The Rôle of Refugees in the History of American Science

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The list of European men of science, who from time to time have sought in America refuge from persecution, is a long one and the stories of their adventurous careers would fill a volume of considerable size. In the present paper a few typical illustrations will be cited from the list of scientists who fled to America in the disturbances of the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The earliest conspicuous example of an American refugee scientist is that of John Winthrop, Jr. (1606-1676), who in 1631, because of the persecution of the Puritans in England under Archbishop Laud, joined his father and other coreligionists in the founding of the Bay Colony in New England. "Laud's hand fell heavily on the English Puritans," writes J. R. Green, the eminent English historian. "Thousands of the best scholars, merchants, lawyers, farmers, were flying..."
Editor's Summary

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