

TEN NEW ENGLAND LEADERS

BY

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IV.

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ANYONE who glances over a general catalogue, such as is issued by Andover Seminary, must be struck first of all by the number of names of those who, while faithful servants of God in their generation, have left little record among men. Few of us can expect even a line in the biographical cyclopaedias of a century hence. It is to that truer and more perfect record of those whose names are written in heaven that we, most of us, must look for whatever memorial is to abide of the fact that we have lived and labored for the advancement of the Kingdom of God. But, among the comparatively limited number of names which arouse recollection as of historic moment as one turns the pages of such a catalogue as I have mentioned, a few seem to exhale a peculiar fragrance that inclines the reader to linger on them with special regard. As one glances through the list of those connected with Andover in the first three years of its existence, what pictures of consecration, of sacrifice, and of endeavor the names of Adoniram Judson, Samuel Newell, Gordon Hall, and Samuel J. Mills conjure up

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before the mental vision! The Church proves that it has never lost the consciousness of that primal apostolic commission in this, if in no other, way, that it feels a special thrill of satisfaction as it contemplates the lives of its missionaries. Its Pauls, its Columbas, its Xaviers, its Careys, its Pattesons stand forth to grateful recollection radiant with a peculiar charm which attaches to none of its dogmaticians, teachers, or administrators. So among the founders of New England, the name of John Eliot, known since 1660 as the "apostle,"¹ draws forth remembrances of the most winsome aspects of Puritan character, and shines with a luster distinctly its own among the leaders of early Congregationalism.

John Eliot was the son of a yeoman, or middle-class farmer, Bennett Eliot, a man of considerable property, whose home was at Nazing, county of Essex some sixteen miles almost directly north of London.² But though Nazing was John's boyhood home, the fact that he was baptized at Widford, some ten or twelve miles yet farther northward of London, on August 5, 1604, in the church of St. John Baptist, commemorated in Charles Lamb's well-known poem, *The Grandame*, makes it probable that Widford was his birthplace, since our modern fashion of delayed baptisms .did not

¹ So first named by Thomas Thorowgood, see Dr. Ellsworth Eliot in *Appleton's Cyclopedia of American Biography*, ii., p. 321.

² See *N. E. Hist. and Geneal. Register*, xxviii., pp. 140-145.

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obtain in the England of that day. Widford, moreover, was the place of the marriage of his parents, October 30, 1598.¹ Of his boyhood and early education we know little. Cotton Mather has preserved a single remark of Eliot's that shows his thankfulness in old age for the memories of a religious home;² but whatever its degree of religious vigor, the spiritual life of his parents' home would not appear to have inclined to Puritanism, for, in March, 1619, he entered Jesus College at Cambridge instead of the warmly Puritan Emmanuel College of that University. While a student here his father died, and left him L 8 a year for the prosecution of his education.³ And here Eliot graduated a Bachelor of Arts in 1622. What next employed his thoughts we do not know; but it would appear probable that he was ordained a minister of the Church of England. Our first definite glimpse of him after his graduation, however, is seven years later, at the close of 1629, or the beginning of 1630, when we find him assisting Rev. Thomas Hooker, afterward eminent among the founders of Connecticut, in teaching a school kept by Hooker for a few months at Little Baddow,⁴ a country village about thirty miles northeast of London.

¹ See N. E. Hist, and Geneal. Register, xlvi., p. 80.

² Magnalia, i., p. 529.

³ Buried November 21, 1621; will, November 5, 1621; N. E. Hist, and Geneal. Register, xxviii., p. 145; Dr. Ellsworth Eliot, as cited.

⁴ Magnalia, i., p. 335.

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The circumstances which had compelled Hooker¹ to establish this school were typically illustrative of the religious state of England. Thomas Hooker had graduated at Emmanuel in 1608, and after further study and service as catechist and lecturer at his *alma mater*, had exercised a ministry of some years at Esher, a hamlet of Surrey, till, in 1626, his fame as a preacher led to his appointment as Puritan lecturer at Chelmsford. These lectureships were a favorite device of the more earnest Protestants of the opening years of the seventeenth century to secure a preaching ministry in parishes where the legal incumbent was unable or unwilling to give sermons to his people. Supplementary services were conducted, occasionally with the full approval of the legal rector, by ministers of sermonic ability, supported by the gifts of sympathetic hearers. And from his Chelmsford pulpit Hooker preached a deep, searching, spiritual, intensely Calvinistic and powerfully awakening series of discourses that won him the support of the more earnest element of the region round about. But Laud viewed the lectureship system as one of the chief bulwarks of Puritanism, to the extirpation of which he had set himself. In spite of the favorable petition of a large portion of his beneficed clerical neighbors, Hooker was silenced in 1629; and, as a means of earning his livelihood, took scholars into his family in the quiet retreat of Little Baddow. Even this

¹ See G. L. Walker, *Thomas Hooker*, pp. 18-51.

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occupation could not shield Hooker from Laud, and in order to escape imprisonment, or worse, he had to flee the country, finding refuge in Holland before the close of 1630.

Eliot's experiences as Hooker's "usher," or assistant, in the Little Baddow school were therefore brief; but short as the time of this association was it was permanently influential in his religious life. As Eliot himself later said of his sojourn in Hooker's household:¹

"To this place I was called, through the infinite riches of God's mercy in Christ Jesus to my poor soul: for here the Lord said unto my dead soul, live ; and through the grace of Christ, I do live, and I shall live forever! When I came into this blessed family I then saw, and never before, the power of godliness in its lively vigour and efficacy."

Eliot's conversion evidently made him fully a Puritan, if he had not been so before; and he seems to have entered into an agreement with friends,² some of whom were from his home village of Nazing, to be a pastor to them if possible in the New World. He doubtless felt that the opposition which drove his friend and spiritual father, Thomas Hooker, into exile would make it impossible for him to exercise an efficient ministry in England. Accordingly, leaving his "intended wife" to follow him,³ he sailed in the Lyon,

¹ *Magnalia*, i., p. 336.

² See his own statement in *Roxbury Church Records, in Report of the Record Commissioners*, City of Boston, Document 114, p. 76.

³ *Ibid.*

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and, after a voyage of ten weeks' duration, landed at Boston, November 4, 1631.¹

The time of Eliot's arrival in Boston was opportune. The teacher of the Boston church, John Wilson, had sailed for a temporary sojourn in England in April previous, and the Boston congregation gladly welcomed Eliot's services. Eliot himself became one of its members, and on Wilson's return, in 1632, the Boston church urged upon Eliot with insistence the position of association in its pastorate which was a year later bestowed on John Cotton.² Eliot felt himself bound to his English friends, some of whom had settled at Roxbury, where a church had been formed in July, 1632, of which Rev. Thomas Welde had been made pastor. On the call of this church in the November following its organization, just a twelvemonth after his arrival in Boston, Eliot entered on the office of "teacher" at Roxbury, which he was to occupy for more than fifty-seven years.³ He had already gone to Roxbury to live some months before his settlement, for the first marriage recorded in that place is that of Eliot, on September 4, 1632, to Hanna Mumford, the betrothed bride who had followed him from England, a woman of remarkable abilities and consecration of spirit, a true helper to him in his life work, of whom

¹ Winthrop, i., pp. 76, 77, 80.

² Ibid., i., p. in. He was offered the teachership.

³ Ibid.; *Roxbury Church Records*, p. 76.

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he could say, as she lay in her coffin after fifty-five years of companionship, that she was a “dear, faithful, pious, prudent, prayerful wife.”¹ Indeed, it was to her careful management of his worldly affairs that Eliot owed whatever measure of outward comfort a very moderate measure be it said that he attained. Like Jonathan Edwards or Nathanael Emmons after him, he believed business cares incompatible with the ministerial office, and so absurdly divorced himself from all concerns in his own property, that he did not even know his own cattle as they stood before his study window.² Fortunately for him his wife was competent to supply his deficiencies in household economics.

But, however indifferent to his own pecuniary welfare, as a pastor Eliot gave himself unsparingly to his people. His long ministry was not unaided. From his settlement in 1632 to 1641, Thomas Welde was his associate, and indeed his superior in public repute, as was natural for one older in years and in ministerial experience. From 1649, till death removed him in 1674, Samuel Danforth was Eliot's younger colleague; and in 1688, near the close of Eliot's long life, Nehemiah Walter was installed by his side; but the enumeration of these bare names and dates shows how large a portion of pastoral labor came to Eliot's constant share. Whatever honor is his as a missionary, it should not

¹ *Magnolia*, i., p. 529.

² *Ibid.*, i., p. 5380

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be forgotten that he was always a pastor, and that the great toils which his missionary service brought him were in addition to the strenuous duties of a parish. No man could have endured such labors had he not been blessed, as was Eliot, with good health, and that basis of good health, a cheerful disposition.¹ The expressions of this temperament which have been recorded sound a good deal like cant to our time, when direct religious allusions fall so seldom from our reluctant lips; but they did not sound so then, nor did they so impress the men of early New England. On the contrary, they admired his "singular skill of raising some holy observation out of whatever matter of discourse lay before him."² Thus, as he climbed wearily up the hill to his meeting-house, Cotton Mather records that he said to the man on whose arm he leaned:³ "This is very like the way to heaven, 't is uphill," and glancing at a bush by the wayside, he instantly added, "and truly there are thorns and briars in the way, too." The same capacity to draw a lesson from every-day occupations is shown in his remark to a man of business whose account books he saw on the table, while the religious books were in a case against the wall:⁴ "Sir, here is earth on the table, and heaven on the shelf; let not earth by any means thrust heaven out of your mind." But perhaps Eliot's constant sweetness and kindliness of temper, as well as his transparent

¹ *Magnalia*, i., p. 532. ² *Ibid.* ³ *Ibid.*, i., p. 533. ⁴ *Ibid.*, i., p. 534.

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fidelity to fact, most appears in his elaborately kept church records, from which I quote but a single entry, illustrative of the spirit of many others. Eliot is noting the death of a member of his Roxbury parish:¹

“William Chandler he came to N. E. aboute the yeare 1637 ... he lived a very religious & Godly life among us, & fell into a consumption, to w^h he had bene long inclined, he lay neare a yeare sick, in all wh time, his faith, patiens, & Godlynesse & contentation so shined, y^t Christ was much gloryfied in him, he was a man of weak p^{ts}, but excellent fath & holyness, he was a very thankfull man, & much magnified Gods goodnesse, he was pore, but God so opened the hearts of his naybe to him, y^t he never wanted y^t w^h was (at least in his esteeme) very plentifull & comfortable to him; he dyed ... in the yeare 1641, & left a sweet memory & savor behind him.’

The man who penned such records as these cannot have been other than a good pastor, nor can anyone doubt what interests he placed first.

Eliot's charity to the poorer members of his flock was unfailing, and far out of proportion to his means as charity is ordinarily bestowed even by the generous. The story is told that one of the officers of the Roxbury church, knowing Eliot's freedom in gifts, on one occasion tied up the portion of his salary paid to him firmly in a handkerchief lest the pastor should part with any of it before reaching home. On his homeward way Eliot visited a family in distress, and as the

¹ *Roxbury Church Records*, p. 83.

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pastoral call lengthened his eagerness to aid increased, till, fumbling in vain at the knots that he could not loosen, he at last handed the handkerchief and all its contents to the mother of the household with the exclamation: "There, there, take it all. The Lord evidently meant it all for you."¹

Eliot's public prayers had a directness almost as marked as those of President Finney. When Captain William Foster of Charlestown and his son Isaac, later pastor of the First Church in Hartford, were captured by the Mohammedans on a voyage in 1671, and it became known to their friends that the ruler of the territory where the Fosters were slaves probably some part of Algiers had declared that he would never let his captives go, Eliot prayed:²

"Heavenly Father, work for the redemption of thy poor servant Foster; and if the prince which detains him will not, as they say, dismiss him as long as himself lives. Lord, we pray thee to kill that cruel prince; kill him, and glorify thy self upon him."

And this prayer his congregation believed they saw answered in the speedy death of the piratical ruler and the release of the captives. So, too, Eliot spoke out freely in prayer that love of schools which made Roxbury eminent, under his care, for its excellent instruction. At the Reforming Synod of 1679, he uttered the petition:

¹ I Coll. Mass. Hist. Soc., x., p. 186.

² For these illustrations, see *Magnalia*, i., pp. 544, 551.

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“Lord, for schools everywhere among us! That our schools may flourish! That every member of this assembly may go home, and procure a good school to be encouraged in the town where he lives! That before we die, we may be so happy as to see a good school encouraged in every plantation of the country.”

No picture of Eliot would be true that did not recognize another trait, at least of his old age; he made the impression of being an old-fashioned man. I suppose every age has looked back on its predecessor, sometimes with truth, as a time of simpler faith and more strenuous habits. It does, indeed, seem odd enough to the eye of the modern reader, to see the page which Governor Bradford wrote in the rude settlement of Plymouth, half-wrested from the wilderness, where, after describing the plain garb of one of the Congregational confessors of his early youth, he asks,¹ “What would such professors, if they were now living, say to the excesses of our times?” The question is wellnigh as old as humanity. But, undoubtedly, Eliot seemed to the men of the third generation on New England soil kin to a simpler, as he certainly was to a more heroic, age. His great moderation at the table was noticeable even in those days of plain living; his strict observance of the Sabbath, and his careful preparation for it, were remarked as unusual even in that age of Puritan strenuousness;² and Cotton

¹ Dialogue, in Young, *Chronicles of the Pilgrims*, p. 447.

² *Magnalia*, i., pp. 535, 538.

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Mather, whose full wig showed his conformity to the supposedly becoming fashions of his age, records that such was Eliot's preference for the natural and unsupplemented covering of the head, which the Puritan custom of the Roxbury teacher's youth had preferred, that "he would express himself continually with a boiling zeal" at sight of examples of what he deemed a heaven-provoking excess.¹ But Eliot was no intolerant bigot; on the contrary, few in New England at that day would have shown the charity that he did, in 1650, in inviting a visiting French Jesuit missionary, Gabriel Druillettes, to spend the winter as an inmate of his house.²

Eliot's interest in public and ecclesiastical concerns was always marked. His share in the preparation of the Bay Psalm Book of 1640 has already been pointed out in treating of Richard Mather. But regarding his more ambitious attempts to suggest an improved organization of political and religious society it is no dishonor to his memory to suggest that an undue insistence on the permanent and binding authority of the institutions of the Jewish state, and a want of any considerable degree of statesman-like insight into the conditions of the political life in which his lot was cast, rendered his speculations more curious than valuable. This is conspicuously true of his tract on government,

¹ *Magnalia*, i. , p. 540.

² Palfrey, *History of New England*, ii., p. 308, See ante p. 41.

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published, in 1659,¹ at London, under the title of *The Christian Commonwealth*, though written seven or eight years earlier.² In this essay he lays down the basal principle³ that

“the Lord Jesus will bring down all people, to be ruled by the Institutions, Laws, and Directions of the Word of God, not only in Church Government and Administrations but also in the Government and Administration of all affairs in the Commonwealth.”

The organic rule for the appointment of civil officers he finds in Exodus xviii. 25; and from that passage he deduces the principle that rulers of tens, of fifties, of hundreds, of thousands, of ten thousands, of fifty thousands, and so on should be appointed, each with judicial and administrative authority over his subdivision ; and that each, together with the officers of the next grade immediately under him, should constitute a court of justice the lowest court being that of the ruler of tens, the next higher being that of the ruler of fifties, together with the five rulers of tens included in his fifty, and so on till over all the “Chief Ruler,” chosen by the people, and assisted by his “Supreme Council,” was reached. Of this reconstructed state the Bible was to be the sole statute book. The plan

¹ J. H. Trumbull, *Brinley Sale Catalogue*, No. 570.

² See *Records of . . . Mass.*, iv., part ii., 6. The whole tract is reprinted in *3 Coll. Mass. Hist. Soc.*, ix., pp. 127-164.

³ *Christian Commonwealth*, Preface.

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was fantastic enough as applied to a country of complex social organization and ancient political traditions like England, though Eliot carried it out as far as possible in the regulation of the political affairs of his Indian converts. But the Massachusetts government, anxious for its own liberties which were imperilled by the restoration of the Stuarts, condemned the book in May, 1661, and ordered its suppression "as justly offensive . . . to kingly government in England."¹ Eliot expressed his disavowal of certain expressions in the book that seemed to reflect on the restored monarchy in a manly letter,² which speaks the tone of sincerity.

But though Eliot might renounce the full application of his theories to civil affairs, he was much enamored of his plan of subdivisions and graded courts therein outlined, so that, in 1665, he printed his *Communion of Churches*, in which he carried very similar principles over to the realm of ecclesiastical affairs. Perhaps his experiences with the Massachusetts legislature already narrated inclined Eliot now to caution, for the volume was not published, and is accounted the first "privately printed American book."³ In this tract Eliot proposed that every twelve churches should unite in a "first council," composed of pastors and delegates, and meeting once a month at least; twelve "first councils" should, in turn, send a chosen pastor and a

¹ *Records of . . . Mass.*, iv., part ii., p. 5. ² *Ibid.* f p. 6.

³ J. H. Trumbull, in *Brinley Sale Catalogue*, No. 760.

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delegate to a quarterly "provincial council"; twelve "provincial councils" should in the same way send representatives to a yearly "national council," and twelve "national councils" might be represented in the same fashion in an "oecumenical council," the deliberations of which might be conducted in Hebrew.¹ It is needless to say that this fanciful outline of church polity found as scanty acceptance as Eliot's proposed reconstitution of civil government. He could not have done the work of Thomas Hooker or of John Cotton.

Eliot's fame rests on none of the publications just described, but primarily on his labors as a missionary, though as a pastor he would well have deserved commemoration had he never preached to the Indians. The thought of labor for the Indians of the New World did not originate with Eliot. To say nothing of the missionary efforts of the Spaniards to which all America from California southward bears witness to this day, or of that bright page of heroism and sacrifice which French Jesuits wrote as the chief glory of the early history of Canada, the English colonists, both of Pilgrim and of Puritan antecedents, had it as one of their main aims in coming to America to carry

¹ I have taken this epitome from Dexter, *Cong, as Seen*, pp. 509, 510. Eliot would provide for fractions by counting each group of more than twelve and less than twenty-four, as twelve; a device that had already appeared in his *Christian Commonwealth*, where, for instance, a " ruler of ten " may rule over any number from ten to nineteen.

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the Gospel to the native inhabitants. But no systematic plan had been adopted for so doing, and the task of founding homes in the new country proved of such difficulty that little attention could be given at first to the Christianization of the Indians. The language, moreover, was a formidable barrier, and even more the dissimilarity of thought between a civilized and a barbarous race. The Indians were accessible with difficulty save on the side of trade; to go among them, to become acquainted with them in any sense that would render an Englishman familiar with their thoughts, and permit the impartation of religious truth, implied days and nights in filthy wigwams, loathsome fare, and deprivations not merely of the comforts but of the decencies of life, such as few, however willing to make the sacrifices involved in setting up a home in the new land, cared to undergo. The Puritans from the first treated the Indians with consideration and tried to protect them by law. In spite of the short, sharp struggle with the Pequots in 1637, New England feeling did not turn strongly upon the Indians as a race to be guarded against, as against the wolf and the lynx, till after the outbreak of Philip's War in 1675. But the two peoples were apart, mutually misunderstanding each other, and finding any terms of intercourse difficult save those on the level of the exchange of the skins of the beaver and the otter, for the cloth, the knives, the kettles, and too often the

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muskets and the rum, of newcomers to New England soil.

The first New Englander who made protracted and successful effort to master the language of the Indians of eastern Massachusetts was that eccentric, opinionated, yet in many ways far-seeing and devotedly Christian man, Roger Williams.¹ As early as 1632, it would appear that Williams had begun to acquire an Indian vocabulary. On this task he labored while ministering at Plymouth, and he continued the work after his removal to Salem, so that by the time of his settlement at Providence in 1636, after his banishment from Massachusetts, he had a considerable command of the dialects of the tribes of the region a linguistic acquaintance which proved of great value to the colonies, as a whole, in the negotiations consequent upon the Pequot war the year following. The fruit of these studies was the publication, in 1643, of Williams's *Key into the Language of America*, a word and phrase list, principally in the Narragansett dialect, that is our best monument of the colloquial speech of the aboriginal inhabitants of southeastern New England. Williams's purpose in all this labor was to carry the Gospel to the Indians; but though he preached to them, as he tells his readers, many hundred times, and not without results, he did not undertake systematic missionary work in the exec-

¹ See the Preface, by J. Hammond Trumbull, to Williams's *Key into the Language of America*, in *Publ. Narragansett Club*, i.

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utive and organizing spirit that the situation demanded for any permanent success.¹

Now it was just this patient, persistent, consecrated endeavor that Eliot gave. Just what circumstances induced him to undertake his work among the Indians it is hard to say. The time was not blind to the missionary duty, for on November 13, 1644, the Massachusetts legislature had directed the county courts to see to it that the Indians in their several jurisdictions were "instructed in y e knowledge & worship of God."² Henry Dunster, the first president of Harvard, had been interested in efforts for the Indians certainly since 1641.³ Some instances of the conversion of Indians had already occurred and had been narrated in *New Englands First Fruits*, published in 1643. But there is no reason to question Eliot's own belief, whatever earthly causes may have conduced to the result, that "God first put into [his] my heart a compassion for their poor souls and a desire to teach them to know Christ and to bring them into his Kingdom."⁴ His first step in preparation was the reception into his household of a young Indian servant, who had acquired some knowledge of English, that by his aid he might

¹ In 1674 Daniel Gookin wrote: "God hath not yet honored him [Williams], or any other in that colony [Rhode Island] that I can hear of, with being instrumental to convert any of the Indians." Palfrey, *Hist. N. E.*, ii., 195, 196.

² *Records of . . . Mass.*, ii., p. 84.

³ Lechford, *Plaine Dealing*, pp. 152, 153.

⁴ Quoted by A. C. Thompson, *Protestant Missions*, p. 57.

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master the dialect of the Massachusetts tribe.¹ By this help the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments were translated ; and Eliot was ready to begin his missionary work.

His first attempt, of which we know little, appears to have been discouraging. About the middle of September, 1646, he sought out some Indians under Chutchamaquin in Dorchester; but they showed little interest in his message, and asked him questions as to the cause of thunder, the nature of the tides, and the source of the wind, instead of those more spiritual interrogations which he hoped to awaken.² But Eliot was not discouraged and soon repeated his missionary efforts in another quarter; this time with success.

An account of those beginnings, probably from the pen of Rev. Thomas Shepard, of Cambridge, was printed in London in 1647,³ and though very familiar, is of such interest and importance that I shall not hesitate to quote freely from it.

It was "upon October 28, 1646," the narrative states, that "four of us" went to Waubon's wigwam, at Nonanturn, in the northern part of what is now

¹ Eliot, *Indian Grammar*, p. 66.

² *The Day-Breaking*, p. 3 (see following note).

³ The story of this first missionary undertaking is told in *The Day-Breaking, if not the Sun-Rising of the Gospell with the Indians in New-England*, London, 1647. Dr. J. H. Trumbull ascribed its authorship to Shepard, *Brinley Sale Cat.*, No. 445; Palfrey thought the author Rev. John Wilson of Boston, *Hist. of New England*, ii., p. 191 ; and it has been attributed to Eliot himself, though page 18 of the tract shows that this is incorrect.

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Newton, and “found many . . . Indians, men, women, children, gathered together,” at Waaubon's invitation. In their hearing Eliot, or one of his companions, began the work with prayer, “which now was in English, being not so farre acquainted with the Indian language as to expresse our hearts herein before God.” Then Eliot, using the scarce familiar speech of the Massachusetts aborigines, preached “for about an houre and a quarter” a time none too long for the contents of the sermon for the narrative records that “he ran through all the principall matter of religion, beginning first with a repetition of the ten Commandments, and a brieve explication of them, then shewing the curse and dreadfull wrath of God against all those who brake them . . . and then preached Jesus Christ to them the onely meanes of recovery from sinne and wrath and eternall death, and what Christ was, and whither he was now gone, and how hee will one day come againe to judge the world in flaming fire; and of the blessed estate of all those that by faith beleeve in Christ . . . the creation and fall of man, about the greatnesse and infinite being of God, . . . about the joyes of heaven, and the terrours and horrours of wicked men in hell, perswading them to repentance for severall sins which they live in, and many things of the like nature; not medling with any matters more difficult.”

Questions being asked for at the end of the sermon, the four companions felt that six queries that were propounded by their Indian auditors were so serious and pertinent as to indicate some special directing

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influence of God. The first inquiry was that fundamental question, "How may wee come to know Jesus Christ?" To which Eliot answered that such knowledge came by reading or hearing the Word of God, by meditation, and by prayer. This last-named suggestion led to the query, "Whether Jesus Christ did understand, or God did understand, Indian prayers"; to which Eliot gave the only answer possible to a Christian, that "Jesus Christ and God by him made all things, and makes all men, not onely English but Indian men, and if hee made them both . . . then hee knew all that was within man and came from man. If hee made Indian men, then he knows all Indian prayers also." Next came that query, so often asked of missionaries the world over, and so difficult to answer: "Whether English men were ever at any time so ignorant of God and Jesus Christ as themselves?" To this Eliot replied "that there are two sorts of English men, some are bad and naught . . . and in a manner as ignorant of Jesus Christ as the Indians now are; but there are a second sort of English men, who though for a time they lived wickedly also . . . yet repenting of their sinnes, and seeking after God and Jesus Christ, they are good men now." The remaining questions had to do with the nature of idols, the possibility of the acceptance by God of the good son of a bad father, and the peopling of the world after the Deluge.

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I have entered thus fully into an account of this first meeting because it shows the type of preaching of these missionaries. Nor was it without speedy results. On November 28th, after a third meeting had been held at Waaubon's wigwam, some of his dusky hearers came to Eliot's house, confessing their sins, and offering their children for Christian education,¹ and Waaubon himself was reported to have begun the practice of prayer.

Eliot did not confine his efforts to these spiritual instructions alone. Like more modern missionaries in Central Africa or the Pacific islands, he felt that civilization and education must go hand in hand as inseparable companions with evangelization. At this first meeting the Indians had asked him that land be assigned them for a permanent town.² That request, seconded by Thomas Shepard of Cambridge and John Allin, the minister at Dedham, who were probably two of Eliot's three companions in his Nonantum visit, the Massachusetts legislature granted about a week after the missionary sermon just described, the purpose being "for y^e incuragm^t of y^e Indians to live in an orderly way amongst us."³ At the same time the Massachusetts legislature practically became the first missionary society in the English colonies, directing the ministers to choose two of their number

¹ *Day-Breaking*, pp. 19, 20.

² *Ibid.*, p. 7.

³ *Records of, . . . Mass.*, ii., p. 166.

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annually to labor among the Indians, and promising assistance in the work. 1 Six months later May, 1647 the legislature voted Eliot L 10 "in respect of his greate paines & charge in instructing y^e Indians in y^e knowledg of God."² So generally interested were the ministers in the work that, on the occasion of the second session of the Cambridge Synod in June, 1647, Eliot preached in its presence, in their own language, to a large concourse of Indians.³ Contributions began to come in from Puritan sympathizers in England. One donation had, indeed, anticipated Eliot's work, that of Lady Armine, a granddaughter of the Earl of Shrewsbury, who had given 20 a year as early as 1644, for the evangelization of the Indians a sum which the Massachusetts legislature in May, 1647, appropriated to Eliot's enterprise.⁴

So strong was the interest excited in England by the printed accounts of these missionary beginnings, that, on July 19, 1649, less than six months after the execution of King Charles I., the Long Parliament passed an act incorporating the first English foreign missionary society, under the name of the " President and Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New

¹ *Records of . . . Mass.*, ii., pp. 178, 179.

² *Ibid.*, ii., p. 189.

³ Winthrop, ii., p. 376.

⁴ See *Some Correspondence between the Governors and Treasurers of the New England Company*, etc., p. ix., London, 1896 ; also *Records of . . . Mass.*, ii., p. 189.

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England,” with power to hold lands to the yearly value of L 2000, and the right to collect money throughout England and Wales. ¹ The response amounted to the then unprecedented sum of L 11,430, and the Society which thus came into being continues to the present day, though its principal labors since the war of American independence have been confined to Canada. This Society made the Commissioners by which the four Congregational colonies of Plymouth, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Haven were represented in the loose political confederacy in which they had been joined since 1643, its direct agents in superintending the work. By 1658 the Society was spending L 520 a year in New England, of which Eliot received L 50, as his salary. ² That year the Society paid L 190 for the education of nine Indian young men at Roxbury and Cambridge, and, besides the stipend to Eliot, seven inhabitants of New England of English parentage and seven Indians were paid, in 1658, for various forms of missionary labor. ³ All this activity implied wide interest in the work on the part of the people of England and of New England alike; but it was not without its vigorous opponents in both lands, as useless, resultless, and a waste of money needed for religious effort at home.

¹ See *History of the New England Company*, etc., pp. I, 2, London, 1871 ; Palfrey, *History of New England*, ii., pp. 197-199.

² Palfrey, ii., pp. 332, 333.

³ *Ibid.*

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I have already pointed out that, with Eliot, Christianity, civilization, and learning were inseparably united, and that, at the beginning of his missionary endeavor he sought to gather his converts into a town on the English model. But Nonantum, where this settlement was first made, proved unsuitable, and therefore, in July, 1650, a more ambitious village was begun at Natick. Here houses were built, chiefly by Indian labor, gardens and orchards planted, and a combined schoolhouse and meeting-house erected. For the government of the little community the Indians were encouraged to choose, in 1651, rulers of tens, of fifties, and a ruler of a hundred; a pattern of civil government which, as we have already seen, Eliot urged upon England a little later as that prescribed by the Scriptures. Here, after long testing, a church was established, on the Congregational model, in 1660, which numbered fifty Indian members by 1674, and to which Eliot preached, while his health permitted, once in two weeks, though before the close of his life, it came under the charge of a native Indian pastor.¹

Eliot felt keenly the need of education for the spiritual training of his disciples, and there is no more self-denying or more successful endeavor in the annals of American missionary labor than that he made to give to his pupils the Word of God. Save for the

¹ *Magnalia*, i., pp. 564-566; Palfrey, ii., pp. 336, 338, iii., p. 141. See also, *A Late and Further Manifestation*, pp. 1-6. London, 1655.

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phrase-book of Roger Williams, the Indian dialects of New England were unwritten; their structure was peculiarly difficult from a grammatical point of view; their literature was wholly to be created. That one who was all his New England life a busy pastor of an English-speaking congregation, and, also, from 1646 onward, an active evangelist among the Indians not only at Nonantum and Natick but over a wide stretch of the eastern portion of Massachusetts, should find time also for such an immense labor in the study of the vocabulary, grammar, and idioms of the Massachusetts dialect, and for so prolific and creditable publication of translations into that tongue, is one of the marvels of missionary accomplishment. How he strengthened himself for such toil, he expressed in one of his volumes in a phrase that gives the key to his industry and courage: "Prayers and pains through faith in Christ Jesus will do anything."¹ And what Eliot accomplished as a translator alone constitutes a monument of which any scholar might be proud.

His first work in the Indian language was a Catechism which he published in 1654.² It enjoys the distinction of being the first volume in the Indian tongue to be printed in New England ; though, unhappily for the collector, every copy has disappeared. But the volumes

¹ *Magnalia*, i., 562, from Eliot's *Indian Grammar*.

² Dexter, *Cong, as Seen*, Bibl., 1661. Was it the Catechism used at Roxbury, June 13, 1654, and printed in English in *A Late and Further Manifestation*, pp. 11-20?

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on which Eliot's fame as a translator chiefly rests were his New Testament of 1661, and his complete Bible of 1663. I can, of course, express no personal estimate of the qualities of this version. So utterly has the Massachusetts race and its speech perished from among men, that few are able to read Eliot's Bible; though probably it is not quite true to say, as used to be said during the lifetime of the late Dr. J. Hammond Trumbull, that only he could do so. But Dr. Trumbull,¹ whose competency as a judge no one will criticise, affirmed regarding Eliot's Bible that it was

“a marvellous triumph of scholarship; achieved in the face of difficulties which might well have appeared insurmountable. It may be doubted if, in the two centuries which have elapsed since the Indian Bible was printed, any translation of the sacred volume has been made from the English to a foreign tongue of more literal accuracy and completeness. If a different impression has been popularly received, slight study of the Indian text will suffice to remove it.”

It was deemed the great honor of William Carey that he was the translator of the Bible into the languages of India; can we give Eliot less meed of praise?

Eliot's Indian Bible was only the beginning of a series of translations and publications in the Indian speech. Bound up with the volume was a translation of the Psalms in meter. The year 1664 saw the

¹ Trumbull in *Pub. Narragansett Club.*, i., pp. 6, 7 ; see also regarding this Indian literature, Trumbull's chapter in *Memorial History of Boston*, i., pp. 465 sqq.

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putting forth by Eliot, in Indian dress, of Baxter's *Call to the Unconverted*; in 1665, a translation of Bishop Bayly's *Practice of Piety* was issued; in 1666 there followed Eliot's *Indian Grammar Begun*; and, in 1669, his *Indian Primer*; the year 1680 saw a second edition of the New Testament, and in 1685 of the whole Bible; and, finally, in 1689, Eliot put forth a translation of Shepard's *Sincere Convert*. These volumes were printed at the New England Cambridge, and chiefly, if not entirely, at the expense of the English Society, which thus supplied Christian literature, as well as tools and other material instruments of civilization to the Indian converts.¹ Of course this literature demanded instruction in reading; and therefore Eliot made the schoolmaster as prominent as the minister in his Indian settlements.

It is evident that a movement of such widespread interest as that in which Eliot was a leader could be confined to no one portion of New England. He was indeed the foremost always in leadership and service; but many others were associated with him, or entered independently into the missionary enterprise moved by the secret promptings of the Divine Spirit. Of these the most conspicuous, perhaps, were the two Thomas Mayhews, father and son, of Martha's Vineyard. There the work had begun, almost without

¹ For an example of some expenditures of the Society, see N. E. Hist. and Geneal. Register, xxxvi., pp. 297-299.

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effort, in 1643, by the awakening of Hiacoomes, one of the leading Indians; and in 1646, the same year that Eliot began his work at Nonantum, the younger Mayhew commenced systematic efforts for the Christianization of his Indian neighbors.¹ After the death of this missionary the undertaking was carried on by his father, and in turn by his son, grandson, and great-grandson, till the demise of the latter in 1806, making this record of five generations the longest chain of hereditary endeavor in the annals of missions.² This labor on Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket was remarkably successful. By 1651 Mayhew could report one hundred and ninety-nine converts, and in 1670, a church was formed on Martha's Vineyard,³ that was soon followed by several others on the islands of this group. In all this work the same English Society that aided Eliot lent its assistance from 1651 onward. Other, though smaller centers of activity developed on Cape Cod, at Marshpee, where a church was formed under Richard Bourne about 1670,⁴ and at Eastham, where Rev. Samuel Treat long labored for the spiritual good of the Indians.⁵ At Plymouth, the pastor of the old Pilgrim church from 1669 to 1697, John Cotton,

¹ See Mayhew's letter in *A Farther Discovery of the Present State of the Indians*, pp. 3-13. London, 1651.

² A. C. Thompson, *Protestant Missions*, p. 87.

³ *Magnalia*, ii., p. 431.

⁴ *Ibid.*, i., p. 567.

⁵ Sibley, *Graduates of Harvard*, ii., pp. 305-307.

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son of the more famous John, did much for the Indians, and helped to revise Eliot's Bible for its second edition.¹ Branford, in Connecticut colony, saw some work for its Indian inhabitants by its pastor, Abraham Pierson, father of the first president of Yale.² Eliot's own immediate mission grew, so that by 1654 a second town, on the plan of Natick, was organized at Punkapog, now known as Stoughton.³ And he had the assistance of consecrated and self-denying men, like Daniel Gookin, whom the Massachusetts government made, from 1656 to 1687, the "ruler" or superintendent of its Indian subjects.⁴ Eliot had the satisfaction, before his death, of seeing that his work would be carried on by those in the New England ministry who were in hearty sympathy with it, like Grindall Rawson of Mendon, and Samuel Danforth of Taunton.⁵

The missionary endeavor was crowned with undeniable success. In spite of its difficulties, by 1674 those Indians who had been brought in some measure under the influence of the Gospel, or "Praying Indians" as they were called, numbered four thousand, of whom nearly one half were on the islands of the

¹ Sibley, i., pp. 496-508; *Magnalia*, i., p. 568.

² Palfrey, ii., p. 340.

³ *Late and Further Manifestation of the Progress of the Gospel*, p. 2. London, 1655.

⁴ Palfrey, ii., p. 338.

⁵ Sibley, iii., pp. 163-168, 244-249.

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Martha's Vineyard group.¹ About eleven hundred were in Eliot's villages. They were gathered into six churches, numbering in all one hundred and seventy-five members, and in at least twenty places preaching and schools were regularly maintained, chiefly by educated Indians. The villages of the " Praying Indians " numbered thirty-three. But the stronger tribes of southern New England, the Narragansetts and Wampanoags, were scarcely touched by Christianity, and probably wholly misunderstood the intentions of the missionaries.² They probably conceived the purpose of settlements like those at Natick and Marshpee as an attempt to render more formidable the white man's tribe by the familiar Indian method of the adoption of weaker neighbors; and doubtless the fear thus excited in these stronger Indian confederations had something to do with bringing on the terrific struggle for the possession of southeastern New England, known as Philip's war. That awful experience of murder, fire, and robbery cost New England six hundred men in 1675 and 1676 to say nothing of the complete or partial destruction of more than forty towns. It cost the Indians far more, and permanently removed the Indian menace from southern New England. But it was a staggering blow for the missionary enterprise.

¹ Palfrey, iii., pp. 141, 142; see Eliot's report for 1673 in *I Coll. Mass. Hist. Soc.*, x., 124. The churches were Natick, Grafton (Hassanamisitt), Marshpee, Nantucket, and two on Martha's Vineyard.

² See Fiske, *Beginnings of New England*, pp. 208-210,

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While most of the converts remained faithful to the English, and some, like those on Martha's Vineyard, were even trusted to guard captives of their own race, many of those who had come merely into external connection with the missionary movement went back to their savage companions, and some even of the converts vied with their heathen associates in the cruelties which they inflicted on the settlers. Even those of Eliot's disciples who remained faithful, as most of them did, were regarded with such suspicion that they were compelled to leave their villages and live under the surveillance of the colonial authorities.¹ And when the war was over there remained a bitter and often indiscriminating feeling of resentment that rose against every Indian as a natural enemy. Yet the work went on. Eliot, Gookin, Mayhew, and their associates faltered not; and, had it been the war alone that hindered, Indian missions in New England would have suffered only a temporary check. As late as 1698, more than twenty years after the war, Rawson and Danforth could report seven churches of Indians, and twenty stations where preaching was maintained and schools were taught. Before Eliot died in 1690, twenty-four Indians had been ordained to the Gospel ministry. His own first colony of Natick was under the pastorate of a devoted convert, Tackawompbait, who served the spiritual interests of the community

¹ Palfrey, iii., pp. 199-202, 220,

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till death came in 1716; and some traces of this work of Indian evangelization, especially on Cape Cod and Martha's Vineyard, continued till far into the nineteenth century.

But it was a dying race for which Eliot labored, and even the Gospel could not greatly check its decline. Devoted as the missionaries were, the story of these Indian churches is one of rapid decay a decay not owing to a spiritual exhaustion, but. to the fading away of the Indian race itself. From Philip's war onward it rapidly dwindled, its decrease being well illustrated in the story of Natick, where the population of Eliot's time diminished to one hundred and sixty-six in 1749, to about twenty in 1797, and in 1855 to one.¹ From the standpoint of permanency it must be confessed that Eliot's work has not endured the test of time; but its failure was not due to any inherent lack of spiritual power; and I suspect that the historian, two hundred years in the future, who writes the story of the missions of the nineteenth century, will have much the same tale to narrate of that success of the Gospel in the islands of the Pacific in which our fathers saw the hand of God almost visibly displayed, and whose real power and significance no passing slurs by politicians anxious to assert the authority of a stronger race can wholly obscure. Like Eliot's, it is a work for a dying race ; and like his, its only permanent record will

¹ I *Coll. Mass. Hist. Soc.*, x., p. 136 ; Bacon, *Hist. of Natick*, p. 21.

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probably be in that book of those whose names are written in heaven. But was it less worth doing? Only he who values a soul at less than the Master's estimate can answer in the negative.

Eliot's life was long, far beyond that of any other conspicuous in the founding of New England. Cotton died at sixty-seven; Richard Mather at seventy-three; Hooker was sixty-one; Davenport was seventy-two. Eliot had nearly reached eighty-six when death came on May 20, 1690. He saw the passing away of the generations who were the leaders in his early manhood and the companions of his maturer years so completely as to come to remark, with that cheerful humor that never deserted him, that "his old acquaintances had been gone to heaven so long before him that he was afraid they would think he was gone the wrong way because he stayed so long behind." But, happily, he did not see the fatal decline of the mission work in which he had been so long engaged. He "was shortly going to heaven" he would say in his last days; "he would carry a deal of good news thither with him . . . to the old founders of New England, which were now in glory."¹ And the taking down of the mortal house, timber by timber, so trying an experience oftentimes in old age, was for him a kindly process. Infirmities crept upon him. But, as late as 1687, he was able to preach to the Indians perhaps once in two

¹ *Magnalia* i., p. 579.

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months;¹ and when weakness would no longer permit even this labor, his strong missionary spirit turned toward some effort for the despised negro slaves, for Massachusetts had slavery in those days, and he gathered those of his vicinity once a week for catechetical and spiritual instruction.² As the sands of the glass of his life ran out, and he was confined to his house, so that even this endeavor was beyond his powers, he took the blind son of a neighbor into his own home, as Cotton Mather says, “with some intentions to make a scholar of him.”³ It is a fitting picture that the worn-out missionary presents to us in his last days, seated by the fireside in his Roxbury home, teaching a crippled boy to repeat by heart that Bible which he had long before translated with such diligent fidelity into the Indian tongue. And we may well leave him there, with his own characteristic remark to those who asked him “how he did”? “My understanding leaves me, my memory fails me, my utterance fails me; but, I thank God, my charity holds out still.”⁴

¹ Letter of Increase Mather, *Magnalia*, i., pp. 566, 567.

² *Magnalia*, i., p. 576.

³ *Ibid.*, i., pp. 576, 577.

⁴ *Ibid.*, i., 541.