

Annual report of the New-Hampshire Anti-slavery Society

Such is the degrading and melancholy picture of slavery in the early annals of New England. Thus early were attempts made to violate the chastity of female slaves. Well might the captive Queen bewail her lot in the touching strains of her own native country. But Maverick, unlike many slave-holders of the present day, did not seduce his female slaves himself. He was no friend to amalgamation. He wished to preserve his negroes free from any admixture of the blood of the whites. A different policy prevails now, and it is a well established fact that "American citizens, who boast loudly of their own freedom and of that of their *posterity*, sell their own children into slavery; and others traffic in the bodies of their half brothers."^{*}

In July, 1637, Capt. William Peirce, of the brig *Desire*, belonging to Salem, was commissioned to transport fifteen boys and two women of the captive Pequot Indians, a formidable tribe, which had been nearly exterminated in war a few months before, to Bermuda, and sell them as slaves. He returned on the 26 February, 1638, with "a cargo of cotton, tobacco, salt and *Negroes*."[†] The Indian slaves had probably been exchanged for African slaves. It is possible that some belonging to this cargo were purchased by Maverick; but as he had built a fort on Noddle's Island, and erected a house and other buildings, and cultivated land before Gov. Winthrop and company arrived, it is not improbable that he brought slaves with him when he first came over; and if so, the era of Negro Slavery in New England must be fixed at about 1629.

In 1639, the next year after Peirce brought the negroes to this country, we find an African in possession of Nathaniel Eaton, the first master of Harvard College, who it appears was, in some respects, better qualified for an overseer of a slave plantation, than the head of a learned institution.[‡]

In 1644, James Smith, a shipmaster, and a member of the church in Boston, and Thomas Keyser, his mate, sailed for Guinea, where, on their arrival, they met with one or more slave ships, engaged in the same traffic with themselves. In concert with the Londoners, who pretended they had formerly been injured by the natives, they invited some of the negroes on board one of the ships on the Sabbath, and having got them in their hands kept them as prisoners. They then landed men, and a piece of ordnance, called a murderer,[§] with which they assaulted one of the towns, and killed many of the people, but "the country coming down," the assailants were forced to retire, without any booty several of their men being wounded with the negroes' arrows, and one of their number killed.^{||}

With those who had been decoyed on board the ship, Smith sailed for the Madeiras, where he purchased wine, and then sailed for Barbadoes to dispose of it. From Barbadoes, where Smith from some cause or other, was left, the ship under the charge of Keyser returned

* Rev. C. P. Grosvenor's Address at Salem, 1834, p. 34. † Winthrop's Hist. N. E. i. 234, 254. ‡ See Winthrop's Hist. N. E. i. 309, 310.

§ A murderer it doubtless proved, as about 100 negroes were killed.

|| Winthrop's Hist. N. E. i. 243.