

At the time we find the last mention of Anselme St. Castine, the British colonies on this continent were giving evidences of a growing prosperity. Boston had become a town of considerable commercial importance.* Settlements had been made in the present State of Vermont, and Connecticut was being rapidly peopled. A small stream of European immigration was annually pouring into Pennsylvania, Virginia, and the Carolinas.

The inhabitants of New England were extending their settlements into Maine and New Hampshire. The great proportion of the population, however, was confined to a narrow range of territory bordering on the Atlantic coast, and the trapper and the trader were the only white men to be seen in the west beyond the Alleghanies. The total population of the British plantations, at this time, was estimated at four hundred thousand souls.

The colonists showed that veneration for religion, and that love of free institutions and education which have long been the most ennobling characteristics of the Anglo-Saxon race. "The Charter Governments," says a contemporary writer, "were celebrated for their excellent laws and mild administration, for the security of liberty and property, for the encouragement of virtue and suppression of vice, for promoting letters by erecting free schools and colleges." We can, however, see in their legislation at that day the evidences of that spirit of independence and self-assertion, which, forty years later, led to such important consequences. The Board of Trade had represented in 1730, that "the people of Connecticut and Rhode Island have hitherto affected an independency of the Crown; they have not for many years transmitted any of their laws for consideration, nor any account of their transactions." Such complaints became more frequent in subsequent years.

The *Boston News Letter*, the first newspaper in America, appeared on the 23d of April, 1704; but by 1740 there were no less than eleven published throughout the colonies. In 1721 James Franklin, in con-

junction with his brother Benjamin, established the *Boston Courant*, as an organ of independent opinion, and a few years afterwards the Puritan magistrates, always ready to persecute Quakers and all those who differed from them in opinion, had censured the paper and imprisoned its publisher on account of some article which he had published, not quite in accordance with the views of the majority.

If we turn now to the French colonies, we can trace step by step the progress of the vast designs which France entertained with reference to this continent. Montreal and Quebec were already the principal towns of New France, and the whole colonial domain had been divided sometime during 1721 into 82 parishes, of which 48 were allotted to the Northern and 34 to the Southern side of the St. Lawrence. The whole population of Canada did not exceed 25,000 souls, of whom 700 were at Quebec, and 300 at Montreal. Peltry was the main article of trade, and the fisheries were as yet prosecuted on a very small scale below Quebec. Forts had been erected at Frontenac, at Mackinaw, at Detroit, on the Illinois, and on the borders of the Gulf of Mexico, at the mouth of the Mississippi. Port Royal and Acadia had remained, however, in the possession of the English after the capture of the former place by Nicholson. Isle Royale and St. John's (P.E. Island) were alone held by the French, and a noble fortress had been commenced in 1720, on the south-eastern coast of the former Island, justly considered the key to the St. Lawrence. The people of Canada at that time were mostly poor, and at times had a struggle for the actual necessities of life. The Home Government did not seem to understand the real wants and condition of the colony, and being constantly engaged in expensive wars in Europe was unable to give that thorough attention to Colonial affairs which they imperatively required. The system of Government, as we have previously intimated, was not calculated to promote the liberty and stimulate the self-reliance and energies of the people, and it says a great deal for the patriotism and bravery of the French in America, that they were able to contend as long as they did with the energetic and warlike people of

* In 1738 there were built in Boston forty-one topsail vessels, burden in all six thousand three hundred and twenty-four tons.—BANK ROFT, III., 36.