Hardships of the first American Settlers

By reading the title the reader expects the text to be about the difficulties met by the people who settled in America. The text belongs to “History of Plymouth Plantation”. It was written by William Bradford from 1650 to 1651. William Bradford was one of the Pilgrim Fathers who sailed to America on the Mayflower in 1620 to escaper religious persecution. He was among the founders of the Plymouth Colony.

Reading the introductory paragraph the read can find many negations (the settlers had no friends; nor inns; no houses; or much less towns to repair) and other expressions (beaten bodies) which transmit the sense of lack, the sense of privation, the difficulties and the deprivation of the facilities. Thus the reader understands that people who settled in America had anyone to welcome them. In this sense the paragraph is connected with the title of the text.

The second paragraph is connected to the title too. In the second paragraph the reader can understand that there are references to religion. Expressions linked to the religious field are: Scripture, Apostle and mercy. Without explicit saying it the writer express a judgment about the barbarians. The behavior of the “barbarians” is totally different from what the religious code states. There is a contrast between the barbarians and the religious people, highlighted by the juxtaposition of the adjective savage to barbarians (they have no god). The barbarians are aggressive and act just for defend themselves, while the religious acts for an ideal; they are another difficult met by the settlers. The description of the setting is connected with the difficulties of the winter season: to convey a realistic and vivid idea of the settlers’ difficulties the writer exploits a catalogue of references to the weather condition (sharp, violent and dangerous) besides the one who doesn’t know the territory had more difficulties to reach the coast. The territory is connected with the terms “hideous”, “wild”, “full of wild beasts and men”. In the last paragraph the writer describes the wild part of the territory on which they landed, it is full of woods and thickets. The troubling situation increase toward the end of the text underlying the deep distance from the place they came from and with a final question. The pilgrim knew they were separated from all the civil part of the word and only the God could sustain them with the grace.