

**SHORT HISTORY OF THE  
CHURCH IN THE UNITED  
STATES, A. D. 1492-1890**

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Short History of the Church in the United States, A. D. 1492-1890 by John F. Hurst

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**OF THE**  
**CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES**

**A.D. 1492-1890**

**BY**

**JOHN F. HURST, D.D.**

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**"SHORT HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION" ETC.**

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SHORT HISTORY  
OF THE  
CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES.

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I.

The Colonial Period.

1492-1783.

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CHAPTER I.

THE NEW CHRISTENDOM.

1. Europe in the Sixteenth Century was in convulsion. The Reformation had already stirred England to its centre by the fearless labors of Wyclif, while Huss of Bohemia had uttered a cry of warning which was heard throughout the Continent and awakened fear in Rome. These reformatory movements reacted on the political life of all the central nations. Not a throne was safe where the new religious revolt was in full force. The entire sixteenth century was a period of universal disturbance. The progress of reform provoked violent hostility, and every land was divided into factions. There were three general grades of sentiment. One class, receiving its inspiration from Rome, wished to continue the old order, with the Pope as practical sovereign. Another class, craving liberty and an ac-

commodation to the new order, was willing to break loose from the Roman see, but desired to retain many of the Romish usages. The third class saw nothing but antichrist in Rome, and found hope only in casting off every reminder of papal doctrine and custom.

2. **The Transferal of European Conflicts to America** was the new order. Whenever a colony came to America, it no sooner settled in its new habitat than it revived, under broader conditions, the struggle in which it had been engaged in Europe. The cavalier of the Virginia Colony surrendered none of his old attachment to the Church of England. The Plymouth Pilgrim was even more intense in his revolt against both Romanism and Protestant Episcopacy than he had been when he was a Brownist at Scrooby, a parishioner of Robinson in Leyden, or a Pilgrim on the *Mayflower*. In the new world were fought out, in smaller numbers, and by contestants more dispersed, the issues which had driven the colonists to the Western wilds.

3. **The Religious Motive** was supreme in the mind of all the best colonists. To enjoy the free exercise of conscience was the Pilgrim's one passion, whose bright flame no distance from native land, nor stormy seas, nor rigor of climate, nor danger of death by savage hands could quench. Our first settlers came as Christians, lived as Christians, and planted the religious principle as the richest inheritance for their posterity. The Pilgrims, before leaving England, had no thought of separating from the Established Church, but longed for reformation within it; and they resolved on the expedient of emigration only when James I. deceived them, and said: "I will make them conform or harry them out of the land." "The charter of the first colony," says Baird, "that of Virginia, provided that the

whole settlement should have a Christian character, and enjoined the worship of the Church of England, requiring every male colonist of sixteen and upward to pay ten pounds of tobacco and one bushel of corn for the support of the Church. When the Puritans gained ascendancy in England, under the Protectorate of Cromwell, Virginia and the Carolinas became the refuge for the Cavalier and the Churchman, as afterwards of the Huguenot and the German Protestant. Georgia was colonized expressly as an asylum for imprisoned and persecuted Bohemians and the inhabitants of the Italian valleys, and the Colony of Gustavus Adolphus was to be a blessing to the whole Protestant world by offering a shelter to all who stood in need of one."