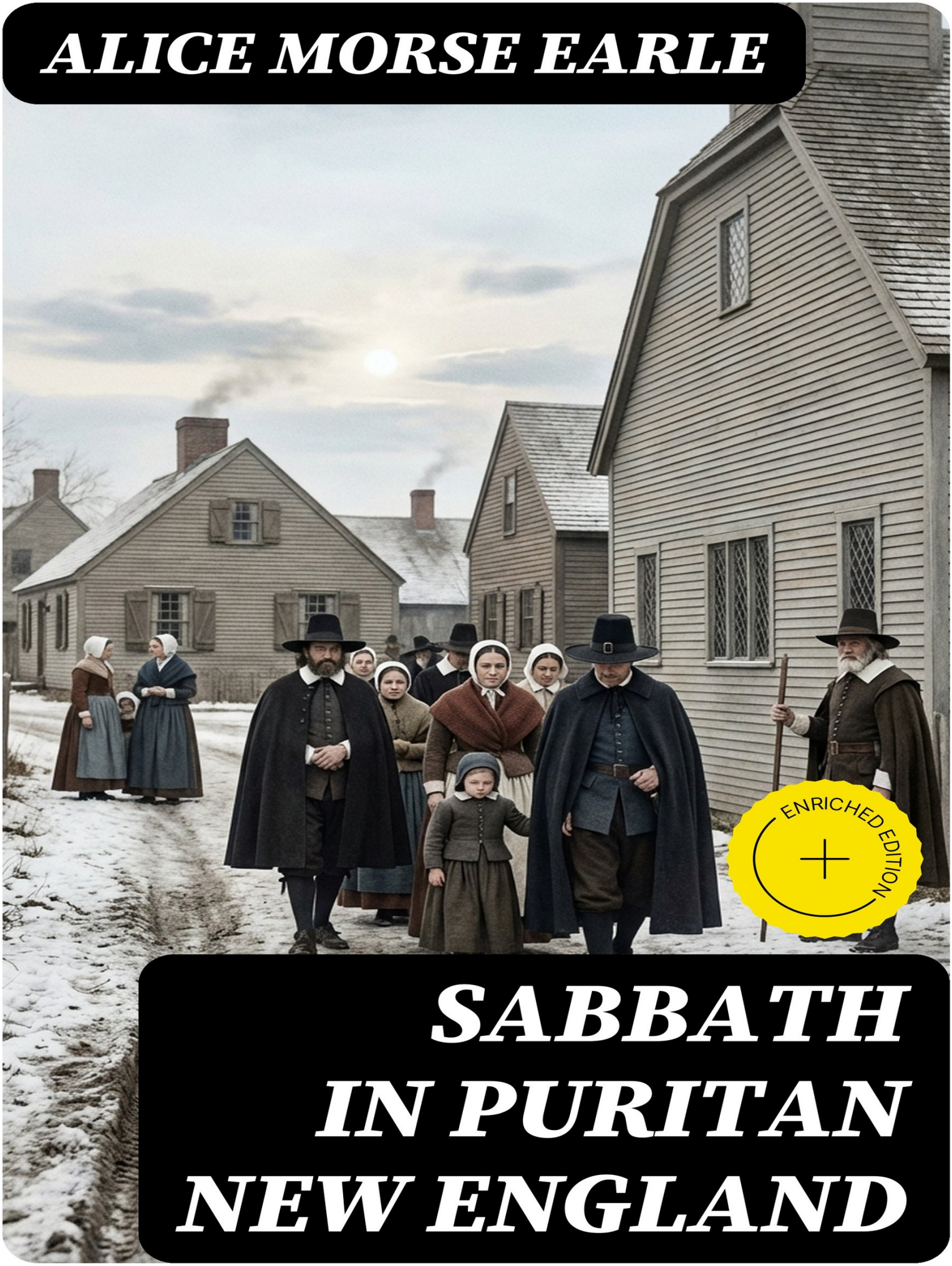
ALICE MORSE EARLE



SABBATH IN PURITAN NEW ENGLAND

Alice Morse Earle

Sabbath in Puritan New England

Enriched edition.

Introduction, Studies and Commentaries by Kendall Pierce

EAN 8596547368670

Edited and published by DigiCat, 2022

Table of Contents

Introduction
Synopsis
Historical Context

Sabbath in Puritan New England

Analysis
Reflection
Memorable Quotes
Notes

Introduction

Table of Contents

Between zeal and necessity, Sabbath in Puritan New England reveals how one holy day regulated the cadence of colonial life. Alice Morse Earle’s study belongs to social and cultural history, examining the institutions and habits surrounding Sunday observance in Puritan communities across colonial New England. First published in the late nineteenth century, it looks backward from that era to reconstruct the order, burdens, and consolations that gathered around the weekly day of rest. Earle situates worship within civic routines and household practice, tracing how rules, customs, and shared expectations shaped travel to meeting, comportment in church, and the practical compromises people fashioned to balance piety with subsistence needs.

The book offers an accessible, vignette-driven portrait rather than a strict chronological narrative. Earle writes in lucid, measured prose, assembling scenes from diaries, town records, church proceedings, and other remnants of daily life to create a textured account of Sabbath-keeping. The tone is observant and humane, respectful of religious conviction yet attentive to the material realities—weather, distance, and scarcity—that complicated ideal practice. Readers can expect steady accumulation of detail that invites reflection without prescribing conclusions. The result is an immersive reading experience: a tour of custom and

ritual that unfolds through carefully chosen examples, creating an atmosphere of intimacy with the past.

At the heart of Earle’s account is time itself: the deliberate structuring of public and private hours to elevate worship above worldly occupation. She shows how the community synchronized its movements around signals, expectations, and regulations that set apart the Sabbath from ordinary days. The journey to meeting, the rhythms of long services, and the shared austerities of song and sermon become social glue as much as religious exercise. Without dramatizing or sentimentalizing, Earle illuminates how collective observance built neighborly obligation and civic identity, even as it demanded restraint, patience, and endurance from those who labored under its weekly discipline.

Equally striking is the book’s attention to material culture and bodily experience. Earle dwells on spaces and objects—meetinghouses, seating plans, garments, modest comforts against winter cold—that reveal how devotion took place in and through things. The practicalities of warmth, sound, and sight shape behavior as surely as doctrine, and the social map of the congregation is legible in architecture and arrangement. She also notes the roles assigned to officials who maintained order, showing how authority was exercised in ordinary moments. These concrete details ground the narrative, allowing readers to feel the texture of observance without reducing it to abstraction.

Family and community emerge as entwined theaters of instruction. Earle traces how households prepared for the day, how children learned forms of reverence and self-

control, and how neighbors monitored and supported one another within shared expectations. The Sabbath becomes a weekly workshop for character, binding generations through habit as well as belief. Yet the same routines that nurtured solidarity could also constrain spontaneity and pleasure, producing a productive tension between communal stability and individual desire. By keeping the focus on lived practice, the book reveals how ideals of sanctity mixed with the everyday negotiations of food, fatigue, and fellowship.

Although the study is rooted in colonial New England, its perspective reflects the late nineteenth century in which Earle wrote. She gathers quotations and anecdotes from period sources and organizes them with a curator’s instinct for telling detail, making specialized materials legible to general readers. The work stands within a broader movement that brought domestic, civic, and religious customs into the historical record, emphasizing the ordinary over the heroic. Earle’s sensitivity to context and her care with documentation make the book a durable introduction to how cultural norms take shape, even as readers should remain alert to the interpretive frame of its time.

For contemporary readers, Sabbath in Puritan New England matters because it shows how shared rituals govern more than belief: they organize time, space, labor, and belonging. Earle’s portrait of a community coordinating rest, worship, and oversight invites reflection on modern debates about work-life rhythms, public rules, and the uses—and limits—of common time. The book offers a clear view of how institutions and habits reinforce each other, how material conditions mold ideals, and how a society justifies

its demands on individuals. As a study in cultural formation, it remains a compelling guide to the enduring interplay of conscience, custom, and community.

Synopsis

Table of Contents

Alice Morse Earle’s Sabbath in Puritan New England offers a closely observed social history of how the weekly day of rest shaped colonial life. Drawing on church records, town orders, diaries, and material evidence, she reconstructs practices and expectations surrounding the Lord’s Day across communities in early New England. Rather than treating doctrine in the abstract, Earle follows the Sabbath through households, meetinghouses, and civic regulation, showing how sacred time organized work, movement, and manners. Her narrative balances anecdote and documentation, presenting a culture that regarded Sunday as both spiritual anchor and civic discipline, and establishing the book’s method: concrete details arranged to illuminate a comprehensive pattern.

Earle begins with the week’s pivot from labor to stillness, when the Sabbath was often reckoned from Saturday evening. She describes domestic preparations that enabled rest the next day—food readied, clothing set out, chores concluded—and the hush that signaled a protected interval. The household is the first stage of observance, where order, cleanliness, and silence marked inward piety as well as outward compliance. Signals and routines connected private spaces to the larger community: notices were posted beforehand, and customs governed when light, noise, or travel should cease. Through these preliminaries, the book

anchors sacred time in everyday rhythms and the shared expectation of restraint.

From the threshold of home, Earle turns to the demanding geography of attendance. She details long walks and rides to the meetinghouse in all seasons, with practical arrangements for families and neighbors. Horse-blocks, pillions, and careful timing made the journey part of devotion. In cold weather, people relied on foot-stoves and wrappers, while “Sabbath-day houses” near the green offered warmth and a place to rest during the midday intermission known as the nooning. The portrait emphasizes the communal dimension of worship: distance, weather, and logistics were met collectively, and every accommodation underscored the belief that presence in public worship justified considerable exertion.

The meetinghouse stands at the center of Earle’s account, presented as both spiritual stage and civic theater. She describes architecture that reinforced authority and audibility: a high pulpit with sounding board, a prominent deacons’ seat, and galleries. Seating plans mirrored community hierarchies, arranged by age, gender, office, and reputation, and negotiated by committees sensitive to rank and precedent. Order was enforced by the tithingman, whose staff and steady vigilance checked drowsiness or disorder and kept young people attentive. Children had their allotted places; latecomers were noted. Through these material and social arrangements, the book shows how space itself carried moral instruction.

Earle next examines the service: prayers, extensive sermons, and psalm-singing that drew the congregation into

disciplined participation. She explains how scripture framed the day and how long, carefully structured preaching formed both minds and manners. Early musical practice relied on “lining out,” with a leader giving each line before it was sung, a method later debated as singing schools and more regularized tunes spread through towns. The clerk or deacon guided pace and pitch, while hourglasses and notes kept time and memory. Throughout, Earle traces the steady tension between reverence for inherited forms and gradual adjustments prompted by practical skill and congregational taste.

The book also surveys rules and sanctions that guarded the Sabbath’s boundaries. Earle compiles cases from town and court records to show how prohibitions on trade, travel, games, and public merriment were enforced through fines, admonitions, and, at times, public confession. She distinguishes between civil authority and church discipline, noting how each supported the other in shaping conduct without collapsing entirely into severity. Examples of leniency, local discretion, and occasional excess reveal a negotiated order: communities aimed to preserve sacred time while addressing real needs and pressures. In this framework, Sabbath-keeping becomes a test of both communal coherence and individual restraint.

Earle closes by considering the Sabbath’s imprint on New England character and memory. The habits, buildings, and regulations she catalogs suggest a culture that linked piety with civic steadiness, and austerity with neighborly obligation. Without romanticizing hardship or caricaturing rigor, the study conveys how a weekly choreography taught

endurance, mutual regard, and accountability. Its enduring resonance lies in showing how ordinary practices—how people traveled, sat, sang, and paused work—carry ideas across generations. By tracing the day from hearth to pulpit and back again, Earle offers a lasting portrait of a society that made time itself into a common discipline.

Historical Context

Table of Contents

Alice Morse Earle’s Sabbath in Puritan New England (1891) examines how seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century New Englanders ordered communal life around the Lord’s Day. Her focus spans Massachusetts Bay, Plymouth, and Connecticut colonies, where Congregational churches were established institutions supported by town rates and intertwined with civil governance. Within compact towns organized around a meetinghouse and common, ministers, selectmen, constables, and church committees shaped weekly rhythms. Earle’s sketches reconstruct the routines of worship, law, and domestic preparation that framed Sundays in settlements founded by English Puritans who migrated beginning in 1620 and, more extensively, with the Massachusetts Bay migration of 1630.

Puritan sabbatarian ideas traveled from England, where reformers urged strict Sunday observance and resisted royal efforts to sanction sports on the Sabbath. In New England, settlers sought a covenanted society. The Massachusetts Bay General Court early enacted laws against unnecessary travel, labor, and recreation on the Lord’s Day, reflecting a shared theology and civic aim. Church membership initially served as a condition for freemanship in Massachusetts, linking political rights to religious standing. Towns levied rates to maintain ministers and meetinghouses, and the 1648 Cambridge Platform codified Congregational polity,

embedding the meetinghouse as the center of worship, discipline, and communal decision-making.

Sunday worship typically comprised morning and afternoon services in unheated meetinghouses, with attendance expected of residents. Ministers preached lengthy sermons, often timed by an hourglass, and congregations sang metrical psalms from texts such as the Bay Psalm Book (first printed in 1640). Singing was commonly “lined out,” with a deacon giving each line before it was sung. Seating was assigned by committees according to age, status, and contribution, emphasizing social order. The tithingman, a town officer, kept order, oversaw families’ behavior, and ensured children’s decorum. Earle situates these practices within a framework of community discipline and reverence for the Lord’s Day.

Colonial statutes and local by-laws penalized “profaning the Sabbath,” with courts imposing fines for work, gaming, or unnecessary travel during meeting times. Constables and tithingmen patrolled, while allowances were recognized for works of necessity and mercy. Frontier conditions influenced observance: in periods of conflict, including King Philip’s War (1675–1676), towns posted watches and in some places required men to carry arms to the meetinghouse. The Sabbath thus combined piety with vigilance. Earle compiles examples from court records and town votes to show how legal enforcement and communal expectation reinforced observance while adjusting to practical needs in a dispersed, sometimes insecure, colonial landscape.

Preparation for Sunday often began on Saturday, with households arranging tasks to avoid labor on the Lord’s Day.

In many communities, families warmed themselves in winter with personal foot-stoves during worship, since early meetinghouses lacked heat. At noon intermissions between services, people ate provisions from home; in some New England towns, small “Sabbath-day houses” or warming houses near the meetinghouse offered shelter in cold weather. Before bells became common, a drum, horn, or conch shell could summon worshipers. Earle traces these domestic and communal adaptations as practical solutions that enabled observance in a climate of long winters, scattered farms, and demanding travel.

Over the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, New England’s religious culture changed while Sabbath observance remained central. The Half-Way Covenant (1662) adjusted church membership to include baptism for children of the baptized, widening participation. After the 1691 provincial charter, property replaced church membership as the basis for voting in Massachusetts, though Congregational churches continued to receive public support. Reforms in music sparked controversy as “singing by note” gradually supplanted lining-out in the early 1700s. The Great Awakening (1730s–1740s) renewed evangelical fervor and created divisions between “New Light” and “Old Light” ministers, but weekly Lord’s Day worship still structured civic and family life.

Uniformity pressures shaped Sabbath practice and discipline. Quakers and Baptists faced legal penalties in the mid-seventeenth century for unauthorized meetings and refusals to conform, though toleration widened over time. Earle distinguishes verifiable statutes from later

exaggerations: while colonial laws restricted Sunday labor and recreation, sensational “blue laws” lists popularized in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are largely apocryphal. Her narrative relies on town records, printed laws, and personal writings to document actual regulations, enforcement, and customary observance. In tracing dissenters’ experiences alongside the majority’s routines, she shows how institutional expectations coexisted with contestation across New England communities.

Published during the late nineteenth century’s Colonial Revival, Earle’s work assembles concrete details to illuminate how theology, law, and daily necessity shaped a weekly ritual that defined community identity. By juxtaposing statutes, sermons, and domestic practices, she reveals the balance Puritan New Englanders sought between reverent rest and practical accommodation. Her vignettes, grounded in archival sources, invite readers to assess the discipline and social ordering of an established church system later dismantled in the early nineteenth century. Sabbath in Puritan New England thus functions as both documentation and quiet critique, capturing an era whose ideals and institutions left durable marks on regional culture.

Sabbath in Puritan New England

Main Table of Contents

I
The New England Meeting-House.
II
The Church Militant.
III
By Drum and Horn and Shell.
IV
The Old-Fashioned Pews.
V
Seating the Meeting.
VI
The Tithingman and the Sleepers.
VII
The Length of the Service.
VIII
The Icy Temperature of the Meeting-House.
IX
The Noon-House.
X
The Deacon's Office.
XI
The Psalm-Book of the Pilgrims.
XII
The Bay Psalm-Book.
XIII
Sternhold and Hopkins' Version of the Psalms.
XIV
Other Old Psalm-Books.
XV

The Church Music.
XVI
The Interruptions of the Services.
XVII
The Observances of the Day.
XVIII
The Authority of the Church and the Ministers.
XIX
The Ordination of the Minister.
XX
The Ministers.
XXI
The Ministers' Pay.
XXII
The Plain-Speaking Puritan Pulpit.
XXIII
The Early Congregations.

I

Table of Contents

The New England Meeting-House.

Table of Contents

When the Pilgrim Fathers landed at Plymouth they at once assigned a Lord's Day[1] meeting-place for the Separatist church,--"a timber fort both strong and comely, with flat roof and battlements;" and to this fort, every Sunday, the men and women walked reverently, three in a row, and in it they worshipped until they built for themselves a meeting-house in 1648.

As soon as each successive outlying settlement was located and established, the new community built a house for the purpose of assembling therein for the public worship of God; this house was called a meeting-house. Cotton Mather[2] said distinctly that he "found no just ground in Scripture to apply such a trope as church to a house for public assembly." The church, in the Puritan's way of thinking, worshipped in the meeting-house, and he was as bitterly opposed to calling this edifice a church as he was to calling the Sabbath Sunday. His favorite term for that day was the Lord's Day[1q].

The settlers were eager and glad to build their meeting-houses; for these houses of God were to them the visible sign of the establishment of that theocracy which they had left their fair homes and had come to New England to create and perpetuate. But lest some future settlements should be

slow or indifferent about doing their duty promptly, it was enacted in 1675 that a meeting-house should be erected in every town in the colony; and if the people failed to do so at once, the magistrates were empowered to build it, and to charge the cost of its erection to the town. The number of members necessary to establish a separate church was very distinctly given in the Platform of Church Discipline[3]: "A church ought not to be of greater number than can ordinarilie meet convenientlie in one place, nor ordinarilie fewer than may convenientlie carry on church-work." Each church was quite independent in its work and government, and had absolute power to admit, expel, control, and censure its members.

These first meeting-houses were simple buildings enough,--square log-houses with clay-filled chinks, surmounted by steep roofs thatched with long straw or grass, and often with only the beaten earth for a floor. It was considered a great advance and a matter of proper pride when the settlers had the meeting-house "lathed on the inside, and so daubed and whitened over workmanlike." The dimensions of many of these first essays at church architecture are known to us, and lowly little structures they were. One, indeed, is preserved for us under cover at Salem. The first meeting-house in Dedham was thirty-six feet long, twenty feet wide, and twelve feet high "in the stud;" the one in Medford was smaller still; and the Haverhill edifice was only twenty-six feet long and twenty wide, yet "none other than the house of God."

As the colonists grew in wealth and numbers, they desired and built better sanctuaries, "good roomthy

meeting-houses" they were called by Judge Sewall[4], the most valued and most interesting journal-keeper of the times. The rude early buildings were then converted into granaries or storehouses, or, as was the Pentucket meeting-house, into a "house of shelter or a house to sett horses in." As these meeting-houses had not been consecrated, and as they were town-halls, forts, or court-houses as well as meeting-houses, the humbler uses to which they were finally put were not regarded as profanations of holy places.

The second form or type of American church architecture was a square wooden building, usually unpainted, crowned with a truncated pyramidal roof, which was surmounted (if the church could afford such luxury) with a belfry or turret containing a bell. The old church at Hingham, the "Old Ship" which was built in 1681, is still standing, a well-preserved example of this second style of architecture. These square meeting-houses, so much alike, soon abounded in New England; for a new church, in its contract for building, would often specify that the structure should be "like in every detaile to the Lynn meeting-house," or like the Hadley, Milford, Boston, Danvers, or New Haven meeting-house. This form of edifice was the prototype of the fine great First Church of Boston, a large square brick building, with three rows of windows and two galleries, which stood from the year 1713 to 1808, and of which many pictures exist.

The third form of the Puritan meeting-house, of which the Old South Church of Boston is a typical model, has too many representatives throughout New England to need any description, as have also the succeeding forms of New England church architecture.

The first meeting-houses were often built in the valleys, in the meadow lands; for the dwelling-houses must be clustered around them, since the colonists were ordered by law to build their new homes within half a mile of the meeting-house. Soon, however, the houses became too closely crowded for the most convenient uses of a farming community; pasturage for the cattle had to be obtained at too great a distance from the farmhouse; firewood had to be brought from too distant woods; nearness to water also had to be considered. Thus the law became a dead letter, and each new-coming settler built on outlying and remote land, since the Indians were no longer so deeply to be dreaded. Then the meeting-houses, having usually to accommodate a whole township of scattered farms, were placed on remote and often highly elevated locations; sometimes at the very top of a long, steep hill,--so long and so steep in some cases, especially in one Connecticut parish, that church attendants could not ride down on horseback from the pinnacled meeting-house, but were forced to scramble down, leading their horses, and mount from a horse-block at the foot of the hill. The second Roxbury church was set on a high hill, and the story is fairly pathetic of the aged and feeble John Eliot, the glory of New England Puritanism, that once, as he toiled patiently up the long ascent to his dearly loved meeting, he said to the person on whose supporting arm he leaned (in the Puritan fashion of teaching a lesson from any event and surrounding): "This is very like the way to heaven; 'tis uphill. The Lord by His grace fetch us up."

The location on a hilltop was chosen and favored for various reasons. The meeting-house was at first a watch-

house, from which to keep vigilant lookout for any possible approach of hostile or sneaking Indians; it was also a landmark, whose high bell-turret, or steeple, though pointing to heaven, was likewise a guide on earth, for, thus stationed on a high elevation, it could be seen for miles around by travellers journeying through the woods, or in the narrow, tree-obscured bridle-paths which were then almost the only roads. In seaside towns it could be a mark for for sailors at sea; such was the Truro meeting-house. Then, too, our Puritan ancestors dearly loved a "sightly location," and were willing to climb uphill cheerfully, even through bleak New England winters, for the sake of having a meeting-house which showed off well, and was a proper source of envy to the neighboring villages and the country around. The studiously remote and painfully inaccessible locations chosen for the site of many fine, roomy churches must astonish any observing traveller on the byroads of New England. Too often, alas! these churches are deserted, falling down, unopened from year to year, destitute alike of minister and congregation. Sometimes, too, on high hilltops, or on lonesome roads leading through a tall second growth of woods, deserted and neglected old graveyards--the most lonely and forlorn of all sad places--by their broken and fallen headstones, which surround a half-filled-in and uncovered cellar, show that once a meeting-house for New England Christians had stood there. Tall grass, and a tangle of blackberry brambles cover the forgotten graves, and perhaps a spire of orange tiger-lilies, a shrub of southernwood or of winter-killed and dying box, may struggle feebly for life under the shadow of the "plumed

ranks of tall wild cherry," and prove that once these lonely graves were cared for and loved for the sake of those who lie buried in this now waste spot. No traces remain of the old meeting-house save the cellar and the narrow stone steps, sadly leading nowhere, which once were pressed by the feet of the children of the Pilgrims, but now are trodden only by the curious and infrequent passer-by, or the epitaph-seeking antiquary.

It is difficult often to understand the details in the descriptions of these early meeting-houses, the colonial spelling is so widely varied, and so cleverly ingenious. Uniformity of spelling is a strictly modern accomplishment, a hampering innovation. "A square roofe without Dormans, with two Lucoms on each side," means, I think, without dormer windows, and with luthern windows. Another church paid a bill for the meeting-house roof and the "Suppolidge." They had "turritts" and "turetts" and "turits" and "turyts" and "feriats" and "tyrryts" and "toryttes" and "turiotts" and "chyrits," which were one and the same thing; and one church had orders for "juyces and rayles and nayles and bymes and tymber and gaybels and a pulpyt, and three payr of stayrs," in its meeting-house,--a liberal supply of the now fashionable *y*'s. We read of "pinakles" and "pyks" and "shuthers" and "scaffills" and "bimes" and "lynters" and "bathyns" and "chymbers" and "bellfers;" and often in one entry the same word will be spelt in three or four different ways. Here is a portion of a contract in the records of the Roxbury church: "Sayd John is to fence in the Buring Plas with a Fesy ston wall, sefighiattly don for Strenk and workmanship as also to mark a Doball gatt 6 or 8 fote wid

and to hing it." *Sefighiattly* is "sufficiently;" but who can translate "Fesy"? can it mean "facy" or faced smoothly?

The church-raising was always a great event in the town**[2q]**. Each citizen was forced by law to take part in or contribute to "raring the Meeting hows." In early days nails were scarce,--so scarce that unprincipled persons set fire to any buildings which chanced to be temporarily empty, for the sake of obtaining the nails from the ruins; so each male inhabitant supplied to the new church a certain "amount of nayles." Not only were logs, and lumber, and the use of horses' and men's labor given, but a contribution was also levied for the inevitable barrel of rum and its unintoxicating accompaniments. "Rhum and Cacks" are frequent entries in the account books of early churches. No wonder that accidents were frequent, and that men fell from the scaffolding and were killed, as at the raising of the Dunstable meeting-house. When the Medford people built their second meeting-house, they provided for the workmen and bystanders, five barrels of rum, one barrel of good brown sugar, a box of fine lemons, and two loaves of sugar. As a natural consequence, two thirds of the frame fell, and many were injured. In Northampton, in 1738, ten gallons of rum were bought for £8 "to raise the meeting-house"--and the village doctor got "£3 for setting his bone Jonathan Strong, and £3 10s. for setting Ebenezer Burt's thy" which had somehow through the rum or the raising, both gotten broken. Sometimes, as in Pittsfield in 1671, the sum of four shillings was raised on every acre of land in the town, and three shillings a day were paid to every man who came early to work, while one shilling a day was apportioned to

each worker for his rum and sugar. At last no liquor was allowed to the workmen until after the day's work was over, and thus fatal accidents were prevented.

The earliest meeting-houses had oiled paper in the windows to admit the light. A Pilgrim colonist wrote to an English friend about to emigrate, "Bring oiled paper for your windows." Higginson, however, writing in 1629, asks for "glasse for windowes." When glass was used it was not set in the windows as now. We find frequent entries of "glasse and nayles for it," and in Newbury, in 1665, the church ordered that the "Glasse in the windows be ... look't to if any should happen to be loosed with winde to be nailed close again." The glass was in lozenge-shaped panes, set in lead in the form of two long narrow sashes opening in the middle from top to bottom, and it was many years before oblong or square panes came into common use.

These early churches were destitute of shade, for the trees in the immediate vicinity were always cut down on account of dread of the fierce fires which swept often through the forests and overwhelmed and destroyed the towns. The heat and blazing light in summer were as hard to bear in these unscreened meeting-houses as was the cold in winter.

"Old house of Puritanic wood,
Through whose unpainted windows streamed,
On seats as primitive and rude
As Jacob's pillow when he dreamed,
The white and undiluted day."

We have all heard the theory advanced that it is impossible there should be any true religious feeling, any

services as a fragrant posy; it was popularly used in households and churches in the 18th–19th centuries.

8 The principal or most honored seat in a meeting-house, usually located in front near the pulpit and reserved for persons of highest rank or office in the community.

9 A sand timer placed by the pulpit used to mark the passage of time during sermons and prayers; before clocks and watches were common the hour-glass was turned when the sand ran out to signal timing.

10 A Latin phrase meaning “here and everywhere,” used in the text as the tithingman’s motto to indicate his ubiquitous supervision; literal translation is ‘here and everywhere.’

11 A term used in colonial New England for a Native American infant or young child; here it refers to a sick baby brought to be prayed over and baptized.

12 A historical term found in the passage for a loft or pew where Black servants or enslaved people sat in some colonial meeting-houses; the phrase is an offensive historical label and reflects segregated seating practices that varied by place and period.

13 A small outbuilding often erected beside rural meeting-houses in colonial New England where worshippers (and sometimes horses) sheltered, warmed themselves, and ate a midday meal between the morning and afternoon Sabbath services, especially in winter.

14 A New England box-sleigh or horse-drawn sled with a wooden box on runners used for winter transport of people and goods; common in the 18th and early 19th centuries before widespread wheeled conveyances.

15 A warm, alcoholic tavern beverage popular in colonial America, typically made from beer (or ale), sugar, and rum and often boiled or heated with a red-hot iron implement to mix and flavor it.

16 An iron implement with a long handle and a bulbous end that was heated in the fire and plunged into liquids (here used to heat and froth flip); in this context it is a heating/stirring tool rather than the nautical sense of the word.

17 A form of shell bead currency (also spelled wampum) used by Indigenous peoples and accepted by European colonists in New England for small payments and local exchange; in the 17th century it circulated as a substitute for scarce coin.

18 An early-modern word for a printing press or print shop; in 17th-century New England it refers to the physical press and its workshop used to produce books and broadsides.

19 A civic oath used in Massachusetts Bay Colony by which a man was admitted as a 'freeman' with rights such as voting and holding office; Governor John Winthrop records it as one of the first sheets printed on the new colonial press.

20 An English-born compositor and early colonial printer who was brought to New England to operate the Cambridge press in the late 1630s and is credited with printing some of the colony's earliest sheets.

21 A mid-17th-century (published 1648) document outlining Congregational church polity and discipline in New

England, drafted by leading ministers and widely influential in colonial church governance.

22 A metrical English translation of the Biblical Psalms by Thomas Sternhold and John Hopkins, first published in the mid-1500s and long appended to the Book of Common Prayer and used in churches and homes in England and the colonies.

23 A metrical French psalter first developed in the 16th century by poet Clement Marot and theologian Théodore de Bèze (Beza), widely used by French Protestants (Huguenots) and printed in many editions for congregational singing.

24 French Protestants, especially Calvinist adherents prominent in the 16th–17th centuries who faced persecution in Catholic France and many of whom emigrated to places such as New England and other countries.

25 A metrical English-language psalter first printed in British North America (Cambridge, Massachusetts) in 1640, notable as the earliest English-language book printed in the American colonies and long used in New England churches.

26 The title of Cotton Mather's 1718 metrical translation of the Psalms (presented in blank verse and with explanatory notes), which aimed to provide a literal English rendering but was not widely adopted in New England.

27 A late-18th-century American style of psalm or hymn setting—popularized by William Billings—featuring staggered, imitative entrances of voice parts (resembling a fugue) that produced lively, contrapuntal effects.

28 An early derogatory name for Quakers, derived from George Fox (1624–1691), the founder of the Religious

Society of Friends; used in 17th–18th-century sources to refer to Quaker activists.

29 An inscription cited as to be placed on a person punished for interrupting worship; ‘gospeller’ here is an archaic term applied pejoratively to someone speaking or proselytizing in church, and the punishment described reflects Puritan disciplinary practices.

30 A principal accuser during the Salem witch trials (1692) — usually identified as Ann Putnam Jr. — who gave numerous testimony episodes and fits in the Puritan meeting-houses during the witchcraft panic.

31 A Latin phrase quoted in the text; it can be rendered approximately as “the insult to scorned beauty” or “injury to rejected beauty,” and was used by contemporaries as a literary or rhetorical expression rather than a legal term.

32 A widely circulated but largely fabricated 18th-century account (often attributed to the Reverend Samuel Peter/Peters) that exaggerated and invented strict colonial New England statutes regulating Sabbath and moral behavior; historians treat many of its provisions as spurious.

33 A social dance or public ball held in connection with a minister's ordination in colonial New England; such events combined religious ceremony with large festive gatherings and sometimes continued into the Federal period.

34 An archaic spelling of 'pumpkins' (or related winter squashes) used in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century cookery and household accounts.

35 A variety of mead — an alcoholic beverage fermented from honey — flavored with herbs or spices; metheglin was