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THE NARRAGANSETT

HISTORIAL REGISTER,

A MAGAZINE

DEVOTED TO THE ANTIQUITIES, GENEALOGY AND HISTORICAL MATTER
ILLUSTRATING THE HISTORY OF THE

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations.

*A record of measures and of men,
For twelve full score years and ten.*

JAMES N. ARNOLD, EDITOR.

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RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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The article concludes: "Altogether, Mrs. Beneman has about 120 children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren living." And "she still enjoys remarkably good health, although quite deaf. She will probably make her home in this city." [Lafayette, Ind., April 11, 1885.]

Relatives having written to me about this grossly erroneous statement requesting its correction, permit me to make such correction out of the family manuscripts of my father, the late Rev. Dr. G. B. Perry, who was as were Hon. Freeman Perry, grandfather of Commodore Oliver H. Perry and himself, and his father, Captain Christopher R. Perry, born in the same room at the original "Perry Homestead," South Kingstown, R. I.: Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry's father, Captain Christopher Raymond Perry, the second son of Hon. Freeman Perry, was born December 4, 1761. Captain C. R. Perry's wife was a Miss Sarah Wallace Alexander (of the Sir William Wallace blood), described as a very attractive, vivacious, accomplished lady, of uncommon conversational ability and pleasing address. By her Captain Perry had issue of six sons and three daughters, viz.: Oliver Hazard, Matthew Calbraith, Sarah Wallace, Raymond, Henry J., James A., Anna Maria, Jane T. and Nathaniel H.

From the foregoing it will at once be seen that not only was there no daughter "Mary" among Captain Christopher R. Perry's children, but notably—as the item of her says Mrs. Mary Beneman was born "March 14, 1773"—if Captain C. R. Perry was born, as the record shows, on the 4th of December, 1761, accordingly the Captain could have been but 12 years old in any case to be Mrs. Mary Beneman's father. As one would say in college days this is the *reductio ad absurdum*, and applies to the whole assertion complained of as fallacious, logically *falsum in uno falsum in omnibus*, including the "120 children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren, living," possibly, but unrelated to Commodore Perry. I can not imagine what could give rise to an item so wholly foreign to fact and delusive, as this now, which I *deny*, and, as others, have asked me, I have sought to *disprove*.

HENRY G. PERRY,

79 NORTH OAKLEY AVENUE, CHICAGO, May 5, 1885.

FIRST MARRIAGE IN BRISTOL.—William Corbett and Eleanor Batrap were married by Capt. Benjamin Church, Sept. 19, 1683. First wedding in town.

COMMENCING IN TIME.—The people of Bristol commenced to agitate the question of celebrating the 200 anniversary of the settlement of the town as early as 1837, nearly fifty years before that event would actually happen.

THE

Narragansett Historical Register.

NARRAGANSETT PUB. CO. } Terms, \$2.00 Per Annum. { JAMES N. ARNOLD,
PUBLISHERS. } EDITOR.

VOL. IV. HAMILTON, R. I., OCTOBER, 1885. No. 2.

The Causes of the Popularity of the Revolutionary Movement in Rhode Island.

A Paper read before the Veteran Citizens' Historical Society, Providence, April 6th, 1885, by James N. Arnold, Editor of the Narragansett Historical Register.

THIS subject is one that to us has ever been deeply interesting, and we know it can be made as instructive as any one that could be selected to prove a trait of Rhode Island character that has ever been a pronounced characteristic of the people.

A true blue Rhode Islander is not afraid of an enemy, and needs no mere proof to substantiate the claim. The gallant Burnside by living in our State did not lose his soldierly qualities. Slocum, Rodman, and Ballou were certainly men that no one need be ashamed of. They died for their country and greater love than this no man can show, than to lay down his life for his friends.

The Mexican war produced the Rhode Island hero in Capt. Vinton, who yielded up his life at Vera Cruz.

The war of 1812 gave the noble Perry, who wrote from Lake Erie—"We have met the enemy and they are ours."

At Roanoke and at Newbern 50 years after, history again wrote, "Where the Rhode Island boys lead the fort is ours."

The Revolution gave Greene, of whom the military critics have written, "Stood next in ability, and in every other commanding quality to the immortal Washington."

The old French war gave a naval power, of whom Lord Colville said, "Without whose aid the reduction of Louisburg was impossible."

We see by these examples that our people will compare with those of any of our sister States, and that our little commonwealth has produced heroes in each one of our historic contests that have made a fame broad as our land, and whose names will be recorded in our nation's history so long as it is read by man, even beyond the life of the nation itself, and in that same spirit we read to-day of those old heroes of Athens and of Rome.

It can be safely written—no people are more law-abiding than those of Rhode Island. None have greater respect for the laws of the land. But yet with all these qualities no people are more independent in thought and action, and none harder to subdue to tyrannic power.

William Corbett, the English Radical, was once in conversation with a naval officer, and was expressing his admiration of the character of the American sailor. "Pooh," said the officer, "I have been aboard their vessels and three-fourths of them are English." "Had you not all English on your vessels. The other fourth then being American must have made all the difference," was the keen retort of the Radical.

Lake Erie showed what could be done where Rhode Island blood had a fair show to display the hero. In the Revolution the same dauntless spirit was shown. Narragansett Bay has repeatedly seen conflicts that fully illustrate the spirit of her people, and she early taught the haughty Britton that here they could find a foe worthy of her steel, and one they could not safely despise.

In the Revolutionary struggle, and in the war of 1812, we see a courage displayed that went beyond the usual prudence of the soldier; went beyond the most hazardous phases of war, and to the extreme of one who fights the forlorn battle of despair. When one fights with such a spirit, there must be something deep and soul-stirring within. Something that has driven out all the usual qualities of soldierly prudence, and has educated a spirit of feeling, or emotion, and a peculiarity of character, that is rarely found on the pages of history.

These facts stand out boldly in our history as characteristic of the people. Great Britain had a powerful fleet and a large standing army at Newport during the Revolution. This was the last place to be given up to the victorious arms of the United Colonies. Boston had been given up early in the contest, and no attempt was ever after made at re-occupation. Newport on the other hand was taken, and maintained so long as they were able to hold a position in New England. The Home Government showed a bitterer spirit, and a more determined policy towards Rhode Island, than towards any other American Colony.

The expense of this military establishment was great. Did it mean nothing? No! It meant that Newport was the key to New England in the opinion of the Home Government. It meant that the Government dreaded the Narragansett privateers more than those of all the rest of New England. Lord Colville's testimony to the Rhode Island naval power at Louisburg had been a public document, and being corroborated by the testimony of other naval officers, had made the little colony famous at the Court of London.

The Gaspee affair gave the Government another surprise. Hence all this expense of a great military establishment at Newport during this historic struggle.

In short the Government had learned to dread the power of Little Rhody. They had been witnesses of her powers, and, as we have before remarked, they had in future years a

chance to learn a few more lessons illustrating the metal of those gallant men that lived on the shores of Narragansett Bay. As the Indians of this historic region had given law to the other New England tribes, so the same spirit had been transferred to men of another race inhabiting this self-same place, and had again brought into prominence those noble qualities of heroic courage, of independence in action and commanding will, that had distinguished that race of men who had owned the soil from a period beyond the record of history.

Could this be learned in a day? Were this race of men bred by a phenomenal occurrence, and destined to pass away, or bloom flower like and pass with a generation? No! It was the work of generations. It was learned in a school of such peculiar discipline as has never fallen to the lot of any other American colony.

We have shown so far but a few characteristics of our people, and have named from the old French war to the present time but a few of our heroes. We have shown so far the opinion of English naval officers, and have, we think, proven that Rhode Island had early taught the Home Government a few lessons of warfare that caused her in the end to take extraordinary means to subdue the colony to her will.

Let us now commence at the other end of the line, and work up the causes that lead to the popularity of the Revolutionary movement in Rhode Island.

From the settlement to the end of King Phillip's war we shall condense our points rapidly. It has been well studied, and we perhaps may say the best studied of any Rhode Island subject, namely, the life and principles of Roger Williams, and the leading views of the Portsmouth and Newport settlers.

The Puritans had been disowned by the Church of England, as they were formerly disowned by the Roman Church. The Puritans in turn disowned Mr. Williams, Coddington and other companies of religious emigrants. Mr. Williams saw the logical conclusions in the future would be that men

would take even wider views on religious subjects. Mr. Williams' judgment in this respect was clearer than that of any other religious teacher of his day, and he tried and did work out we think, successfully, the problem of religious liberty. It was not on the coast of Plymouth that the English emigrant learned those lessons, and enjoyed those beauties of religious liberty of whom the poet wrote,—

“Here they found freedom to worship God.”

No, not here was it learned but on the shores of Narragansett Bay.

The liberal ideas of Williams at Providence, and Coddington and others on Rhode Island, called to their settlements men who we think made a pretext of religion in order to cover up their own selfish designs. It cannot be denied that both of our colonies (Rhode Island and Providence Plantations) suffered in a marked degree from these emigrations. The wisdom of our early settlers, and the strong ground they took that so long as they (the adventurer or erratic philosopher) did not do anything criminal in the eye of the civil law, to let the matter rest, and trusted the future to provide its own remedy; and time has shown this to have been deep wisdom.

Both the colonies of Massachusetts and Connecticut held stricter views in religious discipline, and made that influence felt here. It aroused naturally a spirit of opposition in our people. The Rhode Island idea was “*To mind their own business, and to insist that none others should mind it for them.*” This spirit early fostered a feeling that became intensified with years. As the government was purely democratic, all political and religious questions were canvassed and recanvassed by each freeman, both at home and in public, and in this way the seeds were sown that developed the Revolutionary spirit.

The battle with Connecticut and Massachusetts for life itself, and intensified by years and even generations of strife, had the result to cement solidly together the freemen of our

colony. The pressure from without united the policy of our people, and the leading reasons for our course was a study that had come home to every freeman, and had been taught to each from the cradle. This spirit grew stronger as opposition continued to beat against it; and receiving so much of it from the adjoining colonies led our people to seek other alliances. This policy made our people early take to the water, and the produce obtained in this way finding a ready market, and at a profitable figure, was a strong incentive to enlarge the field of commerce. The continued policy of the adjoining colonies made strong a people on the sea that had first come to these shores for agricultural pursuits, and more peaceful and quiet purposes in life.

It looks indeed singular to us at this late day to see colonies of freemen in adjoining districts worshipping the same Christ, and drawing their rule of inspiration from the same book, and differing only in the interpretation thereof, and on minor points of doctrine at that, so bitter in spirit and action against each other. Singular indeed that such things should be carried into trade, and the more parties differed on some minor points of liberal interpretation, the further indisposed were they to tolerate each other's company. These little acts of christian or unchristian (as the word best pleases you) interchange of courtesies, in a great measure repelled trade, and led to another singular combination—that is, to rather trade with parties that differed far more radically on these same questions of theology. There can be at least one reason given for this, and that is the wide advariance between them would lead each to admit the impossibility of conversion, and so both prudently let the question alone, and attended to trade. As Josh Billings puts it, "They traded hosses and didn't ask each other about their soles."

It is clear now the cause that drew our early settlers in search of a new market, and also made a maritime people. Here were causes certainly that was educating a spirit of exclusiveness, and was in no way cementing the brotherhood of

men. The Rhode Island idea being the most liberal, and wherever applied working to the best interests of the commonwealth became popular, and so ended, not in converting Rhode Island to Massachusetts and Connecticut, but bringing both of these States to Rhode Island. What a grand victory, to conquer such a powerful enemy with so small an army; but yet that little army was as the lion once said of her young, "It was a lion."

This victory of principle was a pride, and added an untold amount of energy to our people, and beyond an estimation. No sooner had she freed herself in a great measure from the crushing influence of Massachusetts and Connecticut, and when these colonies began to see their own interests in a better light, than the Home Government stepped in and commenced in a more decided manner that series of tyrannic measures that culminated in the Revolution.

When the colonies were first planted and weak, they would naturally be dependent upon the Home Government for supplies, and had that government been liberal in her policy towards them it would have perhaps made them more easy to govern. Yet had that government been more pleasing to her subjects, and they in turn been more interested in upholding her policy, there would have been no emigration. It is not the happiest families that break up soonest. Where parents strive to please their children, and the children love and respect their parents, they are loth to go away, and it would be great indeed those inducements that would decide the children to go to such a distance that never again would they see the loved one. A hated parent they would care less of seeing. It was not the love of England but the oppression therefore that planted these colonies.

As soon as these colonies could take care of themselves they did so, and the continued oppression of England strengthened this natural feeling of independence. This policy was felt in our colony decidedly. This interference wounded to the quick the spirit of our people.

Our finance system was all right when it was profitable to the English trader, and it was all wrong when it was not so. Whenever trade took another course than towards the English pocket, their interference became manifested. All the way from Queen Anne's time to 1760 selfishness is written above all things else.

The French war did the colonies great damage in at least two ways:

(1.) It put the colonies to such a test as to bring out their resources for waging successful war fuller than anything ever had before, and aroused the Home Government to jealousy at this display of unsuspected power.

(2.) It surprised the colonies themselves, and certainly created in the Home Government feelings more of envy than of real and generous satisfaction.

This state of feeling culminated in the series of stamp duties that lead up to the revolution that would naturally follow such circumstances.

Had the Home Government paid for all the extra expense caused by the French war, and had this war been caused in a measure by the colonies themselves, nothing would seem more natural than a recompense, and that means would have been proposed to accomplish it. The colonies had paid the war claim themselves, and the Home Government had therefore been put to no great expense in the prosecution of the war along the American coast. It was at best but the outcome of a selfish policy, and should not have taken place. There existed now no more reason why the colonies should be taxed more than had existed in the past. The colonies saw that this war had been caused by no fault of theirs. They therefore proposed to submit to the stamp duties imposed provided they could be represented in the Parliament. In short that they should have a voice in saying how the money so raised should be expended. This looks no more than right now and it was right then. They were by right entitled to this representation as loyal English subjects. That they never had been so

represented did not in the least alter the justice of the claim. The occasion had never arisen for it until now. They had managed their own affairs and had paid their own bills. No direct tax had been levied by the Government upon the colonies. When, therefore, it was insisted that the colonies should be taxed as was Scotland and Ireland, then came the right to representation on the same principle as those two nations were taxed and represented. Nothing more fully showed the utter selfishness of the English government than this refusal of a just demand.

To the English charge that they were wealthy and now could be taxed, as before they were poor and could not so well afford it, was answered that the wealth had been created from other sources than English capital. They had traded in foreign lands and had so accumulated wealth, and England had no right to it. That the Home Government had got them into wars from time to time; had caused them heavy bills. If they were to furnish means for war they wanted a chance to express an opinion as to its necessity. This was the sentiment of all the colonies, and in none more decidedly than in Rhode Island.

They had been early driven to resort to maritime pursuits. In so doing had been exposed to untold perils. They had been so exposed for a long term of years. They had been obliged to adopt a system of finance that was as prudent and as safe as anything that could be thought of, and which had worked successfully when left alone. That had met all reasonable expectations. To have another system thrust upon them; to have it advocated by paid agents sent out to work it; to have it lead men into bad financial positions, and to prove fully as disastrous as the colonial system, was exasperating; and to have it tear down with it our own system finally, maddened and made desperate a band of men that had faced danger from their birth.

It is well known that there were several colonies sent out to other States from Rhode Island previous to the Revolution.

It is known, too, that these emigrants were intensely rebellious to the King. The reasons we have shown. They went from here broken in spirit and in purse, most of them, and feeling they had been swindled out of their hard earned toils. Right here could be written a painful story that has never been fully understood in Rhode Island. Many went from here vowing to utterly forget the past, and many did so in so successful a manner that to-day numerous are the cases that have come under our own observation where the descendants of these emigrants have tried to connect their name with those of early settlers of Rhode Island, and have failed so far, or have done so in a manner more or less imperfect. Here is another feature in the case before us of the English policy that claimed and grasped for all.

The English policy had been such a one as to be termed by our people the "robber" system, and the people of our State had it firmly believed that it had robbed them of their wealth, and that the Stamp Act was a bolder continuation of the same policy. One oppressive measure begets another, and drove the colony into the idea of robbing in their turn. The Revolution furnished the natural outlet. A privateer was just the thing to do it with. They were masters of navigation and naval warfare. It was the quickest way to reach the enemy, and our people were not slow to see all the strong points. Indeed so eager were they for the fray that they were rebellious before even the other colonies had thought of resisting by armed force the oppressions of England.

The history of privateering is interesting. It is germane to our text only how far it illustrates our subject of Rhode Island policy.

When Spain after the discovery of a new field for adventure and commencing a system of successful spoliation against the native tribes, and being wonderfully fortunate in so doing, she aroused in the bosoms of the nations around her the same spirit of cupidity she was so strongly educating among her own people. She first robbed the poor native of his little

wealth, and her sister nations in turn robbed her. English cupidity saw no harm in warring against Spain. Privateering for such purpose was honorable, was patriotic, and was worthy of encouragement; was deserving of the blessing of the priest. When the colonies turned around and pursued the same policy towards her, then it was piracy and worthy of death. This was English logic. Verily, verily, I say unto you, it makes a mighty difference whose ox is gored.

The colony of Rhode Island being extensively engaged in navigation and naval pursuits, had learned the ox story well. Daily were the experiences they had encountered in foreign ports. They had found the English trader to be one that wanted all, and was like the lion of the fable who arranged with the dog and the fox to go hunting agreeing to divide the game. The result of the hunt was a fine deer. Now came the question of division, and the lion said, "One third is mine by natural right, one third as king of beasts, and as for the rest let him touch it who dares." This was the perfect Englishman of those days. The Rhode Island trader had experienced this for years. His credit had been impeached; his honesty doubted; his religious ideas ridiculed, and himself made infamous in every way possible.

The Colonial trader had a reverence for his flag and nation, and this bitterness between the rival traders was endured, even though it had extended over years and generations. Although they had been deluded, cheated, oppressed and over-reached in many ways by the English trader, yet his flag and nation he still held dear. It was not until the Government had enlisted on his rival's side that rebellion cropped out, and his nation's policy became hated and despised. The *Question* to bring this feeling out decidedly was the "*Tea Question*." When the Home Government proposed to give this monopoly, and a monopoly it certainly was in every sense of the word, to a powerful company, and had barred out from participation in the profits the colonial trader, the Yankee was indignant thereat and he was mad all through. He was

prudent enough to see he was not as strong as the Home Government. He was shrewd enough to see that the government had a right to make laws and grant monopolies, but his native independence came into play here and he said decidedly, "They can send the tea here if they choose, but they cannot make me use it." The English trader called this "Rebellion," and he insisted that the government should put this down, and that government was just weak enough to try it.

The question of liberty of trade had lead to the question of liberty of market, and the rights therein to buy or sell. Strictly speaking liberty of trade carries with it the liberty of the market. A just construction of this question by the colonies was named by the monopolist "Rebellion."

The English Government has been run by the traders for centuries. They have allowed their people to get a large lot of bad debts on hand by trading with an impoverished people, and have collected them at the point of the sword. Numerous are the witnesses of these atrocities on the pages of history. The most untutored savage in Africa has been her victim; India's clime testifies of her infamy; the smallest island setting upon the placid bosom of the gentle Pacific has a story of wrong to tell. Even the animals of the frozen north bear ample testimony to the cupidity so pronounced a characteristic of these modern Romans of infamy.

Liberty of trade is grand, and leads to grand results, but infamous measures such as has been pursued by the English traders backed up by the government, has caused misery and tears and woe wherever that flag has floated the wide world o'er. The cause of the Revolution was liberty of commerce, and the right to tax without representation. Take away these incentives and what is the result? China tells us that she has had no war of her own choosing in many centuries. All the wars she has had in modern times have been forced upon her. For example, England thrust the opium curse upon her at the bayonet's point. The French cause of war to-day is only for commercial advantage over a rival nation.

The whole subject turns now on this. The liberty of trade being the issue of course those colonies that were the most deeply interested in those pursuits, and the most extensively engaged in them would come in this case before the English trader and his tool the government, as the ones that needed the most meddling with. Those colonies that interfered the most with his own selfish pursuits, he would pronounce the most "rebellious" and the most "disloyal" to the king, *i. e.* himself.

Apologists for England have painted George as a maniac, and his private life has been viewed from every point. The essayist, moralist, historian, painter, poet and novelist, have each taken their turn at the picture. We believe this is no way to treat the subject, and no way to apologize for these measures. The executive departments were not maniacs if the king was. They were men who knew right from wrong, and could see a fault in another nation even of the minutest kind. They did see them and read the offender many a lesson on morality and right. When they talked theory they held the scales even and weighed accurately. When practice came in then the lion came out. Therefore we think the lion is a very appropriate and very fitting emblem of English authority. It stands out conspicuously and reads *Omnes capio*, or in English, "I take all."

Commerce and taxation being the leading causes of the revolution it follows naturally that our colony being the most extensively engaged in commercial pursuits in proportion to her means of any of the colonies, would naturally feel the most all those measures that sought to limit or to restrict her market. Hence in a war caused by interference in commercial pursuits, she would naturally be expected to take a conspicuous part in such a struggle, and history records she did take just such a part.

The American trader has insisted upon the liberty of the market. To the glory of our nation be it written she never as yet has made herself a tool of monopoly to rule a sister

nation. She has always given even the humblest nations the right to buy or not of her as it pleased them, and has never declared war to collect trading debts.

The historian of Rhode Island says, (II. 373) "The Stamp Act produced the fusion of the rival factions three years later. The destruction of the Gaspee, the commencement of the Revolution, was the result of that fusion and its logical and premeditated conclusion was a practical declaration of independence. The Whigs had aimed at this from the beginning."

He says again, (II. 376) "The records of the colony had always closed with the words, "GOD SAVE THE KING." At the close of this session (May 4, 1776,) it was changed and "GOD SAVE THE UNITED COLONIES," appears for the first time. Rhode Island had become in form as well as in spirit an independent State. However reluctant other portions of the continent may have been to entertain the idea of a final separation from the Mother Country, in this colony the desire for final independence was early conceived and steadily followed."

It seems singular to us that our Fourth of July orators do not make it a point to mention in their addresses the declaration of May 4, 1776. So neglected has this been that the fact is not known to our people, and the knowledge therefore is confined to the students of history. If it was a long-winded document we should not blame them, but a document so short and decisive as this ought and should receive better treatment. Let me read to you: (Col. Rec. VII. 522.)

"Whereas, in all States, existing by compact, protection and allegiance are reciprocal; the latter being only due in consequence of the former.

And whereas, George the Third, King of Great Britain, forgetting his dignity, regardless of the compact most solemnly entered into, ratified and confirmed to the inhabitants of this colony, by his illustrious ancestors, and till of late fully recognized by him, and entirely departing from the duties and character of a good King, instead of protecting, is endeavor-

ing to destroy the good people of this colony, and of all the United Colonies, by sending fleets and armies to America to confiscate our property and spread fire, sword and desolation throughout our country, in order to compel us to submit to the most debasing and detestable tyranny, whereby we are obliged by necessity and it becomes our highest duty to use every means by which God and nature have furnished us in support of our invaluable rights and privileges, to oppose that power which is exerted only for our destruction.

Be it therefore enacted by this General Assembly, and by the authority thereof it is enacted, that an act entitled "An Act for the more effectual securing to His Majesty the allegiance of his subjects, in this Colony and Dominion of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, be and the same is hereby repealed."

There is no mistaking these words for they breathe the spirit of a free people. The great declaration of July 4th following, goes more into detail and enumerates many of the causes that impelled us to the separation. We might sum up the whole as meaning, "We mind our own business and insist that none others shall mind it for us."

The Priests said the language of our revolutionary fathers was "heretical," and the Government called it "rebellion." In spite of those two old saws this has been the policy of our little commonwealth from the beginning, and is the controlling American principle of to-day. From a small beginning what great results ensue.

Note in this great State paper the charges that are brought against the King. He is charged with *a long train of abuses and usurpations*, and that they were submitted to *so long as they were sufferable*. That when they showed a design to subjugate *a free people to despotic power* then it became a necessity to *provide new guards for future security*.

These declarations were not of a hasty, dynamic nature, but the facts had been laid before a prince whose oath at his coronation was to preserve, protect and watch over with all the

care of a father his loyal subjects be they high or humble wherever fortune may have placed them, the wide world over. How had he kept his oath in regard to his American subjects? By spurning with contempt their humble petitions for justice. Among the many charges a few are these: Quartering armies among us in time of peace; cutting off our trade with all parts of the world; transporting us beyond seas for trial for pretended offenses; creating new offences and abolishing old ones as the whim dictated; interfering in our judicial and legislative proceedings; creating a tyrannic system of taxation; refusing our just demand to be represented. And so this grand old paper goes on and records in no uncertain manner these measures that called forth the energy of a free people, and which ended by floating on the ocean, that broad highway of commerce, the flag of another nation whose guiding principle was liberty.

Side by side of the National Declaration place that of our own little State, and note how beautifully they explain and harmonize each other. Both have the same lofty ideas of justice, of equality and of law; both breathe the same spirit of courage and soldierly qualities, and both rely on the same God of Nature and the Spartan courage born in man to maintain, uphold and protect our cause. How many have taken the two Declarations and placed them side by side? How many have read them in the spirit of historical enquiry? How many have noted the harmony between them? How many have noted the manly forbearance, the heroic courage and the firmness and determination to uphold the principles therein enunciated? What need is there of reading the heroic passages of old Grecian and Roman philosophers, while we have something as good nearer to our own time, more than to learn that those same old Grecian and Roman principles can be as tersely stated, as ably fought for, maintained, and died for in the Narragansett country as in those eastern climes.

The study of our State declaration need not end by reading this single State Paper, although there is fire enough of the

hero engrafted to convince the scholar there was a daring spirit behind the hand that guided the inspiration. What our scholars should do is to study more carefully those State Papers that were drawn out by those contests with Massachusetts and Connecticut. They were models of diplomacy, and were so clearly written that even the authorities of those two States were compelled to acknowledge they plead their cause well. When these papers were contrasted with those they were designed to answer, at once was seen their beauty and the clearness of their construction. Whenever Rhode Island took a case before outside tribunals she won her cause. Englands king on more than one occasion conceded the justice of her claim and gave judgment in her favor, and whenever a cause was submitted to an outside and disinterested colony the same result followed. What produced this? She had justice on her side. She had the spirit of liberty in her bosom, and she had the courage to maintain her privilege as an American Colony, to mind her own business in her own way, and insisted sternly upon no outside interference.

These lofty ideas the Home Government saw must be uprooted, and when too late she tried to do it with a heavy hand, but then those roots of liberty had reached too deep into the souls of her people. They had become so interwoven there that no strength of tyrannic power was able to pull out or destroy. The more they were disturbed in these their natural elements, the stronger and the firmer they became. These roots run from colony to colony and drawing its nourishment from the souls of the people, and finally maturing into a perfect plant whose flower was called liberty and its perfume love.

Rhode Island has been called the "Peculiar Colony." We have no wish to dispute this judgment, but rather glory in her peculiarity. No other colony has had her experience, and as we have shown no other colony had such incentives to make, educate, and every way perfect a man of independent and self-relying qualities. Can it be wondered at then that our people are peculiar? Why it is just as natural for a

Rhode Islander to be peculiar as it is for a duck to take to the water.

We have shown that the causes of the Revolution were of such a nature as to call forth the very qualities of courage and endurance that had long been educated here, and of such a nature that developed to the extremist point all the resources of her people. In our humble opinion we believe that no careful historian who studies into the causes of the Revolution, can admit that its causes were of swift growth, and that they grew out of the Stamp Duties only. These Duties merely gave a greater impetus to movements already begun. It can be safely said that the causes reach back to the very commencement of these settlements. They were founded in independence, and they were taught to be dependent on themselves. As they grew stronger and these principles growing up also with the people, the final separation was only a question of time. It follows then from this reasoning that the colony who had learned this lesson best, and had experienced the most rigid discipline of such a school would naturally take the most active interest in such a struggle. Rhode Island had just such a discipline and the largest experience. She had learned her lesson, and the Revolution bears ample testimony to her patriotism, to her courage, to her heroic sacrifices and endurances, and finally to her glorious triumph along with her other sister colonies.

It is a historical fact that while we have had many a joke on us for the smallness of our territory and for our peculiarity, the pen has yet to write in disparagement of our courage. Not even a pin has been found yet to hang such an assertion on. At Portsmouth, General Lafayette remarked, was "The best fought battle of the war," and military critics concede the fact that had the naval power done as well as the land force, the British arms would have met a disaster fully as great as that at Saratoga and at Yorktown. Oh! had we but a Rhode Islander with a spirit like a Perry at the head of that naval armament, the British lion would have had cause

enough for a growl. At Red Bank and on other bloody fields of that ever memorable and never to be forgotten contest, amid the smoke and carnage, amid the strife and where the smoke of conflict were swept aside by the hand of nature, the philosopher who was there to note the result could safely say in the language of the author of the "Star Spangled Banner," as he gazed from his prison towards the place where his flag was floating on the morning after the conflict. Yes, could say the sons of Rhode Island were still there, and the ghastly work around them would bear ample witness they had not been idle.

Such has been the outcome of such a discipline, and so firmly have these lessons been learned that it has not yet been forgotten, and, we may safely add, not likely to be for some time to come. It can be safely predicted that should another conflict in the future become a necessity, that our little commonweath can be depended on to do her duty without faltering. It can be safely written she will put forth those same heroic traits of character her sons have shown in the past, and in that grand historic time of which we have been treating; and she will fully vindicate those heroic characteristics that have made her sons illustrious in the past, and prove that she still has sons worthy and able to emulate the courage and the energy of their sires.

COGGESHALL FIASCO.—Early last Saturday morning one Coggeshall, being somewhat drunk and crazy, went on the Long wharf and turned up his Backsides towards the Bum Brig in this harbour, using some insulting words upon which the Brig fired two four pound shot at: one of which went through the roof of Mr. William Hammond's store on the said wharf, and lodged on the distil house of Mr. Samuel Johnson at the N. E. part of the Cove within the Long wharf. The man was soon after taken up and sent out of town.—*Newport Mercury, Nov. 5, 1775.*