

and the bishops, and proclamation was made to that effect in every Republican pulpit in the colony on Sunday, the fourteenth day of August, 1774. This encouraged an armed mob of "patriots" to surround his house the same night in a tumultuous manner, ordering gates and doors to be opened.

Mr. Peters, from his window, asked if they had a warrant from a magistrate to enter his house. They replied, "We have Joice's warrant, which Charles the traitor submitted to, and it is sufficient for you."

Finally, it was agreed that a committee, composed of the most respectable men in the party, should read all the papers belonging to Mr. Peters. Accordingly, after inspecting all his papers as much as they pleased, they reported that they were satisfied Mr. Peters was not guilty of any crime laid to his charge.

On Sunday, the 4th September, the country was falsely alarmed by reason of Colonel Putnam's declaring Admiral Graves had burnt Boston, and that General Gage was murdering old and young, except Tories and churchmen.

The governor seized this opportunity to set the mobs with redoubled fury upon Mr. Peters and the loyalists of Hebron, whom they called "Peterites." On this occasion intoxicated ruffians spared neither houses, goods nor persons. Some had their bowels crushed out of their bodies. Others were covered with filth and marked with the sign of the cross, in token of loyalty to bishops and kings, who, they said, designed to crucify all good people. Even women were hung up, tarred and feathered. The Rev. Mr. Peters, with his gown torn off, was treated in the most insulting manner. His mother, daughter, two brothers and servants wounded, one of his brothers so badly that he died soon after, and these fiends dragged Mr. Peters almost naked from his dwelling, in spite of the cries and tears of his mother and sisters, which might have melted the heart of a savage, though it produced nothing but peals of laughter which rent to the skies. While they were dragging him to their "Liberty Pole," with intent of hoisting him up and down, as was their manner of treatment, so extremely cruel and barbarous was their usage that the sheriff of Litchfield county could not withhold his interference, by whose timely assistance Mr. Peters was finally set at

liberty and his life providentially saved. Half naked and wounded, he fled to the royal army at Boston, from whence he went to England, by which means he preserved his life, but not his property, from the rapacity and bloody hands of his cruel countrymen.

After such an experience, it is not to be wondered at that Mr. Peters had but a poor opinion of Republican liberty, or that he should have penned the following recipe :

Take the herb of Hypocrisy and root of Pride three handfuls—two ounces of Ambition and Vanity—pound them in the mortar of Faction and of Discord—leave over the fire of Sedition until you perceive the Steam of Deceit at the top—strain it through the cloke of Rebellion—put it in the bottle of Envy—stop it with the cork of Malice till settled—then make it into pills of Conspiracy—take nine when you go to bed—say a long prayer that may be heard in the street—then go to sleep if you can, and it will be sure to have the due effects. All the next day you will be well disposed to censure the church, burn all the Bishops, murder the King, plunder the nation and cut the throats of all honest men.

After the escape of Mr. Peters, 1775, the Rev. Messrs. Mansfield and Viets were cast into prison and tried for high treason for giving food to loyalists flying from drunken mobs—fined and imprisoned.\*

Everything but decency and order overran the colony, and frequent irruption was made in which many loyalists were disarmed, plundered and made prisoners, among whom was the Rev. Dr. Seabury and the mayor of the city of New York. Governor

\*The clergy of the Episcopal Church were particularly obnoxious in New England during the Revolutionary war. This fact was in some measure due to the old antagonism existing between the descendants of Puritans and the Church of England.

Rev. Samuel Peters, referred to in the narrative, was a staunch supporter of the cause of "Church and State" and a resolute opponent of the Puritans. After his return to England, in 1775, he wrote a *History of Connecticut*.

That the Puritans entertained sentiments of decided hostility towards Mr. Peters we have already seen. Subsequently he was charged by them with maliciously forging the so-called "Blue Laws of Connecticut." The origin of the "Blue Laws" has been the source of much controversy—some of it of a recent date. It would seem most probable that the truth lies between the views of the extremists, viz.: that in the early days of Connecticut there existed laws similar to those recorded by Rev. Samuel Peters, although not expressed in language identical with that employed by him.

In connection with the name of Mr. Mansfield, mentioned above, the following is of interest as an illustration of the narrow-minded spirit of the times. Whilst attending Harvard College, Cambridge, young Richard Mansfield through religious conviction renounced the faith of his forefathers, and decided to study for the ministry in the Church of England. So great was the animosity excited by his conduct, that when he sailed for England to be ordained by the Bishop of London, his own sister prayed that he might be lost at sea.

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