

*Diseases.*—Endemical disease is rare. The dysentery has sometimes prevailed in and after the warm season, owing probably to an immoderate use of fruit, and the neglect of warm clothing, at the first approach of cold. Pulmonary consumption has made terrible ravages among females about the age of marriage; young women, however, are still more numerous than men of the same age, owing to the great number of seamen which this state sends out, and the emigration of young men, who go to find an easier subsistence in the new states and territories of the western country. The yellow fever prevailed in some parts of the year 1797.

*Political Character.*—The Rhode Islanders supported the revolutionary war with great gallantry, but they persisted till the year 1790 in refusing to ratify the new federal constitution, though established with the consent of the other states in 1787. They were accused of refusing to assist in suppressing the rebellion in Massachusetts, and of having given a free asylum to the offenders; for which reason the place for some time received the injurious name of Rogue's Island. They deserve great praise, however, for abolishing the slave trade, which had enriched many of the people in Newport. This was done some years ago, by an act of the legislature, prohibiting the trade between Africa and the West India islands. Rhode Island has the honor of having produced one of the most distinguished heroes of the revolutionary war, Nathaniel Green, and the misfortune of having given birth to the noted traitor Benedict Arnold, who attempted to deliver into the hands of the enemy the commander-in-chief of the republican forces.

*Constitution.*—The charter of incorporation, granted by Charles II. in the fifteenth year of his reign, was to the inhabitants of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, in the name of the Governor and Company, to be holden of him, his heirs, and successors, as of his manor of East Greenwich in Kent, in free and common sockage. The king reserved to himself, as an acknowledgment of his sovereignty, the fifth part of the gold and silver ore that should be found within the territory. This charter forms the basis of the present form of government, which consists of a council of twelve members and house of representatives, chosen by the freemen. The former, which includes the governor and deputy-governor, is chosen annually;