

WILLIAM APRESS

1798 – 1839

Near the end of his renowned 1836 speech on King Philip's War, Pequot writer and activist William Apess declared:

We want trumpets that sound like thunder, and men to act as though they were going at war with those corrupt and degrading principles that rob one of all rights, merely because he is ignorant and of a little different color. Let us have principles that will give everyone his due; and then shall wars cease, and the weary find rest.

In that speech, the apex of a remarkable career, he laid claim to Indigenous history, finding in King Philip (also known by his Massachusetts name of Metacom) an exemplary forefather—and a focus for his ongoing critique of the injustice and brutality of colonization. As a preacher, Apess harnessed Christian principles to call for racial equality and to condemn colonial hypocrisy. As a historian, memoirist, and political activist, he was among the early nineteenth century's most eloquent defenders of the principle of Indigenous self-determination, powerfully challenging the white settler myth that the Euro-American colonial project was the destined will of God.



Almost all that we know of Apess's early life comes from his own account in his first published work, the autobiographical *A Son of the Forest* (1829). He was born in Colrain, Massachusetts, in 1798, and was of mixed white, Pequot, and possibly African American ancestry. Following his parents' early separation, he was sent to live with his maternal grandparents in Colchester, Connecticut, where he and his siblings endured dire poverty and frequent abuse until Apess was removed from the home by neighbors. He lived for a time as a "ward" of the town in the care of the white Furman family, and after a year was sold to them as an indentured servant—an extremely common circumstance for Indigenous children in the region.

Apess's account of his time with the Furmans (whom he describes as "poor" but who were also sufficiently financially comfortable to have several servants, and possibly enslaved people, in their household) is deeply ambivalent. Mr. and Mrs. Furman are described at different points as akin both to surrogate parents and to masters, and Mr. Furman clearly subjected Apess to regular (and often racially motivated) abuse, including teaching Apess to fear Indigenous people, thereby inflicting profound psychological trauma. Under their care, Apess received "six successive winters" of formal education, roughly the minimum that the Furmans would have been legally required to provide. Mrs. Furman also introduced him to the principles of Christianity, which soon took an intense hold on him, especially after he began attending Methodist camp meetings—a habit to which the Baptist Mr. Furman eventually put an end. When Apess was eleven years old, the Furmans sold his indenture to a new master, who promptly ended his formal schooling. After a few years, Apess ran away to New York, where he was conscripted into the army by a press gang (who gave his age as seventeen rather than fifteen). The War of 1812 was already well underway when he was enlisted, and he served until its conclusion in 1815.

Apess returned to Colrain in 1818 and was officially baptized into the Methodist Church, embarking then on an informal career as a preacher and missionary. In 1829 he released his autobiography, *A Son of the Forest*, a work heavily influenced by the popular genre of the conversion narrative as well as by

the slave narrative. It also represented Apress's first published foray into historical writing; the appendix, which constitutes half the book, is an exploration of the history of Indigenous peoples and of European colonization. While Apress may also have included Indigenous oral history in his research, this appendix largely repurposes the scholarship of white colonists such as Elias Boudinot, whose 1816 book *A Star in the West* argues that North American Indigenous peoples are the descendants of the biblical lost tribes of Israel. Despite making use of such narratives, Apress is painfully aware of their inadequacy:

The Indian character, I have observed before, has been greatly misrepresented. Justice has not and, I may add, justice cannot be fully done to them by the historian. My people have had no press to record their sufferings or to make known their grievances; on this account many a tale of blood and woe has never been known to the public.

Apress was ordained as a minister in 1831; he spent the following years traveling around the northeastern states, where he frequently spoke in Indigenous and mixed-race communities, forming connections with intellectuals in Indigenous and antislavery resistance movements and developing his ideas regarding religion, justice, and racial equality. For Apress, these issues were connected; as he had written in his autobiography, he was “convinced that Christ died for all mankind—that age, sect, colour, country, or situation, made no difference.” Apress also collaborated with four other Pequot Christians in 1833 to produce a collection of short conversion narratives entitled *The Experiences of Five Christian Indians of the Pequod Tribe*. The text concludes with “An Indian’s Looking-Glass for the White Man,” a damning essay criticizing white Christians for their hypocritical treatment of Native Americans. In its arguments and rhetorical strategies, this essay displays the influence of abolitionist writers and speakers such as David Walker, as well as of Indigenous figures such as Cherokee editor and anti-Removal activist Elias Boudinot/Gallegina (named for the white politician mentioned above).

Later that year, Apress arrived in Mashpee, Massachusetts, where he became involved in agitating for the rights of the Mashpee tribe. Apress acquired regional notoriety for his role in helping draft what is sometimes known as the Mashpee Indian Declaration of Independence—a document that called for Mashpee self-government and jurisdiction over resources. He was briefly imprisoned and given a hefty fine of \$100 following a non-violent confrontation over logging rights, but the Mashpee struggle was ultimately successful, and the tribe obtained some degree of self-government and resource control. Apress, who was adopted as a member of the tribe, described the Mashpee’s accomplishments in *The Indian Nullification of the Unconstitutional Laws of Massachusetts, Relative to the Marshpee Tribe; or, the Pretended Riot Explained* (1835), where he recounts the tribe’s resolution: “That we, as a tribe, will rule ourselves, and have the right to do so; for all men are born free and equal, says the Constitution of the country.”

In 1836, Apress delivered a lecture at the Odeon in Boston on King Philip’s War (1675–78), the conflict that had broken out between the Wampanoag and English Puritans after a longstanding peace treaty was repeatedly violated by the English settlers. Notorious for its high death toll, the war’s violence disproportionately affected the Indigenous population, nearly eliminating the Wampanoag and their allies. King Philip’s War already loomed large in American historical narratives—narratives in which the Wampanoag leader Metacom, or “King Philip,” seemed to have only two possible roles. To some he personified the villainous “savage,” described by Puritan historian Thomas Church as a “great, naked, dirty beast” in *The Entertaining History of King Philip’s War* (1716); to others he was the embodiment of the “vanishing Indian,” tragically representing a noble but inevitably declining race. (The latter approach is exemplified in John Augustus Stone’s play *Metamora: or, The Last of the Wampanoags* [1829], whose title character is based on Metacom.) Apress’s lecture powerfully re-envisioned this history, representing Metacom as a military hero. The speech’s condemnation of the unchristian conduct of the Puritan settlers—and its linking of the same conduct to the ongoing oppression of people of color in America—made such an impression that Apress was asked to speak again two weeks later. The speech was published as *Eulogy on King Philip* (1836) and released in a second edition the following year; Apress also took the *Eulogy* on tour to several other cities.

Apress spent most of the last years of his life in New York City, during which time he made public appearances there and in Washington to speak about politics, religion, and Indigenous history. Upon his death in 1839, Apress was mentioned in a small handful of obituaries, which acknowledged him as a preacher and the author of a work on Metacom, but which did not mention his political activism in New England, or give any sense of the range and importance of his intellectual output. For many decades Apress's work was largely left out of the narrative of American history and literature. Since the 1990s, he has been increasingly acknowledged as a leading figure in the nineteenth century's culture of reform and activism and celebrated for his penetrating exposition of American racism and hypocrisy. Today he is widely seen as a visionary thinker, writer, and speaker, who broke new ground with his autobiographical self-fashioning and his radical reworking of the narratives of Indigenous history.

NOTE ON THE TEXTS: The texts included below are based upon the first Boston printings of *The Experiences of Five Christian Indians of the Pequod Tribe* (1833) and *Eulogy on King Philip, as Pronounced at the Odeon, in Federal Street, Boston, by the Rev. William Apress, An Indian* (1836). Spelling and punctuation have been modernized in accordance with the practices of this anthology.



*An Indian's Looking-Glass for the White Man*¹

HAVING a desire to place a few things before my fellow creatures who are traveling with me to the grave, and to that God who is the maker and preserver both of the white man and the Indian, whose abilities are the same, and who are to be judged by one God, who will show no favor to outward appearances, but will judge righteousness. Now I ask if degradation has not been heaped long enough upon the Indians? And if so, can there not be a compromise; is it right to hold and promote prejudices? If not, why not put them all away? I mean here amongst those who are civilized. It may well be that many are ignorant of the situation of many of my brethren within the limits of New England. Let me for a few moments turn your attention to the reservations in the different states of New England, and, with but few exceptions, we shall find them as follows: The most mean, abject,

miserable race of beings in the world—a complete place of prodigality² and prostitution.

Let a gentleman and lady of integrity and respectability visit these places, and they would be surprised; as they wandered from one hut to the other they would view with the females who are left alone, children half starved, and some almost as naked as they came into the world. And it is a fact that I have seen them as much so—while the females are left without protection, and are seduced by white men, and are finally left to be common prostitutes for them, and to be destroyed by that burning, fiery curse, that has swept millions, both of red and white men, into the grave with sorrow and disgrace—Rum. One reason why they are left so is, because their most sensible and active men are absent at sea.³ Another reason is, because they are made to believe they are minors⁴ and have not the abilities given them from God, to take care of themselves, without it is to see to a few little articles, such

² *prodigality* Wastefulness.

³ *most sensible ... absent at sea* Whaling was at the time a lucrative, though highly dangerous, industry that attracted many highly skilled Indigenous men. Few of these men, however, were ever granted positions of significant authority, and few were as well-remunerated as white whalers, especially since they were often obligated to give a percentage of their earnings to white overseers.

⁴ *minors* American law designated Indigenous people as legal minors.

¹ This text is Apress's epilogue to a longer collaborative work, *The Experiences of Five Christian Indians of the Pequod Tribe* (1833), which contains brief conversion narratives from Apress and his wife Mary, as well as three others.

as baskets and brooms. Their land is in common stock, and they have nothing to make them enterprising.

Another reason is because those men who are Agents,¹ many of them are unfaithful, and care not whether the Indians live or die; they are much imposed upon by their neighbors who have no principle. They would think it no crime to go upon Indian lands and cut and carry off their most valuable timber, or anything else they chose; and I doubt not but they think it clear gain.² Another reason is because they have no education to take care of themselves; if they had, I would risk them³ to take care of their own property.

Now I will ask, if the Indians are not called the most ingenious people amongst us? And are they not said to be men of talents? And I would ask, could there be a more efficient way to distress and murder them by inches than the way they have taken? And there is no people in the world but who may be destroyed in the same way. Now if these people are what they are held up in our view to be, I would take the liberty to ask why they are not brought forward and pains taken to educate them? to give them all a common education, and those of the brightest and first-rate talents put forward and held up to office? Perhaps some unholy, unprincipled men would cry out, the skin was not good enough; but stop friends—I am not talking about the skin, but about principles. I would ask if there cannot be as good feelings and principles under a red skin as there can be under a white? And let me ask, is it not on the account of a bad principle, that we who are red children have had to suffer so much as we have? And let me ask, did not this bad principle proceed from the whites or their forefathers? And I would ask, is it worth while to nourish it any longer? If not, then let us have a change; although some men no doubt will spout their corrupt principles against it, that are in the halls of legislation and elsewhere. But I presume this kind of talk will seem surprising and horrible. I do not see why it

¹ *Agents* White overseers appointed by the federal government to enforce federal policy in Indigenous communities and to represent Indigenous individuals in legal matters. Agents were ostensibly supposed to care for Indigenous people, whom white authorities deemed incapable of self-government, but many agents exploited their extreme power for personal gain.

² *clear gain* I.e., gain without accompanying debt, loss, or legal burden.

³ *risk them* I.e., trust them.

should so long as they (the whites) say that they think as much of us as they do of themselves.

This I have heard repeatedly, from the most respectable gentlemen and ladies—and having heard so much precept, I should now wish to see the example. And I would ask who has a better right to look for these things than the naturalist⁴ himself—the candid man would say none.

I know that many say that they are willing, perhaps the majority of the people, that we should enjoy our rights and privileges as they do. If so, I would ask why are not we protected in our persons and property throughout the Union? Is it not because there reigns in the breast of many who are leaders, a most unrighteous, unbecoming and impure black principle, and as corrupt and unholy as it can be—while these very same unfeeling, self-esteeming characters pretend to take the skin as a pretext to keep us from our unalienable and lawful rights? I would ask you if you would like to be disfranchised from all your rights, merely because your skin is white, and for no other crime? I'll venture to say, these very characters who hold the skin to be such a barrier in the way, would be the first to cry out, injustice! awful injustice!

But, reader, I acknowledge that this is a confused world, and I am not seeking for office; but merely placing before you the black inconsistency that you place before me—which is ten times blacker than any skin that you will find in the Universe. And now let me exhort you to do away that principle, as it appears ten times worse in the sight of God and candid men, than skins of color—more disgraceful than all the skins that Jehovah ever made. If black or red skins, or any other skin of color is disgraceful to God, it appears that he has disgraced himself a great deal—for he has made fifteen colored people to one white, and placed them here upon this earth.

Now let me ask you, white man, if it is a disgrace for to eat, drink and sleep with the image of God,⁵ or sit, or walk and talk with them? Or have you the folly to think that the white man, being one in fifteen or sixteen, are the only beloved images of God? Assemble all nations together in your imagination, and then let

⁴ *naturalist* I.e., Indigenous person.

⁵ *image of God* See Genesis 1.26: “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.”

the whites be seated amongst them, and then let us look for the whites, and I doubt not it would be hard finding them; for to the rest of the nations, they are still but a handful. Now suppose these skins were put together, and each skin had its national crimes written upon it—which skin do you think would have the greatest? I will ask one question more. Can you charge the Indians with robbing a nation almost of their whole Continent, and murdering their women and children, and then depriving the remainder of their lawful rights, that nature and God require them to have? And to cap the climax, rob another nation¹ to till their grounds, and welter out their days under the lash with hunger and fatigue under the scorching rays of a burning sun? I should look at all the skins, and I know that when I cast my eye upon that white skin, and if I saw those crimes written upon it, I should enter my protest against it immediately, and cleave to that which is more honorable. And I can tell you that I am satisfied with the manner of my creation, fully—whether others are or not.

But we will strive to penetrate more fully into the conduct of those who profess to have pure principles, and who tell us to follow Jesus Christ and imitate him and have his Spirit. Let us see if they come anywhere near him and his ancient disciples. The first thing we are to look at, are his precepts, of which we will mention a few. “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. The second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two precepts hang all the law and the prophets.”—Matt. xxii. 37, 38, 39, 40. “By this shall all men know that they are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”—John xiii. 35. Our Lord left this special command with his followers, that they should love one another.

Again, John in his Epistles says, “He who loveth God, loveth his brother also.”—iv. 21. “Let us not love in word but in deed.”—iii. 18. “Let your love be without dissimulation. See that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.”—I. Peter viii. 22. “If any man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar.”—John iv. 20. “Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer, and no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.” The first thing that takes our attention, is the saying of

Jesus, “Thou shalt love,” &c. The first question I would ask my brethren in the ministry, as well as that of the membership, What is love, or its effects? Now if they who teach are not essentially affected with pure love, the love of God, how can they teach as they ought? Again, the holy teachers of old said, “Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.”—Rom. viii. 9. Now my brethren in the ministry, let me ask you a few sincere questions. Did you ever hear or read of Christ teaching his disciples that they ought to despise one because his skin was different from theirs? Jesus Christ being a Jew, and those of his Apostles certainly were not whites—and did not he who completed the plan of salvation complete it for the whites as well as for the Jews, and others? And were not the whites the most degraded people on the earth at that time, and none were more so; for they sacrificed their children to dumb idols! And did not St. Paul labor more abundantly for building up a Christian nation amongst you than any of the Apostles. And you know as well as I that you are not indebted to a principle beneath a white skin for your religious services, but to a colored one.

What then is the matter now; is not religion the same now under a colored skin as it ever was? If so I would ask why is not a man of color respected; you may say as many say, we have white men enough. But was this the spirit of Christ and his Apostles? If it had been, there would not have been one white preacher in the world—for Jesus Christ never would have imparted his grace or word to them, for he could forever have withheld it from them. But we find that Jesus Christ and his Apostles never looked at the outward appearances. Jesus in particular looked at the hearts, and his Apostles through him being discerners of the spirit, looked at their fruit without any regard to the skin, color or nation; as St. Paul himself speaks, “Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian nor Scythian, bond nor free—but Christ is all and in all.”² If you can find a spirit like Jesus Christ and his Apostles prevailing now in any of the white congregations, I should like to know it. I ask, is it not the case that everybody that is not white

¹ *another nation* I.e., the African continent.

² *Where there is ... in all* See Colossians 3:11; *Greek* Gentile; non-Jewish person; *Scythian* Eurasian nomadic ethnic group, often used in ancient rhetoric as an example of “barbaric” peoples.

is treated with contempt and counted as barbarians? And I ask if the word of God justifies the white man in so doing? When the prophets prophesied, of whom did they speak? When they spoke of heathens, was it not the whites and others who were counted Gentiles? And I ask if all nations with the exception of the Jews were not counted heathens? and according to the writings of some, it could not mean the Indians, for they are counted Jews.¹ And now I would ask, why is all this distinction made among these Christian societies? I would ask what is all this ado about Missionary Societies, if it be not to Christianize those who are not Christians? And what is it for? To degrade them worse, to bring them into society where they must welter out their days in disgrace, merely because their skin is of a different complexion. What folly it is to try to make the state of human society worse than it is. How astonished some may be at this—but let me ask, is it not so? Let me refer you to the churches only. And my brethren, is there any agreement? Do brethren and sisters love one another? Do they not rather hate one another? Outward forms and ceremonies, the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye and pride of life is of more value to many professors,² than the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, or an attachment to his altar, to his ordinances or to his children. But you may ask who are the children of God? perhaps you may say none but white. If so, the word of the Lord is not true.

I will refer you to St. Peter's precepts—Acts 10. "God is no respecter of persons"—&c. Now if this is the case, my white brother, what better are you than God? And if no better, why do you who profess his gospel and to have his spirit, act so contrary to it? Let me ask why the men of a different skin are so despised, why are not they educated and placed in your pulpits? I ask if his services well performed are not as good as if a white man performed them? I ask if a marriage or a funeral ceremony, or the ordinance of the Lord's house would not be as acceptable in the sight of God as though he was white? And if so, why is it not to you? I ask again, why is it not acceptable to have men to exercise their office in one place as well as in another? Perhaps you

¹ *the Indians ... counted Jews* Some early racial theories posited that North American Indigenous peoples were descended from one of the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel.

² *professors* I.e., people who profess to follow Christianity.

will say that if we admit you to all of these privileges you will want more. I expect that I can guess what that is—Why, say you, there would be intermarriages. How that would be I am not able to say—and if it should be, it would be nothing strange or new to me; for I can assure you that I know a great many that have intermarried, both of the whites and the Indians—and many are their sons and daughters—and people too of the first respectability. And I could point to some in the famous city of Boston and elsewhere. You may now look at the disgraceful act in the statute law passed by the Legislature of Massachusetts,³ and behold the fifty pound fine levied upon any Clergyman or Justice of the Peace that dare to encourage the laws of God and nature by a legitimate union in holy wedlock between the Indians and whites. I would ask how this looks to your law makers. I would ask if this corresponds with your sayings—that you think as much of the Indians as you do of the whites. I do not wonder that you blush many of you while you read; for many have broken the ill-fated laws made by man to hedge up the laws of God and nature. I would ask if they who have made the law have not broken it—but there is no other state in New England that has this law but Massachusetts; and I think as many of you do not, that you have done yourselves no credit.

But as I am not looking for a wife, having one of the finest cast,⁴ as you no doubt would understand while you read her experience and travail of soul in the way to heaven, you will see that it is not my object. And if I had none, I should not want anyone to take my right from me and choose a wife for me; for I think that I or any of my brethren have a right to choose a wife for themselves as well as the whites—and as the whites have taken the liberty to choose my brethren, the Indians, hundreds and thousands of them as partners in life, I believe the Indians have as much right to choose their partners amongst the whites if they wish. I would ask you if you can see anything inconsistent in your conduct and talk about the Indians? And if

³ *disgraceful act ... Legislature of Massachusetts* Massachusetts had banned intermarriage between whites and those defined as "negro or mulatto" in 1705, and in 1786 it expanded this law to apply to Indigenous people as well. Interracial marriage was not legalized in Massachusetts until 1843.

⁴ *cast* Character; also complexion or physical form.

you do, I hope you will try to become more consistent. Now if the Lord Jesus Christ, who is counted by all to be a Jew, and it is well known that the Jews are a colored people, especially those living in the East, where Christ was born—and if he should appear amongst us, would he not be shut out of doors by many, very quickly? and by those too, who profess religion?

By what you read, you may learn how deep your principles are. I should say they were skin deep. I should not wonder if some of the most selfish and ignorant would spout a charge of their principles now and then at me. But I would ask, how are you to love your neighbors as yourself? Is it to cheat them? Is it to wrong them in anything? Now to cheat them out of any of their rights is robbery. And I ask, can you deny that you are not robbing the Indians daily, and many others? But at last you may think I am what is called a hard and uncharitable man. But not so. I believe there are many who would not hesitate to advocate our cause; and those too who are men of fame and respectability—as well as ladies of honor and virtue. There is a Webster, an Everett, and a Wirt,¹ and many others who are distinguished characters—besides an host of my fellow citizens, who advocate our cause daily. And how I congratulate such noble spirits—how they are to be prized and valued; for they are well calculated to promote the happiness of mankind. They well know that man was made for society, and not for hissing stocks² and outcasts. And when such a principle as this lies within the hearts of men, how much it is like its God—and how it honors its Maker—and how it imitates the feelings of the good Samaritan, that had his wounds bound up, who had been among thieves and robbers.³

Do not get tired, ye noble-hearted—only think how many poor Indians want their wounds done up daily;

¹ *Webster* Daniel Webster (1782–1852), orator, lawyer, and Massachusetts senator, who spoke for the defense of Muscogee lands against Georgia State's expansionist ambitions; *Everett* Edward Everett (1794–1865), Massachusetts governor and Harvard professor, who opposed the Indian Removal Act; *Wirt* William Wirt (1772–1834), the longest-serving Attorney General in United States history, who represented (unsuccessfully) the Cherokee nation in the case *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia* (1831).

² *for hissing stocks* To be objects of scorn or mockery (i.e., “laughing stocks”).

³ *the good Samaritan . . . and robbers* See Luke 10:30–37.

the Lord will reward you, and pray you stop not till this tree of distinction shall be levelled to the earth, and the mantle of prejudice torn from every American heart—then shall peace pervade the Union.

WILLIAM APES.⁴

—1833

from *Eulogy on King Philip*⁵

I do not arise to spread before you the fame of a noted warrior, whose natural abilities shone like those of the great and mighty Philip of Greece, or of Alexander the Great, or like those of Washington⁶—whose virtues and patriotism are engraven on the hearts of my audience. Neither do I approve of war as being the best method of bowing to the haughty tyrant, MAN, and civilizing the world. No, far from me be such a thought. But it is to bring before you beings made by the God of Nature, and in whose hearts and heads he has planted sympathies that shall live forever in the memory of the world, whose brilliant talents shone in the display of natural things, so that the most cultivated, whose powers shone with equal luster, were not able to prepare mantles to cover the burning elements of an uncivilized world. What, then—shall we cease to mention the mighty of the earth, the noble work of God?

Yet those purer virtues remain untold. Those noble traits that marked the wild man's course lie buried in the shades of night; and who shall stand? I appeal to the lovers of liberty. But those few remaining descendants who now remain as the monument of the cruelty of those who came to improve our race, and correct our errors; and as the immortal Washington lives

⁴ *WILLIAM APES* Apes began adding the second “s” to his surname around the summer of 1836; this has since become the standard spelling.

⁵ *King Philip* Known in the Massachusetts language as Metacom (1638–76), a Wampanoag sachem who led his people into a war of resistance against English colonists; Apes forwarded the claim that Metacom was his direct paternal ancestor.

⁶ *Philip of Greece . . . Washington* Three famous and well-respected military leaders: King Philip II of Macedon (382–336 BCE); Philip's son Alexander III of Macedon (356–323 BCE), who established one of the largest empires in ancient history; and George Washington (1732–99).



This engraving (the artist is unknown) was presented opposite the frontispiece of the 1836 and 1837 editions of the Eulogy. Under the heading “Errata” that appears at the end of the text, Apess includes the following note: “In the Frontispiece, the man at the head of Philip should be an Indian.”

endeared and engraven on the hearts of every white in America, never to be forgotten in time—even such is the immortal Philip honored, as held in memory by the degraded, but yet grateful descendants, who appreciate his character; so will every patriot, especially in this enlightened age, respect the rude¹ yet all-accomplished son of the forest, that died a martyr to his cause, though unsuccessful, yet as glorious as the *American* Revolution. Where, then, shall we place the hero of the wilderness?

Justice and humanity for the remaining few prompt me to vindicate the character of him who yet lives in their hearts and, if possible, melt the prejudice that exists in the hearts of those who are in the possession of his soil, and only by the right of conquest—is the aim of him who proudly tells you, the blood of a denominated² savage runs in his veins. It is, however, true, that there are many who are said to be honorable warriors, who, in the wisdom of their civilized legislation, think it no crime to wreak their vengeance upon whole nations and communities, until the fields are covered with blood, and the rivers turned into purple

fountains, while groans, like distant thunder, are heard from the wounded, and the tens of thousands of the dying, leaving helpless families depending on their cares and sympathies for life; while a loud response is heard floating through the air from the ten thousand Indian children and orphans, who are left to mourn the honorable acts of a few—civilized men. ...

The first inquiry is, Who is Philip? He was the descendant of one of the most celebrated chiefs in the known world,³ for peace and universal benevolence towards all men; for injuries upon injuries, and the most daring robberies and barbarous deeds of death that were ever committed by the American Pilgrims,⁴

³ *one of the ... known world* Metacom's father Ousamequin (c. 1581–1661), frequently referred to by his title of Massasoit (“Great Sachem”). He was widely respected as a leader and had been committed to maintaining peace between his people and the colonists, having initiated the first treaty between the Wampanoag and the Plymouth settlers in March 1621.

⁴ *for injuries ... American Pilgrims* Apess may have in mind the atrocities committed by colonial (Massachusetts Bay, Plymouth, and Saybrook) forces during the Pequot War (1636–38), during which hundreds of Pequot were massacred or enslaved. For more on the Pequot War, see William Bradford's account in volume A of this anthology; see also the In Context materials appended to Bradford entitled “Mapping Colonial Conflict.”

¹ *rude* Uncultivated.

² *denominated* Named; so-called.

were with patience and resignation borne, in a manner that would do justice to any Christian nation or being in the world—especially when we realize that it was voluntary suffering on the part of the good old chief. His country extensive—his men numerous, so as the wilderness was enlivened by them, say a thousand to one of the white men, and they, also, sick and feeble—where, then, shall we find one nation submitting so tamely to another, with such a host at their command? For injuries of much less magnitude have the people called Christians slain their brethren, till they could sing, like Sampson, “With a jaw bone of an ass have we slain our thousands, and laid them in heaps.”¹ It will be well for us to lay those deeds and depredations committed by whites upon Indians before the civilized world, and then they can judge for themselves. . . .

December (O.S.²) 1620, the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth, and without asking liberty from anyone, they possessed themselves of a portion of the country, and built themselves houses, and then made a treaty, and commanded them³ to accede to it. This, if now done, would be called an insult, and every white man would be called to go out and act the part of a patriot, to defend their country’s rights; and if every intruder were butchered, it would be sung upon every hilltop in the Union, that victory and patriotism was the order of the day. And yet the Indians (though many were dissatisfied), without the shedding of blood, or imprisoning anyone, bore it. And yet for their kindness and resignation towards the whites, they were called savages, and made by God on purpose for them to destroy. We might say, God understood his work better than this. But to proceed, it appears that a treaty was made by the Pilgrims and the Indians, which treaty was kept during forty years; the young chiefs during this time were showing the Pilgrims how to live in their country, and find support for their wives and little ones; and for all this, they were receiving the applauses of being

savages. The two gentleman chiefs were Squanto and Samoset,⁴ that were so good to the Pilgrims. . . .

The history of New England writers say, that our tribes were large and respectable. How then, could it be otherwise, but their safety rested in the hands of friendly Indians. In 1647, the pilgrims speak of large and respectable tribes. But let us trace them for a few moments. How have they been destroyed, is it by fair means? No. How then? By hypocritical proceedings, by being duped and flattered; flattered by informing the Indians that their God was a going to speak to them, and then place them before the cannon’s mouth in a line, and then putting the match to it and kill thousands of them. We might suppose that meek Christians had better gods and weapons than cannon; weapons that were not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds. These are the weapons that modern Christians profess to have; and if the pilgrims did not have them, they ought not to be honored as such. But let us again review their weapons, to civilize the nations of this soil. What were they: rum and powder, and ball, together with all the diseases, such as the small pox, and every other disease imaginable; and in this way sweep off thousands and tens of thousands. And then it has been said, that these men who were free from these things, that they could not live among civilized people. We wonder how a virtuous people could live in a sink of diseases, a people who had never been used to them.

And who is to account for those destructions upon innocent families and helpless children? It was said by some of the New England writers, that living babes were found at the breast of their dead mothers. What an awful sight! and to think too, that these diseases were carried among them on purpose to destroy them. Let the children of the Pilgrims blush, while the son of the forest drops a tear, and groans over the fate of his murdered and departed fathers. He would say to the

¹ *slain their brethren . . . in heaps* In the Book of Judges, the Israelite leader Samson, who is repeatedly visited by bursts of super-human strength, kills a thousand Philistines using only the jawbone of a donkey, in retaliation for the Philistines’ murder of his wife and father-in-law. See Judges 15:15–16.

² *O.S.* Old Style; indicates that the date was recorded according to the Julian calendar, which in England and the colonies was not replaced by the Gregorian calendar until 1752.

³ *them* I.e., the Indigenous peoples inhabiting the area.

⁴ *Squanto and Samoset* Tisquantum, or Squanto (d. 1622), was a Patuxet who, prior to the arrival of the Pilgrims, had been captured by English explorers and sold into slavery in Europe, where he learned English; following his eventual return to North America, he provided crucial assistance to the New England colonists. Samoset, an Abenaki, was the first Indigenous person to reach out in diplomacy upon the arrival of the Pilgrims, and his work paved the way for later diplomacy between the settlers and Ousamequin.

sons of the Pilgrims (as Job said about his birth day¹), let the day be dark, the 22nd of December, 1622;² let it be forgotten in your celebration, in your speeches, and by the burying of the Rock that your fathers first put their foot upon. For be it remembered, although the gospel is said to be glad tidings to all people, yet we poor Indians never have found those who brought it as messengers of mercy, but contrawise. We say, therefore, let every man of color wrap himself in mourning, for the 22nd of December and the 4th of July are days of mourning and not of joy. (I would here say, there is an error in my book; it speaks of the 25th of December, but it should be the 22d. See *Indian Nullification*.)³ Let them rather fast and pray to the great Spirit, the Indian's God, who deals out mercy to his red children, and not destruction.

Oh, Christians, can you answer for those beings that have been destroyed by your hostilities, and beings too that lie endeared to God as yourselves? his Son being their Savior as well as yours, and alike to all men? And will you presume to say that you are executing the judgments of God by so doing, or as many really are approving the works of their fathers to be genuine, as it is certain that every time they celebrate the day of the Pilgrims they do? Although in words they deny it, yet in works they approve of the iniquities of their fathers. And as the seed of iniquity and prejudice was sown in that day, so it still remains; and there is a deep-rooted popular opinion in the hearts of many, that Indians were made, &c. on purpose for destruction, to be driven out by white Christians, and they to take their places; and that God had decreed it from all eternity. If such theologians would only study the works of nature more, they would understand the purposes of good better than they do. That the favor of the Almighty

¹ *as Job ... birth day* In the Book of Job, God allows Satan to test the virtuous Job's faith through a series of terrible misfortunes; in his misery, Job curses the day he was born (see Job 3.1), but his faith is never fully shaken.

² *22nd of December, 1622* The purported date on which the Pilgrims arrived at Plymouth Rock in Massachusetts, where they began to establish a colony. In fact, the *Mayflower* arrived at the shores of North America in 1620.

³ *Indian Nullification* Apess's account of his participation in the Mashpee struggle for self-government, published in 1835. See the In Context materials for Apess in the website component of this anthology.

was good and holy, and all his nobler works were made to adorn his image, by being his grateful servants, and admiring each other as angels, and not, as they say, to drive and devour each other. ...

But having laid a mass of history and exposition before you, the purpose of which is to show that Philip and all the Indians generally felt indignantly towards whites, whereby they were more easily allied together by Philip, their King and Emperor, we come to notice more particularly his history. As to his Majesty, King Philip, it was certain that his honor was put to the test, and it was certainly to be tried, even at the loss of his life and country. It is a matter of uncertainty about his age; but his birth-place was at Mount Hope, Rhode Island, where Massasoit, his father, lived, till 1656, and died, as also his brother, Alexander, by the governor's ill-treating him (that is, Winthrop⁴), which caused his death, as before mentioned, in 1662; after which, the kingdom fell into the hands of Philip, the greatest man that ever lived upon the American shores. Soon after his coming to the throne, it appears he began to be noticed, though, prior to this, it appears that he was not forward in the councils of war or peace. When he came into office it appears that he knew there was great responsibility resting upon himself and country; that it was likely to be ruined by those rude intruders around him, though he appears friendly, and is willing to sell them lands for almost nothing, as we shall learn from dates of the Plymouth Colony, which commence June 23, 1664. ...

In the year 1668 Philip made a complaint against one Weston, who had wronged one of his men of a gun and some swine; and we have no account that he got any justice for his injured brethren. And, indeed, it would be a strange thing for poor unfortunate Indians to find justice in those Courts of the pretended pious, in those days, or even since; and for a proof of my assertion I will refer the reader or hearer to the records of Legislatures and Courts throughout New England; and also to my book, *Indian Nullification*.

We would remark still further; who stood up in those days, and since, to plead Indian rights? Was it the friend of the Indian? No, it was his enemies who rose; his enemies, to judge and pass sentence. And

⁴ *Winthrop* John Winthrop (c. 1587–1649), English Puritan colonist and governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

we know that such kind of characters as the Pilgrims were, in regard to the Indians' rights, who, as they say, had none, must certainly always give verdict against them, as, generally speaking, they always have. Prior to this insult it appears that Philip had met with great difficulty with the Pilgrims; that they appeared to be suspicious of him in 1671; and the Pilgrims sent for him, but he did not appear to move as though he cared much for their messenger, which caused them to be still more suspicious. What grounds the Pilgrims had is not ascertained, unless it is attributed to a guilty conscience for wrongs done to Indians. It appears that Philip, when he got ready, goes near to them and sends messengers to Taunton, to invite the Pilgrims to come and treat with him; but the governor being either too proud, or afraid, sends messengers to him to come to their residence at Taunton, to which he complied. Among these messengers was the Honorable Roger Williams,¹ a Christian and a patriot and a friend to the Indians, for which we rejoice. Philip, not liking to trust the Pilgrims, left some of the whites in his stead, to warrant his safe return. When Philip and his men had come near the place, some of the Plymouth people were ready to attack him; this rashness was, however, prevented by the Commissioner of Massachusetts, who met there with the Governor, to treat with Philip; and it was agreed upon to meet in the meetinghouse. Philip's complaint was that the Pilgrims had injured the planting grounds of his people. The Pilgrims acting as umpires say the charges against them were not sustained; and because it was not, to their satisfaction, the whites wanted that Philip should order all his men to bring in his arms and ammunition; and the Court was to dispose of them as they pleased. The next thing was that Philip must pay the cost of the treaty, which was four hundred dollars. The pious Dr. Mather² says that Philip was appointed to pay a sum of money to defray the charges that his insolent clamors had put the Colony to. We wonder if the Pilgrims were as ready to pay the Indians for the trouble they put them to.

¹ *Roger Williams* Puritan minister, writer on Indigenous languages, and founder of the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations (1603–83).

² *Dr. Mather* Influential Puritan minister Increase Mather, who wrote an account of the war entitled *A Brief History of the War with the Indians in New-England* (1676).

If they were, it was with the instruments of death. It appears that Phillip did not wish to make war with them, but compromised with them; and in order to appease the Pilgrims he actually did order his men, whom he could not trust, to deliver them up; but his own men withheld, with the exception of a very few.

Now, what an unrighteous act this was in the people, who professed to be friendly and humane, and peaceable to all men. It could not be that they were so devoid of sense as to think these illiberal acts would produce peace; but contrawise, continual broils. And in fact it does appear that they courted war instead of peace, as it appears from a second council that was held by order of the Governor, at Plymouth, September 13, 1671. It appears that they sent again for Philip; but he did not attend, but went himself and made complaint to the governor, which made him write to the council, and ordered them to desist, to be more mild, and not to take such rash measures. But it appears that on the 24th, the scene changed; that they held another council, and the disturbers of the peace, the intruders upon a peaceable people, say they find Philip guilty of the following charges:

1. That he had neglected to bring in his arms, although competent time had been given him.
2. That he had carried insolently and proudly towards us on several occasions, in refusing to come down to our courts (when sent for) to procure a right understanding betwixt us.

What an insult this was to his Majesty, and independent Chief of a powerful nation, should come at the beck and call of his neighbors whenever they pleased to have him do it. Besides, did not Philip do as he agreed, at Taunton, that is in case there was more difficulty they were to leave it to Massachusetts, to be settled there in the high council, and both parties were to abide by their decision; but did the Pilgrims wait? No. But being infallible, of course they could not err.

The third charge was harboring diverse Indians; not his own men, but vagabond Indians.

Now what a charge this was to bring against a King, calling his company vagabonds, because it did not happen to please them; and what right had they to find fault with his company? I do

not believe that Philip ever troubled himself about the white people's company, and prefer charges¹ against them for keeping company with whom they pleased. Neither do I believe he called their company vagabonds, for he was more noble than that.

The fourth charge is that he went to Massachusetts with his council, and complained against them, and turned their brethren against them.

This was more a complaint against themselves than Philip, inasmuch as it represents that Philip's story was so correct, that they were blamable.

5. That he had not been quite so civil as they wished him to be.

We presume that Philip felt himself much troubled by these intruders, and of course put them off from time to time, or did not take much notice of their proposals. Now such charges as those, we think are to no credit of the Pilgrims. However, this council ended much as the other did, in regard to disarming the Indians, which they never were able to do. Thus ended the events of 1671.

But it appears that the Pilgrims could not be contented with what they had done, but they must send an Indian, and a traitor, to preach to Philip and his men, in order to convert him and his people to Christianity. The preacher's name was Sassamon.² I would appeal to this audience, is it not certain that the Plymouth people strove to pick a quarrel with Philip and his men? What could have been more insulting than to send a man to them who was false, and looked upon as such; for it is most certain that a traitor was above all others, the more to be detested than any other. And not only so; it was the laws of the Indians, that such a man must die; that he had forfeited his life; and when he made his appearance among them, Philip would have killed him upon the spot, if his council had not persuaded

him not to. But it appears that in March, 1674, one of Philip's men killed him, and placed him beneath the ice in a certain pond near Plymouth; doubtless by the order of Philip. After this, search was made for him, and they found there a certain Indian, by the name of Patuckson; Tobias, also, his son were apprehended and tried. Tobias was one of Philip's counselors, as it appears from the records that the trial did not end here, that it was put over, and that two of the Indians entered into bonds for \$400, for the appearance of Tobias at the June term; for which a mortgage of land was taken to that amount, for his safe return. June having arrived, three instead of one are arraigned. There was no one but Tobias suspected at the previous Court. Now two others are arraigned, tried, condemned and executed (making three in all), on June the 8th, 1675, by hanging and shooting. It does not appear that any more than one was guilty, and it was said that he was known to acknowledge it; but the other two persisted in their innocency to the last.

This murder of the preacher brought on the war a year sooner than it was anticipated by Philip. But this so exasperated King Philip, that from that day he studied to be revenged of the Pilgrims; judging that his white intruders had nothing to do in punishing his people for any crime, and that it was in violation of treaties of ancient date. But when we look at this, how bold and how daring it was to Philip, as though they would bid defiance to him and all his authority, we do not wonder at his exasperation. When the Governor finds that his Majesty was displeased, he then sends messengers to him, and wishes to know why he would make war upon him (as if he had done all right), and wished to enter into a new treaty with him. The King answered them thus: "Your governor is but a subject of King Charles of England,³ I shall not treat with a subject; I shall treat of peace only with a King, my brother; when he comes, I am ready."

This answer of Philip's to the messengers, is worthy of note throughout the world. And never could a prince answer with more dignity in regard to his official authority than he did; disdaining the idea of placing himself upon a par of the minor subjects of a King; letting them

¹ *prefer charges* Suggest to an authority that charges be made.

² *Sassamon* Wussausmon, also known in English as John Sassamon, was a Christian Massachusetts preacher who worked as a diplomat between various Indigenous groups and the colonists, and had warned the Plymouth governor of an impending attack by the Wampanoag.

³ *King Charles of England* Charles II, who ruled England, Scotland, and Ireland (and thereby the English colonies) from 1660 to 1685.

know at the same time, that he felt his independence more than they thought he did. And indeed it was time for him to wake up, for now the subjects of King Charles had taken one of his counselors and killed him, and he could no longer trust them. Until the execution of these three Indians, supposed to be the murderers of Sassamon, no hostility was committed by Philip or his warriors. About the time of their trial, he was said to be marching his men up and down the country in arms; but when it was known, he could no longer restrain his young men, who, upon the 24th of June, provoked the people of Swansea, by killing their cattle and other injuries, which was a signal to commence the war, and what they had desired, as a superstitious notion prevailed among the Indians, that whoever fired the first gun of either party, would be conquered. Doubtless a notion they had received from the Pilgrims. It was upon a fast day¹ too, when the first gun was fired; and as the people were returning from church, they were fired upon by the Indians, when several of them were killed. It is not supposed that Philip directed this attack, but was opposed to it. Though it is not doubted that he meant to be revenged upon his enemies; for during some time he had been cementing his countrymen together, as it appears that he had sent to all the disaffected tribes, who also had watched the movements of the comers from the new world,² and were as dissatisfied as Philip himself was with their proceedings.

Now around the council fires they meet,
The young nobles for to greet;
Their tales of woe and sorrows to relate,
About the Pilgrims, their wretched foes.

And while their fires were blazing high,
Their King and Emperor to greet;
His voice like lightning fires their hearts,
To stand the test or die.

See those Pilgrims from the world unknown,
No love for Indians do know:

¹ *fast day* Day officially set aside for public penitence; fast days were often declared during times of war, pestilence, famine, or other hardship, on the assumption that collective penitence would prompt the sympathy and aid of God.

² *comers from the new world* Either an unintended error (the colonists having arrived from what is conventionally referred to as the "Old World"), or a conscious inversion of conventional language.

Although our fathers fed them well
With venison rich, of precious kinds.

No gratitude to Indians now is shown,
From people saved by them alone;
All gratitude that poor Indians do know,
Is, we are robbed of all our rights.³

At this council it appears that Philip made the following speech to his chiefs, counselors, and warriors:

Brothers,—You see this vast country before us, which the great Spirit gave to our fathers and us; you see the buffalo and deer that now are our support.—Brothers, you see these little ones, our wives and children, who are looking to us for food and raiment; and you now see the foe before you, that they have grown insolent and bold; that all our ancient customs are disregarded; the treaties made by our fathers and us are broken, and all of us insulted; our council fires disregarded, and all the ancient customs of our fathers; our brothers murdered before our eyes, and their spirits cry to us for revenge. Brothers, these people from the unknown world will cut down our groves, spoil our hunting and planting grounds, and drive us and our children from the graves of our fathers, and our council fires, and enslave our women and children.

This famous speech of Philip was calculated to arouse them to arms, to do the best they could in protecting and defending their rights. The blow had now been struck, the die was cast, and nothing but blood and carnage was before them. And we find Philip as active as the wind, as dextrous as a giant, firm as the pillows of heaven, and fierce as a lion, a powerful foe to contend with indeed; and as swift as an eagle, gathering together his forces to prepare them for the battle. And as it would swell our address too full to mention all the tribes in Philip's train of warriors, suffice it to say that from six to seven were with him at different times. When he begins the war, he goes forward and musters about 500 of his men, and arms them complete, and

³ *Now around . . . our rights* The author of the poem is unknown; it may have been written by Apess himself.

about 900 of the other, making in all about fourteen hundred warriors when he commenced. It must be recollected that this war was legally declared by Philip, so that the colonies had a fair warning. It was no savage war of surprise as some suppose, but one sorely provoked by the Pilgrims themselves. But when Philip and his men fought, as they were accustomed to do, and according to their mode of war, it was no more than what could be expected. But we hear no particular acts of cruelty committed by Philip during the siege. But we find more manly nobility in him, than we do in all the head Pilgrims put together, as we shall see during this quarrel between them. Philip's young men were eager to do exploits, and to lead captive their haughty lords. It does appear that every Indian heart had been lighted up at the council fires, at Philip's speech, and that the forest was literally alive with this injured race. And now town after town fell before them. The Pilgrims with their forces were marching ever in one direction, while Philip and his forces were marching in another, burning all before them, until Middleborough, Taunton, and Dartmouth were laid in ruins, and forsaken by its inhabitants.

At the great fight at Pocasset,¹ Philip commanded in person, where he also was discovered with his host in a dismal swamp. He had retired here with his army to secure a safe retreat from the Pilgrims, who were in close pursuit of him, and their numbers were so powerful they thought the fate of Philip was sealed. They surrounded the swamp, in hopes to destroy him and his army. At the edge of the swamp Philip had secreted a few of his men to draw them into ambush, upon which the Pilgrims showed fight; Philip's men retreating and the whites pursuing them till they were surrounded by Philip, and nearly all cut off. This was a sorry time to them; the Pilgrims, however, reinforced, but ordered a retreat, supposing it impossible for Philip to escape; and knowing his forces to be great, it was conjectured by some to build a fort to starve him out, as he had lost but few men in the fight. The situation of Philip was rather peculiar, as there was but one outlet to the swamp, and a river before him nearly seven miles to descend. The Pilgrims placed a guard around the swamp for 13 days, which gave Philip and his men time to prepare canoes to make good his retreat; in which he

did, to the Connecticut river, and in his retreat lost but fourteen men. We may look upon this move of Philip's to be equal, if not superior, to that of Washington crossing the Delaware.² ...

The Pilgrims determined to break down Philip's power, if possible, with the Narragansetts;³ thus they raised an army of 1,500 strong to go against them and destroy them if possible. In this, Massachusetts, Plymouth, and Connecticut all join in severally to crush Philip. Accordingly, in December, in 1675, the Pilgrims set forward to destroy them. Preceding their march, Philip had made all arrangements for the winter, and had fortified himself beyond what was common for his countrymen to do, upon a small island near South Kingston, R.I. Here he intended to pass the winter with his warriors, and their wives and children. About 500 Indian houses was erected of a superior kind, in which was deposited all their stores, tubs of corn, and other things, piled up to a great height, which rendered it bullet proof. It was supposed that about 3,000 persons had taken up their residence in it. (I would remark that Indians took better care of themselves in those days than they have been able to since.) Accordingly, on the 19th day of December, after the Pilgrims had been out in the extreme cold for nearly one month, lodging in tents, and their provision being short, and the air full of snow, they had no other alternative than to attack Philip in the fort. Treachery, however, hastened his ruin; one of his men, by hope of reward from the deceptive Pilgrims, betrayed his country into their hands. The traitor's name was Peter. No white man was acquainted with the way, and it would have been almost impossible for them to have found it, much less to have captured it. There was

² *Washington crossing the Delaware* On the night and early morning of 25–26 December 1776, George Washington led a secret military crossing of the Delaware River to surprise British forces in Trenton, New Jersey; the successful operation was highly dangerous and is considered to have been one of the defining moments of the Revolutionary War.

³ *Narragansetts* The Narragansett had remained largely neutral during the course of the war, but were drawn into the conflict in part because of their refusal to surrender to colonial forces the Wampanoag women and children to whom they had given refuge. They began to engage in small-scale raids on colonial strongholds following what is sometimes called the Great Swamp Massacre, in which hundreds of Narragansett were killed and much of the tribe's winter stores were destroyed.

¹ *great fight at Pocasset* On 18 July 1675.

but one point where it could have been entered or assailed with any success, and this was fortified much like a block house, directly in front of the entrance, and also flankers¹ to cover a cross fire. Besides high palisades, an immense hedge of fallen trees of nearly a rod in thickness. Thus surrounded by trees and water, there was but one place that the Pilgrims could pass. Nevertheless, they made the attempt. Philip now had directed his men to fire, and every platoon of the Indians swept every white man from the path one after another, until six captains, with a great many of the men had fallen. In the meantime, one Captain Moseley with some of his men had somehow or other gotten into the fort in another way, and surprised them; by which the Pilgrims were enabled to capture the fort, at the same time setting fire to it, and hewing down men, women and children indiscriminately. Philip, however, was enabled to escape with many of his warriors. It is said at this battle eighty whites were killed, and one hundred and fifty wounded; many of whom died of their wounds afterwards, not being able to dress them till they had marched 18 miles; also leaving many of their dead in the fort. It is said that 700 of the Narragansetts perished. The greater part of them being women and children. ...

It appears that one of the whites had married one of Philip's countrymen; and they, the Pilgrims, said he was a traitor, and therefore they said he must die. So they quartered him; and as history informs us, they said, he being a heathen, but a few tears were shed at his funeral. Here, then, because a man would not turn and fight against his own wife and family, or leave them, he was condemned as an heathen. We presume that no honest men will commend those ancient fathers for such absurd conduct. Soon after this, Philip and his men left that part of the country and retired farther back, near the Mohawks; where, in July 1676, some of his men were slain by the Mohawks. Notwithstanding this, he strove to get them to join him; and here it is said that Philip did not do that which was right; that he killed some of the Mohawks and laid it to² the whites, in order that he might get them to join him. If so, we cannot consistently believe he did right. But he was so exasperated that nothing but revenge would

satisfy him. All this act was no worse than our political men do in our days, of their strife to wrong each other, who profess to be enlightened; and all for the sake of carrying their points. Heathen-like, either by the sword, calumny or deception of every kind; and the late duels among the [so-]called high men of honor, is sufficient to warrant my statements. But while we pursue our history in regard to Philip, we find that he made many successful attempts against the Pilgrims, in surprising and driving them from their posts, during the year 1676, in February, and through till August, in which time many of the Christian Indians joined him. It is thought by many that all would have joined him if they had been left to their choice, as it appears they did not like their white brethren very well. It appears that Philip treated his prisoners with a great deal more Christian-like spirit than the Pilgrims did; even Mrs. Rolandson,³ although speaking with bitterness sometimes of the Indians, yet in her journal she speaks not a word against him. Philip even hires her to work for him, and pays her for her work, and then invites her to dine with him and to smoke with him. And we have many testimonies that he was kind to his prisoners; and when the English wanted to redeem Philip's prisoners, they had the privilege. ...

But we have another dark and corrupt deed for the sons of the pilgrims to look at, and that is the fight and capture of Philip's son and wife, and many of his warriors, in which Philip lost about 130 men killed and wounded; this was in August 1676. But the most horrid act was in taking Philip's son, about ten years of age, and selling him to be a slave away from his father and mother. While I am writing, I can hardly restrain my feelings, to think a people calling themselves Christians, should conduct so scandalous, so outrageous, making themselves appear so despicable in the eyes of the Indians; and even now in this audience, I doubt not but there is men honorable enough to despise the conduct of those pretended Christians. And surely none but such as believe they did right,

¹ *flankers* Protective structures.

² *laid it to* Blamed it on.

³ *Mrs. Rolandson* Mary Rowlandson was a colonist taken prisoner by a group of Narragansett during the war, and was for several months held captive among a group of Narragansett, Nipmuc, and Wampanoag. Following her release, Rowlandson published *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God* (1682), which sold extremely well throughout the colonies; the narrative describes several encounters with Metacom, who treated Rowlandson with relative kindness.

will ever go and undertake to celebrate that day of their landing, the 22nd of December. Only look at it, then stop and pause. My fathers came here for liberty themselves, and then they must go and chain that mind, that image they professed to serve; not content to rob and cheat the poor ignorant Indians, but must take one of the King's sons, and make a slave of him. Gentlemen and ladies, I blush at these tales, if you do not, especially when they professed to be a free and humane people. Yes, they did; they took a part of my tribe, and sold them to the Spaniards in Bermuda, and many others; and then on the Sabbath day, these people would gather themselves together, and say that God is no respecter of persons; while the divines would pour forth, "he that says he loves God and hates his brother, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."¹ And at the same time they hating and selling their fellow men in bondage. And there is no manner of doubt but that all my countrymen would have been enslaved if they had tamely submitted. But no sooner would they butcher every white man that come in their way, and even put an end to their own wives and children, and that was all that prevented them from being slaves; yes, *all*. It was not the good will of those holy pilgrims that prevented, no. But I would speak, and I could wish it might be like the voice of thunder, that it might be heard afar off, even to the ends of the earth. He that will advocate slavery is worse than a beast, is a being devoid of shame; and has gathered around him the most corrupt and debasing principles in the world; and I care not whether he be a minister or member of any church in the world; no, not excepting the head men of the nation. And he that will not set his face against its corrupt principles is a coward, and not worthy of being numbered among men and Christians. And conduct too that libels the laws of the country, and the word of God, that men profess to believe in.

After Philip had his wife and son taken, sorrow filled his heart; but notwithstanding, as determined as ever to be revenged, though was pursued by the duped Indians and Church, into a swamp; one of the men proposing to Philip that he had better make peace with the enemy, upon which he slew him upon the spot.

¹ *God is ... of persons* See Acts 10:34; *he that says ... not in him* See 1 John 4:20.

And the pilgrims being also repulsed² by Philip, were forced to retreat with the loss of one man in particular, whose name was Thomas Lucas, of Plymouth. We rather suspect that he was some related to Lucas and Hedge,³ who made their famous speeches against the poor Marshpees in 1834, in the Legislature in Boston, against freeing them from slavery, that their fathers, the pilgrims, had made of them for years.

Philip's forces had now become very small, so many having been duped away by the whites, and killed, that it was now easy surrounding him. Therefore, upon the 12th of August, Captain Church⁴ surrounded the swamp where Philip and his men had encamped, early in the morning, before they had risen, doubtless led on by an Indian who was either compelled or hired to turn traitor. Church had now placed his guard so that it was impossible for Philip to escape without being shot. It is doubtful, however, whether they would have taken him if he had not been surprised. Suffice it to say, however, this was the case. A sorrowful morning to the poor Indians, to lose such a valuable man. When coming out of the swamp, he was fired upon by an Indian, and killed dead upon the spot.

I rejoice that it was even so, that the Pilgrims did not have the pleasure of tormenting him. The white man's gun missing fire lost the honor of killing the truly great man, Philip. The place where Philip fell was very muddy. Upon this news, the Pilgrims gave three cheers; then Church ordering his body to be pulled out of the mud, while one of those tender-hearted Christians exclaims, "What a dirty creature he looks like." And we have also Church's speech upon that subject, as follows: "For as much as he has caused many a Pilgrim to lie above ground unburied, to rot, not one of his bones shall be buried." With him fell five of his best and most trusty men; one the son of a chief, who fired the first gun in the war.

Captain Church now orders him to be cut up. Accordingly, he was quartered and hung up upon four trees; his head and one hand given to the Indian who

² *repulsed* I.e., driven back.

³ *Lucas and Hedge* Men mentioned by Apess in his book *Indian Nullification* (1835) as resisting the Mashpee struggle for self-government, a struggle in which Apess had been an important leader.

⁴ *Captain Church* Benjamin Church (1639–1718), a captain of what would one day become the United States Army Rangers.

shot him, to carry about to show. At which sight it so overjoyed the Pilgrims, that they would give him money for it; and in this way obtained a considerable sum. After which, his head was sent to Plymouth, and exposed upon a gibbet¹ for twenty years; and his hand to Boston, where it was exhibited in savage triumph; and his mangled body denied a resting place in the tomb, and thus adds the poet,

Cold with the beast he slew, he sleeps,
O'er him no filial spirit weeps.²

I think that as a matter of honor, that I can rejoice that no such evil conduct is recorded of the Indians; that they never hung up any of the white warriors who were head men. And we add the famous speech of Dr. Increase Mather; he says, during the bloody contest, the pious fathers wrestled hard and long with their God, in prayer, that he would prosper their arms, and deliver their enemies into their hands. And when upon stated days of prayer, the Indians got the advantage, it was considered as a rebuke of divine providence (we suppose the Indian prayed best then), which stimulated them to more ardor. ...

I do not hesitate to say that through the prayers, preaching, and examples of those pretended pious, has been the foundation of all the slavery and degradation in the American Colonies towards colored people. Experience has taught me that this has been a most sorry and wretched doctrine to us poor ignorant Indians. I will mention two or three things to amuse you a little; that is, as I was passing through Connecticut, about 15 years ago, where they are so pious that they kill the cats for killing rats, and whip the beer barrels for working upon the Sabbath, that in a severe cold night, when the face of the earth was one glare of ice, dark and stormy, I called at a man's house to know if I could not stay with him, it being about nine miles to the house where I then lived, and knowing him to be a rich man, and withal very pious, knowing if he had a mind he could do it comfortably, and withal we were both members of one church. My reception, however, was almost as

¹ *gibbet* Upright post from which the bodies of criminals were hung for display after execution.

² *Cold with ... spirit weeps* From *An Ode Pronounced before the Inhabitants of Boston* (1830) by American poet Charles Sprague.

cold as the weather, only he did not turn me out of doors; if he had I know not but I should have frozen to death. My situation was a little better than being out, for he allowed a little wood, but no bed, because I was an Indian. Another Christian asked me to dine with him, and put my dinner behind the door; I thought this a queer compliment indeed. ...

But who was Philip, that made all this display in the world; that put an enlightened nation to flight, and won so many battles? It was a son of nature; with nature's talents alone. And who did he have to contend with? With all the combined arts of cultivated talents of the old and new world. It was like putting one talent against a thousand. And yet Philip with that accomplished more than all of them. Yea, he out-did the well-disciplined forces of Greece, under the command of Philip, the Grecian Emperor; for he never was enabled to lay such plans of allying the tribes of the earth together, as Philip of Mount Hope did. And even Napoleon patterned after him, in collecting his forces and surprising the enemy. Washington, too, pursued many of his plans in attacking the enemy, and thereby enabled him to defeat his antagonists and conquer them. What, then, shall we say; shall we not do right to say that Philip, with his one talent, out-strips them all with their ten thousand? No warrior of any age, was ever known to pursue such plans as Philip did. And it is well known that Church and nobody else could have conquered, if his people had not used treachery, which was owing to their ignorance; and after all, it is a fact, that it was not the Pilgrims that conquered him, it was Indians. And as to his benevolence, it was very great; no one in history can accuse Philip of being cruel to his conquered foes; that he used them with more hospitality than they, the Pilgrims, did, cannot be denied; and that he had knowledge and forethought, cannot be denied. As Mr. Gooking,³ in speaking of Philip, says,

³ *Mr. Gooking* Daniel Gookin (1612–87), Irish settler who performed substantial missionary work in the Massachusetts Bay Colony and became a strong advocate for the so-called Praying Indians—the name given to groups of Indigenous people who converted to Christianity and lived in Christian communities called praying towns. His books *Historical Collections of the Indians in New England* (1792) and *The Doings and Sufferings of the Christian Indians* (1836) were written partially in response to what he perceived as the erasure of the Praying Indians from colonial histories of New England and of King Philip's War.

that he was a man of good understanding and knowledge in the best things. Mr. Gooking it appears was a benevolent man and a friend to Indians.

How deep then was the thought of Philip, when he could look from Maine to Georgia, and from the ocean to the lakes, and view with one look all his brethren withering before the more enlightened to come; and how true his prophesy, that the white people would not only cut down their groves, but would enslave them. Had the inspiration of Isaiah¹ been there, he could not have been more correct. Our groves and hunting grounds are gone, our dead are dug up, our council-fires are put out, and a foundation was laid in the first Legislature, to enslave our people,² by taking from them all rights which has been strictly adhered to ever since.³ Look at the disgraceful laws, disfranchising us as citizens. Look at the treaties made by Congress, all broken. Look at the deep-rooted plans laid, when a territory becomes a State, that after so many years, the laws shall be extended over the Indians that live within their boundaries. Yea, every charter that has been given, was given with the view of driving the Indians out of the States, or dooming them to become chained under desperate laws, that would make them drag out a miserable life as one chained to the galley; and this is the course that has been pursued for nearly two hundred years. A fire, a canker, created by the Pilgrims from across the Atlantic, to burn and destroy my poor unfortunate brethren, and it cannot be denied. What then shall we do, shall we cease crying, and say it is all wrong, or shall we bury the hatchet and those unjust laws, and Plymouth Rock together, and become friends? And will the sons of the Pilgrims aid in putting out the fire and destroying the canker that will ruin all that their fathers left behind them to destroy? (By this we see how true Philip spake.) If so, we hope we shall

¹ *Isaiah* Biblical prophet.

² *a foundation ... our people* The 1641 Body of Liberties of Massachusetts is considered the first formal legal code in the New England colonies; it established a set of individual rights for colonists—as well as the right to enslave “captives taken in just wars” and “strangers ... [that] are sold to us.”

³ *first Legislature ... ever since* Following the termination of the genocidal Pequot War (1636–37), many of the surviving Pequot people—children as well as adults—were sold into slavery in Bermuda. The subsequent Treaty of Hartford (1638) outlawed the use of the Pequot name, in an attempt to declare the people extinct.

not hear it said from ministers and church members, that we are so good no other people can live with us, as you know it is a common thing for them to say, Indians cannot live among Christian people; no, even the President of the United States tells the Indians they cannot live among civilized people, and we want your lands and must have them, and will have them.⁴ As if he had said to them, “we want your land for our use to speculate upon, it aids us in paying off our national debt and supporting us in Congress, to drive you off.

“You see, my red children, that our fathers carried on this scheme of getting your lands for our use, and we have now become rich and powerful; and we have a right to do with you just as we please; we claim to be your fathers. And we think we shall do you a great favor, my dear sons and daughters, to drive you out, to get you away out of the reach of our civilized people, who are cheating you, for we have no law to reach them, we cannot protect you although you be our children. So it is no use, you need not cry, you must go, even if the lions devour you, for we promised the land you have to somebody else long ago, perhaps twenty or thirty years; and we did it without your consent, it is true. But this has been the way our fathers first brought us up, and it is hard to depart from it; therefore you shall have no protection from us.” Now while we sum up this subject. Does it not appear that the cause of all wars from beginning to end, was and is for the want of good usage? That the whites have always been the aggressors, and the wars, cruelties and bloodshed is a job of their own seeking, and not the Indians? Did you ever know of Indians’ hurting those who was kind to them? No. We have a thousand witnesses to the contrary. Yea, every male and female declare it to be the fact. We often hear of the wars breaking out upon the frontiers, and it is because the same spirit reigns there that reigned here in New England; and wherever there are any Indians, that spirit still reigns; and at present, there is no law to stop it. What, then, is to be done;

⁴ *even the President ... have them* Apess refers to the devastating Indian Removal policies of U.S. President Andrew Jackson (in office 1829–37), which forced Indigenous peoples to abandon their homelands and migrate westwards to what was called Indian Territory, in order to clear land for white settlers. Jackson justified the Indian Removal Act by claiming that Indigenous cultures were incompatible with white American “civilization.” Thousands of Indigenous people died during their forced migration.

let every friend of the Indians now seize the mantle of Liberty and throw it over those burning elements that has spread with such fearful rapidity, and at once extinguish them forever. It is true that now and then a feeble voice has been raised in our favor. Yes, we might speak of distinguished men, but they fall so far short in the minority, that it is heard but at a small distance. We want trumpets that sound like thunder, and men to act as though they were going at war with those corrupt and degrading principles that robs one of all rights, merely because he is ignorant, and of a little different color. Let us have principles that will give everyone his due; and then shall wars cease, and the weary find rest. Give the Indian his rights, and you may be assured war will cease.

But, by this time you have been enabled to see that Philip's prophecy has come to pass; therefore, as a man of natural abilities, I shall pronounce him the greatest man that was ever in America; and so it will stand, until he is proved to the contrary, to the everlasting disgrace of the Pilgrims' fathers.

We will now give you his language in the Lord's Prayer.¹

Noo-chun kes-uk-qut-tiam-at-am unch koo-
we-su-onk, kuk-ket-as-soo-tam-oonk pey-au-
moo-utch, keet-te-nan-tam-oo-onk ne nai;
ne-ya-ne ke-suk-qutkah oh-ke-it; aos-sa-
ma-i-in-ne-an ko-ko-ke-suk-o-da-e nut-as-e-
suk-ok-kefu-tuk-qun-neg; kahah-quo-an-tam-
a-i-in-ne-an num-match-e-se-ong-an-on-ash,
ne-match-ene-na-mun wonk neet-ah-quo-
antam-au-o-un-non-ognish-nohpasuknoo-na-
mortuk-quo-who-nan, kah chaque sag-kom-
pa-ginne-an en qutch-e-het-tu-ong-a-nit, qut
poh-qud-wus-sin-ne-an watch match-i-tut.

Having now given historical facts, and an exposition in relation to ancient times, by which we have been enabled to discover the foundation which destroyed our common fathers, in their struggle together; it was indeed nothing more than the spirit of avarice and usurpation of power, that has brought people in all ages to hate and devour each other. And I cannot for one

moment look back upon what is past, and call it religion. No, it has not the least appearance like it. Do not then wonder, my dear friends, at my bold and unpolished statements; though I do not believe that truth wants any polishing whatever. And I can assure you, that I have no design to tell an untruth, but facts alone. Oft have I been surprised at the conduct of those who pretend to be Christians, to see how they were affected towards those who were of a different cast, professing one faith. Yes, the spirit of degradation has always been exercised towards us poor and untaught people. If we cannot read, we can see and feel; and we find no excuse in the Bible for Christians conducting towards us as they do.

It is said that in the Christian's guide, God is merciful, and they that are his followers are like him. How much mercy do you think has been shown towards Indians, their wives and their children? Not much, we think. No. And ye fathers, I will appeal to you that are white. Have you any regard for your wives and children, for those delicate sons and daughters? Would you like to see them slain and laid in heaps, and their bodies devoured by the vultures and wild beasts of prey? And their bones bleaching in the sun and air, till they molder away, or were covered by the falling leaves of the forest, and not resist? No. Your hearts would break with grief, and with all the religion and knowledge you have, it would not impede your force to take vengeance upon your foe, that had so cruelly conducted thus, although God has forbid you in so doing. For he has said, "Vengeance is mine, and I will repay."² What, then, my dear affectionate friends, can you think of those who have been so often betrayed, routed and stripped of all they possess, of all their kindred in the flesh? Can, or do you think we have no feeling? The speech of Logan,³ the white man's friend, is no doubt fresh in your memory, that he intended to live and die the friend of the white man; that he always fed them and gave them the best his cabin afforded;

² *Vengeance is ... will repay* See Romans 12.19: "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

³ *Logan* Cayuga orator from the Iroquois Confederacy (c. 1723–80) who had advocated peaceful relations with white settlers until the murder of his family by English soldiers in a raid on his village; he delivered a renowned speech, sometimes known as "Logan's Lament," in 1774.

¹ *Lord's Prayer* Commonly recited Christian prayer; see Matthew 6.9–13 and Luke 11.2–4.

and he appealed to them if they had not been well used; to which they never denied. After which, they murdered all of his family in cool blood; which roused his passions to be revenged upon the whites. This circumstance is but one in a thousand.

Upon the banks of Ohio, a party of two hundred white warriors, in 1757, or about that time, came across a settlement of Christian Indians, and falsely accused them of being warriors; to which they denied, but all to no purpose; they were determined to massacre them all. They, the Indians, then asked liberty to prepare for the fatal hour. The white savages then gave them one hour, as the historian said. They then prayed together; and in tears and cries, upon their knees, begged pardon of each other, of all they had done. After which, they informed the white savages that they were now ready. One white man then begun with a mallet, and knocked them down, and continued his work until he had killed fifteen, with his own hand; then saying it ached, he gave his commission to another. And thus they continued till they had massacred nearly ninety men, women and children, all these innocent of any crime. What sad tales are these for us to look upon the massacre of our dear fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters; and if we speak, we are then called savages for complaining. Our affections for each other, are the same as yours; we think as much of ourselves as you do of yourselves. When our children are sick, we do all we can for them; they lie buried deep in our affections; if they die, we remember it long, and mourn in after years. Children also cleave to their parents; they look to them for aid; they do the best they know how to do for each other; and when strangers come among us, we use them as well as we know how; we feel honest in whatever we do, we have no desire to offend anyone. But when we are so deceived, it spoils all our confidence in our visitors. And although I can say that I have some dear, good friends among white people, yet I eye them with a jealous eye, for fear they will betray me. Having been deceived so much by them, how can I help it; being brought up to look upon white people as being enemies and not friends, and by the whites treated as such, who can wonder? Yes, in vain have I looked for the Christian to take me by the hand, and bid me welcome to his cabin, as my fathers did them, before we were born; and if they did, it was only to

satisfy curiosity, and not to look upon me as a man and a Christian. And so all of my people have been treated, whether Christians or not. I say then, a different course must be pursued, and different laws must be enacted, and all men must operate under one general law. And while you ask yourselves, "What do they, the Indians, want?" you have only to look at the unjust laws made for them, and say, "They want what I want," in order to make men of them, good and wholesome citizens. And this plan ought to be pursued by all missionaries, or not pursued at all. That is not only to make Christians of us, but men; which plan as yet has never been pursued. And when it is, I will then throw my might upon the side of missions, and do what I can to favor it. But this work must begin here first, in New England.

Having now closed, I would say that many thanks is due from me to you, though an unworthy speaker, for your kind attention; and I wish you to understand that we are thankful for every favor; and you and I have to rejoice that we have not to answer for our fathers' crimes, neither shall we do right to charge them one to another. We can only regret it, and flee from it, and from henceforth, let peace and righteousness be written upon our hearts and hands forever, is the wish of a poor Indian.

—1836

The Indian King Philip.

AN Eulogy will be pronounced upon this Giant personage of the Woods at UNION HALL, on Tuesday evening next, at 7 o'clock, by an Indian Preacher, who is well acquainted with his history.

Tickets to be had at the Book store of Canfield & Robins, and at the door for 25 cents—Children half price.

We wish the Indian success and a full house.
March 5 p95

Advertisement, *The Times*, Hartford, 5 March 1836.