

for it was this group, schooled for thirteen years in the advanced, liberty loving, atmosphere of the Netherlands, that furnished the nucleus of the party of 102 souls, which came to America on the Mayflower, and settled on the bleak and barren shores at Plymouth.

They were a sober, God fearing, earnest, hard working, hard headed lot. They had run the risk of their lives in holding fast to what they believed, while in England; had left home and relatives to establish a home in Holland; and lest their children should forget their native tongue and grow up as foreigners, they braved a voyage across the ocean to an almost unknown land, where they could worship God according to the dictates of their own conscience, and could establish homes for themselves.

It should be understood that the rank and file had not long been separatists, but had rather looked forward to the reformation of the state church. With the exception of the few years spent in Holland they had known no civil master but the King. In England they had been accustomed to a hard life. They had known no justice under the law, had been shown no appreciation for services rendered, had seen persons hung, burned and pressed; they had seen greed and impurity, everywhere rampant, and everything of a festive nature had been connected with the extravagant expenditure of money wrung from impoverished people. They had no confidence in the state church, in the government, nor in any person or thing but themselves and God. Yet they had a pride in being Englishmen and did not wish their children to become citizens of the Republic that had treated them with a kindness they had known nowhere else.