

was how about three years before, a French ship was cast away at Cape Cod, but the men got ashore and saved their lives, and much of their victuals and other goods. But after the Indians heard of it, they gathered together from these parts and never left watching and dogging them till they got advantage and killed them all but three or four which they kept, and sent from one sachem to another to make sport with, and used them worse than slaves. Of which the aforesaid Mr. Dermer redeemed two of them; and they conceived this ship was now come to revenge it.

Also, as after was made known, before they came to the English to make friendship, they got all the Powachs¹⁰ of the country, for three days together in a horrid and devilish manner, to curse and execrate them with their conjurations, which assembly and service they held in a dark and dismal swamp.

But to return. The spring now approaching, it pleased God the mortality began to cease amongst them, and the sick and lame recovered apace, which put as [it] were new life into them, though they had borne their sad affliction with much patience and contentedness as I think any people could do. But it was the Lord which upheld them, and had beforehand prepared them; many having long borne the yoke, yea from their youth. Many other smaller matters I omit, sundry of them having been already published in a journal made by one of the company, and some other passages of journeys and relations already published, to which I refer those that are willing to know them more particularly.

And being now come to the 25th of March, I shall begin the year 1621. . . .

John Winthrop
1588–1649

By birth and breeding, John Winthrop seems a man destined to have been a leader in Puritan colonial life. The son of an English country gentleman, Winthrop was at eighteen a married man acting as steward and justice of the peace on his father's estate at Groton, to which he had returned after two years of legal studies at Trinity College, Cambridge University. The Winthrops were Puritans, and though John wrote of his "wild and dissolute youth," he found "some peace and comfort in God and his wayes" in his late teens, and thereafter his faith strengthened by degrees.

Winthrop began to consider emigration to the New World when political and religious conditions worsened in England. Under the reign of Archbishop Laud, ministers who refused strict adherence to all Anglican practices fell under suspicion or were silenced. Openly a Puritan, Winthrop lost his attorneyship. Everywhere the dreaded Roman Catholicism seemed on the rise. By spring 1629, Winthrop feared that "God will bringe some heavye Affliction upon this lande" in the form

¹⁰ Medicine men.

of political reprisals or natural disasters such as the plague. Yet he trusted that the Lord would "provide a shelter & a hidinge place for us and others."

The Lord's instrument seemed to be the new Massachusetts Bay Company, which elected Winthrop its first governor in 1629. He sailed for America the following year on the *Arbella*, the flagship vessel of a fleet carrying some seven hundred persons in a "Great Migration" that would soon bring twenty thousand settlers to New England. At sea on board the *Arbella* Winthrop preached a now-classic sermon on the ideals of Christian charity that he felt must govern the colony in all its affairs. It was imperative, he argued, that the settlers form a commonwealth for the mutual benefit of all and that their society be able to withstand the scrutiny of a watchful world. In the Massachusetts Bay Winthrop acted as governor or deputy governor for nearly twenty years, upholding the standards set in his "Model of Christian Charity." In practice his leadership was sought in trials of settlement, trade, property disputes, economic hard times, Indian wars, and the religious controversies that threatened to split the colony into warring camps. Winthrop's *Journal* was the record of these events and became, over time, a record by which to measure how close colonial New England came to being that model "city upon a hill."

One sequence of *Journal* entries outlines a grave internal threat to the colony. The so-called antinomian controversy came to a head in the trials of Mistress Anne Hutchinson, a woman who subsequent generations have identified as a martyr to the cause of religious freedom and women's rights. Hutchinson, a housewife and the mother of twelve children, had been a parishioner of the Reverend John Cotton in Boston, England. One year after Cotton's departure for America, the Hutchinson family followed him. Mistress Hutchinson soon established herself as a valued nurse and midwife. In addition, as a devout and intellectually gifted woman she attracted a circle of some sixty women and men to "private conferences" on Mr. Cotton's sermons. Soon she broadened her discussions to include critical analyses of the teachings of other ministers.

As a partisan of Cotton and a sharp critic of his colleagues, Hutchinson put herself at the center of a theological controversy that concerned the part human beings could play in preparing their hearts to receive God's saving grace. The debate had already pitted Cotton against other powerful ministers, and the widespread publicity of Anne Hutchinson's meetings made her the focus of dissension.

Finally brought to trial on charges of sedition, Hutchinson testified that she had received special divine revelation. In Puritan theology this was heresy and carried political implications as well. The individual who received divine guidance directly from God would not need the teaching of the scriptural word (in Latin, *nomen*) from the ministers. Nor would public officials like Winthrop retain their authority, since they claimed that their power came from biblical injunctions. Hutchinson implicitly challenged the power of both church and state. Her minister, Cotton, joined all the others in condemning her.

She was banished by the Massachusetts General Court in November 1637 and moved to Rhode Island with a small band of her followers. When Hutchinson delivered a malformed infant, Winthrop described it in the *Journal* in excruciating detail, interpreting the deformity as a sign of God's judgment on the heretic and,

of course, as the implicit vindication of Puritan governmental action. Yet Hutchinson remained in the American imagination. She was a major source for Hawthorne's character Hester in *The Scarlet Letter*. And her intellectual power anticipates that of Margaret Fuller, the mid-nineteenth-century writer and great conversationalist who was sometimes as disturbing to Ralph Waldo Emerson as Anne Hutchinson was to John Winthrop.

Winthrop's *Journal* contains accounts of major Puritan controversies like that surrounding Hutchinson. It presents sharp glimpses of colonial life, like that of a townsman who lost his way "and wandered in the woods and swamps three days and two nights without taking any food" and "had torn his legs." Throughout, it emphasizes the working of God's providence in Puritan affairs. (God brought the disoriented townsman to the community of Scituate when he was "near spent" or exhausted.)

From an aesthetic viewpoint it is regrettable that Winthrop did not reshape the *Journal* into a finished narrative, as he intended to do. Yet it stands as a text revealing the Puritan commitment to contemporary history, which they believed would justify the ways of God to man.

Further Reading:

R. Winthrop, *Life and Letters of John Winthrop*, 1864-1867.

S. E. Morison, *Builders of the Bay Colony*, 1930.

E. Morgan, *The Puritan Dilemma*, 1958.

D. Rutman, *Winthrop's Boston*, 1965.

S. Bercovitch, *Puritan Origins of the American Self*, 1975.

Texts:

"A Model of Christian Charity," *The Winthrop Papers*, ed. A. Forbes, 5 vols., 1929-1947.

The History of New England, ed. J. Savage, 2 vols., 1853, 1972.

from A Model of Christian Charitie

Christian Charitie

A Modell Hereof

God Almightye in his most holy and wise providence hath soe disposed of the Condition of mankinde, as in all times some must be rich some poore, some high and eminent in power and dignitie; others meane and in subjection.

The Reason Hereof

I. REAS: First, To hold conformity with the rest of his workes, being delighted to shewe forth the glory of his wisdom in the variety and differance of the Creatures and the glory of his power, in ordering all these differences for the preservation and good of the whole, and the glory of his greatnes that as it is the glory of princes to have many officers, soe this great King will have many Stewards counting himselfe more honoured in dispensing his gifts to man by man, than if hee did it by his owne immediate hand.

2. REAS: *Secondly*, That he might have the more occasion to manifest the worke of his Spirit: first, upon the wicked in moderating and restraining them: soe that the riche and mighty should not eat up the poore, nor the poore, and despised rise up against their superiours, and shake off their yoake; 2ly in the regenerate in exercising His graces in them, as in the greate ones, their love mercy, gentlenes, temperance etc., in the poore and inferiour sorte, their faith patience, obedience etc:

3. REAS: *Thirdly*, That every man might have need of other, and from hence they might be all knitt more nearly together in the Bond of brotherly affection: from hence it appeares plainly that noe man is made more honourable than another or more wealthy etc., out of any particuler and singular respect to himselfe but for the glory of his Creator and the Common good of the Creature, Man; Therefore God still reserves the property of these gifts to himselfe as Ezek: 16. 17.¹ he there calls wealthe his gold and his silver etc. Prov: 3. 9.² he claimes their service as his due honour the Lord with thy riches etc. All men being thus (by divine providence) ranked into two sortes, riche and poore; under the first, are comprehended all such as are able to live comfortably by their owne meanes duly improved; and all others are poore according to the former distribution. There are two rules whereby wee are to walke one towards another: JUSTICE and MERCY. These are allways distinguished in their Act and in their obiect, yet may they both concur in the same Subject in each respect; as sometimes there may be an occasion of shewing mercy to a rich man, in some sudden danger of distresse, and allso doing of meere Justice to a poor man in regard of some particuler contract etc. There is likewise a double Lawe by which wee are regulated in our conversacion one towards another: in both the former respects, the lawe of nature and the lawe of grace, or the morrall lawe or the lawe of the gospell, to omit the rule of Justice as not properly belonging to this purpose otherwise then it may fall into consideracion in some particuler Cases: By the first of these lawes man as he was enabled soe withall is commaunded to love his neighbour as himselfe;³ upon this ground stands all the precepts of the morrall lawe, which concerns our dealings with men. To apply this to the works of mercy this lawe requires two things: first that every man afford his help to another in every want or distresse; Secondly, That hee performe this out of the same affection, which makes him carefull of his owne good according to that of our Saviour (Math:⁴ Whatsoever ye would that men should doe to you). This was practised by Abraham and Lott in entertaining the Angells and the old man of Gibe.⁵

The Lawe of Grace or the Gospell hath some differance from the former as in these respectes: first the lawe of nature was given to man in the estate of inno-

¹ "Thou hast also taken thy fair jewels given thee, and madest to thyself images of my gold and of my silver, which I had of men, and didst commit whoredom with them."

² "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses burst out with new wine."

³ Matthew 5:43; 19:19.

⁴ Matthew 7:12.

⁵ Abraham entertains the angels in Genesis 18:1-2. In Judges 19:16-21 an elderly man of Gilbeah shelters a Levite, a traveling priest, and defends him from enemies from a nearby city.

gency; this of the gospell in the estate of regeneracy:⁶ 2ly, the former propounds one man to another, as the same flesh and Image of God, this as a brother in Christ also, and in the Communion of the same spirit and soe teacheth us to put a difference betweene Christians and others. Do good to all especially to the household of faith; upon this ground the Israelites were to put a difference betweene the brethren of such as were strangers though not of the Canaanites.⁷ 3ly. The Lawe of nature could give noe rules for dealing with enemies for all are to be considered as friends in the estate of innocency, but the Gospell commaunds love to an enemy. Prooffe. If thine Enemy hunger feede him; Love your Enemies, doe good to them that hate you (Math: 5. 44).

This Lawe of the Gospell propoundes likewise a difference of seasons and occasions; there is a time when a christian must sell all and give to the poore as they did in the Apostles times.⁸ There is a tyme also when a christian (though they give not all yet) must give beyond their abillity, as they of Macedonia. Cor: 2. 6.⁹ Likewise community of perills calls for extraordinary liberallity and soe doth Community in some speciall service for the Church. Lastly, when there is noe other meanes whereby our Christian brother may be relieved in this distresse, wee must help him beyond our ability, rather than tempt God, in putting him upon help by miraculous or extraordinary meanes. . . .

It rests now to make some applicacion of this discourse by the present design which gave the occasion of writing of it. Herein are 4 things to be propounded: first the persons, 2ly, the worke, 3ly, the end, 4ly the meanes.

1. For the persons, wee are a Company professing our selves fellow members of Christ, In which respect only though wee were absent from eache other many miles, and had our employmentes as farr distant, yet wee ought to account our selves knit together by this bond of love, and live in the exercise of it, if wee would have comforte of our being in Christ; this was notorious in the practise of the Christians in former times, as is testified of the Waldenses¹⁰ from the mouth of one of the adversaries Aeneas Syluius,¹¹ *mutuo penè antequam norint, they use to love any of their owne religion even before they were acquainted with them.*

2ly. for the worke wee have in hand, it is by a mutuall consent through a speciall overruling providence, and a more then an ordinary approbation of the Churches of Christ to seeke out a place of Cohabitation and Consorteship under a due forme of Government both civill and ecclesiasticall. In such cases as this the care of the public must oversway all private respects, by which not only conscience, but meer Civill pollicy doth binde us; for it is a true rule that particuler estates cannot subsist in the ruine of the public.

⁶ Mankind is here held to have fallen to an unregenerate state after Adam and Eve sinned. Christ redeemed mankind through his suffering and crucifixion, and thereafter those who believe in him are saved or regenerate.

⁷ Those who lived in the promised land, Canaan.

⁸ Luke 18:22: "Sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have

treasure in heaven."

⁹ Actually 2 Corinthians 8:1-4.

¹⁰ Followers of Pater Valdes, who rejected the authority of the pope and taught that the Bible was the sole authority in religion.

¹¹ Pope Pius II (1458-1464).

3ly. The end is to improve our lives to doe more service to the Lord the comferte and encrease of the body of christe whereof wee are members that our selves and posterity may be the better preserved from the Common corruptions of this evill world to serve the Lord and worke out our Salvacion under the power and purity of his holy Ordinances.

4ly for the meanes whereby this must be effected, they are 2fold: a Conformity with the worke and end wee aime at. These wee see are extraordinary, therefore wee must not content our selves with usuall ordinary meanes whatsoever wee did or ought to have done when wee lived in England, the same must wee do and more also where wee goe: That which the most in their Churches maintain as a truth in profession only, wee must bring into familiar and constant practise, as in this duty of love wee must love brotherly without dissimulation, wee must love one another with a pure hearte fervently, wee must beare one anothers burthens, wee must not looke only on our owne things, but also on the things of our brethren; neither must wee think that the lord will beare with such failings at our hands as hee dothe from those among whome wee have lived, and that for 3 Reasons.

1. In regard of the more neare bond of mariage, betweene him and us, wherein he hath taken us to be his after a most strickt and peculiar manner which will make him the more Jealous of our love and obedience, soe he tells the people of Israell, you only have I knowne of all the families of the Earthe, therefore will I punish you for your Transgressions.

2ly, because the lord will be sanctified in them that come neare him. Wee know that there were many that corrupted the service of the Lord, some setting up Alters before his owne, others offering both strange fire and strange Sacrifices also; yet there came noe fire from heaven, or other sudden Judgement upon them as did upon Nadab and Abihu,¹² who yet wee may thinke did not sinn presumptuously.

3ly When God gives a speciall Commission he lookes to have it strictly observed in every Article; when hee gave Saule a Commission to destroy Amaleck¹³ hee indented with him upon certaine Articles, and because hee failed in one of the least, and that upon a faire pretence, it lost him the kingdome, which should have beene his reward, if hee had observed his Commission: Thus stands the cause betweene God and us, wee are entered into Covenant¹⁴ with him for this worke, wee have taken out a Commission, the Lord hath given us leave to drawe our owne Articles, wee have professed to enterprise these Actions upon these and these ends, wee have hereupon besought him of favour and blessing: Now if the Lord shall please to heare us, and bring us in peace to the place wee desire, then hath hee ratified this Covenant and sealed our Commission, and will expect a strickt performance of the Articles contained in it, but if wee shall neglect

¹² See Leviticus 10:1-2.

¹³ In 1 Samuel 15:1-34, God instructed Saul to destroy the Amalekites and all their possessions. Because he spared their sheep and oxen, Saul disobeyed God.

¹⁴ A legal contract in which God extends protection to the faithful, who promise to abide by his word.

the observacion of these Articles which are the ends wee have propounded, and dissembling with our God, shall fall to embrace this present world and prosecute our carnall intencions, seeking great things for our selves and our posterity, the Lord will surely break out in wrathe against us be revenged of such a perjured people and make us know the price of the breach of such a Covenant.

Now the only way to avoide this shipwacke and to provide for our posterity is to followe the Counsell of Micah,¹⁵ to doe Justly, to love mercy, to walke humbly with our God; for this end, wee must be knit together in this worke as one man, wee must entertaine each other in brotherly Affection, wee must be willing to abridge our selves of our superfluities for the supply of others necessities, wee must uphold a familiar Commerce together in all meekness, gentleness, patience and liberallity, wee must delight in each other, make others Condictions our owne, rejoyce together, mourne together, labour, and suffer together, always haveing before our eyes our Commission and Community in the worke, our Community as members of the same body. Soe shall wee keepe the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, the Lord will be our God and delight to dwell among us, as his owne people and will command a blessing upon us in all our ways, soe that wee shall see much more of his wisdom, power, goodnes and truth than formerly wee have beene acquainted with; wee shall finde that the God of Israell is among us, when ten of us shall be able to resist a thousand of our enemies, when hee shall make us a praise and glory, that men shall say of succeeding plantations: the lord make it like that of New England: for wee must Consider that wee shall be as a City upon a Hill,¹⁶ the eyes of all people are uppon us; soe that if wee shall deale falsely with our god in this worke wee have undertaken and soe cause him to withdrawe his present help from us, wee shall be made a story and a by-word through the world, wee shall open the mouths of enemies to speake evill of the ways of god and all professours for Gods sake; wee shall shame the faces of many of gods worthy servants, and cause their prayers to be turned into Curses upon us till wee be consumed out of the good land whether wee are going: And to shutt up this discourse with that exhortation of Moses that faithfull servant of the Lord in his last farewell to Israell (Deut. 30):¹⁷ Beloved there is now set before us life, and good, death and evill in that wee are Commaunded this day to love the Lord our God, and to love one another to walk in his ways and to keepe his Commaundements and his Ordinance, and his lawes, and the Articles of our Covenant with him that wee may live and be multiplied, and that the Lord our God may blesse us in the land whether wee go to possesse it: But if our heartes

¹⁵ Micah 6:8: ". . . and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

¹⁶ Matthew 5:14-15: "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house."

¹⁷ Deuteronomy 30:1-3: "And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse,

which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee, And shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thine heart, and with all thy soul; That then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the nations, whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee."

shall turne away soe that wee will not obey, but shall be seduced and worship other Gods our pleasures, and proffitts, and serve them; it is propounded unto us this day, wee shall surely perish out of the good Land whither wee passe over this vast Sea to possess it;

Therefore lett us choose life,¹⁸
 that wee, and our Seede,
 may live; by obeyeing his
 voice, and cleaving to him,
 for hee is our life, and
 our prosperity.

1838

Anne Bradstreet
ca. 1612–1672

Anne Bradstreet was an English gentlewoman whose heart “rose” in revulsion at the sight of the New World. Yet she became the first significant poet in American literature precisely by capturing the essence of life as a Puritan and as a woman under colonial conditions. She “submitted,” as she put it, to the “new world and new manners,” though the transition was undeniably wrenching.

Anne Dudley was born in Northampton, England. Her father, Thomas, was then a financial officer in the household of the Earl of Lincoln. Anne called him her “guide,” her “instructor,” and “a magazine of history.” Dudley evidently took unusual care with the education of his daughter, perhaps following one educator’s advice to teach the “Abcie and primer” while “playing with [the little children] at dinners and suppers, or as they sit by the fire.” Anne reported that at about age six or seven she was reading the Scriptures.

Young Anne Bradstreet’s era was intellectually lively, as was her immediate environment in the household of the nobleman whose library was probably accessible to her. She evidently knew Sir Walter Raleigh’s *History of the World* (1614), a study of the ancient kingdoms and dynasties emphasizing God’s authority through every historical cycle. And she knew the poetry of Sir Philip Sidney, Edmund Spenser, and Michael Drayton, in addition to Robert Burton’s *Anatomy of Melancholy* and Francis Bacon’s *Essays*. She had probably read some Shakespeare, and she openly admired Joshua Sylvester’s translation of Guillaume

¹⁸ Deuteronomy 30:19: “. . . I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing:

therefore, choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live. . . .”