

Massachusetts ; and an exact adjustment of all questionable limits was left to be subsequently accomplished by commissioners, whose appointment never took place. In opposition to the understanding and the rights of the English court, Villebon, the governor of a French settlement on St. John's River, gave notice to the government of Massachusetts that he was commanded by the king of France to take possession of and defend the whole country as far as Kennebec, and that English vessels attempting to fish on the coast would forthwith be seized ; and in concert with this policy, the Norridgewock Indians, a tribe allied to the French, and implicitly devoted to a French priest whom they accepted for their pastor, began to establish a fixed settlement and erected a church on the banks of Kennebec River. Lord Bellamont communicated information of these transactions to the English court, by which they were so negligently considered and so languidly resented, that, had it not been for the war which more interesting disputes soon after enkindled between England and France, the encroachments of the French (who were actively supported by their king) would in all probability have proved entirely successful. The administration of Lord Bellamont was terminated by his death at New York in the beginning of the year 1701.¹

The wise and liberal policy of King William towards New York and New England was exhausted by the appointment of Lord Bellamont ; and the vacated dignities of this nobleman were now conferred on successors whom we might almost suppose to have been selected for the express purpose of counteracting the impressions produced by his virtue and reputation. The command of New York and New Jersey, as we have already seen, was intrusted to Lord Cornbury, — one of the most odious and contemptible of mankind ; and the government of Massachusetts and New Hampshire, which Lord Cornbury had also unsuccessfully aspired to engross, was committed to a man whose previous history tended to reawaken the most irritating recollections of regal injustice and usurpation. Joseph Dudley was originally destined by his friends to the office of a minister of religion in his native country of Massachusetts ; but

¹ Charlevoix, *Histoire de la Nouvelle France*. Hutchinson. Bolknap. Trumbull. Anderson's *History of Commerce*. Holmes.