

edged in America." Burdette wrote to Laud in 1637, "The colonists aim not at new discipline, but at sovereignty." An intelligent people, bred to a degree of liberty elsewhere unknown, trained by peril and hardship to self-reliance and the use of arms, were little likely ever to be tamed again to subjection to a distasteful and distant power. To guard against this tendency, which would be strengthened by the growth of the colonies into the Northwest regions, still more remote, England proposed to close that vast domain against population, and impeded and prohibited the settlement of the Northwest. At one time it was considered, with the same end in view, whether Canada should not be restored to the French dominion; and finally, by the Quebec Act in 1774, on the basis chiefly of the French settlement and occupation in Illinois, it was intended to permanently detach the Northwest from the Shore Colonies and link it with Canada, so that its permanent affiliations should be with the St. Lawrence basin and not with the Atlantic slope. Only the Revolution broke this purpose. The Northwest was conquered from England and the savages, as it had been from France and the savages. Such was the stake of the Northwest in the Revolution. Nevertheless there was little association and less affiliation between New England and the other English colonies before the events leading to the Revolution brought them into combination. "Till the time of the Boston Port Bill," says Palfrey, "Massachusetts and Virginia, the two principal English colonies, had with each other scarcely more relations of acquaintance, business, mutual influence, or common action, than either of them had with Jamaica or Quebec." But from the moment their action in concert began, the principles of the Plymouth constitution were asserted and became dominant. The Northwest territory grew out of a request of Congress that States would cede their western lands to the government to aid a fund for the payment of the public debt; and in 1787 Congress passed an ordinance for the government of the inhabitants of that territory. By the influence of New England, through this unexampled secondary constitution, the territory of the Northwest steadily unified itself