr. Miles, near the bridge, their head-quarters.

About a dozen of the troop went immediately over the bridge, where they were fired upon from out of the bushes and had one man killed and one wounded. This action drew the body of the English forces after the enemy, whom they pursued a mile or two, until the Indians took to a swamp, with the loss of about a dozen men. Philip now thought it best to quit his station at Mount Hope. A day or two after, Major Savage having arrived with more forces from Boston and having assumed general command, the troops marched into the Indian towns. These they found deserted, with marks of great haste. Philip's wigwam was discovered amongst the rest. Not having met with any of the enemy, the next day they returned to their head-quarters at Swanzey.

The Massachusetts government sent Captain Hutchinson as their commissioner to treat with the Narragansetts. It was thought convenient to do it sword in hand, and therefore all the forces marched into the Narragansett country. Connecticut sent two gentlemen in behalf of that government, and on the 15th of July they came to an agreement with the Narragansett Indians. This tribe favored Philip in their hearts and waited only a convenient opportunity to declare openly for him; but whilst the army was in their country they were obliged to submit to the terms imposed upon them. As soon as the treaty was finished, the forces left the Narragansett country and came to Taunton the 17th, in the evening.

Hearing that Philip was in a swamp at Pocasset, the Massachusetts and Plymouth forces joined, and arrived at the swamp

[1] A troop—a body of horsemen.

the 18th, which they resolutely entered. They found about one hundred wigwams empty. The enemy had deserted them and retired deeper into the swamp. The English followed, but in the disorder which was inevitable when penetrating a thick swamp. A desultory engagement ensued. The soldiers found they were in danger one from another, every man firing at every bush he saw shake. Night coming on, it was necessary to retreat, and it was found that they had lost fifteen men. How many they killed of the enemy is uncertain. It was an unsuccessful attempt, and the more unfortunate because, as they were afterwards informed, Philip was in such distress that if they had followed him half an hour longer he would have surrendered himself and his men, which would have put an end to the war.

This disappointment encouraged the Indians in other parts of New England to follow Philip's example and begin their hostilities against the English. Some few had begun before. The Nipnet or Nipmuck Indians had killed four or five people at Mendon, in the Massachusetts colony, the 14th of July. The governor and council, in hopes of reclaiming the Nipnets, sent Captain Hutchinson[1] with twenty horsemen to Quabaog (Brookfield), near which place there was to be a great rendezvous of these Indians. The inhabitants of Quabaog had been deluded with the promise of a treaty, at a place agreed upon for the 2d of August. Some of the principal of them accompanied Captain Hutchinson thither. Not finding the Indians there, they rode forward four or five miles towards the Nipnets' chief town. When they came to a place called Meminimisset, a narrow passage between a steep hill and a thick swamp, they were ambushed by two or three hundred Indians, who shot down eight of the company and mortally wounded three more, Captain Hutchinson being one of the number. The rest escaped through a by-path to Quabaog.

The Indians flocked into the town, but the inhabitants being

[1] This Captain Hutchinson was the great-grandfather of the author of the history from which this account is taken. See p. 3.

alarmed, had all gathered together in the principal house. They had the mortification to see their dwelling-houses, about twenty, with their barns and outhouses, burnt. The house where they had assembled was then surrounded and a variety of attempts were made to set fire to it. At length the Indians filled a cart with hemp and other combustible matter, which they kindled, and whilst they were thrusting it towards the house a violent shower of rain fell suddenly and extinguished the fire.

August 4th, Major Willard, who had been sent after some other Indians westward, heard of the distress of Brookfield when he was about four or five miles from Lancaster, which caused him with his forty-eight men to alter his course, and the same night he reached Brookfield, after thirty miles' march. Though the Indian scouts discovered him and fired their alarm-guns, yet the main body, from their high joy, always accompanied with a horrid noise, heard nothing of them. Willard joined the besieged, and the Indians, pouring in all the shot they could, but without execution, then quitted the siege, destroyed all the horses and cattle they could find, and withdrew to their dens. They were not pursued, being superior in numbers. The English, moreover, were not yet used to Indian fighting. A party sent from Springfield to the relief of Brookfield, finding it effected, returned, meeting none of the enemy.

Philip and his people continued in the swamp at Pocasset until the last of July. After a skirmish with Captain Church and other parties, they escaped from the swamp, notwithstanding the Massachusetts forces kept their guards round it, and went away to the westward without being very closely pursued. The 5th of August, Philip with about forty men, besides women and children, joined the Nipmuck Indians in a swamp ten or twelve miles from Brookfield.

The Indians upon the Connecticut River, near Hadley, Hatfield, and Deerfield, began their hostilities about the same time, as also did those at Penicook and other places upon the Merrimac River, so that before the end of August the whole Massachusetts colony was in the utmost terror. Philip having left Plymouth,

and the Narragansetts not having engaged, that colony was less affected. There were several skirmishes about Hatfield: *viz.*, at Sugar-loaf Hill, at Deerfield, and at Squakeag (Northfield), about the latter end of August and the beginning of September, in which the English, upon the whole, were losers. September 1st, Hadley was attacked upon a fast-day, while the people were at church, which broke up the service and obliged them to spend the day in very different exercise.[1] The commanders in that part of the country, not being able to do much service by sending out parties, determined to garrison the towns and to collect a magazine of provisions at Hadley.

There being about 3000 bushels of corn at Deerfield in stacks, Captain Lothrop with eighty men was sent to guard it down in carts. The expedition was set upon by seven or eight hundred Indians, and all the English but seven or eight were cut off. Captain Lothrop and his men fought bravely, but in the Indian manner, betaking themselves to trees, which in so great a disproportion of numbers must be inevitable destruction, for many of the lesser party must be unguarded and exposed. Captain Moseley, who was quartered at Deerfield, came out with his company too late to rescue Lothrop, but keeping his men together in a body, fought the whole number of Indians for several hours with the loss of two men only, until Major Treat with about 160

[1] "On Sept. 23, about 10 A.M., an alarm was made in the town of Boston. Twelve hundred men were in arms before eleven, and all dismissed before twelve. One that was on guard at Mendon, thirty miles off, got drunk and fired his gun, the noise of which alarmed the next neighbors, and soon spread to Boston." —*Extract from a letter from Massachusetts to London.*

The fear and uneasiness at Boston was very great all through this winter. Even those Indians in the neighborhood who had been most faithful and devoted to the English were now distrusted. A great many of them were forced to spend the winter under guard, and with scant allowance of food and shelter, on an island in Boston Harbor. Some of the English favored putting all of these to death, merely to make certain of safety against them. No Indian was allowed in Boston unless under guard of two musketeers, and under no circumstances could one stay over night.

Mohegan Indians came to his aid and put the enemy to flight. This battle was a heavy stroke to the county of Essex, to which most of Captain Lothrop's company, being young men, belonged.[1]

A body of Indians who had a fort about a mile from Springfield had hitherto professed great friendship to the English, but Philip's Indians prevailed with them to join in a plot for the destruction of the town, and to receive in the night three hundred of these Indians into the fort. The plan was discovered the night before by Top, a Windsor Indian, which fact, although it saved the lives of many of the inhabitants, yet was no security for their dwellings; thirty odd houses, besides barns, *etc.*, being burnt before forces came from Westfield, Hadley, and other parts, to repel the Indians.

The 19th of October they came with all the force and fury they could raise upon Hatfield, but were repulsed, the Connecticut and Massachusetts forces being, by good providence, at hand so as to prevent any great loss. This discouraged them from continuing any longer in that part of the country, and they withdrew to the Narragansetts, their general rendezvous. Some stragglers remained until the end of November, and a few lurked in the swamps all winter, doing now and then some mischief—enough to keep the inhabitants upon constant watch and guard.

*Give the meaning of the following words:*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Misdemeanor | Exculpate | Combustible |
| Evangelist | Spectator | Inevitable |
| Repentance | Insolence | Rendezvous |
| Apostasy | Intelligence | Ambushed |
| Apprehended | Convenient | Mortification |
| | Resolutely | |

[1] Where is Essex County in Massachusetts?

## CHAPTER III.

THE Narragansetts, contrary to their engagements, had received and comforted Philip's Indians and other enemies of the English. It was not doubted that some of that nation had mixed with the others in their hostilities. If they should all openly engage in the spring, there would be no resisting them; for, scattered in every part of the country, all the forces the English could raise would not be a match for them. One company of soldiers after another had wasted away in the year past. There was no great room to hope for better success in the year to come.

The commissioners of the united colonies therefore agreed to raise one thousand men, to march in the winter into the Narragansett country. Massachusetts was to raise 527, the other two colonies the remainder. Mr. Winslow, the governor of Plymouth, was pitched upon for the general. The 8th of December the Massachusetts forces marched from Boston and were soon joined by Plymouth men. Connecticut men joined them on the 18th at Pettyquamscot. The evening and night were stormy and the men had no covering.[1] At break of day, the 19th, they began a march of fourteen or fifteen miles through the snow, and at one o'clock in the afternoon they came to the edge of the swamp where the enemy lay. They had met with an Indian who was disgusted with the rest, and who offered himself as a pilot.

The Indians knew of the armament coming against them and had fortified themselves with all the art and strength they were capable of. The English fell in suddenly and unexpectedly upon this seat of the enemy, and neither drew up in any order of battle nor consulted where or how to assault. Some Indians appearing at the edge of the swamp, they that were in front of the army in the march fired upon them. The Indians returned the fire and fled.

[1] **Covering**—tents or other shelter from the storm.

The whole army entered the swamp, following the Indians to their fortress, which was upon a piece of upland in the midst of the swamp, palisaded all round, and further surrounded by a hedge of near a rod thick. At one corner only was a gap the length of one log, where the breastwork was not above four or five feet high, but they had placed a blockhouse over against this passage. At this passage and nowhere else the English must enter. As it pleased God to order it, they fell in upon that part of the fort where the passage was. The captains entered at the head of their companies. The two first, Johnson and Davenport, were shot dead at the entrance, as were many of their men. Four other captains, Gardner, Gallop, Siely, and Marshall, also lost their lives.

As soon as the forces were entered they attacked the Indians in their places of shelter, who fought desperately and beat the English out of the fort. After two or three hours, however, the advantage of the English was such that they began to fire the wigwams, which were five or six hundred in number. In many of these the Indian women and children perished. The men who were left alive fled into a cedar forest at some small distance, without any necessaries of life or any shelter from the cold and storms, except the boughs of trees.

The day being near spent, the English thought it high time to retire to their quarters fifteen or sixteen miles distant, carrying dead as well as wounded men with them. Many of the wounded men perished by being exposed to this long march in a cold night, who might otherwise have been saved. The number of killed and wounded amounted to one hundred and seventy. Some of the enemy confessed they lost seven hundred fighting men that day, besides three hundred more who died of their wounds and the hardships to which they were exposed. The number of old men, women, and children which perished by the fire, cold, and famine they could not tell.

The Indians took possession of the fort again the next day, but the English made no further attack. They were scant of provisions, and the weather being extremely cold, delayed the

vessels which had their supplies on board. Some weeks were spent doing nothing. February 5th, the army returned to Boston. There was a remarkable thaw in January, which melted the snow and opened the earth, so that the Indians could come at the ground-nuts, which seem to have been all their provisions. Some from among themselves reported that corn was sold at two shillings the pint.

They took the first opportunity to leave the Narragansetts' country. A general junction of the Indians was thereupon expected, and every part of the English colonies was in terror. The 10th of February, several hundred of the enemy assaulted Lancaster, burnt the houses, and killed and captured forty persons, the minister's wife and children among the rest, he himself (Mr. Rowlandson) being absent. Mischief was done about the same time at Marlborough, Sudbury, and Chelmsford. The 21st, they fell upon Medfield, where there were two or three hundred soldiers, and yet they burned half the town down and killed eighteen of the inhabitants. The 25th, they burned seven or eight houses at Weymouth. This seems to be their nearest approach to Boston, between fifteen and twenty miles distant; at least they did no mischief nearer.

March was a troublesome month, the Indians attacking Northhampton and Springfield upon the Connecticut River, Groton, Sudbury, and Marlborough in Massachusetts, Warwick and Providence in Rhode Island Colony, burning houses and barns, and destroying the cattle and many of the inhabitants. They killed also eleven persons of one family in Plymouth (Mr. Clark's), and on the 26th of March, Captain Pierce, of Scituate in that colony, with fifty English and twenty Indians of Cape Cod, being drawn into an ambushment by a small number of the enemy, found themselves surrounded by a great body of Indians, who killed every Englishman and a great part of the friendly Indians.

The 28th, they burned forty houses, besides barns, at Rehoboth. Where Philip spent the winter[1] was never certainly known.

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[1] What winter is here referred to?

Some conjectured that he went to the Mohawks;[1] others that he went to Canada, which his friends said was his intention in the fall. Knowing the premium set upon his head, he disguised and concealed himself, so that we hear but little of him until he was killed. His affairs were now at the highest flow, and those of the English at never so low an ebb.

But presently after, a sudden turn came on. The beginning of April, the Connecticut men, under George Denison of Stonington, with some friendly Indians, killed or took prisoners forty-four of the enemy; and before the end of the month, the same commanders, with sixty-six English volunteers and one hundred and twelve Pequod Indians,[2] took or slew seventy-six more of the enemy, without the loss of one man in either of these exploits. Between these two successful actions happened a very unfortunate one for Massachusetts. April 20th, news came to Boston of the loss of Captain Wadsworth and fifty of his men, while going to relieve Sudbury, which had been attacked by the enemy.

In May and June the enemy appeared in various parts of the colonies; but their vigor abated, their distress for want of provisions and ammunition increased, and at the same time the Mohawks fell upon them and killed fifty of them. It was commonly said that Philip fell upon a party of Mohawks and killed them, and reported that they were killed by the English, expecting by this means to engage that nation in the war; but one that was left for dead revived, escaped to his countrymen, and informed them that not the English, but Philip and his Indians, had been the murderers. This brought that revenge upon the guilty which without this discovery would have been taken of those who were innocent.

In the beginning of July the Connecticut forces met with a party of Indians in the Narragansett country, pursued them into a swamp and killed and took eighty of them, without any loss

[1] Who were the Mohawks? Where did they live?

[2] What had been the earlier relations between the Pequods and the English? Had they always fought on the same side with each other?

except one or two friendly Indians. In their march back sixty more of the enemy fell into their hands. The Massachusetts and Plymouth men in several parts of the country were likewise very successful from time to time, killing and taking small parties of Indians scattered about the country, and no commander was more fortunate than Captain, afterwards Colonel, Church of Plymouth Colony; he has published an account of his exploits.

But Philip was the object of all the expeditions. Upon his life or death war or peace depended. News was brought that after a year's absence he had returned to Mount Hope,[1] his old quarters, and that great numbers of Indians were flocking to him, with intent to fall upon the neighboring towns. Massachusetts and Plymouth both ordered their forces after Philip. The former returned to Boston, having missed the chief; but they killed and took one hundred and fifty of the enemy, who were now so reduced that they were continually coming in and surrendering themselves upon promise of mercy. Two hundred in one week came into Plymouth.

Philip fled from one swamp to another, divers[2] times having very narrow escapes, and losing one chief counselor after another; his uncle and sister, and at last his wife and son, were taken prisoners. Being reduced to this miserable condition, he was killed the 12th of August as he was flying from a party under Captain Church out of a swamp near Mount Hope. One of his own men, whom he had offended, and who had deserted to the English, shot him through the heart. Instead of taking his scalp, the slayer cut off Philip's right hand, which had a remarkable scar, well known to the English, and it produced a handsome penny,[3] many having the curiosity to see it.

This was a finishing stroke, the parties of Indians that remained being driven from one hole or swamp to another, so that

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[1] Point out on the map. In what colony was it.

[2] **Divers.** What part of speech? Meaning?

[3] **A handsome penny**—a large sum of money.

before winter they were almost all killed, captured, or forced to surrender themselves. Some few were supposed to have fled to the French, and others to nations of foreign Indians. The cruelties which had been exercised upon the English were urged in excuse for the treatment which the Indians received who were made prisoners or surrendered themselves.

In all promises of mercy those who had been principal actors in any murders of the English were excepted, and none had any promise made of anything more than their lives. A great many, therefore, of the chiefs were executed at Boston and Plymouth, and most of the rest were sold and shipped off for slaves to Bermudas and other parts. Every person almost in the two colonies had lost a relative or near friend, and the people were exasperated; but all does not sufficiently excuse this great severity.

*Give the meaning of the following words:*

| | |
|---|---|
| Armament | Innocent |
| Conjectured | Vigor |

# Witchcraft in New England.

## CHAPTER I.

The great noise[1] which the New England witchcrafts made throughout the English dominions proceeded more from the general panic with which all sorts of persons were seized and an expectation that the contagion would spread to all parts of the country, than from the number of persons who were executed, more having been put to death in a single county in England,[2] in a short space of time, than have suffered in all New England from the first settlement until the present time.[3] Fifteen years had passed before we find any mention of witchcraft among the English colonists. The Indians were supposed to be worshipers of the devil, and their powwows[4] to be wizards.[5]

The first suspicion of witchcraft among the English was about the year 1645: at Springfield, upon the Connecticut River,

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[1] **Noise**—excitement; discussion.

[2] The systematic persecution of witches, under the authority of the Church, began a little before 1500. In France and Germany thousands of witches were burned in the first quarter of the sixteenth century, and the craze continued throughout the whole of it. In England the worst period of witch-hunting was between 1640 and 1660. Over three thousand persons were put to death for witchcraft during this time.

[3] **The present time.** This was written about 1750.

[4] **Powwow**—a priest or magician among the Indians.

[5] **Wizard.** Strict meaning, a *wise* (*wiz*) man; i.e., one who knows much that others do not, especially the tricks of magic or sorcery. Supposed to get his knowledge from the devil.

several persons were supposed to be under an evil hand,[1] and among the rest two of the minister's children. Great pains were taken to prove the facts upon several persons charged with the crime, but either the nature of the evidence was not satisfactory or the fraud was suspected, and so no person was convicted until the year 1650. Then a poor wretch, Mary Oliver, probably weary of her life from the general reputation of being a witch, after long examination was brought to confession of her guilt; but I do not find that she was executed.

Whilst this inquiry was making, Margaret Jones was executed at Charlestown; and Mr. Hale mentions a woman at Dorchester, and another at Cambridge about the same time, who all at their death asserted their innocence. Soon after, Hugh Parsons was tried at Springfield, and escaped death. In 1655 Mrs. Hibbins, the assistant's [2] widow, was hanged at Boston.

In 1662, at Hartford,[3] in Connecticut (about thirty miles from Springfield, upon the same river), one Ann Cole, a young woman who lived next door to a Dutch family, and who no doubt had learned something of the language, was supposed to be possessed with demons, who sometimes spoke Dutch[4] and sometimes English, and sometimes a language which nobody understood, and who held a conference with one another. Several ministers who were present took down the conference in writing, and the names

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[1] **Under an evil hand**—under the power of some witch. To bewitch a person was to bring some pain or distress upon him through secret processes, which were taught to the witch by the devil. This was a crime under English law in the seventeenth century and was punishable with death.

[2] **Assistant**—a member of the upper house in the General Court or legislature of Massachusetts.

[3] From the fact that the author takes such pains to explain where Hartford was, what do you think must have been the size and importance of the town when this was written?

[4] The young woman, of course, did the talking, but sometimes in one language and sometimes in another. The hearers supposed that the demons in turn made her speak as she did. It seems strange that they thought ordinarily shrewd demons would talk with one another when their enemies were listening.

of several persons mentioned in the course of the conference as actors or bearing parts in it; particularly a woman, then in prison upon suspicion of witchcraft, one Greensmith, who upon examination confessed and appeared to be surprised at the discovery. She owned that she and others named had been familiar with a demon, and although she had not made a formal covenant, yet she had promised to be ready at his call, and was to have a high frolic at Christmas, when the agreement was to have been signed. Upon this confession she was executed, and two more of the company were condemned at the same time.

In 1669 Susanna Martin of Salisbury was bound over to court[1] upon suspicion of witchcraft, but escaped at that time.

In 1671 Elizabeth Knap, another *ventriloqua*,[2] alarmed the people of Groton[3] in much the same manner as Ann Cole had done those at Hartford; but her demon was not so cunning, for instead of confining himself to old women, he railed at[4] the good minister of the town and other persons of good character, and the people could not be prevailed on to believe him. But they rather believed the girl when she confessed she had been deluded, and that the devil had tormented her in the shape of good persons; and so she escaped the punishment due to her fraud and imposture.

In 1673 Eunice Cole of Hampton was tried, and the jury found her not legally guilty, but that there were strong grounds to suspect her of familiarity with the devil.

In 1679 William Morse's house at Newbury[5] was troubled with the throwing of bricks, stones, *etc.*, and a boy of the family was supposed to be bewitched, who accused one of the neighbors; and in 1682 the house of George Walton, a Quaker, at Portsmouth and another house at Salmon Falls (both in New Hampshire) were attacked in the same manner.

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[1] **Bound over to court**—compelled to be ready for trial at a certain time.

[2] **Ventriloqua**—a female ventriloquist.

[3] **Groton** — a town in Massachussets. See map.

[4] **Railed at.** *Meaning?*

[5] **Newbury.** *Where situated?*

In 1683 the demons removed to Connecticut River again, where one Desborough's house was molested by an invisible hand, and a fire kindled, nobody knew how, which burnt up a great part of his estate; and in 1684 Philip Smith, a judge of the court, a military officer, and a representative of the town of Hadley, upon the same river (an hypochondriac person), fancied himself under an evil hand and suspected a woman, one of his neighbors. He languished and pined away, and was generally supposed to have been bewitched to death. While he lay ill a number of brisk lads tried an experiment upon the old woman. Having dragged her out of her house, they hung her up until she was near dead, let her down, rolled her some time in the snow, and at last buried her in it, and there left her; but it happened that she survived, and the melancholy man died.

Notwithstanding these frequent instances of supposed witchcrafts, no person had suffered for near thirty years in the Massachusetts colony. The execution of the assistant's widow in 1655 was disapproved of by many principal persons, and it is not unlikely that her death saved the lives of many other inferior persons.[1] But in 1685 a very circumstantial account of all or most of the cases I have mentioned was published, and many arguments were brought to convince the country that they were no delusions or impostures, but the effects of a familiarity between the devil and such as he found fit for his instruments; and in 1687 or 1688 began a more alarming instance than any which had preceded it.

Four of the children of John Goodwin, a grave man and a good liver,[2] at the north part of Boston, were generally believed to be bewitched.[3] I often heard persons who were of the neighborhood speak of the great consternation it occasioned. The children were all remarkable for ingenuity of temper, had been religiously educated, and were thought to be without guile.

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[1] **Inferior persons**—persons not in so high a position in society as the assistant.

[2] **Grave man and good liver** — a man of influence and refinement.

[3] How long was this before the birth of Governor Hutchinson? See Introduction.

The eldest was a girl of thirteen or fourteen years. She had charged a laundress with taking away some of the family linen. The mother of the laundress was one of the wild Irish,[1] of bad character, and gave the Goodwin girl harsh language;[2] soon after which the child fell into fits, which were said to have something diabolical in them. One of her sisters and two brothers followed her example, and it is said were tormented in the same part of their bodies at the same time, although kept in separate apartments and in ignorance of one another's complaints.

One or two things were said to be very remarkable—all their complaints were in the day-time, and they slept comfortably all night; they were struck dead[3] at the sight of the Assembly's Catechism, Cotton's Milk for Babes, and some other good books; but could read in Oxford's Jests, Popish and Quaker books, and the Common Prayer without any difficulty. Is it possible the mind of man should be capable of such strong prejudices as that a suspicion of fraud should not immediately arise?

But attachment to modes and forms in religion had such force that some of these circumstances seemed rather to confirm the credit of the children. Sometimes they would be deaf, then dumb, then blind; and sometimes all these disorders together would come upon them. Their tongues would be drawn down their throats, then pulled out upon their chins. Their jaws, neck, shoulders, elbows, and all their joints would appear to be dislocated, and they would make most piteous outcries of

[1] **Wild Irish**—the term commonly used by the English in the seventeenth century to designate the lower classes of the people of Ireland.

[2] **Gave harsh language** — used harsh language towards.

[3] **Struck dead** — frightened exceedingly. The Catechism and the other books which the children could not read were writings which the Puritans regarded as especially excellent; while the others, including the regular Episcopal Prayer-book, were looked upon as exceedingly vicious. That the children could read the bad and not the good was a certain indication to the people of the neighborhood that they were under the influence of the devil. To the people of to-day it only indicates that the children were very ingenious in the lies which they acted and spoke.

burnings, of being cut with knives, beat, *etc.*, and the marks of wounds were afterwards to be seen.

The ministers of Boston and Charlestown kept a day of fasting and prayer at the troubled house, after which the youngest child made no more complaints. The others persevered, whereupon the magistrates interposed and the old woman was apprehended.

Upon examination she would neither confess nor deny, and appeared to be disordered in her senses. Upon the report of physicians that she was *compos mentis*,[1] she was executed, declaring at her death that the children should not be believed. The eldest girl, after this, was taken into a minister's family, where at first she behaved orderly but after some time suddenly fell into her fits. The account of her affliction is in print: some things are mentioned as extraordinary, which tumblers[2] are every day taught to perform; others seem more than natural: but it was a time of great credulity.

The children finally returned to their ordinary behavior, lived to adult age, made profession of religion, and the affliction they had been under they publicly declared to be one motive to it. One of them I knew many years after. She had the character of a sober, virtuous woman, and never made any acknowledgment of fraud in this transaction. The printed account was published with a preface by Mr. Baxter, who says, "The evidence is so convincing, that he must be a very obdurate Sadducee[3] who will not believe." It obtained credit sufficient, together with other preparatives, to dispose the whole country to be easily imposed upon by the more extensive and more tragic scene, which was presently after acted at Salem and other parts of the county of Essex.

Not many years before, Glanvil published his witch stories in

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[1] **Compos mentis**—of sound mind; not insane.

[2] **Tumblers**. *Meaning?*

[3] **Sadducee** here means merely an unreasonable doubter of established truth. The name was commonly used to describe one who disputed the reality of witchcraft.

England. Perkins and other Nonconformists[1] were earlier; but the great authority was that of Sir Matthew Hale,[2] revered in New England, not only for his knowledge in the law, but for his gravity and piety. The trial of the witches in Suffolk was published in 1684. All these books were in New England, and the conformity between the behavior of Goodwin's children and most of the supposed bewitched at Salem and the behavior of those in England is so exact, as to leave no doubt the stories had been read by the New England persons themselves, or had been told to them by others who had read them. Indeed, this conformity, instead of giving suspicion, was urged in confirmation of the truth of both, the Old England demons and the New being so much alike.

Reproach, then, for hanging witches, although it has been often cast upon the people of New England by those of Old, yet it must have been done with an ill grace.

Sir William Phips,[3] the governor, upon his arrival, fell in with the opinion prevailing. Mr. Stoughton, the lieutenant-governor, upon whose judgment great stress was laid, had taken up this notion, that although the devil might appear in the shape of a guilty person, yet he would never be permitted to assume the shape of an innocent person. This opinion at first was generally received; some of the most religious women who were accused, when they saw the appearance of distress and torture in their accusers, and heard their solemn declarations that they saw shapes or specters of the accused afflicting them, persuaded themselves that they were witches, and that the devil somehow or

[1] **Nonconformist** — one who did not worship according to the forms of the Church of England.

[2] **Sir Matthew Hale**—an eminent English lawyer and judge. Born 1609; died 1676. He was generally recognized as a man of the highest genius and the purest integrity. It is the one great stain upon his reputation that he shared the common belief in witchcraft, and as a judge promoted the conviction and execution of unhappy creatures accused of it.

[3] **Sir William Phips**—Governor of Massachusetts from 1692 to 1694. In what important military and naval expedition did he take the leading part? See "Anderson's Pictorial History of the U. S.," p. 56.

other, although they could not remember how or when, had taken possession of their evil hearts and obtained some sort of assent to his afflicting in their shapes; and therefore they thought they might be justified in confessing themselves guilty.

*Give the meaning of the following words:*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Contagion | Molested | Piteous |
| Reputation | Hypochondriac | Credulity |
| Conference | Melancholy | Adult |
| Familiar | Circumstantial | Obdurate |
| Covenant | Delusions | Preparative |
| Ventriloquist | Ingenuity | Conformity |
| Imposture | Diabolical | Preternatural |

## CHAPTER II.

It seems at this day with some people, perhaps but few, to be the question whether the accused or the afflicted were under a preternatural or diabolical possession, rather than whether the afflicted were under bodily distempers or altogether guilty of fraud and imposture. As many of the original examinations[1] have fallen into my hands, it may be of service to represent the affair at Salem in a more full and impartial light than it has yet appeared to the world.

In February, 1692, a daughter and a niece of Mr. Paris (or Parris, as the name is sometimes written), the minister of Salem village, girls of ten or eleven years of age, and two other girls in the neighborhood, made the same sort of complaints as Goodwin's children had made two or three years before. The physicians, having no other way of accounting for the disorder, pronounced them bewitched. An Indian woman, who had been brought into the country from New Spain[2] and who then lived

[1] **Original examinations** — the reports of the proceedings when the witches were tried and executed.

Where is Salem?

[2] **New Spain.** Where was it?

with Mr. Paris, tried some experiments, which she pretended to be used in her country, in order to find out the witch. This coming to the children's knowledge, they cried out upon the poor Indian, as appearing to them, pinching, pricking, and tormenting them, and fell into fits. Tituba, the Indian, acknowledged that she had learned how to find out a witch, but denied that she was one herself. Several private fasts were kept in the minister's house, and several more public by the whole village, and then a general fast through the colony, to seek to God to rebuke Satan.

So much notice taken of the children, together with the pity and compassion expressed by those who visited them, not only tended to confirm them in their designs but to draw others into the like. Accordingly the number of the complaints soon increased, and among those making them were two or three women, and some girls old enough for witnesses. These had their fits too, and when in them cried out not only against Tituba but against Sarah Osburn, a melancholy distracted old woman, and Sarah Good, another old woman who was bedrid.[1] Tituba at length confessed herself a witch and declared that the two old women were confederates. All were then committed to prison; and Tituba,[2] upon search, was found to have scars upon her back which were called the devil's marks, but which might as well have been supposed to be those of her Spanish master. This commitment was on the 1st of March.

About three weeks after, two other women, of good character and church-members, Corey and Nurse by name, were complained of and brought upon their examination. Again the children fell into fits; and the mother of one of them, the wife of Thomas Putman, joined with the children and complained of Nurse as tormenting her, making most terrible shrieks, to the amazement of all the neighborhood. The old women denied

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[1] **Bedrid** — confined to her bed with disease.

[2] Tituba had been a slave, and under the circumstances the scars of former beating were not at all to be wondered at.

everything, but they were sent to prison; and such was the infatuation, that a child of Sarah Good, about four or five years old, was committed also, being charged with biting some of the afflicted,[1] who showed the print of small teeth upon their arms.

On April 3d, Mr. Paris, the minister, took for his text, "*Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil.*" Sarah Cloyse, supposing it to be occasioned by Nurse's case, who was her sister, went out of meeting. She was presently after complained of for a witch, examined, and committed. Elizabeth Proctor was charged about the same time. Her husband, as every good husband would have done, accompanied her to the examination, but it cost the poor man his life. Some of the afflicted cried out upon him[2] also, and they were both committed to prison.

Instead of suspecting and sifting the witnesses and suffering them to be cross-examined,[3] the authority,[4] to say no more, were imprudent in making use of leading questions, and thereby putting words into their mouths or suffering others to do it. Mr. Paris was over-officious: most of the examinations, although in the presence of one or more of the magistrates, were taken by him. The following examinations of the accused may serve as specimens, they being generally made in the same manner:

*At a court held at Salem, 11th April, 1692, by the Honorable Thomas Danforth, deputy-governor:*

Q. John, who hurt you?[5]
A. Goody Proctor first, then Goody Cloyse.[6]

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[1] The biting was supposed to be done while the child was invisible. The power to become invisible at will was one of the gifts which the devil was said to confer upon those familiar with him.

[2] **Cried out upon him**: complained that he was hurting them.

[3] **Cross-examined.** *Meaning?*

[4] **The authority**—i.e., the judges and other law officials.

[5] This "John" was the Indian husband of Tituba. He was cunning enough to save himself by pretending to be afflicted.

[6] **Goody**—sometimes "goodwife;" a term formerly much used as a prefix in speaking to or of a woman; like "mistress" or "Mrs." nowadays, but less dignified,

Q. What did she do to you?
A. She brought the book [1] to me.
Q. John, tell the truth: who hurts you? Have you been hurt?
A. The first was a gentlewoman I saw.
Q. Who next?
A. Goody Cloyse.
Q. But who hurt you next?
A. Goody Proctor.
Q. What did she do to you?
A. She choked me and brought the book.
Q. How often did she come to torment you?
A. A good many times, she and Goody Cloyse.
Q. Did they come to you in the night as well as the day?
A. They came most in the day.
Q. Who?
A. Goody Cloyse and Goody Proctor.
Q. Where did she take hold of you?
A. Upon my throat, to stop my breath.
Q. Do you know Goody Close and Goody Proctor?
A. Yes, here is Goody Cloyse
Q. (By Goody Cloyse.) When did I hurt thee?
A. A great many times.
Cloyse: Oh! you are a grievous liar.
Q. What did this Goody Cloyse do to you?
A. She pinched and bit me till the blood came.
Q. How long since this woman came and hurt you?
A. Yesterday at meeting.
Q. At any time before?
A. Yes, a great many times.
Q. Mary Walcot, who hurts you?
A. Goody Cloyse.
Q. What did she do to you?
A. She hurt me.
Q. Did she bring the book?
A. Yes.
Q. What was you to do with it?
A. To touch it and be well. (Here the girl fell into a fit.)
Q. Doth she come alone?
A. Sometimes alone, and sometimes in company with Goody Nurse and

[1] **Brought the book**—i.e., the book in which, according to the common belief, the agreement to serve the devil was written.

Goody Corey, and a great many I do not know. (Then she fell into a fit again.)

Q. Abigail Williams, did you see a company at Mr. Paris's house eat and drink?

A. Yes, sir; that was their sacrament.

Q. How many were there?

A. About forty, and Goody Cloyse and Goody Good were their deacons.

Q. What was it they drank?

A. They said it was our blood, and they had it twice that day.

Q. Mary Walcot, have you seen a white man?[1]

A. Yes, sir, a great many times.

Q. What sort of a man was he?

A. A fine grave man, and when he came he made all the witches to tremble.

Abigail Williams confirmed the same and said that they had such a sight at Deacon Ingersoll's.

Q. Who was at Deacon Ingersoll's then?

A. Goody Cloyse, Goody Nurse, Goody Corey, and Goody Good.

Then Sarah Cloyse asked for water, and sat down as one seized with a dying fainting fit; and several of the afflicted fell into fits, and some of them cried out, "Oh! her spirit is gone to prison to her sister Nurse."

Q. Elizabeth Proctor, you understand whereof you are charged, *viz.*, to be guilty of sundry acts of witchcraft; what say you to it? Speak the truth, and so you that are afflicted, you speak the truth, as you will answer it before God another day. Mary Walcot, doth this woman hurt you?

A. I never saw her so as to be hurt by her.

Q. Mary Lewis, does she hurt you?

(No answer; her mouth was stopped.)

Q. Ann Putman, does she hurt you?

(No answer; she could not speak.)

Q. Abigail Williams, does she hurt you?

(No answer; her hand was thrust in her own mouth)

Q. John, does she hurt you?

A. This is the woman that came in her shift and choked me.

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[1] **A white man.** The afflicted often described one of the company who hurt them as a white man, exactly like the black man, except in color. Sometimes, however, the "white man" was said to act the part of a good spirit, giving aid to the sufferer against the designs of the devil.

Q. Did she ever bring the book?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. What to do?

A. To write.

Q. What! this woman?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Are you sure of it?

A. Yes, sir.

Again, Abigail Williams and Ann Putman were spoken to by the court, but neither of them could make any answer, by reason of dumbness or other fits.

Q. What do you say, Goody Proctor, to these things?

A. I take God in heaven to be my witness, that I know nothing of it, —no more than the child unborn.

Q. Ann Putman, does this woman hurt you?

A. Yes, sir, a great many times.

Then the accused looked upon them and they fell into fits.

Q. She does not bring the book to you, does she?

A. Yes, sir, often: and saith she hath made her maid set her hand to it.

Q. Abigail Williams, does this woman hurt you?

A. Yes, sir, often.

Q. Does she bring the book to you?

A. Yes.

Q. What would she have you do with it?

A. To write in it and I shall be well.

Did you not, said Abigail to Goody Proctor, tell me that your maid had written?

A. Dear child, it is not so. There is another judgment, dear child.

Then Abigail and Ann had fits. By and by they cried out, "Look you, there is Goody Proctor upon the beam."[1]

By and by both of them cried out against Goodman[2] Proctor himself, and said he was a wizard. Immediately many if not all of the bewitched had grievous fits.

Q. Ann Putman, who hurt you?

A. Goodman Proctor, and his wife too.

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[1] **Upon the beam**—i.e., one of the beams supporting the ceiling of the room. Witches were supposed to have the power of getting out of their bodies in some mysterious way and flying through the air from place to place. At such times they were only visible to those whom they wished to see them.

[2] **Goodman**—the term prefixed to a man's name, as "Goody" to a woman's.

Afterwards some of the afflicted cried, "There is Proctor going to take up Mrs. Pope's feet;" and her feet were immediately taken up.

Q. What do you say, Goodman Proctor, to these things?

A. I know not; I am innocent.

Abigail Williams cried out, "There is Goodman Proctor going to Mrs. Pope;" and immediately the said Pope fell into a fit.

The examiner said to Proctor: "You see the devil will deceive you; the children could see what you was going to do before the woman was hurt. I would advise you to repentance, for the devil is bringing you out."

Abigail Williams cried out again, "There is Goodman Proctor going to hurt Goody Bibber;" and immediately Goody Bibber fell in a fit. There was the like of Mary Walcot, and divers others.

Benjamin Gould gave his testimony, that he had seen Goodman Corey and his wife, Proctor and his wife, Goody Cloyse, Goody Nurse, and Goody Griggs in his chamber last Thursday night; Elizabeth Hubbard was in a trance during the whole examination.

During the examination of Elizabeth Proctor, Abigail Williams and Ann Putman both made offer to strike at said Proctor; but when Abigail's hand came near, it opened, whereas it was made up into a fist before, and came down exceeding lightly as it drew near to said Proctor, and at length with open and extended fingers touched Proctor's hood very lightly. Immediately Abigail cried out that her fingers burned, and Ann Putman took on most grievously of her head,[1] and sunk down."

"Salem, April 11th, 1692. Mr. Samuel Paris was desired by the honorable Thomas Danforth, deputy-governor, and the council, to make in writing the aforesaid examinations, and accordingly took and delivered them in; and upon hearing the same, and seeing what was then seen, together with the charge of the afflicted persons, the accused were, by the advice of the council, all committed by us."

JOHN HAWTHORNE, } *Assistants.*
JOHN CORWIN, }

*Give the meaning of the following words:*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Impartial | Confederates | Officious |
| Compassion | Infatuation | Specimen |
| | Sacrament | |

[1] **Took on of her head**—complained that her head was hurting her.

## CHAPTER III.

No wonder the whole country was in consternation, when persons of sober lives and unblemished characters were committed to prison upon such sort of evidence. Nobody was safe. The most effectual way to prevent an accusation was to become an accuser; and accordingly the number of the afflicted increased every day, and the number of accused in proportion, who in general persisted in their innocency; but, being strongly urged to give glory to God by their confession, and intimation being given that this was the only way to save their lives, and their friends urging them to do it, some were brought to own their guilt. The first confession upon the files[1] is that of Deliverance Hobbs, May 11, 1692, being in prison. She owned everything she was required to do.

The confessions multiplied the witches; new companies were always mentioned, who were immediately sent for and examined. Thus more than an hundred women, many of them of fair characters and of the most reputable families in the towns of Salem, Beverly, Andover, Billerica, *etc.*, were apprehended, examined, and generally committed to prison. The confessions being much of the same tenor, one or two may serve for specimens.

*The examination and confession (Sept. 8, 1692) of Mary Osgood, wife of Capt. Osgood, of Andover, taken before John Hawthorne and other Their Majesties' justices.*

She confesses that about eleven years ago, when she was in a melancholy state and condition, she used to walk abroad in her orchard; and upon a certain time she saw the appearance of a cat at the end of the house, which yet she thought was a real cat. However, at that time it diverted her from praying to God, and instead thereof she prayed to the devil; about which time she made a covenant with the devil, who as a black man came to her and presented her a book, upon which she laid her finger, and

[1] Files. *Meaning?*

that left a red spot; and that, upon her signing, the devil told her he was her god, and that she should serve and worship him, and she believes she consented to it.

She says, further, that about two years agone she was carried through the air in company with Deacon Frye's wife, Ebenezer Baker's wife, and Goody Tyler to Five Mile Pond, where she was baptized by the devil, who dipped her face in the water and made her renounce her former baptism and told her she must be his, soul and body, forever, and that she must serve him, which she promised to do. She says the renouncing her first baptism was after her dipping, and that she was transported back again through the air, in company with the forenamed persons, in the same manner as she went, and believes they were carried upon a pole.

Q. How many persons were upon the pole?

A. As I said before: *viz.*, four persons, and no more but whom she had named above.

She confessed she had afflicted three persons,—John Sawdy, Martha Sprague, and Rose Foster,—and that she did it by pinching her bedclothes, and giving consent the devil should do it in her shape; she said that the devil could not do it without her consent. She confesses afflicting persons in the court by the glance of her eye. She says, as she was coming down to Salem to be examined, she and the rest of the company with her stopped at Mr. Philips's to refresh themselves; and the afflicted persons, being behind them upon the road, came up just as she was mounting again and were then afflicted, and cried out upon her, so that she was forced to stay until they were all past, and said she only looked that way towards them.

Q. Do you know the devil can take the shape of an innocent person and afflict?

A. I believe he cannot.

Q. Who taught you this way of witchcraft?

A. Satan. And she added that he promised her abundance of satisfaction and quietness in her future state, but never performed anything; and that she has lived more miserable and more discontented since than ever before. She confesses, further, that she herself, in company with Goody Parker, Goody Tyler, and Goody Dean, had a meeting at Moses Tyler's house last Monday night to afflict, and that she and Goody Dean carried the shape of Mr. Dean, the minister, between them to make persons believe that Mr. Dean afflicted.

Q. What hindered you from accomplishing what you intended?

A. The Lord would not suffer it to be that the devil should afflict in an innocent person's shape.

Q. Have you been at any other witch meetings?

A. I know nothing thereof, as I shall answer in the presence of God and his people.

But she said that the black man stood before her, and told her that what she had confessed was a lie; notwithstanding, she said that what she had confessed was true, and thereto put her hand. Her husband being present was asked if he judged his wife to be any way discomposed.[1] He answered, that having lived with her so long he doth not judge her to be any ways discomposed, but has cause to believe what she has said is true.

When Mistress Osgood was first called she afflicted Martha Sprague and Rose Foster by the glance of her eyes, and recovered them out of their fits by the touch of her hand. Mary Lacy and Betty Johnson and Hannah Post saw Mistress Osgood afflicting Sprague and Foster. The said Hannah Post and Mary Lacy and Betty Johnson, Jr., and Rose Foster and Mary Richardson were afflicted by Mistress Osgood in the time of their examination, and recovered by her touching of their hands.

This report was signed by John Higginson, Justice of the Peace.

A miserable negro woman, charged by some of the girls with afflicting them, confessed, but was cunning enough to bring the greatest share of the guilt upon her mistress.

SALEM, Monday, July 4, 1692.

*The examination of Candy, a negro woman, before Bartholomew Gedney and John Hawthorne, Esqrs., Mr. Nicholas Noyes also present.*

Q. Candy, are you a witch?

A. Candy no witch in her country, Candy's mother no witch, Candy no witch, Barbadoes. This country, mistress give Candy witch.

Q. Did your mistress make you a witch in this country?

A. Yes; in this country mistress give Candy witch.

Q. What did your mistress do to make you a witch?

A. Mistress bring book and pen and ink; make Candy write in it.

Q. What did you write in it?

In reply she took a pen and ink, and upon a book or paper made a mark.

Q. How did you afflict or hurt these folks? Where are the puppets[2] you did it with?

She asked to go out of the room, and she would show or tell; upon which she had liberty, one going with her, and she presently brought in

[1] **Discomposed**—out of her mind

[2] **Puppets**—rough images or dolls which the witches were supposed to make and call by the names of those whom they wished to afflict. By pinching or striking these figures the pain was caused in the victims.

two clouts, one with two knots tied in it, the other with one. This being seen by Mary Warren, Deliverance Hobbs, and Abigail Hobbs, they were greatly affrighted, and fell into violent fits; and all of them said that the black man and Mrs. Hawkes and the negro stood by the puppets or rags and pinched them, and then they were afflicted; and when the knots were untied, yet they continued as aforesaid. A bit of one of the rags being set on fire, they all said they were burned, and cried out dreadfully. The rags being put into water, two of the aforenamed persons were in dreadful fits and almost choked, and the other was violently running down to the river, but was stopped. *Attest:* JOHN HAWTHORNE, Just. Peace.

Mrs. Hawkes, the mistress, had no other way to save her life but to confess also.

Mr. Hale, the minister of Beverly, who has the character of an impartial relater, acknowledges that the confessors generally went off from their confessions, some saying they remembered nothing of what they had said, others that they belied themselves. But he thinks if the times had been calm, the condition of the confessors might have called for a *melius inquirendum;*[1] and thinks it remarkable that children and grandchildren should confirm the confessions of their parents and grandparents (instancing in the case of Goody Foster, her daughter Mary Lacey, and granddaughter Mary Lacey, Jr.), and that other children should accuse their own parents, as in the case of Richard Carrier, a lad of eighteen years of age.

These confessions are preserved, and their character shows that they were forced from the accused through fear of losing their lives if they refused; and their fear in some cases was so great as to disorder their brains, and they scarce knew what they said.

Margaret Jacobs had been brought to accuse herself, and then to charge Burroughs,[2] the minister, and her own grandfather; but, struck with horror, she chose to lose her own life

[1] *Melius inquirendum* — a more careful examination.

[2] This Mr. Burroughs was accused by several of the afflicted persons, and also by some of those who confessed, of having been present at meetings where the devil presided and the witches frolicked. He was convicted and executed. See p. 58.

rather than persist in her confession, and begged forgiveness of Burroughs before his execution, who is said to have freely forgiven her, and recanted all she had said against her grandfather, but in vain as to his life.

Her own life was saved by a disorder in her head, which prevented her trial at the first court; but before the next court she made a formal recantation of all she had confessed and delivered it to the judges.

*The humble declaration of Margaret Jacobs unto the honorable court now sitting at Salem sheweth:*

That whereas your humble declarant being closely confined here in Salem gaol for the crime of witchcraft, which crime, thanks to the Lord, I am altogether ignorant of, as will appear at the great day of judgment:

May it please the honored court, I was cried out upon by some of the possessed persons as afflicting them; whereupon I was brought to my examination, which persons at the sight of me fell down, which did very much startle and affright me The Lord above knows I knew nothing in the least measure who afflicted them or how: they told me without doubt I did, or else they would not fall down at me; they told me if I would not confess I should be put down into the dungeon and would be hanged, but if I would confess I should have my life; the which did so affright me, with my own vile, wicked heart, to save my life made me make the like confession I did, which confession, may it please the honored court, is altogether false and untrue.

The very first night after I made confession, I was in such horror of conscience that I could not sleep, for fear the devil should carry me away for telling such horrid lies. I was, may it please the honored court, sworn to my confession, as I understood since, but then, at that time, was ignorant of it, not knowing what an oath did mean.

The Lord, I hope, in whom I trust, out of the abundance of his mercy, will forgive me my forswearing myself. What I said was altogether false, against my grandfather and Mr. Burroughs, which I did to save my life and to have my liberty; but the Lord, charging it to my conscience, made me in so much horror, that I could not contain myself before I had denied my confession; which I did, though I saw nothing but death before me, choosing rather death with a quiet conscience, than to live in such horror, which I could not suffer. Wherefore, upon my denying my confession, I was committed to close prison, where I have enjoyed more felicity in spirit a thousand times than I did before in my enlargement.[1]

[1] **Enlargement.** What does it mean here?

And now, may it please your honors, your declarant having in part given your honors a description of my condition, do leave to your honors' pious and judicious discretions to take pity and compassion on my young and tender years, to act and do with me as the Lord above and your honors shall see good, having no friend but the Lord to plead my cause for me, not being guilty in the least measure of the crime of witchcraft, nor any other sin that deserves death from man; and your poor and humble declarant shall forever pray, as she is bound in duty, for your honors' happiness in this life, and eternal felicity in the world to come. So prays your honors' declarant, MARGARET JACOBS.

Among the confessing witches I find Dorothy Falkener, a child of ten years; Abigail Falkener, of eight; and Sarah Carrier, between seven and eight.

*Sarah Carrier's Confession, August* 11, 1696.

It was asked Sarah Carrier by the magistrates or justices, John Hawthorne, Esq., and others:

How long have you been a witch?

A. Ever since I was six years old.

Q. How old are you now?

A. Near eight years old; brother Richard says I shall be eight years old November next.

Q. Who made you a witch?

A. My mother; she made me set my hand to a book.

Q. How did you set your hand to it?

A. I touched it with my fingers and the book was red; the paper of it was white.

She said she never had seen the black man; the place where she did it was in Andrew Foster's pasture, and Elizabeth Johnson, Jun., was there.

Q. Who was there beside?

A. Aunt Toothaker and my cousin.

Q. When was this?

A. When I was baptized.

Q. What did they promise to give you?

A. A black dog.

Q. Did the dog ever come to you?

A. No.

Q. But you said you saw a cat once; what did that say to you?

A. It said it would tear me in pieces if I would not set my hand to the book.

She said her mother baptized her, and the devil or black man was not

there, as she saw; and her mother said when she baptized her, "Thou art mine forever and ever, and amen."

Q. How did you afflict folks?

A. I pinched them.

She said she had no puppets, but she went to them that she afflicted.

Q. Did you go in your body or spirit?

A. In my spirit; mother carried me there to afflict.

Q. How did your mother carry you when she was in prison?

A. She came like a black cat.

Q. How did you know that it was your mother?

A. The cat told me that she was my mother.

She said she afflicted Phelps' child last Saturday, and Elizabeth Johnson joined with her to do it. She had a wooden spear, about as long as her finger, of Elizabeth Johnson, who had it of the devil.

She would not own that she had ever been at the witch meeting at the village.

This is the substance. Attest: SIMON WILLARD.

This poor child's mother then lay under sentence of death. The mother of the other two children was in prison, and was soon after tried and condemned; but upon her confession she was reprieved, and finally pardoned.

I met with but one person in near an hundred whose examinations are upon file, that was dismissed after having been once charged, for which he might thank one of the girls, who would not agree with the rest in the accusation.

For three or four months the afflicted generally confined themselves to their own neighborhood in their accusations. In the examinations there is sometimes mention made of strangers, whose shapes or specters were unknown to the afflicted.

The first accused in any other county was Mrs. Cary, wife of Nathaniel Cary, a principal inhabitant of the town of Charlestown. He, as soon as he heard of it, carried his wife to Salem village, supposing she would not be known to the afflicted. They happened to arrive just as the justices were going into the meeting-house, where they held their court to examine prisoners. All the prisoners who were brought in were accused, and the girls fell into fits as usual; but Mrs. Cary came in and sat

without any notice, except that one or two of the afflicted came to her and asked her name.

After the examination her husband went to the tavern, intending there to discourse with one of the girls whom he heard had accused his wife. John the Indian,[1] who pretended to be one of the afflicted, was a servant in the house.

Two of the girls were soon brought in, and instead of giving any opportunity of discoursing with them, they tumbled about the floor, crying out, "Cary! Cary!" and a warrant came to apprehend her. The Indian joined the two girls in the charge. No bail could be admitted, nor was it to any purpose to make any defense, and she was ordered to prison in Boston; but upon the request of her husband she was removed to Cambridge jail, where she was kept in irons.

Afterwards, when the trials came on at Salem, her husband went there to see how they were managed, and he thought the only chance his wife had for her life was by an escape. This by some means or other he effected and fled with her to New York, where Governor Fletcher entertained them very courteously.

They petitioned, I suppose before the escape, that she might be tried in the county where she lived. If the court thought they were bound to try the fact in the county where it was committed, there seems to have been room for an argument, her body being in Middlesex[2] at the same time that her specter[3] and the body of the afflicted persons were in Essex.

Mrs. Cary was committed about the middle of May. Towards the end of the month, Captain John Alden, of Boston, was accused and was thereupon sent down to Salem. He had been many years commander of a sloop in the colony service, employed for supplying the ports east with provisions and stores; and

[1] **John the Indian**—Tituba's husband. See page 38.

[2] **Middlesex**—i.e., Middlesex County, in which was Charlestown, the woman's home.

[3] **Specter.** A witch could, by the power given her by the devil, *appear* far from the place where her body actually was.

although upon his first appearing the justices allowed that he always had the character of an honest man, yet one of them, Gidney, soon after let him know he then saw reason to think otherwise of him.

Alden, in his account, says that the accuser first pointed to another man and said nothing; but the man who held her stooped down to her ear, and then she cried out, "Alden! Alden!" All were ordered into the streets, and a ring made, and then she cried out, "There stands Alden, a bold fellow, with his hat on; sells powder and shot to the Indians,[1] *etc.*" He was immediately taken into custody of the marshal and required to deliver up his sword. A further examination was held in the meeting-house, and his hands were held open by the officer that he might not pinch the afflicted, who were struck down at the sight of him and made their usual cries. All this the justices deemed sufficient grounds for committing him to jail, where he lay fifteen weeks. Then he was prevailed on by his friends to make his escape and to absent himself until the consternation should abate and the people recover the use of their reason.

*Give the meaning of the following words:*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Consternation | Recantation | Warrant |
| Unblemished | Declarant | Courteously |
| Intimation | Dungeon | Custody |
| Renounce | Felicity | Abate |
| Impartial | Reprieved | |

## CHAPTER IV.

ALTHOUGH the number of prisoners had been increasing from February until the beginning of June, yet there had been no trials. The charter[2] had been expected from day to day, and

[1] Selling powder and shot to the Indians was a very serious offense in those early days.

[2] The expected charter was the one which was granted by William and Mary, after the great revolution

the new constitution of government that was to take place. Soon after its arrival commissioners of oyer and terminer[1] were announced for the trial of witchcrafts.

By the charter, the general assembly are to constitute courts of justice, and the governor, with the advice of the council, is to nominate and appoint judges, commissioners of oyer and terminer, *etc.*; but whether the governor, with advice of the council, can constitute a court of oyer and terminer, without authority for the purpose derived from the general assembly, has been made a question. This, however, the most important court to the life of the subject which ever was held in the province, was constituted in no other manner than by the governor. It was opened in Salem, the first week in June.

Only one of the accused, Bridget Bishop *alias*[2] Oliver, was then brought to trial. She had been charged with witchcraft twenty years before, though the accuser on his death-bed confessed his own guilt in the accusation. But an old woman once charged with being a witch is never afterwards wholly free from the accusation; and she being besides of a fractious temper, all the losses the neighbors met with in their cattle and poultry, and accidents in oversetting their carts, *etc.*, were attributed to her spite against them and were now suffered to be testified against her.

This evidence, together with the testimony of the afflicted and of the confessors as to what they had heard from the specters and seen of her specter, and an excrescence[4] found upon her

in England in 1688. How had Massachusetts been deprived of her old charter, and who was governor at the time? See "Anderson's Pictorial History of the U. S.," p. 55.

[1] **Oyer and terminer**—a court where ordinary crimes are regularly tried. The words mean "to hear and to determine," and the name was given to the court because the judges were ordered to hear and to determine or decide the charges of crime brought against any one.

[2] *Alias. Meaning?*

[3] The devil was supposed to put a peculiar mark somewhere upon the body of a person who entered his service as a witch. Many a poor woman lost her life because a mole or some other natural birth-mark was found upon her.

body, were deemed by the court and jury plenary proofs, and she was convicted and on the 10th of June executed.[1] The further trials were put off by adjournment to the 30th of June.

The governor and council thought proper in the mean time to take the opinion of several of the principal ministers upon the state of things as they stood. This was an old charter practice. They gave their opinion as follows:

*The return of several ministers, consulted by his Excellency and the Honorable Council upon the present witchcraft in Salem village.*

BOSTON, June 15, 1692.

1. The afflicted state of our poor neighbors that are now suffering by molestations from the invisible world we apprehend so deplorable, that we think their condition calls for the utmost help of all persons in their several capacities.

2. We cannot but with all thankfulness acknowledge the success which the merciful God has given to the sedulous and assiduous endeavors of our honorable rulers to defeat the abominable witchcrafts which have been committed in the country, humbly praying that the discovery of these mysterious and mischievous wickednesses may be perfected.

3. We judge that in the prosecution of these and all such witchcrafts there is need of a very critical and exquisite caution, lest by too much credulity for things received only upon the devil's authority there be a door opened for a long train of miserable consequences, and Satan get an advantage over us; for we should not be ignorant of his devices.

4. As in complaints upon witchcraft there may be matters of inquiry which do not amount unto matters of presumption, and there may be matters of presumption which yet may not be matters of conviction, so it is necessary that all proceedings thereabout be managed with an exceeding tenderness toward those that may be complained of, especially if they have been persons formerly of an unblemished reputation.

5. When the first inquiry is made into the circumstances of such as may lie under the just suspicion of witchcrafts, we could wish that there may be admitted as little as possible of such noise, company, and openness as may too hastily expose them that are examined, and that there may be nothing used as a test for the trial of the suspected, the lawfulness whereof may be doubted by the people of God; but that the directions given by such judicious writers as Perkins and Barnard may be observed.

6. Presumptions whereupon persons may be committed, and, much

[1] The ordinary method of execution for witches was by fire. At Salem, however, all were put to death by hanging.

more, convictions whereupon persons may be condemned as guilty of witchcrafts, ought certainly to be more considerable than barely the accused persons being represented by a specter unto the afflicted; inasmuch as it is an undoubted and notorious thing, that a demon may, by God's permission, appear, even to ill purposes, in the shape of an innocent,[1] yea, and a virtuous man. Nor can we esteem alterations made in the sufferers by a look or touch of the accused to be an infallible evidence of guilt, but frequently liable to be abused by the devil's legerdemain.

7. We know not whether some remarkable affronts given the devils, by our disbelieving these testimonies whose whole force and strength is from them alone, may not put a period unto[2] the progress of the dreadful calamity begun upon us, in the accusation of so many persons, whereof some, we hope, are yet clear from the great transgression laid to their charge.

8. Nevertheless, we cannot but humbly recommend unto the government the speedy and vigorous prosecutions of such as have rendered themselves obnoxious, according to the directions given in the laws of God and the wholesome statutes of the English nation for the detection of witchcrafts.

The judges seem to have paid more regard to the last article of this return than to several which precede it; for the prosecutions were carried on with all possible vigor, and without that exquisite caution which is proposed.

At the first trial there was no colonial or provincial law against witchcraft in force. The statute of James I. must therefore have been considered as in force in the province, witchcraft not being an offense at common law. Before the adjournment ended, the old colonial law, which makes witchcraft a capital offense, was revived, with the other local laws as they are called, and made a law of the province.

At the end of the adjournment, June 30, five women were

[1] It was a much disputed point at that day whether the devil could assume the shape of an innocent man. The opinion that he could, as given here, was the only means by which some of the most esteemed people of the village escaped the fate of witches. When testimony was given that they had been seen in the witch gatherings, they were believed when they insisted that it was the devil in their form, which he assumed to effect their ruin. See page 35.

[2] **Put a period unto.** *Meaning?*

brought upon trial: Sarah Good, Rebekah Nurse, Susannah Martin, Elizabeth How, and Sarah Wilder.

There was no difficulty with any but Nurse. She was a member of the church and of a good character, and as to her the jury brought in their verdict not guilty. Thereupon the accusers made a great clamor and the court expressed their dissatisfaction with the verdict, which caused some of the jury to desire to go out again. They then brought her in guilty. This was a hard case, and can scarcely be said to be the execution of law and justice in mercy. In a capital case the court often refuses a verdict of guilty, but rarely, if ever, sends a jury out again upon one of not guilty. It does not indeed appear that in this case the jury was ordered out again, but the dissatisfaction expressed by the court seems to have been in such a manner as to have the same effect. The certificate given by the foreman of the jury to satisfy the relations of the woman shows how the fact was.

July 4, 1692.

I, Thomas Fisk, the subscriber hereto, being one of them that were of the jury last week at Salem court upon the trial of Rebekah Nurse, *etc.*, being desired by some of the relations to give reason why the jury brought her in guilty after the verdict of not guilty, I do hereby give my reasons to be as follows:

When the verdict not guilty was given, the honored court was pleased to object against it, saying to them, that they think they let slip the words which the prisoner at the bar spoke against herself, which were spoken in reply to Goodwife Hobbs and her daughter, who had been faulty in setting their hands to the devil's book, as they had confessed formerly. The words were, "What do these persons give in evidence against me now? They used to come among us!" After the honored court had manifested their dissatisfaction of the verdict, several of the jury declared themselves desirous to go out again, and thereupon the honored court gave leave; but when we came to consider the case, I could not tell how to take her words as in evidence against her, till she had a further opportunity to put her sense upon them,[1] if she would take it; and then going into court, I mentioned the

[1] **To put her sense upon them** — i.e., to explain what she meant by the words. They seemed to be practically a confession that she was a witch, by classing herself with the Hobbs women, who had admitted their guilt.

words aforesaid, which by one of the court was affirmed to have been spoken by her. She, being then at the bar, made no reply nor interpretation of them ; whereupon these words were to me a principal evidence against her. THOMAS FISK.

Nurse, being informed of the use which had been made of her words, gave in a declaration to the court, that when she said Hobbs and her daughter were of her company, she meant no more than that they were prisoners as well as herself ; and further, that being hard of hearing, she did not know what the foreman of the jury said. But her declaration had no effect.

Mr. Noyes of Salem, a zealous prosecutor, excommunicated the poor old woman and delivered her to Satan, to whom he supposed she had formally given herself up many years before ; but her life and conversation [1] had been such that the remembrance thereof in a short time after wiped off all reproach occasioned by the civil and ecclesiastical sentence against her.

It is said that at the trial of Sarah Good one of the afflicted persons fell into a fit, and after recovery cried out "that the prisoner had stabbed her and broke her knife in doing it ;" and a piece of the knife was found upon the afflicted person. But a young man declared that the day before he broke that very knife and threw away the piece, this afflicted person being then present. The court took so much notice as to bid her tell no more lies, but went on to improve her as a witness against other prisoners.

Something happened not unlike this in a trial before Sir Matthew Hale.[2] The afflicted children, in their fits, would shriek out upon the least touch from Rose Cullender, one of the witches, but remained quite insensible when anybody else touched them. Lest there should be any fraud, Lord Cornwallis, Sir Edmund Bacon, Serjeant Keeling and other gentlemen attended one of the girls while she was in her fits at another part of the hall, and

[1] **Conversation.** *Meaning here?*

[2] This incident was at the witchcraft trials in England previously referred to, and shows well the cruel wickedness and deceit of the accusers as well as the astonishing credulity of the judges and people.

one of the witches was brought, and an apron was put before the girl's eyes. Then instead of the witch's hand, another person's hand was taken to touch the girl, who thereupon shrieked out as she used to do. The gentlemen returned and declared to the court they believed the whole thing was an imposture. Notwithstanding this, the witch was found guilty and the judge and all the court were fully satisfied with the verdict and awarded sentence accordingly,

To return to the Salem trials. One of the women being told at her execution by the minister, Mr. Noyes, that he knew she was a witch and therefore advised her to confess, replied that he lied, and that she was no more a witch than he was a wizard; and if he took away her life, God would give him blood to drink. There is a tradition among the Salem people that this man actually was choked to death with blood.

[1] At the trial of another of them it is said that one of the afflicted cried out in court upon Mr. Willard, a minister of Boston, and that she was immediately sent out of court, and it was given out that she was mistaken in the person. There was one Willard then in prison for witchcraft.

At the termination of the next adjournment, August 5th, George Burroughs, John Proctor and Elizabeth, his wife, John Willard, George and Martha Carrier, were all brought upon trial and condemned, and all executed upon the 19th of August, except Elizabeth Proctor.

Burroughs had been a preacher several years before at Salem village, where there had been some misunderstanding between him and the people. Afterward he became a preacher at Wells, in the province of Maine. We will be a little more particular in our account of his trial.

The afflicted persons and confessing witches were first exam-

[1] This incident is mentioned to show the fearful unfairness and partiality of the court. Against wretched old women the judges would take any evidence from anybody and, indeed, compel charges to be made. But when a friend of theirs was accused, they put the accuser out of court without ceremony.

ined ; for although, by the advice of the elders, their evidence was not conclusive, yet some presumption arose from it, and with other circumstances to corroborate it the proof might be sufficient to convict. One circumstance was, that, being a little man, he had performed feats beyond the strength of a giant, *viz.*, had held out a gun of seven feet barrel with one hand, and had carried a barrel full of cider from a canoe to the shore. Upon his urging that an Indian who was present held out the gun also, and the witnesses not remembering that any Indian was there, it was said the Indian must have been the black man or the devil, who, the witnesses swore, looked like an Indian.

Other evidence was given of his harsh treatment of his wives, having been twice married, and of his pretending to them that he knew what had been said to them in his absence, and his persuading them to give it under their hands in writing, and to swear to it, that they would not reveal his secrets ; and it was further said they had privately complained to the neighbors that their house was haunted with spirits.

And a brother of one of his wives swore, that going out after strawberries, upon their return, he (Burroughs) went into the bushes on foot ; and though they rode a quick pace, yet when they came near home, to their astonishment they found him with them ; and he fell to chiding his wife for talking to her brother about him, and said he knew their thoughts, which the brother said was more than the devil knew ; to which Burroughs replied that his god told him.

Against this evidence he urged that a man was with him, to show that another walked as fast as he did ; and this was immediately determined to be the black man also. And upon the whole, he was confounded and used many twistings and turnings,[1] which I think we cannot wonder at.

At his execution he concluded his dying prayer with the

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[1] **Twistings and turnings** — i.e., ways of explaining away the circumstances brought forward against him, and of avoiding the absurd explanations of them given by his accusers.

Lord's Prayer, probably to convince some of the spectators of his innocence; for it was the received opinion that a true witch could not say the Lord's Prayer without blundering; and in many of the examinations it was used as a test; and several old women not saying it right, this was improved against them.

September 9th, *Martha Cory, Mary Esty, Alice Parker, Ann Pudeater,* Dorcas Hoar, and Mary Bradbury were tried; and September 17th, *Margaret Scott, Wilmot Reed, Samuel Wardwell, Mary Parker,* Abigail Falkner, Rebekah Eames, Mary Lacey, Ann Foster, and Abigail Hobbs; and all received sentence of death. Those in italics were executed the 22d following.

Mary Esty, who was sister to Nurse, gave in to the court a petition, in which she says she does not ask her own life, although she is conscious of her innocence, but prays them, before they condemn any more, to examine the confessing witches more strictly; for she is sure they have belied themselves and others, which will appear in the world to which she is going if it should not in this world.

Those who were condemned and not executed I suppose all confessed their guilt. I have seen the confessions of several of them. Wardwell also confessed, but he recanted and suffered. His own wife as well as his daughter accused him and saved themselves. There are many instances, among the examinations, of children accusing their parents, and some of parents accusing their children. This is the only instance of a wife or husband accusing one the other, and surely this instance ought not to have been suffered. I shudder while I am relating it.

Besides this irregularity there were others in the course of these trials. The facts laid in the indictments were witchcrafts upon particular persons; there was no evidence of these facts but what was called spectral evidence,[1] which, in the opinion of

[1] **Spectral evidence**—i. e., evidence about the acts of the "specters" or "forms" of the accused persons. But the ministers, in their advice to the Governor (p. 54), said that a person ought not to be considered a witch merely because his "form" had been seen in wrong-doing; for the devil could assume the form of an innocent person, and thus secure his execution.

the ministers, was insufficient ; some of the other evidence was of facts ten or twenty years before,[1] which had no relation to those with which they were charged, and some of them no relation to the crime of witchcraft. Evidence is not admitted, even against the general character of persons upon trial, unless to encounter other evidence brought in favor of it ; much less ought their whole lives to be arraigned without giving time sufficient for defense.

Giles Cory was the only person besides those already named who suffered death. He, seeing the fate of all who had put themselves upon trial, refused to plead.[2] But the judges, who had not been careful enough in observing the law in favor of the prisoners, determined to do it against this unhappy man, and he had judgment of *peine fort et dure* for standing mute and was pressed to death—the only instance which ever was, either before this time or since, in New England. In all ages of the world superstitious credulity has produced greater cruelty than is practised among the Hottentots or other nations whose belief of a Deity is called in question.

This court of oyer and terminer, happily for the country,

[1] In trying a man for crime, it is always required in civilized countries, that the accusers must make it certain that he committed the one special crime for which he is on trial, without reference to what he may have done at other times. To hang a man for murder because he stole a hundred dollars five years ago, would be itself a dreadful crime. But even worse than that was done in the witchcraft trials; for example, in the case of Burroughs, p. 58.

[2] When a man is brought before the court for trial, he is first required to state distinctly whether he is guilty or not guilty. This statement is called his "plea," and to make it is "to plead." No trial can proceed until the accused has pleaded. By refusing to plead, therefore, the accused can prevent the trial altogether, and accordingly the law formerly provided a horrible punishment for one who should be so obstinate. This was called *peine fort et dure*, which means literally, "a penalty harsh and severe." It consisted in stretching the culprit out flat on his back, with arms and feet extended to the utmost in four different directions, and then piling heavy weights of iron and stone upon his body till he died. The common name of this process was "pressing to death."

sat no more. Nineteen persons had been executed, all asserting their innocence; but this was not enough to open the eyes of the people in general. The jail at Salem was filled with prisoners, and many had been removed to other jails; some were admitted to bail, all reserved for trial, a law having passed constituting a supreme standing court, with jurisdiction in capital as well as all other criminal cases. The general court[1] also showed their zeal against witchcraft, by a law passed in the words of the statute of James I.; but this law was disallowed by the king.[2] If the court was of opinion that the statute extended here, I see no necessity of a provincial act exactly in the same words; if the statute did not extend here, I know not by what law the first that was tried could be sentenced to death.

The time by law for holding the court at Salem was not until January. This gave opportunity for consideration, and this alone might have been sufficient for a change of opinions and measures; but another reason has been given for it. Ordinarily persons of the lowest rank in life have had the misfortune to be charged with witchcrafts; and although many such had suffered, yet there remained in prison a number of women of as reputable families as any in the towns where they lived, and several persons of still superior rank were hinted at by the pretended bewitched or by the confessing witches. Some had been publicly named. Dudley Bradstreet, a justice of the peace, who had been appointed one of President Dudley's Council, and was son to the worthy old Governor, then living, found it necessary to abscond. Having been remiss in prosecuting, he had been charged by some of the afflicted as a confederate. His brother, John Bradstreet, was forced to fly also. Calef says it was intimated that Sir William Phips's lady was among the accused. It is certain that one who pretended to be bewitched at Boston, where the infection was beginning to spread, charged the secretary of the colony of Connecticut. Mrs. Hale, wife of the minister of

[1] **General Court**—the name given to the Massachusetts legislature.

[2] By the charter of Massachusetts, the king could veto any law that did not suit him.

Beverly, was accused also; which caused her husband to alter his judgment and to be less active in prosecutions than he had been.

At the court in January the grand jury found bills against about fifty for witchcraft, one or two men, the rest women; but upon trial they were all acquitted, except three of the worst characters, and those the governor reprieved for the king's mercy. All that were not brought upon trial he ordered to be discharged. Such a jail delivery was made at this court as has never been known at any other time in New England.

Several persons had been charged and imprisoned in the county of Middlesex also, and at the first court at Charlestown they were brought to trial, but the jury acquitted them all. Some of the court were dissatisfied, but the juries changed sooner than the judges. However, it was not long before one at least of the judges of the first court of oyer and terminer was sensible of his error. Mr. Sewall, at a public fast, gave to the minister a bill acknowledging his error in the late proceedings, and desiring to humble himself in the sight of God and his people. It is said that the chief-justice, Mr. Stoughton, being informed of this action of one of his brethren, observed for himself that when he sat in judgment he had the fear of God before his eyes, and gave his opinion according to the best of his understanding; and although it might appear afterward that he had been in error, yet he saw no necessity of a public acknowledgment of it.

One of the ministers, who in the time of it was fully convinced that the complaining persons were no impostors, and who vindicated his own conduct and that of the court in a narrative that he published, remarks not long after, in his diary, that many were of opinion that innocent blood had been shed. None of those who pretended to be afflicted were ever brought upon trial for their fraud: some of them proved profligate persons, abandoned to all vice; others passed their lives in obscurity or contempt.

The opinion which prevailed in New England for many years after this tragedy, that there was something preternatural in it,

and that it was not all the effect of fraud and imposture, proceeded from the reluctance in human nature to reject errors once imbibed. As the principal actors went off the stage, this opinion has gradually lessened; and perhaps it is owing to a respect to the memory of their immediate ancestors that many do not yet seem to be fully convinced.

There are a great number of persons who are willing to suppose the accusers to have been under bodily disorders which affected their imaginations. This is kind and charitable, but seems to be winking the truth out of sight. A little attention must force conviction that the whole was a scheme of fraud and imposture, begun by young girls who at first, perhaps, thought of nothing more than being pitied and indulged, and continued by adult persons, who were afraid of being accused themselves. The one and the other, rather than confess their fraud, suffered the lives of so many innocents to be taken away.

*Define the meaning of the following words:*

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| Constitute | Sedulous | Zealous |
| Nominate | Assiduous | Corroborate |
| Accusation | Credulity | Indictment |
| Fractious | Exquisite | Encounter |
| Excrescence | Presumption | Abscond |
| Plenary | Infallible | Vindicate |
| Molestation | Legerdemain | Impostor |
| Deplorable | Obnoxious | Preternatural |
| Capacity | Interpretation | Reluctance |