

to guide and direct the force of individuals and communities. It furnished the elements of reason and judgment to opinions. That it should be adequate to overcome all narrowness and bigotry was not to be expected. That it should cut men abruptly away from their intellectual inheritance of thought, or lift them out of their inevitable environment, was of course impossible. But many things are charged to narrowness and to bigotry, which had their foundation in the most comprehensive ideas of social and political emancipation. It may be convenient enough for the adherents of various forms of ecclesiastical organization to attribute the resistance of New England to Episcopacy and Presbyterianism, as times then were, to bigotry, but it is false. It was liberality and liberty, not bigotry or narrowness. It was the protest against being narrowed. The Church of England and the Scotch Presbyterian represented to them the very abomination of ecclesiasticism, from which they had recoiled and fled. They wanted no ecclesiastical organization to confuse loyalty to the organization with fidelity to religion, or to superintend their thought upon any subject or dominate their modes of public education. They were unable to point to any time or country in which the great mass of the population were improved in their intellectual and political condition by the control or influence of any ecclesiastical system whatever.

At all times a somewhat equivocal policy disguised the real determination of all the colonists in the matter of absolute independence both of the king and the ecclesiastical power of England. In their own hearts the settlers carried a habitual sentiment of independence, which was at variance sometimes with their immediate policy and with the formal declarations of their public documents. A tendency to assume an independent sovereignty was always active in New England from the hour the Mayflower compact was signed. It asserted itself strongly in the league of the four colonies, and was continually visible in the conduct of public affairs. A war of independence was inevitable from the first political act of the Pilgrims. It was sure to come. John Adams said : "The authority of Parliament was never generally acknowl-