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ing to reduce them to a state little different from that of their own slaves; thus detesting, for themselves, what they found convenient to exercise upon others.

The inhabitants of the colonies, especially those of New England, enjoyed not only the shadow, but the substance itself, of the English constitution; for in this respect, little was wanting to their entire independence. They elected their own magistrates; they paid them; and decided all affairs relative to internal administration. The sole evidence of their dependence on the mother country, consisted in this; that they could not enact laws or statutes, contrary to the letter or spirit of the English laws; that the king had the prerogative to annul the deliberations of their assemblies; and that they were subject to such regulations and restrictions of commerce, as the parliament should judge necessary and conducive to the general good of the British empire. This dependence, however, was rather nominal than actual, for the king very rarely refused his sanction; and as to commercial restrictions, they knew how to elude them dexterously, by a contraband traffic.

The provincial assemblies were perfectly free, and more perhaps than the parliament of England itself; the ministers not being there, to diffuse corruption daily. The democratic ardor was under no restraint, or little less than none; for the governors who intervened, in the name of the king, had too little credit to control it, as they received their salaries, not from the crown, but from the province itself; and in some, they were elected by the suffrages of the inhabitants. The religious zeal, or rather enthusiasm, which prevailed among the colonists, and chiefly among the inhabitants of New England, maintained the purity of their manners. Frugality, temperance, and chastity, were virtues peculiar to this people. There were no examples, among them, of wives devoted to luxury, husbands to debauch, and children to the haunts of pleasure. The ministers of a severe religion were respected and revered; for they gave themselves the example of the virtues they preached. Their time was divided between rural occupations, domestic parties, prayers, and thanksgivings, addressed to that God by whose bounty the seasons were made propitious, and the earth to smile on their labors with beauty and abundance, and who showered upon them so many blessings and so many treasures. If we add, further, that the inhabitants of New England, having surmounted the first obstacles, found themselves in a productive and healthful country, it will cease to astonish, that, in the course of a century, the population of the American colonies should have so increased, that from a few destitute families, thrown by misfortune upon this distant shore, should have sprung a great and powerful nation.