

# A brief ACCOUNT of the STATE of the Province OF THE *Massachusetts-Bay* IN *New-England*, Civil and Ecclesiastical.

By a Lover of his Country.

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## **A brief Account of the State of the Province of the *Massachusetts-Bay* in *New-England*, Civil and Ecclesiastical.**

IT was not very long after the beginning of the former *Century*, That a considerable Num|ber of the Subject of the Crown of *England*, by the Allowance, and under the Countenance and Protection of the Supream Authority, did Transplant themselves, Families and Estates into the remote Regions of *America*.

THESE first Planters were known to be Per|sons not only of approved Piety to GOD, but of ex|emplary Loyalty to the Throne and Government they belonged to, and brought these Principles of affection and duty to their Prince into these His distant Dominions, and their care was to transmit the same Loyal Principles and Spirit to their Posterity.

TO encourage and strengthen them to sub|mit to the many Toils, Hazards and vast Ex|pence in Subduing and Planting a Wilderness. They were favoured with the Royal Grant of a CHARTER, by which they were vested with several Powers, Liberties, and Priviledges for their good Order and Government.

UNDER the Protection of the Royal CHAR|TER, [Page 3](#) in which they intirely confided for the security of the Liberties therein granted, they were animated chearfully to undergo, unknown Perils and Hardships, which were unavoidable in their first Plantations: By which a valuable accession has been made to the *British* Domi|nions, and the Commerce of *Great Britain* en|larged, without any Charge to the Crown.

IN the latter end of the Reign of King *Charles* the Second, this *Charter* was vacated by a Judgment in the High Court of *Chancery*, which Judgment was respite till the Reign of King *James* the Second, when this Corporation were disfranchised, and actually divested of all the Powers, Liberties & Priviledges that had been granted to them.

AFTER the happy Revolution those Glorious Princes King *WILLIAM* & Queen *MARY* of Immortal Memory, were pleased in their Princely Wisdom and Grace, by their Royal CHARTER to Unite, and Erect into One Province the Colonies of the *Massachusetts-Bay, New-Plymouth, &c.* by the Name of the Province of the *Massachusetts-Bay* in *New-England*, which was to be Governed by a Governour, Council and Assembly.

BY this Royal CHARTER many valuable Priviledges and Immunities are vested in the Body of the People inhabiting said Province, their Properties secured, and all the Immunities and Liberties of natural Subjects born in [Page 4](#) the Realm of *England*, are granted and affirmed to them.

HEREBY also Powers are vested in the General Assembly of Electing Annually such as shall assist in Council, to Constitute and Settle all Civil Officers, under certain Restrictions and Reservations: To Erect Courts of Judicature, To Levy Taxes upon said Inhabitants for the Support of the Government, and Defence of the Province. And to make Laws from time to time not repugnant to the Laws of *England*, for the good Government of the Subjects.

IN the present Constitution of the Government of the said Province by its present CHARTER, effectual Provision is made to maintain their intire dependence on, and to secure in all points the Rights and Prerogatives of the Crown.

THE Nomination and Constitution of the Governour, Lieutenant Governour, Secretary, and all Officers of the Admiralty, is wholly reserved to the Crown.

THE Power of the *Militia* is wholly in the hands of His Majesty's Governour, as Captain General.

ALL Judges and Justices, of a Superiour and Inferiour Order, and Sheriffs, to whom the Execution of the Laws are Entrusted, are nominated and appointed by the Governour, with the Advice and Consent of his Majesty's Council.

THE Governour has a Negative upon all Laws, Elections, and Acts of Government of the General Assembly and Council.

[Page 5](#) ALL Laws Enacted by the General Assembly and approved of by the Governour are to be transmitted Home for the Royal Approbation and if disallowed within the space of Three Years, to be utterly void.

HIS Majesty's Liege People of this Province have since the Enjoyment of their present CHAR|TER been exposed to many inconceivable Hard|ships by two long and bloody Wars with the bar|barous Salvages, in which with great Unanimity and Alacrity, they have defended these His Ma|jesty's Dominions with great Expence of Blood and Treasure.

THE Inhabitants of this Province have al|ways had a just value for their Civil Liberties. But the free and secure Enjoyment of their Reli|gious Priviledges, has ever been most dear to them: and esteem'd a plentiful Reward of all the Dangers and Difficulties they have been struggling with, from their first Plantation to this Day.

THE first Planters of these His Majesty's Ter|ritories, were as to their Perswasion in Religion, such as in the *English* Nation were called Puritans, who desired and sought, what was in their ap|prehension a further Reformation, in point of Discipline, and Worship.

THAT they and their Posterity after them might Enjoy the Liberty of their Consciences in these Points, and Worship GOD according to their best Light, with less hazard to themselves and less offence to others, They sought a place of rest in these remote Regions.

[Page 6](#) NOTWITHSTANDING their conscientious dissent from the Church of *England* in some lesser Points, yet in their Removal they paid all just Regards to Her, they dutifully askt her Prayers and Blessing in their Settlement, & heartily prayed for the Prosperity of Religion in her Communion.

BY the Care and Zeal of these first Planters, the Kingdom of CHRIST was first Planted in these His Majesty's distant Dominions, Churches Erected in their several Towns & Plantations, in which the Gospel is Dispensed, & the Ordinances of GOD's House, Administred, without any Terms of Communion, but what according to their best *Light*, were plainly prescribed in the *Word of GOD*.

THE Doctrines of Faith professed in these Churches are entirely *Protestant*, most agreeable to the Doctrinal Articles and Homilies of the Church of *England*, and to the Confessions of the Reformed Churches abroad.

THESE *Churches* in point of Discipline & Mode of Worship are mainly *Congregational & Presbyterian*, of one Profession & Principle, with the United Brethren the *Protestant Dissenters* in *South-Britain*.

THE Use and Power of Ecclesiastical Councils & Synods is here acknowledged, & the Right not only of the Churches, but also the Power of the Civil Government to Convocate such Assemblies, when the necessities of the Churches shall call for them, is Asserted.

IT is required that the Pastors of these Churches, be Persons of approved Sanctity of Life, [Page 7](#) Orthodoxy in the Faith, of good Learning and known Ministerial Abilities: These are Elected by the People, They take the Charge of; & are set apart to the Pastoral Office, by the Imposition of the hands of the *Presbytery*.

TO provide for a Succession of such an Orthodox & Learned Ministry in these Churches, *Grammar-Schools* were Erected in the most considerable Towns through the Province, and a *College* early was Founded, where the Liberal Arts and Sciences are publicly taught, and nothing required to qualify for Academical Honours, and Priviledges, but a proficiency in Learning and good Morals.

BY the Favour of Heaven upon this Seminary of Piety, & good Literature, these Churches, have hence been fully supplied from time to time to this Day, with a well qualified Ministry, who have taught them the good Knowledge of GOD.

THESE Churches, tho' not formed in all points, in exact Conformity to the Establishd Church of *South-Britain*, yet have their Constitution and Priviledges secured to them, not barely, by an Act of Toleration, but a Legal Approbation and Establishment.

MANY good Laws have been Enacted by the Governour and Assembly, by which these Churches are Protected & Encouraged in the peaceable and regular Profession & Practice of their Religious Priviledges, their Form of Worship, Church Order & Discipline. By which also the Method of Calling & Setling Ministers in the several Congregations through the Province, is Legally stated

and established, and Legal Provision made for the Honourable Support and [Page 8](#) Maintenance of the Ministers thus Called & Setled.

ALL which Laws have been Confirmed, by the Approbation and Sanction of the Crown in the Glo|rrious Reign of King *WILLIAM* of Blessed Memory.

THROUGH the Blessing of Heaven these Chur|ches under their present Securities, have greatly flou|rished and increased, That at the present Time, there are above an *Hundred* Religious Assemblies and Con|gregations in this Province of the *Massachusetts-Bay*, besides about *Thirty* Assemblies of Christianized *Indi|ans*, who profess the Faith, Order and Worship here|in acknowledged.

AND at the same time there are through the whole Province not above *Three* Congregations that in their Form of Worship and Discipline, profess them|selves of the Perswasion of the Church of *England*; Though Persons of that perswasion are under no Restraints, or Discouragements, but are ever Treated with all Christian Respect.

IT must in Justice be affirmed to the Honour of these Churches of the *Congregational* and *Presbyterian* Denomination, that there is not one Minister or one single Person known in their Communion, but what are full of Duty, Zeal and Affection to the Succession of the Crown in the Illustrious Protestant House of *HANOVER*, and do account themselves under the strongest ties, to Bless GOD for the happy Accession of His present Majesty King *GEORGE*, to the Throne of his Ancestors, and both Pastors and People do utterly abhor the late Impious and Rebellious attempts, to disturb His Peaceable Go|vernment. They Adore and Praise the Hand of Heaven in giving such a signal Blast to the designs of those wicked Sons of Violence. And their Prayers are ever going up, for the long Life and Prosperity of His Majesty, and the whole Royal Family.

FINIS.