To the Honourable the Senate, & House of Representatives
in General Court assembled.  

Whereas a Petition has been presented to your Honourable Body, signed by sundry of the inhabitants of the Plantation of Marshpee, containing matters touching the religious affairs of said Plantation; Your Memorialist begs leave humbly to make such statements as shall serve to set this subject in a clearer light. He began to preach in Marshpee, in the Congregational Meeting House formerly occupied by the Rev. Gideon Hawley, in the winter of 1809, by appointment of the Corporation of Harvard College, who in September, 1811, with the concurrence of the Overseers of Marshpee, and the approbation of the State Legislature (a very respectable committee of the Indians having previously waited on him, and, in due from, invited him to remain among them.) publically ordained him, as Congregational Preacher, to the inhabitants of this place, where he has remained in the discharge of his official duties, to the satisfaction for any thing that appears to the contrary.) of those who employed him in this service. In the course of those years, your Memorialist has statedly preached the Gospel on the Sabbath- has attended numerous weekly lectures - has attended the sick and dying - has visited from house to house and is not conscious to himself of refusing any call that strength and opportunity would permit, and among those too of every shade of colour, and of every religious denomination. Though he can not say that his well-meant services have been always kindly entertained, yet he is conscious to himself that he has not been altogether repelled by unkindness, but has always been willing to do more

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than circumstances permitted. He has, during his ministry, received to Church Fellowship, 20 persons of colour, and 16 others, and the Church is now more numerous in coloured members, then when he undertook the Pastoral Charge, though there have not been wanting efforts to break us up. He has promoted schools -assisted in the building of School-Houses - has distributed books at his own expense and procured donations of books from abroad;- he has established Bible-Class meetings and endeavored to promote attention to many of the benevolent operations, objects of the day. For many years he has sustained a Sabbath-School, which has been sometimes numerously attended - it is the only one on the Plantation, and has a Juvenile Library of more than 350 Vols. procured, in no inconsiderable part, at his own expense. - Some of the most promising youth-some who superintend the weekly Schools- have belonged to the Sabbath-School!- He mentions this to shew that people are not always grateful for benefits - and that, in a time of special excitement, they are not over scrupulous as to the means by which they attempt to procure a favourite object.

Your Memorialist will
now beg permission to remark upon a few expressions contained in the Indian Petition. They say that Mr. Fish was settled among them without their consent. He would not stop to decide - who is most heavily accused in this allegation - whether Himself- the Board of Mashpee Overseers, - The Corporation of Harvard College, or the Honourable Legislature

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of the Commonwealth. Certainly all parties knew that there was more than one denomination here, and it is to be presumed they had no intention of settling a Congregational Preacher over a Baptist or Methodist Society. They were willing, and doubtless wished, that all should hear and derive a benefit from what was considered by them as a gratuity, but they probably never seriously contemplated a complete union of parties as the result. It is fact, however, that your memorialist was waited on, by a respectable Committee (one of whom was the Father of the youngest of the present delegation.) and, in due form, was he invited to settle among them. The Ordination was not a thing done in a corner. Again, the Memorialists complain that "they have not been permitted to worship God, according to their own views and feelings, and as conscience dictated". But let it be asked, where is the restraint? None certainly are formal enough to ask leave to quit one form of worship for another. At this moment, beside the Congregational, there is both a Baptist and a Methodist Church and Society, who agree not to worship together. This seems proof sufficient, that the rights of conscience are not restricted, except inasmuch as the Parsonage privileges have not been divided according to Denomination, and can not be, without the hazard of annihilation. But the Whites, it is said, "have had three times the benefit of the Preacher and our funds, that we have ourselves"- Your Memorialist found it a custom to attend to the White portion of the Population. They had been in the habit of occupying

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a portion of the Meeting House- perhaps for generations [erasure:!] - It is a new thing to impute this as a crime! - Attention to others has X been no prevention of the benefit of the coloured population had they been disposed to receive it. - But again, "We have been kept out of our Meeting House and School Houses till very recently" - Your Memorialist will only state facts. The coloured inhabitants of Mashpee never have been excluded from the Meeting House in the common and sacred uses of it! And the School Houses
built by the munificence of the State, for the express accommodation of Schools, began to be occupied as Meeting Houses soon after their erection, and have been more or less occupied in this fashion, ever since, and your Memorialist who drew up the petition which received a gracious hearing from your Honourable Body, for the building of the same, desires to affirm, that in this perversion of your liberal purpose he had no share whatever. - "Our Meeting House", say they, "is almost worn out by white people, and is not fit for respectable people to meet in." - As it was built by a White Missionary Society, and as it was thoroughly repaired at the expense of the White Legislature of the State, perhaps the whites may think themselves entitled to some wear of it, & being no way "fit for respectable people", the Church and Congregation beg, hope they may the more readily be left unmolested in their accustomed use of it.- But it is farther asserted that "the coloured portion of the Congregation, worshipping in the Meeting House, would not average ten, and the Church was not a male member having one drop of the royal or real native blood in him".

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More than twice ten names of coloured children are now on the Sabbath School list alone! In regard to the Church, some have, from time to time, been joined to it of royal blood, who have departed in peace. We had a Deacon too- who partook of the same (the oldest of the deputation for redress of grievances,) who once walked worthy of his holy calling - but who- (I am truly concerned to say it.) has left us according to his repeated declaration before witness - not for any thing he had against either Church or Pastor, but because he is oppressed by the Government! When dealt with by the Church in form, for ascertaining his final determination, he promised before witness, to return to duty. How has he redeemed his pledge? By attendance at his post one Sabbath only, and then joining himself in form with the bitter persecutor of the Church, and assuming a man of credibility (who is ready to declare the same on oath.) that the above promise was made by him "because he did not know how otherwise to get clear"! Says the Indian Petition, "the pastor was ordained without the particular knowledge of us". -- This is credible of the youngest of the deputation, for his parents brought him to Baptism some time after the Ordination, and he is still so young, that though his name is affixed to a list of Charges against the Pastor, in quality of President- yet he can not explain or vindicate those charges by his own knowledge.- The Stranger who appears before you, knows of course only what he is told!- But how could the person above mentioned, after walking in communion with the Church and even officiating as Deacon, for a series of years, honestly put his hand to the position & say, " We have been kept out of our Meeting House"? -
"The Ordination of the Minister was without the particular knowledge of us" &c and yet has nothing to allege against Church or Pastor - no reasons to offer for his separation, but such as are foreign to the Subject, as the conduct of the Roman Government, to the internal affairs of the primitive Church. - As to the character of those who have presented a memorial in behalf of the Pastor, your Memorialist would only say, there are not wanting among them such as will not suffer by comparison with the best inhabitants of the Plantation - some of them are exemplary members of the Church, many others are in the habit of attending Public Worship - are of good character, and all abundantly able to discriminate between those, who are, and those who are not suitable to instruct them in religious subjects. - Your Memorialist in obtaining signatures was careful that the short and simple paper subscribed by them, be fully understood & on that account he received the names of Heads of Families, with a very few exceptions, and did not care to give an imposing appearance to his list, by inserting the names (as he perceives has been done in another instance.) of a great number who can not discern the right hand from the left. If there are instances (as is alleged.) of persons who have signed his papers without understanding what was contained in the writing they signed - depend upon it, it was not for want of pains to have a fair understanding in regard to subscribers on the opposite part, and, if Gentlemen [ illegible ] take the pains to compare the opposite Lists, and notice in how many instances the same persons have signed both sides, it may easily be conceived that multiplied instances may be found, would time permit, in which persons whose names appears against the Government, either know not what they signed, or had their names set down without their knowledge. Several in stances of each sort have already been detected! - Your Memorialist would now call up your attention to the attempt that has been made, within the year past, upon the Congregational Church and Society in Marshpee.- Not content with reproaching them by various unseemly epithets - not satisfied with employing almost every insidious artifice to diminish their numbers - in the midst of the last summer, our opposers stimulated by a reckless adventurer entered the Meeting House without permission - proclaimed their intention of assuming the sole occupancy of it, on a certain day, & unquestionably would have made good their threats, had not the strong arms of the the law inter posed, and rescued them from an impending fate. - Thus a real persecution had well nigh been perpetrated. Little has been said by the Public, and they have not seemed to be a-
wakened by the flagrancy of this attempt. But those concerned, have felt the peril of their circumstances, and as they have carefully walked in peace and without offence, they have felt conscious of a claim upon the sympathy not only of the religious, but of the whole civilized community. What have they done to provoke such aggressions? And what religious community can be safe, if such violations pass unnoticed, and unproved? When those who have chosen another name, aided by numbers, stimulated by the hope of personal advantage, can violate with impunity, the quiet enjoyment of others, because

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8th. they are found in the minority, truly it may be exclaimed in the language of the "voice from Marshpee" - "Is the like known any where, amongst other towns in this State, peopled by White Men"? Your Memorialist therefore prays in the first place, for the parsonage privileges, which were many years ago, set apart for the maintenance of the Congregational Worship - which is the most ancient form of religious worship here, and which has still many conscientious adherents, may still be continued in the use of the Incumbent. The whole yearly income, it is true, is not of great value, but it makes an item in his means of subsistence, which is needful, especially in the present state of his family, to relieve him from anxiety, and to animate him to a preserving discharge of duty. He is conscious to himself of rectitude of purpose. He can assert in sincerity, that he has "coveted no man's silver or gold." While he has avoided careless waste, he has accumulated no hoards during his ministry. The House in which he dwells, and the Plot of Ground on which it stands, constitute all his worldly possessions. - possessions which would dwindle into very little, should he attempt to make sale of them in such a Locality! - Your Memorialist again prays for the undisturbed enjoyment of the House of Worship - built originally for the Congregational worship - rebuilt by the care and at the instance of the present Pastor, through the liberality of the Legislature, - never used for any other than the Congregational Service, but free and open to all, who choose to avail themselves of preaching and ordinances administered "without money and without price." Why should Congregational Worship be excluded to make room for others? Where will be the end of vicissitude on the adoption of such a principle, and how is it possible, amid the action of rival factions for pure religion to be promoted? Allow your petitioner then

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9th. and without price." Why should Congregational Worship be excluded to make room for others? Where will be the end of vicissitude on the adoption of such a principle, and how is it possible, amid the action of rival factions for pure religion to be promoted? Allow your petitioner then
those rights which were conferred upon him by the great and the Good, and which have never been called in question, till of late- allow him to pursue the functions of his obscure service, without permitting any to molest one whose desire it is to "live peaceably with all men!" -
Your Memorialist also prays for the blessings of a good Government. He has never had a share in the administration of civil affairs. He has witnessed the operation of existing regulations and believes them wise and good. He has been long acquainted with the present Administrators, and has cause to believe them actuated by good and worthy motives, and desirous of distributing justice and diffusing comfort, as far as possible, through the community. Under the present system he can discern no undue restraint upon liberty, no striking inequality of operation - no voluntary oppression. Your Memorialist would state it as his opinion, that neither these men, nor their measures, have occasioned the host of evils complained of; they take their rise from other causes!-
The events of last summer afford, it might be supposed, sufficient evidence to the community, how far this peo-

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people are capacitated for self government. Some of the wisest and most respectable of those who wish for the management of their own affairs, acknowledge that they were duped and deceived by one, whom they hesitate not to pronounce a false and unprincipled man, yet still, it is evident, that they accredit this man, and suffer him to take a most conspicuous part in their most important concerns. If they have been deceived so easily, and profited so little by it, may they not become the constant dupe of similar characters- till the very worst consequences ensue? Already do we witness the force of example, in the visible increase in crime. But a few weeks since a peaceful family was fired in upon during their midnight repose.- while I have been writing- another has been committed to prison for a high misdemeanor. This frequency of crime, shews that resistance of the laws furnishes us no means for training peaceful and orderly citizens! This state of affairs sits with solemn weight on the hearts of many among us. - "If these things are done", (say they) in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" - Your Memorialist conceives himself to be justified in feeling a common interest with others in these concerns. Here he has a Church and people - here he has a work appointed him - and a portion of his support afforded by another Honourable Body - the Corporation of Harvard College. - Here is his dwelling - and
here must be the residence of his family.- This Home

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and Fireside, he feels anxious should be favoured with
the defence of good and equal laws, and a stable
administration. To You, in common with many
others, he looks for preservation from the effects of
doubtful and hazardous experiments. He writes with
others in praying for the continuance of existing
regulations, and administration or - if this may not be-
that provision be made for sure redrefs of griev
ances! -

Your Memorialist concludes by declaring him
self ready to reply to all charges that may be pre-
ferred against him. He has no cause for conceal-
ment. He courts investigation. I know you will not
condemn me unheard. Send, if you please, a Commis-
sioner to inquire on the Spot. You have heard
what enemies have to say. You will surely hear
also the opinion (if not of friends.) yet of the many
respectable and disinterested persons, who are fully ac-
quainted with my manner of conversation.-

And, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

Phineas Fish, Missionary.

Mashpee. Janv. 28 - 1834-

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House of Reps Janv. 30. 1834. Referred to the
Comm. on the Marshpee Indians, with in-
structions to cause the same to be printed.

Sent up for concurrence

L.S. Cushing

In Senate Janv 30. 1834    Clk.

Concurrence.

Cha. Calhoun, Clk
No 17. Senate 1500 printed
Memorial of Missionary to The Marshpee Tribe of Indians.
in relation to the Memorial of Sundry of said Tribe

printed