

over them. It was no time to hesitate. None but tried and trusted men were allowed to hold public offices, and the people became united. In the mother country noses were slit, ears were cut off, cheeks were branded with hot irons, men were burned at the stake, Massachusetts must beware of foes without, and discourage dissension from within. In consequence every arrival from the old world was questioned in regard to his opinions ; at the same time the colony offered a free welcome and aid at the public cost to Christians of every nation " who might escape from the tyranny and oppression of their persecutors."

A wild enthusiast named Gorton, is said to have been persecuted because he denied the existence of a place of future punishment ; but it appears from history that the charge against Gorton and his associates was not that they were disbelievers, but that they in civil matters denied the authority of the magistrates, inasmuch as they were elected by the people and not appointed by King Charles. Even their punishment was not sustained by the people, who clamored for their release, and the men were set at liberty, and the sentence of exile against Wheelwright was also abandoned.

And now we will glance at the persecution of Baptists. It must be borne in mind that the Anabaptists of other days were different from the Baptists of our day. The first appearance of the Anabaptists as a distinct sect was in the year 1522. In almost any account of Luther's time, reference will be found to the appearance of a number of men who claimed to be directly inspired from heaven. They declared that study was quite unnecessary, and was an idolatrous concession to the flesh and letter ; that it was wasting time and strength to translate the Holy Scriptures, since without their understanding a word of Greek or Hebrew, God had revealed its meaning to their hearts. Their leader, Nicholas Storck, claimed to be a prophet, and chose twelve apostles and seventy-two disciples. These men discouraged infant baptism, baptised by immersion, and were called "Anabaptists," a name that the Baptists of a later time repudiated. Multitudes of the German peasants became followers of these men, and were excited by their leaders to overthrow all government and proclaim the government of King Jesus. They marched through the land in tens of thousands, taking possession of city after city, and castle after castle. They inflicted cruel deaths on both men and women of the nobility, and burnt and pillaged the convents. Their conduct was a serious check on the Reformation, and Luther himself was compelled to do all he could for the suppression of the revolt. At Munster they set up a tailor as king, John of Leyden, and called the city the New Jerusalem. From that time forward the name Anabaptist became associated with anarchy and confusion. At the time of the revolution, in the reign of Charles the First, the Anabaptists were not numerous in England, having been treated with terrible severity by the Tudors and Stuarts. During the time of the Commonwealth, owing to the stand for freedom of conscience taken by the Independents, they increased greatly in numbers, and many of them, like the followers of Storck and Munster, were opposed to all government, and desired to set up what they called the reign of King Jesus ; and, at the close of the Protectorate, which they assisted to overthrow, their numbers were considerable. Baptists of the present day disavow, and with good reason too, the extravagance of the Anabaptists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. They decried all government, and refused to submit to any authority, and the renowned Baxter, a Presbyterian authority, has left on record that, as late as his time, some of them " were in the habit of baptizing persons naked, or next to naked, and