

all, colonial acts were transmitted by the colonial Governor directly to the clerk-in-waiting of the Privy Council, though sometimes they were directed to the Secretary of the Board of Trade. Upon the receipt of the acts these officials duly delivered them to the Privy Council (or to a Committee of the Privy Council on Plantation affairs) for their perusal. The acts were then submitted to the Board of Trade for their official report and recommendations. The recommendations of the Board were usually accepted by the Privy Council but not necessarily. Opportunity was given at every stage for full discussion and deliberation. Often a colonial agent was called in and given a hearing before any matter of special importance was decided. The colonial agent representing Massachusetts was really chosen by the Massachusetts Assembly, who instructed him from time to time as to the course he should adopt. It would be an interesting problem to estimate the influence that colonial diplomacy in England exercised over the course of colonial legislation. There is no doubt but that this influence was often very considerable.⁷

Having briefly considered the method of dealing with colonial legislation, our next problem is to make an analysis of all the public and private acts disallowed by the Crown during the career of Massachusetts as a Royal province, i.e. from 1692 to 1775, a period of eighty-three years.⁸ The number of acts disallowed for Massachusetts during this period is on the whole surprisingly small, as these were only 59 in all. Of this number 47 were public and 12 private acts. The distribution of these 59 disallowances over this period of eighty-three years is rather instructive, while the number of acts disallowed within certain periods and the reasons for their disallowance throws considerable light on the colonial policy of the time.

The 47 public acts will first be dealt with by an attempt to classify them according to the chief reasons for their disallowance. This scheme of classification is not always mutu-

⁷See *Provincial America*, by E. B. Greene, *The American Nation*, vol. vi, p. 78, 1904; *The Provincial Governor*, by E. B. Greene, *Harvard Hist. Studies*, vol. vii, 1898.

⁸This analysis is based on the *Acts and Resolves Public and Private of the Province of Massachusetts*, 10 vols., 1692-1775.