

PREFACE.

The most important business of the session of Sept.—Oct., 1704, was the thorough revision of the laws, and enactment of what was nearly a complete code. The Governor and Assembly were on the most harmonious terms; interchanges of polite speeches and professions of esteem were frequent, and halcyon weather prevailed. That the urbane Seymour had, however, when he chose to use it, a rough side to his tongue, is shown by his objurgation of two Catholic priests, who had been guilty of the enormity of saying mass in a chapel. The Governor's bark was apparently worse than his bite, for we find him signing a bill suspending the prosecution of priests who should celebrate mass in private houses.

One thing that gave the Assembly much uneasiness was a rumor from England that agents from New York were urging a scheme to bring all the colonies under that government. It is hardly conceivable that the Privy Council would have entertained such a proposal; but the mere possibility of it was alarming. Both Houses joined in a memorial to the Queen; but the Upper House pointed out that if any effective countermining was proposed, a sum of money must be provided for necessary expenses; and to this the Lower House demurred. An ingenious expedient was then proposed. In 1702 the Assembly had voted a fund to assist New York in her defensive measures against the French and Indians. New York, though notified that this fund was at her disposal, had never asked for it—an abstention, in the eyes of the Assembly, so unnatural and inexplicable, that it must be connected with some dark design. However, there the money was, and it was now proposed that it should be sent to England to be used in baffling New York's machinations.

The sessions of 1705 and 1706 present little that calls for remark. The conspiracy of Richard Clark and his accomplices, and the burning