

prudent—clearly founded upon a commandment of which no one will venture to dispute the wisdom. In fact, the wisest and best men in New York and Philadelphia are even now attempting to enforce just such wise and salutary Sabbath laws; and *nineteen-twentieths* of the population approve and sustain them in this course. The moderation, as well as the wisdom, of these early Colonists appear in their laws and rules of government no less clearly than in their well regulated lives. It is to be regretted—to-day we may confess it—their successors have not always possessed as much wisdom, nor manifested equal moderation in the laws which they have enacted; yet the New England States are confessedly among the most moral and best, because least, governed communities in the world.

I would mention as traits belonging to the first New England Colonists, the love of peace and order in connection with respect for the rights of others. I mention these together, because charges have often been preferred against them, which, to me, seem to be unjust and unwarranted by the facts. They manifested no disposition to force their opinions upon others, or to infringe upon the rights of any. They would not separate from the Church of England.—They sought only its reform in matters of practice. And even this they did not seek in an illiberal spirit or uncharitable manner. John Robinson, in his last charge, advised them “by all means to endeavour to close with the godly party of the kingdom of England, and rather to study union than division, namely how near we might possibly, without sin, close with them, than in the least measure to affect division or separation from them.” Winslow testifies that John Robinson “professed and held communion both with the French and Dutch Churches, yea tendered it even to the Scotch also.” While they claimed toleration and the right of private judgment, they were willing that others should enjoy the same privileges. They removed from Amsterdam to Leyden that they might not be the occasion of disturbance to the brethren whom they found in the former city. No charge of bigotry or intolerance can be sustained against them in aught that they said or did previous