

power, or acknowledging the authority of, the Parent State.

These independent communities founded the institutions, and disseminated the democratic opinions that were subsequently adopted by the continental provinces. The former are, with some small modifications, such as are in existence there at the present day, and the latter are identical with the views of their descendants. The reason that so little is known of the occurrences of this period I have already assigned, but they are essential elements in forming any just estimate of subsequent events, or an accurate opinion of transatlantic affairs. With these commonwealths our narrative must necessarily commence. I shall omit everything that does not either develop the character or principles of the people, or elucidate the views they entertained of their own supremacy, and their right to the soil, and government of the country of their adoption. I shall pass over also the earlier settlement at Plymouth with only a brief reference, as well on account of the greater growth and importance of Massachusetts, and the influence it always exerted on the neighbouring plantations, as to preserve the narrative entire.

At the end of half a century these two republics were rendered nominally subordinate to the empire, but remained practically independent, retaining their own self-government, resisting the encroachments