

- a. The English settlers...a diverse group with certain factors in common and a couple of original ideas with each group.
- (1) Separatists...largely congregational in motivation, the separatists claimed independence in religious expression and meeting. They particularly objected to the Establishment (the term describing state settlement of an ecclesiastical body) and its restrictions on "freedom of conscience". Note that the separatists did not argue for a "freedom of religion" but for a privilege of non-conformity within an existing society. It will be seen that they were not willing to grant that same privilege to a society in which they were the establishment. One of the ironies of life. As a class they were largely a trades and lower commercial class.
 - (2) Puritans...largely concerned with reform of the Established church and not its removal. On the whole a very calvinistic segment and more representative of the upper trades and the wealthier part of the populace. They viewed religious and social reform with less zeal than did the separatists although they were very concerned that the Anglican church show itself distinct from the Roman communion in every way.
 - (3) Anglicans...those persons of the Church of England. They accepted the Establishment as it stood and argued for such privilege. Many who came to the colonies were land holders and persons of commercial advantage. They disdained the separatists and generally distrusted the puritans.
 - (4) Quakers...while in some way a form of separatists, the Quakers were really a newer sectarian body that had come to make a great deal of experience and divine presence. The non-deferral of Quakers in general to persons of rank and importance had made them almost unsavory in English society. But they tended to be successful merchants and were mostly from the upper echelons of society. As a rule the separatists regarded them as doubtful mystics and the puritans saw them as heretics.
 - (5) Romanists...persecuted in England, they were also viewed with suspicion by the Roman See which saw them as having adopted too much of the liberties allowed in that land.
 - (6) Prisoners...hardly a religious class but the colonies were viewed as a good place to send them (note the history of Australia) and a quantity eventually came to this continent to work out their time.

When coming to the American continent, these often hostile bodies did not immediately put down their guns, so to speak, but in time became an amalgamated "English" constituency of the theological make up of America. They are vaguely reminiscent of a story about the English sparrow and the starling...a story which I will likely tell at this time to the chagrin of the serious students.