**LIFE OF JOHN ELIOT:**

**THE APOSTLE TO THE INDIANS.**

**BY CONVERS FRANCIS.**

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CAMBRIDGE: CHARLES FOLSOM,

PREFACE.

IN preparing the following account of   
the Apostle Eliot, it has been my object to con-  
­fine the narrative as strictly as possible within   
the limits of his personal biography, and of   
the circumstances necessarily connected with   
it. The story obviously furnishes many   
points, at which a writer would desire to   
avail himself of the opportunities presented   
for discussion and general remarks. Among   
these topics, the condition and fate of the   
American Indians, and the character of mis-  
­sionary enterprises among them since Eliot's   
time, would open a large field for inquiry   
and reflection, in connexion with the history   
of a man, who labored so strenuously for that   
interesting race. It would likewise be desir­-  
able to take a somewhat ample notice of Mr.   
Eliot's fellow-laborers in the same benevo­-  
lent work. But my limits have necessarily

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precluded these and similar digressions. The   
object of a work like the present is to give a   
distinct and faithful picture of the life, doings,   
opinions, and habits of the individual; and   
the reader must be left to derive from the   
account such materials for speculation as   
may be suggested to his own mind.  
 Of the sources, from which I have drawn   
the facts for this biographical sketch, some  
are obvious, and have been before used; to   
others access has hitherto been had either  
not at all, or only at second hand. The “Col-  
lections of the Massachusetts Historical So-  
ciety,” which are full of useful materials for   
the student of American history, have af-  
forded important aid. These volumes, be-  
sides the account of the apostle Eliot pre-  
pared by his highly respected namesake, the   
Reverend Dr. John Eliot of Boston, contain   
scattered facts and documents connected   
with the subject of this work. I have con-  
­sulted the Colony Records, and in a few in-  
­stances they have furnished me with facts,   
which I was glad to obtain.

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I have been reluctantly compelled, by   
want of room, to omit many of the most in-  
­teresting questions proposed by the Indian   
converts to their teacher, and some details of   
Mr. Eliot's proceedings. But I hope the book   
will be found to present a fair representation   
of his deeds and character, and to consti­-  
tute a memorial not altogether unworthy of   
one belonging to the venerable class of “the   
righteous who shall he in everlasting remem­-  
brance.” The record of the wise and good   
will never he forgotten by a community, who   
understand what they owe to themselves;   
and it may be refreshing briefly to withdraw   
from the heating excitements, which daily   
crowd upon the public mind, to the con-  
­templation of a man, whose long life was a   
life of moral labor, whose active spirit was   
a spirit of self-sacrifice and of pure be-  
­nevolence.

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JOHN ELIOT.

CHAPTER I.

Eliot's Birth. -- Education. -- Connexion with   
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 ­ton. -- Marriage. -- Settlement at Roxbury.

THE distinguished man, whose life consti-   
tutes the subject of the following narrative, is   
familiarly known in New England history as   
the APOSTLE TO THE INDIANS, a title as richly de-  
­served, as it is significant and honorable. JOHN   
ELIOT was born at Nasing,\* Essex County, Eng-  
­land, in 1604, and, as Prince supposes,† in No-  
­vember of that year. At this distance of time,   
little information can be had concerning that

\* I state this on the authority of Mr. Moore (Memoirs of   
Eliot), and of President Allen (Biographical Dictionary,   
second edition), who, however, both make a slight mis-  
­take of orthography in calling the place Nasin. The older   
writers do not give the birth-place of Eliot. Cotton   
Mather, who was his contemporary, says, “It was a town   
in England, the name whereof I cannot presently recover.”   
Nasing is in Essex, near Waltham, and between Epping   
and Harlow.

† Annals, Part II. Sec. 2.

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part of his life, which was passed in his native   
country. All that we know of it is scanty in   
amount, and of a general character. We learn   
that Mr. Eliot's parents were persons of re-  
­markable piety, and that they sought, with   
conscientious solicitude, to give the feelings   
of their son a spiritual direction, and a devout   
cast, even in the earliest days of childhood. In   
his own expressive language, his “first years   
were seasoned with the fear of God, the word,   
and prayer." Their pious care was not lost.   
It laid the foundation of a character well fitted   
for extraordinary tasks in the service of God.   
They cast good seed on the young mind; but   
they knew not, that, across the ocean in the far   
distant wilderness, it was destined to produce   
fruit for the nourishment of spiritual life in the   
church, and in the cabins of the benighted chil-  
­dren of the forest.   
 Mr. Eliot was educated at one of the English   
Universities, probably at Cambridge, though we   
know not at which of the numerous halls in that   
seat of learning. To his character as a scholar,   
during this forming period of life, there is   
merely a general, but an honorable testimony.   
He acquired a sound, thorough, and discrim-  
­inating knowledge of the original languages   
of the Scriptures, became well versed in the   
general course of liberal studies, and was par­-  
ticularly skilful in theological learning. It is

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recorded that be bad a partiality for philolog­-  
ical inquiries, and was an acute grammarian; a   
turn of mind which, we may suppose, afterwards   
had its influence in stimulating and directing   
the labor his pious zeal prompted him to be-  
­stow on the language of the Indians.   
 On leaving the University be engaged in the   
business of instruction. Mr. Hooker, who at a   
subsequent period became one of the most emi­-  
nent among the worthies of New England, hav­-  
ing been silenced in the work of preaching on   
account of his nonconformity, had established a   
grammar school at Little Baddow, near Chelms­-  
ford in Essex. In this school Mr. Eliot was   
employed as an usher. It is recorded, that he   
discharged the unostentatious, but important,   
duties of this station with faithful and successful   
industry. Cotton Mather, with an amusing zeal,   
takes pains to prove that he was not disgraced   
by the employment. This reminds us of the folly   
of those writers, who drew upon themselves   
the caustic remarks of Johnson for endeavour­-  
ing to vindicate Milton from the degradation of   
having been a schoolmaster. There are many   
facts, which show that in the sixteenth and   
seventeenth centuries the office of a teacher of   
youth was far from being treated with that re­-  
spect in England, which belongs to the weighty   
task of building up minds for the service of the   
state and of the world.

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Eliot was by his situation brought into that   
familiar acquaintance with Mr. Hooker, which   
exerted the happiest influence on the advan-  
­cing formation of his character and principles.   
From that devoted and able man he received   
deep religious impressions, which were never   
effaced, and which reinforced with strong power   
all the good effects of his pious education. He   
always spoke of his residence at Little Baddow   
as a rich blessing to his soul. In the lonely-  
­ness of retirement, and in the quiet sanctity of   
Hooker's household, his spiritual life was kind­-  
led into that expansive energy, which led him   
with unalterable purpose to the service of God.   
“When I came to this blessed family,” said he,   
“I then saw, and never before, the power of   
godliness in its lively vigor and efficacy.”   
Hooker must have experienced the happiness,   
which a good man feels, when he has been the   
instrument of bringing a gifted mind and a   
sanctified heart to work for the cause of truth   
and righteousness.\*  
 To the Christian ministry Eliot now resolved   
to devote himself. But for the Puritan or Non­-  
conformist preacher there was at that time no   
open field in England. He was fortunate if he   
  
\* Cotton Mather was in possession of a manuscript writ-  
­ten by Mr. Eliot, in which he gave an account of the school   
and of his residence at Little Baddow. See Magnalia,   
Book III. *Life of Hooker*.

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escaped imprisonment, and at best could but   
exercise his office in a half-suppressed, clan­-  
destine manner, while he was continually star-  
­tled by the sound of pursuit, and liable at any   
moment to be taken in the toils laid for him by   
arbitrary power.\* It is not necessary here to   
enter into the detail of those measures, which   
were pressed with pertinacious folly, till in the   
stormy reaction the throne and the church went   
to the ground, and the fierce struggle of a civil   
war became the price, at which some advance   
was gained in a cause, that has ever since, from   
time to time, been in a course of onward move­-  
ment. When Mr. Eliot saw that his friend and   
instructor, Hooker, notwithstanding the inter-  
­position of forty-seven conforming clergymen   
on his behalf, could escape from the searching   
tyranny of Laud only by fleeing to Holland, he   
must have been convinced that neither safety   
nor usefulness was any longer to be expected   
in his native country. In these circumstances,   
he turned his thoughts to the new western   
world. There a refuge had already been found   
by many, of whom England had rendered her­-  
self unworthy; and there he resolved to take

\* In Eliot's case, it would seem, the persecution extend-  
­ed further than to the exercise of the ministry, if we may   
believe Neal, who says that he was “not allowed to teach   
school in his native country.” – History of the Puritans,   
Vol. II. p. 245.

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his lot among those, who were driven forth by   
their countrymen to do a great work for human   
rights and for God's cause in the wilderness.   
 With a mind thus well matured, and a char-  
­acter thus prepared for the important duties   
that awaited him, Mr. Eliot bade farewell   
to the home of his fathers, and sought the   
shores of America. On the 3d of November,   
1631, the ship Lyon, in which he took passage,   
came to anchor in Boston harbour, bringing a   
company of about sixty persons. Among them   
were the wife and children of Governor Win-  
­throp. Their arrival was welcomed with pecu-  
­liar demonstrations of joy, and every thing,   
which kindness could suggest, was done to give   
them a pleasant reception.\*  
 Mr. Eliot was now twenty-seven years of   
age, in the full vigor of youthful health and   
strength. No sooner had he landed; than he   
found a field of usefulness, and was called to   
the work on which his heart was set. Mr.   
Wilson, pastor of the First Church in Boston,   
had gone to England, for the settlement of   
his affairs, in the latter part of the preceding   
March. In his absence, the religious services   
had been superintended and conducted by   
Governor Winthrop, Mr. Dudley, and Mr. Now­-  
ell, the elder. Wilson, at a solemn meeting   
before his departure, had designated these in-   
  
 \* Savage's Winthrop, Vol. I. pp. 63-66.

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dividuals as best fitted for “the exercise of   
prophecy,” as it was termed, that is, for the   
office of public religious instruction. The duty   
was doubtless well and wisely discharged by   
these distinguished laymen; and the church   
must be deemed a favored one, which, in the   
absence of its pastor, could thus furnish from   
its own number gifted and pious men to sus-   
tain the public offices of the Sabbath. But it   
was natural, that they should avail themselves   
of the first opportunity to procure the services   
of a well-qualified minister. Such an oppor-   
tunity occurred when Mr. Eliot arrived. He   
immediately joined the Boston church, and of­-  
ficiated as their preacher until his removal to   
Roxbury. He performed the duties of this sta-  
­tion with distinguished ability and usefulness;   
and the church welcomed him as a faithful   
helper of their joy.   
 In the following February, Mr. Eliot is men-  
­tioned as one of those, who accompanied the   
Governor on that excursion, in which they dis­-  
covered and named Spot Pond.   
 When Eliot left England, more tender affect-  
­tions than those of national feeling still lingered   
there. His heart and hand were pledged to a   
young lady, whose name is not transmitted to   
us, but who seems to have been in every re­-  
spect worthy of such a man. She followed him   
to New England, and their marriage took place

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in October, 1632. Their union was very long   
and very happy. She is said to have been a   
woman of much active benevolence and of ex­-  
emplary piety, prompt to share with her hus-  
­band the works of charity, and affording him   
that aid, on which a mind tasked and wearied   
with arduous duties might lean with full and   
refreshing confidence.   
 So entirely faithful and acceptable were the   
clerical labors of Mr. Eliot, that the Boston   
church expressed a strong wish to retain him   
permanently in their service. They would   
gladly have settled him, as teacher, in connex-  
­ion with their pastor, Wilson, when he return­-  
ed from England. They seem, from Winthrop's   
account.\* to have set their hearts much on ac-  
­complishing this union. When we recollect   
the character of the leading men in that church,   
this urgency on their part speaks well for the   
gifts and graces, which could so soon ex-  
­cite an interest so deep and strong. But, in   
consequence of a prior engagement, their cher­-  
ished purpose failed of success. When Eliot   
left his native land, a considerable number of   
his Christian brethren, who loved him and sym­-  
pathized in his views, had thought of following   
him to America. He had promised them, that,   
if they should carry that plan into effect, and   
should arrive in New England before he had   
  
 \* Vol. I. p. 93.

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formed a regular pastoral connexion with any   
other church, he would be their minister and   
devote himself to their service. The next year   
they came hither, and settled at Roxbury. The   
pledge he bad given was now to be redeemed.   
The Boston church strove earnestly to retain   
him, but in vain. Both he and the new congre­-  
gation preferred to abide by their engagement.   
Accordingly, on the 5th of November, 1632, he   
was established as teacher of the church in   
Roxbury, and continued in that office till his   
death. The following year he received a col­-  
league, Mr. Welde, with whom his connexion   
was uniformly harmonious and happy. In 1641   
Mr. Welde went to England, as agent for the   
province, and never returned. At subsequent   
periods, Mr. Danforth and Mr. Walter were   
colleagues with the Roxbury teacher.   
 Mr. Eliot now found himself placed in a re-  
­lation, for which his education, his habits of   
thought, and the spirituality of his character   
were adapted to give him a strong affection.   
He loved the labors of the ministry, and en­-  
gaged in them with his whole soul. His situa­-  
tion had much that was attractive, amidst the   
hardships and trials of a new settlement. He   
was among friends, who had known him long   
enough to give him their hearts without reserve.   
He was not now for the first time to win their   
confidence. They met in the new world as

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those, who had been drawn to each other by   
kindred feelings amidst the trials of their na-  
­tive land. From what has already been stated   
of his history, it may seem almost superfluous   
to say that his important duties were discharge-  
­ed with exemplary zeal, ability, and faithful-  
­ness. Even at that time, when ecclesiastical   
labors were the first and highest in the infant   
colony, and when the clergy by their office were   
leading men in the community, scarcely a name   
can be mentioned, which stood before that of   
Mr. Eliot. Of his ministry in Roxbury there is   
not much to be told, that can be presented in an   
historical form; for the life of a clergyman, as   
such, though full of toil, is not full of events.   
We know, that from first to last he was a hard   
student and a hard worker; breaking the bread   
of life with affectionate fidelity, and administer­-  
ing divine truth with uncompromising sinceri­-  
ty; fearless in rebuke and kind in counsel;   
meeting every claim of duty with unwearied   
patience, and bringing his wisdom to bear on   
the most common things; proverbially charita-  
­ble, and ready to be spent in every good work.\*

\* “How strong,” says Came, “must have been his emo-  
­tion, when the aged Hooker toiled up the hill to listen to   
the words of the man, whose soul he had first guided; it   
was one of the most touching scenes of Eliot's life, when   
the former, well stricken in years, came to America, to lay   
his bones there, and found his once young and valued

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Another part of this narrative may afford an   
opportunity of recurring to this subject. At   
present I will only remark, that the abilities   
and graces manifested in his professional du-  
­ties naturally remind us of those delineations   
of clerical excellence, in which simplicity of   
heart, sanctified learning, and watchful fidelity   
are beautifully blended;   
 “Such priest u Chaucer sang in fervent lays,   
 Such as the heaven-taught skill of Herbert drew.”

friend thus surrounded with comfort and respect." -- Lives   
of Eminent Missionaries, Vol I. p. 9. This is one of the   
pleasant fancies, of which Carne's account is full. It is   
altogether likely that Hooker, when he came to New Eng­-  
land, visited Eliot and heard him preach, though I know   
not where Carne found any notice of the fact. With re-  
­spect to the interest the picture derives from the old age   
of Hooker, it should be remembered that be was but forty-  
­seven years old when he arrived in Boston, and that three   
years afterwards be removed to Hartford in Connecticut,   
and died there in 1647, in his sixty-second year. During   
the short time in which be bad opportunities of hearing   
his young friend in Roxbury, he could not, except by a   
poetical license, be called “well stricken in years.”

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CHAPTER II.

Eliot’s Animadversions on the Pequot Treaty. --   
 His Connexion with the Trial of Mrs. Hutchin-  
 son.—His Agency in the New England Version   
 of the Psalms.

NOT long after Mr. Eliot's settlement at Rox-  
­bury, he was brought into some trouble by the   
honest, though perhaps injudicious, freedom of   
his remarks on a civil transaction. In Octo­-  
ber, 1634, a messenger from the sachem of the   
Pequots waited on Mr. Ludlow, the deputy-  
­governor, for the purpose of soliciting the es-  
­tablishment of friendly relations by treaty be-  
­tween that tribe and the Massachusetts settlers.   
The Pequots were then at war with the Narra-  
­gansets and with the Dutch; and their anxiety   
to secure the friendship, if not the direct aid,   
of the English, in this perilous crisis of their   
affairs, was the occasion of the negotiation they   
had set on foot. The messenger received from   
the deputy-governor the answer, that his tribe   
must send more responsible persons, before the   
governor, Mr. Dudley, would consent to enter   
upon the consideration of the business.   
 The next month two of the Pequots appeared   
in the character of ambassadors, bringing with

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them the usual Indian present of wampum.\*   
The deputy-governor accompanied them to   
Boston, where several of the assistants were in   
attendance on the weekly lecture. This afford­-  
ed an opportunity of consulting the clergy, as   
was frequently done with regard to important   
transactions of state. The result of the de-  
­liberation was, that an offer was made to the   
Pequots of a treaty on certain conditions, one   
of which was, that they should surrender those   
Indians, who had murdered Captain Stone, and   
other Englishmen, some time before. They   
agreed to deliver up the two, who, as they al-  
­leged, alone survived of the number concerned   
in that outrage. They also promised to favor   
the settlement of an English plantation in Con-  
­necticut, and to furnish four hundred fathoms of   
wampum, besides forty beaver and thirty otter   
skins. On. these terms, the government of the

\* The best explanation I have seen of this term, so   
often occurring in Indian history, is in the following note   
furnished for Drake's reprint of “The Present State of   
New England with respect to the Indian War,” &c., p.28.   
 “Wampampeag, commonly called Wampum, was the   
money made by the Indians, and made a lawful tender by   
the whites. It was white and black; the white was formed   
of the Periwinkle, or, in Indian, Meteauhock (Buccinum la-  
­pillus and undatum, Linn.] The black, of the Poquanhock,   
(now called Quahaug or Clam], the Venus mercenaria of   
Linnaeus. Much of it, and indeed most of it, was made on   
Block Island. It was reckoned by fathoms, and parts of a,   
fathom, being worth from 5 to 10 shillings the fathom.”

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colony consented to establish a treaty of amity   
and peace with them, but not to engage in an   
alliance of defence against their enemies.\*  
 On this proceeding Mr. Eliot thought it his   
duty to animadvert with some freedom in a   
sermon at Roxbury. This he did in accordance   
with the spirit of those times, when the minis-  
­ters, in their concern for the general good,   
took a large and free share in the discussion of   
all matters of public interest. He blamed the   
ministers for advising, and the magistrates for   
concluding, the treaty with the Pequots in such   
a manner; nor did he limit his rebukes to that   
point. The ground of his censures was, that   
the engagement with the Indians had been   
made by the governor and assistants on their   
own authority alone, without the consent of the   
people; plebe inconsulia, as it was expressed.   
 The animadversions of the Roxbury teacher   
gave much offence. It was supposed they might  
tend to the disparagement of the magistrates,   
and excite a spirit of complaint unfriendly to   
good order. The apprehension was natural,   
considering the high character of the man from   
whom the rebuke came; and the actual effect   
was to call forth expressions of disaffection   
among the people. It was deemed too im­-  
portant a matter to be passed over in si­-  
lence. The government appointed Mr. Cotton,   
  
 \* SAVAGE'S Winthrop, Vol. I. p. 147.

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Mr. Hooker, and Eliot's colleague, Mr. Welde,   
“to deal with him," as the phrase was, that is,   
to convince him of his error, and induce him to   
make, such an explanation of his opinion, as   
would obviate the ill consequences of his cen-  
­sures. These divines discussed the subject   
with their brother minister. He confessed, that   
he had taken an incorrect view of the case, and   
that the form of his opinion was erroneous.   
He acknowledged, that, since this was a treaty   
for peace and friendship, and not one the con-  
­sequence of which would be to involve the colo-  
­ny in a war, he thought the magistrates might   
act in their official capacity on the occasion   
without waiting for the consent of the people.   
This explanation of his views seems to have   
been satisfactory, and he promised to announce   
it in his pulpit on the next Sabbath.\*  
 Mr. Eliot's objection to the conduct of the   
governor and his associates in this instance   
can scarcely, I suppose, be considered sound or   
defensible. The powers of the Massachusetts   
government at that time seem to have been   
somewhat indefinite. They were, by the ne-  
­cessity of the case, sometimes exercised rather   
according to present wants and exigencies,   
than upon settled and guarded principles. It   
is true, the charter conferred on the governor,  
  
 \* Ibid. p. 151.

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deputy-governor, and assistants no authority   
to make treaties with any people or tribe.\*   
But the charter did not, and could not, provide   
for every emergency, that should arise in the   
affairs of a colony thrown into a situation, the   
wants of which could not be foreseen. In the   
absence of any regulation on the subject, the   
treaty-making ·power seemed naturally to rest   
with the executive magistrates. The construc­-  
tion, by which they considered the application   
of the Pequots as a case lying within the scope   
of this power, and believed themselves author­-  
ized to act in this instance, according to their   
discretion, for the good of the colony, cannot   
probably be deemed an unjust assumption.   
Yet we may well suppose the point appeared   
sufficiently doubtful to be a fair subject for dif-  
­ference of opinion, and to vindicate Eliot, if he   
was wrong, from the charge of being captious   
in his view of it. However unfounded might be   
his objection, his error could have sprung only   
from that watchful jealousy for the rights of   
the people, which has always marked the char-  
­acter of the American communities, and which,   
in most other cases at least, has been suffi-  
­ciently lauded. At the particular time in ques-  
­tion, this feeling may have been brought into   
stronger action, than usual, in his mind. For

\* The charter may be seen in HAZARD'S State Papers,   
Vol. I.

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it was in 1634, the year of the transaction with   
the Pequots, that the people vigorously assert-  
­ed their right to a larger share in the govern­-  
ment, and insisted on the institution of a rep-  
­resentative body to be chosen from the several   
towns.\* The popular interest excited by this   
movement was still so fresh, when the Indians  
sent their embassy to Boston, that there proba-  
­bly existed an unusually keen disposition to   
question and scrutinize any new exercise of   
power† by the governor and assistants. When   
Mr. Eliot spoke of the consent of the people as   
necessary to the making of the treaty, he must   
have meant the consent of the new court of   
delegates, the representatives of the people.   
To have discussed or determined the matter by   
a meeting of the whole people was manifestly   
impracticable.   
 With regard to Eliot's concession, it is worthy   
of remark, that it does not imply any change in   
his view of the point at issue, considered as a   
question of right. His explanation amounts,   
not to the doctrine that treaties in general

\* Hutchinson, Vol. I. p. 39. See Mr. Savage's excellent   
remarks on the interesting occasion referred to; Winthrop,   
Vol. I. p. 129.  
† There was, I believe, no instance of a treaty in Massa­-  
chusetts with the Indians before this with the Pequots.   
Miantunnomoh, the Narraganset sachem, came to Boston   
for that purpose in 1632; but nothing was done. See   
Hutchinson, Vol. I. p. 32.

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might be concluded by the magistrates without   
consulting the people, but that in this case   
there was no objection to be made to the exer-  
­cise of such a power, because the people could   
be involved in no injurious consequences by it;   
an explanation, which takes the ground of pres-  
­ent expediency, not of a general principle.   
He doubtless felt, upon consideration, a strong   
reluctance to disparage the authority of govern­-  
ment, or to create disaffection, by insisting   
pertinaciously on the question of right; and   
perhaps he had begun to see, that, should he do   
so, he would find it difficult to sustain his opin­-  
ion. He was therefore ready at once to with­-  
draw his opposition, and make such a statement   
as would allay excitement, and quiet the dis-  
­turbed feelings of the magistrates; though it   
does not appear that he abjured the principle,   
on which his censure was originally founded.   
His conduct may be supposed to have proceed-  
­ed from a discreet regard to the public peace;   
but I find no evidence that he was timid.\*

\* Hubbard praises the magnanimity Eliot displayed by   
acknowledging himself in the wrong.--General History of   
New England, p. 166.   
 It should here be remarked, that Roger Williams is said   
to have expressed the same views about the Pequot treaty,   
as Mr. Eliot did, but could not, like him, be brought to   
make any explanation. This statement is made in the ac­-  
count of Mr. Eliot in 1 Mass. Hist. Coll. Vol., VIII. p. 28, and   
repeated in KNOWLES'S Memoir of Roger Williams, p. 126.

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Mr. Eliot's name stands connected with the   
agitation respecting Mrs. Hutchinson, which   
makes so conspicuous a figure in the early ec-  
­clesiastical history of New England. That the   
religious opinions of this remarkable woman   
were conscientiously and piously held, there is   
no reason to doubt; and that she possessed   
uncommon abilities, and knew well how to use   
them, must be conceded by all. If she was   
pragmatical or officious in the exhibition of her   
sentiments, the fault, however lamentable, is   
too common to diminish our sympathy for her   
hard fate. The wisdom of permitting every   
religious manifestation, however fantastic, if it   
do not disturb the rights of others, to have   
room in the community, and the assurance that,   
if it be an error or folly, it will thus soonest   
come to destruction, are lessons gathered from   
experience, but were unknown to the early

Both of these writers refer for their authority to BENTLEY'S   
History of Salem; but neither specifies the place. I can   
find no such statement in Bentley's History. He says,   
“Unfortunately for Mr. Williams, the apostle Eliot, immor-  
­tal by his services in the conversion of the Indiana, had   
taken liberty to speak against the Indian treaty, though, be-  
­ing brought to confess before the magistrate, he published   
afterwards his recantation.”--1 Mass. Hist. Coll.,Vol. VI.   
p. 247. The sentence is a blind one. Why it was un-  
­fortunate for Williams, or what connexion he had with it,   
we are not told. I am not aware that there is any other   
passage, in which Bentley alludes to the subject.

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settlers of New England, and not less so to their   
brethren in the mother country. Had the zeal   
of Mrs. Hutchinson been suffered to work itself   
off in unnoticed assemblies with her friends, or   
in the contests of private argument, a painful   
season of bitterness would have been spared to   
our fathers; and we should not be called to   
lament, that dignified magistrates and learned   
divines should have deemed it their duty, in   
solemn conclave, to hold sharp encounter with   
a female on antinomianism, on the covenant of   
grace and the covenant of works, on the per-  
­sonal indwelling of the Holy Ghost, on assert­-  
ed revelations and internal impulses; that they   
should have banished her from their communi-  
­ty, and afterwards regarded her tragical end   
as a special judgment for her errors and sins.   
She was evidently regarded as a formidable   
antagonist; for the author of Wonder-working   
Providence, in the midst of his invectives, calls   
her “the masterpiece of womens' wit.” The   
pertinacity and zeal of Mrs. Hutchinson caused   
so general an excitement, that for the first time   
in New England a synod was summoned by   
order of the General Court. This assembly,   
which met at Cambridge in August, 1637, seem   
to have had as much, and probably about as   
useful, business on their hands, as the synods   
of earlier ages; for, before they separated, they   
pronounced condemnation on a list of eighty-

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two erroneous opinions.\* In November of the   
same year, Mrs. Hutchinson was brought before   
the court and several of the elders for ex-  
­amination.†  
 On this occasion Mr. Eliot appeared among   
the witnesses against her. He and others of   
the clergy had visited her, and in the course of   
their discussions had deemed it their duty to   
rebuke her for the severe and irritating cen-  
­sures she bad uttered against all the ministers,   
except Cotton and Wheelwright. On the ex­-  
amination, Mr. Eliot as well as others gave his   
report of what had passed in conversation.   
He had at the time taken a memorandum, to   
which he could now appeal. “I have it in writ-  
­ing,” said he, “therefore I do avouch it.” On   
the second day of the examination, Mrs. Hutch-  
­inson demanded that the witnesses against   
her should be put on oath. This occasioned   
considerable discussion. Some thought there   
was no need of complying with her demand;   
others deemed it judicious to do so, for the

\* A catalogue of these, with the confutation of each, is   
given in “A Short Story of the Rise, Reign, and Ruin of   
the Antinomians,” &c., a treatise full of bitterness and   
bigotry, published by Welde, Eliot's colleague, after he   
went to England.   
 † A minute account of the trial is given in Hutchinson,   
Vol. II. p. 423, Appendix. This was “an ancient manu-  
­script”; but at what time or by whom it was written, the   
historian, if he knew, does not inform us.

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sake of general satisfaction. Mr. Eliot de­-  
clared that he was willing “to speak upon   
oath,” adding the remark, “I know nothing   
we have spoken, but we may swear to.” His   
colleague, Welde, and Hugh Peters were ready   
to do the same. At length an oath was ad-  
­ministered to these three, and they gave their   
testimony with respect to Mrs. Hutchinson's   
conversation, as before. Soon after this, the   
trial was closed by the condemnation and ban­-  
ishment of the female heresiarch.   
 It may be added, that during the trial Mrs.   
Hutchinson had spoken with great confidence   
of her supernatural impulses and revelations;   
the common resort of fanatics, especially in   
seasons of persecution. Mr. Eliot had the good   
sense to enter his protest against these idle   
pretensions. “I say,” was his judicious re­-  
mark, “there is an expectation of things prom-  
­ised; but to have a particular revelation of   
things that shall fall out, there is no such thing   
in the Scripture.” The sentiment seems to   
have been regarded as somewhat bold; for the   
governor immediately interposed the caution,   
that we must not “limit the word of God.”   
During the discussion, reference had been made   
by one of the deputies to a revelation, which   
Mr. Hooker, while he was in Holland, professed   
to have had respecting the approaching de­-  
struction of England. Eliot, who could not

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patiently hear the name of his revered instruct-  
­ter adduced in support of a delusion, called in   
question the truth of this statement. “That   
speech of Mr. Hooker's,” said he, “which they   
allege, is against his mind and judgment”;   
meaning, I suppose, that it was inconsistent   
with what he knew of Hooker's opinions and   
habits of thought on such subjects.\* This part   
of the discussion at least was honorable to his   
frankness and sound judgment. On the whole,   
the agency which he had in the measures   
respecting this unfortunate and misguided   
woman, if considered in comparison with the   
conduct of others, cannot be alleged to his dis-  
­credit. He was stern and inflexible against

\* If we may credit Mather (Magnalia, Vol. I. Book III.   
p. 310), Hooker afterwards avowed at Hartford the reve-  
­lation in question; so that Eliot committed the creditable   
mistake of thinking better of his instructer's judgment than   
it deserved. It may here be remarked, that Hooker had,   
by some report, been led to misapprehend Eliot's views   
about the Hutchinson excitement; for in a letter to Shep-  
­ard of Cambridge he says,” A copy of Mr. Vane's expres-  
­sions at Roxbury I desire to see and receive by the next   
messenger. I have heard my brother Eliot is come about   
to this opinion. I have writ to him about it. I would   
fain come to a bandy where I might be a little rude in the   
business; for I do as verily believe it to be false, as I do   
believe any article of my faith to be true.” -- Hutchinson,   
Vol. I. p. 48. Hooker's information about Eliot's opinion   
could not be true. There is no evidence that Eliot ever   
belonged to Vane's party; and in the examination of Mrs.   
Hutchinson he was decidedly opposed to that party.

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her, as the rest were. But during the proceed­-  
ings at the trial, I see no evidence that he lost   
his temper, or indulged in bitterness of expres­-  
sion, as some others unhappily did. He be-  
­lieved he was doing his duty to God and the   
churches; and, if he was right in that convic-  
­tion, his manner of doing it seems not justly   
liable to censure.   
 We next find Mr. Eliot concerned in an at­-  
tempt, which was made to improve the psalmo­-  
dy of the churches. In 1639, the civil and ec­-  
clesiastical leaders of the colony decided to   
have a new version of the Psalms for use in   
public worship. The task of preparing it was   
assigned to Mr. Eliot, Mr. Welde, and Richard   
Mather of Dorchester, who were considered   
well qualified by their Hebrew scholarship.   
Their work was printed at Cambridge by Daye   
in 1640. It was entitled “The Psalms in   
Metre, faithfully translated for the Use, Edifi­-  
cation, and Comfort of the Saints in publick   
and private, especially in New England.” It   
was known by the name of “The Bay Psalm   
Book,” but afterwards was more commonly   
designated as “The New England Version of   
the Psalms,” by which appellation it is now best   
known. We have no means of ascertaining   
Eliot's individual portion of this pious labor.   
The reverend versifiers seem to have antici-  
­pated some unfavorable criticisms. In the

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preface they say, “If the verses are not alwayes   
so smooth and elegant as some may desire or   
expect, let them consider that God's altar   
needs not our pollishings; for wee have re-  
­spected rather a plaine translation, than to   
smooth our verses with the sweetness of any   
paraphrase, and soe have attended conscience   
rather than elegance, fidelity rather than poe­-  
try, in translating the Hebrew words into Eng­-  
lish language, and David's poetry into English   
metre.”  
 Notwithstanding this deprecatory apology,   
there were some, who did not suppress their   
disposition to sneer at the new Psalm-books.\*   
The poetical merits of this metrical translation   
are indeed sufficiently humble. One is com-  
­pelled to go back in imagination two centuries,   
in order to understand how it was, that devo-  
­tion did not expire in singing such stanzas.   
Yet, when compared with the specimens of

\* The admonition of Mr. Shepard of Cambridge to his   
brethren on this occasion has been often quoted, but is   
perhaps sufficiently curious to be repeated. It is found in   
the Magnalia, Book III. ch. 12. Life of Dunster,  
  
 “You Roxb'ry poets keep clear of the crime,   
 Of missing to give us very good rhime.   
 And you of Dorchester your verses lengthen,   
 But with the text's own words you will them strengthen.”

I know not how much of censure Shepard intended; but   
whatever it was, the poetry of it seems scarcely better   
than that of the version, for the composition of which the   
rhyming advice was given.

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church poetry then prevalent, it should not   
be severely condemned. At least it may be   
weighed against Sternhold and Hopkins with­-  
out sustaining disparagement. It is not till a   
recent period, that the claims of the sanctuary   
on the hallowed powers of imagination and   
taste have been appreciated and answered, or   
that strains of true sweetness and grandeur   
have been consecrated to the service of God.   
 The second edition of this version was pub-  
­lished in 1647. When a third edition was   
needed, it was thought necessary to attempt   
some improvement. The task was committed   
to Dunster, president of Harvard College, who   
revised the whole, and added to it “Scriptural   
Songs and Hymns,” written by Mr. Richard   
Lyon. The book passed through twenty edi­-  
tions, and was adopted immediately by all the   
New England churches, except that of Ply­-  
mouth, into which it was not received for many  
years. That church used the version made by   
Ainsworth, whom they had known and highly   
respected in Holland.\* The New England

\* A copy of this book is in the Massachusetts Historical   
Society. The title is “The Booke of Psalmes in English   
Metre; by HENRY AINSWORTH.” On a blank leaf, Prince,   
who once owned the volume, has written the following   
notice: “This version of Ainsworth was sung in Plymouth   
Colony, and I suppose in the rest of New England till   
the New England version was printed first in 1640.”   
Prince's supposition with regard to “the rest of New

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version was reprinted in England and Scot-  
­land, and was in high favor with many of the   
dissenting congregations.   
 The Psalms versified by Eliot, Welde, and   
Mather were the first book printed in North   
America. The “Freeman's Oath,” and an   
Almanac, had been printed the preceding year.\*

England” differs from the statement of Dr. Holmes (His-  
tory of Cambridge, 1 Mass. Hist. Coll.,VII. 19), who says   
that Sternhold and Hopkins were in common use before   
the New England version was undertaken. Of this last,   
Prince himself published in 1758 a revised and improved   
edition.   
 It may here be mentioned that Mr. Eliot appears some­-  
times to have indulged the rhyming vein for his own   
amusement. A few specimens of this sort, with the ana-  
­grams so common in that age, are found in the ancient   
book of records belonging to the church in Roxbury.

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CHAPTER III.

General Remarks on the Indians. -- Interest in   
their Conversion to Christianity. -- Mr. Eliot's   
Preparation for the Work by learning the   
Indian Language.

WE come now to that portion of Mr. Eliot's   
life, which was spent chiefly in efforts to spread   
the Christian faith among the native inhabit­-  
ants of New England. This was the great   
work, to which he devoted the strongest ener-  
­gies of his mind, and the best part of his days.   
It was the mission, to which he felt himself   
called by the holiest inducements; and, taken   
in all its branches, with the collateral inquiries   
and exertions to which it led, it must be re­-  
garded as a remarkable passage in the great   
history of Christian benevolence.   
 When our fathers came to the western world,   
they found the wilderness peopled by a race,   
who could not fail to be objects of strong in-  
­terest, apart from any friendly or hostile rela­-  
tions. The settlers had just arrived from a   
country abounding in all the refinements of the   
old world, and were suddenly brought into the   
neighbourhood of a people exhibiting the pecu-  
­liarities of one of the rudest forms of savage

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life. Among the several tribes, who roamed   
over the territory, there was a general resem­-  
blance in character, modes of life, and religion.   
 The virtues and the vices of uncivilized man   
have been exaggerated. Rousseau, who found   
in him the model of perfection, and Volney,   
who sunk him beneath humanity, have left the   
truth between them. The savage is neither   
the atrocious brute described by some, nor the   
noble hero pictured by the imagination of   
others. He is simply a man, in whom the ani-  
­mal nature predominates, and in whom the   
intellectual nature, though far from being   
quenched, is feeble, puerile, and slumbering.   
The several functions of his physical and spir-  
­itual being have not been developed in harmo-  
­nious and well-proportioned movements, under   
the influences supplied by the competitions of,   
ingenuity, by religion, by a sense of present   
deficiency, and an earnest longing after im-  
­provement. He is a stationary being, because   
he is chiefly a sensual being. The inward life   
is in him; but it is smothered, or has reached   
only its childhood. He is a standing refutation   
of the sophistry of those, who tell us that the   
savage condition is the natural state of man.   
Man's truly natural state is that, to which his   
nature, in all its developements, efforts, and   
wants, tends; that is, a state of the highest   
attainable refinement and civilization. The

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Indians of New England, like all savages, were   
averse to regular labor of any sort. Their   
time was spent in the alternations of war,   
hunting, or fishing, and idleness or sleep.   
Their passions, when aroused, were fiercely   
impetuous, their love of revenge keen and long-  
­cherished; but the elements of generous and   
noble dispositions were largely, though irregu­-  
larly, mingled in their character. Their knowl­-  
edge was limited nearly within the narrow   
circle of animal wants; and their ignorance of   
the use of the metals was evinced by their   
habit of calling an Englishman a knife-man, the   
knife being an implement wholly new to them,   
and one which they greatly admired.\*  
 The germ of the spiritual, and of a tendency   
to the infinite, lies in the bosom of savage as

\* The contributions to the history of the Indians are so   
numerous and common, that it is scarcely necessary to   
make any special references. Heckewelder's “Historical   
Account,” published in the first volume of the Transactions   
of the Historical and Literary Committee of the American   
Philosophical Society, is written in an attractive manner   
and with a deep interest in the subject. Heckewelder,   
however, is considered by some as having been too credo-  
­lous and partial to be a trustworthy authority. It is   
thought that he was disposed to paint in glowing colors   
every thing pertaining to Indian life and character, es-  
­pecially among his favorite tribe, the Delawares. See an   
able article in the North American Review, Vol. XXVI.   
pp. 366- 386; and a spirited and interesting examination   
of the strictures made by the writer of that article, in the   
United States Literary Gazette, Vol. IV. pp. 262-374.

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well as of civilized man. The religious senti-  
­ment is there, however wild, confused, or faint   
may be its developement, reminding us that   
“under the ashes of our collapsed nature there   
are yet remaining sparks of celestial fire.”   
There has been much discussion, and no little   
variety of statement, respecting the religion of   
the American Indians. Some have declared   
that they had no religion whatever.\* This   
erroneous assertion was the result, partly of   
scanty observation, and partly of the wary re-  
­luctance of the natives to make any communi­-  
cations on the subject. The religion of the   
Indians in its general features resembled that   
of other uncivilized tribes. They recognised   
the divine power in forms suitable to their   
rude conceptions. The developements of this   
sentiment resembled in some degree the poly-  
­theism of ancient times. Each part or mani-  
­festation of nature was supposed to have its   
peculiar subordinate god. There was the sun   
god, the moon god, and so of other things.   
That disposition to believe in an invisible   
  
 \* Winslow fell into this mistake, winch however he   
afterwards corrected; “Whereas,” says he, “myself and   
others in former letters wrote, that the Indians about us   
are a people without any religion, or knowledge of any   
God, therein I erred, though we could then gather no   
better.” -- Good Newes from New England, 2 M. H. Coll.  
IX. 91. A similar error is found in the accounts of   
Hearne and Colden.

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agency concerned in each particular movement   
or object, which is in fact the unfashioned pre-  
­sentiment of the true doctrine of the Infinite   
Agent, was a striking part of their faith. Every   
thing in nature had its spirit; but these Manittos   
were of different rank and influence. The In­-  
dian felt the sentiment, which in more graceful   
or beautiful forms the imaginative religion of   
poetry has always loved to cherish;

“Live not the stars and mountains? Are the waves   
 Without a spirit?”

When the storm or the thunder-gust was ris-  
­ing, he would beg the Manitto of the air to   
avert its terrors; and when he committed his   
light skiff to the bosom of the mighty lake, he   
would pray to the Manitto of the waters to   
calm the swell of its heaving waves.” When   
any thing, which he did not understand, took   
place, or any exploit, indicating wonderful   
ability or skill, was performed, he exclaimed,   
it is a spirit.† But with this polytheism the   
Indians united a belief in one presiding or   
chief deity, the author of good, who lived far   
in the west part of the heavens, and in another   
great being, the source of all evil and mischief;   
a creed which contained the seminal principles

\* HECKEWELDER's Historical Account, p. 205.   
 † So, too, the philosopher in ancient times affirmed,   
“Nemo igitur vir magnus sine aliquo afflatu divino unquam   
fuit,” -- CIC, de Nat. Deorum, Lib. II. 66.

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of the Manichean doctrine. The notion of   
some form of existence after the present, and   
the crude elements of the doctrine of retribu-  
­tion, were found among them. Their concep­-  
tions of a future life were sometimes connected   
in a touching manner with the affections and   
sympathies growing out of the relations of this   
life.\* But in these respects, doubtless, there   
were differences among them corresponding to   
individual susceptibilities and habits of feeling.   
 Something in the nature of a priesthood was   
found among the New England Indians. They   
had an order of men and women called pow­-  
aws, in whose connexion with invisible powers   
they had great faith. The common office of   
these persons was to cure diseases by means   
of herbs, roots, exorcisms, and magical in­-  
cantations. A powaw, in short, was at once   
priest, physician, and juggler. This order   
of men, we may readily suppose, exercised a   
strong and fearful influence over a people dis-  
­posed by ignorance to see the mysterious only   
in its grossest forms, and to tremble before it.   
Their power was. found to present a formidable   
obstacle to the spread of Christianity; “for,”   
said the Indians, “if we once pray to God, we   
must abandon our powaws, and then, when we

\* See a beautiful instance of this in CARVER'S Travels,   
p. 231.

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are sick and wounded, who shall heal our   
maladies?”\*   
 Such, among the Indians, were the principal   
elements of that religious sentiment, which is   
an indestructible part of man's nature, and   
which always struggles forth into some out­-  
ward expressions, however gross and barbar­-  
ous. These were the minds, upon which and   
for which Eliot was to work. His task was   
certainly a laborious one; and it required a   
strong faith, like his, to make it lighter by the   
encouragement of hope.   
 When the settlement of New England began,   
an interest in the civilization and conversion   
of the Indians was felt by many in the mother   
country. Among others, Dr. Lake, the Bishop   
of Bath and Wells, had the object so much at   
heart, as to declare that nothing but his old   
age prevented him from going to America and   
devoting himself to the work. In the charter   
granted by Charles the First to the Massachu-  
­setts colony, this was mentioned as a principal

\* On the religion of the. Indians, Gookin (1 M. H. Coll. I.   
154, et seq.); Dr. Jarvis's learned and able Discourse before   
the New York Historical Society, December. 20th, 1819;   
Heckewelder's Historical Account; and Lafitau, Maeuras   
du Savages Ameriquains, may be consulted with advan-  
­tage. On the general subject of the religion of savage   
life, there are many fine remarks in the work of Constant,   
De la Religion, &c.

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object.\* In the Plymouth colony, for many   
years after the landing, but little was or could   
be done in a systematic way towards bringing   
the natives within the Christian church. “O   
that you had converted some, before you killed   
any,” said John Robinson in a letter to the   
governor of Plymouth. The wish was an ex-  
­pression of a pious concern honorable to the   
good man; but the circumstances of the Pil-  
­grim fathers must vindicate their conduct from   
any blame, which it might imply. A few in­-  
stances occurred, in which the interest of the   
Indians was excited towards the religion of   
their new neighbors. One of them in 1622   
was induced, by the supposed answer from   
Heaven to the prayer of the English for rain, to   
forsake his tribe, and seek some knowledge of   
the Englishman's God. Two years after the   
English settled in Massachusetts, Sagamore   
John, who had from the first been kind and   
courteous to them, contracted an affection for

\* In this instrument the desire is expressed, that the   
settlers "maie wynn and incite the Natives of the Country   
to the Knowledg and Obedience of the onlie true God and   
Sauior of Mankinde, and the Christian Fayth, which in our   
Royall Intencon, and the Adventurers free Profession, is   
the principall Ende of this Plantacion,” - HAZARD'S State   
Papers, Vol. I. p. 252. It should perhaps be mentioned,   
that the device on the seal of the Massachusetts colony   
was an Indian with a label at his mouth, containing the   
words “Come over and help us.”

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their religion, but was soon carried off by the   
small-pox. One of the Pequots, named We­-  
quash, was so impressed with the destruction   
of his tribe, that he importuned the Christians   
to make him acquainted with their God; and   
having become, as was supposed, a sincere con-  
­vert, is said to have died by poison given him   
by his incensed follow-savages. Hiacoomes,   
the distinguished Indian of Martha's Vineyard,   
was converted in 1643. But these were inci­-  
dental cases, not resulting from systematic   
efforts on the part of our fathers. Probably   
they judged wisely in not making such efforts,   
till they had become better acquainted with the   
Indian character. Besides, the care, toil, and   
anxiety which gathered around the work of an   
infant settlement, “res dura et regni novitas,”   
the quarrels in which they were involved with   
the natives, and the disturbances among them­-  
selves, were sufficient for some time to occupy   
all their industry, and engross all their energy.   
 But at length a direct action was awakened   
on this subject. In 1646 an order was passed   
by the General Court of Massachusetts to pro-  
­mote the diffusion of Christianity among the   
aboriginal inhabitants. The elders of the   
churches were requested to consider how it   
might be best effected.” It was probably this   
proceeding on the part of the government,

\* Hutchinson, Vol. I. p. 151.

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which fixed the immediate attention of Mr.   
Eliot on the project. He had, however, long   
felt a deep concern for the moral condition of   
the natives; a concern inspired by his sancti-  
­fied love of doing good, and increased proba-  
­bly by his belief, that the Indians were the   
descendants of the lost tribes of Israel. This   
theory, among the numerous conjectures on the   
origin of the natives of America, has found   
advocates not deficient in learning or talents,   
however weak may be the foundation on which   
their reasoning rests.\*

\* This much agitated topic still remains one of “the   
vexed questions” of historical criticism. The theory es-  
­poused by Mr. Eliot was zealously defended by Adair, and   
more recently by Dr. Boudinot in his “Star in the West.”   
I find that in Allen's Biographical Dictionary, and in   
Holmes's American Annals (second edit. Vol. I. p. 434), a   
work on this subject is ascribed to Eliot, entitled “The   
Jews in America.” This, however, is a mistake. Thomas   
Thorowgood, one of the Assembly of Divines, published at   
London, in 1650, a work entitled “Jewes in America, or   
Probabilities that the Americans are of that Race,” &c.   
To this book Cotton Mather alludes in one of his poor puns,   
when he says, that Eliot “saw some learned men looking   
for the lost Israelites among the Indians in America, and   
counting that they had thorow-good reasons for doing so.”   
In 1660 a second part of Thorowgood's work was published   
in London, with the title, “Jewes in America; or Proba­-  
bilities that those Indians are Judaical, made more probable   
by some Additionals to the former Conjectures.” To this   
part “an accurate Discourse is premised by Mr. John Eliot   
(who first preached the Gospel to the Natives in their own

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Mr. Eliot had been for some time assiduously   
employed in learning the Indian language. To   
accomplish this, he secured the assistance of   
one of the natives, who could speak English.   
Eliot, at the close of his Indian Grammar;   
mentions him as “a pregnant-witted young   
man, who had been a servant in an English   
house, who pretty well understood his own   
language, and had a clear pronunciation.”\*  
  
  
Language) touching their Origination, and his Vindication   
of the Planters.” See Rich's valuable “Catalogue of   
Books relating principally to America,” Part I. p. 86. The   
connexion of Mr. Eliot's name with the book, by means   
of his “Discourse,” was probably the occasion of the work   
being erroneously ascribed to him.   
 \* Mr. Eliot had previously spoken of him in a letter   
written in 1648. “There is,” he says, “an Indian living   
with Mr. Richard Calicott of Dorchester, who was taken in   
the Pequott Warres, though belonging to Long Island;   
this Indian is ingenious, can read; and I taught him to   
write, which he quickly learnt, though I know not what use   
he now maketh of it; he was the first that I made use of to   
teach me words and to be my Interpreter.” This young   
man was then about to join the church in Dorchester. --  
WINSLOW'S Glorious Progresse of the Gospel, p. 19. The   
name of this Indian is supposed by Drake (Book of the   
Indians, b. II. p. 111) to have been Job Nesutan; and for   
this he quotes the authority of Gookin's History, &c. of the   
Christian Indians. But Gookin's assertion does not prove   
so much. He says, that Job Nesutan “was a very good   
linguist in the English tongue, and was Mr. Eliot's assist-  
­ant and interpreter in his translation of the Bible and other   
books in the Indian language.” Whether he was Eliot's   
first teacher in the language does not appear; it is not   
improbable, however, that he was.

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He took this Indian into his family, and by   
constant intercourse with him soon became   
sufficiently conversant with the vocabulary and   
construction of the language to translate the   
ten commandments, the Lord's prayer, and   
several passages of Scripture, besides compos-  
­ing exhortations and prayers.   
 Here was a task, which must have been   
formidable enough to discourage any one,   
whose motives had been those of mere curi-  
­osity. The language, which this devoted man   
resolved to acquire as an instrument to be used   
in the cause of religion, must have present-  
­ed appalling difficulties. The Indian tongues   
have of late years been made a subject of curi-  
­ous inquiry by learned philologists. For a long   
time it had been customary to describe them   
as wretchedly poor and meagre dialects, com­-  
posed only of barbarous and irregular jargon.   
This is found to be an entire mistake, with re-  
­spect to the languages both of the northern   
and southern tribes. They are represented to   
be copiously expressive in their stock of words,   
and remarkably regular in their structure.   
 Whatever may be said of the scanty fund of   
ideas in the mind of the savage, and however   
it may be supposed that these must be con-  
­fined to the obvious forms and phenomena of   
material things, yet the fact that the whole   
Bible could be translated into his language and

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be made intelligible to him, affords sufficient   
evidence, that moral relations and even meta-  
­physical ideas could be adequately expressed   
in his speech, however destitute it might be of   
the polished refinement, or the critical precis-  
­ion, belonging to the tongues of civilized na-  
­tions. The long words, which are found in   
the Indian languages present indeed a formida­-  
ble aspect, and seem to set pronunciation at   
defiance. Cotton Mather, who loved a jest   
and superstition about equally well, thought   
they must have been growing ever since the   
confusion at Babel. He tells us in the same   
breath, that he once put some demons upon   
their skill in the tongues, and found that   
though they could manage to understand Latin,   
Greek, and Hebrew very well, they were   
utterly baffled by the speech of the American   
natives. The language, which thus sorely   
puzzled the demons, has been discovered by   
the inquiries of indefatigable scholars to be an   
important branch of grammatical research.\*

\* For information concerning the Indian languages,   
which exhibit many curious and remarkable phenomena,   
the reader is referred to the labors of those accomplished   
American scholars, Pickering and Duponceau, in their   
Observation, and Notes on Eliot’s, Indian Grammar,   
(2 M. H. Coll, IX. 223, &c.); the Correspondence between   
Heckewelder and Duponceau (Transactions of the Hist.   
and Lit. Com. of the Am. Phil. Soc. I. 357 -448); Edwards's   
Observations, (2 M. H. Coll. X. 81-134), to which Dugald

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 Mr. Eliot must have found his task any thing   
but easy or inviting. He was to learn a dia-  
­lect, in which he could be assisted by no affin-  
­ity with the languages he already knew. He   
was to do this without the help of any written   
or printed specimens, with nothing in the shape   
of a grammar or analysis, but merely by oral   
communication with his Indian instructer, or   
with other natives, who, however comparatively   
intelligent, must from the nature of the case   
have been very imperfect teachers. He applied   
himself to the work with great patience and   
sagacity, carefully noting the differences be-  
­tween the Indian and the English modes of   
constructing words; and, having once got a   
clew to this, he pursued every noun and verb   
he could think of through all possible varia-  
­tions. In this way he arrived at analyses and   
rules, which he could apply for himself in a   
general manner.   
 Neal says, that Eliot was able to speak the   
language intelligibly after conversing with the

Stewart refers with much interest in the third volume of   
his Philosophy; and the Appendix to the sixth volume of   
the Encyclopaedia Americana. The celebrated German   
work, Mithridates, oder allgemeine Sprachenkunde, &c., by   
Adelung, Vater, and Humboldt, is a wonderful treasury of   
research. Roger Williams's Key into the Language of   
America. reprinted by the Rhode Island Historical Soci-  
­ety, in 1827, as well as Eliot's Grammar, affords valuable   
aid in these curious inquiries.

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Indian servant a few months.\* This in a limited   
sense may be true; but he is said to have been   
engaged two years in the process of learning,   
before he went to preach to the Indians. In   
that time he acquired a somewhat ready facility   
in the use of that dialect, by means of which he   
was to carry the instructions of spiritual truth   
to the men of the forest, though as late as   
1649 he still lamented his want of skill in this   
respect.   
 When we consider the irksomeness of the   
effort to learn, at the middle age of life, a new   
tongue, remote in its character and derivation   
from any already known to us, even with all the   
aids of well-prepared books and trained instruct-  
­ters, we may form some estimate of the invin­-  
cible perseverance, the unwearied zeal, which   
could impel Mr. Eliot to undertake, alone and   
under every discouragement and difficulty, to   
explore a dialect, that not only had no literary   
treasures to reward his toil, but was merely   
the unwritten medium of intercourse among the   
squalid and barbarous natives of the wilder-  
­ness. Nothing but the sustaining influence of   
a pious purpose, joined with great natural en­-  
ergy of spirit, could have carried him through   
so heavy a labor. In the annals of literary   
industry it is related of Cato, that he learned   
Greek at an advanced age, and of Dr.Johnson,   
  
 \* History of New England, Vol I. p. 242.

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that he studied Dutch a few years before his   
death. In these cases there were abundant   
helps and allurements. But a more honorable   
fact is recorded of John Eliot, when it is told   
that he found his way, through so many ob­-  
stacles, to the acquisition of a language, which   
offered nothing to gratify taste or to impart   
wisdom, solely that he might use the spoken   
and written word for his God and his Savior.   
Well might he· say, as he does with pious   
simplicity of heart at the end of his Indian   
Grammar, "Prayer and pains through faith in   
Christ Jesus will do any thing.”

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CHAPTER IV.

Eliot's First Visits to the Indians at Nonantum.

MR. ELIOT'S mental powers had now reached   
the maturity of their strength; his habits of   
judgment were well formed and ripened; his   
zeal in the service of religion had by long ex­-  
ercise grown into a deep as well as fervent   
principle of action. He was in the forty-second   
year of his age, when he began to devote him­-  
self to the work of preaching Christianity to   
the natives of New England. From the interest   
he had taken in their language and their wel­-  
fare he was no stranger to such of the Indians,   
as might be found in the neighborhood of   
Roxbury. It may be presumed, that he had   
already by personal acquaintance gained the   
respect, perhaps the affection of some among   
them. It would seem from his own account,   
that he had frequently conversed with the In-  
­dians on topics relating to their improvement,   
before he visited them at their dwellings.   
Some of them were so struck with the advan­-  
tages of the habits of civilized life, that they   
were desirous of adopting the customs of the   
English. They expressed their belief, that in   
forty years many of their people would be

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“all one” with the English, and that in a  
hundred. years they would all be so. They   
hoped to coalesce with the white man, instead   
of vanishing before him. Eliot was much af­-  
fected by this declaration. He endeavored to   
make them understand, that the causes of the   
superiority of the English were their posses-  
­sion of the knowledge of the true God, and   
their skilful industry in the mechanical arts,   
and in providing for themselves the comforts   
of life by regular labor. They then lamented   
their ignorance of God, and wished to be   
taught how they might serve him. Eliot, glad   
to find their interest thus excited, told them   
he would visit them at their wigwams, and in­-  
struct them, together with their wives and   
children, in the truths of religion. This prom-  
­ise they received with much joy.\*  
 Notice having been given of his intention,   
Mr. Eliot in company with three others, whose   
names are not mentioned, having implored the   
divine blessing on the undertaking, made his   
first visit to the Indians on the 28th of Octo-  
­ber, 1646, at a place afterwards called Nonan-  
­tum, a spot, that has the honor of being the   
first, on which a civilized and Christian settle-  
­ment of Indians' was effected within the Eng-

\* Mr. Eliot's letter to Shepard in “The Clear Sun-shine   
of the Gospel breaking forth upon the Indians in New   
England," p. 17.

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lish colonies of North America. This name   
was given to the high grounds in the north-  
­east part of Newton, and to the bounds of that   
town and Watertown. At a short distance   
from the wigwams, they were met by Waban,   
a leading man among the Indians at that place,   
accompanied by others, and were welcomed   
with “English salutations.”\* Waban, who is   
described as “the chief minister of justice   
among them,” had before shown a better dis-  
­position, than any other native, to receive the   
religious instruction of the Christians, and had   
voluntarily proposed to have his eldest son   
educated by them. His son had been accord-  
­ingly placed at school in Dedham, whence he   
had now come to attend the meeting.   
 The Indians assembled in Waban's wigwam;   
and thither Mr. Eliot and his friends were con-  
­ducted. When the company were all collected   
and quiet, a religious service was begun with   
prayer. This was uttered in English; the   
reason for which, as given by Mr. Eliot and   
his companions, was, that he did not then feel   
  
 \* Mr. Carne, who permits imagination, in some in-  
­stances, to take the place of sober history, describes Mr.   
Eliot as approaching the Indians with “his translation of   
the Scriptures, like a calumet of peace and love, in his   
hand.” – Lives of Eminent Missionaries, Vol. I. p. 10. Mr.   
Carne should have remembered that the translation was not   
accomplished till many years after this event.

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sufficiently acquainted with the Indian lan-  
­guage to use it in that service. The scruple   
may, at first sight, seem overstrained, when we   
remember that the meaning of the heart, not   
the words of the lips, constitute the essence of   
prayer. But the good man doubtless deemed   
it irreverent to use in an exercise of devotion   
those imperfect expressions, which might pos­-  
sibly convey improper or defective ideas to the   
rude minds of his hearers; an effect which,   
especially at the outset, he would justly think   
was by all means to be avoided. The same   
difficulty would not occur in preaching, since   
for this, we may suppose, he had sufficiently pre-  
­pared his thoughts and expressions to make his   
discourse intelligible on all important points;   
and if he should, in some parts, fail of being   
understood, he could repeat or correct himself,   
till he should succeed better. Besides, he   
took with him an interpreter, who was fre­-  
quently able to express his instructions more   
distinctly, than he could himself. Though the   
prayer was unintelligible to the Indians, yet,   
as they knew what the nature of the service   
was, Mr. Eliot believed it might be not without   
an effect in subduing their feelings so as to   
prepare them better to listen to the preaching.   
It was moreover intended as an exercise of the   
heart for himself and his brethren, with regard   
to the duty before them.

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Mr. Eliot. then began his sermon, or ad­-  
dress, from Ezek. xxxvii. 9, 10. The word   
wind, in this passage suggested to the minds   
of some, who afterwards gave an account of   
this meeting, a coincidence which might, in   
the spirit of the times, be construed into a   
special appointment of Providence. The name   
of Waban signified, in the Indian tongue, wind;   
so that when the preacher uttered the words,   
“say to the wind,” it was as if he had pro­-  
claimed, “say to Waban.” As this man after-  
­wards exerted much influence in awaking the   
attention of his fellow savages to Christiani­-  
ty, it might seem that in this first visit of   
the messengers of the gospel he was singled   
out by a special call to work in the cause. It   
is not surprising that the Indians were struck   
with the coincidence. Mr. Eliot gave no coun­-  
tenance to a superstitious use of the circum­-  
stance, and took care to tell them that, when   
he chose his text, he had no thought of any   
such application.\*  
 In his discourse from this passage, the   
preacher stated and explained to the untaught   
minds of the assembly some of the leading   
truths of natural religion, and of Christianity.   
He repeated the ten commandments with brief   
comments, and set forth the fearful conse-  
­quences of violating them, with special appli-

\* SHEPARD'S Clear Sunshine of the Gospel, &c., p. 33.

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cations to the condition of his audience. He   
spoke of the creation and fall of man, the   
greatness of God, the means of salvation by   
Jesus Christ, the happiness of faithful believ-  
­ers, and the final misery of the wicked, adding   
such persuasions to repentance as he supposed   
might touch their hearts. He did not choose   
to take up more abstruse matters, till he had   
given his untutored hearers a taste of “plain   
and familiar truths.” Of the topics which have   
been mentioned, though high and difficult in   
themselves, the preacher probably presented   
only the most simple points, illustrated by   
homely explanations. The sermon was an hour   
and a quarter long. One cannot hut suspect,   
that Mr. Eliot injudiciously crowded too much   
into one address. It would seem to have been   
better, for the first time at least, to have given   
a shorter sermon, and to have touched upon   
fewer subjects. But he was doubtless borne   
on by his zeal to do much in a good cause,   
and, as we have reason to think, by the atten-  
­tive, though vague, curiosity of the Indians.   
 The scene presents itself to our imaginations   
as one of deep interest. Here was a gifted   
scholar, educated amidst the classic shades of   
an English university, exiled from his native   
land for conscience' sake, a man of high dis-  
­tinction in the churches of New England,   
standing among the humble and rude huts of

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the forest, surrounded by a peaceful group of   
savages, on whose countenances might be   
traced the varieties of surprise, belief, vacan­-  
cy, and perhaps half-suppressed scorn, seeking   
to find some points of intercourse between his   
own cultivated mind and their gross concept-  
­tions, that spiritual truth might enter into their   
hearts, and leave its light and blessing there.   
The communication of Christian instruction in   
such a place, and under such circumstances,   
has an affecting significance. To use the beau­-  
tiful illustration in the original narrative of   
this visit, it was breaking the alabaster box   
of precious ointment in the dark and gloomy   
habitations of the unclean.   
 Our natural curiosity to know how this dis­-  
course was received can be in some measure   
gratified. When the sermon was ended, Mr.   
Eliot asked the Indians whether they under-  
­stood what he had said. Many voices at once   
answered in the affirmative. They were then   
requested to propose any questions, which   
might have occurred to them in connexion   
with the discourse. This drew from them   
the following queries. First; how they might   
be brought to know Jesus Christ. Second;   
whether God or Jesus Christ could understand   
prayers in the Indian language. Third; wheth­-  
er there ever was a time, when the English   
were as ignorant of divine things as them-

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selves. Fourth; bow could there be an image   
of God, since it was forbidden in the fourth   
commandment. Fifth; whether, if a father be   
bad and his child good, God will be offended   
with the child; a question referring to what is   
said in the second commandment. Sixth; how   
came the world so full of people, if they were   
all once drowned in the flood. These inquiries   
seem natural, and some of them indicate a   
more attentive state of mind, and deeper re­-  
flection, than could have been expected. The   
second question affords a striking instance of   
the views, which men in the lowest stage of   
culture entertain of the attributes of the Deity.  
It arose from the circumstance, that one of the   
Indians, while praying in his own language,   
was interrupted by another, who told him it   
was useless to pray except in English, because   
prayers in the Indian tongue would not be   
understood by a Being, who had been accus­-  
tomed to hear them only in English. This   
anecdote is valuable as an illustration of the   
manner, in which the religious sentiment is   
developed among savage tribes. The fifth   
question is not without interest, as exhibiting   
a tendency to more precise ideas of moral jus-  
­tice, than are commonly found in the specu-  
­lations of uncivilized man. All these que-  
­ries were answered by their visiters somewhat   
at length, and with a judiciously directed

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endeavor to meet and satisfy their state of   
mind.   
 Mr. Eliot and his companions, wishing to   
interest and enlighten them still further, pro­-  
posed in their turn a few questions, adapted to   
draw out their thoughts respecting what they   
had heard. They asked the Indians, whether   
they would not like to see God, and whether   
they were not tempted to doubt of his exist-  
­ence, because they could not see him. To this   
some of them replied, that, although an actual   
sight of this great Being would please them   
much, yet they believed he was not to be seen   
with the eyes of the body, but by “their soul   
within.” The answer implies a wise and   
thoughtful recognition of a great principle;   
but it may have been only the verbal repetition   
of what they had learned. Mr. Eliot then   
asked them whether they found no difficulty in   
believing, that one God should be in many   
different and distant places at the same time.   
Their reply was, that it did seem strange to   
them, yet they thought it might be true. Their   
instructer happily illustrated this point to their   
apprehensions by comparing the divine omni­-  
presence to the light of the sun, which, while   
it shone in one wigwam, shone also in the   
next, and. all over Massachusetts, and across   
the big waters in old England also. He next   
inquired of them, whether, when they had done

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wrong, they did not feel trouble within, and   
where they hoped to find comfort when they   
should die. This appeal to the inextinguish-  
­able power of the moral faculty in the human   
breast, and to the sentiment of immortality,   
was answered by the confession, that they did   
feel distressed when they had sinned, and that   
they wished for further light on the subject;   
“for,” says the account, “some knowledge of   
the immortality of the soul almost all of them   
have.” Their reply gave their teacher an   
opportunity to aim some pungent remarks at   
their consciences and their fears.   
 Thus ended a conference three hours long,   
at the end of which the Indians affirmed that   
they were not weary, and requested their   
visiters to come again. They expressed a   
wish to build a town and live together. Mr.   
Eliot promised to intercede for them with the   
court. He and his companions then gave the   
men some tobacco, and the children some   
apples, and bade them farewell.   
 A fortnight afterwards, on the 11th of No-  
vember, Mr. Eliot and his friends repeated   
their visit to the wigwam of Waban. This   
meeting was more numerous than the former   
The religious service was opened, as before,   
with a prayer in English. This was followed   
by a few brief and plain questions addressed   
to the children, admitting short and easy

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answers. The children seemed well disposed   
to listen and learn. To encourage them, Mr.   
Eliot gave them occasionally an apple or a   
cake;\* and the adults were requested to re­-  
peat to them the instructions that had been   
given. He then preached to the assembly in   
their own language, telling them that he had   
come to bring them good news from God, and   
show them how wicked men might become   
good and happy, and in general discoursing on   
nearly the same topics as he had treated at his   
first visit.   
 This was succeeded by conversation, in   
which questions were proposed and answered.   
One aged Indian touched the feelings of his   
instructers by asking whether it were not too   
late for such an old man as he to repent and   
seek God. Their reply was an appropriate   
illustration of the paternal mercy of the divine   
character. They told the aged savage, that, as   
a good father is always glad to welcome home   
a son penitent for the wrong he has done, so   
God would at no time refuse to pardon and   
receive one of his repenting children. Some   
of the assembly then desired to know how it   
happened, that the English differed so much   
from the Indians in their knowledge of God,   
since they all had one common Father; a   
   
 \* This pleasant little circumstance is mentioned   
by Winthrop, Vol. II. p. 304.

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question which furnished Mr. Eliot with an   
opportunity to give them some explanation of   
the religious history of mankind. Another in-  
­quiry was, how they might be brought to serve   
God; in answer to which they were told, that   
they must first feel their unworthiness, then   
seek forgiveness, and strive to know God's   
will, as a dutiful child would seek to know his   
father's will. A fourth· question was proposed,   
which indicated a curiosity about natural phe-  
­nomena. How comes it to pass, said they,   
that the sea water is salt, and the land water   
fresh? The reply was, that it was God's   
pleasure to make them so, in the same way as   
strawberries are sweet and cranberries sour,   
for which there is no reason except that the   
Creator so constituted them. However, an at­-  
tempt was made to explain the natural causes   
and uses of the fact in question; but these, it   
is stated, were “less understood.” This was   
followed by another question of a like charac-  
­ter, namely, If the water be higher than the   
earth, why does it not overflow the earth?   
To meet this difficulty, their visiters held up   
an apple, and “showed them how the earth   
and water made one round globe, like that   
apple;” and they compared the sea to a great   
hole or ditch, into which when water is poured,   
it is confined, and cannot overflow. The last   
point they proposed was a question of casuistry;

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If an Indian should steal goods, and not be   
punished by the sachem or by any law, and   
then should restore the goods, would all be   
well and right, or would God still punish him   
for his theft? They were taught, that such   
conduct would be an offence to God, who, if it   
were not repented of, would punish the trans-  
­gressor, even if he should escape punishment   
from man. There was a higher law, than hu-  
­man law, to which they must answer for their   
conduct.   
 When the Indians had made an end of their in-  
­quiries, Mr. Eliot and his companions proposed   
to them only two questions, the object of which   
was to discover whether they remembered and   
believed what they had heard. The meeting   
was closed with prayer. This was expressed   
in the Indian language, chiefly for the reason   
that some doubt had formerly been raised   
whether prayers in that tongue were under-  
­stood in Heaven; a doubt which was probably   
strengthened by Mr. Eliot's practice at the   
first meeting. During the devotional exercise,   
one of the assembly was deeply affected, even   
to tears, illustrating the fine remark of Madame   
de Stael, that “to pray together, in whatever   
language and according to whatever ritual it   
may be, is the most affecting bond of hope and   
sympathy, which man can contract on earth.”   
After the prayer, the English visiters had some

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conversation with this man, when he wept still   
more, and seemed pierced to the heart by the   
pungent power of divine truth. The fervent   
appeals and the touching descriptions in Eliot's   
preaching may well be supposed to have stirred   
up strong emotions in a rude breast, brought   
for the first time to feel, however confusedly,   
the reality of spiritual things; and in that ex-  
­citement might be the germ of an inward life,   
which needed only time and opportunity to   
grow into fulness and strength. The whole   
afternoon was spent in this visit; and as   
nightfall approached, Mr. Eliot and the others   
returned to their homes.   
 A third interview with these Indians took   
place on the 26th of November, at which the   
writer of the narrative before referred to was   
not present. He has however given a brief   
account of it, which he had from Mr. Eliot,   
“the man of God,” as he calls him, “who then   
preached to them.” Some impediments had   
been thrown in the way of the good work since   
the last meeting by persuasions and menaces.   
Neal ascribes this mischievous interference to   
the powaws or priests.\* But Eliot's account   
does not specify them particularly; though it   
is natural to suppose that their agency was not   
wanting in the business. This circumstance   
gave the preacher occasion to warn the Indians

\* History of New England, Vol. I. p. 244.

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against the temptations of the Devil; which,   
as the account affirms, he did with great pun-  
­gency and effect. The Indians were more   
serious than ever. Among the questions they   
started were the following; Whether it were   
lawful, as some of their people affirmed, to   
pray to the Devil; what was meant by humili­-  
ation; why the English called them Indians;   
what a spirit is; whether dreams are to be   
believed. To all which, as the narrative states,   
they had fit answers; but these are not given.   
 On the Saturday night after this third meet­-  
ing, a judicious Indian, by the name of Wampas,   
went as a messenger from Nonantum to Mr.   
Eliot's house in Roxbury. He took with him   
his own son, and three other children. He   
asked permission to leave them with the Eng-  
­lish, that they might be educated to know   
God; for, he said, if they remained at home,   
they would grow up in rudeness and wicked-  
­ness. The children were at the ages of four,   
five, eight, and nine years. What became of   
them we know not. We only learn that Wam-  
­pas received a promise, with which he was   
satisfied, that his request should be complied   
with as soon as convenience would permit.   
This would seem to have presented a favorable   
opportunity for trying the experiment of a   
Christian education upon Indian children; and   
it would be gratifying to learn the result.

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W am pas was attended by two young and   
strong Indians, who wished to find employ-  
­ment as servants in English families, that they   
might be in the way of knowing and enjoying   
the true religion. These were among the num-  
­ber, who had appeared deeply affected at the   
Nonantum meetings. How long their good   
impressions lasted, we are not informed; but   
situations were obtained for them in families,   
according to their request.   
 Mr. Eliot experienced great satisfaction in   
being informed of the zeal of Waban. On the   
night after the third meeting, this man had   
been heard by an English youth instructing   
his company in the truths they had listened to   
from the preacher that day; and, when he   
awoke in the night, he would be continually   
praying and exhorting. Eliot's companion ex­-  
presses his belief, that this man might become   
an instrument of great usefulness, but still does   
not conceal his apprehension that “cowardice   
or witchery” might blast the hopeful promise   
in this, as in some other cases; a fear, which   
in the instance of Waban was not realized.   
 It is further related, that the old man, who   
asked the affecting question at the second   
meeting, had six sons, one of whom, and his   
wife, were powaws. These had resolved to   
abandon their sorceries and to seek Christian   
instruction; for they now believed that God

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was the only author of good, and they would   
have nothing more to do with Chepian, that is,   
the Devil. The young Indians, who had ac­-  
companied Wampas, explained to the English   
the manner, in which their powaws were made;   
and it is a somewhat curious fact in the history   
of the religion of barbarous tribes. It seems,   
that if any Indian happened to have a certain   
strange dream, in which Chepian appeared to   
him in the form of a serpent, the next day he   
would relate his dream to his companions.   
This was immediately regarded by them as an   
intimation from the invisible world, that the   
person so visited in his sleep must be made   
a powaw. The Indians consequently would   
gather together, and dance and rejoice around   
him for two days. This was considered as his   
institution in the office of priest; and thence-  
­forth his chief business was to cure the sick   
by magical powers and odd gesticulations.   
Yet there seems to have been nothing sacred   
in his person; if a patient died under his hands,   
he was bitterly reviled, and very likely to be   
killed by some of the friends of the deceased,   
especially if they could' not recover what they   
had paid for the promised cure; for, it ap-  
­pears, the powaw took care to get his fee   
beforehand.   
 On the 9th of December a fourth meeting of   
the Indians was held at Nonantum. Of this

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we have but a brief and general account. It   
is stated, that the Indians offered all their   
children to be instructed by the English, and   
lamented that they were unable to pay any   
thing for their education. This suggested the   
necessity of making preparations for establish-  
­ing a school among or near them; an object   
which Mr. Eliot bad always much at heart, and   
which he rightly judged to be one of the most   
important means of accomplishing his benevo-  
­lent purposes. At this meeting a passage of   
Scripture was explained, and applied to the   
condition of his hearers. Questions, as before,   
were proposed by both parties. One of the   
assembly complained of a new species of perse-  
­cution from his fellows. He stated, that they   
reviled the Christian Indians, and called them   
rogues, for cutting off their hair and wearing   
it short, as the English did. We discover an   
amusing specimen of the notions, which then   
prevailed, when we are told it was considered an   
evidence of the influence of Christianity on   
the natives, that they became sensible of “the   
vanity and pride which they placed in their   
hair,” and, without any persuasion, cut it off,   
after “the modest manner” of their civilized   
neighbors. If we are inclined to smile at this,   
we should remember, that, in times claiming to   
be more enlightened, other things, as frivolous   
and indifferent as this, have been made matters

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of religious duty. It was not long afterwards,   
that the offence of wearing long hair became   
so formidable in New England, as to induce   
grave magistrates to enter into a combination   
for its suppression. Mr. Eliot, we may pre-  
­sume, was as decided an enemy to long natural   
locks, as we shall hereafter see he was to the   
practice of wearing wigs.   
 Our good evangelist\* was much encouraged   
by the evidences of piety in Waban and some   
others. They used in their prayers such fer­-  
vent and devout expressions as these; “Take   
away, Lord, my stony heart; wash, Lord, my   
soul; Lord, lead me, when I die, to heaven.”   
These words they had not, as we might sus-  
­pect, learned by rote; for their preacher af-  
­firmed he had never used them in his prayers   
at their meetings. There were indications of a   
true religious feeling among the Indians, which   
Eliot was thankfully disposed to consider as   
omens of good. He and his companions, how­-  
ever, were not credulous. They indulged with   
caution and sobriety the hopes these meetings   
had inspired. They were well aware, to use   
the language of their narrative, that “the pro-

\* Mr. Eliot's modesty induced him earnestly to dis-  
­claim “the title of evangelist,” which he so truly deserved,   
and which designates justly his peculiar labors. See   
WHITFIELD'S Farther Discovery of the Present State of the  
Indians in New England, p. 18.

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fession of many is but a mere paint, and their   
best graces nothing but flashes and pangs,   
which are suddenly kindled, and as soon go  
out again.” But they labored in faith; for,   
they said, “God doth not usually send his  
plough and seedsman to a place, but there is   
at least some little piece of good ground, al-  
though three to one be naught.” They were  
delighted to believe, that the minds of some of  
the savages were open to the reception of   
divine truth, and that by God’s blessing the   
good seed, sown in a soil hitherto dry and   
barren, would yet spring up, and in time yield  
the true fruit.  
 I have ventured to be the more particular in  
describing these four meetings, which Eliot  
and his associates had with the Indians at   
Nonantum, because they were the commence-  
ment\* of that mission, to which he devoted so  
large a part of his life and strength, and be-  
cause they afford, probably, a fair specimen  
of his general manner of instruction. They   
bear unequivocal testimony to his singleness  
  
 \*There had indeed been a meeting at Cutshamskin’s  
wigwam, near “Dorchester mill,” six weeks before the first  
meeting at Nonantum; but it amounted to little, and I   
know not that any account of it is to be found. Mr. Eliot  
himself says, “I first began with the Indians of Noonan-  
etum” (Nonantum).—SHEPARD’S Cleare Sun-shine, &c.,   
p. 17.

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of heart, and to the kind and faithful spirit,   
in which this excellent man entered upon his   
arduous task.\*

\* For a notice of the original narrative, from which is   
taken the above account of the first visits to Nonantum,   
and of other ancient tracts used in preparing this Me­-  
moir, see APPENDIX, No. I.   
 To this place belongs an extract from the Roxbury   
Church Records in Eliot's handwriting, under the year   
1646; for which I am indebted to the kindness of the Rev.   
Mr. Putnam, and which may preserve for the curious a   
singular fact in the history of our climate. It is as fol­-  
lows. “This winter was one of the mildest that ever we   
had; no snow all winter long, nor sharp weather; but they   
had long floods at Connecticut, which was much [injury]  
to their com in the meadows. We never had a bad day   
to go and preach to the Indians all this winter, praised   
be the Lord.”

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CHAPTER V.

The Nonantum Establishment. -- Meetings and   
 Eliot's Preaching at Neponset. -- Cutshamakin.   
 -- Questions and Difficulties, proposed by the   
 Indians. -- Eliot at Concord.

MR. Error's care for the Indians was not   
confined to religious teaching. It was his   
favorite and well-known opinion, that no per-  
manent good effect could be produced by ef­-  
forts for their spiritual welfare, unless civiliza-  
­tion and social improvement should precede or   
accompany such efforts.\* In conformity with   
this sound view of the subject, he had already  
endeavored to introduce among them the bene-   
fits of a school. He now aimed to soften, and   
gradually to abolish, their savage mode of life,   
by bringing them together under some social

\* This opinion he has expressed in many passages of   
his letters. The Reverend John Danforth of Dorchester,   
who wrote verses consecrated to the memory of Eliot, put   
his hints on this subject into rhyme;

“Address, I pray, your senate for good orders   
 To civilize the heathen in our borders.”

And again;

“We hope in vain the plant of grace will thrive   
 In forests where civility can't live.''

See 1 M. H. Coll. IX. 176.

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arrangement. The Indians, with Waban at   
their head, formed the plan of a settlement,   
and framed certain laws for their own regula­-  
tion. These laws are interesting, as specimens   
of savage legislation, and as indicating the   
existing habits among these people. They re-  
­late entirely to the promotion of decency,   
cleanliness, industry, and good order.\*  
 When the natives had received a grant of   
land for the settlement, they next wished to   
find a name for it. Their English friends ad­-  
vised them to call it Noonatomen or Nonan­-  
tum, which name was accordingly adopted.†  
 They now began to work very industriously,   
being encouraged and aided by Mr. Eliot, who   
promised to furnish them with spades, shovels,   
mattocks, iron crows, &.c., and to give them   
sixpence a rod for their work on the ditches   
and walls. So zealous were they in their new   
enterprise, that he says they called for tools

\* See Day-Breaking of the Gospell, &c., p. 22.   
 † The name is variously written by different authors,   
and sometimes by the same, Nonantum, Nonandem, Noon­-  
atomen, and Noonanetum. “This towne the Indians did   
desire to know what name it should have, and it was told   
them it should bee called Noonatomen, which signifies in   
English rejoycing, because, they hearing the word and seek-  
­ing to know God, the English did rejoyce at it, and God   
did rejoyce at it, which pleased them much; and therefore   
that is to be the name of their towne.” --The Day-Breaking   
of the Gospell, &c., p. 22.

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faster than he could supply them. The wig-  
­wams they built were in a better style than   
formerly. Before this time they had used   
mats; but now they used the bark of trees in   
constructing their humble dwellings, and had   
in them distinct rooms.   
 By Eliot's direction they fenced their   
grounds with ditches and stone walls, some   
vestiges of which were remembered by persons   
in the latter part of the last century. Their   
women partook of the spirit of improvement,   
and became skilful spinners, their good teach-  
­er himself taking pains to procure wheels for   
them. They began to experience the stimulat-  
­ing advantages of traffic, and found something   
to carry to market in the neighboring towns.   
In the winter they sold brooms, staves, eel-pots,   
baskets, and turkeys; in the summer, whortle­-  
berries, grapes, and fish; in the spring and   
autumn, strawberries, cranberries, and venison.   
In the season for hay and harvest, they some-  
­times worked on wages for their English neigh-  
­bors, but were not found to be hardy and per-  
­severing laborers.   
 The impulse of improvement, however im-  
­perfect, was strongly felt. The poorest wig­-  
wams among them were equal to those of the   
princes or sachems in other places. Their in-  
­fant settlement, rude and poor as it must neces­-  
sarily have been, already began, to show, that

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man, amidst the relations of a community in   
some degree orderly, working with his own   
hands for himself and his family, is a being   
far superior to man roaming through the   
forest in reckless vagrancy, with no excitement   
to industry in any form, and dividing his time   
between hunting and sleep.   
 The interest, which Eliot took in founding   
and promoting this little establishment, is   
scarcely less honorable to his memory, than his   
labors of piety. When we thus see one, whose   
talents and attainments fitted him to stand   
with the highest in the land, busying himself   
in the minute details of such an enterprise,   
procuring tools for the men and spinning-  
­wheels for the women, advising and assisting   
them with the kindness of paternal wisdom in   
their new attempt· at social order, we cannot   
but feel, that in the humblest work of benevo-  
­lence, which man performs for his fellow man,   
there are the. elements of true moral greatness.   
We are reminded of the excellent Oberlin, the   
pastor of Waldbach, whose life is one of the   
most delightful narratives in the history of the   
lowly but important labors of devoted piety.\*

\* Hutchinson (I. 153), who is followed in the History   
of Newton (I M. H. Coll. V. 259), says, that the Indiana   
built a house for public worship at Nonantum, fifty feet   
long and twenty-five broad, which Mr. Wilson said, “ap-  
peared like the workmanship of an English housewright.”

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Thus was established a company of praying   
Indians, by which significant appellation the   
converts to Christianity became distinguished.   
 Another place for religious meetings and in-  
­struction was found at Neponset, within the   
limits of Dorchester. There our evangelist   
preached in the wigwam of a sachem named   
Cutshamakin. Gookin informs us, that this   
man was the first sachem to whom Mr. Eliot   
preached. It is probable that the operations   
at Nonantum and at Neponset were nearly   
simultaneous in their origin. They appear to   
have been carried on alternately for some time.   
 With Cutshamakin the English had entered   
into a treaty. He was one of the chiefs, who   
in 1643 made a voluntary proffer of submission   
to the government of the colony, agreeing to   
observe their laws, on condition of receiving   
the same protection which was extended to   
other subjects. When this agreement was   
ratified, they were made to understand the   
articles, and “all the ten commandments of   
God,”\* to which they gave a full assent. This   
curious specimen of the intermixture of reli-

This I suppose to be an erroneous statement. I cannot   
find that any house for public worship was built at Nonan­-  
tum. Wilson's remark was applied to the house subse-  
­quently built at Natick, which was of the dimensions here   
given. I suppose Hutchinson inadvertently transferred it   
to Nonantum.   
 \* SAVAGE's Winthrop, Vol. II. p. 157.

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gious instruction with a civil negotiation shows,   
at least, a pious solicitude on the part of our   
fathers for the good of the natives; but, we   
may suppose, the assent to the ten command­-  
ments was easily gained, if the other articles   
were satisfactory.   
 At what time Cutshamakin became a Chris­-  
tian, or professed to be such, I have not dis­-  
covered. From the circumstance of Eliot's   
giving lectures in his wigwam in 1646, it may   
be presumed, that then, if not before, he was   
favorably disposed towards the cause of the   
“praying Indians.” Mr. Eliot relates an in-  
­teresting case of discipline, which occurred in   
this man's family. A son of the sachem, fif­-  
teen years old, had been guilty of drunken-  
­ness; he had also treated his parents with   
contumacy and disobedience. When instructed   
in the Catechism by Mr. Eliot, in repeating the   
fifth commandment, he would omit the word   
mother, and was very reluctant to say honor thy   
father. For this conduct he was admonished.   
He confessed the truth of what was alleged   
against him, but at the same time accused his   
father of treating him angrily, and compelling   
him to drink sack. He was severely rebuked   
by Eliot and Wilson\* for his want of filial rev-  
­erence, but without effect.   
  
 \* Rev. John Wilson of Boston, who sometimes accom-  
­panied Mr. Eliot.

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They were aware, however, that the son's   
accusations against his father were not ground-  
­less. On the next lecture day, therefore, they   
exhorted Cutshamakin to prepare the way for   
his son's reformation by confessing his own   
sins, of which, they knew, the number was   
neither few nor light. Being thus faithfully   
admonished, be honestly acknowledged and   
bitterly lamented his offences. This example   
had a good effect on all the Indians present,   
who then joined their endeavors with those of   
Eliot and Wilson to soften the son into a peni-  
­tent state of feeling. At last the boy yielded,   
made the most humble confession, and, taking   
his father's hand, entreated his forgiveness.   
His humiliation overcame his parents so much,   
that they wept aloud; and the board on which   
the stern and passionate sachem stood was   
wet with his tears.”  
 In this anecdote, told with Eliot's charac­-  
teristic simplicity, it is delightful to recognise   
the subduing spirit of love bursting forth in   
the bosom of the savage, like a beautiful wild­-  
flower from the cleft of a rock; and we cannot   
fail to observe with pleasure the kind, judi­-  
cious, and patient discipline, by which Eliot   
and his companions brought the heart of the

\* SHEPARD'S Cleare Sun-shine of the Gospel, &c., p. 21.

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rebellious young savage into the bonds of filial   
obedience and affection.   
 A remark, made by Cutshamakin on one oc-  
­casion, shows a thoughtful and serious state of   
mind. He said, that before he knew the true   
God, he had been' at ease and satisfied with   
himself; but, since that time, he had found his   
heart full of sin, more so than he had ever im-  
­agined it to be before; “and at this day,” he   
continued, “my heart is but very little better   
than it was, and I am afraid it will be as bad   
again as it was before; therefore I sometimes   
wish I might die before I be so bad again.”  
 Cutshamakin formed a true estimate of him-  
0self, when he distrusted his own reformation.   
His wild passions were never well tamed; and   
he was never a trustworthy man, or a hopeful   
convert. At a subsequent period, about the   
time of the settlement of Natick, hereafter to   
be mentioned, he protested strenuously against   
Mr. Eliot's· proceeding to establish an Indian   
town. He was violent on the subject, and   
affirmed that all the- sachems felt as he did.   
Eliot's manner of subduing this opposition   
bears honorable testimony to his invincible   
firmness and his strong good sense. He found   
that the Indians friendly to his undertaking   
were frightened by the sachem's violence,   
turned pale, and slunk away, leaving him to   
contest the matter alone. He saw the necessity

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of prompt resolution. With calm courage he   
told Cutshamakin, that, as he was about God's   
work, he feared neither him nor the other sa-  
­chems, and that, let them do what they would,   
he should go on with his undertaking. The   
spirit of the savage sunk before this deter-  
­mined firmness, as fierce animals are said   
sometimes to be subdued by looking at them   
with a stern and steady eye. This victory over   
the violence of the chief contributed not a lit-  
­tle to strengthen the apostle's influence with   
the other Indians.   
 The matter did not rest here. When Eliot   
took leave of the meeting, Cutshamakin ac-  
­companied him a short distance, and unbur­-  
dened his heart by stating honestly the ground   
of his opposition. He alleged that the “pray­-  
ing Indians” did not pay him tribute, as they   
used to do before they became such. He was   
alarmed, therefore, at the idea of losing his   
accustomed revenues, should such settlements   
be encouraged. Mr. Eliot, finding him now   
brought to reason, treated him very kindly.   
He reminded the sachem, that this complaint   
was not a new one, and that, when he had   
heard it before, he had preached a discourse to   
inculcate upon the Indians their duty in this   
respect. Cutshamakin acknowledged that the   
teaching was good, but complained that the   
Indians would not do as they were taught;

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they would not pay the tribute; and this, he   
affirmed, was the cause of that jealousy, with   
which all the sachems observed these new   
movements.   
 Eliot saw, that here was an evil not to be   
neglected. He consulted the magistrates, Mr.   
Cotton, and the elders in Boston, on the sub-  
­ject. Mr. Cotton's discourse at the next   
Thursday lecture in Boston was to be on a   
topic appropriate to the point. Eliot, being   
apprized of this, advised such of the Indians   
as understood English to attend the lecture.   
By what they heard on that occasion, and by   
what was told them otherwise, they were much   
troubled to find themselves accused of refusing   
to pay the just tribute to their sachem. They   
declared the accusation to be false, and speci­-  
fied to Mr. Eliot all the particulars of service   
and of gifts, which they had contributed to   
Cutshamakin's revenue, such as twenty bushels   
of corn at one time, six at another, several   
days spent in hunting for him, fifteen deer   
killed for him, breaking two acres of land,   
building a large wigwam for him, &.c. All   
these Mr. Eliot set down in writing; and,   
though they were contributed but by a few, he   
found to his surprise that they amounted to   
nearly thirty pounds. He now saw, that the   
sachem's complaint was groundless, and that   
the real source of his resentment was in the

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diminution of that despotic power, which he   
once exercised over his subjects, and by which   
he could dispose of their lives and goods at   
pleasure. He still received a just and reason-  
­able tribute; but the authority to exact what-  
­ever he might choose was questioned, and he   
was sometimes freely admonished of the faults   
of his government.   
 Mr. Eliot had now the difficult task of con­-  
vincing Cutshamakin of the injustice of his   
complaints. At the next meeting of the In-  
­dians he took with him an elder by the name   
of Heath. They found the sachem sullen with   
resentment, and turning on them very sour   
looks. Of this they took no notice, and Mr.   
Eliot proceeded to preach as usual. He took   
for his subject the account of the temptation   
in the fourth chapter of Matthew. When he   
came to the explanation of the eighth and   
ninth verses, he applied it to Cutshamakin's   
case, told him that he was guilty of wicked   
ambition and lust of power, that a temptation   
from Satan was upon him, soliciting him to   
give up praying to God, that is, being a Chris-  
­tian, for the sake of recovering the greatness   
of his former arbitrary dominion. The preach­-  
er exhorted him to reject the temptation, warn­-  
ing him that otherwise God would reject him.   
The appeal was not lost on the sachem. After   
the discourse, Mr. Eliot and the elder had

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“much conference” with him. At length he   
appeared satisfied, and returned to a fair and   
orderly course of conduct.\* But he was al­-  
ways an unsafe man, veering about with every   
gust of passion, violent equally in his offences   
and his repentance.   
 Mr. Eliot's conduct on this occasion is cer-  
­tainly worthy of all praise, both for the im-  
­movable firmness with which he repulsed the   
turbulent onset of the sachem, and for the pa­-  
tient justice with which he afterwards investi­-  
gated the case, and brought the difficulty to an   
equitable conclusion.   
 At one of the meetings at Neponset, the In-  
­dians with great anxiety inquired, whether it   
were possible for any of them to go to heaven,   
“seeing they found their hearts so full of   
sin.” This gave their preacher an opportunity   
to open the whole subject to them, and to show   
them how they might hope for the pardon of   
sin through the Savior.   
 The only dependence of the Indians in case   
of illness was on the miserable operations of   
their powaws; and they naturally shrunk from   
the thought of losing what they supposed their

\* See Eliot's letter in WHITFIELD'S Farther Discovery of  
the Present State of the Indians, p. 39. --The above ac­-  
count, though out of place as to the time, I have inserted   
here as belonging to the history of this sachem. In this   
case the chronological order is of little importance.

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sole protection against fatal disease. Eliot,   
with his usual good sense, saw that the only   
way to remove this fear was to have them in­-  
structed in the use of proper medical remedies.   
He himself had endeavored to give them some   
general notions of anatomy and physic, but   
with little success. In this connexion, he ex­-  
presses bis earnest wish, that their friends in   
England might be induced to furnish mainte-  
­nance for some persons, who might give them   
medical and anatomical instruction. By these   
means, he thought, while important benefits   
would be conferred on the natives, some ad-  
­vantage might also be expected for the healing   
art; since, by the help of the Indians and of   
the colonists, many new plants, valuable for   
their medicinal efficacy, might perhaps be dis-  
­covered, to enrich the pharmacopoeia of medi­-  
cal science.\*  
 Another difficulty occurred. The Indians   
who opposed Christianity would ask the con-  
­verts tauntingly; "What do you get by pray­-  
ing to God and believing in Jesus Christ? You   
are as poor as we, your clothes and your corn

\* Cleare Sun-shine, &c., p. 26.--It may be worth re­-  
cording, as a fact in the history of anatomical studies   
among us, that, according to Eliot's statement, there had   
been at that time (1647) but one skeleton in the country,   
upon which, he says, a Mr. Giles Firman had read some   
good lectures.

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are no better than ours, and meanwhile we   
take more pleasure than you do. If we could   
see that you gain any thing by being Chris-  
­tians, we would be so too.” This reminds us   
of the scoffing question of the irreligious in   
ancient times; “What profit should we have,   
if we pray unto him?”\* What should they   
say to such persons? Mr. Eliot's answer to   
the inquiry was very happily conceived.   
 He told them, that there are two sorts of   
blessings; the little ones, which he illustrated   
by holding up his little finger, and the great   
ones, which he signified by extending his   
thumb, for they delighted in such symbolical ex­-  
planations. “The little mercies,” he continued,   
“are riches, good clothes, houses, pleasant food,   
&.c.; the great ones are wisdom, the know­-  
ledge of God and Christ, of truth and eternal   
life. Now, though God may not give you any   
large measure of the little blessings, he gives   
you what is much better, the great blessings;   
and these are things which those wicked In­-  
dians do not see or understand.” Their teacher,   
however, let them know that godliness has a re-  
­ward even in the things of this life; “for,” said   
he, “in proportion as you become wiser and   
better Christians, you will be more industrious   
and orderly, and then you will have better

\* Job xxi. 15.

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clothes, more comfortable houses, and other   
improvements." Thus skilfully and patiently   
did the good evangelist accommodate his in-  
­structions to their conceptions and difficulties.   
 About this time, a question of casuistry was   
proposed by some of the natives, which per-  
­plexed their teacher not a little. They had   
been, it seems, exceedingly addicted to gam­-  
ing, a passion for which is generally one of the   
strongest in the breast of savage as well as   
civilized man. Those of them who received   
Mr. Eliot's instructions were convinced of the   
unlawfulness of this practice. Their query   
then was, whether they were bound to pay the   
debts ·they had formerly incurred by gaming;   
for these debts were demanded by such as   
were not “praying Indians.” Mr. Eliot saw   
that the case was embarrassing, and that,   
as he says, “there was a snare underneath.”   
On the one hand, he would not say any thing   
which they could so construe as to countenance   
the sin of gaming; on the other, he would   
not teach them to violate their promises.   
 In this dilemma, he first advised them, when   
such debts were claimed, to refer the case to   
the governor of the colony, presuming that   
measures might be taken by him to settle the   
matter to the satisfaction of both parties. But   
this proposal was not relished. He then took   
  
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another course. First, he talked with the cred­-  
itor, urged on him the sinfulness of the game-  
­ster's practices, and told him, that, having been   
guilty in this respect, he ought to be willing   
to give up half of his claim, to which it is   
rather remarkable that he cheerfully consented.   
He then talked with the debtor, reminding him   
that, though he had sinned in gaming, and   
must heartily repent of that transgression, yet,   
as he had promised payment, and as God re-  
­quires us to perform our promises, it would be   
a sin to violate his obligation. He then pro-  
­posed to the debtor, that he should pay one   
half of the debt, to which he gave a very wil-  
­ling assent. With this compromise, the one   
surrendering half, and the other agreeing to   
pay half, both parties were satisfied.   
 This mode of settling the difficulty came to   
be the established rule of justice in such cases.\*   
It may be doubted whether Mr. Eliot's decision   
would receive the approbation of every casuist;   
but its effect on such minds as he had to deal   
with was unquestionably salutary.   
 While these efforts were in progress at No­-  
nantum and Neponset, the attention of our In-  
­dian evangelist was called to another quarter.   
The doings at the former place had been re­-  
ported among the Indians, and had excited a   
   
 \* Cleare Sun-shine of the Gospel, pp. 26-28.

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good deal of interest. Tahattawan, a sachem   
at Concord, with some of his people, went to   
Nonantum and heard Mr. Eliot preach. Wheth-  
­er he received any religious impressions at this   
time, we know not; but we learn that he was   
smitten with a desire to rise above the wild   
courses of savage life, and to imitate English   
habits. Having learned that this project was   
secretly opposed by many of his people, he   
summoned his chief men around him, and as-  
­sured them that what the English were doing   
was for their good. “For,” said he, “what have   
you gained, while you have lived under the   
power of the higher sachems, after the Indian   
fashion? They only sought to get what they   
could from you, and exacted at their pleasure   
your kettles, your skins, and your wampum.   
But the English, you see, do no such things;   
they seek only your welfare, and, instead of   
taking from you, they give to you.”\*  
 The effect of the sachem's speech was to   
draw his people to his way of thinking. The   
result appeared in a body of twenty-nine “con-  
­clusions and orders,” which were established   
as rules of government and behavior. Some   
of these regulations related to moral points,   
forbidding drunkenness, lying, theft, powaw­-  
ing, and adultery, and enjoining humility,   
  
 \* Ibid., p. 2.

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peaceful living, improvement of time, obser­-  
vance of the Sabbath, &c.; others were de-  
­signed to promote neatness, order, and mutual   
respect in their daily conduct. Shepard, who   
gives a list of all these rules, says that they   
were generally well observed, and that most   
of the Indians set up morning and evening   
prayer in their families.   
 In drawing up these regulations, they had   
the assistance of the wisest Indians at Nonan­-  
tum, and probably, through them, of Mr. Eliot.   
They requested Captain Willard of Concord   
to put them in writing, and to act as their re-  
­corder. They also desired the apostle to visit   
and preach to them, and wished to have a town   
granted to them near the English, that by the   
neighborhood they might keep up a love for   
religious instruction and for the word of God.   
Such an opportunity for usefulness in his own   
beloved way Mr. Eliot of course would rejoice   
to improve. He visited the Concord Indians   
as often as his pressing duties would permit.   
He met their wants, and answered their inqui­-  
ries, with his usual winning affection and good   
judgment. Land was granted them for a town   
according to their request;\* but strong oppo-

\* So says Shepard in his Cleare Sun-shine, &c., p. 3. But   
Mr. Shattuck doubts whether there was, as has often been   
stated, any definite grant of land to the Indians, either   
at Concord or Nonantum. He thinks “they lived by suffer-

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sition from some of the natives prevented the   
settlement at that time.   
 A few years afterwards, by the mediation of   
Eliot, the object was accomplished. An Indian   
town called Nashobah, a name given to a ter-  
ritory lying partly in Littleton and partly in  
Aton, was constituted. They had the insti\_  
tutions of Christian worship, and an Indian   
teacher, probably one prepared by our evange-  
list.\* The desire of enjoying some of those  
comforts of life, of which they saw the English  
in possession, seems to have led the natives at  
Concord to take the first step towards em-  
bracing Christianity.  
  
ance on lands claimed by the English, prior to their gather-  
ing at Natick.”—History of Concord, p. 24.   
 \*In addition to 3 M. H. Coll., IV. 38-41, see SHAT-  
TUCK’S History of Concord, pp. 20-27, and EMERSON’S  
Historical Discourse, Sept. 12th, 1835, pp. 18-20. Mr.   
Shattuck (p. 26) has given a copy of Eliot’s petition to the   
General Court in behalf of the Indians, who were dis-  
turbed in the places where they settled.

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CHAPTER VI.

Visit of Shepard and Others to Nonantum. --A   
 Court established for the “Praying Indians.” --  
 Their Appearance before a Synod. -- Their   
 Questions. -- Their Observance of the   
 -- Sabbath. -- Funeral of a Child.

THE Indian work was regarded with deep   
interest by other clergymen, as well as by   
Eliot, though on him the main responsible­-  
ness and the chief labor always rested. On   
the 3d of March, 1647, Mr. Shepard of Cam­-  
bridge, Mr. Wilson of Boston, Mr. Allen of   
Dedham, and Mr. Dunster, president of Har-  
­vard College, accompanied by others, attended   
the lecture at Nonantum.   
 Of this visit Shepard has left a brief ac-  
­count. The women seem to have been objects   
of more attention than at any time before. It   
was considered improper for them to propound   
questions publicly themselves. They were   
therefore requested to communicate their in-  
­quiries to their husbands, or to the interpreter   
privately, who would propose them before the   
assembly. Two questions were accordingly   
stated, the first that were ever propounded   
from their women in this public way. One was

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suggested by the wife of Wampas, who has  
been before mentioned. “When my husband  
prays,” said she, “if I say nothing, and yet my   
heart goes along with what he says, do I pray/”  
This inquiry indicates that doubtful tendency  
towards the true idea of devotion, which be-  
longs to a mind just awakened to spiritual   
thought, but ignorant of spiritual relations.  
She was of course instructed, that prayer, be-  
ing an act of the heart, is true and efficient,  
whether words be uttered or not.  
 Mr. Eliot mentions this woman with great  
interest, in a letter written more than a year  
after this meeting. She was one of those  
at the Nonantum establishment, who had  
learned to spin, and was remarkable for her  
industry and good management of her chil-  
dren. She was attacked with an illness, in  
which she suffered much and which proved  
fatal. When Mr. Eliot visited her, and prayed  
with her, she told him, that “she still loved  
God, though he made her sick, and was re-  
solved to pray to him so long as she lived;”  
that “she was willing to die, and believed she  
should go to heaven and live happy with God  
and Christ there.” She was the first adult  
that had died among the Indians since Eliot  
began his mission.\*  
  
 \* WINSLOW’S Glorious Progresse of the Gospel, &c.  
pp. 6, 7.

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Another woman put what she had to say   
into the form of a statement, rather than a   
query. This she did, according to Shepard,   
from motives of kindness to her husband. “Be-  
­fore my bus band prayed,” said she, “he was very   
angry and froward; but, since he began to pray,   
he has not been so much angry, but only a   
little.” She meant, as was supposed, to imply   
the question, whether a husband could with a   
good conscience pray with his wife, and yet   
continue to indulge his irascible passions.   
But by the form in which she expressed her   
suggestion, Mr. Shepard thought that she gave   
her husband a creditable testimony for the de-  
­gree in which he had overcome his habit of   
anger, and at the same time conveyed a gentle   
admonition of the need of further reformation.\*   
It may be doubted whether the good divine did   
not see more refinement in the case, than the   
truth of the matter would warrant.   
 On the 26th of May, 1647, the General Court   
manifested a regard to the welfare of the na-  
­tives, by passing an order for the establish-  
­ment of a judiciary among them, adapted to   
their condition and wants. They had ex-  
­pressed to Mr. Eliot a desire to have “a course   
of ordinary judicature.” It was ordered that   
one or more of the magistrates of the colony   
should, once every quarter, hold a court at

\* Cleare Sun-shine, &c., p. 7.

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some place where the Indians usually assem­-  
bled for religious purposes. It was the duty   
of this court to hear and · determine all civil   
and criminal causes, not being capital, which   
concerned the Indians only. The sachems   
were empowered to issue orders or a summons   
to bring any of their· people before this tribu-  
­nal. They were also permitted to hold inferior   
courts themselves every month, if there should   
be occasion, to determine civil causes of a less   
important nature, and such smaller criminal   
causes, as might be referred to them by the   
magistrates. The sachems were to appoint   
officers to serve warrants, and execute the or­-  
ders and judgments of the courts. All fines   
were to be appropriated to the building of   
places of worship, or the education of chil-  
­dren, or to some other such public use as Mr.   
Eliot and other elders might recommend. It   
was also requested of the magistrates and of   
Mr. Eliot, that they would endeavor to make   
the natives understand the laws by explaining   
the principles of reason and equity on which   
they were founded, and that they would pro-  
­vide for the observance of the Lord's day   
among the Indians.\* These seem to have been   
wise arrangements, and to imply no small con-  
­fidence in the integrity and good judgment of   
the natives.

\* Ibid., p. 15.

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On the 8th of June, 1647, a synod of the   
churches met by adjournment at Cambridge.   
This was thought to be a favorable occasion to   
call the attention of the leading men in eccle­-  
siastical affairs to the labors of Mr. Eliot, and   
to give the messengers of the churches an op-  
­portunity of judging, by personal observation,   
of the reports they had heard concerning the   
good work. The “praying Indians” were en-  
­couraged to attend the meeting; and there   
was, we are told, “a great confluence of them.”   
In the afternoon of the second day of the ses-  
­sion, Mr. Eliot preached to them in their own   
language from Ephesians ii. 1, and dwelt upon   
the truths appropriate to their condition, sug­-  
gested by that passage.   
 After the lecture; the usual exercise of ques-  
­tions and answers took place in presence of   
the ministers and elders. The only questions   
by the Indians on. that occasion, left on record,   
are the following;   
 “What countryman was Christ, and where   
was he born?  
 “How far off is that place from us here?   
 “Where is Christ now?  
 “How and where may we lay hold on him,   
as he is now absent from us?”  
 These inquiries, though relating to points of   
great importance, are certainly not so striking   
and significant, as some which were proposed

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on other occasions. What we know of the   
Indian character will hardly allow us to sup-  
pose, that they were overawed by the solemn   
assembly of the clergy and elders; but their   
attention migh have been so distracted by the   
novelty of the scene, that they could not lay   
open their minds with so much natural free-  
dom, as at more private meetings. Full an-  
swers were given to their questions. They  
are described as having been profoundly atten-  
tive to Mr. Eliot’s preaching, and much moved   
by it. Many of their children were present,  
who in an interesting manner answered the   
principal questions of the Catechism, in which   
they had been instructed. The whole scene  
must have been singularly impressive. One  
can imagine, that the pencil of the painter  
might sketch with good effect this assembly of   
the grave fathers of the churches, surrounded  
by the red men of the woods, and their little  
ones, as objects of that high interest, which   
belongs to the spiritual relations of man with   
man.\*  
 In the latter part of the summer of 1647,   
Mr. Shepard speaks of having again visited   
the scene of Eliot’s exertions, probably at No-  
nantum. He was agreeably surprised to find  
  
 \*Shepard furnishes us with an account of this meeting,  
Cleare Sun-shine, &c., p. 11. Winthrop also mentions it,  
II. 308.

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many of the men, women, and children clad in   
good clothes, after the fashion of their civil-  
­ized neighbors. These they had received from   
their friends among the English, who attended   
the lectures. A report is given of some of the   
Indian questions in the course of Eliot's in-  
­structions during the subsequent winter, from   
notes taken by a Mr. Jackson of Cambridge,   
who was present at the meetings; but the an­-  
swers are not recorded.   
 Among the difficulties, of which they sought   
a solution from their teacher, were the follow-  
­ing. “Whether the Devil or man was made   
first?” One cannot but feel a curiosity to   
know what train of thought suggested this in­-  
quiry. “How may one know wicked men,--  
who are good and who are bad?” A question   
which has puzzled wiser heads and more prac­-  
tised observers, than these untaught men of   
the wilderness. “If a man should be enclosed   
in iron a foot thick, and thrown into the fire,   
what would become of his soul? Could the   
soul come forth thence or not?” This is a   
good illustration of the difficulty, which the   
rude mind finds in conceiving the nature of a   
spiritual existence, even when it has some ap­-  
prehension of a spiritual agency. It is at least   
as important a question, as many of those on   
which minute philosophers have disputed long   
and angrily. “Why did not God give all men

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good hearts, that they might be good? And   
why did not God kill the Devil, that made all   
men so bad, God having all power?” Here  
struggles forth, in a crude form, from the labor-  
in breast of the savage, the same thorny per-  
plexity concerning the existence and origin of   
evil, which has been discussed from the earliest   
to the latest of the philosophers, who have  
speculated on the being and destination of   
man. It would be gratifying to know in what   
manner Mr. Eliot met such inquiries as these.  
Other questions of much interest were pro-  
posed; as, “how they should know when their   
faith was good, and when their prayers were  
good prayers.”  
 These questions, says Shepard, were ac-  
counted by some “as part of the whitenings of  
the harvest.” The Indians likewise manifest-  
ed some anxiety about the causes of natural   
phenomena, and started inquiries concerning   
the sun, moon, stars, earth, sea, lightning,  
and earthquakes.\*  
 About this time we find the first instance of  
a disrespectful question addressed to Eliot.  
A drunken Indian, known by the name of   
George, being in a condition to feel more inter-  
est in the origin of his beloved liquor than in  
the origin of any thing else, called out impu-  
  
 \* Cleare Sun-shine, &c., pp. 13, 14.

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dently, “Who made sack, Mr. Eliot, who made   
sack?” For this the other Indians rebuked   
him, and termed it a papoose question, that is, a   
childish question. The preacher spoke to him   
with so much gravity and wisdom, that his in-  
­solence was overawed into decency. Mr. Eliot   
relates, that this same fellow, having killed a   
cow in Cambridge, sold it at the College for a   
moose. For this he was subjected to admoni­-  
tion at one of the Indian meetings. But he   
had contrived to cover his fraud with so many   
dexterous lies, that Mr. Dunster, president of   
the College, was reluctant to have him direct-  
­ly accused of it, and thought a further inquiry   
should be made. However, he was called be-  
­fore the assembly, and charged with his fault   
so powerfully, that he could not deny it, but   
made an ample confession.\* The president   
of the College, and grave divines, sitting in   
judgment on the trick of an Indian blackguard,   
exhibit an amusing picture to our imaginations   
at the present day, though doubtless the disci-   
pline was necessary and salutary.  
 Mr. Eliot tell us, that the “praying Indians”   
were strict in their observance of the Sabbath.   
As the care of his own church would not allow   
him to be with them often on that day, they   
were in some perplexity; for, they said, if they

\* Eliot's letter in Cleare Sun-shine, &c., p. 23.

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should go to the English meetings, they should   
understand nothing, or so little, that it would   
be useless. He advised them, as the only fea-  
­sible measure, to meet among themselves, and   
request the best and wisest of their number to   
pray with them, and teach them such things as   
they had learned through him from the divine   
word.   
 Some instances related by Eliot, show their   
strong conviction of the impropriety of violat-  
­ing the Lord's day by common employments.   
The wife of Cutshamakin once went to fetch   
water on the Sabbath, and talked with other   
women by the way “on worldly matters,” as   
the account states. This came to the ears of   
Nabanton, who was to be the teacher that day.   
Nabanton preached on the sanctification of the   
Sabbath, and at the close rebuked the miscon­-  
duct of which he had heard in the morning.   
The wife of Cutshamakin, not dashed by this   
personal application of the subject, shrewdly   
and probably with truth told him after the ser-  
­mon, that he had done more harm by making   
so much talk about the matter in the public as­-  
sembly, than she had by fetching the water.   
This brought on a discussion, and they con-  
­cluded to refer the case to Mr. Eliot. To his   
house in Roxbury they went the next day, and   
laid the matter before him. What decision he   
pronounced, he does not definitely say. He

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only remarks, that he gave them such direc­-  
tions as were agreeable to the word of God.   
 Another instance occurred at the wigwam   
of no less a man than Waban. On a Sunday   
two Indians arrived there towards night, and   
told him, that about a mile off they had chased   
a racoon into the hollow of a tree. They   
wanted help to fell the tree, and take the ani-  
­mal. It seems that Waban, who, like the In­-  
dians generally, was “given to hospitality,”   
thought the racoon would furnish a good meal   
for his stranger guests. So he sent. two of his   
men, who felled the tree and caught the animal.   
The rest of the Christian Indians were offend-  
­ed with this conduct, as a violation of the   
Sabbath not to be overlooked. The subject   
was kept for discussion at the next lecture,   
when the questions to which it gave rise were   
answered by Eliot.   
 A third case is mentioned, in which a vigi-  
­lance was exercised, that must have been sat­-  
isfactory even to the framers of the Connecti­-  
cut Blue Laws. On a certain Sabbath, the pub-  
­lic meeting was held long and late. One of   
the Indians, on returning to his wigwam, found   
the fire almost gone out. He took his hatchet,   
as he sat by the fireside, and split a small   
piece of dry wood, which was kept for kin-  
­dling, and so lighted up his fire. This was   
deemed a trespass by the Indians who took

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notice of it; and at the next lecture the matter   
was brought before the assembly for further   
investigation.\*  
 These instances may serve to show how they   
were led to regard the Sabbath. It might be   
supposed, that, to men accustomed to the wild-  
­est freedom of life at all times, such restraints   
must have been irksome. Yet, if we may judge   
from a curious expression of their feelings on   
one occasion, they did not consider the sacri-  
­fice of their liberty in this respect as annoying   
or troublesome. When Cutshamakin and oth­-  
ers entered into a treaty with their English   
neighbors in 1643, they were asked whether   
they would agree “not to do any unnecessary   
work on the Sabbath day, especially within the   
gates of Christian towns.” They gave a ready   
assent, replying with amusing naiveté, that “it   
would be easy to them, that they had not much   
to do on any day, and could well enough take   
their rest on that day.”†  
 Another anecdote related by Eliot illustrates   
his mode of administering admonition and cen-  
­sure. Wampas on some trivial occasion, in a   
fit of passion, beat his wife. This brutal treat­-  
ment of their females had formerly been, as is   
usual among savage tribes, very common, and

\* Eliot's letter in Cleare Sun-shine, &c., pp. 19, 20.

† Gooott's MS. Hist. Account of the Christian Indians.

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passed without notice. But since they had re-  
­ceived Christianity, they had learned to con­-  
sider it as a great offence, and the transgressor   
in such cases was exposed to a fine. Wampas   
was made to stand up, and answer for his fault   
before the public meeting, which happened to   
be uncommonly large, being attended by the   
Governor and many others of the English. The   
Indian made an humble confession of his crime,   
took the blame wholly to himself, and attempt­-  
ed no palliation. When Mr. Eliot set before   
him, in its true light, the sin of beating his   
wife and indulging his violent passions, he   
turned his face to the wall and wept. All were   
disposed to forgive him; but his fine was   
strictly exacted, which he cheerfully paid.   
 Particulars like these are valuable for the   
light they throw on the Indian character, as   
it was sometimes affected by the instructions   
of a teacher, who, while like all others of his   
day he pressed some points with too much   
rigor, still always aimed, and for the most part   
wisely, at the true improvement, the real good,   
of his rude disciples.   
 About this time an Indian, who was reputed   
to be a powaw, asked Mr. Eliot how it hap­-  
pened, that, as the English had been in the   
country a considerable time, some of them no   
less than twenty-seven years, they had so long   
neglected to instruct the natives in the knowl-

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edge of God, and why they had not sooner   
imparted what they professed to consider so   
important. “Had you done it sooner,” said   
he, “we might have known much of God by   
this time, and much sin might have been pre-  
­vented; but now some of us are grown old in   
sin.” Whatever of rebuke there was in these   
questions and remarks, Mr. Eliot received with   
submissive acknowledgment of the fault. He   
assured the Indian, that the English sincerely   
repented of their neglect in this matter. But   
he added, that the natives had never till now   
been willing to hear religious teaching, and   
profit by it. Had the experiment been before   
made in any such manner, as to justify this last   
assertion?  
 Some of the Indians, with the interest natu-  
­ral to the parental feelings, were anxious to   
know what would become of their children   
after death, since they had not sinned. Mr.   
Eliot's theology led him, on this occasion, to   
expound to his wild hearers, who at best were   
“in the gristle and not hardened into the   
bone” of Christianity, the mysteries of original   
sin, and to assure them, that, when God elects   
the father or mother to be his servant, he elects   
the children also. This doctrine, he says,   
“was exceeding grateful unto them.” Might   
not their good teacher have better used the   
simple and touching illustrations taken from

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the paternal character of God, which on some   
other occasions he applied with much beauty   
and power?   
 The natives had learned from their new re-  
­ligion to renounce polygamy. But this change   
in their habits gave occasion to a difficulty,   
which they stated in the following way. Sup-  
­pose an Indian, before he knew God, had been   
the husband of two wives, one of whom had been   
barren, and the other had borne children;   
which of the two wives should he discard? If   
the first, then he would apparently violate the   
solemn obligation belonging to her prior matri-  
­monial claim, solely because she happened to   
have no children. If the second, then, together   
with her whom he dearly loved, he must re-  
­nounce her children, and make them illegiti-  
­mate. Men, who could reason thus, were not   
wanting in clearness of discernment, or in fine   
feeling. To Eliot and Shepard the inquiry   
was so embarrassing, that they declined giving   
a reply, till they had consulted with some of   
their brethren. We are not informed what   
answer was finally returned; but doubtless   
some rule of action was established for such   
cases.   
 At one of the Nonantum lectures, an old   
squaw asked, “If God loves those who turn   
to him, how comes it to pass that men are any   
more afflicted after they turn to God?” Here

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was exhibited that notion of an obligation on   
the part of the Deity to reward his worshippers   
with good things, which is generally found in   
the rude developements of the religious senti­-  
ment, accompanied with but little, if any, ap-  
­prehension of the nature of a state of disci-  
­pline and probation.   
 At another time Wampas, who is said to have   
been “sober and hopeful,” instead of propos­-  
ing a question, made the following statement   
of a difficulty, under which the converts to   
Christianity were suffering; “On the one hand,   
the other Indians hate and oppose us, because   
we pray to God; on the other, the English will   
not put confidence in us, and suspect, that we   
do not really pray. But,” he added with an   
affecting consciousness of honesty, “God, who   
knows all things, knows that we do pray to   
him.” To this Mr. Eliot replied, that it was   
true some of the English for various reasons   
had suspicions as to the reality of their reli-  
­gion; “but,” said he, “I and others, who are   
in the habit of seeing and conversing with you,   
have no .such suspicions.” He then spoke en­-  
couraging words, and exhorted them to be   
faithful, true, and persevering.   
 When Mr. Eliot had preached, at one of the   
Nonantum lectures, from Ephesians v. 11, one   
of his hearers, by a very natural application of   
the text, inquired what the English thought of

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him for coming among the wicked Indians to   
teach them. Another query was, Suppose two   
men sin, of whom one knows that he sins, and   
the other does not know it; will God punish   
both alike? He who put this question had   
some better conceptions of moral equity in the   
divine government, than is often found in the   
savage breast. Again, another inquired, wheth­-  
er a wise Indian, who teaches other Indians in   
the ways of God, should not be as a father or   
a brother to those whom he so teaches. There   
is in this question a fine moral meaning, in ac-  
­cordance with one of the most beautiful decla-  
­rations of our Savior, and worthy of the reli­-  
gious philosophy of the enlightened Christian.   
 An affecting scene occurred at Nonantum in   
October, 1647. An Indian child had been for   
a long time ill with a consumption, and at   
length died. Some of the natives went to the   
English to learn their manner of burying their   
children. Having received the desired infor-  
­mation, they rejected all their own customary   
observances on such an occasion, procured a   
few boards and nails, made a neat coffin, and   
about forty of them in a solemn manner accom­-  
panied the body of the little one to its resting-  
­place in the dust. They then withdrew a   
short distance to the shade of a large tree, and   
requested one of their number to pray   
with them. Their devotional exercise, which

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lasted nearly half an -hour, was extremely fer­-  
vent, and accompanied with many tears. The   
Englishman, who observed these proceedings   
at a distance, and reported them, said that   
“the woods rang again with their sighs and   
prayers.”\*

\* Cleare Sun-shine, &c., pp. 34-37.

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CHAPTER VII.

Eliot's Visits to Passaconaway at Pautucket.--   
 Kindness experienced by Him from the Nashawag   
 Sachem, and his Exposure and Suffering.—His  
 Agency with Regard to Murder, committed   
 among the Indians.--Excursion to Yarmouth.

HITHERTO the exertions of the Apostle to the   
Indians had not taken him far from his home.   
By these he had gained such acquaintance with   
the character, habits, and minds of the natives,   
as enabled him to proceed in his work with re-  
­newed confidence. He now began to extend   
the sphere of his pious duties to more distant   
places. Wherever there was a call to do good,   
by bringing the truths of the Gospel to bear on   
the barbarism and ignorance of the wilderness,   
he was happy to go, and ready to spend and   
be spent.   
 Near Merrimac River at Pautucket he found   
opportunities of intercourse with Passaconaway,   
an Indian ruler of much celebrity. This man   
is supposed to have been a bashaba, that is, a   
greater sachem, to whom inferior sachems ac­-  
knowledged subjection.\* His dominion was   
  
 \* DRAKE’S Book of the Indians, B. III. ch. 7.

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of large extent, and his power great. The   
English had become acquainted with him on   
various occasions, and his name often occurs in   
the history of the times. He is said to have   
lived to a great age. Gookin remarks; “I saw   
him alive at Pautucket when he was about a   
hundred and twenty years old,”\* but does not   
tell us how he ascertained his age. He proba-  
­bly had no satisfactory means of information.   
Eliot merely calls him “old” when he saw him.   
 Not long before his death, this chief made a   
speech to his children and friends, in which he   
advised them never to quarrel with the English.   
“For,” said he, “though you may doubtless   
have it in your power to do them much harm,   
yet, if you do, they will surely destroy you, and   
root you out of the land. I was once as much   
an enemy to them, as any one can be. I did   
what I could to prevent their settlement, or   
bring them to destruction; but it was all in   
vain. I therefore counsel you never to contend   
or make war with them." There is a tone   
either of the piteous despair attending the con-  
­sciousness of a hopeless struggle, or of the   
more refined sentiment of willing submission to   
the superiority of the white man, in the feeling,   
which thus burst from the soul of the old chief,   
as he was about to close his eyes in death. He

\* Historical Account of the Christian lndians.

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had the reputation of being a great sorcerer, or   
powaw; and his subjects believed, that he   
could make a green leaf grow in winter, put   
the trees into a dance, and set water on fire.   
 Some time in 1647, or perhaps in the preced-  
­ing year, Mr. Eliot, in company with Captain   
Willard of Concord and others, travelled as   
far as the Merrimac. At that time Passacona-  
­way would not see them, and fled with his sons,   
pretending that he was afraid of being killed.   
This conduct in a powerful Indian chief seems   
inexplicable. That he really feared one who   
came, as Shepard says, “only with a book in   
his hand, and a few others without any weap­-  
ons to bear him company,” is hardly to be sup-  
­posed. Many of his men remained, and lis­-  
tened to what the preacher had to say. Eliot   
was accompanied by some Christian Indians   
from his own neighborhood. These were of   
much service on the present occasion, by pray-  
­ing in the wigwams and conversing about   
“the things of God.”  
 In the spring of 1648, Mr. Eliot again visited   
Pautucket. At that season of the year, there   
was annually a great confluence of Indians at   
this spot, which was a famous fishing-place.   
These gatherings reminded Eliot of the fairs   
in England, which he thought they resembled.   
He found them fit occasions for the good pur-  
­poses he had in view, because they furnished

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him with large audiences, that came from var-  
i­ous quarters. It must have required all his   
zeal, firmness, and prudence, to remain day   
after day among this savage multitude, and   
wait his opportunities of instruction amidst   
their wild festivity. Already his influence   
there had been such, that many of the Indians   
had exchanged the gaming and other evil prac-  
­tices of those seasons, for religious instruction   
and good conversation. On the present occa-  
­sion Passaconaway did not, as before, betake   
himself to flight at the apostle's approach. He   
was willing to stay and listen. Eliot preached   
from Malachi i. 11, of which passage, -- I sup-  
­pose that he might make it more intelligible   
and striking to his hearers, -- he gave the fol­-  
lowing version; “From the rising of the sun   
to the going down of the same, thy name shall   
be great among the Indians; and in every   
place prayers shall be made to thy name, pure   
prayers, for thy name shall be great among the   
Indians.”  
 After the preaching they proposed questions.   
One of them inquired, whether all the Indians,   
who had died hitherto, had gone to hell, and   
only a few now at last were put in the way for   
going to heaven. To this natural and fair   
question Mr. Eliot has not recorded his reply.   
He merely remarks, that the doctrine of a two-  
­fold future state was always one of the first

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points in his preaching, and that it was readily   
embraced by the natives; for they had already   
some traditional notions of another life and its   
retributions. After some time, old Passacona-  
­way himself spoke. He said he had never yet   
prayed to God, for he had never before heard   
such instructions concerning God. But he de-  
­clared his belief in the truth of what had just   
been taught, and his determination for the fu-  
­ture to pray to God, and to persuade his sons   
to follow his example. Two of them were   
present, who assented to their father's purpose.   
The conversion of the old chief may seem to   
have been too sudden to be lasting. But Mr.   
Eliot had reason to think, that it was not a   
vanishing impulse of the moment, because af­-  
terwards this sachem told Captain Willard,   
who was in the habit of trading in those quar­-  
ters for beaver and otter skins, that he wished   
him and the apostle to fix their abode in his   
neighborhood, in order that his people might   
enjoy religious instruction. He likewise offered   
to allow them their choice of the best of his   
lands for that purpose. It was the uniform   
and judicious endeavor of Mr. Eliot to prevail   
on the chief sachems to receive Christianity,   
that, having the support of those who were as   
princes among the barbarians, he might more   
effectually encourage the timid, and repress the   
insolence of the scorners. In this way Passa-

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conaway's conversion was likely to be of much   
service to the cause.\*  
 In this connexion our painstaking evange-  
­list speaks of the difficulty, which the mission­-  
ary to the Indians must experience from their   
squalid poverty and barbarous habits of living.   
He who went among them might not expect to   
find food and drink, of which he could partake.   
These he must take with him, and other things   
besides for presents. “I never go unto them   
empty,” says Eliot, “but carry somewhat to   
distribute among them.” He also invited them   
to his house, where he always had refreshments   
and gifts for them. Nor did they omit such   
humble expressions of kind feeling towards   
their good teacher, as were in their power.   
He relates with pleasant simplicity, that once,   
as he was taking his horse to depart, “a poor   
creature” seized his hand and thrust some­-  
thing into it, which he found to be a penny-  
­worth of wampum on the end of a straw. He   
accepted the humble present with thanks, “see-  
­ing so much hearty affection in so small a   
thing,” and requested the Indian to visit him   
at his house.   
 The next year Mr. Eliot was personally in-  
­vited by Passaconaway, with earnest importu-  
­nity, to live among his people, and be their

\* SHEPARD's Cleare Sun-shine, &c., p. 32. WINSLOW'S   
Glorious Progress of the Gospel, p. 9.

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teacher. The sachem thought that his visits   
once a year did but little good, because in the   
long intervals his people were apt to forget   
what they had heard. Many of them; he said,   
were naught, and required Jong and patient   
teaching. He illustrated his meaning by a   
comparison not inaptly stated. “You do,”   
said he, “as if one should come and throw a   
fine thing among us, and we should catch at it   
earnestly, because it appears so beautiful, but   
cannot look at it to see what is within; there   
may be in it something or nothing, a stock, a   
stone, or a precious treasure; but if it be   
opened, and we see what is valuable therein,   
then we think much of it. So you tell us of   
religion, and we like it very wen at first sight,   
but we know not what is within; it may be   
excellent, or it may be nothing, we cannot tell;   
but if you will stay with us, and open it to us,   
and show us all within, we shall believe it to   
be as good as you say it is.”  
 These “elegant arguments,” as Eliot calls   
them, he applied with much wisdom and affect-  
­tion. He was doubtless sincere and in earnest,   
and he probably continued strongly attached to   
his new religion. The appropriate comparison   
which he used on this occasion, it may be re-  
­marked, more resembles the style of speaking   
among a civilized people, than those bold, ab-   
rupt, and violent figures, which are commonly

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considered as characteristic of Indian elo-  
­quence. His speech was that of a reasonable   
man, and could not fail to arrest attention. It   
had been for some time a favorite project with   
Mr. Eliot to establish an Indian town, which   
might form a sort of central point for the Chris-  
­tian natives; and his heart yearned towards   
Passaconaway's earnest proposal.   
 But there were weighty objections, as he   
thought, to the plan of fixing his town in that   
region. The Indians in his own vicinity, on   
whom he must principally rely as the best ma­-  
terials for the nucleus of such a settlement,   
were unwilling to remove thither; though they   
said they would, if necessary, go to any place   
with him. This affecting expression of their   
confidence made him more reluctant to cross   
their inclinations; and, as he cherished the   
hope that he should need more than one town,   
he probably thought the time would come, when   
Passaconaway's wish for a settlement in his   
domains might be gratified.\*  
 Before this time, Mr. Eliot had visited Nash-  
­away, now called Lancaster; but I find no par­-  
ticular account of his doings there. We know,   
however, that the sachem was much interested   
in his favor; and he alludes to his having   
preached at the place. There was an old sa-

\* WHITFIELD’S Farther Discovery of the Present State   
of the Indians, &c., p. 20.

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chem at Quabagud or Quaboag, now Brook­-  
field, a place which Eliot describes as “three   
score miles westward” (that is, from his resi-  
­dence in Roxbury), who earnestly wished to   
prevail upon him to visit his people, and even   
to make his abode there. He undertook a jour-  
­ney thither, and went by the way of Nashaway.   
There had been some disturbances between the   
Narraganset and Mohegan Indians, and seve­-  
ral had been murdered in or about the region,   
which he proposed to visit. This circumstance   
threw some doubt on the minds of the Roxbury   
church, whether it might be safe for their pas­-  
tor to venture thither.   
 When the Nashaway sachem heard of this,   
he commanded twenty of his men to take arms   
and be ready to protect the missionary, and   
added himself to the number. Besides this   
force, several of the Indians in Eliot's neigh-  
­borhood, and some of his English friends, at-  
­tended him as a guard. He was much gratified   
by the promptness of the natives in protecting   
him from harm, because he regarded it as a   
proof of their interest, not in himself only, but   
in his work. When he arrived at the place of   
his destination, he found “sundry hungry after   
instruction”; but of the particulars of his   
ministration we have no account.   
 The journey proved exceedingly wearisome   
and exhausting. It may serve to give us an

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idea of the toil and suffering, which this de-  
­voted evangelist sometimes incurred in the   
course of his labors. The company were ex­-  
posed to continual rains and bad weather, with   
no protection. They were drenched with wet;   
and Eliot says, that from Tuesday to Saturday   
he was never dry, night or day. At night he   
would pull off his boots, wring the water from   
his stockings, and put them on again. The   
rivers were swollen by the rains; and, as they   
made their way through them on horseback,   
they were still more wet. Eliot's horse failed   
from exhaustion, and he was obliged to let him   
go without a rider, and take one belonging to   
another person. But he says, with his usual   
piety of feeling, “God stept in and helped; I   
considered that word of God, Endure hardness   
as a good soldier of Christ.” From this fa-  
­tiguing and perilous excursion the company   
returned home in safety and health.”  
 In the proceedings, which took place in con-  
­sequence of the murders above mentioned, Mr.   
Eliot had some agency, of which it is proper   
to take notice. The murdered Indians were   
supposed to be among those, who were under   
the jurisdiction and protection of the Massa-  
­chusetts government. Acting on this belief,   
the Governor and magistrates sent twenty men

\* Eliot's letter to Winslow in Farther Discovery, &c.,   
p. 21.

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to Nashaway to ascertain the facts of the case,   
and, if possible, to arrest the murderers. But   
the criminals had escaped to Narraganset; and   
the men sent by the Massachusetts government,   
on their return, could only report, that the crime   
had been perpetrated, and that it was well un-  
­derstood who were concerned in it. After­-  
wards the sachem Cutshamakin procured two   
Indians, who offered to apprehend the mur­-  
derers. The reason why this sachem inter­-  
posed in the affair was, that three of the mur­-  
dered men belonged to a party at Quaboag,   
with whom he was in a treaty of friendship,   
and whom, indeed, ·he considered somewhat in   
the light of subjects. The magistrates ac­-  
cepted the offer of the two Indians, gave them   
a commission, and wrote to Mr. Pynchon of   
Springfield to assist them in the search.   
 But Pynchon's reply put a stop to the pro-  
­ceedings. He maintained, that the murdered   
Indians were not the subjects, nor the murder­-  
ers within the jurisdiction, of the Massachu­-  
setts government, and that by prosecuting the   
matter they would be in danger of stirring up   
a war. It is in this letter of Pynchon, that the   
mention of Mr. Eliot's agency occurs. It   
seems that Cutshamakin, who of course was   
well acquainted with Mr. Eliot, had prevailed   
upon him to use his influence with the magis-  
­trates to procure the desired assistance. Pyn-

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chon says, that in this the Indians of Quaboag   
“dealt subtly.” Eliot wrote a letter to Pyn-   
chon, in which he exhorted him to assist the   
two Indian agents in their inquest about the   
murder, urging the command of God to make  
inquisition for blood, and denying that there  
was any danger of war in consequence of this  
proceeding. Upon this Pynchon remarks, that  
if the murdered had been subjects of Massa-  
chusetts, and the murderers within the juris-  
diction of that government, Mr. Eliot’s appeal   
would have been seasonable and appropriate;  
but, the facts being otherwise, it was of no  
avail. Governor Winthrop desired, that Eliot  
might immediately be made acquainted with   
this letter of Pynchon. Dudley, the deputy-  
governor, had a conference with Eliot on the   
subject; and they concluded, for various rea-  
sons, to advise that a stop should be put to   
any further proceedings.\*  
 Mr. Eliot may have been in an error, as to  
the point of jurisdiction; but his active share  
in this transaction unquestionably arose from  
his strong desire to have such justice adminis-  
tered from the crime of shedding blood, as would  
conciliate the feelings of the Indians by con-  
vincing them, that in the English they had   
  
\* SAVAGE’S Winthrop, Vol. II, p. 325, and Appendix,  
pp. 384-387.

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friends, who would not see them injured with   
impunity.   
 It was in the latter part of 1647, or in 1648,   
that Mr. Eliot, with Wilson of Boston and   
Shepard of Cambridge, visited Yarmouth on   
Cape Cod. The harmony of the church in that   
place had been disturbed by some unhappy dif-  
­ficulties; and these clergymen with others from   
Plymouth colony met, I suppose as a council, to   
heal the breach, and bring into union the con­-  
tending parties. This they accomplished most   
satisfactorily, and Christian harmony was re­-  
stored to the church and town.   
 But Eliot did not consider his errand to this   
place as finished. The object, which was ha­-  
bitually uppermost in his thoughts, failed not   
to claim his attention. He gladly availed him-  
­self of the opportunity to visit the Indians in   
that region, and present to them the word of   
life. It was with difficulty that they under­-  
stood him. The dialect of the Indians in that   
quarter was found to differ considerably from   
that of the natives in the neighborhood of Bos-  
­ton and in the western parts of Massachusetts.   
Varieties of this kind were often observed in a   
range of forty or sixty miles.\* Besides, these

\* One of the obstacles to the diffusion of Christianity   
among the natives of New England was “the diversity of   
their owne language to Itself, every part of that countrey   
having its owne dialect, differing much from the other.”   
New England’s First Fruits, p. 1.

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Indians were unaccustomed to those words and   
forms or speech used for the expression of re-  
­ligious thoughts or conceptions, to the acquisi­-  
tion of which Mr. Eliot had been led by the   
nature of his mission to give his principal at-  
­tention. In order to make himself intelligible   
to them, he was obliged to use much circumlo­-  
cution, and put his remarks into various forms,   
besides availing himself of the aid of inter-  
­preters who happened to be present. He over-  
­came all difficulties, and made himself under­-  
stood.   
 At this place there was no little opposition   
to Eliot's preaching, especially by a reckless   
sachem, to whom, on account of his fierce and   
furious spirit, the English gave the sobriquet of   
Jehu. He promised fairly enough, that on the   
appointed day he would attend the religious   
services, and bring his men with him. But,   
when the day came, he sent his men away early   
in the morning to sea, on the pretence, that   
they must get some fish. He himself went to   
hear the sermon, though late; but, when there,   
he affected not to understand any thing, though   
some of the Indians assured Mr. Eliot, that he   
did understand as well as any of them. Still   
he would sit and listen with dogged sullenness   
and a dissatisfied look. There was probably   
as much of waggery, as of ill nature or malice,   
in his conduct. There is something adapted to

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excite a smile in the grave but unsuccessful   
attempt of the divines to manage this intracta-  
­ble and mischievous spirit.   
 There was another sachem of a better tem­-  
per and more pliable disposition, who lent a   
willing ear to instruction, and whose people   
were attentive and docile. It was here, that,   
at the usual time for proposing questions, an   
aged Indian made a statement, which at first   
struck those who heard it with surprise, but   
was found to admit an easy explanation. He   
affirmed, that the very things which Mr. Eliot   
had just taught concerning the creation, the   
nature of God, and his commandments, had   
been said years ago by some old men among   
them, who were now dead, and since whose   
death all knowledge or remembrance of these   
doctrines had been lost, till they were revived   
by what they had now heard. In a more figu-  
­rative manner, the same fact was expressed by   
others to a Christian in that region, who com­-  
municated it to Eliot and his companions at   
this time. They said that their forefathers   
once knew God, but that afterwards their peo-  
­ple fell. into a heavy sleep; and when they   
awoke, they had forgotten him.   
 These statements, implying that some knowl-  
­edge of the true religion was possessed by the   
natives before their acquaintance with the   
English, excited curiosity and inquiry. Mr.

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Shepard supposed, that the fact might be ac­-  
counted for by the circumstance of a French   
preacher having been cast away on that coast   
many years before, whose instructions might   
have given the Indians of that day such an   
acquaintance with religion, as was reported of   
them.   
 Shepard was doubtless right in his conjec-  
­ture. About three years before the Plymouth   
settlers arrived, a French ship was wrecked on   
Cape Cod. The lives of the men were saved,   
and they reached the shore. But they were all   
killed by the Indians, except three or four, who   
were kept and sent from one sachem to another.   
Two of them were redeemed by Mr. Dormer,   
and another died among the natives. One of   
them lived with the Indians long enough to be   
able to use their language. He instructed   
them in religion, and, among other things, told   
them, that God was angry for their wickedness,   
that he would destroy them, and give their   
country to another people. The natives replied   
in derision, that they were too numerous for   
God to kill them. Soon after the death of the   
Frenchman, multitudes of them were swept   
away by a terrible pestilence. They now be­-  
gan, with the superstition natural to savages,   
to think that one part of the prediction they   
had despised was fulfilled; and, when the Ply-  
­mouth settlers came, they apprehended that

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the other part was about to be accomplished.   
When they afterwards became acquainted with   
the English, several of the oldest and most   
trustworthy among them related these facts.\*   
The story accounts sufficiently for the declara-  
­tion made by the Indians to Eliot, Shepard,   
and Wilson, respecting the religious knowledge   
of their fathers.   
 It may be here observed, that Mayhew re­-  
lates a similar, but less precise remark, made by   
one of the natives on Martha's Vineyard. The   
Indian said, that “a long time ago their people   
had wise men, who in a grave manner taught   
them knowledge; but,” he added, “they are   
dead, and their wisdom is buried with them;   
and now men live a giddy life in ignorance till   
they are white-headed, and go without wisdom   
unto their graves.”† This speech may have   
referred to the same reminiscence of a better   
knowledge, which is explained by the instruct-  
­tions of the Frenchman; or it may have been   
merely one of those complaints of the degener­-  
acy of present times, the disposition to which   
is perhaps too natural to man to be confined to   
the civilized.

\* See Judge Davis's edition of MORTON'S New Eng­-  
land's Memorial, p. 60; also Mr. Savage's remark in his   
notes on Winthrop, Vol. I. p. 59.   
 † Mayhew's letter to Winslow in Glorious Progresse,   
&c., p. 5.

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Another circumstance, which interested Mr.   
Eliot and his companions, was the relation of   
a dream by an Indian in these parts. He said,   
that about two years before the English came   
over, a very destructive sickness prevailed   
among the Indians. One night, when his sleep   
was broken and troubled, he saw, in a dream,   
a multitude of men coming to that region,   
dressed in precisely such garments as he now   
found the English to wear. Among them was   
one man all in black, with something in his   
hand, which he now discovered to have been a   
book, such as the English carry. The man in   
black stood higher than the rest, having the   
Indians on one side and the English on the   
other. He assured the Indians, that God was   
angry with them, and would destroy them for   
their sins. Upon this, the dreamer stood up,   
and begged to know what God would do with   
him, and his squaw, and papooses. This ques-  
­tion he repeated three times, when his fears   
were relieved by being told, that they would   
all be safe, and that God would give them vic-  
­tuals and good things. Such was the vision   
of the night, which the savage had to relate.   
 No one, I presume, at the present day will   
be disposed to inquire, whether it were pro-  
­phetic, or will think the Indian had reason to   
say with Eve,

“For God is also in sleep, and dreams advise,   
 Which he hath sent propitious, some great good

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Presaging, since with sorrow and heart's distress   
 Wearied I fell asleep.”

But Shepard, who tells the story, while he pro-  
­fesses to have little faith in dreams, yet in­-  
clines to think, that God may see fit to speak   
in this way to the Indians, when he would not   
to those who have a more sure word of warn­-  
ing and direction. His construction is more   
favorable to the savages, than the poetic judg­-  
ment of Claudian, who declares that   
  
 “Barbarians never taste the hallowed streams   
 Of prophecy, nor are inspired by dreams.”\*  
  
The simple truth of the case is, that the dream   
may be easily explained by adverting again to   
the story of the French priest. The circum-  
­stances of it have a sufficient resemblance to   
the facts of that story; and it occurred during   
the prevalence of the fearful sickness, when   
the mind of the Indian was harassed by the   
alarm, which the Frenchman's prediction had   
awakened. He saw in his sleep a confused   
image, with some additions, of what he had   
seen, or heard of, when the man in black an-  
­nounced the judgments of God. The story   
thus explained is of some value, as an illustra-  
­tion of the laws that prevail in the phenomena   
of dreams.

\* “Nullus Castalios latices, et praecia fati   
 Flumina, polluto bubarus ore bibit.”

CLAUDIAN. In Ruf. Lib. 11. Praef.

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The man who told this dream proved to be no   
hopeful hearer of the word. Mr. Eliot and his   
brethren flattered themselves, that the vision he  
had received would dispose him to attend par-  
ticularly to the men in black, who had now come.  
But his dream seems to have had no such stim-  
ulating effect. He withdrew from the sermon,  
though he came again at the latter part of it,   
“hoping it had been done.” The ministers  
then endeavored to persuade him to stay; but  
“away he flung,” and they saw no more of him  
till the next day. Of the effect produced by  
their labors in this quarter, we have no suffi-  
ciently particular statement to form an es-  
timate.\*

\* The only account of this visit to Yarmouth, which I  
have seen is in SHEPARD’S Cleare Sun-shine, &c., pp. 8-10.

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CHAPTER VIII.

Eliot', Care of Nonantum. -- Questions. --Eliot's   
 Endeavors to interest Others in the Cause.--  
 ­His Need of Assistance.--Society for Propa-  
 ­gating the Gospel among the Indians established   
 in England.

THE little establishment at Nonantum con-  
­tinued an object of as lively interest to Mr.   
Eliot as ever; perhaps more so than any other   
scene of labor, because his first converts were   
there. In 1649, he wrote to a gentleman in   
England, who had advised him to encourage   
his Christian Indians to plant orchards and   
cultivate gardens. This he had already done.   
He had promised them several hundred trees,   
which were reserved in nurseries for them, and   
which he hoped they would plant the next   
spring. They were then engaged in fencing a   
large cornfield, and had finished two hundred   
rods of ditching, securing the banks with   
stones gathered from the fields.   
 Mr. Eliot complains of bad tools, and of a   
want of tools, and says that a magazine of all   
necessary implements must be provided for   
them. He tells his correspondent, that they   
were able to saw very good boards and planks,

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and that they would do all these things better,   
and in a more orderly manner, if he could be   
with them more frequently. He found them   
willing to follow his advice, but was prudent   
enough not to require a great deal of them at   
first. “I find it absolutely necessary,” he ob­  
serves, “to carry on civility with religion.”   
The best mode of effecting his objects, as he   
believed, would be to establish a settlement for   
the Indians in some place distant from the   
English, to live among them, to bring them   
under a regular form of government, and into   
the practice of the mechanical arts and trades.   
It gives us an affecting idea of the poverty of   
our venerated fathers, when he adds, that such   
an enterprise would be too costly for New Eng­  
land at that time, which was her day of small   
things.   
 Schools for the natives were favorite objects   
with our apostle. A gentleman in London,   
whose name he never knew, had in 1648 sent   
him ten pounds for that purpose. Five pounds   
he paid to a woman in Cambridge for teaching   
Indian children; “and,” says he, “God so   
blessed her labors, that they came on very   
prettily.” The other five pounds he paid to a   
schoolmaster in Dorchester, who taught the   
children of the natives with very good success.   
He feared, however, that the schools would   
fail, as he could hear of no further supply for

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their support, and so the children would lose   
all they had learned the first year. His own   
course of catechizing the young, whenever he   
held a meeting, he continued constantly, and   
found their proficiency very encouraging.\*  
 These are specimens of the minute and hum­-  
ble labors, to which this devoted man gave his   
time and heart, that he might bless the unen-  
­lightened with civilization and Christianity.   
Many were his hindrances and discourage­-  
ments; but he always toiled in the cheerful-  
­ness of hope. Is there not something touch­-  
ing in the incidental remark he makes, that “it   
is hard to look on the day of small things with   
patience enough”?  
 Many of the questions propounded by the

\* Glorious Progresse of the Gospel, &c., p. 16. -- Mr.   
Eliot was pleased with his success among the Indian chil­-  
dren, whose docility and good progress he on several occa­-  
sions praises. In this respect he was more fortunate than   
was Mr. Egede with the Greenland boys, whom he took   
into his house, and of whom we are told, “as to their learn-  
­ing, it went briskly at first, because they had a fish-hook,   
or some such thing, given them for every letter they learnt.   
But they were soon glutted with this business, and said,   
they knew not what end it answered to sit all day long   
looking upon a piece of paper, and crying a, b, c, &c.; that   
he and the factor were worthless people, because they did   
nothing but look in a book, or scrawl upon paper with a   
feather; but, on the contrary, the Greenlanders were brave   
men, they would hunt seals, shoot birds, &c.” –CRANTZ’S  
History of Greenland, Vol. I. p. 290.

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Indians about this time sufficiently prove, that   
they were neither dull hearers nor thoughtless   
men. Specimens of them are recorded by their   
teacher; and they are found to be full of mean-  
­ing. The true principle of moral and mental   
life must have been awakened, or they could   
not have been suggested. They show, as Mr.   
Eliot justly remarks, that “the souls of these   
men were in a searching condition after the   
great points of religion and salvation.”  
 Meanwhile the Indian apostle endeavored to   
inspire his brethren in the ministry and others   
with a zeal kindred to that of which his own   
heart was full. The sachem Cutshamakin had   
some subjects at Martha's Vineyard. They   
had been moved by his example to adopt the   
new religion, and were reckoned in the number   
of “praying Indians.”  
 In 1648 Mr. Eliot speaks of having entreated   
the younger Mayhew, who was the minister at   
the Vineyard, to attend to the religious wants   
of these Indians. To this call Mayhew was   
not inattentive. Indeed he had for some time   
been engaged in learning the language of the   
natives, with a view to the introduction of   
Christianity among them. Eliot speaks with   
thankful emotion of the success of his efforts.   
He afterwards recurs to the subject, and ex-  
­presses his gratitude for the blessing of God   
on Mayhew's labors, hoping that the natives at

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the Vineyard would be prepared to form a reg­-  
ular civil and religious settlement, when they   
should see a successful experiment of that kind   
in another place, such as he had set his heart   
on endeavoring to effect. His friendship for   
Mr. Mayhew is further evinced by the pains he   
took to procure books for him. In a letter   
sent to England about this time, he mentions   
him with much affection, as a young beginner,   
who is in extreme want of books; he begs,   
therefore, that commentaries, and all the works   
necessary for a young minister, may be for-  
­warded by the benevolent. It was a request   
on which he laid much stress.”  
 Our good evangelist was importunate with   
all the ministers, who lived near the Indians, to   
learn their language, and put their hands to   
the work of spreading among them the knowl­-  
edge of God. Having mentioned· these solici­-  
tations, he adds, “I hope God will in his time   
bow their hearts thereunto.” These anxious   
desires for cooperation were naturally dictated   
by the strength of his own feelings for the   
cause, and by his heartfelt conviction of its   
great importance. There is an expansive ac-  
­tion in moral warmth, like that which belongs   
to heat in the natural world. It cannot remain   
shut up in the heart where it originates, but

\* Eliot's letters in 3 M. H. Coll. IV. 81, 128.

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ever seeks to diffuse itself. No man can work   
heartily for truth or benevolence, without en-  
­deavoring to infuse into others something of the   
spirit by which he is himself animated and   
impelled.   
 Hitherto the Apostle to the Indians had per-  
­severed in his pious enterprise with compara­-  
tively little aid. He had received indeed the   
encouraging sympathy of many around him,   
both of the clergy and the laity. Some of the   
ministers, the Governor, and other magistrates   
were frequently present at his lectures. They   
cheered his spirit and strengthened his hands   
by giving him their countenance and occasional   
assistance. But nearly the whole burden of   
the undertaking rested on him; and the time   
seemed to have arrived, when, if it was to be   
sustained and enlarged, some efficient help   
would be necessary. Shepard, who had taken   
an active and hearty interest in Mr. Eliot's   
success, and had often been his companion in   
the work, died in 1649. The loss of such a   
friend and counsellor must have pressed heav-  
­ily on the heart of the good evangelist.   
 The efforts he had already made appeared to   
have been sufficiently successful to encourage   
more extensive plans of benevolence for the   
Indians. It has been before mentioned, that   
his favorite project was to bring them together   
in well-ordered towns, where industrious em-

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ployment in the several arts and trades, and   
general improvement in civil affairs, might ad-  
­vance hand in hand with religious instruction.   
This wisely conceived part of his plan lay near   
his heart; but it could not be accomplished   
without considerable assistance. Such assist-  
­ance, as we have seen, he could not and did   
not expect from the infant colony; for New   
England, who now makes every ocean white   
with her commerce, and over whose hills and   
by whose rivers prosperous villages and wealthy   
towns are at this day scattered broadcast, was   
then scarcely able to sustain her own few and   
poor settlements in the wilderness. Some pe-  
­cuniary aid, however, Mr. Eliot received from   
an appropriation made by order of the Gene-  
­ral Court.” While he was grateful for this

\* This was in May, 1647. The order was as follows;   
“It is ordered, that ten pounds be given to Mr. Eliot, as a   
gratuity from this Court, in respect of his pains in instruct-  
­ing the Indians in the knowledge of God, and that order be   
taken that the twenty pounds per annum, given by the Lady   
Armine for that purpose, may be called for and employed   
accordingly.” See Savage's note on Winthrop, Vol. II.   
p. 305. The benefaction of Lady Armine, here mentioned,   
is recorded by Winthrop, Vol. II. p. 212; but he does not   
state for what purpose it was given. It appears, by the or-  
­der of the Court, to have been designed to promote the In­-  
dian work.   
 From the above statement we learn, that Gookin was   
not quite correct, when he said, “In this work did this good   
man [Eliot] industriously travail sundry years, without any

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proffered bounty, he must still have been aware   
that the further extension of his efforts would   
require a larger supply than could be looked   
for at home.   
 At this juncture his heart· was gladdened by   
assistance from the mother country. The la-  
bors for the conversion of the Indians had been   
reported in England, and had excited not a   
little attention. The tract entitled “The Day-  
­Breaking, if not the Sun-Rising of the Gospel,”   
&c., and Shepard's “Cleare Sun-shine of the   
Gospel,” &c., in which was given an interest-  
ing account of these labors, had been published   
in London. Shepard's papers on the subject   
were sent to Edward Winslow, who had gone   
to England as agent for the colony. This   
gentleman communicated them to some of the   
most distinguished clergymen in and about   
London, such as Marshall, Goodwin, Whitaker,   
and Calamy, who, when the papers were pub-  
­lished, prefaced them with two very fervent   
epistles, one addressed to the Parliament, the   
other “to the godly and well-affected” of the

external encouragement, from men I mean, as to the re-  
­ceiving any salary or reward. Indeed, verbal encourage­-  
ments, and the presence of divers persons at his lectures,   
he wanted not.” -I M. H. Coll., I. 169. It may be that   
Eliot, in his usual spirit of disinterestedness, did not accept   
the gratuity of ten pounds; but the offer of it by the Court   
proves, that he received somewhat more than merely   
“verbal encouragements.”

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nation. In these an earnest call was sounded   
for interest and help in the work of converting   
the natives of New England.   
 The appeal to Parliament was not made in   
vain. An order was passed, March 17th, 1647,   
requiring the Committee on Foreign Planta­-  
tions to prepare an ordinance “for the encour-  
­agement and advancement of learning and   
piety in New England.” The committee re-  
­ported the result of their deliberations. It   
does not appear what course of measures, or   
what mode of action, they proposed. But   
whatever these were, Eliot was much gratified   
with them; for, in a letter to Winslow the next   
year, he expressed his entire approbation of   
what had been done, adding, “I trust it is per-  
­fected long before this time.” But he ex­-  
pected more than had then been accomplished.   
At that period of agitating excitement, the   
Parliament were so absorbed in other more   
urgent business, that the report of their com-  
­mittee was for some time neglected. Winslow,   
who felt a warm and honorable interest in the   
matter, in an “epistle dedicatory” prefixed to   
a tract which he published in 1649, ventured   
to remind them of this neglect, and asked per-  
­mission to recall their attention to the subject.   
By way of appeal to their piety, he dropped   
the hint, that doubtless “the common enemy   
of man's salvation” rejoiced, when a godly

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enterprise, so happily begun, was suspended   
for want of further encouragement; and he   
urged the probability, on which so much stress   
was laid by many at that time, that the North   
American Indians were the descendants of the   
ten tribes of Israel.   
 How much influence this appeal may have   
had in exciting an immediate attention to the   
subject, we know not; but the Parliament   
passed an ordinance, July 27th, 1649, for the   
advancement of civilization and Christianity   
among the Indians of New England.\* A cor­  
poration in perpetual succession was instituted,   
bearing the title of “The President and Soci­  
ety for the Propagation of the Gospel in New   
England,” with power to receive, manage, and   
dispose of moneys for that purpose. It was   
also enacted, that a general contribution for   
the object should be made through England   
and Wales. The ministers were required to   
read the ordinance from their pulpits, at the   
same time exhorting the people to give gener­  
ous aid .to the pious undertaking. The uni­  
versities of Oxford and Cambridge also issued   
letters addressed to the ministers, calling upon   
them to stir up their congregations to the good   
work. But, notwithstanding this powerful in­  
fluence, the contribution proceeded heavily and

\* The breviat of this Act is given in HUTCHINSON’S  
History of Massachusetts, Vol. I. p. 153.

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slowly. It met a warm opposition; and the   
whole plan of converting the Indians was al­-  
leged by many to be merely a scheme to gather   
money by appealing to the piety of the nation.   
So discouraging was the prospect of a contri-  
­bution from the people, that an effort was made   
to raise something from the army.   
 But, in despite of all opposition, a very con­-  
siderable sum was collected. Lands were pur­-  
chased to the value of between five and six   
hundred pounds a year, and vested in a cor­-  
poration, of which Judge Steel was the first   
president, and Mr. Henry Ashurst the first   
treasurer. Portions of the income were from   
time to time transmitted to America, and en-  
­trusted to the Commissioners of the United   
Colonies of New England, who faithfully ap­-  
propriated the money to the objects for which   
it was collected.   
 It appears from notices, which we gather at   
different periods, that salaries were paid to the   
preachers engaged in the work; that schools   
for the Indians were supported; tools, instru-  
­ments of labor, wool, and other commodities   
provided for them; an Indian college erected,   
and the expense of printing Eliot's Translation   
of the Bible and of other books defrayed. The   
last-mentioned of these objects will recur in a   
subsequent part of this narrative. They were   
the most expensive of any to which the funds

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of the Society were applied. It cannot now   
be ascertained, I suppose, how much Mr. Eliot   
annually received from this source. We know   
however, that for the year 1662, as appears   
from the account rendered by the Commission-  
ers, his salary was fifty pounds.\* This was a   
larger sum, than was granted to any other in-   
dividual that year. It was, we may presume,   
justly deemed a liberal allowance.   
 On the restoration of Charles in 1660, the   
funds, and even the existence of this corpora­  
tion, were endangered. Some, who had the   
ear of the king, endeavored to persuade him,   
that the act by which the Society was consti­  
tuted, having been passed without the royal   
assent, was illegal; and they ad vised him to   
absorb its revenues into the royal coffers. The   
corporation had purchased an estate worth   
three hundred and twenty-two pounds per an­  
num of one Colonel Bedingfield, a papist. This   
man took advantage of the opportunity afford­  
ed by the restoration, when he supposed the   
corporation to be dead in law, to repossess   
himself of this estate. He also refused to re­  
pay the money he had received for it.   
 At this perilous crisis, the Society found an   
able and efficient friend in the Honorable Rob­  
ert Boyle, a name which so nobly adorns the  
  
 \* Gookin, 1 M. H. Coll., I. 218.

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history of science and of general learning in   
England. He promptly made use of his inter-  
­est with the Lord Chancellor Clarendon, to   
avert the threatened injustice, and to reestab­-  
lish the rights of the corporation.\* Richard   
Baxter and Mr. Ashurst were likewise active   
on the occasion, and their indefatigable zeal   
was of great service.† The king, probably by   
the influence of Clarendon, instead of listening   
to the evil counsel he had received, granted a   
new charter to the Society, and confirmed its   
rights under his royal hand.‡ Bedingfield pros­-  
ecuted his claim by a suit in chancery, and thus   
delayed the recovery of the contested proper-  
­ty about a year. But the Lord Chancellor, who   
in the whole course of this business had been   
steadily favorable to the rights of the Society,   
gave judgment against him, and granted a de-  
­cree for a new corporation.   
 Thus the question, in which Mr. Eliot's favor-  
­ite work in New England was so deeply interest­ed,   
was happily settled, and the Society restored

\* See BIRCH’S Life of Boyle, p. 42, prefixed to the edi-  
­tion of Boyle's Works in five volumes, fol., London, 1744.   
 † See Reliquiae Baxterianae, or BAXTER'S Narrative of  
his Life, published by Sylvester, p. 290. Baxter ascribes   
a large share of influence in this business to himself and   
Mr. Ashurst. There can be little doubt, that the agency   
of Boyle was more efficient than that of any other man.   
 ‡ The charter may be found in the Appendix to BIRCH'S   
Life of Boyle, No. I.

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to a secure course of usefulness. Robert Boyle  
was appointed its first governor under the new   
constitution, and remained constantly devoted   
to its interests. The sincerity with which he   
espoused the cause of the Society for Propogat­  
ing the Gospel among the Indians, was evinced   
by bestowing -upon it a third part of the for­  
feited impropriations in Ireland, which in 1662   
were granted to him by the King.\* An inter­  
esting correspondence was carried on from   
time to time between Mr. Boyle and Mr. Eliot,   
to which, as well as to some letters that passed   
between Eliot and Richard Baxter, I shall here­  
after have occasion to refer.†

\* BIRCH’S Life of Boyle, p. 41.   
 † Mr. Boyle's first letter to the Commissioners of the Col-  
onies, and their answer, are given by Gookin; 1 M. H. Coll.,   
I. 214 - 218. They are both valuable, as exhibiting the   
views and the spirit of the leading men, who were engaged   
in the cause.

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CHAPTER IX.

Further Labor, of Eliot among the Natives. --  
 His, Letter, to Winslow. -- Questions of the In-  
 ­dians. --Eliot's Converts troubled by Gorton's   
 Doctrines. -- Desire of the Indians for a Town   
 and school. -- Opposition from the Powaws   
 and Sacl&ems.

I NOW return to the story of Mr. Eliot's exer­-  
tions among the Indians; but I find it difficult   
to arrange his labors in chronological order, on   
account of the disjointed manner in which they   
are related by himself and others.   
 We learn from his statement, that the natives   
in the southern parts of Massachusetts and the   
adjoining region were in general but little dis-  
­posed to embrace Christianity. There were a   
few “praying Indians” at Titacut. Young   
Massasoit (whom Eliot calls by his other name,   
Ousamequin), son of the sachem so distin-  
­guished in the history of Plymouth, was op­-  
posed to all attempts at religious instruction;   
and of his father Mr. Eliot humorously says,   
“The old man is too wise to look after it.”   
The western Indians were found to be more   
docile. They listened to the word with much   
willingness. Shawanon, the sachem of Nasha-

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way, had received Christianity; and many of   
his people, induced perhaps as much by his   
example as by any other motive, had done the   
same. We have seen before, that he was   
friendly to Mr. Eliot, and ready to defend him   
in the hour of danger. In the summer of 1648,   
the apostle visited his domain four times, and   
found a numerous people there. But, as it was   
nearly forty miles from his home, he could not   
be with them so frequently as he or they   
wished. They begged him to come oftener   
and stay longer.\*

\* When Shawanon died, an apprehension was enter­

tained, that his people might choose such a successor, as   
would be friendly neither to Christianity nor to the Eng­  
lish. To avert this danger, the Court made use of Mr.   
Eliot's influence with the Indians. He and Mr. Nowell   
were sent to them for the purpose of persuading them to   
make a proper choice. This fact I learn from the follow­  
ing notice, extracted from the Colony Records, under the   
date of October, 1654.

“Whereas Shawanon, sagamore of Nashaway, is lately   
dead, and another is now suddenly to be chosen in his room,   
they being a great people that have submitted to this juris­  
diction, and their eyes being upon two or three of the blood,   
one whereof is very debased, and a drunken fellow, and   
no friend of the English, another is very hopeful to learn   
the things of Christ; --This Court doth therefore order,   
that Mr. Increase Nowell and Mr. John Eliot shall and   
hereby are desired to repair to the Indians, and labor by   
their best counsel to prevail with them for the choosing of   
such a one as may be most fit to be their sagamore, which   
would be a good service to the country.”

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There are letters of Mr. Eliot, written to   
Winslow in 1649 and. 1650. From these we   
learn something of the objects which engaged   
his interest. Winslow had informed him of a   
distinguished Jewish theologian at Amsterdam,   
Rabbi Ben Israel, who affirmed, that the ten   
tribes of Israel were certainly transported to   
America, of which fact there were “infallible   
tokens.” Eliot eagerly seized on this piece   
of information, supposing it might bring to   
light new evidence for his favorite opinion.   
He requested his correspondent to sift the mat­-  
ter thoroughly, and to learn, if possible, on   
what grounds the Jewish doctor had founded   
his assertion, at what time, in what manner,   
and in what numbers the lost tribes had   
reached America. In confirmation of the the-  
­ory he stated, that Mr. Dudley had told him of   
one Captain Cromwell, lately deceased at Bos-  
­ton, who had frequently been among Indians at   
the south, that were circumcised, and had been   
able to ascertain the fact beyond all doubt.   
“This,” says Eliot, “is one of the most prob­-  
able arguments that ever I yet heard of.” His   
solicitude to have this point proved did not   
spring from idle curiosity. The inquiry was   
one of those, which clustered around the cen­-  
tral interest of his soul; for, if it could be   
shown, that the Indians were descendants from   
the ancient people of God, to whom. a cove-

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nant of rich promises was once given, he be-  
­lieved there would be “a ground of faith to   
expect mercy for them”; for, as he says, “Je­-  
hovah remembereth and giveth being to ancient   
promises.” His heart would then be greatly   
encouraged in his work.\*  
 However we may smile at the theory which   
he cherished with so much zeal, or at the argu­-  
ments by which he sought to support it, we   
must respect the motive, which gave this bias   
to his speculations. If his desire to impart   
the blessings of divine truth to the Indians had   
been less fervent, he would have cared less to   
prove, that they came from the ancient stock of   
Israel.   
 Mr. Eliot felt, and expressed in his corres-  
­pondence, a warm sympathy with those who   
were placed amidst the strong conflicts, by   
which the mother country was rent asunder.   
His wishes and prayers were all in favor of the   
dominant party; but whether the execution of   
the King was regarded by him with approba­-  
tion, we have no means of ascertaining.   
 From the contemplation of political convul-  
­sions, however, his heart was still returning to   
his own good work at home, and rested there.   
He was delighted to receive any sympathy on

\* Further Discovery of the Present State of the Indians,   
&c., pp. 14, 24.

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this subject. He blessed God when he heard,   
that the celebrated John Owen expressed a   
great interest in his labors. The favorable   
notice, which the conversion of the Indians had   
gained in Parliament, together with his politi-  
­cal prepossessions, induced him to speak of   
that assembly in terms of indiscriminate praise,   
which may be thought at the present day to   
need some qualification.   
 He renewed at this time the mention of   
schools to be provided for the. natives. No   
man believed more devoutly in the necessity of   
dependence on the divine blessing; but he no   
less firmly believed, that, if the work of im-  
­provement was to be permanent, the founda­-  
tion must be laid in the education of the young.   
He insisted, therefore, that there must be an   
annual appropriation for the support of school-  
­masters and schoolmistresses. He proposed   
to carry the business of education still further;   
for he had found some of the Indian youth so   
docile, and of such prompt and quick parts,   
that he wished to have them, as be expressed   
it, “wholly sequestered to learning.” By this   
he meant, that they should be sent to college,   
and devote their lives to study and teaching.   
Ten pounds per annum, he thought, would be   
sufficient for the maintenance of a single youth   
in this way. At a later period, we shall see,   
unsuccessful attempts were made to carry this

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plan in some degree into effect. Eliot like-  
­wise urged the importance of translating the   
Bible and other books for the natives. He in-  
­sisted, that, if money could be procured, there   
was no purpose to which it might be so use­-  
fully devoted as to this. These were the lead­-  
ing objects, to which he earnestly called the   
attention of his friends in England.   
 Winslow and Mr. Herbert Pelham, who was   
likewise in England at that time, had taken   
occasion in their letters to express their affec­-  
tionate greetings to the “praying Indians.”   
Eliot, touched with this kind remembrance of   
his converts, soon found opportunity to make   
use of it, as an illustration in the course of his   
instructions. Some Christian Indians from   
Martha's Vineyard had visited those, to whom   
our evangelist ministered in Massachusetts.   
Among them was one, whose assistance May-  
­hew had found very serviceable in learning   
their language. Eliot's Indians had much con­-  
versation with their visiters, and, finding a per­-  
fect sympathy on religious subjects, they gave   
the strangers a hearty welcome.   
 This circumstance occasioned a question,   
which to a man like their teacher must have   
had an affecting interest. “How is it,” said   
they, “that, when an Indian whom we never   
saw before, comes among us, and we find that   
he prays to God, we love-him exceedingly; but

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when our own brother, dwelling at a distance,   
visits us, if he does not pray to God, though   
we love him, yet it is not with such a love as   
we have for the other man?” The sentiment   
of religious sympathy must have been strong,   
that gave rise to such a question in the minds   
of men scarcely in any considerable degree re-  
­claimed from savage life.   
 Mr. Eliot first inquired, whether they really   
found this feeling in their hearts. They replied   
that they did, and bad often wondered at it.   
Encouraged by this answer, their teacher fur­-  
ther asked them, what they supposed could be   
the reason, that good people in England, at   
the distance of three thousand miles, who   
never saw them, should love them as soon as   
they heard of their praying to God, and send   
them tokens of their affectionate regard. He   
then mentioned the kind message sent by Mr.   
Winslow and Mr. Pelham. He reminded them   
of the good things already bestowed by their   
friends in England, and assured them that they   
would receive more, for that means would soon   
be sent to assist them in building a town.   
 The Indians acknowledged, that they could   
not account for this benevolent interest. Mr.   
Eliot, having thus prepared their minds, pro-  
­ceeded to explain to. them the nature of that   
unity of spirit by which those who love reli-  
­gion are attached to each other, and doubtless

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left on their hearts a far more salutary and en­  
during impression, than could have been con­  
veyed by any attempt to open the depths of   
doctrinal mysteries.   
 Our apostle was troubled to hear, that some,   
who had gone from America, had reported un­  
favorably in England concerning his work   
among the natives. He requested Mr. Winslow   
to inquire of such, whether they had ever taken   
the pains to go three or four miles to some of   
the Indian meetings, that they might judge for   
themselves from personal observation. If they   
had not, he protested against their testimony.   
If they had done so, and were acquainted with   
the Indians, he begged to know specifically   
what their objections were.   
 As to the general, sweeping charge, that all   
the Indians were bad and reckless, because   
those were so who were found loitering around   
the English settlements, watching for an op­  
portunity to steal or to do mischief, he would   
have such as talked in this way consider how   
it would fare with the English, if the character   
of all should be judged and condemned by that   
of the worst among them. He asked only for   
fair dealing. While he was far enough from   
making any extravagant claims for his Indians,   
he would not have them traduced by the   
thoughtless or the malignant, without inter­  
posing an honest vindication.

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While Eliot was thus actively engaged in   
labors, which took and kept him much from   
home, he was not unmindful of his studies.   
His love of books appears by a request he   
made to Winslow for assistance, to enable   
him to purchase the library of Mr. Welde, his form-  
­er colleague, who had gone to England, and   
did not intend to return. He was extremely   
unwilling, that these books should be sent back   
to England, while they were so much needed   
in the infant colony, where the means of theo-  
­logical learning were scanty. The price of   
the library was thirty-four pounds; but he   
would pay that price only on condition that all   
the books were included.   
 It seems, from his manner of speaking, that   
he expected to refund the money which he   
wished to have disbursed for him on this occa-  
­sion. But he soon after learned, that the cor­-  
poration in England were willing to discharge   
the expense of the purchase, for which he was   
heartily grateful. They likewise bought the   
library of Mr. Jenner, minister of Weymouth,   
for Harvard College, as appears from a letter   
of Winslow, published by Hazard.\* Eliot's   
expressions seem to imply, that Welde's books   
were to be presented to him; but this is not

\* See Savage's note on Winthrop, Vol: I. p. 251. Mr.   
Eliot also mentions Jenner's library in connexion with  
Welde's.

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positively said. He promised to send to Eng-  
­land a catalogue of each of the libraries, as   
soon as his engagements should allow him suf-   
ficient leisure.   
 On one occasion, Eliot's converts were some-  
­what troubled by the doctrines of the notorious   
Gorton, whose conduct and creed caused so   
much disturbance in the early days of New   
England. In July, 1650, two of the “praying   
Indians” travelled to Providence and War-  
­wick, and spent the Sabbath among Gorton's   
followers, with whom they had much confer­-  
ence about religion. They returned with per-  
­plexing doubts on their minds. At the next   
lecture, before the assembly had fully come to­-  
gether, one of those Indians asked Mr. Eliot   
this question; “How happens it, that the Eng-  
­lish, among whom I have lately been, though   
they have the same Bible as we have, yet speak   
different things?” He then said, that he and   
his brother had visited Providence and War-  
wick, and though they did not understand the   
public exercises, yet they learned from conver-  
sation, that there was much difference between   
the opinions of the people there and those of   
their own teacher.   
 Mr. Eliot requested him to state the particu-  
lars. He accordingly enumerated the points,   
about which their faith had been disturbed.   
“First,” said he, “you teach us there is a

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heaven and a hell; but according to Gorton's   
people, it is not so; for they say the only   
heaven is in the hearts of the good, and the   
only hell in the hearts of the wicked.” “Well,”   
said the preacher, “how did you answer that?”   
“I told them,” rejoined the Indian, “that I   
did not believe their doctrine, because heaven   
is a place where good men go after death, and   
hell is a place where the wicked go when they   
die.” Mr. Eliot was pleased with the reply.   
 Many reflecting Christians at the present   
day would find little or nothing objectionable   
in the doctrine of Gorton's followers on this   
subject. But probably the conceptions, which   
the Indians had naturally formed, were better   
suited to the rude state of their minds, than   
more refined views. A place, with outward   
material accompaniments for happiness or mis­-  
ery, is a more definite and imposing object to   
the imagination, than a state of the heart; be-  
­cause it admits those gorgeous descriptions   
and that glowing imagery, which have all the   
stirring effect of the most striking objects of   
sense.   
 The Indian then proceeded to mention other   
particulars, in which some of Gorton's peculiar   
opinions against infant baptism, and against   
the utility or propriety of the office of minis-  
­ters and magistrates, were developed. On each   
of these topics Eliot inquired, how they had

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met and answered the doctrines of these men.   
He found that in every instance, they had, as   
he believed, replied wisely and soundly. Gor­-  
ton's people said, besides, something about the   
Parliament of England, which the Indian re­-  
porter did not understand.   
 It is observable, that during this conversa-  
­tion Mr. Eliot himself made no remarks on the   
errors of Gorton. He merely proposed que-  
­ries, to ascertain how the minds of his Indian   
disciples were affected by these views, and   
how their own unassisted thoughts could dis­-  
pose of them. Full of joy at finding these   
untutored men, whose faith had been thus ex-  
­posed to a perilous encounter, so discreet and   
firm in the right way, he offered solemn thanks,   
in the prayer at the opening of the ensuing   
service, that God had given them such ability   
to discern between right and wrong, and so   
stout hearts to stand for the truth against   
error. He regarded this trial as an evidence   
of the success, which the blessing of God had   
bestowed on his teaching.\*  
 It should here be mentioned, that in the re-  
­monstrance against “The Petition and Declar­-  
ation of Samuel Gorton,” which was intrusted   
to Winslow when he went to England, and ad-  
­dressed to the Earl of Warwick and the other   
Commissioners for Foreign Plantations, it was

\* Eliot's Letter in Further Discovery, &c., pp. 33-35.

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maintained, that the good work of christianiz-  
­ing and civilizing the Indians, which had been   
so happily begun by Mr. Eliot, would be dashed,   
if Gorton should be countenanced and upheld   
in his proceedings.\* There was so much   
heated excitement against this man, that it is   
difficult to judge whether the accusation was   
well founded.   
 The project of establishing a town for the  
“praying Indians” was one of growing inter­-  
est and importance. The natives themselves   
entered heartily into the plan, and in the spring   
of 1660 importuned their teacher to permit   
them to begin the enterprise. But at that time   
he advised them to delay the business a little,   
as he was waiting for tools and other helps   
from England, by means of which he hoped to   
prosecute the work in the summer.   
 Meanwhile several ships arrived without   
bringing the expected supply. This failure   
made Mr. Eliot sad. His heart smote him for   
depending so much on human means, and for   
repressing the zeal of the Indians, by holding   
out a hope which was not fulfilled. The piety   
of his day regarded every disappointment as a   
rebuke from God. He thought himself now   
called to learn the lesson of putting more   
trust in the Lord, and less in man. So seri-

\* SAVAGE’S Winthrop, Vol. II. p. 297.

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ously did he construe this temporary delay of   
the expected assistance, that he consulted with   
the elders and some of the members of his   
church, as to the light in which it was to be   
viewed. He also sought the advice of sever-  
­al elders at the Boston lecture.   
 Mr. Cotton declared, “My heart saith, Go on,   
and look to the Lord only for help.” Eliot's   
church, upon his recommendation, observed a   
day of fasting and prayer for this and for   
other causes, and engaged to afford as much   
aid as their ability would permit. At that very   
time, before they had retired from the place of   
meeting, they had notice of the arrival of a   
ship from England, by which encouraging let-  
­ters and promises of aid were received from   
private friends. This mercy cheered the spir-  
­its of Mr. Eliot; and it was so ordered, he   
observes, that he “should receive it as a fruit   
of prayer.”  
 While his conduct on this occasion may be   
thought to exhibit the hasty despondency, into   
which a temporary check upon a favorite plan   
sometimes betrays the feelings even of a good   
man, and we wonder that he should so sud-  
­denly construe his disappointment into a re-  
­proof from heaven, and his relief into a special   
answer to prayer; we may also observe here   
that habit of reliance on God, which is so often   
the stimulating principle of energetic and

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persevering action in a good cause. Man is   
never so strong as when, in the consciousness   
of utter dependence, he leans on the wisdom   
and goodness of Him whose arm sustains the   
universe.   
 Meanwhile our evangelist continued with   
unwearied zeal to preach, and to instruct by   
question and answer, at the several stations   
where he was accustomed to collect the In-  
­dians. It was not to be expected, that he   
could proceed without opposition from the na­-  
tives. No missionary ever went to unenlight-  
­ened men in a better spirit of love and wisdom   
than Mr. Eliot. But all his prudence, all his   
affectionate address, could not silence or obvi­-  
ate the irritated feelings of many, who were   
unable to appreciate the kindness which aimed   
only to do them good. The selfish passions,   
too, were naturally stirred into resistance.   
Mr. Eliot accordingly, while cheered with some   
encouraging evidences of success, found him­-  
self called to meet and subdue the obstacles   
thrown in his way by the action of fierce and   
resentful feelings.   
 The opposition at first arose chiefly from the   
powaws. These men, though occasionally   
treated with indignity by their people, pos­-  
sessed that power, the stronger for being mys­-  
terious, which a supposed connexion with the   
invisible world always confers.

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The savage, if inaccessible in other ways, is   
for the most part easily held captive by his su-  
­perstitious fears. The howling and dances,   
the charms and incantations of the powaws,   
overawed men, whom no physical force could   
intimidate, and from whom no physical pain   
could extort a groan. It was believed, that   
they could kill or cure the diseased, and that   
they had communications from the world of   
spirits, enabling them to bewitch their enemies,   
or put them to death; Their influence operated   
so deeply on the minds of the Indians, that   
even the Christian converts stood in awe of   
them, and found it almost impossible to shake   
off their dread of the supernatural endow­-  
ments, with which they were supposed to be   
invested. Such an influence as this, so flatter-  
­ing to the natural love of power in the human  
breast, we may readily believe would not be   
resigned without a struggle.   
 One of the first objects with Mr. Eliot was   
to induce the Indians to abandon their powaws,   
and thus to liberate them from that debasing   
thraldom in which they had been held. When   
these men saw a new religion introduced among   
their people, which threatened to withdraw   
from their hands those over whom they had   
exercised such power, they met the innovation   
with determined resistance. They brought all   
the agency of old fears to bear on every one,

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who showed a disposition to escape; and it   
required no common courage to set their   
threats at defiance. Many of the apostle's   
disciples were exceedingly troubled in this   
way. He “observed a striking difference in   
their countenances, when the powaws were   
present and when they were out of the way.”\*  
 For some time the principal opposition to   
Eliot's labors came from these men. But, in a   
letter to Winslow in 1650, be observes, that   
the sachems also had generally become formid­-  
able enemies, and omitted no effort or device to   
prevent their people from “praying to God,”   
for this was the general phrase by which they   
designated the new religion. Their opposition   
sprung from one of the strongest feelings in   
the heart of man, whether savage or civilized.   
The effect of Mr. Eliot's success was to eman­-  
cipate their people in some degree from the   
grasp of their despotic tyranny. They held   
their subjects in absolute servitude. Both   
property and persons were at their command;   
and the language of the sachem was, “All is   
mine.” What they wanted, they would demand   
with violent clamors, or seize without hesita-  
­tion. The consequence was, that their people   
either timidly surrendered all that they had, or   
concerted some plot to murder their oppres-

\* NEAL’S History of New England, VOL. I p. 253.

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sors. On one side was lawless tyranny; on   
the other, unconditional submission or reckless   
outrage. The Indian subjects, knowing that   
whatever they might acquire was at the mercy   
of the sachems, felt no desire to gain any thing   
more than a bare sufficiency for present sub-  
­sistence.   
 Wherever Christianity was introduced among   
them, it had a tendency to abolish, or greatly   
mitigate, this state of servitude and oppres­-  
sion. The people learned in some rude degree   
to understand their rights. They were willing   
to pay the tribute as before; but they insisted   
that it should be regulated by acknowledged   
and reasonable measures.   
 When the sachem attempted to overawe them   
by rage and violence, they had the. courage to   
admonish him for his sin, instead of pacifying   
him by submission. They let him know, that   
their possessions were not to be extorted from   
them in that way, and, reminding him that they   
had learned industry from the divine command,   
they even ventured to enjoin on him the same   
duty. Neither in the splendid palace, nor in   
the cabins of the forest, is man willing to re-  
­sign arbitrary power, so long as he can hold it.   
The sachems could not look with complacency   
or indifference on the inroads of a religion,   
the effect of which was to bring their authority

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within some just limits and under some rea-   
sonable principles.   
 Mr. Eliot tells us, that he had requested the   
Commissioners for the United Colonies to de-  
­vise a general mode for the instruction of all   
the Indians, and that in his prayers he was ac­-  
customed to offer petitions for some of the   
tribes by name, such as. the Mohegans and the   
Narragansets. This, being made known among   
them, occasioned much excitement. Uncas,   
sachem of the Mohegans, went to Hartford,   
when the Court of Commissioners was in ses-  
­sion there, and expressed to them the appre-  
­hensions this report had raised in his mind,   
and his extreme dislike towards the introduc­-  
tion of Christianity among his people.\*  
 Under these circumstances, the “praying   
Indians” naturally became objects of aversion   
and persecution. The sachems banished them   
from their communities, and even in some in-  
­stances, it is said, put them to death. Had   
not their fear of the English held them consid-  
­erably in check, the converts would probably   
in general have fared much worse at their   
hands than they did.   
 Mr. Eliot was often in great personal dan-  
­ger. His life would frequently have been in   
peril among them, bad they not dreaded the   
  
 \* Eliot's letter in Further Discovery, &c., p. 38, &c.

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retaliation of their English neighbors, who were   
too strong to permit outrage with impunity.   
They would sometimes drive him out with vio-  
­lent and menacing language, and would tell   
him, that, if he came again, it should be at his   
peril.   
 He had too much of the spirit of a martyr   
to be intimidated by these threats. “I am en­-  
gaged,” he said to them, “in the work of God,   
and God is with me. I fear not all the sa­-  
chems in the country. I shall go on in my   
work, and do you touch me if you dare.” The   
same man, whose heart was full of love, and   
who with the most winning gentleness would   
interest himself in the wants of the little child-  
­ren of the wigwam, could, when the occasion   
called for unyielding intrepidity, face without   
dismay the savage chiefs, and answer their   
angry violence with a firmness, before which   
the stoutest of them quailed.   
 It is worthy of remark, that Eliot makes no   
severe comment on this sharp opposition. He   
lamented it chiefly because he feared it might   
deter many of the Indians from venturing to   
adopt the religion of Christ. He regarded it   
with compassion, as the natural conduct of   
men, who could not understand, that he was   
bringing them a blessing, instead of inflicting   
an injury.   
 He had, moreover, the piety and the wisdom

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to believe, that good would spring out of this   
warm opposition. The searching and sifting   
trial, through which the Indians passed in be­-  
coming Christians, would be at once an evi-  
­dence and an exercise of their fidelity. The   
chaff would be winnowed out, and only the   
good grain brought in. The insincere, the   
loose, the careless, who from various base or   
unworthy motives might have called themselves   
“praying Indians,” could they have done it   
with safety or advantage, would be effectually   
kept away from a profession, which they could   
adopt only at the risk of persecution. On the   
other hand, a strong confidence might be placed   
in those, who had firmness and faith enough to   
brave the displeasure of sachems and powaws,   
and give themselves up to the new religion in   
defiance of the perils by which they were sur­-  
rounded. The impulse, that inspired such   
courage, could be no light or hypocritical one.   
There would be a well-founded hope, that the   
true light had dawned on their minds, that the   
principle of inward life had been touched by   
divine truth.   
 It was wise in Mr. Eliot thus to derive en­-  
couragement even from strenuous opposition;   
though, in expecting so much good from this   
source, he did not, perhaps, make sufficient al-  
­lowance for the difference between savage and   
refined man, as to the influence of such mo-

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tives. It should, however, be observed, that   
his confidence even in those, who came into   
Christianity through so many obstacles, was   
not hastily bestowed. He cautiously waited   
for the testimony of a competent time. If upon   
experience they were found to improve in the   
knowledge and love of religion, in proportion   
as they understood it, and to submit to its   
restraints, and practise its duties, “what,” he   
modestly and feelingly asked, “should hinder   
charity from hoping, that there is grace in their   
hearts, a spark kindled by the word and spirit   
of God, that shall never be quenched?”

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 CHAPTER X.

The Settlement at Natick. --Labors of the In­-  
 dian at that Place. -- Form of Polity devised   
 for them by Eliot. -- Their Civil Covenant. --   
 Visit of Governor Endicot and Mr. Wilson to   
 Natick, and their Account. -- Eliot's Endeavors   
 to form Indian Preachers.-- Further Particu-  
 ­lars of Natick.

THE time had come when Mr. Eliot's long-  
­cherished desire for the establishment of a   
town of “praying Indians” was to be grati­-  
fied. It would seem, that the settlement at   
Nonantum would naturally have been selected   
for that purpose. But there were reasons why   
the leader of the enterprise preferred to seek   
another place for the community he had in view.   
 It was his opinion, that the town ought to be   
“somewhat remote from the English.” Diffi­-  
culties had already been found to arise from   
the vicinity of Nonantum to the English set­-  
tlers; and Eliot was persuaded, that, for sev­-  
eral reasons, it would be expedient for the   
natives to have a more insulated situation,   
where there would be less danger of collision.   
Besides, Nonantum did not afford room enough   
for his purpose. He wanted a tract of land,

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where the Indians could be gathered into a   
large society, furnished with instruction of va­-  
rious kinds, a form of government, and encour­-  
agements to industry in agriculture and the   
trades, in fishing, dressing flax, and planting   
orchards.s He wished to make the experiment   
under the most favorable circumstances, be-  
­cause be intended to found such a town as   
might be an example for imitation in future at-  
­tempts of the same kind, a model for all the   
subsequent communities of Christian Indians,   
that might be collected.   
 His own solicitude was increased by finding   
a strong disposition on the part of his converts   
to cooperate in the plan. They often ex­-  
pressed a warm desire to be gathered into a   
church, to enjoy the administration of the ordi­-  
nances, and to have regular services of public   
worship on the Sabbath ; in short, to be united   
under such ecclesiastical forms as they saw   
among their English friends. Their faithful   
teacher told them, that in their present irregu-  
­lar, unfixed mode of life, they could not profit-  
­ably or decently maintain among themselves   
these religious institutions; that they must first   
be established in civil order, and in the forms   
of an industrious community, and then they   
would be prepared to have a church and its

\* Eliot's letter to Winslow in The Glorious Progresse  
of the Gospel, &c., p. 8.

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ordinances. This admonition quickened their   
desire for the proposed settlement; and some   
of their aged men exclaimed, “O that God   
would let us live to see that day!”   
 At length, in 1651, the “praying Indians”   
came together, and laid the foundation of a   
town on the banks of Charles River, about   
eighteen miles in a southwestern direction from   
Boston. They named it Natick, which signi­-  
fies a place of hills; and thither the Nonantum   
Indians removed. Some delay and disappoint-  
­ment had occurred before this selection was   
effected. Mr. Eliot regretted the delay, be-  
­cause he feared it might discourage his disci­-  
ples and embolden their adversaries. But he   
deemed it imprudent to begin, until he had   
heard from the friends of the enterprise in the   
mother country. He therefore continued to   
labor patiently and faithfully, as he had done,   
waiting for the time when Providence should   
grant the accomplishment of his wishes.   
 In the mean time be used all diligence to   
select the best situation. For this purpose he   
made several visits and surveys. At last he   
believed himself to be guided to the choice of   
the spot in answer to his prayers. However   
he might mistake, as was the propensity of his   
times, by a too confident estimate of the special   
interposition of Providence, still this circum-  
­stance should be mentioned as an evidence of

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the devout habit of his mind. In a letter writ-  
­ten in October, 1650, he speaks of having rode,   
probably early in the spring, to what he calls.   
“a place of some hopeful expectation”; but   
he found it unsuitable for his purpose. He   
stopped on his way, retired behind a rock, and   
there prayed for divine direction. While he   
was travelling in the woods, his Christian   
friends at home were also asking in prayer   
the blessing and guidance of God for him. His   
company, in consequence of the sickness of one   
of their number, were obliged to hasten their   
return. But on their way home, some of the   
Indians who were with them mentioned a situ­-  
ation, in the description of which he was so   
much interested, that, taking them for guides,   
he visited some parts of it. Upon a more careful   
survey, he determined to choose this spot for   
the settlement, being the same that was after-  
­wards called Natick. Hence he remarked, that   
“the place was of God's providing, as a fruit   
of prayer.”  
 The settlement was to occupy both sides of   
Charles River. Though the stream was so   
shallow in the summer, that the Indians could   
generally wade through it with ease, yet, as the   
water was deep in the spring and at other   
times, it became necessary to throw a bridge   
over it. Mr. Eliot persuaded them to under­-  
take this work. They built a foot-bridge over

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the river, eighty feet long and nine feet high   
in the middle. Doubtless it was a sufficiently   
rude structure; but it answered their purpose,   
and, what was quite as important, it gave them   
the stimulating excitement of that satisfaction,   
which man enjoys, in seeing the successful re-  
­sult of his labor in a new form.   
 When they had finished it, Eliot called them   
together, offered thanks to God, and gave them   
instruction from a portion of Scripture. He   
then praised them for their ready and cheerful   
industry. He added, that, as they had worked   
hard in the water, if any desired wages, he   
would pay them; but, as the bridge was wholly   
for their own use, if they would consider it as   
a labor of love, he should be glad, and would   
remember it at a future time. They at once   
replied, that they should accept no wages, and   
thanked him for his kind assistance in an un-  
­dertaking so useful to themselves.” There   
was in the transaction much of the character­-  
istic spirit of this earnest, artless, benevolent   
man.   
 This took place in the autumn of 1650. The   
next spring the Indians went to their work   
with spirit and interest. Their town was laid   
out in three streets, two on one. side and one   
on the other side of the river. Lots of land

\* Further Discovery, &c., p. 37.

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were measured and divided, apple-trees were   
planted, and the business of the sowing season   
was begun. A house-lot was assigned to each   
family; and it is said, that some of the cellars   
of these dwellings may be seen at the present   
day. They built a circular fort, palisaded with   
trees, and a large house in the English style,   
the lower part of which was to be used for   
public worship on the Sabbath, and for a school-  
­room on other days, while the upper apartment   
was appropriated as a wardrobe and as a de-  
­pository for valuable commodities. A part of   
this room was divided from the rest by a par­-  
tition for Mr. Eliot's peculiar use,--“the   
prophet's chamber,” in which he had a bed.   
This house, fifty feet long, twenty-five feet   
wide, and twelve feet high between the joists,   
was built entirely by the Indians, excepting the   
assistance they had from an English carpenter   
for a day or two, who gave them directions   
about raising the frame and some other par-  
­ticulars.   
 Canopies were constructed of mats upon   
poles, one for Eliot and his attendants, and   
others for the natives, the men and women hav­-  
ing separate canopies. These are said to have   
been for “the hearers,” I suppose on occasion   
of the common discourses in pleasant weather,   
or on other days than the Sabbath. Several   
small houses after the English mode were

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erected; but Gookin says, the Indians found   
these too expensive, and, for that reason as   
well as others, they generally preferred to   
build wigwams in their old fashion.\*  
 Some mode of government was now to be   
provided for the new community, which Eliot   
had collected. On this subject his principles,   
however strange the form in which they are   
stated may seem at the present day, were such   
as the religious character of the Puritan strug­-  
gle had made acceptable to many pious men at   
that time. He thought, that all civil govern-  
­ment and all laws should be derived from the   
Scriptures alone. A form of polity, which   
did not take its model and authority from the   
word of God, was false and bad. This point   
Mr. Eliot loved to argue and enforce. We   
find it frequently recurring in his correspond-  
­dence with his friends in England, when he   
touched upon the mode of government he   
should choose for his Indian converts. He   
believed that the time would come, when all   
other civil institutions in the world would be   
compelled to yield to those derived direct-  
­ly from the Bible. Of his Indians he says,   
“They shall be wholly governed by the Scrip-  
­tures in all things, both in church and state;   
the Lord shall be their lawgiver, the Lord   
shall be their judge, the Lord shall be their   
   
 \* 1 M. H. Coll., I. 181.

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king, and unto that frame the Lord will bring   
all the world ere he hath done.”   
 It was his earnest prayer, that the Puritans   
in England, after the overthrow of the mon­  
archy, might be led to reconstruct their civil   
state on these principles. But his plan, he   
supposed, would be more easily effected among   
the unsophisticated men of the wilderness,   
than anywhere else. Other nations, he said,   
would be loth “to lay down the imperfect star­  
light of their laws for the perfect sun-light of   
the Scriptures”; but the Indians, being neither   
blinded by preconceived ideas, nor led astray   
by false wisdom, would readily “yield to any   
direction from the Lord,” with respect to their   
polity, as well as religion.   
 Such was Mr. Eliot's theory, which seems to   
have been quite vague and indefinite, the aspi­  
ration of piety, rather than the result of politi­  
cal philosophy, but still containing the germ of   
a principle as sound as it is noble. He earn­  
estly desired to see his ideas on this subject   
carried into practice in the mother country.   
“Oh,” he exclaimed, “the blessed day in Eng­  
land, when the word of God shall be their   
Magna Charta and chief law-book, and when   
all lawyers must be divines to study the   
Scriptures.”\*  
  
 \* Eliot's letter in A Further Discovery, &c., pp. 23, 28.

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How extensive were the views he would have   
derived from these principles, we know not.   
So far as the occasion allowed, he applied them   
in the government of his new town. He ad­-  
vised the Indians at Natick to adopt the plan,   
which the father-in-law of Moses recommended   
for the Israelites in the wilderness;\* that is,   
to divide their community into hundreds and   
tithings, and to appoint rulers of hundreds,   
rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. Every   
man was to choose under which ruler of ten   
he would place himself; but this arrangement   
must obviously have been regulated in some   
such way as to prevent more than the due   
number being assigned to any one. The rulers   
of ten Mr. Eliot called tit/ting-men; for so, he   
says, they were denominated in the mother   
country, “when England did flourish happily   
under that kind of government.” He here al-  
­ludes, I suppose, to the institutions established   
by Alfred, when the invasions of the Danes   
had thrown every thing into confusion, and he   
was obliged to provide for the administration   
of justice by making each division responsible,   
by means of the decennary or frank-pledge, for   
the good conduct of its members.†  
 The polity, which the Indians thus adopted

\* Exodus xviii. 21.

† HUME's History of England, Vol. I. p. 92, and TUR-  
NER’S History of the Anglo-Saxons, Vol. I. p. 327.

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by their teacher's advice, was only a municipal   
government for their own regulation. They   
acknowledged their subjection to the magis-  
­trates of the colony, and appeals were to be   
made to their authority in all necessary cases.   
From Eliot's statement, the courts provided   
for the natives by the Governor and magis-  
­trates appear to have been hitherto of little   
practical use, in consequence of the difference   
of language, the want of good interpreters,   
and the trivial and tedious causes brought for   
adjudication; so that, as he says, they must   
either have had no government, or one among   
themselves. They had frequently referred their   
disputes to his judgment; but he found it in-  
­expedient and unpleasant to act as umpire.   
He was right in wishing them to have a gov-  
­ernment of their own to meet their wants and   
to settle matters of litigation.   
 Their form of polity being thus fixed, a   
meeting was held on the 6th of August, 1651,   
at which the “praying Indians” from different   
quarters were collected. Mr. Eliot opened the   
meeting with prayer; he then read and ex-  
­pounded to them the eighteenth chapter of   
Exodus, which he had often explained to them   
before, as exhibiting the model of their gov-  
­ernment. They next proceeded to their elec­-  
tions, and chose a ruler of an hundred, two   
rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens, or tithing-

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men. Then each one selected for himself the   
tithing-man to whom he would belong, and   
took his place accordingly. Eliot says, it   
seemed to him “as if he had seen scattered   
bones go bone to bone, and so live a civil, po-  
­litical life.” The sight was refreshing to his   
spirit. He then proposed to bring them into a   
covenant, by which they should agree “to be   
the Lord's people, and to be governed by the   
word of the Lord in all things.” To this pro-  
ceeding he wished to give a peculiar solem­-  
nity, by appropriating a day specially for the   
purpose.   
 Before this time, the Indians had inquired   
of their teacher, why they had never been di-  
­rected to have a day of fasting and prayer,   
like those observed by the English churches.   
He replied, that whenever there should be an   
important solemnity on hand, such as the work   
of becoming the people of the Lord by cove-  
­nant, they would be advised or required to ob-  
­serve a day of fasting and prayer. The occa-  
­sion, of which he had spoken, had now arrived.   
 There was another reason for this public hu­-  
miliation before God. A ship, in which the   
Society in England had sent large supplies for   
the infant settlement of the Indians, was   
wrecked at Cohasset on the 1st of September.   
Most of the goods were saved, but were much   
damaged. At a lecture on the 10th of the

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same month, Eliot informed the Indians of the   
misfortune, which had befallen the assistance   
so kindly sent by their friends. He instructed   
them to regard this as a peculiar frown of   
Providence, and as “a fruit of sin.” In con-  
­sideration of these circumstances, a day was   
appointed to humble themselves before God by   
fasting and prayer, and to enter into a solemn   
covenant.   
 Before the day came, the conduct of Cut-  
­shamakin caused some trouble. Of this man   
Mr. Eliot, who probably regarded him with   
special interest, as being the first sachem to   
whom he preached, remarks, that, though con­-  
stant in his profession, he was “doubtful in   
respect of the thoroughness of his heart.” He   
had been to the Narraganset country to ap­-  
pease some strife among his brother sachems.   
On the journey he and his companions had pur-  
­chased “much strong water” at Gorton's set-  
­tlement, the consequences of which were rev-  
­elry and intoxication. Though Cutshamakin   
himself was not known to have been actually   
drunk, yet his conduct was scandalous, and   
could not be permitted to pass without rebuke.   
 Thus the good apostle found himself an-  
­noyed in his proceedings by the Englishman's   
alcohol, which, from the first hour of its intro-  
­duction to the present moment, has been a with-  
­ering curse to the poor Indians.

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A meeting was held September 24th, 1651,   
the appointed day of fasting and humiliation.   
Cutshamakin's misconduct had become pub­-  
licly known, and he was forbidden to take any   
share in the teaching on this solemn occasion.   
But he began the exercise with an humble con­-  
fession of his sin before them all. He offered   
a short prayer, in which he acknowledged his   
transgression, implored forgiveness of God,   
and entreated that the spirit of the Lord might   
for the future dwell in and govern his heart   
One of the Indians then prayed, and taught   
from Luke vii. 36, to the end of the chapter.   
Another commented on the Lord's prayer. A   
third spoke from Matthew vii. 19, to the end   
of the chapter. These exercises they per-  
­formed in a manner which gratified Mr. Eliot.   
He then gave them a discourse from Ezra ix.   
3 and 9, in which he explained the nature and   
meaning of a day of fasting. “By the parable   
of a nut,” says he, with his usual simplicity   
of illustration, “I showed that outward acts   
are as the shell, which is necessary, but a   
broken and believing heart is the kernel.”   
 There was then a pause in the services for   
refreshment, during which we learn, that “a   
question came, whether it were lawful to take   
a pipe of tobacco.” They soon reassembled,   
and some of the Indian teachers addressed   
the meeting. Night was drawing on; and Mr. Eliot

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closed the exercises by a discourse from Deu-  
­teronomy xxix. 1- 16. He next recited the   
covenant,\* to which first, the rulers, then the   
people, all gave their assent. A collection was   
taken for the poor; and, as evening approached,   
the work of the day, which Mr. Eliot in the joy   
of his heart called “that blessed day,” was   
finished. These proceedings constituted the   
first public and formal act of civil polity among   
the Indians of North America.†  
 Thus, in the spirit of piety and good order,   
a town of “praying Indians” was established,   
with such religious, civil, and economical regu­  
lations as seemed to give fair promise of a   
prosperous issue. It was natural, that the   
founder should wish some of the leading men of   
the colony to take note of the settlement. On   
the 8th of October, which was the next lecture­  
day, Governor Endicot, the Reverend Mr. Wil­  
son, and many others visited Natick, to see   
for themselves what the pious industry of Eliot   
had done for the natives. Soon after their ar­  
rival, the usual religious service was attended.   
One of the best instructed of the Indians dis­  
coursed to his brethren. The Governor and   
others were so much interested in his manner  
  
 \* This covenant, with the addition recommended by Mr.  
Cotton, is given in a letter from Mr. Eliot, in Further Pro­  
gress of the Gospel, pp. 10, 12.  
 † Ibid., pp. 9 -14.

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and appearance, that they desired Mr. Eliot to   
write down the substance of his remarks.   
 The subject of his discourse was taken from   
the parables of the treasure hidden in a field,   
and of the merchant man seeking goodly pearls,   
Matthew xiii. 44 - 46. These he explained   
with much good sense, and with appropriate   
applications. The hidden treasure was the   
knowledge of Jesus Christ, including repent­-  
ance, pardon, and the means of grace; the   
field where it was found was the Christian   
church; the things to be parted with in order   
to gain it were their old customs and vices,   
every thing, in short, which hindered them   
from receiving, with the true spirit, the bles-  
­sings of the Gospel. The merchant man was   
the seeker after God and truth, such as the   
poor praying Indian; the pearl of great price   
was faith in the Savior, connected with repen­-  
tance for sin; the riches that he possessed   
were interpreted to mean former evil courses   
and manners; and these were sold, that is,   
sins must be cast away, for the sake of the   
pearl. On these points he dilated with fervor,   
and applied them with hearty feeling to the   
condition of his Indian brethren.   
 This specimen of native preaching certainly   
furnishes striking evidence of the Christian   
advancement, to which Eliot had conducted   
some of his disciples in the wilderness. The

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apostle had not labored in vain, for the true   
life was in those words; and when they were   
heard in the deep tranquillity of that retired   
spot, which till now had echoed with few other   
sounds than the wolf's long howl, or the fierce   
war-hoop of the savage, the heart must have   
been hard and dry, that was not moved by the   
presence of such a spirit in such a place.   
 Of this visit to Natick both Governor Endi­-  
cot and Mr. Wilson have left interesting ac-  
­counts in letters, which they wrote at the time   
to the corporation in England. They speak   
with delight of what they witnessed. They   
describe with some particularity the objects,   
which arrested their attention in the new set-  
­tlement. Mr. Wilson takes special notice of   
“the firm, high foot-bridge, archwise,” and   
says the Indians were much delighted to find   
that their bridge withstood the ice and floods   
of the preceding season, while one a few   
miles from them at Medfield, built by the Eng-  
­lish, was carried away. He describes the   
preaching of. the Indian above mentioned, as   
being marked “with great devotion, gravity,   
decency, readiness, and affection.” He relates,   
that Mr. Eliot prayed and preached in the In-  
­dian language for an hour, “about coming to   
Christ and bearing his yoke,” which was fol­-  
lowed by pertinent questions on the subject   
from his converts. Then the Indian school-

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master\* read, line by line, a psalm translated   
by Eliot, which the men and women sung “in   
one of our ordinary English tunes melodiously.”   
 Wilson and the Governor were too much af-  
­fected to be silent. They each addressed an   
exhortation and a word of encouragement to   
the natives, which the apostle was requested   
to translate and explain to them. Endicot   
affirms, that he could scarcely refrain from   
tears of joy on the occasion. “Truly,” says   
he, “I account this one of the best journeys I   
have made these many years.” He was much   
pleased with the skill and ingenuity the natives   
displayed in their various works. One kind of   
manufacture he found among them, which rath­-  
er surprises us; “They have made,” he says,   
“drums of their own with heads and braces   
very neatly and artificially.”† The next sum-

\* His name was Monequassun.   
 † The following fact, mentioned by Gookin, will show   
that drums at that period were sometimes devoted to other   
than martial uses. Describing the Indian mode of worship,   
he says, “Upon the Lord's days, fast-days, and lecture-  
­days, the people assemble together at the sound of a drum,   
(for bells they yet have not,) twice a day,” &c. -1 M. H.   
Coll., I. 183. But the Indians were not the only ones, who   
were summoned to public worship in this singular manner.   
The good people of Cambridge at one time had the same   
practice. Johnson describes one who, in 1636, wandered   
to that town, and came to a large plain; “no sooner was   
he entered therein, but, hearing the sound of a drum, he

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mer they were to build a water-mill, concern­-  
ing which the advice of the Governor and other   
gentlemen was requested.   
 It was a plan, which Mr. Eliot had much at   
heart, to qualify the natives to instruct one an­-  
other. I have already mentioned the Indian   
schoolmaster at Natick. Endicot and Wilson   
state, that this man could read, spell, and write   
English correctly, and that his success with   
his pupils gave good promise. Mr. Eliot's ob-  
­ject was to prepare some of the most gifted,   
intelligent, and serious of the Indians to be-  
­come the religious instructors of their own   
people. He wished to form a kind of seminary   
from which young natives, well taught and well   
disciplined, should go forth as missionaries to   
distant places. “There be several providences   
of God,” says he, “appearing to work, which   
make me think, that the most effectual and gen-

was directed towards it by a broad beaten way; following   
this road, he demands of the next man he met, what the   
signal of the drum meant; the reply was made, they had   
as yet no bell to call men to meeting, and therefore made   
use of a drum.” -- Wonder-working Providence, B. I. ch. 43.   
Dr. Holmes, however, says there is evidence, that “the   
church had a bell at first,”' and then adds, “A drum, for   
what reason does not now appear, was afterwards substi-  
­tuted in its place.” -- History of Cambridge, I M. H. Coll.   
VII. 18. If the use of the drum was a matter of choice,   
and did not arise from the want of a bell, the fact is one of   
curious, however trivial, interest.

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eral way of spreading the Gospel will be   
by themselves, when so instructed as I   
have above mentioned. As for my preaching,   
though such whose hearts God hath   
bowed to attend can pick up some knowledge   
by my broken expres­sions, yet I see that it   
is not so taking and effectual to strangers,   
as their own expressions be, who naturally   
speak unto them in their own tongue.”  
 Accordingly he was accustomed to select   
two of them each Sabbath “to exercise,” as   
he termed it, intending thereby to habituate   
them to a clear and forcible manner of   
convey­ing their thoughts. They were required   
to re­hearse such portions of Scripture as he   
read to them, and to attend carefully to his   
expositions as a model. The ability they   
manifested in these attempts was encouraging,   
and in prayer they exceeded his expectation.   
He left to the schoolmaster the task of catechizing   
the chil­dren, and reserved to himself that of   
catechiz­ing the adults, in doing which he was   
cautious and tender, lest he should “damp and   
discour­age the weak.”  
 On one occasion he mentions having tried   
the experiment of these Indian missionaries   
among their brethren. Mr. Winthrop, son of   
the Massachusetts governor, advised him to   
send two discreet men to the roost powerful   
sachem among the Narragansets. He thought

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the Indians in those parts might be stirred   
up to attend to religion, and would have   
questions to propose, which might furnish   
occasion for spreading the truth among them.   
Mr. Eliot followed the advice. He sent a   
present by his missionaries to conciliate good   
will. The sa­chem accepted the present, but   
treated with contempt the offer of religious   
instruction. The mission at first seemed likely   
to prove a failure. But when Eliot's two Indians   
went among the people, especially such as   
were somewhat remote from the influence of   
the leading men, they found more willing   
hearers, who asked many questions, and   
expressed a strong desire for instruction in   
the Gospel. The particulars of the interview   
are not stated. Many of the Indians scattered   
through the Nipnet country sent a request to   
the “praying Indians” for religious teachers.   
Occasionally Mr. Eliot despatched some of   
the best and most skilful to different places   
on short mis­sions; and they returned not   
without success.   
 The territory of Natick was granted to   
the “praying Indians” by the inhabitants of   
Ded­ham, at the intercession of Mr. Eliot.   
The Indians gave the people of Dedham, in   
ex­change, the township which is now called   
Deerfield. The grant from Dedham was con-  
­firmed by the General Court. The original

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extent of Natick township was about six thou-  
­sand acres.\*   
 A large part of this land was “the inheri­-  
tance of John Speene, and his brethren and   
kindred.” It was desirable, that they should,   
by a formal act, resign their right in it, before   
the settlement was. finally organized. To this   
proposal they willingly consented. Accord­ing-  
ly on a lecture-day in 1650, they, in a pub-  
­lic and solemn manner, “gave away all the   
right and interest, which they formerly had in   
the land in and about Natick, unto the publick   
interest of the town,” reserving nothing to   
themselves but the wears on the river for   
catching fish.† Of the land, they only took   
house-lots as others did. For this quitclaim   
“they received a gratuity unto their good con-  
­tentment.” Another family made a similar   
surrender of their property.   
 It was Eliot's original intention to collect   
all the “praying Indians” into one community   
at Natick. But the Cohanit‡ Indians had re-

\* So it is stated in BIGLOW'S History of Natick. Dr.  
Homer, in his History of Newton, says it was a “fertile and   
beautiful tract of about three thousand acres.” -1 M. H.   
Coll.,V. 263.   
 † This appears from a record, in the handwriting of Eliot,   
among the archives of Natick, quoted by Biglow in his   
History of that town, p. 23.   
 ‡ This was the Indian name for the territory now con-  
­stituting Taunton and Raynham.

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served a spot for themselves, where they wished   
to fix their settlement. Mr. Eliot found, that   
he could not take that place for the site of his   
town, without opposition from the English.   
He therefore rejected it, and pitched upon Na­-  
tick. This preference created among the Co­-  
hanit Indians a suspicion, that the apostle had   
more affection for his other converts than for   
them. The influence of this circumstance, to­-  
gether with the death of Cutshamakin,\* and   
the succession of Josias as sachem, so alien­-  
ated their feelings, that they would take no   
part in the Natick establishment. They did   
not, however, relinquish the design of a settle­-  
ment, but determined to effect it at Punkapog,†   
the place of their first choice.   
 Mr. Eliot says, that three towns more were   
in preparation. He came to the conclusion,   
that separate settlements would be better for   
the Indians, than his first plan of bringing them   
into one. He found, that Natick would not have   
afforded convenient accommodation for them   
all, and that, had he. gathered the whole body   
of his disciples there, they would probably soon   
have been compelled to separate and scatter,

\* I have found no notice of the time of this sachem's   
death. Mr. Eliot's tract, in which the above facts are men-  
­tioned, was published in 1655., Cutshamakin's death was   
then probably recent.   
 † Now celled Stoughton.

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which perhaps would have discouraged them at   
the outset. By living in smaller companies,   
they would find their condition improved, and   
be more contented. These happy effects they   
had already experienced at Natick, and were   
beginning to experience at Punkapog, “through   
God's mercy and the bounty of the good peo­-  
ple in England, whose love laid the foundation­-  
stone of the work.”\*

\* ELIOT'S Brief Narration of the Indians Proceedings  
in respect of Church-Estate, &c., pp. 2, 3.

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CHAPTER XI.

Proposed Organization of a Church at Natick. --   
 Examination and Confessions of the Indians.--  
 Delays.--Intemperance among the Indians.--   
 Further Examination. -- A. Church established.   
 -- Affectionate Regards and Kind Services of   
 the Christian Natives. -- Misrepresentations as   
 to Eliot and his Work.--Appointment of Eng-  
 ­lish Magistrate, for the “Praying Indians.”

THE principles of civil order and social in-   
dustry had now taken root in the wilderness.   
The solitary place was made glad. The pleas-  
­ant sounds of the axe and the hammer were   
heard in the woods, as well as the cry of the   
wild hunter. The habitations of order and   
peace sprung up by the river-side, where men   
either had not been, or had been only as those   
who roam in idle vacancy or in pursuit of   
blood. The germ. of spiritual life was devel­-  
oped, where the animal man alone had ruled,   
and all had been dark and cold. When the   
apostle visited the spot, his heart was filled   
with that grateful gladness, which the achieve­-  
ment of a benevolent work kindles in the good   
man's soul. But he had a still further object   
in view, to which what he had hitherto done

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was meant to be subservient. He wished now   
to gather his Indians into a Christian church.   
The civil organization was to be followed by   
the ecclesiastical.   
 He approached this point in the progress of   
his plans with deliberate caution. To form his   
converts into “a church estate” was a pro­-  
ceeding, into which he would admit nothing   
that even appeared like haste or carelessness.   
Perhaps he ascribed a disproportionate impor-  
­tance to this outward act, considered in itself.   
He may have been too much disposed, as is   
frequently the case, to regard it as the end,   
rather than as one of the means, of the Chris-  
­tian life. But when we remember that, in   
point of fact, this step was looked upon as the   
crowning evidence of piety, we shall applaud   
the cautious reverence, with which he guarded   
against precipitation, in respect to men like his   
catechumens, of whose religious proficiency or   
soundness it was so difficult to have satisfac-  
­tory assurance.   
 His contemporaries observed and praised his   
Christian prudence on this subject. It was re-  
­marked, that, if he had been disposed to hurry   
the Indians to baptism, as the Catholics in   
South America had done; or had bribed them   
to a profession by giving them coats and shirts,   
he could long ago have collected hundreds or   
thousands under the name of churches. “But,”

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it was added, “we have not learnt as yet, that   
art of coining Christians, or of putting Christ's   
name and image upon copper metal.”\* When,   
therefore, Mr. Eliot at length believed there   
was good ground for proceeding to constitute   
a church of “praying Indians,” we may be   
sure it was, at least, no decision of hasty   
enthusiasm.   
 He was persuaded, that it was time to take   
this step. As a preparation for it, in the summer   
of 1652, on the Sabbaths and lecture-days, he   
was accustomed to require from many of them   
statements of their religious knowledge and   
experience. These they gave with much so­-  
lemnity, and he wrote down their sayings and   
confessions. He then requested the elders of   
neighboring churches to hear them, that he   
might have their advice. His brethren were so   
much pleased with these confessions, that they   
deemed it expedient to hold a solemn meeting   
on the subject at Natick. A day of fasting   
and prayer was appointed; the names of the   
Indians, who were to present their confessions,   
were sent to the churches in the vicinity; and   
a large assembly came together to witness their   
qualifications for church fellowship.   
 This was on the 13th of October, 1652. The   
morning, until eleven o'clock, was spent in

\* The Day-Breaking of the Gospel, &c., p. 15

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prayer and in discourses by Mr. Eliot and two   
of the Indians. The elders were then request­-  
ed to ask such questions, as might put to the   
test the religious knowledge and feelings of   
the catechumens. But it was thought best to   
hear their confessions, both such as they had   
formerly made and such as they might now   
make before the assembly, and then to pro­-  
pose questions, if it should seem necessary.   
Five of them were called forth in succession,   
and gave statements of their religious views   
and feelings. Many more were ready; but,   
when these had finished their confessions, the   
time was so far spent, that it became necessary   
to close the exercise.   
 The Indians were slow of speech; and they   
spoke the more slowly, because Mr. Eliot   
wished to write down all they said. He some­-  
times found it difficult to understand fully   
every sentence, and intimates, with all Chris­-  
tian gentleness, that they were disposed to be   
tediously prolix. These circumstances, he says,   
“did make the work longsome, considering   
the enlargement of spirit God gave some of   
them.” This is not the only case, in which   
verbosity has been considered as the result of   
spiritual influence. Of the confession of the   
Indian schoolmaster, who had probably ac­-  
quired a greater facility of speaking than the   
rest, it is particularly recorded, that it was

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growing very long and wordy, when the audi-  
­ence began to tire and go out, and there was   
great confusion both within and around the   
house. Mr. Eliot was obliged to cut short the   
schoolmaster's speech, or, as he expresses it,   
“took him off,” and called another.   
 The assembly found, that, if they heard all,   
sunset would overtake them, and leave them to   
find their way home, in a dark, cold night,   
through the woods. The elders, therefore, ad-  
­vised Mr. Eliot to proceed no farther at pres-  
­ent, but to assure the Indians, that nothing but   
want of time prevented them from listening to   
all the speeches. This. was said, that they   
might not be discouraged by an appearance of   
neglect, or by the present disappointment of   
their wishes respecting a church organization.   
Eliot had expected the assistance of Mr. May-  
­hew from Martha's Vineyard, and Mr. Lever­-  
idge\* from Sandwich on this occasion; but   
they failed to attend. The interpreters also,   
whom he had sent for to facilitate the work, did   
not appear. The whole burden; therefore,   
came on him. “I was alone,” says he, “as I   
have been wont to be.” This was another of   
  
 \* Mr. Leveridge was noted for his pious labors among   
the Indians in and about Sandwich. A letter from him   
may be found in 3 M. H. Coll., IV. 180. A brief notice of   
him is given by Mr. Savage in a note on Winthrop, Vol. I.   
p.115.

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the circumstances, which retarded the business   
of the day. He gave his converts a word of   
encouragement, and promised them a second   
similar meeting. The elders expressed to the   
apostle a warm approbation of his labors, and   
strengthened his heart by their kind sympathy.   
 Our faithful evangelist prepared an account   
of the transactions at this meeting, containing   
a report of all the Indian confessions. This   
was published in London for the information   
of the Society for Propagating the Gospel.\*

\* See the tract entitled Tears of Repentance, &c., pub-  
­lished in 1653; Among the prefatory matter is an ad-  
­dress from the pen of Mr. Eliot to “His Excellency, the   
Lord General Cromwell,” which is full of such warm praise   
of that extraordinary man, as might be called flattery, were   
it not evidently the offspring of religious conviction. “The   
Lord,” says Eliot to the Protector, “hath not only kept   
your honor unstained, but also caused the lustre of those   
precious graces of humility, faith, love of truth, and love   
to the saints, &c., with which through his free grace he   
hath enriched you, to shine forth abundantly, beyond all   
exception of any that are or have been adversaries to your   
proceedings.” This eminently able Leader of the Saints   
received as much adulation, under the guise of pious   
speeches, and loved it as well, as the proudest of the line   
of Stuarts. Eliot compliments Cromwell for “the favora­-  
ble respect he hath always showed to poor New England,”   
and says, “In your great services unto the name of Christ,   
I doubt not but it will be some comfort to your heart to see   
the kingdom of Christ rising up in these western parts of   
the world.” Mr. Carne gives us a beautifully sketched   
conception of what he imagines must have been the Pro-

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Eliot averred, that be had been conscientiously   
scrupulous in giving the true substance of the   
Indian speeches; indeed, that, instead of mak-  
­ing them better than the reality, be feared he   
had weakened them by omissions and abridge-  
­ment. There is no reason to doubt the rigor-  
­ous truth of his affirmation. The ministers,   
and others present on the occasion, were highly   
pleased with the confessions. Richard Mather,   
particularly, spoke of them, and of the whole   
scene, with the warmest satisfaction.   
 These confessions are certainly valuable, as   
honest specimens of the manner, in which the   
inward life of the soul struggled forth in these   
rude but sincere children of nature. They are,   
as we should expect, incoherent and broken,   
full of repetitions and wordy sentences, some­-  
times extravagant, and sometimes without

tector's feelings, when thus addressed by the Apostle to   
the Indians. (Lives of Eminent Missionaries, Vol. I. pp.   
41, 42.) But the reader's judgment of the fidelity of the   
picture will depend very much on his opinion of Cromwell.   
Mr. Carne makes a statement, for which one would be glad   
to know his authority. He represents it as an instance of   
the delusions of the heart, that the Protector “should write   
to the man of God with earnest concern and affection for   
the perishing heathen, while the blood of his King was   
scarcely washed from his hand.” If Cromwell ever wrote   
to Eliot, it is a fact of which ·my inquiries have furnished   
no evidence. It is to be regretted, that Mr. Carne has not   
given the letter, or at least his authority for the assertion.

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much meaning. But no serious person can   
read them without feeling a conviction, that   
the crude minds, from which they came, were   
awakened to some apprehension of the truths   
of salvation, and were earnest seekers after   
the way of God, however confused their con-  
­ceptions of it might be.   
 There are some expressions, which seem   
rather like the mechanical repetition of what   
they had heard, than the spontaneous outpour-  
­ings of their own hearts. This was naturally   
to be expected, and may easily be excused.   
But there is enough of another kind to show   
us that divine truth was breaking into their   
souls, that some of its rays had struck through   
the darkness of barbarity. A seed was cast   
into the ground; and, though it might be the   
least of all seeds, still it contained a vital   
principle, from which the tree of life might   
spring.   
 In some of the confessions there is a pecu-  
­liar air of honesty. One acknowledged, that   
he first became a praying Indian, not because   
he understood or cared for religion, but be-  
­cause he loved the English, and wished them   
to love him. This impulse of feeling brought   
him into a state of mind, which resulted in   
deep and abiding convictions. Another said,   
in a spirit of sadness, “My heart is foolish,   
and a great part of the word stayeth not in it   
strongly.”

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Mr. Eliot closes his account with the story   
of two little children, under three years of age,   
who died showing, as he believed, great “man­-  
ifestation of faith.” While we may regret, that   
the good man should have been carried so far   
by his kind interest in these lambs of his flock,   
as to attach much religious value to such infan-  
­tile expressions, we cannot but feel, that there   
is some power of simple pathos in one of the   
anecdotes. The mother had made for the   
amusement of the child a little basket, a spoon,   
and a tray. The child had been much pleased   
with these toys when in health; but in the   
extremity of his sickness, when the mother   
brought them to divert his attention from suf­-  
fering, he pushed them away, and said, “I will   
leave my basket behind me, for I am going to   
God; I will leave my spoon and tray behind   
me, for I am going to God.”  
 The next year nothing was done towards   
the formation of an Indian church at Natick.   
Before Mr. Eliot proceeded further, he wished   
to receive some answer or information from   
England respecting the account, which he had   
transmitted thither, of the doings of the pre-  
­ceding year. No such communication, nor   
the printed account itself, which he wanted for   
distribution at home, had reached him in sea-  
­son. Another reason for the delay was, that   
the “praying Indians” had, in the mean time,

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incurred an unjust obloquy, which threw a tem-  
porary check and discouragement on Mr. Eli­-  
ot's proceedings.   
 Hostilities had commenced between the   
mother country and the Dutch, which affected   
the relations of the respective colonies of those   
countries. In 1653 much alarm was excited   
by information, received by the Massachusetts   
government from the Indians, that the Dutch   
governor of the colony at Manhadoes had been   
attempting to draw them into a confederacy for   
the destruction of the English settlements.\*   
It was believed, that such a conspiracy was on   
foot, and a groundless rumor was spread, that   
the “praying Indians” were among the num-  
­ber engaged in the confederacy.   
 The government of Massachusetts gave no   
credit to the report; but it was sufficiently be-  
­lieved in the community to create a strong feel-  
­ing of jealousy, and some ill will, towards the   
Christian natives. Eliot deemed it inexpedient   
to make any movement about their church af­-  
fairs, while “the waters were so troubled”;   
for, perhaps, the minds even of many serious   
persons might be alienated by the force of pop-  
­ular opinion. We shall find subsequently, in the   
transactions connected with Philip's war, an-  
­other more strong manifestation of this dispo-

\* Hutchinson, Vol. I. p. 165 et seq.

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sition among the people to cherish suspicions   
of perfidy on the part of the Christian Indians.   
 It happened, that after the published account   
before mentioned, entitled Tears of Repent­-  
ance, &c., had been received from England,   
there was a great meeting at Boston, at which   
the Commissioners of the United Colonies were   
present. Our apostle, ever watchful for the   
Indian interest, availed himself of this opportu-  
­nity to prepare the way for further proceed-  
­ings at Natick. He proposed to the assembly,   
that, as they had now seen the confessions of   
his catechumens, there should be another ex-  
­amination as to their knowledge in the funda­-  
mental points of religion. If the result should   
be satisfactory, and if trustworthy testimony   
should be received as to their Christian walk   
and conversation, he inquired whether the or-  
­ganization of a church among them would be a   
transaction acceptable to Christians. He re-  
­ceived an answer expressive of general ap­-  
probation.   
 Accordingly, in 1654, Eliot requested the   
advice and assistance of the elders of the   
churches in this matter. He proposed, that   
they should, at a convenient season, take ample   
time by the aid of interpreters to examine into   
the knowledge which the Indians bad of reli­-  
gion, that they might by personal inspection   
be prepared to judge and testify, as to their

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qualifications to be gathered into a church.   
The elders consented to· the proposal; and it   
was resolved, that the time should be fixed for   
a deliberate investigation. Meanwhile a fast   
was ordered, on some other account, in the   
churches; and the Indians also observed the   
day with reference to the appointed meeting.   
 But, about ten days before the examination   
took place, an incident occurred, which had   
well nigh occasioned much scandal and dis-  
­couragement. By means, however, of strict   
discipline, its bad effects were obviated. Three   
of the loose and unsound part of the “praying   
Indians,” who were perpetually bringing re-  
­proach on the rest, had procured several quarts   
of “strong water” from those among the   
English who were ready to furnish them with   
the fiery poison, and had made themselves   
drunk,\* There was at Natick a ruler by the   
name of Toteswamp, a man of gravity and   
authority. It happened, that he had sent his   
child, a boy eleven years old, to get some corn   
and fish at the place where these drunken In­-  
dians were holding their revel. One of them   
gave the boy two spoonfuls of rum, which   
turned his head. Another put a bottle to his   
mouth, and made him drink till he was entirely   
intoxicated. When they had done this, they

\* See APPENDIX, No. II.

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cried out jeeringly, “Now we shall see whether   
your father will punish us for drunkenness,   
since you are drunk as well as we.” The In-  
­dians soon began to fight, and the boy in this   
situation lay abroad all night.   
 When this was reported at Natick, Tote­-  
swamp and the rest were deeply grieved. He   
called the other rulers together to determine   
what should be done in consequence of this   
scandal. They sat as a court of judgment on   
the case, and found that four transgressions   
had been committed, namely, drunkenness,   
making the child drunk, reproachful contempt   
of rulers, and fighting.   
 In the mean time, intelligence of this shame-  
­ful business reached Mr. Eliot at Roxbury, just   
as he was taking his horse on Saturday to go   
to Natick for the Sabbath. The good apostle   
was sorely afflicted by it, and said he judged it   
“to be the greatest frown of God he had ever   
met in his work.” He thought of the scandal   
it might bring' on the cause nearest to his   
heart, at the moment when he was looking for   
the consummation of his religious establish-  
­ment, and his spirit sunk within him. He was   
the more grieved, because one of the offenders   
was an Indian, who had served him as an inter-  
­preter, and whose aid he had used in translating   
a large part of the Scriptures. The sin of this   
man was a hard trial to the evangelist; but he

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hoped God would humble him, and he deter-  
­mined that he should not act as interpreter on   
the day of examination.   
 Eliot proceeded to Natick, and there found   
the court of Indian rulers in session. As soon   
as he arrived, they told him the story of the   
shame that had been brought upon them, and   
asked his advice. Toteswamp spoke with deep   
feeling. He considered, that it was now put to   
the test, whether he loved the religion of Christ   
better than his child. He then referred to   
some Scriptural precepts and examples, and   
said, “God requires me to punish my child;   
how can I love God, if I should refuse to do   
it?” When reminded, that not the boy, but   
those who had intoxicated him, were to be   
blamed, he replied, that the child was guilty in   
not giving heed to the counsel he had often   
heard to beware of evil company, that, if he   
had avoided sinners, he would not have been   
betrayed into drunkenness, and that he de­-  
served punishment.   
 After some conversation, the rulers retired   
to deliberate again. At length they gave sen­-  
tence, that the three offenders should sit in the   
stocks a long time, be taken thence to the   
whipping-post, and receive each twenty lashes;   
and that the boy should sit in the stocks a   
little while, and then be whipped by his father   
at school before all the children. These judg-

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ments were faithfully executed. The men   
were brought one after another, by the consta-  
­ble, to the tree used for a whipping-post, and   
received their punishment. When this was   
done, each of the rulers addressed the culprits   
and the by-standers, telling them that the pun-  
­ishment was designed for the good of the of­-  
fenders, that here they might see the wages of   
sin, and take warning not to disgrace religion   
and incur such shameful punishment.   
 Mr. Eliot appears to have left the Indians to   
take their own course on this trying occasion,   
in order that the discipline might have the   
better effect by being the expression of their   
own spontaneous indignation at the sin. He   
returned to Roxbury, and gave an account of   
the result at Natick to one of the elders of his   
church. The elder remarked, that the effect   
of this affair, scandalous as it was, would on   
the whole be beneficial, since the signal pun­-  
ishment would be long remembered, and do   
more good than the offence could do harm; a   
mode of educing good from evil, with which   
his minister was much consoled for the tempo­-  
rary shame that might fall upon his favorite   
cause.   
 It was deemed advisable for several reasons   
to have the proposed examination at Roxbury,   
rather than at Natick. It was accordingly held   
at the former place, probably in Mr. Eliot's

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meetinghouse, on the 13th of July, 1654. Eliot   
despatched letters to such as were acquainted   
with the Indian language, requesting their   
presence and aid on the occasion. Of these it   
does not appear that any attended, except Mr.   
Mayhew of Martha's Vineyard, who took an   
interpreter with him. Eliot had given the In­-  
dians notice of what would be expected of   
them at the time,\* and advised them to pre­-  
pare for it with devout diligence. The Natick   
schoolmaster, who was much wanted on the   
occasion, was unfortunately detained by ill-  
­ness; and, his disease being pulmonary, it was   
feared he would not long survive.†

\* They called it Nateotomuhteae kesuk, i. e. "A day   
of asking questions.” Neal incorrectly gives this as the   
name, which the Indians applied to the day of the former   
assembly on the 13th of October, 1652. (History of New   
England, Vol. I. p. 255.) In this mistake is followed by   
Mr. Moore. (Memoirs of Eliot, p. 69).   
 † Consumption seems to have been a common mala-  
­dy among the New England natives. Gookin remarks;   
“Of this disease of the consumption sundry of those In­-  
dian youths died, that were bred up to school among the   
English. The truth is, this disease is frequent among the   
Indians; and sundry die of it, that live not with the Eng-  
­lish. A hectic fever, issuing in a consumption, is a com-  
­mon and mortal disease among them.” --1 M. H. Coll.,   
I. 173. And General Lincoln, in his Observations on the   
Indians of North America, says, “Their tender lungs are   
greatly affected by colds, which bring on consumptive hab-  
­its; from which disorder, if my information is right, a large   
proportion of them die.” --1 M. H. Coll., V. 7.

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When the assembly had come to order, Mr.   
Eliot introduced the business by stating the   
object of the meeting. Liberty was given to   
every one, in due order, to propose such ques­-  
tions as he pleased. If any doubts respecting   
the interpretation of the answers should be   
entertained, it was desired Hutt the words   
might be reexamined and thoroughly sifted by   
the interpreters, so as to leave nothing ambig-  
­uous or unsatisfactory.   
 In one case, and probably in more, this pro-  
­cess took place. The question proposed to   
the Indians was, How they knew the Scripture   
to be the word of God? They replied, “Be­-  
cause they did find, that it did change their   
hearts, and wrought in them wisdom and hu-  
­mility.” Mr. Mayhew doubted the correctness   
of the word humility\* in the translation of this   
answer. It was examined again by the inter-  
preters, and, their version being proved to be   
correct, Mayhew was satisfied. This beautiful   
reply, so striking from the mouth of a savage,   
expresses the principle of that powerful branch   
of evidence, which arises from the admirable   
adaptation of Christianity to the moral wants   
and moral nature of man.   
 Eliot intended to write a precise record of   
all the questions and answers, but was too

\* The Indian word was hohpoóonk.

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much engaged in carrying on the business of   
the examination to attend to it, unless he had   
interposed great delay. Mr. Walton, one of   
the assembly, wrote an exact report of them,   
which, together with Eliot's narrative of the   
whole proceeding, was published by the corpo­-  
ration in London. It is a valuable tract.\* The   
questions concern all the most prominent topics   
of religious knowledge, faith, and character.   
The Indians, according to this report, certainly   
sustained the catechetical process with much   
credit to themselves. Their answers generally   
indicate not only a good understanding of the   
main points of religion, but sometimes more   
quickness and clearness of thought, than one   
would have expected from them on such sub-  
­jects. To the question, “What is sin?” the   
comprehensive and discriminating answer was   
given, “There is the root sin, an evil heart;   
and there is actual sin, a breaking of the law   
of God.”  
 We cannot but observe the discretion and   
fairness, with which Eliot conducted this whole   
transaction. He seems to have feared his own   
partiality for the Indians, and to have suspected

\* The title is, A Late and Further manifestation of the  
Progress of the Gospel amongst the Indians in New Eng­-  
land, &.c. London, 1655. This is followed by The Ex-  
­amination of the Indians at Roxbury, the 13th day of the   
4th month, 1654.

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himself of a disposition to proceed too fast.   
He therefore insisted, with the more cautious   
rigor, upon a strict inquest into their qualifica­-  
tions, and upon the utmost deliberation in the   
movement. Two meetings bad now been held,   
at each of which the Indian catechumens had   
undergone no light scrutiny. Still the step, by   
which they were to be gathered into a church,   
was yet longer delayed. For this delay Mr.   
Eliot assigned several reasons. He and some   
others had much confidence in the sincerity of   
the Indian professions. “Yet,” said he, “be­-  
cause I may be in a temptation on that hand, I   
am well content to make slow haste in this   
matter.” He felt strongly the necessity of   
guarding against delusion as to appearances of   
piety in men, who had so lately been brought   
from the darkness and barbarity of savage life.   
Their steadfastness needed to be yet further   
tried.   
 In addition to this, there was much of jeal-  
­ousy and doubt, and something of unkindness,   
among the people of the colony towards the   
“praying Indians,” as well as towards the   
other natives; and time, it was thought, might   
efface these unfavorable impressions. Imme­-  
diate attention to the affairs of the Indians   
was prevented by a press of other ecclesiasti­-  
cal business among the churches. Moreover, a   
more urgent want than any other, as Eliot be-

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lieved, was the want of native preachers and   
instructers to go forth among the tribes, speak-  
­ing to them from their own hearts, and in their   
own way, and meeting them at those numerous   
points of sympathy, which, the world over, man   
has with his brother of the same nation. This   
was an object to which, for the present, the   
evangelist wished to devote his most energetic   
labor. He was willing, under existing circum-  
­stances, to defer the ecclesiastical organiza­tion,   
which he nevertheless longed to see.   
 It was not till 1660, that the Indian church   
was formed at Natick, the first among the na­-  
tives of North America. I have found no par-  
­ticular account of the proceedings on that oc-  
­casion. We only learn, that Mr. Eliot baptized   
the catechumens, and then administered the  
Lord's supper. Of how many this church at   
first consisted, I believe it cannot now be   
ascertained. In a postscript to Narration   
of Indian Proceedings, &c., it is stated, that   
“the number examined (at that time) was   
about eight, namely, so many as might be first   
called forth to enter into church covenant, if   
the Lord give opportunity.” But this was six   
years before the church was organized; and   
during that time, we may suppose, additions   
were made to the number.   
 Thus were laid at Natick the foundations of   
the first civil and ecclesiastical community of

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Christian Indians. I have given a somewhat   
minute account of these circumstances, because   
this establishment may be regarded as the most   
ample specimen of the manner, in which Eliot   
designed to impart the blessings of social or-  
­der and of the Christian faith to that wild race,   
whom our fathers found on these shores, when   
they

“passed the sea, to keep   
 Their Sabbaths in the eye of God alone,   
 In his wide temple of the wilderness.”

That the general principles of his plan were   
the result of good sense and of enlightened   
views, and that the pure spirit of Christian be-  
­nevolence pervaded his undertaking, no candid   
inquirer, I think, will question. We may con-  
­fidently ask, whether the history of missions at   
that period, perhaps at any period, presents an   
instance of a similar work, in which was mani­-  
fested more true wisdom, or more affectionate   
diligence.   
 It is no dubious evidence of the excellent   
spirit, in which Eliot conducted this Christian   
enterprise, that he secured the hearty affection,   
and the profound respect of the Indians. They   
loved and venerated him as a father; they   
consulted him as an oracle; they gathered   
around him as their best friend. They would   
make any sacrifice to serve him, and run any   
risk to defend him.

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Such feelings do not take root and last in   
the bosom of the savage without good cause.   
The presence of Mr. Eliot, whenever he was   
among them, spoke to them in that strong nat­-  
ural language, by which a kind and faithful   
spirit makes itself understood and felt, even   
by the most untutored heart. They saw him   
continually laboring, with that self-forgetting   
charity which was always a bright grace in his   
character, to make them wiser, better, and   
happier; and God has written it in the human   
constitution, that man cannot see this without   
some grateful returns of affection. He too   
loved them as man loves those to whom he   
wishes to do good. He looked through all the   
outward circumstances of barbarous manners   
and wild habits of life, and rejoiced to find un-  
­der them the elements of a capacity for im­-  
provement, the germ of the higher life. And   
he would not despair; for he believed, that no   
spirit can grovel so low, or be so shut up in   
darkness, but the labor of faith and patience   
can do much to raise and redeem it into light   
and liberty.   
 In this place may be stated the delight, with   
which he relates, that when the small-pox   
raged fatally among the Indians, in the winter   
of 1650-51, many of his converts hazard-  
­ed their lives in unwearied attention to the   
sick. There was an aged paralytic in a loath-

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some condition, which rendered him extremely   
troublesome. His own children became tired   
of the burden and forsook him. Mr. Eliot of­-  
fered six shillings a week to any one who would   
take care of him. None would undertake the   
office for hire; but some of the families of the   
Christian Indians offered their services gratui-  
­tously, and took charge of him in this way for a   
long time. Others, who continued the irksome   
task, were paid a small sum from a fund col­-  
lected among themselves.   
 Eliot says, that by speaking a word he could   
have raised an abundance from his church and   
other churches for the relief of the paralytic;   
but he did not choose to check the action of   
the free charity of the Indians. He wished   
them to learn, by exertion and sacrifice, in a   
work of benevolence, how much more blessed   
it is to give than to receive.   
 The work, in which Mr. Eliot was engaged,   
did not proceed without opposition and oblo­-  
quy from his own countrymen; nor did he per-  
­sonally escape censure. At the close of his   
account of the examination of the Indians, he   
observes that his faith in God was a strong   
support to him against the suspicions, the hard   
speeches, and the unkindness of some men,   
who denied the reality of his success, and   
blamed his management of affairs.   
 Of the nature of the accusations, to which he   
here alludes, we are not specifically informed.

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We learn that in England many objections and   
cavils were started, and many false reports   
circulated, to prejudice the nation against the   
alleged attempt to convert the Indians to the   
Christian faith. Some affirmed, that, after all,   
there was in reality no such work on foot, or   
that at the best it amounted to nothing more   
than to bring some half-dozen of the natives to   
profess the Gospel by motives of interest.   
Of these and other reproaches notice was taken   
by the corporation in England, with an indig-  
­nant denial of their truth. Richard Mather   
observes, that both in Old and New England   
men were found, who declared the whole plan   
to be only a device for getting money, and the   
reported conversion of the Indians to be a   
mere fable. Upon this calumny he remarks,   
that, if such mercenary motives were at the   
bottom of the affair, he wonders that the magis­-  
trates and elders should have advised the   
delay of the Indian· church at Natick, and not   
rather have hastened the business with all   
speed; regardless of any principles, since the   
report of an organized church among the na­-  
tives would have done more to win money from   
pious Christians, than any thing else.   
 The truth is, doubtless, that the accusations   
proceeded from those enemies to the colonies,   
who labored in various modes to prejudice the   
mother country against the rising settlements

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in the western world. I do not find that any   
definite facts, or specific charges, were alleged.   
The objections seem to have consisted of those   
general and random assertions, which are easi-  
­ly made, but have little weight in the mind of   
an impartial inquirer.   
 Soon after the establishment of the Indian   
town at Natick, the General Court of Massa-  
­chusetts again legislated for the protection and   
improvement of the Christian natives. The   
system of judicature instituted at Nonantum   
appears now to have been renewed and en­-  
larged. It was enacted, that one of the magis­-  
trates of the colony, acting in conjunction   
with the Indian rulers, should hold a higher   
court, the powers of which should be of the   
same latitude as those of a county court among   
the English. The laws passed for the regula­-  
tion of affairs among the Indians were to be   
made known to them once a year. These laws   
related chiefly to the security of the property   
of the Indians, and to the various ways in   
which the objects of education, morals, and   
religion might be promoted.   
 The first magistrate, who was appointed to   
the abovenamed jurisdiction, was Daniel Gook-  
­in, a gentleman distinguished for piety and   
intelligence, and whose name is honorably con-  
­nected with many important transactions in   
Indian history by his valuable writings; as well

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as by his wise and kind conduct.\* He was   
the intimate friend of Mr. Eliot, who found   
him a very valuable associate and counsellor in   
his labors. Mr. Gookin received this appoint-  
­ment in 1656. Not long after this, he was ab-  
­sent on a visit to England two or three years.   
During that interval the Indian affairs were   
administered by Major Humphrey Atherton.   
Gookin was reappointed to that agency in   
1661, after the death of Atherton, and uni-  
­formly sustained the character of a faithful,   
benevolent, and judicious magistrate, respected   
and beloved by the Indians. One part of his   
care was to provide for public worship and the   
observance of the Sabbath, and for schools   
and other means of improvement, among the   
natives.   
 The Indian rulers and teachers received a   
small stipend by tithes from their people, who,   
when they gathered or threshed their grain,   
set apart a tenth for this purpose, which was   
carried to some general depository in the town.   
This practice of paying tithes was introduced,

\* A short account and candid estimate of Gookin may   
be found in 1 M. H. Coll., I. 228-230, written by the late   
venerable Dr. Freeman, one of whose numerous claims on   
the grateful respect of the community is the discriminating   
interest he took in the early history of New England. The   
Biographical Dictionaries of Eliot and Allen may also be   
consulted for information about Gookin.

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sais Gookin, on the recommendation of “good   
Mr. Eliot, who first led them into this way, not   
without good reason.” Gookin, apprehending   
that it might “be censured by some, as savor­-  
ing too much of Judaism and anti-christianism,”   
enters into a defence of the practice.\* Proba­-  
bly it was the only convenient or feasible mode   
by which those natives, who were engaged in   
managing the education and civil affairs of their   
people, could be compensated for their time.   
Mr. Gookin received no pay from, them for his   
services. After he had labored gratuitously   
for several years, the corporation in England   
granted him fifteen, or sometimes twenty   
pounds per annum. He died poor.

\* 1 M. H. Coll., I. 178.

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CHAPTER XII.

Eliot's “Christian Commonwealth.” -- His Tran-  
 s­lation of the Sriptures into the Indian Lan­-  
 guage. -- Second Edition of the Translation.   
 -- Remarks on the Work.

To the year 1660 belongs the notice of a   
book, of which we know little, but by which   
Mr. Eliot drew upon himself a public censure.   
It was entitled, “The Christian Common­-  
wealth.” We gather from Eliot's statement,   
that it was written by him nine or ten years   
before this time, and that the manuscript, being   
sent to England, was there published, whether   
by his direction or consent we cannot certainly   
ascertain.   
 How long the book had been received in   
New England before it was condemned, we are   
not informed. But on the 18th of March, 1660,   
the Governor and Council took it up, and   
passed upon it a formal judgment. They de­-  
clared that on a perusal of the book called   
The Christian Commonwealth, they found it   
“full of seditious principles and notions in re-  
­lation to all established governments in the   
Christian world, especially against the govern-  
­ment established in their native country.”

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They were prepared to inflict censure on the   
author; but, having consulted with the elders   
of the churches, they deferred it till the Gen-  
­eral Court should meet, that Mr. Eliot might   
have time to consider the matter, and retract   
the offensive publication.   
 In May, when the Court met, Mr. Eliot pre-  
­sented a paper containing a recantation given   
under his haw. He owned himself the author   
of the book; but his expressions intimate, that   
it was published without his knowledge or con­-  
sent. He attempted no defence of it; and, in   
order to make public satisfaction for its errors,   
he bore his testimony against all those expres­-  
sions in the work, which treated the govern­-  
ment of England by King, Lords, and Com-  
­mons as anti-christian, and which justified the   
proceedings of “the late innovators.” The   
restored government of England he acknowl-  
­edged to be “not only a lawful, but eminent   
form of government.” He then declared his   
readiness to subject himself, for conscience'   
sake, to any form of civil polity, which could   
be deduced from Scripture, as being of God,   
and abjured every thing in the book inconsist-  
­ent with this declaration.   
 The retraction was ample enough to satisfy   
the Court. They took measures to suppress  
the book, and ordered Mr. Eliot's acknowl-

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edgment to be posted in the public places of   
all the chief towns in the colony.   
 Such are the facts in the case, as stated by   
Hutchinson, who adds the sarcastic remark,   
that, “when times change, men generally suffer   
their opinions to change with them, so far at   
least as is necessary to avoid danger.” If   
this transaction be judged without any regard   
to circumstances, it certainly bears no favor-  
­able testimony to Eliot's firmness or consist­-  
ency. It seems the conduct of a man, who has   
the weakness to renounce declared opinions   
for the sake of escaping present peril. But   
candor requires us at least to remember, that   
this occurred at a peculiar crisis in the political   
condition of the colony. The restoration of   
Charles had just taken place, and been an­-  
nounced in New England. The enemies of   
the colony were already busy. Complaints had   
been made against Massachusetts to the King   
in council and to the Parliament by Mason,   
Gorges, and others. During the preceding   
subversion of the monarchy and church, the   
sympathies of the New England Puritans had   
of course been on the side of the Republicans.   
 Under these circumstances, the magistrates   
of Massachusetts might well be apprehensive   
of unfavorable suspicions on the part of the   
English government. They would naturally   
watch with anxious care against every move-

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ment, that might swell the obloquy already so   
perilous. They had presented an address to   
the King, and another to the Parliament, full   
of loyalty and allegiance.   
 At this juncture of affairs Mr. Eliot's book   
arrested their attention. To permit such a   
work to pass unnoticed and unreproved might   
be represented to their disadvantage, as imply-  
­ing a disposition to sanction the sentiments it   
defended. To pronounce upon it a sentence   
of condemnation might, when reported in Eng­-  
land, tend to allay unfavorable suspicions, and   
to defend them against the injurious charges   
urged by their enemies. It is probable, there-  
­fore, that, as a matter of state policy and from   
a regard to the present public good, the magis­-  
trates of Massachusetts required Eliot to re-  
­tract the opinions given in his book. Had it   
been received in New England during the as-  
­cendency of the Republicans, it would probably   
have incurred no censure.   
 The same motive may have been considered   
by Mr. Eliot sufficiently imperious to require   
of him a compliance with the demand of the   
magistrates. The safety of the state, which, in   
a crisis of danger, is deemed the supreme law,   
might induce him to recant offensive opinions   
with a facility, which seems like timidity, and   
certainly was a weakness. If his brethren in   
the ministry urged him to make the desired

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acknowledgment, he would not be likely to   
treat their opinion with indifference. Might   
he not, moreover, be biassed by the apprehen­-  
sion, that his political sentiments, if left un-  
­explained, would in the change of affairs in   
England, bring odium upon his beloved work   
among the Indians?  
 Considerations like these afford no apology   
for renouncing opinions sincerely and consci-  
­entiously believed to be true. But they show,   
that, in a regard to the public good, which was   
supposed to be at stake, he had a weighty   
reason for reconsidering those opinions. It   
is deeply to be regretted that the book itself   
is not to be found.\* Without it, we can   
   
 \* It is not known that there is a copy in America, but   
I find The Christian Commonwealth, in a catalogue of   
books relating to America, which constitute the COLLEC-  
­TION of Colonel Aspinwall, Consul of the United States   
at London; whose indefatigable zeal and efforts for many   
years, in collecting books illustrative of American his­-  
tory, deserve the gratitude of his countrymen. On this   
subject his library is by far the most copious and val-  
uable private collection in existence. It will be a serious   
misfortune, should not this library be ultimately procured   
and deposited in some public institution in the United   
States.   
 Nor ought we here to forget, or pass over, the labors of   
Mr. Rich in a similar walk. His B1BLIOTHECA AMERI-  
CANA. NOVA, or Catalogue of Books in various Languages,   
relating to America, from the year 1700 to 1800, recently   
printed in London, and forming a beautiful volume of more

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scarcely form a fair estimate of Mr. Eliot's   
conduct in this affair. A copy of The Christian   
Commonwealth, could we obtain it, would en-  
­able us to judge whether it deserved the sen-  
­tence passed upon it, and would probably give   
us a better insight, than we now have, into   
Eliot's political views. If it was indeed “full  
of seditious principles,” he did well to retract   
it. But we may reasonably doubt, whether the   
book deserved the sweeping censure passed   
upon it. It may have been written with warmth,   
and in a spirit of extravagance; for Eliot not   
only, as we may suppose, adopted the distin­-  
guishing political principles of the Puritans,   
but, as we have seen on another occasion, had   
certain visionary notions about a form of gov-  
­ernment to be derived from Scriptural authori-  
­ty, before which all human institutions must   
fall to the dust. Upon cooler reflection, he   
doubtless found some, perhaps many, of his   
positions untenable. But the man, who had   
recently flattered Cromwell and his adherents   
in no stinted terms for “endeavoring to put   
government into the hands of the saints,”   
should not have allowed himself, in a change   
of power, to designate them contemptuously

than four hundred pages, is a curious and important con-  
­tribution to American literature, and the most interesting   
bibliographical work that has ever appeared in relation to   
America.

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as “the late innovators.” The Christian Com-  
­monwealth was printed in London without date.   
 Mr. Eliot continued to visit the Christian   
stations among the natives with unabated   
industry. At Natick, Concord, Neponset, the   
region of Merrimac River, and other places, he   
devoted himself to the oversight and instruct-  
­tion of the “praying Indians,” and to the fur­-  
ther diffusion of the word of life where it had   
not been received.\*  
 The course of this narrative has brought us   
to that period of Eliot's life, when he accom­-  
plished a task, which, as a monument of pious   
zeal and indefatigable industry, has always   
been regarded with admiration. I refer to his   
translation of the Scriptures into the Indian   
language.   
 On this work he had long set his heart with   
earnest desire, believing, that, until God's truth   
could reach his Indian disciples in the written   
as well as spoken word, the means of making   
its power permanent and complete would be   
wanting. If the schools, which in his plan   
were to be the never-failing attendants of   
Christian instruction, should effect their pur-   
  
 \* Hutchinson mentions the notice, which Colonel Goffe,   
the regicide judge, took of the questions at an Indian lec-  
­ture, which he attended in 1660.—History of Massachu-  
setts, Vol. I. p. 152.

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pose among his converts and their children;   
and if he could then place the Bible, in their   
own tongue, under their eyes in every wigwam   
or house, he might justly feel that a strong   
foundation would be laid for those great re-  
­sults, which were embraced in the anticipations   
of his far-reaching benevolence. He had as   
yet been able to communicate to his hearers in   
the wilderness only fragments and insulated   
portions of the Scriptures, by translating for   
immediate use such passages or chapters, as   
were required by the discourse, exposition, or  
conversation at the time.   
 In this way the Indians had, indeed, acquired   
a very considerable acquaintance with many   
important parts of the Bible. Their questions,   
their confessions, and their examinations evince   
a better knowledge of the main points of Scrip­-  
tural instruction, than one would expect under   
such unfavorable circumstances. Their teacher   
must have been a man of no ordinary sagacity   
and zeal, to have been able, under so many   
difficulties, to make them comprehend and re-  
­member so much of the Bible.   
 But the best, that could be effected by such   
means, was necessarily defective and slow.   
It was of great importance that the Scriptures   
in a body should be by their side as a per-  
­petual though silent instructer; that they   
should have the inspiration of Heaven in words

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familiar to their ears, to which they and their   
apostle might always appeal.   
 From the commencement of his Indian la-  
­bors, Eliot had evidently kept this great ob­-  
ject in view. He-had been intent upon obtain-  
­ing the best assistance he could command in   
acquiring an accurate knowledge of the lan-  
­guage; and his perseverance, under every dis-  
­couragement, in a pursuit so unattractive, is   
truly wonderful. In a letter to Winslow, dated   
the 8th of July, 1649, he expressed his intense   
desire “to translate some parts of the Scrip-  
­tures” for the Indians. He considered it as an   
undertaking demanding the most scrupu­-  
lous and conscientious care. “I look at it,”   
he said, “as a sacred and holy work, to be   
regarded with much fear, care, and reverence.”   
His duties in the ministry among his own flock   
had prevented his bestowing on the language   
all the thorough .and constant attention he   
could have wished. It would be necessary,   
therefore, he thought, to have assistants, In-  
­dians and others, continually at hand to exam­-  
ine and put to the test his translations. These   
must be paid. Other expenses also must be   
incurred. He could not undertake the work   
with his own means, which were slender. He   
had a numerous family to be educated; and   
his labors among the natives at that time were   
gratuitous. His only regular source of main-

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tenance was his salary at Roxbury; and he   
could not give up his ministry there to devote   
himself exclusively to the business of translat­-  
ing and preaching for the Indians.   
 Thus the work, which he had so much at   
heart, was retarded, as he said, only by “want   
of money.” In 1651 he mentioned, in a letter   
sent to England, the improvement he had been   
gratified to find in the ability of the Indian,   
who was assisting him in his version of the   
Scriptures; but soon after he said in a tone   
of despondence, “I have no hope to see the   
Bible translated, much less printed, in my   
days.”\* We may infer that, for several years,   
the project of the Indian translation was float-  
­ing in his mind, without any distinct expec-  
­tation of seeing it realized. Meanwhile he   
labored at the task from time to time, trusting   
that the providence of God would at length   
send the aid necessary to bring it to the de-  
­sired result.   
 Nor was his trust in vain. When the funds   
of the corporation in England became availa­-  
ble, here was an object, which was at once   
seen to be the most important, to which assist-  
­ance could he appropriated. Their patronage   
removed the only hindrance; and at their ex-  
­pense the New Testament in the Indian Ian-   
  
 \* Further Progresse of the Gospel, &c. p. 7.

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guage was published in September, 1661, soon   
after the restoration of Charles the Second.\*  
 It happened that the printing was com-  
­pleted, while the question concerning the con-  
­firmation of the Society's charter in England   
was pending. The friends of the Society   
thought this a favorable opportunity to con-  
­ciliate the good will of the King. The Com­-  
missioners of the United Colonies accordingly   
prefixed to the Testament a Dedication to his   
Majesty, written without adulation, but in a   
tone adapted to win the favorable notice of   
the sovereign. It was believed to have had   
some influence in deciding his mind for the   
confirmation of the charter. But we may be   
permitted to suspect, that a monarch like   
Charles was scarcely so much moved by a   
pious dedication, as by the powerful agency   
of Clarendon, to whose decision he was doubt-

\* It has two title-pages, one in English, the other in   
Indian. The first is, “The New Testament of our Lord   
and Saviour Jesus Christ. Translated into the Indian Lan-  
­guage, and ordered to be printed by the Commissioners of   
the United Colonies in New England. At the Charge and   
with the Consent of the Corporation in England for the Pro-  
­pagation of the Gospel among the Indians in New England.   
Cambridge. Printed by Samuel Green and Marmaduke   
Johnson. MDCLXI.” The other is, “Wusku Wuttestamentum  
Nul-Lordumun Jesus, Christ Nuppoquohwussuaeneumun.”   
There is a copy of this New Testament in the library of   
Harvard College. It has the Address or Dedication to the   
King, which was not inserted in all the copies.

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less. glad to leave the troublesome question.   
Twenty copies of the Testament were sent to   
England, each of which contained the dedi­-  
cation; one for the King, the rest for other   
distinguished persons.” In the Dedication the   
Commissioners say to the King; “The Old   
Testament is now under the press, wanting   
and craving your royal favor and assistance   
for the perfecting thereof.”  
 In 1663 the Old Testament, thus promised,   
was published, after having been three years   
in the press. Copies of the New Testament,   
already printed, were bound with it; and thus   
was furnished a complete Bible in the Indian   
language.† To this Bible were added a Cate-  
­chum, and the Psalm, of David in Indian verse,   
which were a translation of the New England   
version of the Psalms prepared for the churches   
some years before, as has been mentioned, by

\* In a letter of the Commissioners accompanying the   
copies sent to England, they request, “that, two of the   
special being very well bound up, the one may be present­-  
ed to his Majesty in the first place, the other to the Lord   
Chancellor; and that five more may be presented to   
Dr. Reynolds, Mr. Carrill, Mr. Baxter, and the two vice-  
­chancellors of the Universities, who we understand have   
greatly encouraged the work; the rest to be disposed of   
as you shall see cause.”   
 † According to Thomas (History of Printing, Vol. L   
p. 255) it had two title-pages, the one English and the   
other Indian. The copy of this edition in Harvard College   
library has only an Indian title-page.

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Eliot and others. The natives were much   
pleased with singing; to gratify and improve   
their taste, these Psalms in metre were affixed   
to the sacred books.   
 The Commissioners, in a letter to Robert   
Boyle, dated September 10th, 1662, speak of   
the Bible as “about half done.” This letter   
was accompanied by an account rendered to   
the corporation of the disbursements of the   
moneys received from them. One item is, “To   
sundry disbursements for printing the Bible,   
two hundred and thirty-seven pounds five shil­-  
lings.” The Commissioners say, that the fur-  
­ther requisite expense would be uncertain, but   
could not be estimated at less than two hun-  
­dred pounds. I know not that we have any  
means of ascertaining what was the whole cost   
of this first edition.   
 When the Indian Bible was thus completed,   
a copy in elegant binding was sent to Charles   
the Second. “Such a work and fruit of a plan­-  
tation,” observes Baxter, “as was never before   
presented to a king.”\* Another Dedication to   
the monarch, in addition to that of the New   
Testament, was prepared by the Commission-  
­ers; and both the dedications were inserted in   
the presentation copies sent to England, but   
in very few of those circulated in the colonies.   
The additional Dedication, as prefixed to the   
  
 \* Reliquiae Baxterianae, &c., p. 290.

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whole Bible, is consequently very rare in this   
country. Indeed a Bible containing it is scarce-  
­ly to be found. But a copy of it was fortunate-  
­ly rescued from destruction by the Rev. Dr.   
Harris of Dorchester. He discovered in a bar-  
­ber's shop Eliot's Indian Bible of the first edi­-  
tion, in a mutilated state, which was in the   
process of being used for waste paper. It was   
found to contain both the dedications to the   
King; and Dr. Harris seized upon it with all   
the interest belonging to, the discovery of a   
long-lost treasure. He transcribed the ad-  
­dresses, and published them in the Collections   
of the Massachusetts Historical Society.\* One   
of these valuable antiquarian relics thus incur­-  
red the risk of meeting a fate as disastrous   
as that, which the manuscripts of Cardinal   
Ximenes's Polyglot experienced at the hands   
of the rocket-maker of Alcala; but both are   
now preserved beyond the reach of danger.   
 The second Address, or Dedication to his   
Majesty, is an interesting document. It is writ-  
­ten with ability and with graceful propriety.   
The Commissioners present their thanks to the   
King for his royal favor in renewing the char­-  
ter of the corporation, and thus defeating the   
attempts of its enemies. They assure his   
Majesty that though New England has not,   
like the Spanish colonies of South America,

\* 1st Series, Vol. VII. p. 222.

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gold and silver, with which to enrich the   
mother country, yet they rejoice to send to   
the land of their fathers the Bible in the lan­-  
guage of the natives, among whom the Gospel   
had been planted and propagated, believing   
this to be “as much better than gold, as the   
sou1s of men are worth more than the whole   
world.”   
 One cannot but contrast with this the dif-  
­ferent estimate, which the voluptuous and   
profligate monarch would be likely to make.   
If the address found its way to the King, and   
he paused from his career of sensuality long   
enough to read it, we can almost imagine that   
we see the sneering look and hear the merry   
jests it would call forth, as he sat surrounded   
by courtiers, who gained his favor in proportion   
as they relieved him from the cares of state, and   
ministered to his corrupt pleasures. The   
pious exultation, with which the poor colonists   
in the wilderness presented this laborious re­-  
sult of their Christian zeal, could hardly have   
been addressed to one less likely to appreciate   
its meaning or value. The mere act of legal   
justice, which Charles permitted, by reestab-  
­lishing the rights of the Society for Propagat­-  
ing the Gospel, seems to have been the whole   
amount of aid, which he bestowed upon Eliot   
and his fellow-laborers, in any part of their   
enterprise.

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Thus was the apostle's toil at last crowned   
with a result, which must have gladdened the   
good man's heart. The Indians had now the   
whole Bible in their own language; and when   
he visited their abodes he could, with such joy   
as none but the Christian knows, hold it forth,   
and say, “This word of life is now your own.”  
 I do not know, that it can be ascertained   
precisely of what number of copies this edition   
of the Bible consisted. Different statements   
are made.\* But the corporation observe, in a   
letter to the Commissioners, while the New   
Testament was in the press, that in their judg­-  
ment “it is better to print fifteen hundred,   
than but a thousand, hoping that by encourage-  
­ment from Sion College, with whom we have   
late conference, you may be enabled to print   
fifteen hundred of the Old Testament like­-  
wise.”† It is fair to presume, that the judg-  
­ment of the corporation, who defrayed the ex-  
­pense of the work, would be followed on this   
subject, and that consequently the edition con­-  
sisted of the number stated in their letter.   
Two hundred copies of the New Testament   
were bound strongly in leather for the imme-  
­diate use of the Indians.

\* Mr. Moore (Memoirs of Eliot, p. 83) says, “two thou-  
­sand.” Mr. Thomas (History of Printing, Vol. I. p. 245)   
mentions “one thousand” as the number.   
 † THOMAS'S History of Printing, Vol. I. p. 242.

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Of the printers of this edition of the Indian   
Bible, Samuel Green and Marmaduke Johnson,   
the former had for several years superintended   
a press. The latter was sent over from Eng-  
­land by the corporation, in 1660, for the ex-  
­press purpose of assisting in the enterprise of   
printing the Indian Bible. Johnson seems to   
have been anxious to secure his share of honor   
in publishing such a work; for, “at his earnest   
request and for his encouragement,” the corpo-  
­ration desired, that his name might appear as   
one of the printers on the title-page.   
 They also sent from England a press and   
types, and furnished all the materials neces-  
­sary for the printing. Johnson was a good   
workman, but behaved ill and exposed himself   
to much censure. He was loose in his conduct,   
and so idle that he absented himself from the   
labors of the press more than six months at   
one time. His unfaithfulness retarded the   
work, which at best could proceed but slowly;   
and he was dismissed as soon as the time of   
his engagement had expired.   
 This Indian version of the Scriptures was   
the first Bible ever printed on the continent of   
America. It was not till about the middle of   
the next century, that the Scriptures in the   
English language were printed in this country.   
This was done as privately as possible. The   
book bore on its title-page the London imprint,

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and the name of the King's printer. This de­c-  
eption was practised to escape prosecution   
from those in England who had the exclusive   
right of. publishing the Bible, either by a pa-  
­tent from the King, or cum privilegio, as was   
the case with the Universities.   
 Cotton Mather, who commonly has something   
marvellous to tell, affirms, that Mr. Eliot wrote   
“his whole translation with but one pen.”   
Mather is sometimes so loose in his state­-  
ments, that one scarcely knows how much they   
mean. In this instance, however, his story   
seems more precise than credible. If he meant   
the translation of the New Testament, which   
was published first, the anecdote may be cred­-  
ited, though this would be a great task for   
one pen to perform. But it is hard to be­-  
lieve the statement, if applied to the whole   
Bible. In either case, “we may presume,” as   
has been remarked, if the story be true, “that   
the pen was not made of goose-quill, but of   
metal.” It has been reported of Gibbon, that he   
wrote the twelve volumes of the “Decline and   
Fall” with one pen, which he afterwards gave to   
the Duchess of Devonshire, who enshrined it   
in a silver case. Stories of this sort commonly   
originate in some mistake, or some mere jest,   
and float about in rumor for a while, till the   
disposition to attach to a great work every

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possible circumstance of a surprising nature   
receives them for accredited facts.   
 The first impression of the Indian Bible suf­-  
ficed for about twenty years. In 1680 another   
edition of the New Testament was published.   
Mr. Eliot, in a letter written during that year   
to the Honorable Mr. Boyle, alludes to it when   
he says, “We are at the nineteenth chapter of   
the Acts; and when we have impressed the   
New Testament, our Commissioners approve   
of my preparing and impressing the Old.”\*   
In addition to the Psalms, a Catechism was   
annexed, as in the first impression, This New   
Testament has the imprint of Cambridge, but   
no printer's name.   
 In 1685, a second edition of the Old Testa-  
­ment appeared, printed at Cambridge by Sam-  
­uel Green. This was bound with the last im-  
­pression of the New Testament; and the two   
parts, thus taken together, constitute the second   
edition of the whole Bible, though there was   
an interval of five years between the times   
at which the two Testaments respectively   
appeared.† Each part has but one title-

\* Letter III., in 1 M. H. Coll. 180.   
 † Mr. Thomas says, (History of Printing, Vol. I. p. 262,)   
that the second edition “was six years in the press.” This   
assertion, however, supposes that the printing of the Old   
Testament followed that of the New continuously, without   
any delay, which was probably the case, though we are   
not certain of it.

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page, which is in Indian, and the same   
as before.\*  
 We learn some facts respecting this second   
edition of the Indian version from Eliot's cor­-  
respondence with Mr. Boyle. The whole im-  
pression was two thousand copies.† It was   
superintended by Mr. Eliot, who gave a part   
of his salary towards defraying the expense,   
and received for the same purpose from the   
corporation in England, through Mr. Boyle,   
nine hundred pounds at different times, namely,   
forty pounds at one time, four hundred and   
sixty at another, and four hundred at a third.   
If some collateral expenses be included, the   
whole cost of the impression must have been   
little, if any, short of a thousand pounds. Mr.   
Eliot's remarks lead us to suppose, that the   
first edition was nearly or quite exhausted.   
If so, and if the number of its copies was what   
I have supposed, this fact will furnish us with a   
measure by which we may estimate the demand   
for the Scriptures among the Indians for twenty   
years after the translation was first printed.   
We may presume, that the number of copies,   
which curiosity might lead people in the colony

\* The Indian title of the New Testament has been al­  
ready given. That of the whole Bible is as follows; “Ma­   
mussee Wunneetupanatamwe Up-Biblum God Naneeswe   
Nukkone Testament kah wonk Wusku Testament.''   
 † Letter VII.

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to purchase, or which courtesy might send to   
England, could not be large.  
 Eliot apologized to Mr. Boyle for the slow   
progress of the printing, by alleging the want   
of an adequate number of workmen, and the   
interruption of labor among those whom they   
had, by sickness, which prevailed fatally in the   
winter of 1683 and the spring of 1684. His   
heart was saddened by these and other events,   
which seemed to throw discouragement on the   
work; for he was then bending beneath the   
weight of years, and, with the feelings of an   
old and faithful servant, his soul yearned to   
witness, as his last labor, the completion of the   
new edition of his translation.   
 The affectionate earnestness, with which he   
dwells on the subject in his correspondence   
with the English philosopher, has a touching   
interest. “My age,” says he, “makes me im­-  
portunate. I shall depart joyfully, may I but   
leave the Bible among them; for it is the word   
of life.” Again he writes, “I desire to see it   
done before I die, and I am so deep in years,   
that I cannot expect to live long; and sundry   
say, if I do not procure it printed while I live,   
it is not within the prospect of human reason,   
whether ever, or when, or how, it may be ac­-  
complished.” He bore it on his heart to God   
in his devotions, and the anxious earnestness   
of his soul seemed to be fixed on this point.

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The prayer of the good old man was answered.   
He lived to see a new impression of his Bible;   
and when he took the precious volume in his   
hands, we can easily imagine, that with up­-  
lifted eyes he may have uttered the Nunc dimit-  
­tas of the aged Simeon.   
 In preparing this second edition Mr. Eliot   
received valuable assistance from the Reverend   
John Cotton of Plymouth, who had spent much   
of his time for several years in forming a   
thorough acquaintance with the Indian Ian­-  
guage.\* This obligation Eliot acknowledged   
in a letter to Boyle in 1688.† Several years   
before that time, Boyle had intrusted to Eliot   
thirty pounds for the promotion of religion   
among the Indians. The money had not been   
expended, perhaps because no opportunity   
had occurred for the particular mode of using   
it which Boyle designed. Of this sum, Eliot   
requested that ten pounds might be given to   
Major Gookin's widow, who was poor; ten   
pounds to Gookin's son, who lectured among   
the Indians; and ten pounds to Mr. John Cot­-  
ton, “who,” says he, “helped me much in the   
second edition of the Bible.” Probably Mr.

\* He had a son, Josiah Cotton, who compiled a “Voca-  
­bulary of the Massachusetts (or Natick) Indian Language,”   
which was published, with a prefatory notice, by Judge   
Davis, in 3 M. H. Coll., II   
 † Letter IX.

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Cotton revised the whole version with him,   
that by their joint labors a more exact and   
faithful translation might be exhibited in the   
new impression.\*  
 One of the Christian natives was concerned   
in the process of publishing the Indian Bible,   
who deserves to be specially mentioned. This   
was James the printer, or, as he was called by   
applying the name of his occupation to the man,   
James Printer. He was born at Hassanamesitt   
(Grafton), an Indian settlement, where his   
father and brothers held civil and ecclesiastical   
offices among their brethren. James received   
so much instruction at the Indian charity   
school in Cambridge, as to enable him to read   
and write English correctly. He then served   
an apprenticeship with Green, the printer, in   
whose office he assisted as a pressman in work-  
­ing off the first edition of Eliot's Bible.   
 When Philip's war broke out, the smothered   
embers of national feeling were rekindled in   
his breast. He absconded from his employer,   
and joined the forces of his countrymen against   
the English. Hubbard† and Increase Mather,‡

\* It has been incorrectly said by some writers, that the   
second edition of the Indian Bible was not published till   
after the death of the translator, and that it was then re­v-  
ised and corrected by Mr. Cotton.   
 † Narrative or the Troubles with the Indians, p. 96.   
 ‡ Brief History of the War with the Indians in New   
England, p. 39.

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who speak of him with severity as an apostate,   
relate, that he availed himself of the opportu­-  
nity to return to his English friends afforded   
by the declaration published by the Council at   
Boston in 1676, which proclaimed, that all In-  
­dians who should come in within fourteen days   
might hope for mercy. James, after his return,   
probably lived in or about Boston till 1680.   
He was then employed by Green at Cambridge,   
on the second edition of the Indian Bible.   
 Mr. Eliot alludes to this man in his corre­-  
spondence with Boyle. In 1682 he says, “We   
have but one man, the Indian printer, that is   
able to compose the sheets and correct the   
press with understanding;” and in 1684 he   
remarks, “We have but few hands, one Eng-  
­lishman, a boy, and one Indian.” As late as   
1709, James's name appears in connexion with   
that of Bartholomew Green, as printer, on the   
title-page of the Psalter in Indian and English.   
From Mr. Eliot's notice of him, we are led to   
suppose, that he must have been an efficient   
and valuable workman in printing the Indian   
version. His acquaintance with both lan­-  
guages would of course enable him to work   
with the more rapidity and accuracy.   
 Such is the history of the two editions of the   
Indian Bible, which issued from the Cambridge   
press. Mr. Eliot doubtless looked forward   
with delightful anticipations to the time, when

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the multiplied converts to Christianity among   
the natives would require impression after im­-  
pression of the volume, on which he had spent   
so much exhausting but happy toil. One of   
the hopes, we may suppose, which solaced the   
evening of his days was, that ages after his   
grey hairs should have gone down to the grave,   
this sacred book would continue to be read in   
the dwellings and heard in the churches of the   
Indian settlements, far and wide, through New   
England.   
 But these cheering expectations were des-  
­tined never to be realized. The second edi-  
­tion of his Translation of the Scriptures was   
the last. The printer never was, and never   
will be, again called to set his types for those   
words, so strange and uncouth to our ears. A   
century and a half has elapsed since the last   
impression of the volume appeared; and it is   
a thought full of melancholy interest, that the   
people for whom it was designed may be con-  
­sidered as no longer on the roll of living men,   
and that probably not an individual in the wide   
world can read the Indian Bible. It is a re-  
­markable fact, that the language of a version   
of the Scriptures made so late as in the latter   
half of the seventeenth century should now be   
entirely extinct.   
 Of the correctness and fidelity of Mr. Eliot's   
version no one has now the means of forming

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an exact judgment. It would seem, indeed,   
from the circumstances under which he learned   
the language, that his knowledge of it for a   
considerable time must have been limited and   
imperfect. Many cases would occur, in which   
the rude teaching of the natives on a subject   
requiring so much precision would, we may   
suppose, fail to satisfy his inquiries; and his   
own patient observation, skilful comparison,   
and gradual discovery must have supplied, as   
they could, the deficiency of the usual helps in   
learning the structure and power of a new or-  
­gan of thought.   
 He felt for some time the embarrassment   
arising from a defective acquaintance with the   
language. “My brother Eliot,” said Shepard   
in 1648, “professes he can as yet but stammer   
out some pieces of the word of God unto them   
in their own tongue;” and Eliot himself, in a   
letter to Winslow in 1649, remarked, “I have   
yet but little skill in their language, having   
little leisure to attend to it by reason of my   
continual attendance on my ministry in our   
own church.” But this was said fourteen years  
before the first edition of the Indian Bible was   
published, and thirty-six years before the second   
was completed. During that time his mind had   
been industriously engaged on the language.   
By preaching and conversation his knowledge   
of its construction, and skill in its use, must

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have been perpetually enlarged with acceler­-  
ated progress.   
 When his version of the Scriptures appeared,   
he was, therefore, undoubtedly as well qualified   
for the work as any man could hope to be.\*   
The Indians could not have profited so much   
as they evidently did by his instructions, had   
he not been able to use their language with   
propriety and force in spoken communications;   
and there is no good reason why he should   
have been less successful in writing. The   
greatest difficulty must have occurred in the

\* Mr. Eliot would, of course, often be obliged, in the   
process of his translation, to apply to the Indians for a spe-  
­cific term to designate an object, the name of which in   
their language he had not learned. Tradition has reported   
a curious mistake, incurred in this way. The story is, that   
when he came to the passage in the book of Judges (v. 28)   
where the mother of Sisera is said to have “cried through   
the lattice,” he knew no Indian word which signified lattice.   
In this perplexity he applied to some of the natives for a   
suitable term. They had never seen a lattice; but he en-  
­deavored by description to make them understand what it   
was, illustrating it by wicker-work, netting, &c. Upon this   
they soon gave him a word, which he used; but some time   
after, when he had acquired further knowledge of the lan-  
­guage, he was surprised and amused to find, that the word   
which the Indians had given him for lattice, signified an   
eel-pot. Such is the anecdote. That a mistake like this   
may have happened in his inquiries of the natives, is not   
improbable. But that the error did not find its way into   
the printed Translation, I think, is evident; for, on turning   
to the passage in the Indian Bible, I find that the word, by

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endeavor to represent the purely spiritual parts   
of the Bible in words used by men unaccus-  
tomed to spiritual modes of thought. But the   
language itself is believed not to have been so   
barren and poor in this respect, as one would   
naturally suppose; and perhaps few men could   
have been better prepared to meet the diffi­  
culty, than Mr. Eliot. On the whole, his ver­  
sion, we may fairly presume, was such as to   
give the Indians, in all important respects,   
about as correct and competent a knowledge of   
the Scriptures, as translations are generally   
found to give.   
 The Indian Bible has become one of those   
rare books, which the antiquarian deems it a   
triumph to possess.\* The copies in private

which lattice is translated, is latticeut, a term which un­  
doubtedly is nothing but the English word with an Indian   
termination to accommodate it to the structure of that lan­  
guage. To this expedient Mr. Eliot would naturally resort,   
when he found no Indian word, that could be used to ex­  
press the object. Besides, in the passage in question, the   
same word is used in both editions of the Translation. Had   
the mistake described in the story been committed in the   
first edition, Eliot must certainly have discovered and cor­  
rected it during the many years which passed before the   
second appeared.   
 \* Ebeling, whose books form so valuable an addition to   
the library of Harvard College, wrote in his copy of the   
Indian Bible, “Liber summae raritatis.” The following   
descriptive title-page of the book, also written by Ebeling,   
may be not without interest to the curious; “Biblia Sacra,

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or public libraries are very few. It has acquired   
the venerable appearance of an ancient and   
sealed book; and, when we turn over its pages,   
those long and harsh words seem like the mys-  
­terious hieroglyphics in some time-hallowed   
temple of old Egypt. It failed to answer the   
pious purpose, for which the translator labored   
in preparing it. But it has answered another   
purpose, which was perhaps never in his mind,   
or, if it were, was doubtless regarded as an   
inferior consideration. In connexion with his   
Indian Grammar, it has afforded important aid   
as a valuable document, in the study of com­-  
parative philology. Though the language, in   
which it is printed, is no longer read, yet this   
book is prized as one of the means of gaining   
an insight into the structure and character of  
“unwritten dialects of barbarous nations,” a   
subject which, of late years, has attracted the   
attention of learned men, and the study of   
which, it is believed, will furnish new facts to   
modify the hitherto received principles of uni-  
­versal grammar.   
 On this account scholars of the highest name   
in modern times have had reason to thank   
Eliot for labors, which the Indians are not left

in linguam Indorum Americanae gentis τῶν Natick trans  
­lata a Johanne Eliot, Missionario Anglicano. Impress   
Cantabrigiae,” etc.

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to thank him for. While the cause of religion   
missed, in a great degree, the benefit designed   
for it, the science of language acknowledges   
a contribution to its stores. Mr. Eliot trans-  
­lated the Bible into a dialect of what is called   
the Mohegan tongue, a language spoken by all   
the New England Indians, essentially the same,   
but varied by different dialects among the sev-  
­eral tribes.” By Eliot and others it was called   
the Massachusetts language.†  
 There is, besides, a moral aspect, in which   
this translation of the Scriptures should be   
viewed. It must be regarded as a monument   
of laborious piety, of painstaking love to the   
soul of man. Would the translator have had   
the spirit to undertake, still more the persever-  
­ance to carry through, a work so wearisome

\* EDWARD’S Observations on the Language of the Muh­-  
hekaneew Indians, 2 M. H. Coll., X. 86. But Heckewelder   
makes the Delaware, or the Lenape, the common stock of   
these dialects; see Transactions of the Historical and Lit­-  
erary Committee, &c., p. 106.   
 † The Indian Bible has been an object of much interest   
among the literary collectors of Europe. See Bibliotheque   
Curiese Historique et Critique, ou Catalogue raisonne de   
Livres difficies a trouver, par David Clement, Tome IV. p.   
204. It is there registered as Bible Virginienne. Virginia   
was once a common designation of New England. Mr.   
Eliot, and his labors in general, are mentioned with great   
honor by Hoombeeck, De Converaione Indorum et Genti-  
lium, Lib. II. cap. xv., and by Fabricius, Lux Evangelii,   
p.589.

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and discouraging, had he not been animated   
by the deep, steady, strong principle of devot-  
­edness to God and to the highest good of his   
fellow-men? The theological scholar, who   
translates the Bible, or even one of the Testa-  
­ments, from the original into his vernacular   
tongue, is considered as having achieved a   
great task, and as giving ample proof of his   
diligence. Yet such a work is easy compared   
with the labor which Eliot undertook and fin­-  
ished amidst a press of other employments,   
which alone might have been deemed sufficient   
to satisfy the demands of Christian industry.   
 Among the many remarkable doings of the   
Apostle to the Indians, this bears the most   
striking testimony to his capacity of resolute   
endurance in the cause of man's spiritual wel-  
­fare. We justly admire the moral courage, the   
spirit of self-sacrifice, which sustained him in   
the tasks of preaching, visiting, and instruc­-  
tion, never deterred by the dark squalidness   
of barbarity, never daunted by the fierce   
threats of men who knew no law but their pas-  
­sions, never moved by exposure to storms,   
cold, and the various forms of physical suffer-  
­ing. But, when we represent him to our minds,   
as laboring at his translation of the Scriptures   
in the silence of his study, year after year, in   
the freshness of the morning hour and by the

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taper of midnight, wearied but not disheart­-  
ened; continually perplexed with the almost   
unmanageable phraseology of the dialect of   
the barbarians, yet always patient to discover   
how it might be made to represent truly the   
meaning of the sacred books; doing this chap-  
­ter by chapter, verse by verse, without a wish   
to give over the toil; cherishing for a long time   
only a faint hope of publication, yet still wil-  
­ling to believe, that God in his good provi-  
­dence would finally send the means of giving   
the printed word of life to those for whom he   
toiled and prayed, --we cannot but feel that   
we witness a more trying task, a more surprise-  
­ing labor, than any presented by the stirring   
and active duties of his ministry among the   
natives.   
 It was a long, heavy, hard work, wrought   
out by the silent but wasting efforts of mental   
toil, and relieved by no immediately animating   
excitement. It was truly a labor of love.   
When we take that old dark volume into our   
hands, we understand not the words in which   
it is written; but it has another and beautiful   
meaning which we do understand. It is a   
symbol of the affection, which a devoted man   
cherished for the soul of his fellow-man; it is   
the expression of a benevolence, which fainted   
in no effort to give light to those who sat in   
  
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darkness and in the shadow of death; and so   
it remains, and will ever remain, a venerable   
manifestation of the power of spiritual truth   
and spiritual sympathy.\*

\* “Since the death of the Apostle Paul,” says Mr. Ever-  
­ett, “a nobler, truer, and warmer spirit, than John Eliot,   
never lived; and taking the state of the country, the nar­-  
rowness of the means, the rudeness of the age, into con-  
­sideration, the history of the Christian church does not   
contain an example of resolute, untiring, successful labor,   
superior to that of translating the entire Scriptures into the   
language of the native tribes of Massachusetts; a labor   
performed, not in the flush of youth, nor within the luxuri­-  
ous abodes of academic ease, but under the constant bur­-  
den of his duties as a minister and a preacher, and at a   
time of life when the spirits begin to flag.” -- EVERETT'S   
Address at Bloody Brook, p. 31.

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CHAPTER XIII.

Further Translation, and other Book, for the   
 Christian Indians by Mr. Eliot. - His Indian   
 Grammar. -- His “Communion of Churches,”   
 &c. -- Indians at Harvard University. – In  
 dian College. -- Towns of Praying Indians.

Mr. Eliot did not confine his labors of trans-   
lation to the Scriptures. He prepared by the   
same process other books for the use of his   
converts. In 1664 he published in the Indian   
language Baxter's Call to the Unconverted. It   
was a small octavo of one hundred and thirty   
pages. A thousand copies were printed by   
Green at Cambridge. Eliot thought this work   
peculiarly fitted to be useful among the natives   
by “the keenness of its edge and the liveliness   
of its spirit.” In his correspondence with   
Baxter he mentioned his intention of clothing   
this book in an Indian dress. The letter was   
written in July, 1663; and he had then begun   
the translation.   
 He allowed himself a liberty with regard to   
this volume, which he did not dare to take with   
the Scriptures. When the phraseology might,   
if put into another form, be better and more   
clearly translated, he hesitated not to make

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the necessary change; and those parts of the   
book, which were peculiarly adapted to the   
condition of the people of England he so   
altered as to suit them to the wants of his   
Christian Indians. Of the liberties, which he   
had thus taken, he gave Baxter notice; “but,”   
he added, “I do little that way, knowing   
how much beneath wisdom it is, to show a  
man's self witty in mending another man's   
work.” In the same letter he observed, that   
he intended to translate for the Indians The   
Practice of Piety, or some similar book, which   
might serve as a manual for their direction in   
public and private worship, in days of fasting   
and feasting, and generally in Christian life   
and conduct.”   
 More than twenty years elapsed before this   
last-mentioned work appeared. In 1685. Mr.   
Eliot published a translation of The Practice of   
Piety, of which in a letter to Boyle, written in   
August of that year, he remarks, “It is finished   
and beginneth to be bound up.”† A third

\* Reliquie Baxterianae, &c., p. 293. Baxter himself,   
having mentioned Eliot's Bible (p. 290) proceeds to ob­-  
serve,-- “He sent word that next he would print my Call   
to the Unconverted, and then The Practice of Piety; but   
Mr. Boyle sent him word, it would be better taken here,   
if The Practice of Piety were printed before any thing of   
mine.” Eliot seems not to have followed Mr. Boyle's ad-  
­vice in this particular.   
 † A copy of this translation, one of the Ebeling books, is

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edition, we are told, was printed by Green in   
1687.\* If there be no mistake in this state-  
­ment, there must have been such a demand for   
the book, as would indicate, that it shared in   
its Indian form much of the popularity of its   
English original.†  
 In 1688 Mr. Eliot informed Sir Robert Boyle,   
that, many years before, he had translated into   
Indian two small treatises by Mr. Shepard,   
one entitled The Sincere Convert, the other,   
The Sound Believer. These translations had   
not been published; and he requested his   
honored correspondent to countenance the   
project of printing them at the expense of the   
Society for Propagating the Gospel. He ob­-  
served that they must be carefully revised, be-  
­fore they could be committed to the press.   
He depended on the assistance of his friend,

in the library of Harvard College. Its Indian title is,   
“Manitowompae Pomantamoonk sampwshanau Christianoh   
uttoh woh an Pomantog wussikkitteahonat God.”   
 \* THOMAS’S History of Printing, Vol. I. p. 262.   
 † The Practice of Piety was remarkable for the exten-  
­sive and long-continued popular favor, in which it was   
held. Perhaps no book of practical religion, except The  
Imitation of Christ, has passed through so many editions.   
In 1792 it was in its seventy-first edition. The author of   
the book was Lewis Bayly, at one time chaplain to James   
the First. He was promoted to the see of Bangor in 1616,   
and died in 1632. See BIOGRAPHIA BRITANNICA, Art.  
BALY, and Bishop KENNETT'S Register and Chronicle,   
Ecclesiastical and Civil, p. 530.

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Mr. Cotton of Plymouth, in the task of revisal,   
“which,” he remarks, “none but Mr. Cotton   
is able to help me to perform.” A translation,   
in a, duodecimo volume of one hundred and   
sixty-four pages, was printed by Green at   
Cambridge in 1689, which Mr. Thomas says   
was Shepard's Sincere Convert.\* This I have   
never seen; but I am inclined to think, that   
The Sound Believer was also included in the   
volume. At any rate, as Eliot made the same   
request of Mr. Boyle with regard to each of   
the works, it is likely that they were both   
printed.   
 Cotton Mather tells us, that Mr. Eliot   
“translated some of Mr. Shepard's compo-  
­sures,” but does not inform us which of them   
were published. In selecting these books to   
be put into the hands of the Christian natives,   
we may presume that the translator was in­-  
fluenced, not only by their merit, but by affect-  
­tionate respect for the memory of their author,   
who had taken a deep interest in the Indian   
work, but was cut off before that progress had   
been made, which would so much have gratified   
his pious feelings.   
 In 1664 Eliot published the Indian Psalter at   
Green's press. It was a small octavo of one   
hundred and fifty pages, and the edition con-  
­sisted of five hundred copies. I suppose this   
  
 \* History of Printing, Vol. I. p. 263.

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to have been a separate publication of the   
Book of Psalms, taken from the Indian transla-  
­tion of the Old Testament.   
 Having given an account of Eliot's transla-  
­tions, I shall now take notice of other produc-  
­tions of his pen, which belong to nearly the   
same period. As early as 1663 he had pub-  
­lished a Catechism in the Indian language, at   
the charge of the corporation. In 1661 a   
second edition was printed, consisting of a   
thousand copies; and in 1687 a third or fourth   
edition appeared. These were all from Green's   
press. Mr. Eliot more than once, in the course   
of his correspondence with his English friends,   
mentions his Catechum; and we have seen   
what use was made of it in teaching the Indian   
children to write.   
 He prepared and published an Indian Prim­-  
er, perhaps more than one. The date of its   
first publication does not appear. It was   
printed in 1687, when it had already passed   
through several editions at the expense of the   
corporation. This little book has found a use   
beyond that anticipated in its preparation. It   
has assisted the philological inquirers of the   
present day to gain a better knowledge, than   
they could otherwise have had, of the syllabic   
divisions of Indian words.\* It was printed by   
Green.

\* 3 M. H. Coll., II. 244.

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The book, which next claims our notice, is   
Eliot's Indian Grammar. Mr. Thomas classes   
this among the works printed by Green. He   
describes it as containing about sixty pages   
quarto, and adds, “No year is mentioned, as   
I find is often the case with other printers be­-  
sides Green; but it must have been printed   
about 1664.”\* Unless there was more than one   
edition of the Grammar, which does not appear   
to have been the case, there must be a singular   
mistake in Thomas's statement; for in the   
modern republication of the book, the title­-  
page of which, being an exact reprint of the   
original one, must give correct information, it   
appears to have been printed by Marmaduke   
Johnson, and bears the date of 1666.   
 Mr. Eliot prepared this Grammar for the as-  
­sistance of those, who might be disposed to   
learn the Indian language, as an instrument of   
teaching religion to the natives, whom he de­-  
scribes as “those ruins of mankind,† among   
whom the Lord is now about a resurrection-  
­work, to call them into his holy kingdom.”   
The book is prefaced with a dedicatory ad­-  
dress to Robert Boyle, and to the rest of the   
corporation of which he was governor. Eliot

\* History of Printing, Vol. I. p. 257.   
 † This strong expression was used, as descriptive of the   
Indians, by Mr. Hooker. They are also called “the very   
ruins of mankind” in New England's First Fruits, &c. p. 1.

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speaks of it with much modesty, as “not wor-  
­thy the name of a grammar.” He says that he   
had merely “laid together some bones and   
ribs preparatory at least for such a work.”   
At the close he gives a brief account of the   
manner, in which he had acquired his knowl­-  
edge of the construction and peculiarities of   
this language.   
 The Grammar was not destined to become   
so extensively or permanently useful, as its   
author hoped. But, as Governor Endicot said,   
in 1651, “There are some scholars among us,   
who addict themselves to the study of the In-  
­dian tongue,”\* it may be presumed that the   
book was received with approbation and used   
with profit by a few of the students of that   
day. When the interest in the Indian cause   
declined, the Grammar went out of notice, and   
its leaves were seldom disturbed. But atten-  
­tion has been recalled to it in our own times   
by a reprint, enriched with the philosophical

\* Endicot's letter in The Further Progress of the Gospel,   
&c. p. 35. But Gookin, who wrote in 1674, says, “The   
learned English young men do not hitherto incline or en-  
­deavor to fit themselves for that service (i. e. teaching the   
natives) by learning the Indian language. Possibly the   
reasons may be; first, the difficulty to attain that speech;   
secondly, little encouragement while they prepare for it;   
thirdly, the difficulty in the practice of such a calling   
among them, by reason of the poverty and barbarity,” &c.  
--1 M. H. Coll., I. 183.

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observations and learned notes of Pickering   
and Duponceau, This appeared in 1822, and   
constitutes a very valuable portion of the “Col-  
­lections of the Massachusetts Historical Socie­-  
ty.”\* The Grammar itself, and the important   
annotations accompanying it, afford a rich fund   
of materials to those, who have the curiosity   
to inquire into the idiomatic structure of the   
speech of the American Indians. However   
humble might be Eliot's estimate of his own   
work, its philological value is rated very high   
by its modern editors.†  
 I shall here subjoin an interesting letter from   
Eliot to Robert Boyle, by which it will appear   
that the Grammar was prepared, or hastened,   
at the suggestion of that distinguished patron   
of the Indian work. The letter is found in the   
fifth volume of the folio edition of Boyle's   
Works. As it is not included among the let­-  
ters from Eliot to Boyle in the “Collections of   
the Massachusetts Historical Society,” and is   
in itself valuable and characteristic, the inser­-  
tion of it in this place may be gratifying to the   
reader.   
 “Roxbury, August 26, 1664.   
“RIGHT HONORABLE,   
 “I am but a shrub in the wilderness, and  
have not yet had the boldness to look upon,

\* In the ninth volume of the Second Series.   
 † See APPENDIX, No. III.

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or speak unto, those cedars, who have under-  
­taken an honorable protection of us. But for   
sundry reasons, I have now broke out, and   
have taken upon me the boldness to write unto   
yourself, Right Honorable Sir, because I do   
sufficiently understand, how learning and hon-  
­or do rendezvous in your noble breast, and   
what a true friend you are to all learning, and   
also to this good work of the Lord in promot-  
­ing religion and the knowledge of Christ among   
our poor Indians.   
 “I do humbly present my thankfulness to   
yourself, Noble Governor, and all the rest of   
your honorable Society, for your favorable pro-  
­tection and diligent promotion of this work,   
which otherwise might have been sunk and   
buried before this day; but by your vigilance   
and prudence, Noble Sir, it is not only kept in   
being, but in a state of flourishing acceptation   
with his Majesty, and other great peers of the   
land; which favor of yours Christian duty doth   
oblige me to acknowledge.   
 “I am bold to present some things to the   
honorable Corporation (according as I am ad-  
­vised) by the hand of my Christian friend,   
Mr. Ashurst. What doth more immediately   
concern learning, I crave the boldness to make   
mention of unto yourself. You are pleased to   
intimate unto me a memorandum of your de-  
­sires, that there may be a grammar of our In-

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dian language composed, for public and after   
use; which motion, as I doubt not but it spring-  
­eth from yourself, so my answer unto yourself   
about it will be most proper. I and my sons   
have often spoken of it. But now I take your   
intimation as a command to set about it.   
When I have finished the translation of The   
Practice of Piety,\* my purpose is, if the Lord   
will, and that I do live, to set upon some essay   
and beginning of reducing this language into   
rule; which, in the most common and useful   
points, I do see, is reducible; though there be   
corners and anomalities full of difficulty to be   
reduced under any stated rule, as yourself   
know, better than I, it is in all languages. I   
have not so much either insight or judgment,   
as to dare to undertake any thing worthy the   
name of a grammar; only some preparatory   
collections that way tending, which may be of   
no small use unto such as may be studious to   
learn this language, I desire, if God will, to   
take some pains in. But this is a work for the   
morrow; to-day- my work is translation, which,   
by the Lord's help, I desire to attend unto.   
And thus, with my humble thankfulness, I shall   
cease to give you any farther trouble at pres-

\* If the translation of this book was finished before the   
Grammar was printed, it must have lain on Mr. Eliot's   
hands many years unpublished, since it did not appear till   
1685.

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ent, but, commending you unto the Lord and   
to the word of his grace,   
 “I remain, Right Honorable,   
 “Yours in all service I can in Christ Jesus,   
 “JOHN ELIOT.”

In 1665 appeared an ecclesiastical tract from   
the pen of Mr. Eliot, entitled, Communion of   
Churches; or the Divine Management of Gospel  
Churches by the Ordinance of Councils, consti­-  
tuted in. Order, according to the Scriptures,   
printed by Marmaduke Johnson.   
 This pamphlet was intended only for private   
distribution, and has become very scarce.\*   
The Preface begins with the following remark;   
“Although a few copies of this small script   
are printed, yet it is not published, only com­-  
mitted privately to some godly and able hands,   
to be viewed, corrected, amended, or rejected,   
as it shall be found to hold weight in the sanc-  
­tuary balance, or not.” The object of the tract   
was to defend the utility of councils or synods,   
and to inculcate respect for their decisions, as   
the safeguards of order, discipline, and purity   
of faith in the churches. Mr. Eliot describes,   
with considerable minuteness, the nature of   
ecclesiastical councils, the numbers of which

\* I have been furnished with a copy of it by the kind-  
­ness of a gentleman distinguished for his theological and   
antiquarian learning, the Reverend Dr. Harris of Dor­-  
chester.

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they should consist, the mode of electing their   
members, the business which ought to come   
before them, and the manner in which their ex-  
­penses might be defrayed. He would have   
them summoned, not, as they are at the present   
day, occasionally to meet particular emergen-  
­cies, but at regular periods, and as permanent,   
established conventions for the arrangement   
and adjudication of ecclesiastical affairs. His   
plan was large and systematic. There were   
to be four orders of these councils, or synods;   
each rising above the preceding in dignity and   
extent of jurisdiction. They were to be desig-  
­nated as the First Order, the Provincial Coun­-  
cil, the National Council, and the OEcumenical   
Council. Of each of these Mr. Eliot points out   
the constitution and the objects with a precis-  
­ion, which evinces his conviction of the im-  
­portance of an exact, well-defined system of   
action. It is difficult to see how the liberty   
of the New England churches, to which never-  
theless he was a warm and firm friend, could   
have been maintained under such an arrange-  
­ment. This was a favorite topic with our   
author. Cotton Mather tells us,\* that while   
Eliot respected the independence of indi­-  
vidual churches, he attached great importance   
to ecclesiastical conventions of delegates and

\* In his Life of Eliot in the MAGNALIA, Part II. Art. V.

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messengers from the churches. He not only   
deemed these synods in a high degree useful,   
but was disposed to have the results of their   
deliberations so submissively received, that   
“he would not be of any church, which would   
not acknowledge itself accountable to rightly   
composed synods, which may have occasion to   
inquire into the circumstances of it.” Coun­-  
cils, he thought, should be called to settle all   
questions relating to heresy, contention, mal-  
­administration, and disorder in ecclesiastical   
affairs.   
 Mr. Eliot seems not to have been aware,   
that, by multiplying occasions for councils and   
clothing them with such authority, he would   
leave but very narrow ground for the inde-­  
pendence of individual churches, and might   
bring them under a system of censorship and   
espionage not much better than the rule of   
“the lords spiritual.” It was not till the   
middle of the second century, that the custom   
of holding councils commenced in the Christian   
church. Till that time each assembly of be­-  
lievers was like a little state, governed only   
by such regulations as were established and   
approved by the society. Gregory Nazianzen   
was so much opposed to councils, that, in writ­-  
ing to Procopius, he apologized for his refusal   
to attend a synod by saying, “To tell you   
plainly, I am determined to fly all conventions

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of bishops; for I never yet saw a council that   
ended happily.” There appears to be no mid-  
­dle ground between a regularly established   
hierarchy and the unqualified power of self­-  
government in each body of worshippers.   
 We learn from Cotton Mather, that Mr. Eliot   
published an answer to a book in favor of anti­-  
paedobaptism by Mr. Norcott. But I have seen   
neither the tract itself, nor any other account   
of it than that given by Mather.   
 We must now revert to the progress of the   
exertions on behalf of the Indians. An at-  
­tempt was made to introduce among them in-  
­struction of a higher kind than had before been   
given. With the view of supplying them with   
learned and well-qualified ministers from their   
own number, it was thought that some of the   
most apt and studious of them might be carried   
through the process of a scholastic education.   
Two Indians of Martha's Vineyard, named Joel   
and Caleb, were accordingly sent to the college   
in Cambridge. Joel, whose improvement is   
said to have been peculiarly hopeful, visited   
his father at the Vineyard just before the com­-  
mencement at which he would have taken his   
degree. On his return, the vessel was wrecked   
on the island of Nantucket; and all on board   
were either lost at sea, or murdered by the In-  
­dians on shore. Thus perished a young man,   
of whose usefulness flattering hopes were en-

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tertained; for Gookin, who knew him well,   
says, “he was a good scholar and a pious man.”   
Caleb finished the college course of study, and   
took his bachelor's degree; but, not long after   
Commencement, died of consumption at Charles-  
­town.”  
 This was a discouraging beginning. But,   
had it been more favorable, the experiment, if   
continued, would doubtless have proved a fail-  
­ure. It was too soon to make such an attempt.   
The natives must have been gradually softened,   
and one generation after another brought under   
the regular social habits of civilized life, be-  
­fore they could be prepared to receive academ­-  
ical education with any good effect. The   
change from their roving, careless modes of   
life, from the freedom of the woods, and the   
excitement of the hunting-grounds, to the uni-  
­form and measured habits, the mental labor,   
and the regular discipline of a college, was   
quite too violent. We are not surprised, there-  
­fore, to be told that those, who undertook the

\* His name appears on the Catalogue of Harvard Col­-  
lege, 1665, Caleb Cheeshahteaumuck, Indus. “At the con-  
­clusion of two Latin and Greek elegies, which he com­-  
posed on the death of an eminent minister,” observes Mr.   
Carne, “he subscribed himself Cheesecaumuk, Senior Soph-  
­ista. What an incongruous blending of sounds!” (Lives   
of Eminent Missionaries, Vol. I. p. 48.) See Gookin in   
1 M. H. Coll., I. 173.

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life of students, for the most part soon grew   
weary, and pined for their forests and for the   
company of their tribe.   
 But the friends of Indian education still   
persevered, and in 1665 erected a brick build­-  
ing at Cambridge for the use of the natives,   
called the Indian College. It was large enough   
to accommodate about twenty students. The   
expense, which was between three and four   
hundred pounds, was defrayed by the corpora-  
­tion in England. This edifice, however, failed   
to answer the purpose for which it was de-  
­signed, “not being improved,” says Gookin,   
“for the ends intended, by reason of the death   
and failing of Indian scholars.” Among other   
uses, it was converted into a printing-office;   
and in it was set up Green's press for printing  
Mr. Eliot's Translation of the Bible.   
 Meanwhile the apostle continued his mis-  
­sionary work with unremitted zeal. Of his visits   
and preaching at the several Indian stations   
between the time when the printing of his Bi-  
­ble was begun, and the war, with Philip, we   
have no circumstantial account. But an idea   
may be formed of the progress of the work,   
and of the amount of good effected, by the no­-  
tice which Gookin, who wrote in 1674, has left  
of the “Indian praying towns.”\*

\* 1 M. H. Coll., I. 180-196.

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At Natick Mr. Eliot, in addition to his other   
instructions, set up “a lecture in logic and   
theology,” as it was designated. This was   
attended once a fortnight during the summer.   
He alludes to it in a letter to Boyle in 1670,   
when he says, “Your Honor will see, that I   
have undertaken and begun a kind of academ­  
ical ·reading unto them in their own language,   
thereby to teach the teachers and rulers, and   
all that are desirous of learning.” We cannot   
suppose, that he purposed, or expected, to in­  
doctrinate the natives in the technical forms or   
subtile distinctions of the logic of the schools.   
The object of his lectures was to accustom   
them, in some degree, to clear and methodical   
habits of thought, that they might arrange and   
express their ideas on religious subjects with   
propriety. These instructions seem to have   
been designed chiefly for such as were to be   
trained to the office of teaching and expound­  
ing. In aid of this design, Eliot published, in   
1672, an Indian Logick Primer, which was  
printed by Johnson at Cambridge. Natick  
became a kind of seminary, from which teach­  
ers went forth among their brethren at the   
other stations.   
 About two miles from Wamesit,\* near Pau­  
tucket Falls, was the wigwam of Wannalancet,

\* Tewkesbury.

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a sachem of much distinction, the eldest son   
of Passaconaway, who has been before men-  
­tioned. Wannalancet, though grave in his   
character and friendly to the English, had not   
been persuaded to embrace Christianity, but   
was willing to hear preaching. His reluctance   
to yield himself a convert was thought to arise   
from the opposition to such a step, which he   
found among his relations and chief men. But   
in May, 1674, his aversion was overcome. He   
listened to Mr. Eliot's preaching, and, after the   
discourse, signified to him his change of mind   
by the following address, which is an apt illus-  
­tration of the Indian love of figurative speech.   
“You have been pleased in your abundant   
goodness, for four years past, to exhort me   
and my people, with much persuasion, to pray   
to God. I acknowledge, that I have been   
used all my life to pass up and down in an old   
canoe; and now you wish me to make a   
change, to leave my old canoe and embark in a   
new one, to which I have been unwilling; but   
now I give up myself to your advice, enter into   
a new canoe, and do engage to pray to God   
hereafter.” One of the company present, pur­-  
suing the figure, desired Mr. Eliot to say to   
Wannalancet, that “while he went in his old   
canoe, though the stream was quiet, the end   
would be destruction; but that now he had   
embarked in the new canoe, though he should

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meet storms and rough passages, yet he must   
take courage and persevere, for the end would   
be everlasting rest.” After this, Wannalancet   
became faithful and constant, for the most part,   
in the observance of religious duties, though   
he was deserted by many of his people.   
 There were seven old towns of “praying In-  
­dians,” so called because they were first settled   
in civil and religious order.   
 Besides these, there were in the Nipmuck   
country seven “new praying towns,” so desig­-  
nated because they were more recently brought   
into the profession of the Christian faith.   
They were on the territory now occupied by   
the towns of Ward, Oxford, Uxbridge, Dudley,   
and Woodstock.   
 In 1673 and 1674, Eliot and Gookin jour-  
­neyed through this region, to scatter the seed   
of divine truth, to confirm the converted, to   
settle religious teachers, and to establish civil   
order. On this journey, the faithful evangelist   
spent the day in travelling through pathless   
woods and in preaching; the evening he de-  
­voted to conversation in the wigwams, when   
questions were heard and answered. The heart   
of the good man glowed within him, as the   
children of the forest gathered around him, and,   
in the familiar confidence inspired by his un-  
­wearied affection, gazed on his countenance   
with curious wonder, and sought instruction

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from his lips. At one place, he preached from   
the passage, “Lift up your heads, O ye gates,   
and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the   
King of glory shall come in.” Perhaps never,   
under the splendid arches or the beautiful   
carved work of an ancient cathedral, did these   
words inspire more of heartfelt eloquence, than   
when this holy man discoursed of them in the   
forest sanctuary of the wilderness.   
 The travellers proceeded to other places.   
Religious teachers and civil officers were ap­-  
pointed or confirmed. These were charged   
solemnly “to be diligent and faithful for God,   
zealous against sin, and careful in sanctify-  
­ing the Sabbath.” On the 18th of Septem­-  
ber, 1674, after prayer, singing, and religious   
exhortation, Eliot and Gookin took leave of   
these new settlements, went to Marlborough,   
and thence returned to their own homes.   
 Within the jurisdiction of Massachusetts   
there were, at this time, two Indian churches,   
fourteen towns of “praying Indians,” which   
were considered as established, and two others   
in a state of preparation. The number of In-  
­dians in this whole territory was computed   
by Gookin to be eleven hundred.”

\* The following estimate of the whole number of “pray-  
­ing Indians” in 1674, at other places, as well as those   
referred to above, is taken from Judge Davis's note to

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We have already seen, that Mr. Eliot's care   
extended beyond the Massachusetts line. He   
sometimes travelled into the jurisdiction of   
Plymouth and Martha's Vineyard. These visits,   
as well as his letters and example, animated   
his fellow-laborers in these places to prosecute   
the cause of religion among the natives. In   
1670, Eliot and Cotton of Plymouth went to   
Martha's Vineyard, and there, in connexion   
with Mr. Mayhew, ordained for pastor of the   
Indian church Hiacoomes, the first converted   
native. This church, for purposes of conven­-  
ience, was soon divided into two, one of   
which had a pastor, the other a teacher, and   
both ruling elders. Soon after this, an Indian   
church was gathered at Mashpee, and Mr.   
Bourne ordained its pastor. His ordination   
was solemnized by Mr. Eliot and Mr. Cotton,   
with delegates from the Natick church and that   
of the Vineyard.   
 A letter is extant written by Mr. Eliot, in

Morton's Memorial (pp. 407 - 415), where may be seen   
further statements of the situation and number of the   
Christian natives at subsequent periods.

In Massachusetts, under the care of Mr. Eliot, 1100   
In Plymouth Colony, by Mr. Boerne's and Cotton'e account, 530   
Additional number, under Cotton’s care in Plymouth Colony, l70   
On Nantucket 300   
On Martha's Vineyard and Chappaquiddick, under the care of   
 the Mayhews 1500   
 Total 3600

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August, 1673, to a friend, who had asked for   
information as to the state of Christianity   
among the Indians generally.\* Eliot states,   
that six churches had been gathered among   
them, one at Natick, one at Hassanamesit,†   
one at Mashpee, two at Martha's Vineyard,   
and one at Nantucket. These churches had   
been formed in the same way as among the   
English. They were all furnished with reli-  
­gious officers, except the church at Natick,   
where, says Mr. Eliot, “in modesty they stand   
off, because, so long as I live, they say there is   
no need.” This favorite church, the first   
planted by his special care and labor, might   
well regard him as their only spiritual father.   
There is something touching in their affection-  
­ate reverence for the apostle, which would al-  
­low them to receive no other teacher, while his   
hallowed voice could be heard.   
 In these churches of the natives, the ordi-  
­nances were administered, and discipline exer-  
­cised, as in all other churches. Mr. Eliot vin­-  
dicated his converts from every suspicion of   
heresy, with a zeal that is amusing, though it   
was so sincere; for, as yet, how or where   
would the poor Indians be likely to become   
heretics? He endeavored to persuade his   
brethren and the elders in the churches, that

\* 1 M. H. Coll., X. 124. † Grafton.

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it was their duty to receive these Christians of   
the wilderness into their communion. From   
his manner of expression, it would seem, that   
some reluctance had been manifested towards   
extending this fellowship to the Indians. But   
Cotton Mather tells us, that, at Martha's Vine-  
­yard and Nantucket, “the Christian English in   
the neighborhood, who would have been loth   
to have mixed with them in a civil relation, yet   
have gladly done it in a sacred one.”

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CHAPTER XIV.

Letter from Eliot to Governor Prince. – Suffer-  
 ­ings and Conduct of the Christian Indians dur­-  
 ing Philip's War, and Eliot's Solicitude on   
 their Behalf.

OF the troubles, which preceded the war   
with Philip, Mr. Eliot was no inattentive ob­-  
server. Those who are acquainted with Indian   
history will recollect, that, before that war   
broke out, much alarm had been excited in   
Plymouth Colony by some threatening indica-  
­tions from that spirited and restless chieftain.   
Fears were entertained, that the Indians about   
Plymouth might be induced to join his stand-  
­ard, and constitute an alliance formidable to   
the security and peace of the colony. The   
government of Plymouth took measures to sup-  
­press or prevent such movements. The na­-  
tives in several places had been required to   
surrender their arms. Hostile appearances for   
the present ceased; for Philip at length re-  
­newed the covenant of peace and friendship   
with the English, and agreed to resign his   
arms to be kept by them as long as they should   
find reason for so doing.\*

\* Hutchinson, Vol. L p. 254 et seq., and DRAKE’S Book  
of the Indians, B. III. p. 18.

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In relation to this subject, Mr. Eliot in June,   
1671, wrote a letter of advice to Mr. Prince,   
Governor of Plymouth, which I shall here in-  
­sert, and which I believe has never before been   
published. The address is, “To the Right   
Worshipful Mr. Prince, Governor of Plimouth.”

“Sir,   
 “Let not my boldnesse in medling with your   
state matters be an offence unto you; and, this   
request being humbly premised, I shall be   
bold to suggest my poor advice, that stoute   
people, who refuse to render their armes, be   
pursued with speed and vigor until they stoop,   
and quake, and give up (at least) some of their   
armes; which done, immediately give them to   
them again; and first Phillip his, the sooner   
the better. My reasons are; first, lest we ren­-  
der ourselves more afraid of them and their   
guns than indeed we are, or have cause to be;   
alass, it is not the gun, but the man, nor in-  
­deed is it the man, but our sin, that we have   
cause to be afraid of; secondly, your so doing   
will open an effectual door to their entertainment   
of the Gospel. Our worthys, by the assistance   
of the Lord, have vigorously prosecuted and   
executed the murderer. This act of eminent   
justice hath and will strike more terror into   
them than ten disarmings, though in due sea­-  
son that is a prudent way too. But I shall

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give you no further trouble at present, but,   
committing you to the Lord and to the word of   
his grace, I remain   
 “Your Worship's to serve you   
 "in the Lord Jesus,   
 "JOHN ELIOT  
 "Roxb., this 16th of the 4th, '71.”   
  
 This advice seems to have been given with   
the best intentions, and, however strange it   
might seem to men alarmed as the Plymouth

\* Mr. Eliot's autograph of the above letter is in the   
possession of Judge Davis of Boston. To the kindness of   
that distinguished jurist and scholar I am indebted for per-  
­mission to take this copy. Judge Davis has done me the   
favor to accompany his transmission of the letter with the   
following remarks. “Mr. Eliot's advice must have ap-  
­peared a little odd to the statesmen of the day; but Gov­-  
ernor Prince appears to have yielded to it in part, or at   
least to have pursued the course recommended, in refer­-  
ence to some of the Indians. (See his letter to Goodman  
Cooke, August 24th, 1671, 1 M. H. Coll., V. 196.) The In-  
­dians there intended were, I suppose, those in the neigh­-  
borhood of Dartmouth.”  
 With regard to the murderer, to whom Eliot alludes in   
the letter, Judge Davis gives the following explanation.   
“Hutchinson in a note (Vol. I. p. 258) speaks of 'an Eng-  
­lishman shot through the body in Dedham woods in the   
spring of the year 1671,' and says, that 'an Indian, the sup-  
­posed murderer, was taken and imprisoned.' 'But,' adds   
Hutchinson, 'whether he was executed or not, I do not   
find; but it kept the colony in an alarm for some time.' Is   
it not probable, that this is 'the murderer' mentioned in   
Eliot's letter?”

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people then were, it was probably not injudi­-  
cious. It may be questioned whether it was   
wisely done to disarm the Indians, or at least   
to detain their guns. The second of the rea-  
­sons, which Mr. Eliot gives for his opinion,   
shows that he never lost sight of the interests   
of his favorite cause.   
 The work of planting Christianity among the   
Indians had at this period reached its highest   
state of prosperity. It had received its lead­-  
ing impulse from the hands of one devoted in­-  
dividual. From humble beginnings, through   
difficulties and discouragements, it had, for   
nearly thirty years, gradually gained strength  
and found favor, till he who made his first   
doubtful and almost hopeless visit to the wig-  
­wams of Nonantum, could range over a wide   
region, or send his thoughts to far distant hills   
and forests, with the cheering consciousness,   
that God had blessed his toil, and that foun-  
­tains of life were opened to refresh the waste   
places. It was to the aged apostle a season   
of such happiness, as is known only to the   
heart that gives itself up, as an offering on the   
altar of a righteous cause. But the scene was   
to be changed. It is. a melancholy thought,   
that the close of this good man's life should   
have been saddened by seeing his long cher-  
­ished hopes overcast with a cloud of discour­-  
agement. Philip's war, which spread such terror

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and devastation through some parts of New   
England, smote heavily upon the Christian en-  
­terprise among the natives, and filled the hearts   
of its ardent friends with that distress, which   
the good feel, when the anticipations of pious   
benevolence are defeated.   
 Mr. Eliot was seventy-one years old, when the   
war with Philip began, but was still strong, ac­-  
tive, and full of the Christian zeal which had an­-  
imated his earlier days. It does not fall within   
my province to discuss the character of Philip.   
That be was an able, bold, and astute chief,   
no one can deny. His lofty and regal spirit   
was strikingly exemplified in his answer to an   
ambassador, sent to him by the Governor of   
Massachusetts. “Your Governor,” said he,   
“is but a subject; I will not treat except with   
my brother, King Charles of England.”\* Like   
his father, Massassoit, he would neither re-  
­ceive the Christian religion himself, nor permit   
it to be introduced among his subjects. We are   
informed, that when Mr. Eliot once offered to   
preach Christianity to him and his people, he   
rejected the offer with disdain, and, taking hold

\* We learn this from a tract entitled, “The Present   
State of New England with respect to the Indian War,   
&c.; faithfully composed by a Merchant of Boston, and   
communicated to his Friend in London; “first printed at   
London in 1675, and republished at Boston in 1833, by   
S. G. Drake. Seep. 68.

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of a button on the apostle's coat, told him he   
cared no more for the Gospel than for that   
button. It seems, however, that a hope of his   
conversion was at one time entertained. So,   
at least, Gookin testifies, and affirms that he   
himself had heard him use expressions, which   
implied, that his conscience was touched by   
good influences.\* But, if such soft moments   
of relenting ever came, they were soon ban-  
­ished by the habitually strong passions of the   
wild sachem. The voice of holy persuasion,   
which reached the hearts of so many in the   
forest, could not subdue him. The war-cry,   
which rang through the woods and echoed from   
the hills, was more pleasant music to his ear,   
than all the eloquent words of peace and love   
which the good evangelist could utter.   
 When the war commenced, it was to be ex-  
­pected that those Indians, who were supposed   
to be united with the English by religious sym-  
­pathy, would find little mercy at the hands of   
Philip. He might hope to win or frighten   
some of them to his side; but for the most   
part he could regard them only with feelings   
of hostility. The annoyance and the injury,   
which might come from this quarter, were to   
be anticipated as the natural results of a state   
of war. But the Christian Indians incurred

\* 1 M. H. Coll., I. 200.

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another and more trying calamity from a source,   
to which they looked only for kindness. The   
English soon began to regard them with stern   
suspicion and angry apprehension. There was   
little or no confidence in their fidelity. It was   
believed, that they would, at any moment, by   
craft or open alliance, render all the assistance   
in their power to the hostile Indians. This   
became the popular sentiment; and under its   
influence Mr. Eliot's hapless converts suffered   
the harshest injustice. It was their hard fate   
to have the good will of neither party in the   
war; to be treated by Philip as allies of the   
English, and to be sharply suspected by the   
English of a secret but determined leaning   
towards Philip.\*

\* My principal guide in this part of my narrative has   
been a very interesting manuscript, written by Gookin, to   
which I have already occasionally referred. Its title is,   
An Historical Account of the Doings and Sufferings of the   
Christian Indians in New England in the Years 1675, 1676,   
1677. Impartially drawn by One well acquainted with that   
Affair, and presented unto the Right Honorable the Corpora-  
­tion residing in London, &c. It is preceded by Gookin's  
“Epistle Dedicatory to the Honorable Robert Boyle,” and   
by a letter from Mr. Eliot to Gookin “upon his perusal of   
it.” Eliot testifies to the accuracy of the narrative. “I   
do not see,” he says, “that any man or orders of men can   
find just cause of excepting against (human frailties ex-  
­cepted) any thing that you have written.”  
 This manuscript was loaned to Mr. Sparks by the Rev.   
Mr. Campbell of Pittsburg, who procured it in England,

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The circumstances of the time account for   
this inflamed state of popular feeling against   
the Christian Indians. A fierce and powerful   
enemy was ravaging the country. The flames   
of burning villages glared in the darkness of   
midnight; the scalping-knife, the arrow, and   
firearms were lurking in ambush by day. In   
the storms of winter, and amidst the sunshine   
of summer, an insidious and cruel warfare was   
ever in progress, and dismay struck upon every   
settlement. The passions of the people were   
naturally exasperated to the highest pitch   
against those, the dread of whose incursions   
disturbed the slumbers of night, and surround-  
­ed the labors of the field with peril. The   
usual epithets applied to the savage foe were   
“wolves, blood-hounds, fiends, devils incar-  
­nate”; and Increase Mather uttered the com­-  
mon sentiment, when he said, that the English   
did not “cease crying to the Lord against   
Philip, until they had prayed the bullet into   
his heart.”  
 Under intense alarm, men are apt to lose   
sight of the distinction between justice and

and allowed Mr. Sparks to have a copy taken. It is now   
about to be published by the American Antiquarian Society   
in Worcester. It contains much that cannot be learned   
from any other source, and, though perhaps the narrative   
is sometimes colored by the partialities of the writer, is  
doubtless in all important points faithful and correct.

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injustice, between right and wrong. The peo-  
­ple in general, perhaps, were but little ac-  
­quainted with the Praying Indians; and if   
they had been, they might easily believe that   
their adoption of the Christian religion would   
not effectually repress the impulse to return, in   
the hour of warlike excitement, to their brethren   
of the woods, from whom they had been separ­-  
ated only by the slender line of an imperfect   
civilization. These men had also been among   
the English; and, knowing their habits and   
their force, might be the more dangerous,   
should they go over to the enemy. Besides,   
suspicion, which under any circumstances would   
be likely to turn a watchful and keen eye upon   
them, was inflamed by the fact, that some did   
leave their settlements, and join the arms of   
Philip.\* though by far the greater part were   
true to the English interest. These circum-  
­stances, while they do not justify, may account   
for that blind excitement, which would not   
stop to separate between the innocent and the   
guilty, but involved all the Praying Indians

\* These were almost wholly from what were called the   
new praying towns, who, says Gookin, “being but raw and   
lately initiated into the Christian profession, most of them   
fell off from the English and joined with the enemy in the   
war, some few excepted.” The old towns remained faith­-  
ful, but the indignation of popular feeling did not attend to   
the distinction.

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in one common proscription. From the indis­-  
criminate resentment, however, which pervad-  
­ed the mass of the community, the magistrates   
and government were, for the most part, ex­-  
empt; but they were seldom able to stem the   
violence of the popular current.   
 On many occasions the Christian Indians   
rendered good and faithful service during the   
war, and were ambitious of acquitting them­-  
selves to the satisfaction of the English. In   
July, 1675, Captain Hutchinson and Captain   
Wheeler were sent to treat with the Indians in   
the Nipmuck country. Three Christian Indians   
accompanied the expedition, as guides and in-  
­terpreters, and so faithfully performed their   
duties, that the most ample testimony to their   
good conduct was given by the commanding   
officers. One of them was taken prisoner.   
But, notwithstanding their services, the two   
who returned were treated with so much harsh-  
­ness by the English, that “for want of shelter,   
protection, and encouragement,” as Gookin   
affirms, “they were in a manner constrained to   
fall off to the enemy.” One of them was kill-  
­ed by a scouting party of Praying Indians.   
The other was taken prisoner, sold as a slave   
in Boston, and sent to Jamaica. By the earn-  
­est intercession of Mr. Eliot, he was brought   
back, but still held in slavery. His wife and

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his two children, who were also in captivity,  
were redeemed by Mr. Eliot.   
 In August, 1675, a number of the Christian   
Indians at Marlborough were seized and sent   
to Boston for trial, on the charge of having   
been concerned in the murder of several per-  
­sons at Lancaster. The accusation was ground-  
­less, and the whole affair was believed to have   
been a malicious proceeding. During the trial,   
Eliot and Gookin made every effort in their   
power to save these men from being sacrificed   
to popular fury, and 'thereby brought upon   
themselves the indignation of those, whose   
passions had heated them into a thirst for the   
blood of the Indians. The venerable evangel-  
­ist and the faithful magistrate were reviled,   
and subjected to the most injurious suspicions.   
 An anecdote may illustrate this state of   
feeling. Mr. Eliot was once on a sailing ex-  
­cursion, when the boat in which he had taken   
passage was run down and overset by a large   
vessel. Eliot was in great danger of sinking   
to a watery grave, but by strenuous effort was   
happily rescued. This happened in the time   
of the Indian war, when the excitement against   
him was high; and one man, full of the popu­-  
lar fury, hearing how narrowly Mr. Eliot had   
escaped, said he wished he had been drowned.\*

\* Life of Eliot in the MAGNALIA, Part I. Article V.

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Gookin was publicly insulted, while acting as   
a member of the court. He said on the bench,   
that he was afraid to walk in the streets.   
 Facts like these mark the exasperated state   
of popular feeling on this subject, and prove   
that it required no common firmness in Mr.   
Eliot and his friend, at such a time, to plead   
the cause of those whom they supposed to be   
innocent. They were ever on the alert to pro-  
­tect their defenceless converts, and, with a   
courage inspired by Christian principle, shrunk   
from no danger or obloquy. Their judgment   
may have been in some instances biassed by   
the partiality of zeal; but their moral intre­-  
pidity was worthy of all praise.   
 In consequence of the prevalent excitement,   
the court passed an order, that the Indians at   
Natick should be forthwith removed to Deer   
Island, having first obtained the consent of the   
owner of that island.\* Captain Thomas Pren-  
­tiss, with a party of horse, was appointed to   
superintend their removal. He took a few men   
to assist, and five or six carts to carry away   
such commodities as would be indispensable   
for the Indians; When he arrived at Natick,   
and made known to them the pleasure of the   
court, they sadly but quietly submitted, and   
were soon ready to follow him. Their number

\* Mr. Samuel Shrimpton, of Boston.

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was about two hundred, including men, women,   
and children. They were ordered to a place   
called The Pine, on Charles River, two miles   
above Cambridge, where boats were to be in   
readiness to take them to the island. At this   
place, their spiritual father and ever faithful   
friend, Mr. Eliot, met them, to say a few kind   
and consoling words before they embarked.   
While he sympathized in their sorrows, he ex-  
­horted them to be patient under suffering and   
firm in their faith, reminding them that through   
much tribulation they must enter into the king-  
­dom of God.   
 There is an affecting moral beauty in this   
scene. That settlement, towards which the   
heart of the good apostle bad yearned alike   
through seasons of discouragement and of   
hope; the foundations of which were laid by his   
own hands and hallowed by his own prayers;   
where the tree of life, as he believed, was firm­-  
ly rooted in the wilderness; where, by the pa­-  
tient labor of years, he had made the word of   
God understood, and had reared civil and so-  
­cial institutions; that settlement, which prob­-  
ably next to his own home he loved better than   
any thing else on earth, is suddenly broken up,   
in consequence of a misguided excitement, and   
its inhabitants are hurried away from their   
fields and homes into what is little better than   
an imprisonment. At the hour of their depar-

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ture, the venerable man, on whose head more   
than seventy winters had shed their frosts,   
stands with them on the bank of the river to   
pour forth his prayers for them, to mingle his   
tears with theirs, and to teach them the lesson,   
not of resentment against man, out of submis-  
­sion to God, the lesson of meekness and of   
strong endurance. The whole company pres­-  
ent were deeply affected to see the quiet resig­-  
nation “of the poor souls, encouraging and   
exhorting one another with prayers and tears.”   
On the 30th of October, 1675, about midnight,   
when the tide served, they embarked in three   
vessels and were transported to their destined   
confinement on Deer Island.   
 The slightest occurrence was enough to kin-  
­dle the passions of the English into outrage.   
A barn in Chelmsford, full of hay and grain,   
was burnt to the ground. This was afterwards   
discovered to have been done by some skulk­-  
ing Indians of the enemy's. party. But the in-  
­habitants of the place at once imputed the   
crime to the Christian Indians of Wamesit, and   
in the heat of resentment, without further in-  
­quiry, determined on revenge. Fourteen men   
from Chelmsford went with arms to their wig-  
­wams, and called to them to come out. When   
they, suspecting no harm, appeared, two of the   
men fired upon them. One lad was killed, and   
five women and children were wounded. The

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murderers were soon arrested and brought to   
trial; but were acquitted by a jury acting under   
the influence of the popular exasperation. The   
Wamesit Indians were so frightened by this   
brutal assault, that most of them fled from   
their settlement far into the forests, and re­-  
mained there a long time exposed to cold and   
hunger.   
 Attempts were made to induce them to re­-  
turn; but the remembrance of the day when   
their wives and children were shot down like   
wild beasts was still fresh, and they refused.   
They, however, sent by the messengers a let-  
­ter, addressed to Lieutenant Henchman of   
Chelmsford, in which there was a passage,   
which must have brought a blush to the faces   
of men calling themselves Christians. “We   
are not sorry,” they said, “for what we leave   
behind; but we are sorry, that the English   
have driven us from our praying to God, and   
from our teacher. We did begin to understand   
a little of praying to God.” But at length   
winter and hunger drove them back to their   
wigwams.   
 When their return was made known at Bos-  
­ton, a committee, consisting of Mr. Eliot, Ma-  
­jor Gookin, and Major Willard, was appointed   
to visit them with a message of friendship and   
encouragement, and to persuade the people of  
Chelmsford into a better temper towards them.

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The committee discharged their duty promptly   
by doing their utmost to restore quiet and am-  
­ity. They were also directed to visit Concord,   
where the Nashobah Indians were then living.   
These they placed under the care of Mr. John   
Hoare, their firm friend, who allowed them to   
establish their wigwams on his grounds near   
his house.   
 The sachem Wannalancet, who has been be­-  
fore mentioned, had retired to some distance   
from his usual residence on the Merrimac; but   
he continued friendly to the English. In the   
autumn of 1675, Messrs. Eliot and Gookin   
were sent on an embassy to urge him to   
return to his accustomed place of residence.   
In a letter to Boyle, October, 1677, Mr. Eliot   
writes thus; “We had a sachem, of the great-  
­est blood in the country, submitted to pray to   
God, a little before the wars. His name is   
Wannalancet. In the time of the wars he fled,   
by reason of the wicked actings of some Eng-  
­lish youth, who causelessly and basely killed   
and wounded some of them. He was persuad­-  
ed to come in again. But, the English having   
ploughed and sown with rye all their lands,   
they had but little corn to subsist by.”  
 The Christian Indians from Punkapog,\* on   
some slight pretence, were removed to Deer

\* Stoughton.

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Island, as others had been from various places.   
The whole number of those now collected there   
amounted to about five hundred. They were   
necessarily exposed to much suffering. To­-  
wards the end of December, 1675, Gookin,   
Eliot, and others visited them several times to   
cheer them under their trials. They found   
these objects of their benevolent care uniform-  
­ly patient and humble, never disposed to mur-  
­mur at the treatment they had received, and   
exhibiting in their whole temper much of the   
spirit of practical Christianity. Such is the   
testimony of Gookin; and, however inclined   
he might be to look on the favorable side of   
the case; he was certainly too conscientious to   
overstate their merits purposely, and too sa­-  
gacious to be much deceived. Must not a   
great part of their Christian deportment un-  
­der suffering be ascribed to the affectionate   
instruction and powerful influence of Mr.   
Eliot?  
 Wherever the Christian Indians were found,   
they seem to have been considered as fair prey   
by the English soldiers. Some of them, who   
belonged to Hassanamesit, with their religious   
teacher, had been taken prisoners by the ene­-  
my. These men had endeavored to effect an es-  
­cape, and so far succeeded as to get away from   
the enemy's quarters. They were wandering   
in the woods, when they were met by a party

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of scouts under the command of Captain Gibbs,   
who plundered them of the few things they   
had, and among the rest of a pewter cup, which   
Mr. Eliot had formerly given them to be used   
in the communion service, and which the In­-  
dian teacher had religiously preserved. The   
Captain took them to General Savage, the com-  
­manding officer, who did all in his power to   
protect them. But they were afterwards ex­-  
posed to much cruel treatment. The Indian   
teacher, with his aged father and several chil­-  
dren, was sent to Boston. There they were   
kindly entertained by a friend, at whose house   
Mr. Eliot met them; and gave them much con­-  
solation and good advice. They were after-  
­wards sent to Deer Island.   
 In the summer of the same year, a consider­-  
able number of the Christian natives were em-  
­ployed in the army against Philip. Perhaps   
the popular sentiment against them had by this   
time become somewhat softened. At any rate   
the government were determined to avail them­-  
selves of the aid of these men; and the confi­-  
dence reposed in them was not misplaced.   
They proved good soldiers, true to the English   
interest, brave, adroit, and adventurous. “I   
contend,” says Gookin, “that the small com-  
­pany of our Indian friends have taken and   
slain of the enemy, in the summer of 1676, not   
less than four hundred; and their fidelity and

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courage are testified by the certificates of their   
captains.” Their acquaintance with the In-  
­dian modes of movement and fighting rendered   
them a very efficient part of the army. When   
the strongest and best of their number were   
thus withdrawn from the island, the rest, who   
were either women or old and feeble men, suf-  
­fered much from the want of provisions and   
of proper care.  
 Soon after this the General Court gave per­-  
mission for their removal from the islands,\*   
taking care, however, to provide that it should   
be done without any expense to the colony.   
They were accordingly removed, under the   
superintendence of Gookin, at the charge of   
the corporation in England. They were taken   
to Cambridge, where Mr. Thomas Oliver offered   
them a residence for the present on his lands,   
near Charles River. Here they found a con­-  
venient place for fishing. Many of them were   
very ill, some dangerously so, at the time of   
their removal. The assiduous, and never­-  
wearied charity of Eliot and Gookin was called   
into constant exercise. They took means to   
provide the Indians with wholesome food, and   
with such care and medicines, as their sickness   
  
 \* It appears from Gookin, that many of the Indians, at   
this time, were on Long Island, in Boston harbour, while   
others, as before mentioned, occupied Deer Island.

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required. By this kind attention most of them   
recovered.   
 Philip, the white man's dreaded enemy, was   
now dead, and probably the feeling of hostil-  
­ity to the Praying Indians lost much of its   
heat. Before winter they removed from their   
residence in Cambridge. Some settled about   
the falls of Charles River, and some stationed   
themselves at Nonantum, the spot where thirty   
years before Mr. Eliot had first preached the   
Gospel to the natives. Here one of their   
teachers, named Anthony, built a large wigwam,   
in which the meetings for lectures were held,   
and a school kept during the winter. Mr. Eliot   
preached to them once a fortnight at the place,   
in which he began his course of pious useful­-  
ness, and which must have awakened in his   
mind the most interesting associations. He   
also lectured to another set of Indians, who had   
been brought from one of the islands, and were   
settled near Brush Hill in Milton. The aged   
and the widows among the Christian natives   
were supplied with clothing and all other ne­-  
cessary commodities, at the expense of the Eng-  
­lish corporation. By the aid of this charity,   
and by the venison and fish the men were able   
to procure, the settlements were comfortably   
supported. Winter being past, most of the   
Praying Indians returned to their old settle­-  
ments at Natick and at the other plantations.

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On one occasion, when a court was held and   
Mr. Eliot had lectured to a large assembly of   
the Praying Indians, Waban made a speech in   
the name of the rest, which must have been   
very gratifying to their English friends. It   
was full of simple piety, humility, and thank­-  
fulness. The Indian orator acknowledged with   
deep feeling the kindness of the corporation   
in England, and of their friends in Massachu­-  
setts, touched lightly upon the sufferings they   
had lately experienced, and rejoiced that his   
brethren had been enabled by their good con­-  
duct, as soldiers, to gain so much favor and   
acceptance. Gookin replied to this speech in   
a few plain, affectionate, and pious remarks,   
assuring them of continued friendship, and ex-  
­horting them to bear their cross wisely and   
meekly.   
 The consequences of the war with Philip in-  
­flicted a disastrous blow on the progress of   
Christianity among the Indians, from which it   
never entirely recovered. Many of their vil­-  
lages were broken up; and a feeling of dis-  
­couragement weakened those that remained.   
How could it be otherwise? The friendly sen-  
­timent so necessary to the successful diffusion   
of religion, especially among rude minds, had   
just grown warm, and was beginning to ce-  
­ment a bond of moral union between the untu­-  
tored men of the forest and their civilized

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neighbors, when it was suddenly sundered by   
the strong passions, that sprung from the heat   
of a terrific warfare. After this rupture, it   
was a hard work to reunite sympathies, which   
were broken before they had time to coalesce   
firmly. There would be bitter remembrances,   
which might be smothered, but could hardly   
fail to throw a chill upon the persuasions of   
the English Christians.   
 These effects of Philip's war unhappily oc-  
­curred at a time, when the civil and religious   
improvements among the Praying Indians   
were new, and, being at best but feebly estab-  
­lished, were ill prepared for such a shock. If   
the sense of wrong did not rankle in the minds   
of the natives, they must at least have felt, that,   
in case of any emergency, they were powerless   
and insecure; and if the pointed remark of   
Tacitus, that it is the disposition of mankind   
to hate those whom they have injured,\* be as   
true as it is sad, many of the Massachusetts   
people could entertain but little kindness for   
their fellow-men of the woods.

\* “Proprium humani ingenii est, odisee quem laeseris,”   
-- De Vita Agricolae, 42. Seneca ascribes the same dispo­-  
sition peculiarly to those; who are inflated with power and   
fortune; "Hoc habent pessimum animi magna fortuna in-  
­solentes; quos laeserunt et oderunt.” -- De Ira, II. 33.

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CHAPTER XV.

Eliot's “Harmony of the Gospels.”--lnformation   
 gathered from his Letters to Robert Boyle. --   
 Notice of him by John Dunton and Increase   
 Mather. --Indian Teacher ordained at Natick.   
 -- Remarks on Eliot's Labors among the In­dians.

AMIDST all the cares, with which the hands   
and the heart of Mr. Eliot were full, his pen   
was not idle even in old age. In 1678, he pub-  
lished The Harmony of the Gospels in the holy   
History of the Humiliation and Sufferings of Je-  
sus Christ from his Incarnation to his Death and   
Burial.\* The beginning of the title might   
mislead the expectations of a reader at the   
present day. It is not what would now be   
called a Harmony of the Gospels, but rather a   
Life of the Savior, presenting a connected   
view of the events recorded in the evangeli­-  
cal history, with few comments of a critical na-  
­ture, but with many illustrative and practical   
remarks. It breathes a deep spirit of piety;

\* This is a closely printed volume of one hundred and   
thirty-one pages, from the press of John Foster, the first   
printer in Boston.

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and the style has the unction, energy, and fer­-  
vent simplicity imparted by such a spirit. Its   
theological character is what might be ex-  
­pected from the author's religious opinions,   
and those of his times. Of these, different   
estimates would be formed by different read­-  
ers, according to their habits of thinking on   
these subjects. The volume is free from po-  
­lemical bitterness, and presents a valuable   
specimen of the manner of treating the topics   
connected with the history of Jesus, by one of   
the most distinguished of the early divines   
of New England.   
 By the occasional letters of Mr. Eliot to   
Robert Boyle, between 1670 and 1688, we are   
made acquainted with some of the subjects,   
which occupied his thoughts at that time. He   
sometimes mentions facts, which he supposed   
might interest Mr. Boyle, as a philosophical in-  
­quirer into nature. He relates, for instance,   
the great mortality among the fish in Fresh   
Pond, which took place in the summer of 1670,\*   
and the increase of the disease of the stone

\* Hubbard assigns this event to the summer of 1676.   
(General History, p. 648.) Mr. Eliot says the fish thrust   
themselves out of the water on the shore, as fast as possi-  
­ble, and there died. Not less than twenty cart-loads lay   
dead around the pond. Hubbard remarks, "It was con­-  
ceived to be the effect of some mineral vapor, that at that   
time had made an irruption into the water.”   
  
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among both the English and Indians, the cause   
of which he thought he had discovered.   
 In speaking of the disturbance occasioned,   
and the losses sustained, by the war with the   
eastern Indians, he remarks, that the colonists   
had learned by experience “the vanity of mili­-  
tary skill after the European mode,” in their   
encounters with the savages. “Now,” he   
adds, “we are glad to learn the skulking way   
of war.”\* He alludes also to the disasters   
suffered from the incursions of the fierce Mo­-  
hawks, a narrative of which Gookin had drawn   
up, and presented to Lord Culpepper and Sir   
Edmund Andros. A copy of this narrative   
was to be sent to Mr. Boyle.   
 Information concerning the second edition   
of the Indian Bible, while it was in process,

\* It cost the English some time and a good deal of care-  
­ful attention to understand and meet the insidious mode of   
Indian warfare. At first, Gookin informs us, they “thought   
easily to chastise the insolent doings and murderous prac­-  
tices of the heathens. But it was found another manner   
of thing than was expected; for our men could see no en­-  
emy to shoot at, but yet felt their bullets out of the thick   
bushes, where they lay in ambushments. The enemy also   
used this stratagem, to apparel themselves from the waist   
upward with green boughs, that our Englishmen could not   
readily discern them, or distinguish them from the natural   
bushes. This manner of fighting our men had little expe­-  
rience of, and hence were under great disadvantages.”--  
­Historical Account, &c. Captain Church discovered some   
of the principles, which the savages observed in their crafty

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is frequently given in these letters. Mr. Boyle  
had sent a number of English Bibles, for which   
Eliot returns his cordial thanks, but reminds   
his honored correspondent, that to have the   
Scriptures in their own tongue was the great   
want of the Indians. He says, “Our Praying   
Indians, both in the islands and on the main,   
are considered together numerous; thousands   
of souls, of whom some are believers, some   
learners, and some still infants; and all of   
them beg, cry, entreat for Bibles, having al­-  
ready enjoyed that blessing, but now are in   
great want.”  
 It had been a source of deep grief to Mr.   
Eliot, that many of the Indians captured dur-  
ing the wars were sold into slavery. He   
regarded this practice with that indignant ab-  
­horrence, which it ought to excite in every

mode of fighting. He “inquired of some of the Indians   
that were become his soldiers, how they got such advan-  
­tage, often, of the English in their marches through the   
woods. They told him, that the Indians gained great ad­-  
vantage of the English by two things; they always took   
care, in their marches and fights, not to come too thick to-  
­gether, but the English always kept in a. heap together, so   
that it was as easy to hit them as to hit a house. The   
other was, that, if at any time they discovered a company   
of English soldiers in the woods, they knew that there   
were all, for the English never scattered; but the Indians   
always divided and scattered.” – CHURCH’S History of   
Philip's War, Drake's edition, p. 108.

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Christian bosom. He remonstrated warmly   
against the iniquity; but the temper of the   
times, in respect to the Indians, was but little   
inclined to listen to reason or humanity.   
 By a letter, written in 1683, it appears, that   
he was on the watch for an opportunity to re­-  
lieve some of those, who had suffered in this   
way. He informs Mr. Boyle, that a vessel had   
formerly carried away a number of these cap-  
­tives to be sold for slaves, but that “the na-  
­tions whither she went would not buy them.”   
She had afterwards left them at Tangier, and   
Mr. Eliot had heard of them through an Eng­-  
lishman, who had lately come from that place.   
He entreats Mr. Boyle to use his mediation for   
their deliverance, so that they might be re-  
­stored to their homes, either by a direct pas-  
­sage to New England, or by being sent to   
England and thence to America. He presses   
this matter with all the earnestness of a benev­-  
olent heart, and says of the effort for the res-  
­cue of these men, which he requests Mr. Boyle   
to make, “I am persuaded, that Christ will at   
the great day reckon it among your deeds of   
charity done for his name's sake.” Whether   
the application was successful, I have not been   
able to discover. This noble spirit of human-  
­ity, this strong sense of justice, on behalf of   
the oppressed and the wronged, when pub­-  
lic sensibility was dead on the subject, does

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great honor to Eliot's character. However   
they might be despised or forgotten by others,   
in him they found a true and fearless friend.\*  
 Mr. Boyle had requested a particular account   
of the Praying Indians. Eliot's reply was   
written in 1684, and gives a brief statement   
of their condition at that time. Since Philip's   
war, the stated places in Massachusetts, where   
the natives met foe. worship and religious in­-  
struction, had been reduced to four.† Occa-  
­sional meetings were held in other places, when   
they came together in large numbers to fish,   
hunt, or gather chestnuts.   
   
 \* Speaking of the fate of Philip's wife and son, Mr. Ev­-  
erett says, “They were sold into slavery, -- West Indian   
slavery! an Indian princess and her child sold from the   
cool breezes of Mount Hope, from the wild freedom of a   
New England forest, to gasp under the lash, beneath the   
blazing sun of the tropics! ‘Bitter as death;’ ay, bitter   
as hell! Is there any thing, I do not say in the range of   
humanity, -- is there any thing animated, that would not   
struggle against this?” -- Address at Bloody Brook, p. 28.   
Well may we add, in the language of a poem, which has   
many striking beauties,   
 “Ah! happier they, who in the strife   
 For freedom fell, than o'er the main,   
 Those who in slavery's galling chain   
 Still bore the load of hated life,--   
 Bowed to base tasks their generous pride,   
 And scourged and broken-hearted died!”   
 Yamoyden, Canto I. 10.

† These were Natick and the towns now called Stough-  
­ton, Tewksbury, and Dudley

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A new assistant in the work had been re-  
­ceived in the person of Gookin's son, a pious   
and learned man, thirty-three years of age,   
who had been eight years “a fellow of the col-  
­lege.” He was settled in the ministry at Sher-  
­burne, and once a month gave a lecture at Na-  
­tick, which was communicated to the Indians   
by an interpreter. Mr. Gookin was learning   
the language of the natives, that he might   
preach to them with more efficiency. The heart   
of the aged Eliot must have been gladdened,   
as he was soon to be gathered to his fathers,   
to see the cause sustained by the youthful arm   
of the son of his beloved friend.   
 It is worthy of remark, that one of Eliot's   
letters to Mr. Boyle is dated “August 29th,   
1686, in the third month of our overthrow.” This   
expression is presumed to refer to the change   
in the government of the colonies by the dis-  
­solution of the charters and to the appointment   
of Sir Edmund Andros, as Governor-General   
of New England. The people felt it to be in­-  
deed a season of “overthrow.” A deep senti­-  
ment of indignation and alarm pervaded the   
community. They could no longer choose their   
own governors, but were compelled to take   
such as the royal authority designated. The   
accession of James the Second to the throne of   
England they believed to be the signal for op-  
­pression and tyranny; and the conduct of the

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new governor soon justified their fears. Mr.   
Eliot begins his letter with saying, “I have   
nothing new to write but lamentations.” This   
was an expression of the general feeling of the   
country.   
 Eliot's last letter to Mr. Boyle, in which,   
being eighty-four years old, he says with af-  
­fecting simplicity, “I am drawing home, and   
am glad of an opportunity to take my leave of   
your Honor with all thankfulness,” expresses   
a hope of the revival of the Christian cause   
among the natives. It is pleasant to find, that   
the light of hope sometimes fell upon the last   
days of the venerable evangelist, instead of   
the sadness which would have darkened them,   
could he have looked into the future, and seen   
that those for whom he labored were doomed   
to vanish before the white man, instead of   
sharing with him the blessings of civilization   
and Christianity.   
 Among those who have recorded their notice   
of Mr. Eliot and his doings, should be men­-  
tioned that amusing bookseller and writer,   
John Dunton, who visited New England in   
1685. He bears a full testimony to the good   
effects of the apostle's labors for the Indians.   
“I have been an eyewitness,” he affirms, “of   
the wonderful success, which the Gospel of   
peace has had amongst them. Their manners   
became less barbarous; they formed themselves

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into more regular societies, and began to live   
after the English fashion.”\*  
 Increase Mather wrote a letter in 1687 to   
Leusden, Professor of Hebrew in the Uni-  
­versity of Utrecht, in which he presents a   
sketch of the progress and condition of the   
converted Indians, and of course makes favor-  
­able mention of Mr. Eliot.† But there is little   
to be gathered from it in addition to what we   
learn from other sources. With regard to the   
religious language used by the Indians, the   
writer makes the following remark; “Before   
the English came into these coasts, these bar-  
­barous natives were altogether ignorant of the   
true God; hence it is, that in their prayers and   
sermons they use English words and terms; he   
that calls upon the most holy name of God,   
says Jehovah, or God, or Lord; and also they   
have learned and borrowed many other theo­-  
logical phrases from us.” This was naturally   
the expedient, which a people would adopt,   
when the ideas they wished to embody in   
words, being in some respects new to them,   
could find no precise expression in their own   
tongue. With the new religion they would   
necessarily learn some new words, and inter­-  
weave them with their own phraseology. When

\* See DUNTON'S Life and Errors, Vol. I. pp. 115 -122.   
 † See Cotton Mather's Life of Eliot, in the MAGNALIA,  
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Increase Mather. wrote this letter, Mr. Eliot   
was bowed under the weight of eighty-three   
years; yet he still preached to his Indian dis-  
­ciples as often as once in two months.   
 An Indian teacher, whose name was Daniel   
Takawombpait, was ordained at Natick. Mr.   
Eliot had an agency in his ordination; but at   
what time this took place, we do not learn. It   
must, however, have been before the summer of   
1687; for by the above-mentioned letter of In­-  
crease Mather, of that date, it appears that this   
man was then in the pastoral office. He died   
on the 17th of September, 1716, aged sixty-  
­four years. A humble grave-stone marked the   
spot where he was interred. It is now stand-  
­ing, as one of the lower stones in a wall, which   
runs across his grave by the road near the   
meeting-house in South Natick. The Indians   
of Na tick have entirely disappeared in the   
progress of years. It is unnecessary here to   
give the history, or to investigate the causes,   
of their decay,\* which is indeed but one item   
in the general story of the wasting of the abo-  
­riginals. At the present day, one miserable   
hut, or wigwam, inhabited by three or four of   
mingled Indian and Negro blood, is the only   
remnant of a settlement, which its founder

\* On this subject see the statements in the Reverend  
Stephen Badger's letter in 1 M. H. Coll., V. 33 - 45.

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hoped would prove a seminary of Christian   
and social blessings for the natives of our land.   
 I have now brought to a close the account of   
Mr. Eliot's persevering efforts for the civil and   
religious improvement of the Indians. The   
story might be enlarged; but I hope enough   
has been presented to give a correct concep­-  
tion of the task, on which this good man spent   
so large a portion of his days and his strength.   
 It seems impossible for any candid mind to   
doubt the purity of the motives, by which Mr.   
Eliot was excited to engage in this Christian   
enterprise. If we may trust the evidence of his   
conduct, and of all testimonies concerning him,   
he was a man distinguished by singleness of   
heart, one who listened to the voice of duty as   
the voice of God. No one could be less likely to   
make cunning calculations of personal interest   
in any undertaking; for he had the guileless   
simplicity of a child, as well as the firmness   
of a tried Christian. What inducement, but   
the hearty love of doing good, could have sent   
him forth on an errand of mercy, which pre-  
­sented no attractions, except such as the Chris-  
­tian sees in every proposal for advancing the   
welfare of his fellow-men.  
 The design seems to have sprung up amidst   
the silent workings of his own mind. No voice   
of invitation or encouragement, at the first,  
came to him from without. No eloquent appeal

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to his piety or his compassion was made by   
others. No one had gone before him in the   
enterprise, and returned to tell the story of the   
red man's wants, and to rouse the white man   
to supply them. He hearkened in silence to   
the admonition within his breast, which he re­-  
vered “as God's most intimate presence in the   
soul,” and which told him, that a work of be-  
­nevolence must be performed for the neglected   
and forlorn barbarians. He went forth to per-  
­form it amidst discouragements and obstacles,   
which were ever driving back his spirit on the   
resources of faith; amidst suffering, danger,   
and personal exposure, which were ever mak-  
­ing large demands on his power of endurance.   
 No trace of spiritual ambition, no mark of   
self-complacency, no word of vanity appears   
in the whole course of the labors of more than   
forty years. He cared not who had the praise,   
so the work of God were done. There have   
been achievements more brilliant than his;   
there have been enterprises more susceptible   
of attractive embellishment in the description   
than his; but none more unequivocally marked   
with the spirit of Christian disinterestedness.   
We cannot hesitate to yield a full assent to the   
testimony of Gookin, when he affirms, that   
“Mr. Eliot engaged in this great work of   
preaching unto the Indians upon a very pure   
and sincere account.”

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Nor can it be denied, that the manner, in   
which he discharged his difficult duty, was   
wise and judicious. No fanatical impulse, no   
irrational expectation, carried him headlong   
without regard to circumstances. He weighed   
well the nature of the undertaking. He sought   
to deal with the savage, as with a benighted   
brother, who must be taken by the hand like a   
child, and be led by winning means to feel his   
want of a better state, till he should rejoice to   
have the want supplied. No man was ever   
more devoted to a task, than Mr. Eliot to his;   
but it was a devotedness regulated by good   
sense and by the true spirit of faith. He en-  
­deavored to secure a lodgment for the truths of   
the Gospel, not by inculcating abstract ideas on   
the mind of the Indian, nor by leading it darkly   
along a chain of reasoning, which it could not   
grasp, but by plain and easy expositions of the   
facts and teachings of Scripture, and by famil-  
­iar illustrations of elementary truths, borrowed   
from objects or ideas to which his hearers were   
accustomed.   
 We have seen how much importance he   
ascribed to the mechanical arts, as well as to   
schools, in bringing the natives to a better   
condition, and how desirous be was to make   
his Indians good farmers and good artisans,   
as well as good Christians. He understood and   
practised upon the true doctrine on this sub-

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ject, that judicious modes of civilization and   
of social improvement must proceed simulta­-  
neously with such simple forms of religious in-  
­struction, as are adapted to the mental condi­-  
tion of the catechumens. There were errors   
and mistakes in Mr. Eliot's manner of proceed-  
­ing, as there have been in all similar enter­-  
prises; but, on the whole, there are few, if   
any, better models of missionary effort, than   
that which his history presents. It has been   
said, probably without exaggeration, that Mr.   
Eliot was the most successful missionary that   
ever preached the Gospel to the Indians.   
 The question has been, and will be again,   
asked, What after all was the use of this diffi-  
­cult effort, this hard toil 1 Was it not a wasted   
labor? Were the Indians benefited, or was   
Christianity planted with an abiding power in   
their wigwams and villages? Did not the   
whole disappear, like the snow-wreath in the   
sun? These questions are sometimes put in a   
sneering and contemptuous spirit, which be-  
­comes neither the Christian nor the philoso-  
­pher.” If the natives of our forests derived   
no permanent benefit from the exertions of Mr.   
Eliot and others, let it be remembered, that   
these natives vanished from among men, before

\* See the flippant remarks of Douglass; Summary   
Historical and Political, Vol. I. p. 172.

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the experiment could be tried on a large scale,   
and for many successive years. They dwin­-  
dled away in presence of the ever-restless en-  
­terprise of the New England settlers; and   
well might they say of “the pale race” around   
them,   
 “They waste us, --ay, like April snow   
 In the warm noon, we shrink away;   
 And fast they follow, as we go   
 Towards the setting day,--  
 Till they shall fill the land, and we   
 Are driven into the western sea.”

I do not say that blame is necessarily to be at-  
­tached to those, by whom they were crowded   
out; for, the world over, it is, and has been,   
generally a law of human progress, that civil-  
­ized man must overtop and displace uncivilized   
man. But I say, that it ill becomes us, who   
have taken possession of the broad and fair   
lands of New England, to ask in derision,   
what was the use of all the Christian zeal dis-  
­played in behalf of the race that once roamed   
over our hills and plains, when we recollect   
that they disappeared, to make room for us,   
too soon for the great and final results of that   
zeal to be fairly unfolded.   
 But the question may be asked, on the other   
hand, Was there no good done? It is true,   
indeed, that both the red man and his Christi-  
­anity, such as it was, vanished ere long from   
the roll of existing things. But while he re-

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mained, did the religion, which he had re­-  
ceived, do nothing for him? True, it was a   
very imperfect and rude exercise of faith; his   
conceptions of what he had learned under the   
name of Christianity were, as we should ex­-  
pect, coarse and narrow. But was even such   
a form of moral life useless to him? God has   
endowed spiritual truth with a power, which,   
when it has once found its way to the heart,   
cannot be wholly suppressed or extinguished   
by any rudeness of apprehension, or any pov­-  
erty of knowledge.   
 “Who the line   
 ­Shall draw, the limits of the power define,   
 That even imperfect faith to man affords?”

I cannot readily believe, that any portion of   
spiritual culture is entirely lost. Somewhere   
and somehow it has worked, and will work, for   
good. Even in the comparatively faint moral   
life kindled among the Indian settlements   
founded by Mr. Eliot, before they were broken   
by war and discord, there was far more of the   
substantial good that belongs to man in his   
true attributes, than among all the tribes, who   
still roamed in vaunted freedom through the   
forests, unchained by any restraints of order   
or religion.   
 But even if not one of the Indians had been   
personally benefited by the labors of the apos-  
tle Eliot, still those labors, like every great

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benevolent effort, have answered a noble pur­-  
pose. They stand as the imperishable record   
of good attempted by man for man; and such   
a record, who, that values the moral glory of   
his country, will consider as a trivial portion   
of her history? It constitutes a chapter in the   
annals of benevolence, which every Christian,   
every friend of man, will contemplate with   
pleasure, even if his gratification be mingled   
with the sad reflection, that so much was done   
for so small results. When the settlers of   
New England came hither, and built new homes   
on these shores, they and the natives, the   
stranger emigrant and the old inhabitant, stood   
side by side, each a portion of God's great   
family. Had our fathers never cast one kind   
regard on these wild men, had they never ap-  
­proached them in any office of kindness or   
any manifestation of sympathy, had they stood   
off from them in surly or contemptuous indiffer-  
­ence, except when occasion might serve to   
circumvent or crush them, a melancholy deduc­-  
tion must have been made from the reverence,   
with which every son of New England loves to   
regard their character and doings.   
 But it is not so. The voice of Christian af­-  
fection was spoken to the savage. The accents   
of pious kindness saluted his ear. For him   
benevolence toiled, and faith prayed, and wis-  
­dom taught; and the red race did not pass

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away, carrying with them no remembrance but   
that of defeat, and wrong, and submission to   
overpowering strength. The Christianity of   
the white roan formed a beautiful, though tran-  
­sient, bond of interest with them. The light,   
which Eliot's piety kindled, was indeed des­-  
tined soon to go out. But there his work   
stands for ever on our records, a work of love,   
performed in the spirit of love, and designed   
to effect the highest good which man is capa­-  
ble of receiving. Nonantum and Natick will   
ever be names of beautiful moral meaning in   
the history of New England.

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CHAPTER XVI.

The Studies, Preaching, Charity, and General   
 Habits of Mr. Eliot, during his Ministry at   
 Roxbury. -- His Family.

WHILE Mr. Eliot was thus for a long series   
of years employed in the work, which has been   
described, he had also been a faithful and labo-  
­rious servant of Christ in the ministry of his   
own church. Few men could have carried on   
two courses of service, one requiring such pe-  
­culiar efforts, and both sufficiently arduous,   
with so much fidelity and success. His minis-  
­try in Roxbury was of nearly sixty years' du­-  
ration. For about thirty-four years of that   
time, he had the assistance of colleagues at   
different periods; but his own attention to the   
duties of the sacred office, when at home, was   
always constant and devout. When he began   
to preach to the Indians, he had no colleague;   
and several of the neighboring ministers occa­-  
sionally assisted him by attending to his duties   
in Roxbury, while he was engaged in a new   
field of labor. Besides the work of his mission   
to the natives, his exertions among his own   
people were such, as to entitle him to the char­-  
acter of a most devoted and able minister.

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The sketch of that part of his life, which   
was spent in these duties, must necessarily be   
a description of general habits, rather than a   
narrative of events. Mr. Eliot uniformly pur-  
­sued his theological studies with untired zeal   
and with distinguished success. Amidst the   
active and exciting engagements, in which he   
was so constantly employed, it is surprising,   
that he was able to find so much leisure for   
meditation and learned inquiries.   
 The original languages of the Bible he   
studied with an exact and persevering dili­-  
gence proportioned to his reverence for divine   
truth. The Hebrew especially he held in high   
honor. So great was his veneration for this   
language, that he thought it admirably adapted   
to supply the desideratum of a Universal Char-  
­acter, the attainment of which was a problem   
that exercised the ingenuity of Bishop Wilkins   
and other learned men of those days. In a   
letter to Richard Baxter, written in 1663, Eliot   
introduces this subject. He affirms, that no   
language is so well adapted, as the Hebrew, to   
answer the purpose of “that long talked of   
and desired design of a universal character   
and language.” He quotes Jordini Hebreae Ra-  
­dices, in the Preface to which it is affirmed, that   
the Hebrew, by “the divine artifice” of its   
construction, “is capable of a regular expatia-  
­tion into millions of words,” Then, growing

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warm in his enthusiasm, Eliot adds, “It had   
need be so, for being the language which shall   
be spoken in heaven, where knowledge will be   
so enlarged, there will need a spacious language;   
and what language fitter than this of God's   
own making and composure? And why may   
we not make ready for heaven in this point, by   
making and fitting that language, according to   
the rules of the divine artifice of it, to express   
all imaginable conceptions and notions of the   
mind of man in all arts and sciences.”\* He   
even thinks, that such a glorious result is a   
subject of prophecy in Zephaniah iii. 9, and   
other passages of Scripture.† Mr. Eliot's con­-  
fidence, that Hebrew is the language of heaven,   
furnishes an amusing specimen of the whimsi-  
­cal notions, which a man may seriously adopt   
in the ardor of a favorite study. It was not,   
however, peculiar to himself; for the zeal of   
other Oriental scholars had led them to defend   
the same conjecture. The design of a Univer-  
­sal Character, on which Mr. Eliot dwelt with   
so much pleasure, after having exercised the   
learning and abilities of such men as Wilkins,   
Dalgarno, Leibnitz, Becher,‡ and others, may

\* Reliquie Baxterianae, &c., p. 294.   
 † The same strain of remark respecting the Hebrew oc-  
­curs in ELLIOT'S Communion of Churches, &c.,ch. III. p. 17.   
 ‡ For some remarks on the views of Leibnitz on this sub-  
­ject, see the Eloge de M. Leibnitz par M. DE FONTENELLE;

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probably be considered as having passed into   
the region of philosophical vagaries.   
 On the metaphysical questions of theology   
Mr. Eliot appears to have bestowed some   
thoughtful attention, if we may judge from oc­-  
casional intimations. A few remarks mani­-  
festing this propensity occur in the before-  
­mentioned letter to Baxter, whose speculations   
on the freedom of the will he had read with   
much satisfaction. Having referred to Genesis   
i. 26, he proceeds to remark, “But what our   
likeness to God is, is the question. Why may   
it not admit this explication, that one chief   
thing is to act, like God, according to our light   
freely, by choice without compulsion, to be the   
author of our own act, to determine our own   
choice. This is spontaneity; the nature of the   
will lieth in this.” The freedom of the will,   
he thinks, was not lost by the fall; only, its   
energies were wholly turned to evil. But what   
difference there can be between a constraint   
upon the spontaneity of the will, and an im-  
­possibility to act except in one direction, that

OEuvres de Fontenelle, Tome V. p. 493. An account of the   
plan of Becher, an ingenious man, though a charletan, is   
given in ADELUNG's Geschichte der Menschlichen Narrheit,   
Vol. I. p. 138. On the subject of a philosopical or universal   
language, see DUGALD STEWART, Works, Vol. I. p.149; and   
COUSIN, Cours de l'Histoire de la Philosophie, Tome II.   
pp. 311-315.

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is, towards sin, it would be difficult to dis­cover.   
 In the same letter Eliot manifests an inter­est,   
which he had exhibited on other occasions,   
in the progress of medical science. He speaks   
in terms of high praise of the studies and la­-  
bors of the College of Physicians in London.   
“By the blessing of God upon them,” says he,   
“they seem to me to design such a regiment   
of health, and such an exact inspection into all   
diseases, and knowledge of all medicaments,   
and prudence of application of the same, that   
the book of divine Providence seemeth to pro-  
­vide for the lengthening of the life of man   
again in this latter end of the world, which   
would be no small advantage unto all kinds of   
good learning and government. And doth not   
such a thing seem to be prophesied in Isaiah   
lxv. 20? If the child shall die one hundred   
years old, of what age shall the old man be?   
But I would not be too bold with the Holy   
Scriptures.” This fashion of finding at pleas-  
­ure predictions in the Bible, to suit all occa­-  
sions, was common at that time.   
 The preaching of Mr. Eliot is described\* as

\* On this and on most points relating to the ministry   
and domestic habits of the Apostle Eliot, Cotton Mather,   
who was his contemporary, and knew him well, gives us   
more full and important information than any other writer.   
In this part of my narrative I rely chiefly on his authority.

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having been of the most skilful and efficient   
kind. It was distinguished by great simplicity   
and plainness, “so that,” says Mather, “the   
very lambs might wade into his discourses on   
those texts and themes, wherein elephants   
might swim.”\* His manner was usually gen-  
­tle and winning; but when sin was to be   
rebuked or corruption combated, his voice   
swelled into solemn and powerful energy, and   
the heart of the transgressor shook as at the   
sound that rolled from Sinai. On such occa­-  
sions, there were “quot verba tot fulmina, as ma-  
­ny thunderbolts as words.”  
 Carelessness or negligence in the duties of   
the pulpit he could not tolerate. He always   
insisted, that sermons should be prepared with   
great attention, and with much mental effort,   
at the same time that they were pervaded by   
the sanctifying spirit of a divine influence.   
He would say to one, whose preaching was of   
this character, “Brother, there is oil required   
for the service of the sanctuary, but it must be

\* This striking, but somewhat quaint illustration was not   
original with Mather, though perhaps, amidst his multifa­-  
rious reading, he had forgotten whence he received it.   
“One of the Fathers,” says Coleridge, “has observed, that   
in the New Testament there are shallows where the lamb   
may ford, and depths where the elephant must swim.” --   
Lay Sermon addressed to the Higher and Middle Classes,   
&c., p. 58.

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beaten; I praise God that your oil was so well   
beaten to-day.”  
 In the administration of ecclesiastical affairs,   
Mr. Eliot, like most of the ministers at that   
time, was an advocate for the rigorous strict-  
­ness of church discipline. The Congregational   
form, which was the favorite one in New Eng-  
­land, he always loved and defended, as a happy   
medium between Presbyterianism on the one   
band, and Brownism, so called, on the other.   
 In children, and in the young generally, Mr.   
Eliot's interest was strong and hearty. He   
loved them with a truly paternal kindness;   
and the efforts, which he made for their good,   
were not undertaken in the mechanical or cold   
spirit of one, who merely does what is expected   
of him as an official duty. He had a deep con-  
­viction of the importance of placing religious   
influence strongly and largely among those   
first elements, which are to be the germs of   
future character. He was thoroughly persuad­-  
ed that the piety, which takes its root among   
the pleasant feelings and tender impressions   
of childhood, is likely to be more enduring,   
more true to God arid the Savior, than that   
which is laid upon the mind, rather than incur-  
­porated into it, at a subsequent period, when   
the feelings have grown hard and dry.   
 Mr. Eliot maintained a sympathy with the   
youthful part of his flock, which could have

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been the result only of a hearty concern for   
their best welfare. This man, who stood high   
among the first divines of his country and   
age, and whose Christian activity was ever   
going forth in far-reaching enterprises of piety,   
had a heart for humbler scenes, and was ever   
ready, like his Master, to take little children   
into his arms and bless them. He was earnest   
in inculcating the duty, and able in defending   
the practice, of infant baptism. He valued   
highly the religious instruction given by cate­-  
chizing; a mode of teaching the young, to   
which greater relative importance was ascribed   
then, than will be assigned to it in modern   
times, when more varied and more interesting   
means of conveying religious truth to the mind   
of the child are so generally in use. “The care   
of the lambs,” said Mr. Eliot, “is one third   
part of the charge over the church of God.”\*  
 It was in the same spirit, that on all occa-  
­sions he pressed the importance of maintaining   
good schools in the towns and settlements of   
the colony. It is related, that he made this the   
subject of fervent and special prayers at the   
meeting of a synod in Boston. By his active   
agency, a school of a high character was estab­-  
lished in Roxbury, for the support of which he   
bequeathed a considerable part of his own

\* This he said in commenting on John xxi. 15.

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property. This free school was the admiration   
of the neighboring towns; and Mather states,   
as a result of its influence, “that Roxbury has   
afforded more scholars, first for the college, and   
then for the public, than any town of its big-  
­ness, or, if I mistake not, of twice its bigness,   
in all New England.”  
 There was no point, on which Mr. Eliot was   
more earnest in his exhortations, or more strict   
in his example, than the observance of the   
Sabbath. He might be said, indeed, to devote   
every day to God, by devoting it to duty. But,   
on the Lord's day, it was a matter of con­-  
science and of uniform practice with him to   
consecrate his thoughts by special exercises to   
spiritual communion and spiritual improve­-  
ment. Probably in the punctilious rigor, with   
which he regulated his habits in this respect,   
there was a portion of the superstitious pre-  
­cision that belonged to his times. But who   
can doubt, that these seasons of exclusive de­-  
votion to the duties of religious abstraction   
and meditative piety contributed much to   
arm his soul with strength for the great tasks   
of such a life as his 1 On the subject of the   
Sabbath he had some discussion by letter   
with the celebrated John Owen of England,   
the most eminent divine among the Independ­-  
ents, who, in his answer to Eliot, lamented,   
as one of the saddest frowns of Providence

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towards him, that he should have been so mis-  
­understood by the churches and the ministers   
of New England whom he loved, as to be sus-  
­pected of having given a wound to the cause   
of holiness.   
 Mr. Eliot's intercourse with the people of   
his charge was a perpetual exhibition of the   
fidelity of a spiritual friend, and the virtues of   
a benevolent, heavenly-minded Christian. With   
all his gravity of character, there was nothing   
stiff in his deportment, or morose in his dispo-  
­sition. Social freedom and innocent hilarity   
never fled from his presence. On the contrary,   
he was distinguished by that facetious affabili-  
­ty, which springs naturally from a contented   
and cheerful heart. He had a relish for chas-  
­tened wit, and his conversation was sprinkled   
with its pleasant influence. His leading aim,   
however, in social intercourse, was to promote   
edification. No man was more intent upon   
seizing every occasion for a good hint, or for   
an apt illustration of moral and religious truth.   
Scarcely a topic passed him in conversation,   
without being made to minister to important   
instruction. He discovered gold where others   
saw only common stones.   
 In the ordinary occurrences of life, and in   
the usual course of divine Providence, he had   
the same disposition to find matter for fruitful   
reflection, which Luther cherished in his study

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of the Scriptures;\* so that he was compared   
in his old age to Homer's Nestor, from whose   
lips dropped words sweeter than honey. It   
was the frequent remark of his friends, that   
“they were never with him, but they got, or   
might have got, some good from him.” He be-  
­lieved a life of duty to be the best preparation   
for death; “for,” said he, on one occasion,   
“were I sure to go to heaven to-morrow, I   
would do what I am doing to-day.” The   
spirituality of his feelings was ever going   
forth in spontaneous manifestations. It is re­-  
lated, that when he once visited a merchant in   
his counting-room, seeing books of business on   
the table, and some books of devotion laid   
away on a shelf, he said, “Here, Sir, is earth   
on the table, and heaven on the shelf; pray do   
not sit so much at the table, as altogether to   
forget the shelf; let not earth thrust heaven   
out of your mind.” If the merchant regarded   
the admonition as intrusive and unseasonable,   
he doubtless respected the pious zeal and   
apostolical simplicity of the good man.   
 In the performance of his duties among his

\* “In the Bible,” said Luther, “we have rich and pre-  
­cious comforts, learnings, admonitions, warnings, promises,   
and threatenings.” And he added, in his quaint way,   
“There is not a tree in this orchard, on which I have not   
knocked, and have shaken at least a couple of apples or   
pears from the same.”--Table-Talk, Chap. I.

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congregation and elsewhere, he was eminently   
remarkable for his free and self-forgetting   
bounty. The pecuniary resources of a New   
England clergyman, slender enough at any   
time, were then scanty indeed. But Mr. Eliot,   
in the unchecked freedom of his liberality,   
made the most of the little he possessed, in   
works of benevolence. To the poor he gave   
with an open hand, till all was gone; and they   
looked to him as a father and a friend. The   
amount of his personal charities in this way   
alone, at different times, was many hundred   
pounds. He did not wait for suffering to come   
in his way, but sought it out diligently. As   
other men would search for hidden treasures,   
he searched for opportunities of raising the   
wretched and relieving the miserable. When   
his own means were exhausted, he applied to   
those who were blessed with abundance, and   
begged of them contributions for the children   
of want. His bounty, to be so profuse, must   
sometimes doubtless have been indiscriminate   
and injudicious. With a benevolence too in-  
­cautious, he often distributed his salary for the   
relief of others, before the wants of his own   
family were supplied.   
 On this subject there is a well-known anec­-  
dote, which, though probably familiar to many   
readers, is too characteristic to be omitted.   
When the parish treasurer was once about to

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pay him his salary, or a portion of it, knowing   
his habitual propensity, he put it into a hand­-  
kerchief, which he tied in several hard knots,   
in order to prevent Mr. Eliot from giving it   
away before be reached home. After leaving   
the treasurer, the benevolent man called at the   
house of a family, who were poor and sick.   
He blessed them, and told them God had sent   
relief by him. His kind words brought tears   
of gratitude to their eyes. He immediately   
attempted to untie his handkerchief; but the   
knots had been so effectually made, that he   
could not get at his money. After several   
fruitless efforts to loose the handkerchief,   
growing impatient of the perplexity and delay,   
he gave the whole to the mother of the family,   
saying, “Here, my dear, take it; I believe the   
Lord designs it all for you.”\*   
 The kindness of Mr. Eliot was manifested   
in other ways as effectually, at least, as in the   
bestowment of money. His wife is said to have   
had some skill in physic and surgery, sufficient   
to enable her in common cases to administer   
to the diseased and wounded with considerable   
success. She was always glad to use her   
knowledge as an instrument of charity; and it   
  
 \* See 1 M. H. Coll., X. 186, where, I believe, this often-  
­repeated anecdote was originally told. It is given in a   
letter signed J. M.; and the writer of the letter received it   
from his parents, who were natives of Roxbury.

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was with delight that her husband saw her   
engaged in these labors of kindness. One of   
his parishioners was deeply offended by some­-  
thing he had said in the pulpit, and reviled   
him in no measured terms, both by speech and   
writing. Not long afterwards, this man hap­-  
pened to wound himself in a dangerous man-  
­ner. Eliot immediately despatched his wife to   
dress his wound and relieve his suffering. She   
discharged the office with ready kindness, and   
soon effected a complete cure. When the man   
had recovered, he went to thank the good lady,   
and offered her a compensation, which she de­-  
clined. Mr. Eliot urged him to stay at his   
house, and dine with him. The invitation was   
accepted; and Eliot treated him with great   
kindness, never alluding to the calumnies and   
the acrimonious speeches, with which his par-  
­ishioner had assailed his character. The man,   
ashamed of his conduct, was subdued into   
a friend. Is there a better illustration of the   
fine precept, “Be not overcome of evil, but   
overcome evil with good”?  
 Our benevolent apostle was distinguished   
for his love of peace. “He was a great enemy   
to all contention,” says Mather, “and would   
ring aloud the curfew-bell wherever he saw the   
fires of animosity.” To one, who complained   
of the intractable disposition of others, he   
would say, “Brother, learn the meaning of

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those three little words, bear, forbear, forgive.”   
When either peace or his own rights must be   
given up, he was always willing to sacrifice the   
latter to the former; and wherever he ap­-  
peared, his earnest persuasive was, like the   
affectionate charge so often repeated by the   
aged Apostle John, “My children, love one   
another.”  
 His habits with respect to personal indul-  
­gence were of the most simple and severe   
kind. He had attained a complete mastery   
over the pleasures of sense, and held them in   
despotic subjugation. The lessons of self-  
denial, which he had thoroughly learned and   
daily practised, and his indifference to outward   
accommodations, fitted him to endure with-  
­out complaint the privations, to which he was   
often exposed in his ministry to the Indians.   
He allowed himself but little sleep, rising early   
and beginning his labors in the freshness of   
morning. This habit he recommended to   
others, especially to those who were engaged   
in intellectual pursuits. He would often say   
to young students, “I pray you, look to it that   
you be morning birds.”  
 His food was always the plainest and most   
simple. Rich viands and highly seasoned va­-  
rieties for the table, it seems, were not un-  
­known in New England even at that time.   
For these Mr. Eliot had no relish himself, and

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but little mercy for the taste in others. When   
he dined abroad, he partook of but one dish,   
and that the plainest on the table. He was   
habitually a water-drinker, and seldom devi­-  
ated into the use of any other liquor. The   
juice of the grape he did not denounce, but   
rarely tasted it himself. “Wine,” be was ac-  
­customed to say, “is a noble, generous liquor,   
and we should be humbly thankful for it; but,   
as I remember, water was made before it.”   
He thought very justly that intemperate eating   
deserved to be severely rebuked, no less than   
intemperate drinking. In his correspondence   
with Baxter he remarks, “I observe in yours   
a thing, which I have not so much observed in   
other men's writing, namely that you often in-  
­veigh against the sin of gluttony, as well as   
drunkenness. It appeareth to be a very great   
point of Christian prudence, temperance, and   
mortification, to rule the appetite of eating as   
well as drinking; and, were that point more   
inculcated by divines, it would much tend to   
the sanctification of God's people, as well as   
to a better preservation of health, and length-  
­ening of the life of man on earth.”\*  
 Extravagance or finery in dress was likely   
to draw from Mr. Eliot a witty or a serious re-  
­buke. His own apparel was not only without

\* Reliquiae Baxterianae, &c., p. 294.

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ornament, but frequently of the most homely   
kind. It is said that, like John the Baptist,   
he sometimes had a leathern girdle about his   
loins; but this, it is likely, was worn only or   
chiefly during his missionary excursions. In   
some men, habits like these might justly be   
supposed to proceed from an affectation of   
homeliness; for there is a pride of plainness,   
as well as a pride of finery. But Mr. Eliot   
was too guileless a man to be suspected of   
such folly. His negligence of external appear­-  
ance, and his contempt for the pleasures of the   
table, were the result of an unaffected love of   
simplicity, strengthened by a studious life and   
by intense engagement in absorbing duties.   
 Mr. Eliot had a few whims, to which he was   
pertinaciously attached. One of these was an   
unsparing hostility to the practice of wearing   
long hair and wigs. He could not endure it;   
he regarded it as an iniquity not to be toler­-  
ated. The man, and especially the minister   
of the Gospel, who wore a wig, he considered   
as committing an offence, not only against de-  
cency, but against religion. His zeal about   
“prolix locks” was warm, but unavailing. He   
lived to see the practice prevail in spite of his   
remonstrances, and at last gave over his war-  
­fare against it with the despairing remark!”   
The lust has become insuperable!” The   
readers of New England history will remem-

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ber, that in 1649 an association was formed,   
and a solemn protest published, against wear-  
­ing long hair, by Governor Endicot and the   
other magistrates.\*  
 In this punctiliousness we see the influence   
of sympathy with the English Roundheads car­-  
ried even into trifles. In England periwigs   
were permitted quietly to cover the head soon   
after the restoration of Charles. But for more   
than thirty years after that time, they were   
deemed by many a sore grievance in New Eng­-  
land. Gradually during that period they were   
coming into use; but they needed all the au-  
­thority derived from the practice of such di-  
­vines as Owen, Bates, and Mede, to find pro-  
­tection at last. The intolerance they experi­-  
enced from Mr. Eliot was not, therefore, a   
singularity in the good man; he only perse-  
­vered in his stern hostility against them longer   
than many others.   
 To the use of tobacco, the introduction of   
which had caused no little disturbance in New   
England, be had likewise a strong aversion,   
and denounced it in the severest terms. But   
his opposition in this case was as ineffectual,   
as in that of the wigs. “In contempt of all   
his admonitions,” says Allen, “the head would   
be adorned with curls of foreign growth, and   
the pipe would send up volumes of smoke.”

\* Hutchinson, Vol. I. p.142.

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In his domestic relations this devoted laborer   
for truth and righteousness was richly blessed,   
though the providence of God repeatedly called   
him to that painful trial, the bitterness of which   
none but a parent's heart can know. He had   
six children; one daughter, who was the eldest,   
and five sons. Only the daughter and one son   
survived him. The others died young, or in   
middle age.\*  
 The frequent and grievous disappointment   
of parental hopes Mr. Eliot received with the   
submissive piety of a Christian. “I have had,”   
said he in the calm spirit inspired by his faith,   
“six children; and, I bless God for his grace,   
they are all either with Christ or in Christ,   
and my mind is at rest concerning them. My   
desire was that they should have served God   
on earth; but if God will choose to have them   
rather serve him in heaven, I have nothing to   
object against it, but his will be done.” It was   
his earnest desire to train up his sons to aid   
and follow him in his favorite work of the In-  
­dian ministry. On this subject his feelings   
were once much affected by the inquiries which   
one of the natives made respecting his chil-  
­dren.†

\* See an account of Eliot's children in the MAGNALIA,   
Life of Eliot, Preliminary I. The youngest son assisted   
his father some time in the ministry at Roxbury.   
 † “Another Indian,” says he, “who lived remote another

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Mr. Eliot's wife was a woman of many vir­-  
tues, distinguished for gentle piety and busy   
usefulness, and admirably fitted to be the com­-  
panion of such a man. Their union was very   
long and very happy. She stood by his side   
for many years to soothe his sorrows, to en-  
­courage his heart, and to strengthen his hands.   
It was fortunate for him, that she bestowed a   
skilful attention on the management of the pru­-  
dential concerns of the family; for so negligent   
was he of these things, that he did not know   
his own property. His wife once amused her-  
­self by pointing to several of his cows, that   
stood before the door, and asking him whose   
they were. She found that the good man knew   
nothing about them.

way, asked me if I had any children. I answered, Yea.   
He asked how many. I said, Six. He asked how many of   
them were sons. I told him, Five. Then he asked whether   
my sons should teach the Indians to know God, as I do.   
At which question I was much moved in my heart; for I   
have often in my prayers dedicated all my sons unto the   
Lord to serve him in this service, if he will please to ac-  
­cept them therein; and my purpose is to do my uttermost   
to train them up in learning, whereby they may be fitted in   
the best manner I can to serve the Lord herein; and better   
preferment I desire not for them, than to serve the Lord in   
this travail. And to that purpose I answered him; and my   
answer seemed to be well pleasing to them, which seemed   
to minister to my heart some encouragement that the   
Lord's meaning was to improve them that way, and he   
would prepare their hearts to accept the same.” -- Eliot's   
letter in Further Discovery, &c., p. 20. See APPENDIX,   
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Her excellent domestic economy, her un-  
­wearied activity, and her truly Christian char-  
­acter made her a blessing to her family, to   
the church, and to the whole circle of her ac-  
­quaintances. She died, three years before her   
husband, on the 24th of March, 1687, in the   
eighty-fourth year of her age. The Reverend   
Mr. Danforth of Dorchester offered to her mem-  
­ory the tribute of a poetical effusion.\* Her   
death smote heavily on the heart of her vener-  
­able husband. The weight of eighty-three   
years was pressing him down; and she, who   
was bound to him by the strong ties of early   
love, who had been his solace amidst toil and   
trial, and who was truly called “the staff of   
his age,” had fallen by his side.   
 When the aged are thus separated, there is   
for the survivor a dreary loneliness, which   
none but the aged can feel. The smile, which   
had made the fireside cheerful for many years,   
the busy kindness in the little details of every   
day which grows more important as years steal   
on, the quiet happiness arising from a perfect   
acquaintance with each other's tastes and an   
entire confidence in each other's hearts, the   
pleasure of mutual dependence which habit has

\* A poem “On the death of Mrs. Anne Eliot, the virtu-  
ous Consort of the Reverend John Eliot, first Minister of   
Roxbury.” See 1 M. H. Coll., IX. 176. Mr. Danforth also   
wrote “verses to the memory” of Mr. Eliot.

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made a daily want; these are gone, and the   
world offers nothing that can fill their place.   
One, who was present at the funeral, tells us   
that Mr. Eliot stood beside the coffin of her   
whom he had so long loved, and, while the   
tears flowed fast and full, said to the con-  
­course of people around, “Here lies my dear,   
faithful, pious, prudent, prayerful wife; I shall   
go to her, but she shall not return to me.”   
He turned away from her grave, and went to   
his house; but it was desolate, for the light of   
his home was gone.

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CHAPTER XVII.

Eliot's Old Age and Death. -- Concluding   
 Remarks.

THE closing scene of this excellent man's   
life was now drawing nigh. Time had been   
gradually doing its work upon him; the earthly   
tabernacle was near to dissolution; “the time-  
­shadow” of this noble spirit was about to van-  
­ish. Mr. Eliot's rigid temperance, and the   
hard exercise to which his various duties had   
called him, had strengthened a constitution   
naturally firm, and given him almost uniform   
good health. He was one of those who wear   
well. His last days were not days of pain and   
disease, though the infirmities of long-pro­-  
tracted life gathered around him. The old   
age of the apostle Eliot was indeed an envia-  
­ble one; calm, bright, and full of sustaining   
recollections. His task was done, and well   
done. “His witness was in heaven, and his   
record on high.” Years had struck feebleness   
into his limbs; but his soul was strong; his   
spirit was ripe for the communion of the   
blessed; and the eye of faith ever looked up-  
­ward. He had stood, during a long life, at the  
post of duty with sleepless vigilance; success

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had never seduced him into sluggishness; dis-  
­appointment had never driven him into despair.   
Not to one like him could be applied, in any   
sense, the lamentation over the close of an idle,   
useless life, so beautifully expressed by Sadi,   
the philosophical poet of Persia;

“Alas! for him who has gone and has done no good work;   
 The trumpet of march has sounded, and his load was not   
 bound on.”\*

With a fidelity that never broke down, with   
an affection that was never wearied out, Eliot   
had gone forth among the wild men of the   
woods, year after year, in sunshine and in   
storm, under the burning rays of summer and   
in winter's sharpest cold, to proclaim to them   
“the unsearchable riches of Christ.” He had   
been the first to break the ground, on which   
“the seed which is the word of God” was to   
be sown; and, in the devout confidence of faith,   
he believed the harvest would come. He had   
dealt kindly, truly, and earnestly with the bar-  
­barians; and they had listened to him, loved   
him, and in their homely way testified their   
gratitude, and received his instructions. He   
had left among them that noble gift, the fruit   
of many years' hard toil, the Bible in their own   
native words; and there it would remain, the   
silent but quickening teacher of God's truth,

\* MALCOLM'S History of Persia, Vol. II. p. 538.

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reminding them of him whose heart had felt,   
and whose hand had labored, for them, when   
that heart and that hand should be dust. He   
had laid open a whole new field, on which di-  
­vine truth might work out its triumphs, and   
send forth its blessings.   
 Besides this, he had done the duty of a faith-  
­ful minister at home; he had been the counsel-  
­lor, the friend, the comforter of all; living   
words of instruction, of peace, of encourage-  
­ment, of warning, had gone forth from his lips,   
and reached and quickened many souls. To   
the church in general he had, with ability and   
fidelity, rendered highly valued services by his   
writings and his personal influence; and he   
had stood among the guiding spirits of the   
country. When the feebleness of more than   
fourscore years had disabled him for active ex-  
­ertion, and his frame was bowed, and his steps   
slow, he was still beloved and revered; he   
was amidst a people who looked to him as to   
one already speaking to them from another   
world; they called him their father, and loved   
him as such ; and their children hung around   
him “to share the good man's smile.” Was it   
not a happy old age, the old age of the Christian   
scholar, the faithful missionary, the time-worn   
servant of God? How different from that old   
age, barren of cheering recollections or full   
of remorse, which may well be dreaded, and

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which, it has been finely said, appears like the   
magical beings fearfully portrayed in Oriental   
fiction, who sit in clouds of darkness at the   
end of man's course, fixing upon their victims,   
as they approach, those keen, never-moving   
eyes, which by an indescribable but terrific   
power draw, them towards their destiny in   
spite of all their efforts!   
 Mr. Eliot continued to preach as long as his   
strength lasted. His trembling voice was still   
heard, and his apostolic form seen, in the pul-  
­pit which had so long been his beloved place   
of duty. With slow and feeble steps he as-  
­cended the hill, on which his church was situ­-  
ated, and once observed to the person, on   
whose arm he leaned for support, “This is very   
much like the way to heaven; 'tis up hill; the   
Lord by his grace fetch us up.” At length his   
physical powers failed so much, that he was   
peculiarly reminded of his need of an assistant.   
Since 1674 he had been without a colleague.   
He now requested his people to provide them­-  
selves with another minister, that, before he   
should die, he might have the satisfaction   
of seeing his successor established in office.   
When he made this request, he added, with   
his characteristic liberality, “’Tis possible, you   
may think the burden of maintaining two minis-  
­ters too heavy for you; but I deliver you from   
that fear; I do here give back my salary to the

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Lord Jesus Christ; and now, brethren, you   
may fix that upon any man whom God shall   
make a pastor for you.” His church were   
much affected by the old man's generous pro-  
­posal. With a noble spirit, worthy of imita-  
­tion, but not always imitated, they assured him,  
that, though he was disabled from rendering   
them the services they had so long received,   
yet they should account his beloved presence   
among them worth a salary.   
 On the 17th of October, 1688, the Reverend   
Nehemiah Walter was ordained as his col-  
­league. Mr. Eliot received him with the kind­-  
ness of a father, and was delighted to witness   
his usefulness, and the favor he found among   
the people of his charge. After this it was   
with difficulty that he could be persuaded to   
engage in any public service. The last time   
this venerable man preached was on the day of   
a public fast. He delivered a clear and edify-  
­ing exposition of the eighty-third Psalm. At   
the close he begged his hearers to pardon his   
poor and broken thoughts, and added, “But   
my dear brother here will by and by mend   
it all.”  
 This aged servant of Christ sat waiting, as   
it were, in the antechamber of death, quiet   
and full of hope. He used sometimes pleas­-  
antly to say, that he was afraid some of his old   
Christian friends, who had departed before him,

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especial1y John Cotton of Boston and Richard   
Mather of Dorchester, would suspect him to   
have gone the wrong way, because he remained   
so long behind them. His full share of work   
seemed to have been done; but even now he   
could not consent to be idle. He looked   
around for some labor of benevolence and   
piety, such as the remnant of his powers might   
allow him to perform. The care of the igno-  
­rant and the neglected was still the ruling pas-  
­sion of his heart. He saw with grief the great   
want of concern for the moral welfare of the   
blacks. He proposed to many of the families   
within two or three miles of his house, that   
they should send their negro servants to him   
once a week, to be instructed in religion. In   
this humble, but truly benevolent work, he re-  
­joiced to occupy some of his last hours; but   
death intervened before much could be ac­-  
complished.   
 Another labor of charity, which he under-  
­took when he could no longer go out of doors,   
was the instruction of a boy, who in infancy   
had lost his sight by falling into the fire. To   
this blind boy the venerable man devoted much   
time and attention. He took him to his own   
house; and by the tedious process of verbal   
repetition made him acquainted with many por­-  
tions of Scripture, so that the youth learned to   
repeat whole chapters, and would instantly

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correct any mistake which he heard a person   
commit in reading. Mr. Eliot instructed him   
patiently in religion and other subjects; and   
the blind child heard the voice of love and   
truth from the aged man, till that voice was   
hushed in death.   
 Amidst the infirmities of his last days, Mr.   
Eliot never lost his interest in the welfare of   
New England. His heart was still upon the   
good of the church and the colony. He ob-  
­served with distressing apprehensions the pro­-  
ceedings of the notorious Edward Randolph;   
and, when Increase Mather was about to depart   
for England as agent of the province, Eliot   
with a trembling hand wrote to him a few im-  
­perfect lines. This is supposed to have been   
the last time that he used his pen.   
 While death was fast approaching, his men-  
­tal powers, though dimmed and broken, were   
still retained. He rejoiced in the thought, that   
he should soon carry to his friends in heaven   
good news of the prosperity of the New Eng­-  
land churches. When some one inquired how   
he was, he replied, “Alas! I have lost every  
thing; my understanding leaves me; my mem-  
­ory fails me; my utterance fails me; but, I   
thank God, my charity holds out still; I find   
that rather grows than fails.” One of his last   
remembrances lingered sadly among those, to   
whom he had given so much of his strength

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and life. “There is a cloud,” he said, “a   
dark cloud upon the work of the Gospel among   
the poor Indians. The Lord revive and pros­-  
per that work, and grant it may live when I am   
dead. It is a work, which I have been doing   
much and long about. But what was the word  
I spoke last? I recall that expression my do­-  
ings. Alas, they have been poor and small do-  
­ings, and I'll be the man that shall throw the   
first stone at them all.” When, a short time   
before his death, Mr. Walter came into his   
room, he said, “Brother, you are welcome to   
my very soul; but retire to your study, and   
pray that I may have leave to be gone.” Mr.   
Eliot died on the 20th of May, 1690, aged   
eighty-six years. The last words on his lips   
were “WELCOME JOY!”   
 Such was the life and such the end of John   
Eliot. New England bewailed his death, as a   
great and general calamity. The churches,   
whose growth and prosperity had always been   
among the things which lay nearest to his heart,   
felt that they had lost a spiritual father, whose   
venerable presence had been to them a defence   
and glory. So deep was the sentiment of rev-  
­erence for his character, that Mather observes,   
“We had a tradition among us, that the coun-  
­try could never perish as long as Eliot was   
alive.” One, who for a long series of years   
had filled so large a space with eminent use-

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fulness, on whom the confidence of the best   
men in church and state had reposed without   
wavering, and over whose name, age and great   
services had shed a saintly consecration, could   
not depart from those, with and for whom he   
had acted, without leaving a community in   
mourning. The Indian church at Natick wept   
the loss of their venerated instructer, as rough   
men in simplicity of heart would weep for one,   
who had loved them, who had prayed for them,   
and guided them to the things of their ever-  
­lasting peace.”  
 A voice came across the waters, responding   
to the voice of New England. When Richard   
Baxter lay, as he supposed, dying in his bed,   
he received a copy of Cotton Mather's Life of   
Eliot.† He was able to read the book, and it   
revived him. He wrote a short letter to In­-  
crease Mather, then in London, dated August   
3d, 1691, in which he said, “I knew much of   
Mr. Eliot's opinions by many letters I had   
from him. There was no man on earth, whom   
I honored above him. I am now dying, I hope,   
as he did.” -- Baxter, whose hearty integrity of   
principle raised him above the weakness of   
flattery, and gave peculiar value to his com-   
  
 \* See APPENDIX, No. V.   
 † This was first published in a small book separately,   
and afterwards incorporated into the MAGNALIA.

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mendation, had expressed, in a letter written   
nearly twenty years before this time, his opin­-  
ion of Mr. Eliot's labors; “There is no man   
on earth,” said he, “whose work I think more   
honorable and comfortable, than. yours. The   
industry of the Jesuits and friars, and their   
successes in Congo, Japan, China, &c., shame   
us all, save you.” Of a man to whom such tes-  
­timony was borne by the records of his own   
life, and by the attestations of the wise and   
good who knew him well, it may be said with   
simple truth, in the lines of one whose poetry   
has graced the literature of the age, as well as   
of his own country.  
 “His youth was innocent; his riper age,   
 Marked with some act of goodness, every day;   
 And watched by eyes that loved him, calm and sage,   
 Faded his late declining years away.   
 Cheerful be gave his being up, and went   
 To share the holy rest that waits a life well spent.”  
   
 Of Eliot's personal appearance we have no   
information; nor is there, so far as I can learn,   
a portrait or effigies of him in existence.   
 In the course of this narrative all the writ-  
­ings of Mr. Eliot, which have come to my   
knowledge, have been described or mentioned.   
Some of these I have not seen, and presume   
they are not to be found in any public or pri­-  
vate library among us. When we consider his   
high character as a preacher, it is remarkable

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that he published no sermons.\* Those of his   
compositions, which are in our hands, prove   
that he wrote with great simplicity and direct-  
­ness, with a heart full of his subject, and in­-  
tent on reaching the hearts of others. It is   
evident that he had not studied much what is   
commonly called the art of writing well; yet   
he wrote well. His style is sometimes rugged   
and ungraceful, but frequently strong, nervous,   
peculiarly expressive, and always like the   
speech of a man who earnestly believes what he   
has to say, and therefore says it in a straight-  
­forward manner. Some of his best writing is   
found in his letters concerning the affairs of   
the Indians. In these his heart gushes forth in  
a mixture of warm zeal and gentle feeling,   
which sometimes has a beautiful effect. His   
general character as a writer, and probably as   
a preacher, so far as thought and style are con-  
­cerned, may be fitly described in the language   
of Milton, who says, “True eloquence I find to   
be none but the serious and hearty love of   
truth, and that whose mind soever is fully pos­-  
sessed with a fervent desire to know good   
things, and with the dearest charity to infuse

\* Mather gives us what I suppose to have been a part of   
one of Eliot's sermons on the passage, “Our conversation   
is in heaven,” which he wrote down from the lips of the   
speaker. It presents a pleasing specimen of his style of   
preaching. -- Life of Eliot, Part I. Article I.

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the knowledge of them into others, when such   
a man would speak, his words, by what I can   
express, like so many nimble and airy servi­-  
tors, trip about him at command, and in well-  
­ordered files, as he would wish, fall aptly into   
their own places.”\*  
 It is difficult now to ascertain what were   
Mr. Eliot's peculiar faults. He has been re-  
­proached, we are told, both with the want of   
constancy in his opinions and conduct, and   
with pertinacious obstinacy in maintaining his   
peculiar notions. These two characteristics,   
though not positively irreconcilable, could   
scarcely have existed together in a mind like   
his. From what we learn of his life, it is diffi-  
­cult to perceive the justice of the accusation.   
A man is not necessarily versatile or fickle be-  
­cause on one occasion he retracts an opinion, nor   
stubborn because on another he is not to be   
moved from strict adherence to his own views.   
His conduct, in the first instance, may be can-  
­dor; in the other, it may be the firmness of   
principle.   
 Cotton Mather, pursuing a fancy of which   
he was very fond, tells us, that the anagram of   
Eliot's name was Toile. This conceit has at   
least the merit of expressing truly one of the   
most prominent traits in the character of the

\* Apology for Smectymnuus, Section XII.

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Apostle to the Indians. His life may be re­-  
corded among the most eminent examples   
of industry, which the world has furnished. How   
few, even of those-who might be deemed dili-  
­gent men, that would not have shrunk from the   
tasks, which he cheerfully undertook, and reso-  
­lutely accomplished! He had none of that dis­-  
trust or timidity, which springs from indolence.   
Acting on the conviction, that, for the most   
part, it is idleness alone which creates impos­-  
sibilities, he felt, that hard work, performed in   
the spirit of faith and crowned with the bles­-  
sing of God, will remove mountains. He   
seemed to consider incessant and strenuous   
labor as his inheritance; he loved it, and gave   
himself to it with unsparing perseverance. By   
day and by night, at home and abroad, in soli-  
­tude and in society, he was ever at work, ever   
busy for truth, for his- fellow-men, and for God.   
His course of moral service was marked by   
those excellences, which Cicero in his warm   
panegyric on Pompey ascribes to the comman­-  
der in military service;\* and if ever there was   
a man, who might justly be said to have died   
“rich in good works,” that man was John Eliot.   
 Fervent piety and devotedness to duty were

\* “Labor in negotio, fortitudo in periculis, industria in   
agendo, celeritas in conficiendo, consilium in providendo.”   
-- Oratio pro Lege Manilia, XI.

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the vital elements of Mr. Eliot's inward life.   
His heart was given, as a holocaust, to the Fa­-  
ther of his spirit; and because be loved God,   
he loved and labored for man till the last hour,   
till the grasp of death was on him. It would   
not be easy to find on the records of human   
virtue one, who more habitually felt, that in re-  
­ceiving the gift of life he had received a great   
mission to do good. All his duties belonged,   
in his estimate, to the family of religion; and   
his services to man were after the measure of   
his piety to God. That intrigue between truth   
and error, which so often constitutes the so­-  
phistical disguise of wrong, his simplicity of   
heart sternly discarded.   
 His remarkable humility may be considered   
as the consequence of the sense of God's pres­-  
ence by which his mind was overshadowed,   
and of the industrious consecration to labors   
of usefulness which made up the history of his   
days. He thought not of himself, because he   
was intent on his work. In one, who became   
a leader in a new moral movement, who was   
the first Protestant.\* that diffused Christianity

\* So it is stated in 1 M. H. Coll., VIII. 11. The com­-  
mencement of Mayhew's labors for the Indians is by   
some placed a year earlier than that of Eliot's. But from May­-  
hew's own account (3 M. H. Coll., IV. 109- 118) it ap-  
­pears, that he did not preach to the Indians till 1646, the   
same year in which Eliot began his course. Before that

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among the wild tribes of America, and who   
effected more than any other man in the Indian   
mission, we might be disposed to pardon some   
degree of egotism. But we have nothing of   
this sort to excuse in Mr. Eliot. I know not   
that in any of his writings, or in any account   
of his conversation, there can be found a soli­-  
tary expression, that looks like self-seeking, or   
a sense of personal importance. His forget-  
­fulness of self, while others were looking on   
him with admiration, reminds us of the quaint   
and significant remark of a Scotch divine, when   
commenting on the circumstance, that Moses's   
face shone as he came down from the mount;   
“It was a braw thing,” he said, “for a man's   
face to shine, and him not to ken it.” It was   
in accordance with the same disposition, that,   
though ardent in his efforts, Mr. Eliot was   
not enthusiastic in his statements of success.   
His character presented the unusual combina-  
­tion of warm zeal in labor with habitual fair-  
ness in estimating its results.   
 Never, perhaps, was there a missionary,   
whose reports contained less that could be

time, Hiacoomes had by intercourse with the English be-  
­come a convert to their religion; but there had been no   
systematic exertions on the put of Mayhew. Eliot and   
Mayhew may, therefore, be considered as having com-  
­menced the work of preaching to the natives about simul­-  
taneously.

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called sanguine or fanciful. And whatever   
success he supposed to be achieved, he as-  
­cribed to Him, on the strength of whose sup­-  
port he felt his dependence. He would have   
no honor given to the instrument, but all to that   
Being, faith in whom was his soul's central   
principle. His gifts, his attainments, his life,   
he consecrated to the cause of holiness and to   
the work of duty. “I think,” said Shepard,   
who knew him well, “that we can never love   
nor honor this man of God enough.” The name   
of the Apostle to the Indians must always   
stand in distinguished brightness on that roll   
of the servants of the Most High, whom New   
England delights, and ever will delight, to   
honor in the records of her moral history.

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No. I. p. 66.

ACCOUNT OF RARE AND VALUABLE TRACTS, IN WHICH   
 ARE DESCRIBED THE LABORS OF THE APOSTLE ELIOT   
 IN TEACHING CHRISTIANITY TO THE INDIANS.

THERE are several old and very valuable tracts relating   
to the Indians, and especially to the attempts made by   
our ancestors to convert them to Christianity. These have   
come down to us from the earliest periods of New England   
history, and were written by men who lived in the midst   
of the best opportunities for personal observation or knowl­-  
edge. As they are comparatively but little known among   
us, and may be regarded as the original and best authori-  
­ties on these subjects, I have thought that the following   
list of them might not be unacceptable to the curious   
reader.   
  
 1. “Good Newes from New England; or, A True   
Relation of Things very remarkable at the Plantation of   
Plimouth in New England; &c. Written by E. W.   
[Edward Winslow], who hath borne a Part in the fore-  
­naned Troubles, and there lived since their first Arrival; &c.  
London. 1624.” --This was reprinted among the Collec-  
­tions of the Massachusetts Historical Society (1st Series,   
VIII. 239-276, and 2d Series, IX. 74-104); but in a   
disjointed manner, as the whole original work was not to   
be found till it was furnished by the Ebeling Library, and   
the first republication was from the abridgment in PUR-  
CHAS’S Pilgrims.

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2. “New England's First Fruits; in Respect, 1. of   
the Conversion of some, Conviction of divers, Preparation   
of sundry of that Indians. 2. Of that Progresse of Learning   
in the College at Cambridge in Massachusetts Bay, &c.   
London. 1643.” --This tract is anonymous, and I am not   
aware that the name of the writer can be ascertained.   
A part of it (that which relates to the College) is reprinted   
in 1 Mass. Hist. Coll., I. 242- 250.   
 3. “The Day-Breaking, if not the Sun-Rising of the   
Gospel with the Indians in New England, &c. London.   
1647.” -- In this account we have the original narrative   
of the first visits to Nonantum. It was printed without   
the writer's name. In the reprint which appears in the   
Collections of the Mass. Hist. Soc. (3d Series, IV.), it is,   
in a note to the Advertisement to the Reader, ascribed to   
Mr. Eliot. But this is unquestionably a mistake. There   
are several circumstances in the narrative, which furnish   
strong presumptive evidence, that he could not have been   
the author of “The Day-Breaking, &c.” But the follow­-  
ing sentence, which occurs towards the close of the tract,   
seems decisive of the question. “He that God hath raised   
up and enabled to preach unto them, is a man (you know)   
of a most sweet, humble, loving, gracious, and enlarged   
spirit, whom God hath bleat, and surely will still delight   
in, and do good by.” Now the person here spoken of   
could have been no other than Eliot; and he, of course,   
did not write this concerning himself. Nor do I find, upon   
inquiry, any authority for the note, which assigns this tract   
to him. In the valuable account of Eliot, which the Rever-  
­end Mr. Young of Boston affixed to his “Sermon at the   
Ordination of the Reverend Mr. Thompeon in Natick,” he   
ascribes “The Day-Breaking, &c.,” to the Reverend John   
Wilson of Boston. I am disposed to believe this statement   
to be correct, especially as it is confirmed, I am told, by the   
authority of the late Mr. Baldwin, librarian of the Ameri-  
­can Antiquarian Society, well-known for his accuracy in   
matters of this kind. Wilson was a friend of Mr. Eliot,

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and very likely, from the interest he felt in his Indian   
labors, to have written the account in question. It seems   
singular, that Eliot's name is not once mentioned in the   
whole narrative. He is spoken of as “one of the company”   
who preached. It is not improbable that, with his char-  
­acteristic modesty, he requested the writer not to mention   
his name.

4. “The Cleare Sun-shine of the Gospel breaking forth   
upon the Indians in New England; or, An Historicall   
Narration of God's wonderfull Workings, &c. By Mr.   
Thomas Shepard, Minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ at   
Cambridge in New England. London. 1648.” -- This   
tract is preceded by a Dedication to the Parliament, and   
an Epistle to the Reader, each signed by Stephen Mar­-  
shall and eleven other of the distinguished divines of that   
period in England. Besides Shepard's own narrative, it   
contains a letter from Mr. Eliot to him, giving an account   
of his work among the Indians up to that time.

5. “The Glorious Progress of the Gospel amongst the   
Indians in New England, &c. Published by Edward Win-  
­slow. London. 1649.” -- This is dedicated to the Par­-  
liament by Winslow. It commences with some introduc­-  
tory remarks from the same hand; and the rest of the   
book consists of four letters, one from Mayhew and   
three from Eliot, and an Appendix by “J. D.” These initials are   
supposed by Mr. Rich in his Catalogue (Part I. p. 70) to   
designate John Dury, the famous pacificator of the Chris­-  
tian sects. They may, however, be the initials of John   
Downam, one of the divines who took an interest in the   
Indian cause.

6. “The Light appearing more and more towards the   
perfect Day; or, A further Discovery of the present State   
of the Indians in New England, &c. Published by Henry   
Whitfeld. London. 1651.”-- Mr. Whitfeld (or, as it is   
sometimes written, Whitfield) was the first minister of

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Guilford in Connecticut. He returned to England in 1650,   
and there published this book. It is dedicated by him to   
the Parliament, and contains one letter from Mayhew,   
and five letters from Mr. Eliot.

7. “Strength out of Weakness; or, a Glorious Mani-  
­festation of the further Progresse of the Gospel amnongst   
the Indians in Nm England, &c. London. 1652.” --The   
first tract published by “The Corporation for promoting   
the Gospel among the Heathen in New England.” It is   
dedicated to the Parliament by William Steele in the   
name of the Corporation, and has an “Address to the   
Reader” by a number of distinguished divines. It contains   
two letters from Mr. Eliot, one from the Reverend John   
Wilson, and one from Governor Endicot, each giving an   
account of the Natick settlement, and letters from Lever­-  
idge, Mayhew, and others.

8. “Tears of Repentance; or, A. further Narrative of   
the Progress of the Gospel amongst the lndians in New   
England; &c. Related by Mr. Eliot and Mr. Mayhew, two   
faithful Laborers in that Work of the Lord. London.   
1653.” -- A large tract published by the Corporation. A   
considerable effort was made to render it the means of   
attracting attention to the cause of religion among the   
Indians. It is preceded by an address to Cromwell from   
William Steele, president of the Corporation; by a letter   
to the Corporation from Mayhew, setting in a favorable   
light the nature and progress of the work at Martha's   
Vineyard; by an address to Cromwell from Eliot, and   
another to the reader from the same hand; and by remarks  
“to the Christian reader” from Richard Mather of Dor-  
­chester. It begins with Mr. Eliot's “Brief Relation of the   
Proceedings of the Lord's Work among the lndians in refer­-  
ence unto their Church-Estate.” Then follow, in somewhat   
minute detail, the Confusions of the Christian natives   
preparatory to their ecclesiastical organization.

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9. “A Late and Further Manifestation of the Progress  
of the Gospel amongst the Indians in New England.   
Declaring their constant Love and Zeal to the Truth, &c.   
Being a Narrative of the Examination, of the Indians   
about their Knowledge in Religion, by the Elders of the   
Churches. Related by Mr. John Eliot. London. 1655.” --   
Published by the Corporation. There is an address to the   
reader by Joseph Caryl, a. divine known by his elaborate   
commentary on Job. The tract consists of two parts;   
namely, “A Brief Narration of the Indians' Proceedings   
in respect of Church-Estate, and how the Case standeth   
at the present with us”; and “The Examination of the   
Indians at Roxbury, the 13th Day of the 4th Month, 1654.”

10. “Of the Gospel amongst the Indians in New Eng-  
­land; being a Relation of the Confessions made by several   
Indians, in order to their Admission into Church Fellowship.   
Sent over to the Corporation, &c. By Mr. John Eliot, one   
of the Laborers amongst them. London. 1659.” -- This   
tract I have never seen. My only knowledge of it is   
derived from Mr. Rich's Catalogue, (Part I. p. 86.) Judg-  
­ing: from its title, it may perhaps be another edition, or a   
repetition in another form, of what Eliot had before written   
on the same subject.

11. “A Briefe Narrative of the Progress of the Gospel   
among the Indians in New England in the Year 1670.   
Given in by the Rev. Mr. John Eliot, Minister of the Gos-  
­pel there, in a Letter by him directed to the Right Worship-  
­ful the Commissioners under his Majesty's Great Seal, for   
the Propagation of the Gospel amongst the poor blind Na-  
­tives in those United Colonies. London. 1671.” -- A small   
tract of eleven pages, which I have not been able to find.   
Its title is contained in Mr. Rich's Catalogue, (Part I.   
p. 96.) It was probably the first publication of the Cor-  
­poration, after their charter was confirmed or renewed by   
Charles the Second. I presume it to be the same account,

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of which Hutchinson makes so much use in his note con-  
­cerning the Praying Indians, Vol. I. p. 156.

Seven of the above tracts, namely, those from the third   
to the ninth inclusive, have been republished together in   
the fourth volume of the third series of the Collections of   
the Massachusetts Historical Society. The original copies   
were kindly furnished by the American Antiquarian So­-  
ciety, whose valuable library contains them bound in one   
volume. Neal used several of these narratives in com­-  
posing his History of New England. From him and from   
the London Missionary Register, I believe, our writers   
had taken all that they knew of them, till the abovemen­-  
tioned reprint appeared. These very important tracts had   
become exceedingly scarce; and the Massachusetts His­-  
torical Society, by making them accessible to the public,   
have added another to their many good services in the   
cause of American antiquities. Several of the originals   
are now in the library of Harvard College.   
 It may here be added, that Mr. Eliot published, in a   
small pamphlet of twelve pages, the “Dying Speeches and   
Counsels of such Indians as dyed in the Lord.” It is with-  
­out date, and contains the acknowledgments, testimonies,   
and advice, which were uttered by some of the Christian   
natives, when they were about to leave the world.

No. II. p. 194.

THE sale of spirituous liquors to the Indians was for­-  
bidden in Massachusetts, but the prohibition was evaded.   
“Though all strong drink,” says Gookin, “is strictly pro-  
­hibited to be sold to any Indian in the Massachusetts   
colony, upon the penalty of forty shillings a pint, yet some   
ill-disposed people, for filthy lucre's sake, do sell unto the   
Indians secretly, though the Indians will rarely discover   
these evil merchants; they do rather suffer whipping or

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fine than tell.'' The same writer adds, -- “This beastly   
sin of drunkenness could not be charged upon the Indians   
before the English and other Christian nations, as Dutch,   
French, and Spaniards, came to dwell in America; which   
nations, especially the English in New England, have   
cause to be greatly humbled before God, that they have   
been, and are, instrumental to cause these Indians to   
commit this great evil and beastly sin of drunkenness.''   
(I M. H. Coll., Vol. I. p. 151.) The testimony of Gookin   
on this point is confirmed by Heckewelder, who says, --   
“The Mexicans have their Pulque and other indigenous   
beverages of an inebriating nature; but the North Ameri-  
­can Indians, before their intercourse with us commenced,   
had absolutely nothing of the kind.” (Historical Account,   
&c., ch. 36.)   
 Mr. Eliot's attention was early turned to this subject, as   
appears by the following petition presented by him to the   
Court, October 23d, 1648, a copy of which has been kindly   
furnished to me, from the Colony Records, by the Reverend   
Joseph B. Felt, to whose accurate and faithful researches   
into our early history the community is much indebted.   
 “As the Indians have frequent recourse to the English   
houses, and especially to Boston, where they too often see   
evil examples of excessive drinking in the English, who   
are too often disguised with that beastly sin of drunken-  
­ness; and themselves (many of them) greatly delight in   
strong liquors, not considering the strength and evil of   
them; and also too well knowing the liberty of the law,   
which prohibiteth above a half-pint of Wine to a man, that   
therefore they may without offence to the laws have their   
half-pint; and, when they have had it in one place, they   
may go to another and have the like, till they be drunken;   
and sometimes find too much entertainment that way   
by such who keep no ordinary, only desire their trade,   
though it be with the hurt and perdition of their souls; --   
Therefore, my humble request unto this honored Court is   
this, that there may be but one ordinary in all Boston,   
who may have liberty to sell wine, strong drink, or strong

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liquors unto the Indians; and that whoever shall further   
them in their vicious drinking for their own base ends,   
who keep no ordinary, may not be suffered in such a sin   
without due punishment; and that at what ordinary soever   
in any other town, as well as Boston, any Indian shall be   
found drunk, having bad any considerable quantity of   
drink, there they should come under severe censure.   
These things I am bold to present unto you, for the pre-  
­venting of those scandalous evils which greatly blemish   
and interrupt their entertainment of the Gospel, through   
the policy of Satan, who counterworketh Christ that way   
with not a little uncomfortable success. And thus, with   
my hearty desire of the gracious and blessed presence   
of God among you in all your weighty affairs, I humbly   
take leave, and rest   
 “Your servant to command in our Saviour Christ,   
 “JOHN ELIOT.”

This petition produced the following order from the   
Court; -- “On petition of Mr. Eliot, none in Boston to   
sell wine to the Indians, except Wm. Phillips, on fine   
of 20s.”

A valuable account of the baneful effects of supplying   
the natives with spirituous liquors is given by Halkett, --   
Historical Notes respecting the Indians of North America,  
ch. 8 and 9.

No. III. p. 250.

IN his Grammar, Eliot says, on the subject of the declen-  
saions, “The variation of nouns is not by male and female, as   
in other learned languages, and in European nations they   
do.” He adds, “There be two forms or declensions of   
nouns, animate, when the thing signified is a living crea-

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tme, and inanimate, when the thing signified is not a   
living creature.” (Grammar, pp. 8-10.) But the most re-  
­markable peculiarity of the Indian languages is the alleged   
absence of the substantive verb to be. “We have,” says   
Eliot, “no compute distinct word for the the verb substantive,  
as other learned languages and our English tongue have;   
but it is under a regular composition, where many words   
are made verb substantive.” (Grammar, p. 15.) Mr.   
Leveridge made a similar remark, and Mr. Duponceau   
observes, “It is one of the most striking traits in the   
Indian languages, that they are entirely deficient of our   
auxiliary verbs to have and to be. There are no words that   
I know in any American idioms to express abstractedly   
the ideas signified by these two verbs.” (Report, &c. in   
Transactions of the Historical and Literary Committee,   
&c., p. XL.) On this remark, Judge Davis suggested some   
doubts in a letter to Mr. Duponceau. (See the whole dis­-  
cussion in 2 Mass. Hist. Coll., Vol. IX., Notes on Eliot's   
Grammar, pp. xxiv.-xliv.) If the above statement with   
respect to the Indian dialects be correct, there is an ex-  
­ception to the universality of Adam Smith's remark, who   
says, “There is in every language a verb, known by the   
name of the substantive verb; in Latin sum, in English   
I am. This verb denotes not the existence of any par-  
­ticular event, but existence in general. It is, upon this   
account, the most abstract and metaphysical of all verbs;   
and, consequently, could by no means be a word of early   
invention.” (Considerations on the Formation of Lan-  
­guages; Works, Vol. I. p. 426.) But the able writer in   
the “North American Review,” to whom I have before had   
occasion to refer, dissents from the abovementioned opin­-  
ion with regard to the absence of the verb to be from the   
dialects of our native tribes. “We have shown,” says he,   
“the manner in which assertions are made in the Indian   
languages; and such expressions aa horse mine, rifle good,   
I hungry, are continually recurring, This anomaly could   
not but excite the attention of those, who were investi-  
­gating these modes of speech, and no doubt led to the

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conclusion too hastily adopted, that the substantive verb   
was unknown to them. So far this verb may be em­-  
ployed to denote simple existence, we believe it is found   
in all the aboriginal dialects.” (Vol. XXVI. p. 391.) But   
this position is controverted with much strength of argument   
in the “United States Literary Gazette,” Vol. IV. p. 363.

No. IV. p. 325,

TWENTY-FOUR years after the death of Mr. Eliot, the   
name of one of his grandchildren occurs in a petition   
respecting a tract of land, which he had received or pur-  
­chased of the Indians. The case will be explained by   
the following extracts, which I have transcribed from the   
Colony Records in the office of the Secretary of the   
Commonwealth of Massachusetts.   
 “In Council, June 22d, 1714. The following order   
passed in the House of Representatives; read and con-  
­curred; viz.   
 “In answer to the petition of John Eliot praying a con-  
­firmation of a tract of one thousand acres of land at a place   
called the Allom Ponds, lying in the wilderness west of   
Brookfield, given by the Indian proprietors to his grand­-  
father, the Reverend John Eliot, late of Roxbury, Clerk,   
deceased; Ordered, that the tract of one thousand acres of   
land given by the Indian proprietors to the late Reverend   
John Eliot, as by their grant thereof presented with this   
petition is described, be confirmed to such of the descend-  
­ants of the said donee as are legally entitled to the same,   
provided it do not interfere with any prior grant; and they   
may improve John Chandler, Esquire, to survey and lay   
it out, and return a plat thereof to this Court for further   
confirmation.

“Consented to, J. DUDLEY.”

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The survey was accordingly made, and a plat returned   
to the Court, which is among the papers in the Secretary's   
office. It contains a map and a minute description of the   
land, certified by John Chandler. It is termed, “The sur-  
­vey of a thousand acres of land purchased by the Reverend   
John Eliot, late of Roxbury, deceased, Clerk, of Wattal-  
­loowekin and Nakan, the 27th of September, 1655, and con­-  
firmed and allowed by the General Assembly,” &c. The   
survey was made August 26th, 1715. On the back of the   
paper containing the survey is the following order;   
  
 “In the House of Representatives, December 5th, 1715.   
Ordered, that the. plat on the other side be accepted, and   
the land therein described be confirmed to the descendants   
of the late Reverend John Eliot, deceased, pursuant to the   
vote of this Court passed for that end at their session   
in June, anno 1714.

“JOHN BURRILL, Speaker.   
 “Sent up for concurrence.   
 “In Council, December 5th, 1715. Read and concurred.   
 “SAM'L WOODWARD, Sec'y.”

It will be observed that there is a discrepancy in the   
above extracts with respect to the manner, in which this   
land is said to have come into Mr. Eliot's possession. In   
the first Order, it is described as given to him by the In-  
­dian proprietors; in the Survey, it is spoken of as pur-  
­chased by him of Wattalloowekin and Nakan. The terms   
of the description in the Order were probably taken from   
the grandson's petition; those in the Survey were, it may   
be supposed, the terms used by the surveyor to designate   
the land. The latter would be more likely, from inadver-  
­tency, to commit a mistake in this matter, than the former;   
and it may, therefore, be deemed more probable that the   
land was a gift, than a purchase.

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No. V. p. 336.

A TESTIMONY, fifteen years after the death of Mr. Eliot,   
to the veneration in which his name and authority were   
held by the Indians, and also to the good effects of the   
diffusion of Christianity among them, is found in a scarce   
tract entitled, “A Letter about the Present State of Chris-  
­tianity among the Christianized Indians of New England.   
Written to the Honorable Sir William Ashurst, Governor   
of the Corporation for Propagating the Gospel,” &c. Bos-  
­ton. 1705. This letter is signed by Increase Mather,   
Cotton Mather, and Nehemiah Walter. They write as   
follows;   
 “But we have now before us a letter very lately   
received from as knowing and as faithful a person, as   
could be inquired of, wherein he speaks a little more   
particularly. He says, The administration of sacra-  
­ments among them [the Indians] is like ours, and as they   
were taught by their apostle Eliot. His name is of won-  
­derful authority among them; and the rules he gave them   
for the form of marriages, and for admonitions and excom-  
­munications in their churches, are not to be found fault   
with by any, but it will provoke them. Not long since an   
Indian lodged at an Englishman's house one night; and   
the next day he visited me and asked, why the man at   
whose house he lodged did not pray in his family. Seeing   
that Mr. Eliot taught the Indians to do it every day, morn­-  
ing and evening, he thought it strange that the English   
should direct them to pray in their families, and yet not   
do it themselves. But at last he entertained the distinc­-  
tion, that there were matchet Englishmen, as well as   
matchet Indians, and that some English did not practise   
as they had been taught to do. [Matchet, that is to say,   
naughty or wicked].'  
 “‘To your last inquiry, What I think there may be of   
piety among them. Sir, I think that there were many of   
the old generation, who were instructed by the reverend

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Eliot and others, which died in the Lord, and the first   
fruits of them are in heaven as an earnest of more to fol-  
­low. I think the censorious English among us are not to   
be the rule for our charity about them. Yet let me say,   
I could never yet inquire of any plantation or assembly   
of Indians, but the most censorious English would grant,   
there were three or four persons in that plantation, who,   
they verily believed, were sound Christians, though they   
condemned the rest. Whereas, a charitable man would   
have reckoned these three or four to have been the most   
eminent for piety among them, and have granted the rest   
to have such a measure of knowledge in the Gospel   
method of salvation, and to be so ready to submit with   
most admirable patience to the church censures among   
them, and so penitent in their confessions of their faults,   
and fearful afterwards of relapsing into the same or like   
faults, as might be a just foundation to hope that they are   
travelling the right way to heaven.’” --pp. 9-11.