

each other. A miracle (which they ridiculed when claimed by Romanists), attested the divine approbation of such institutions. On one occasion, when they were all assembled, a snake suddenly appeared near the seat occupied by the Elders. Many of them shifted from it, but Mr. Thompson, of Breamtree, "a man of much faith," trod upon its head, and so held it with foot and staff till it was killed. "This being so remarkable," says Winthrop, "and nothing falling but by Divine Providence, it is out of doubt, the Lord discovered somewhat of his mind in it. The serpent is the Devil, the synod the representative of the Churches of Christ in New England. The Devil had formerly and lately attempted their disturbance and dissolution; but their faith in the seed of the woman, overcame him, and crushed his head." But although both the civil and religious bodies severally disclaimed all control over each other, they soon found it convenient to give and receive mutual assistance. As both belonged to the same Church, this reciprocal accommodation, it was thought, would be attended with little or no danger; while each in its turn derived additional weight from the interchange of protection.

It is not necessary to pursue this subject into detail. Sufficient has been said to show that