

The Colonial Society of Massachusetts

The following *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts* are still available. The volumes of Transactions contain the papers read or communicated to the meetings of the Society, on a wide range of subjects related to the history and literature of New England. All were printed in small editions, and the plates have been destroyed.

II: Massachusetts Royal Commissions, 1681-1774.

III: Transactions, 1895-1897.

IV: Land Bank Papers, Bibliography of printed Laws and House Journals of Massachusetts.

VII: Transactions, 1900-1902.

X-XIV: Transactions, 1904-1913.

XV, XVI: Harvard College Records, 1636-1750.

XVII-XXI: Transactions, 1913-1919.

XXII, XXIII: Plymouth Church Records, 1620-1859.

XXIV-XXVII: Transactions, 1920-1930.

XXIX, XXX: Records of the Suffolk County Court,
1671-1680.

Price five dollars a volume postpaid. Orders should be sent to ALLYN B. FORBES, *Editor*, 1572 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

THE NEW ENGLAND QUARTERLY

*An Historical Review of
New England Life and Letters*

JUNE
1935

- THE DYNAMIC INTERPRETATION OF HISTORY Roy F. Nichols
THE NANTUCKET WHALE FISHERY Gerald S. Graham
SANTAYANA'S DEBT TO NEW ENGLAND Donald MacCampbell
THE SOUTH AND NORTHERN RADICALISM Clement Eaton
EVOLUTION IN NEW ENGLAND B. J. Loewenberg
MEMORANDA AND DOCUMENTS
The Cardinal's *Recollections* Francis A. Christie
Thoreau's Opinion of Whitman Viola C. White
New England Almanacs N. W. Lovely
Henry Marchant's Library Susan S. Brayton

BOOK REVIEWS (see next page)

\$4.00 a year

\$1.00 a copy

THE PLIMPTON PRESS
NORWOOD
MASSACHUSETTS

EDITORS

SAMUEL E. MORISON
ARTHUR M. SCHLESINGER
FREDERIC I. CARPENTER
ALLYN B. FORBES

STANLEY T. WILLIAMS
RANDALL STEWART
MILTON ELLIS

KENNETH B. MURDOCK
Book Review Editor
STEWART MITCHELL
Managing Editor

BOOK REVIEWS

- GEOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY OF . . . CAPE COD . . .
by J. B. Woodworth and Edward Wigglesworth *H. C. Kittredge*
- SAMUEL GRIDLEY HOWE, by Laura E. Richards *H. S. Commager*
- AMERICAN PLAYS, by Allan Gates Halline *W. E. Sedgwick*
- AMERICANS IN ENGLAND, by R. B. Mowat *R. E. Spiller*
- AMERICA'S TRAGEDY, by James Truslow Adams *Elizabeth Foster*
- THE LETTERS OF GAMALIEL BRADFORD, 1918-1931,
Edited by Van Wyck Brooks *E. S. Noyes*
- TUDOR GEOGRAPHY, 1485-1583; and LATE TUDOR AND EARLY
STUART GEOGRAPHY, 1583-1650, by E. G. R. Taylor; and THE
EXPLORERS OF NORTH AMERICA, 1492-1806,
by John Bartlett Brehner *Fulmer Mood*
- CANADA AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION, by George M. Wrong *T. H. Le Duc*
- ESSAYS OF WILLIAM GRAHAM SUMNER,
Edited by A. G. Keller and Maurice R. Davie *P. A. Sorokin*
- FOURSCORE: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY, by Robert Grant *Stewart Mitchell*

The NEW ENGLAND QUARTERLY is published quarterly at Norwood, Massachusetts. Publication Office, The Plimpton Press, Norwood, Massachusetts. Subscription Offices: The Plimpton Press, Norwood, Massachusetts, and Post Office Box C, Astor Station, Boston, Massachusetts. Manuscripts may be addressed to S. E. Morison, 417 Harvard College Library, Cambridge, Massachusetts; Stanley T. Williams, 595 Whitney Avenue, New Haven, Connecticut; or Stewart Mitchell, 1154 Boylston Street, Boston, Massachusetts.

All books for review should be sent to Kenneth B. Murdock, The Master's Lodgings, Leverett House, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

All Rights Reserved

Entered as second class matter Norwood, Massachusetts, August 23, 1934.

Copyright 1935 by The Plimpton Press

THE NEW ENGLAND QUARTERLY

Registered in the United States Patent Office

*An Historical Review of
New England Life and Letters*

Volume VIII

Number 2

June, 1935

RHODE ISLAND
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

phlet is followed by an exhortation to Americans to stand by the non-importation agreement. "Those who have not Virtue enough to deny themselves those superfluities which are ruinous to their country, are unworthy to live in a land of Freedom."

The almanac for 1770 (after a sarcastic account of the landing of English troops in Boston, a preface to "My Freeborn Countrymen," and a continuation of Publius Claudius Britano Americanus) takes up the cudgels for non-importation by printing a "List of the Names of those who audaciously continue to counteract the united sentiments of the Body of Merchants . . . by importing British goods contrary to that Agreement." It is interesting to note among these proscribed merchants the names of Mein and Fleeming, who were importers of British books and magazines. Apparently they found sufficient demand for this literature to warrant their continued importation in spite of the colonial boycott on British goods. It is also noticeable that the almanacs of Mein and Fleeming for this period are strictly non-committal on political matters.

In the Edes and Gill almanac of 1770 we also find that at a meeting of merchants and traders at Faneuil Hall, January 23, 1770, four offenders (for refusing to cooperate in a scheme for storing goods under a committee until a general importation might take place) were boycotted "not only during the present struggle for Liberty, but for ever hereafter." There follows an electioneering essay against neutrals and Tories and an urgent appeal to women to support the embargo: "saving your money is saving your country." In the back of this almanac is printed the *Liberty Song*, and *The Parody Parodized or Massachusetts' Liberty Song*, followed by "A new Song—composed by a Son of Liberty and Sung by Mr. Flagg at Concert Hall, Boston, February 13, 1770. The British Grenadier." One stanza seems particularly interesting as showing the growing national consciousness and belief in the coming greatness of America:

Some future day shall crown us the Masters of the Main,
And giving laws and Freedom to subject France and Spain;
When all the isles o'er ocean spread shall tremble and obey,
Their lords, their lords, their lords, the lords of brave America.

Thus popular almanacs were one means of revolutionary propaganda. Just as importantly, perhaps, they reflected opinion.

Their printed pages and the interleaved diaries which we find scattered through them are significant for reconstructing the life that we must know well before we can begin to understand the genuine forces of the revolution in America against government from England. There is nothing startling in this: all the evidence tends to confirm what has always been thought true of the time and the people. Even a cursory acquaintance with their every-day handbooks, however, gives one a sense of the actual humanity of the men who are conveniently called Puritans and patriots. Edmund Burke and Roger Sherman have shown the essential fallacy of treating people as if they were numerals or abstractions.

THE LIBRARY OF AN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY GENTLEMAN OF RHODE ISLAND

SUSAN STANTON BRAYTON

IN the *Spectator* of April 12, 1711, Addison records a visit to a lady named Leonora. While waiting for Leonora to come down, he noted the titles of her books, which were attractively arranged by folios and quartos on her book-shelves. Among them he found: *Ogleby's Journal*; *Dryden's Juvenal*; *Sir Isaac Newton's Works*; *Locke's Essay Concerning Human Understanding*; *Sir William Temple's Essays*; *Seneca's Morals*; *Taylor's Holy Living and Dying*. A rather dull list, it seems, on the whole, but it was probably typical of the literary resources of the period. Such books, it would seem, might have been found in the library of a cultivated English lady's home in 1711. It is interesting to see what an educated gentleman on this side of the Atlantic might be supposed to have read later on in the same century.

A collection of old books, a diary, a will, and a few letters in the possession of the Marchant family show that Henry Marchant, of Newport and South Kingstown, Rhode Island, graduate of the embryo University of Pennsylvania, attorney-at-law, colonial agent, and member of the continental congress, had, at his hand, reading matter both varied and extensive in its scope. Most of the books of this collection are thick folios, bound handsomely in calf, and

printed, almost without exception, in England. From the dates on their title-pages, it is evident that they could have been purchased by Mr. Marchant during his visit to the mother country in 1771-1772. The object of this visit was to secure compensation to the colony of Rhode Island for services rendered during the French and Indian wars, but Mr. Marchant made it serve him personally as well, by forming the acquaintance of interesting people and going the usual round of sight-seeing. In his diary he records regular attendance at church, possibly for the edification of his pious wife, Rebecca, and carefully enters résumés of the sermons. We wonder how he reconciled with the severity of his wife's principles, not to say his own puritanical upbringing, his frequent visits to the theatre and his participation in levees and balls. David Garrick was at the height of his popularity at this time. Mr. Marchant saw him in several rôles and even had the privilege of taking breakfast with him. Thus it is not surprising to find among his books a contemporary criticism of the art of Garrick and other actors of the period.

Mr. Garrick is not handsome, nor did the most enthusiastic admirer of Mrs. Cibber ever call her a beauty, but both have features large, strong and formed for marking the passions; each has the eye piercing in the greatest degree. . . . It will seem singular, but I think Mr. Garrick greater in comedy than in tragedy. His Benedict I think equal to his Richard, though the beauties of his playing are less striking in their nature. . . . The kicking down of the chair by Mr. Garrick when the ghost of his father in Hamlet enters in the closet scene was a piece of by-play introduced very happily in tragedy. Happy as this was he had the good sense not to repeat it constantly, for then it becomes a stage trick and is contemptible. . . . No woman can speak Jane Shore so well as Mrs. Pritchard, but a lady so much en bon point makes an odd figure dying of famine.

Like most travellers, Mr. Marchant supplied himself with a book affording useful information about places and people likely to furnish profitable entertainment. This is a thick little volume entitled *Rider's British Merlin | For the Year of our Lord God 1772 | Adorned with many delightful and | useful Verities fitting all Capacities in | the Islands of Great Britain's Monarchy*. The *British Merlin*, which was probably published annually, is an epitome of the political, industrial, and social life of late eighteenth-

century England. The fairs, for instance, were listed in it. These were held in various places on the first or the second of each month; on some days there were as many as thirty-one going on simultaneously. Here it is also stated that his majesty's levee days were every Wednesday and Friday and, during the sitting of parliament, every Monday; while the queen's drawing room was on every Thursday, and the Princess Amelia's on the third Tuesday in the month. The king's household comprised the departments of pantry, buttery, wood-yard, confectionery, pastry, and silver-scullyery. The pan-keepers, the pewter-scourer, and the washers received £30 annually; while Charles Eldridge, the keeper of ice-houses, was handsomely paid £100. How the gossips must have enjoyed the information that the wet-nurse to the Prince of Wales, Mrs. Margaret Scott, was paid £200 a year, and that Lady Mary Churchill, the house-keeper at Windsor, received £320.

In London, Mr. Marchant formed the acquaintance of Catherine Macaulay, who seems to have been in sympathy with his ideas of government: he was a Whig, and she, also, set up for a lover of liberty. Evidence of their friendship is to be found in their correspondence and the presence among his books of Mrs. Macaulay's *The History of England from the Accession of James I to the Elevation of the House of Hanover*. In the introduction of eleven pages, the author announces her intention "To do justice to the memory of our illustrious ancestors still having an eye to public liberty." The history consists of five folio volumes sumptuously bound in calf. It was originally planned for six volumes; the fifth carries the narrative only as far as the restoration of Charles II. In a letter to Mrs. Macaulay, December 7, 1773, Mr. Marchant wrote: "My compliments to Mr. Dilby [the publisher]. If your sixth volume is out I desire he would send it to me neatly bound as the others by the first Rhode Island Ship. He shall be duly paid."

One would not gladly read this monumental work, nor yet *The History of England*, in two huge folio volumes of eight hundred pages each, written in French by Rapin de Thayras and translated into English by N. Tindal, M. A., vicar of Great Waltham in Essex; nor even the works of the once-highly-thought-of Sir William Temple. Sir William was ready to take all knowledge as his province. His first volume deals with the relations of European countries to England in 1671; the second contains letters relating

to "the most important transactions that passed in Christendom from 1665 to 1672." The first folio is well thumbed; the second is fresh and even new in appearance. Jonathan Swift saw these big books through the press and, ambitious for advancement, wrote the dedication to "His Most Sacred Majesty William III." They brought him little profit and no preferment. Eighteenth-century historians did not possess an easy style nor did they cater to the general reader. All are solid, dignified, and Johnsonian. Only the title-pages of many of these tomes are interesting.

The works of Algernon Sidney, once ambassador at the court of Denmark, another eight-hundred-page folio, as well as *A Treatise of Military Discipline*, by Humphrey Bland, Esq., and *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, by Adam Ferguson LL.D. one pushes aside with relief for a sight of Johnson's *Dictionary*, in two volumes, fourth edition, and *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, by John Locke, Gentleman, twelfth edition. The *Poetical Works of Alexander Pope*, in four volumes, and Bell's edition of *The Poets of Great Britain*, complete from Chaucer to Churchill, also help to clear the literary atmosphere.

Marchant was attorney-general for the colony of Rhode Island from 1770 to 1777; so one would expect to find law books in his library. Only two appear in this collection, however: *The Principles of the Laws of Scotland*, by John Balfour, and *Observations on Reversionary Payments on Schemes for providing Annuities for Widows and Orphans*, by Richard Price. That he possessed many such books is probable, for a letter to Mr. Alexander Grant, merchant, London, reads thus:

NEWPORT, FEBRUARY 12TH, 1774.

DEAR SIR:

. . . I would desire that the articles may be provided agreeable [*sic*] to Mrs. Marchant's memorandum herin [*sic*] sent. Which will more particularly fall to the care of Mrs. Grant. With what remains be pleased to apply to Brotherton & Sewell at the Sign of the Bible opposite the Royal Exchange for the books agreeable to the List. Many of them in course as they stand with the Shoes and Wigs may come to the money.

I have had many Books of Them and it may not be amiss to let them know you want Them for me. When they have given you an Amount of the Books you may (which is I found sometimes necessary) remind Them that five percent is to be deducted therefrom for prompt Pay. And be pleased to desire Them to

put up carefully with Them two of what They call Tilton Cheese made in the Form of a Bag Pudding. Brotherton will remember my admiring Them at his House. The Box he packs the Books in may be made large enough to put the Box in which Mrs. Grant may first pack Mrs. Marchant's Things in for more Convenience and Safety. You will excuse this Trouble I give you. Men disposed to kind Offices must always expect Imposition. . . .

Your much obliged and very affectionate Friend,

HENRY MARCHANT.

Sir William Temple Works 2 folio Volumes.
Sidney on Government with his Life and Apology
Sir Matthew Hale's Pleas of the Crown; published with Notes by Soloni, 2 Volumes.
Lord Talbot's Reports
Willson's Reports
Banbury (Will) Replica of Copy in the Exchequer published by George Willson
Plowden's Reports
Vattally, Law of Nations I think the Title is in 2 or 3 Quarto Volumes.
Burroughs Settlement Cases Adjudged from the Death of Lord Raymond, 1732
The Complete Body of Husbandry: — A large folio Volume.
The best Treatise [*sic*] in 1 Octavo Volume upon Forestry

3 pairs neat strong Shoes for Summer for Mrs. Marchant: George Davidson has the Measure and Last.

A handsome Wigg such as now be fashionable at St. James. Mr. Marchant's Barber was William Willson. I think he lived in a little new round Court in the Strand not far to the Eastward of Craven Street. Mrs. Stevenson where Dr. Franklin lodges however can direct Mrs. Grant's servant. Willson has Mr. Marchant's measure.

2 handsome Rose Bags for Wigs.

p. s. The Articles will be wanted as early as may be procured and sent to this Part of Newport.

TO MR. ALEXANDER GRANT

MERCHANT, LONDON

Per Captain Frost.

p.s. I omitted before to send a Lock of Hair of the Colour I would have the Wig.¹

¹ Letter-Book of Henry Marchant, in the possession of his great-great grand-daughter. The Dr. Franklin mentioned is Benjamin Franklin, whom Mr. Marchant had met in England and with whom he had travelled in Scotland.

After the battle of Lexington, Mr. Marchant was in danger of personal violence on account of his participation in revolutionary activities — it was said that he had been threatened with hanging at the yard-arm by the English if he were to be apprehended. Consequently, he transferred his residence from Newport to a farm which he had bought on the mainland, in South Kingstown. Here he found opportunities to put into practice the instructions given in *A Compleat Body of Husbandry*, as well as those contained in *The Art of Farriery*, by Mr. John Reeves, Farrier at Ringwood, Hants. *A Treatise on Bees*, with an appendix on the natural history of wasps and hornets, must also have been useful. This last is profusely illustrated and its dedication reads:

To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty.

Madam: The following sheets, which treat of Bees, are inscribed to your Majesty with the greatest humility. They contain the internal constitution of nations infinite in their numbers, where nature has settled the wisest regulations of policy and subordination, whose supreme magistrate is a Queen, who is in every respect the mother of her people, and whose gratitude, homage, and affection to her is equally sincere and lasting.

At about the time of his removal to South Kingstown, Mr. Marchant purchased for his son, William, a *Short Introduction to English Grammar*, for the sum of two shillings, sixpence. This little book of one hundred and thirty-two pages is unique in that all the examples illustrating the rules are taken from the Bible or from great English writers. On a single page, for example, under the discussion of principal parts of irregular verbs are found quotations from Pope's translation of the *Odyssey*, Atterbury's *Sermons*, Addison, Prior, Dryden, Milton, and Shakespeare. Dean Swift, too, is represented in these satirical lines:

The sun has rose and gone to bed
Just as if Partridge were not dead.

By the terms of Henry Marchant's will, his English books were to be divided equally among his wife and three children. The agreement finally reached by these heirs, on September 3, 1796, was that Mrs. Rebecca Marchant should have Dr. Hopkins's *System of Divinity*, West on the *Resurrection*, Quincy's *Sermons*, *Justification of Dissenters*, and Hale's *Tracts*; the daughter, Sarah: Bailey's

Dictionary, Beattie on *Truth*, Pope's *Dunciad*, Pope's *Iliad*, *Modern Geography*, Addison's *Travels in Italy*, Ferguson's *Moral Philosophy*, and Stowe's *Gardens*; the daughter, Elizabeth, and her husband, Thomas Sessions: Belknap's *History of New Hampshire*, *Tours through Britain*, *Beauties of the Stage*, *Religion of Nature*, *Durham Abbey*, *Æsop's Fables*, *Lyric Poems*, Gibson's *Dispensatory*, Butler's *Hudibras*, Terence's *Plays*, *The Whole Duty of Man*, *Present to Apprentice*, *Natural History of East and West Florida*, and Patten's *Sermon upon the Death of Dr. Stiles*. The rest and residue of the library was to be the property of the son, William Marchant. As he received books greater in number and value than those given to his mother and sister Sarah, he agreed to pay his mother two pounds, eighteen shillings; and his sister, one pound, seven shillings, sixpence. Literature, as we understand it, is not largely represented in this old library. Possibly there were more amusing books in the collection, books which were worn out with being read — and finally thrown away.

At the close of the Revolution, Mr. Marchant had returned to his Newport home, which had been ill used by the British guests, and there he died. Judge William Marchant, his son, gave up the house and made his permanent residence in South Kingstown. There, in the beautiful colonial house which still stands a little aloof at the end of a lane branching from the South County Trail, William installed the furnishings of the Newport home, and among these, the books which he had inherited from his father. Together with the Latin texts which he himself had used at Yale, they filled the book-cases of two old secretaries. Now they are assembled in still another home, remote from the two in which they were once cherished. Turning their pages curiously, a modern reader may be reminded of the wise opinion Addison printed in the *Spectator*:

Were all books reduced to their quintessence, many a bulky author would make his appearance in a penny paper; there would be scarce such a thing in nature as a Folio. The works of an age would be contained on a few shelves, not to mention millions of volumes that would be totally annihilated.