



ELIOT TEACHING THE INDIANS.

The following account of the Indians, amongst whom Eliot, the missionary, laboured, is taken from the life of Eliot, in the library of the Methodist Episcopal S.S. Union:

When the British established their first colonies in New-England, there were about twenty or thirty different nations of Indians in that territory, which closely resembled one another in their external appearance, mode of living, form of government, language, religious views, and moral habits. The Indians of Massachusetts were supposed to be among the most populous of all these tribes; and though, owing to their residence on the sea coasts, they had made some little progress in civilization, they were described by those who were acquainted with them as "the most sordid and contemptible of the human race," and "as the veriest ruins of mankind on the face of the earth."

The Indians were remarkable for their strength, agility, and hardness of constitution. Their clothing, which was very imperfect, was generally formed of the skins of beasts. They were exceedingly

fond of decking themselves with fantastic ornaments, and of painting their bodies with ill-shapen figures of men, trees, and other natural objects; and accustomed to respect the individual who could distinguish himself by any peculiarity in his appearance.

Their food, which was principally the produce of their hunting and fishing, and imperfectly-cultivated grounds, experienced little preparation before it was used. They had no fixed time for taking their meals; and, owing to their extreme indolence and improvidence, they were frequently subjected to long fastings. They have been known, indeed, to abstain from food for several days together, and to live for a considerable time on a handful of meal and a spoonful of water. Comfort seems to be an object which they had not in view, and which, from their ignorance of the most simple mechanical arts, they could not attain, in the construction of their huts or wigwams. These presented a mean appearance, externally and internally, being commonly formed by young trees bent down to the ground, and covered with rush mats,