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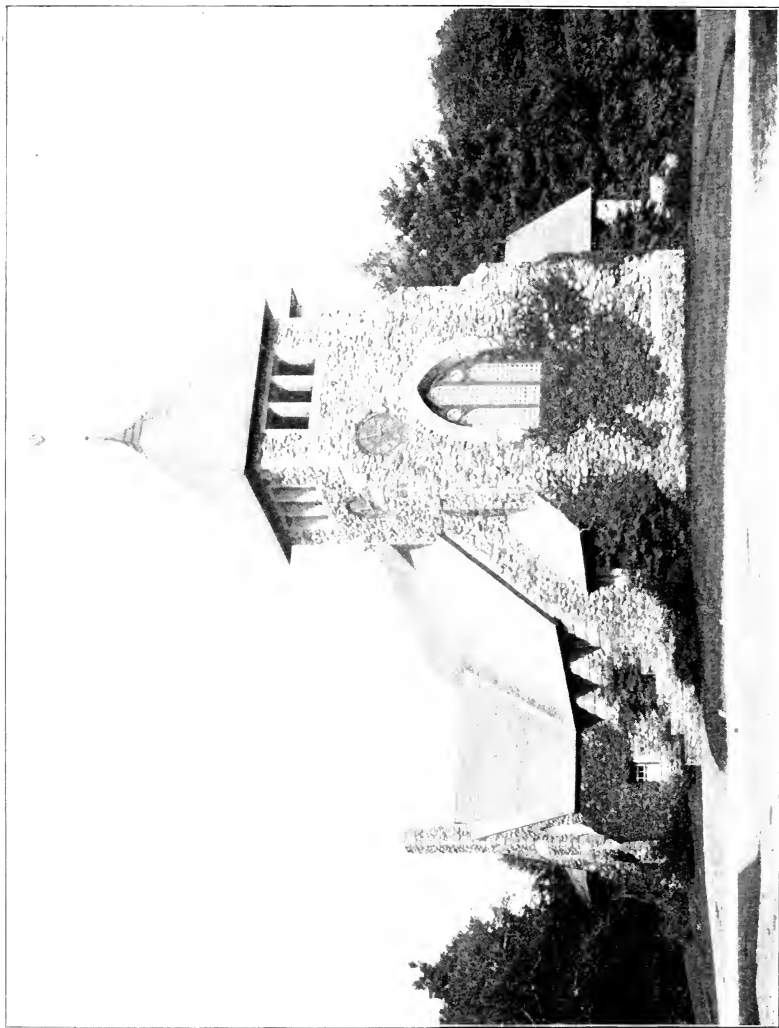
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The *First Parish* of WESTON



FIRST PARISH CHURCH, WESTON. BUILT 1888.

AN ACCOUNT

of the

CELEBRATION *by the*

FIRST PARISH of WESTON

Massachusetts of its

Two Hundredth Anniversary

on SUNDAY the Nineteenth of June

and SUNDAY the Twenty-sixth of June

MDCCCXCVIII

A L S O

Sundry Addresses and other
Papers therewith connected

1 6 9 8 — 1 8 9 8

Weston, *Massachusetts*

Printed for THE PARISH

M C M

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The *First Parish* of Weston
Weston Mass.

A *List of* THE PICTURES

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The *Preliminary* PROCEEDINGS

THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE PARISH AND THE PARISH COMMITTEE

At the annual meeting of the First Parish of Weston, held on May 3, 1897, the Standing Committee included in their report the following recommendation :

“This is an appropriate occasion on which to remind the parish that this time-honored church was founded in 1698, and that next year will be the two hundredth anniversary of its organization. We recommend the appointment, therefore, of a special committee, clothed with full powers, to arrange for a proper and adequate celebration of that interesting event.”

In accordance with this recommendation it was voted that the Standing Committee, consisting of Horace S. Sears, Charles H. Fiske, Albert H. Hews, have charge, with full powers, of the celebration of the two hundredth anniversary of the founding of the parish.

In due course this committee held several meetings to complete arrangements for the approaching celebration, and at the annual meeting on May 11, 1898, reported to the parish, as follows :

“Within a few weeks the two hundredth anniversary of the founding of the parish will be celebrated. The act of the General Court authorizing

Proceedings of the Parish

the farmers of the Weston precinct to organize their own church was passed June 24, 1898. As it serves better the general convenience the celebration will be observed on Sunday, instead of June 24, which falls on Friday. The Committee of Arrangements have planned to have exercises both on Sunday, June 19, and Sunday, June 26, of which a full and complete announcement will be made within a few days. That the celebration will be a noteworthy one and entirely worthy of this ancient and honorable church, we have every reason to believe. The Standing Committee ask for authority to have the proceedings printed in full."

In accordance with the recommendation of the Standing Committee the following vote was passed at this meeting:

Voted: That the Standing Committee be authorized and directed to have the proceedings at the Bicentennial celebration of the parish printed in full, in such form as they may deem best, the expense to be met by subscription or by such other method as they may elect."

The Committee of Arrangements afterwards added the Reverend Charles F. Russell to its membership, and proceeded as instructed by the parish.

An account of the celebration is herewith given, as well as certain letters relating thereto.

The LETTERS

The Letters

Commonwealth of Massachusetts,
Executive Department, Boston, May 18, 1898.

HORACE S. SEARS, ESQ.,
202 Devonshire Street, Boston.

MY DEAR SIR: I beg to acknowledge receipt of your very courteous invitation to attend the Bicentennial Celebration of the First Parish of Weston, on Sunday afternoon, June 26th.

It would give me much pleasure to be present on the occasion, which I am sure will be a most interesting one, but I have made a rule since holding public office, to which I believe I have admitted no exceptions, not to accept invitations of a public nature on Sundays, as the day is much needed by me for rest, and to admit one exception to the rule would open the way to many.

I beg that you will accept my cordial thanks for the invitation, and believe me,

Very truly yours,
ROGER WOLCOTT.

The *Letters*

Washington, D. C., June 1, 1898.

MY DEAR MR. SEARS:

I regret exceedingly that I have been unable to so shape my affairs as to allow me to visit Weston, June 26. The celebration there comes at a very awkward time for me. I know you will have a most interesting occasion, and it would delight me to be able to contribute something to it, but this I now find an impossibility.

I am, sincerely yours,

CARROLL D. WRIGHT.

HORACE S. SEARS, Esq.,

202 Devonshire Street, Boston, Mass.

The Letters

Church of the Messiah Study, 34th Street and Park Avenue,
New York, N.Y., June 20, 1898.

MY DEAR MR. SEARS :

It is with the greatest regret that I find myself obliged to telegraph you this morning. After doing my best to arrange the matter, I find I *cannot possibly* get away this week. I am very much tired and worn; but should try to do it for all that if I could; but no end of things remain to be done here. I had hoped to get through by Thursday, but find now that it is impossible. I shall not be able to leave till some time after next Sunday. You will easily find somebody to take my place; so that perhaps the principal loss is my own after all. I hope that your meeting will be the finest possible success.

Most heartily yours,

M. J. SAVAGE.

The Letters

South Congregational Church, Boston, May 6, 1898.

MY DEAR MR. SEARS :

I regret extremely to say that on the Sunday you name I have promised Mr. Fenn to preach for him in Chicago. I can hardly tell you how much I regret this.

The first Sunday I ever preached after being licensed to preach I spent in Berlin, to the west of you. On the next Sunday, to oblige a friend, I preached in the pulpit of your church, as it was before it was remodelled. I have therefore very interesting associations with the church.

More than this, the minister of your church united in marriage my great-grandfather, Alexander Hill, to Thankful Allen, at about the year 1735. I do not know where I should be now if he had not done so.

The prosperity of the church, as a very important working factor in the Christianity and civilization of a region which has done so much for human liberty and progress, is a matter of interest to everyone who knows anything of the history of Massachusetts. Let me congratulate you on its prosperity at the present time, and express to you my cordial wish that such prosperity and success may be continued in the future.

Truly yours,

EDWARD E. HALE.

The *Letters*

Lancaster, June 16, 1898.

TO THE FIRST PARISH OF WESTON :

The First Congregational Society of Lancaster acknowledge your kind remembrance in the invitation you send them to be represented at the celebration of your Bicentennial.

Mindful of our fellowship in the same Christian faith and hopes, we are also deeply sensible of the tie which binds our two Societies together in their having partaken in the ministry of one whose exceptional and remarkable gifts and saintly character can never be forgotten by any who were witnesses of them.

We regret that conditions of which you need no explanation will probably prevent our meeting with you by committee or otherwise on either of the appointed days. So we send by letter the greetings and congratulations we may not bring, only promising to ourselves to be sharers in thought with those who will be with you, in all the sacred and tender memories and associations that will then be awakened.

G. M. BARTOL.

HORACE S. SEARS,
CHARLES H. FISKE,
ALBERT H. HEWS,
REV. CHARLES F. RUSSELL, } *Committee.*

The Letters

Plymouth, Mass., June 15, 1898.

HORACE S. SEARS, ESQ., BOSTON.

DEAR SIR: Your courteous invitation to the Bicentennial Celebration of the First Parish of Weston has been received.

Personally, I should take great pleasure in attending the exercises, but duties in my own pulpit on the dates named will prevent my doing so.

Should any lay-delegate be appointed I will let you know at the earliest moment. In the meantime the First Parish in Plymouth, through its minister, extends to the First Parish of Weston a cordial greeting and congratulations upon attaining the two hundredth anniversary of useful and prosperous service in the Lord's kingdom.

Old-time associations and hallowed memories make such celebrations intensely interesting, and renew the feeling of devotion and loyalty.

The spirit of the Father is with us still. The broader outlook of our day makes more real the presence of God in all his universe and deepens the sense of brotherhood throughout the whole human race.

Wishing you joy in the Holy Spirit, and in the common fellowship of Christian love,

I am, sincerely yours,

CHARLES P. LOMBARD,

Minister of the First Church in Plymouth.

The ORDER *of* SERVICE

The hymns were sung from the edition of the *University Hymn Book* especially prepared for the First Parish.

FIRST PARISH, WESTON

Founded June twenty-fourth, 1698



Order of Service for June
nineteenth, 1898, at its

Bicentennial Anniversary

Celebrated Sunday, June
nineteenth, and Sunday,
June twenty-sixth, 1898

Morning Service at three-quarters past ten o'clock



INVOCATION

HYMN 288 (by the Choir)

PSALMS FOR THE DAY

HYMN 9 (by the Congregation)

OLD TESTAMENT READING, from Joshua iii.

ANTHEM, "When God of old came down from
heaven" *Hall*

NEW TESTAMENT READING, from Mark iv.

ANTHEM, "Our God, our help in ages past" . *Gounod*

PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER (by the Choir)

SERMON by Reverend WILLIAM HENRY SAVAGE, Minister of
the First Congregational Society, Watertown, Massachu-
setts

The Place of the Old Church in New England History

Acts xxi. 39 : "But Paul said, I am a citizen of no mean city."

HYMN 265 (by the Congregation)

BENEDICTION

Evening Service at three o'clock



INVOCATION

ANTHEM, "Honour the Lord" *Stainer*

SCRIPTURE READING, from Ecclesiasticus xlv.

ANTHEM, "Let every soul be subject" *Stainer*

PRAYER

HYMN 282 (by the Congregation)

ADDRESSES UPON FORMER MINISTERS OF THE PARISH

Reverend Joseph Mors

Reverend William Williams

By Reverend CHARLES FRANK RUSSELL

Reverend Samuel Woodward

Reverend Samuel Kendal, D.D.

By Reverend FRANCIS BICKFORD HORN BROOKE

HYMN 80 (by the Congregation)

ADDRESSES UPON FORMER MINISTERS OF THE PARISH

Reverend Joseph Field, D.D.

By CHARLES HENRY FISKE, Esquire

Reverend Edmund Hamilton Sears, D.D.

By Reverend ALFRED PORTER PUTNAM, D.D.

HYMN 309 (by the Congregation)

BENEDICTION

FIRST PARISH, WESTON

Founded June twenty-fourth, 1698



Order of Service for June
twenty-sixth, 1898, at its

Bicentennial Anniversary

Celebrated Sunday, June
nineteenth, and Sunday,
June twenty-sixth, 1898

Morning Service at three-quarters past ten o'clock



INVOCATION

HYMN 230 (by the Choir)

PSALMS FOR THE DAY

HYMN 225 (by the Congregation)

OLD TESTAMENT READING, from Jeremiah xxxi.

ANTHEM, "Ye shall dwell in the land" . . . *Stainer*

NEW TESTAMENT READING, from 1 Timothy iii. and iv.

ANTHEM, "The pillars of the earth are the Lord's" . *Tours*

PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER (by the Choir)

SERMON by Reverend CHARLES FRANK RUSSELL, Minister of
the First Parish, Weston, Massachusetts

The Church of the Living God

1 TIMOTHY iii. 15 : "The church of the living God, the pillar
and ground of the truth."

HYMN 287 (by the Congregation)

BENEDICTION

Evening Service at three o'clock



INVOCATION

ANTHEM, "The Lord is my light" *Parker*

SCRIPTURE READING, from Deuteronomy xxx.

ANTHEM, "The strain upraise" *Hall*

PRAYER

HYMN 32 (by the Congregation)

ADDRESSES

The Influence of Puritanism on our National Life

By Honorable CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS

The Church and the Town

By Honorable SHERMAN HOAR *

HYMN 124 (by the Congregation)

ADDRESSES

The Development of the Congregational Polity

By Reverend JAMES EELLS

The Forward Look

By Reverend SAMUEL McCHORD CROTHERS

HYMN 309 (by the Congregation)

BENEDICTION

* The Honorable SHERMAN HOAR, through sickness, was unable to attend the celebration, and his address was not given.

The PLACE *of the* OLD CHURCH
in NEW ENGLAND HISTORY



FIRST PARISH CHURCH, WESTON. 1840-1887.

THE PLACE OF THE OLD CHURCH IN NEW ENGLAND HISTORY

BY REVEREND WILLIAM HENRY SAVAGE

But Paul said, I am a citizen of no mean city.—

ACTS xxi. 39.

TWO hundred years ago this month the Weston church began its separate life.

Up to that date, Watertown and Weston were one people. What was done in the old church, was done by *your* fathers not less than by *ours*, and the memories of that time are a common heritage.

We are, therefore, for the present hour, sitting together as one people, and neither speaker nor hearer is supposed to know that any separation has ever taken place. When I say Watertown, it is *your* Watertown I am speaking of. What I claim for the old church, I claim for *your* old church, wherein your fathers and mothers worshipped God and wrought for human-kind. So much, by way of preface.

In the summer of the year 1630, a company of immigrants, newly arrived from England, ascended the Charles River, and selected a place for settlement. The leaders of this company were Sir Richard Saltonstall, a noble gentleman from Yorkshire, and the Reverend George Phillips, a graduate of the University of Cambridge. How many people followed these leaders is not definitely known, but there is reason to believe that the settlers were strong in numbers and excellent in quality. On the 7th

The *First Parish* of Weston

of September, 1630, the Board of Assistants, sitting at Charlestown, ordered that "Trimountain be called Boston; Mattapan, Dorchester; and the town upon Charles River, Watertown."

On the 30th day of July, about five weeks before the settlement had been legally named, the men of the place assembled (probably at the house of Sir Richard Saltonstall) for a day of fasting and prayer. They came together upon the recommendation of the governor, on account of the great sickness then prevailing among the people of Charlestown. But they had another reason for their assembly, for Mather says: "They resolved that they would combine into a church fellowship as their first work." After the close of their religious exercises, they proceeded to make history, for Mather goes on to say: "About forty men, whereof the first was that excellent knight, Sir Richard Saltonstall, then subscribed this covenant 'in order unto their coalescence into a church estate.'" This is the covenant they signed:

"July 30, 1630.

"We whose names are hereto subscribed, having through God's mercy escaped out of the pollutions of the world, and been taken into the society of his people, with all thankfulness do hereby both with heart and hand acknowledge that his gracious goodness and fatherly care towards us: and for further and more full declaration thereof to the present and future ages have undertaken (for the promoting of his glory and the church's good, and the honor of our blessed Jesus, in our more full and free subjecting of ourselves and ours, under his gracious government, in the practice of, and obedience unto all

The *First Parish* of Weston

his holy ordinances, and orders, which he hath pleased to prescribe and impose upon us) a long and hazardous voyage from East to West, from old England in Europe to New England in America; that we may walk before him without fear in holiness and righteousness all the days of our lives; and being safely arrived here, and thus far onwards peaceably preserved by his special Providence, that we may bring forth our intentions into actions, and perfect our resolutions in the beginnings of some just and meet executions; we have separated the day above written from all other services and dedicated it wholly to the Lord in divine employments, for a day for afflicting our souls and humbling ourselves before the Lord, to seek him, and at his hands a way to walk in, by fasting and prayer, that we might know what was good in his sight; and the Lord was intreated of us. For in the end of that day, after the finishing of our public duties, we do all, before we depart, solemnly and with all our hearts, personally, man by man, for ourselves and ours (charging them before Christ and his elect angels, even them that are not here with us this day, or are yet unborn, that they keep the promise unblamably and faithfully unto the coming of our Lord Jesus) promise and enter into a sure covenant with the Lord our God, and before him with one another, by oath and serious protestation made, to renounce all idolatry and superstition, will-worship, all human traditions and inventions whatsoever in the worship of God; and forsaking all evil ways, do give ourselves wholly unto the Lord Jesus, to do him faithful service, observing and keeping all his statutes, commands, and ordinances, in all matters

The *First Parish* of Weston

concerning our reformation; his worship, administrations, ministry and government; and in the carriage of ourselves among ourselves and one toward another, as he hath prescribed in his holy word. Further, swearing to cleave unto that alone, and the true sense and meaning thereof to the utmost of our power, as unto the most clear light and infallible rule, and all-sufficient canon in all things that concern us in this our way. In witness of all, we do, *ex animo*, and in the presence of God, hereto set our names or marks, in the day and year above written."

To our ears this long-drawn statement has a curious sound. At first hearing its cumbrous sentences seem to have little to do with the life that now is and to aim at any other life in a very zigzag and round-about fashion. Why people who had not yet taken time to get a roof over their heads should give a day to drawing up and signing such a document as that, with ceremonies so formal and solemn is, at the first glance, by no means plain. To the *very* "practical" man of to-day, who finds history tiresome and theology stupid, the whole business appears a piece of ponderous nonsense.

But such an estimate of the day's work done on the 30th of July, 1630, is far astray from the truth; every word of that old document was then alive with tremendous meaning. On that paper were traced the lines of a struggle that was then shaking all Europe. The Watertown Covenant was at once a Bill of Rights and the troth-pledge of its signers to stand by those rights and by one another in life and in death. "I tell you, sir," said Andrew Melville to him who was afterward James I. of England, "I

The *First Parish* of Weston

tell you, sir, there are two kings and two kingdoms in Scotland. There is Christ Jesus the king, and his kingdom the kirk, whose subject James VI. is, and of whose kingdom, not a king, nor a lord, nor a head, but a member. And they whom Christ hath called to watch over his kirk and govern his spiritual kingdom, have sufficient power and authority so to do both together and severally."

Here is the very dialect of our old document, but what sounds to an uninstructed ear to be but the outburst of an angry theologian is really an assertion of popular rights against despotic privilege; an assertion couched in language as lofty as any king ever held toward his poorest vassal. When James had put on his English crown, he said of such as Melville: "I will *make* them conform, or I will harry them out of the land." The son of James was to find that though he might "harry" his Puritans, he could not make them "conform." They were to show the world a new thing under the sun, "A church without a bishop, and a state without a king."

That was the meaning of the old covenant, kept for us on the yellow page of Cotton Mather's rambling record, to which "that excellent knight, Sir Richard Saltonstall" and "about forty" other men set their hands "with oath and solemn protestation," on that 30th day of July, 1630.

The first church organized on the soil of New England was that in Salem which had its origin in 1629, on the 6th day of August. It has been quite commonly supposed that the church in Dorchester came next, in June, 1630, and that the First Church in Boston was organized on the same day as that in Watertown.

The *First Parish* of Weston

The facts, however, seem to be otherwise. First: The people who settled in Dorchester, in June, 1630, had been organized into a church before they left England. Second: This original church left Dorchester in 1636, and established itself in Windsor, Connecticut, where it still remains. The present First Church in Dorchester is not the original. Bond says: "After this removal, the remnant of the church left in Dorchester, with Mr. Richard Mather and the company that came over with him, united and organized another church, their covenant being dated August 23, 1636." This statement of Bond is confirmed by Professor Alexander Johnston, in his *Connecticut*. In this Professor Johnston says: "The original church of Watertown is still in Massachusetts; the original churches of Cambridge and Dorchester are now in Hartford and Windsor." If anything further were needed to settle the matter, we might find it in these words from Winthrop's *Journal*, under date of February 1, 1636.

"Mr. Mather and others, of Dorchester, intending to begin a new church there (a great part of the old one being gone to Connecticut) desired the approbation of the other churches and of the magistrates; and, accordingly, they assembled this day, and, after some of them had made proof of their gifts, they made confession of their faith, which was approved of; but proceeding to manifest the work of God's grace in themselves, the churches, by their elders, the magistrates, etc., thought them not meet, at present, to be the foundation of a church; and thereupon they were content to forbear to join till further consideration."

This "further consideration" lasted until August

The *First Parish* of Weston

23, 1636, under which date, Winthrop says: "A new church was gathered at Dorchester, with the approval of the magistrates and elders, etc."

The facts regarding the First Church in Boston seem to be as follows: It was organized August 27, 1630, in Charlestown. Under this date, Governor Winthrop wrote in his *Journal*: "We of the congregation kept a fast, and chose Mr. Wilson our teacher, and Mr. Nowell an elder, and Mr. Gager and Mr. Aspinwall deacons." That this was the true date, is shown by an entry in the diary of the Reverend Joseph Sewall of Boston. This entry reads as follows: "1730, August 27, I preached the lecture from 2 Peter 3.15, 'Account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvaⁿ.' N.B. It is y^s day one hundred years since the first church in this Town was gathered in Charlestown."

This is perfectly explicit, and is conclusive as to Boston opinion when men had access to original and living authorities. The writer of this note might have seen and talked with men who had participated in the meeting recorded by Governor Winthrop, and heard from their own lips their own understanding of what they did at that time.

The decision and capacity for affairs displayed by the founders of Watertown, in the first steps of their community-life, marked them as men of no ordinary type. Some, at least, of the men who settled here understood what the newly opening era was to record, better than any others in the colony of Massachusetts Bay, and they were better prepared to enter upon the new stage and rightly act their parts.

This appears at once in the structure of the church they organized "as their first work." The "estate"

The *First Parish* of Weston

founded by them was not "a church" as that institution had existed in England and during most of the Christian centuries. It was a free democracy, a miniature state, organized under the charter of divine law, by men who held themselves to be sons of God. George Phillips, the first minister of Watertown, declared, before he had been two weeks on shore, that "if they would have him stand minister by that calling which he had received from the prelates in England, he would leave them." The only "calling" he would recognize was that given him by his brethren when they asked him to be their minister. His position in this matter was regarded by most as extreme, but he steadily adhered to it, and in so doing he was sustained by his people. And when, in 1639, they desired a colleague for Mr. Phillips, they selected Mr. John Knowles, and ordained him as a second pastor, without giving the governor any notice of their intended action, without consultation with any other church, and without inviting any minister except their own. By doing as they did, they simply put into practice a widely accepted theory of Christian liberty; but then, as now, theory and practice were not always seen in company, and Watertown became notorious for its perverse consistency. But it is now seen that, by turning theory into practice, it had incarnated the principle of congregational independence in the first purely congregational church in the colony.

But they went farther than this. In this they simply asserted their own right to liberty of thought and action. To do this, *as they did it*, required a high type of enlightenment and daring. But to assert the right of other people to liberty of thought

The *First Parish* of Weston

and action requires not only a high type of enlightenment and daring, but also a largeness of spirit not common at the present day. In 1630, and among Puritan seceders from the Church of England, it was found only in a few rare souls. But such souls were found here on the Charles, before the church was a year old. Richard Browne, the elder of the church, declared that "the churches of Rome were true churches." This was, practically, to say that as he had acted out his conviction in helping to organize a democratic church, so another man might act out his conviction in helping to organize a Romish church. This was a heresy of the first order, and on the 21st of July, 1631, the governor, the deputy-governor, and the elder of the Boston church, came out to make inquiry and administer rebuke. It then came out that Mr. Phillips, the minister of the church, gave his countenance to Browne's doctrine. In the following November the matter was taken up by the General Court, but there is nothing to show that either Mr. Phillips or his elder ever receded from the ground they had taken. The people of the town stood by their minister, and showed their approval of Browne by sending him more than twenty times as their representative to the General Court.

Sir Richard Saltonstall was, as we have seen, one of the founders of our town, and his name was the first on the old church covenant. He did not remain in the colony, but as he held his lands and intended to return, he must have remained a member of the Watertown church. His famous letter to the ministers of Boston may, therefore, be regarded as a part of our church history. In this letter he

The *First Parish* of Weston

protests against the policy of the colonial authorities of proscribing and excluding those who differed from them in religious belief, and takes ground in favor of a wide and generous toleration.

“Reverend and deare friends,” he writes, “whom I unfeignedly love and respect: It doth not a little grieve my spirit to heare what sadd things are reported dayly of your tyranny and persecutions in New England, as that you fine, whip, and imprison men for their consciences. First, you compel such to come into your assemblies as you know will not joyne with you in your worship. And when they show their dislike thereof, or witness against it, then you styrrre up your magistrates to punish them for such (as you conceyve) their publick affronts.

“Truly, friends, this your practice of compelling any in matters of worship to doe that whereof they are not fully persuaded is to make them sin; for soe the Apostle tells us, and many are made hypocrites thereby, conforming in their outward man for feare of punishment. We who pray for you, and wish you prosperity every way, hoped that the Lord would have given you so much light and love there, that you might have been eyes to God’s people here, and not to practice those courses in a wilderness which you went so far to prevent. These rigid ways have layed you very lowe in the hearts of the saints. I doe assure you I have heard them pray in the publique assemblies that the Lord would give you meeke and humble spirits, not to strive so much for uniformity as to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

“I hope you do not assume to yourselves infallibilitie of judgment, when the most learned of the

The *First Parish* of Weston

Apostles confesseth that he knew but in part, and saw but darkly as through a glass. Oh that all those who are brethren, though they cannot think and speak the same thing, might be of one accord in the Lord!

“Your truly and much affectionate friend in the nearest union,
RIC: SALTONSTALL.”

If any evidence were needed to show that Sir Richard is to be regarded as a fair representative of the Watertown church, such evidence might be found in a petition, now on file at the State House, a petition written and signed by George Phillips, asking pardon for a man who had been fined for having a Baptist tract in his possession.

How wide the gulf was between Watertown and Boston, in these matters of charity and toleration, is shown in vivid colors on the pages of Governor Winthrop's *Journal*, in the writings of Dudley, and in the records of the courts. The persecutions for opinion's sake, the whippings, the banishments, the wild riot of fanaticism and credulity and cruelty, of which one reads in the annals of Boston's first quarter of a century, would be past belief if they were not set down, in black and white, in the grim records of the official actors. George Phillips and Richard Browne and Sir Richard Saltonstall were, in their spirit, men of to-day, while Winthrop and Dudley and Wilson belong to a world wherein “the secular arm” was promptly laid on any who questioned the infallibility of the majority.

Curious students of early New England history are aware of the fact that Watertown sustains a unique relation to our form of representative government; but knowledge on this point appears to be

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confined to a very small circle. Early in 1631, a tax of £60 was laid on the plantations, by the Board of Assistants, to pay for building fortifications at Cambridge, then called "Newe Towne." Of this £60, Boston and Watertown were assessed £8 each. Boston and the rest paid. Watertown alone refused payment, with most remarkable results. Concerning what followed, John Fiske, in *The Beginnings of New England*, says: "This incident was, in itself of small dimensions, as incidents in newly founded states are apt to be. But in its historic import it may serve to connect the England of John Hampden with the New England of Samuel Adams. The inhabitants of Watertown at first declined to pay this tax, which was assessed by the Board of Assistants, on the ground that English freemen cannot be rightfully taxed save with their own consent. This protest led to a change in the constitution of the infant colony, and here, at once we are introduced to the beginnings of American constitutional history."

We find the official side of this affair in Winthrop's *Journal*, under date of February 17, 1631. "The governour and assistants called before them, at Boston, divers of Watertown; the pastor and elder by letter, and the others by warrant. The occasion was, for that a warrant being sent to Watertown for levying of £8, . . . the pastor and elder, etc., assembled the people and delivered their opinions, that it was not safe to pay moneys after that sort, for fear of bringing themselves and posterity into bondage."

In taking this stand, the people here were simply planting themselves on their charter rights, which

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were being ignored by the authorities in Boston. A fair review of the events that preceded and followed their protest shows that the church in Watertown was clearly in advance of Winthrop and his associates in the matter of statesmanship, as well as in the matter of religious enlightenment and breadth. So much is evident from the account the governor himself gives of the affair. If George Phillips and Richard Browne had kept journals, they would not now be waiting for their places in the Pantheon of American Statesmen. As it is, they ought to wait no longer for their due meed of praise here, on the soil they defended against the encroachments of oligarchical power, and consecrated to the religion of charity and humanity.

Professor Johnston, in his *Connecticut*, says: "The life principle of the American Union may be traced straight back to the primitive union of . . . three little settlements on the bank of the Connecticut River. . . . The first written constitution, in the modern sense of the term. . . . known in history, and certainly the first American constitution to embody the democratic idea, was adopted by a general assembly, or popular convention, of the planters of the three towns, held at Hartford, January 14, 1638."

The three towns referred to by Professor Johnston are Wethersfield, Windsor, and Hartford. The first of these, Wethersfield, was settled by people from the First Church in Watertown, and was the first civil settlement in Connecticut. Windsor came next, and was settled by people from Dorchester. Hartford, the last, was founded by the church from Cambridge.

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The reason for the migration of these colonists was their growing dislike of the narrow and domineering spirit that had got control of things in Boston, and was dictating the civil and ecclesiastical policy of the Bay Colony. We have seen that this dissatisfaction showed itself in Watertown as early as February, 1631; that it led to most important results, and marked the beginning of American constitutional history. Here again, in Connecticut, the Watertown men led the way, and became the founders of the little republic that furnished the model for the federal republic, the United States of America.

One more claim I have to make for the Watertown church. It sent out the first Protestant preacher and founder of a Protestant church among the Indians of New England.

It is quite commonly supposed that the first founder of a Christian community among the Indians was John Eliot, who is known as the "Apostle." I am informed that this claim is made in an inscription upon a monument that has been erected to Eliot's memory. But this claim does not seem to be sustained by the facts.

Palfrey states that Eliot's first step toward Christianizing the Indians was taken in October, 1646. But before this time, in 1641, Thomas Mayhew, of Watertown, had bought the island of Martha's Vineyard from the Earl of Stirling, and in 1642, or 1643, probably in 1642, his son Thomas had gone thither to take possession and begin a settlement. This son, seeing the deplorable condition of the natives, began preaching to such of them as would listen, and by 1644, two years before Eliot began

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his work, had a substantial following, some of whom gave "unquestioned evidence of genuine conversion to God." In 1650, he reported: "There are now, by the grace of God, thirty-nine Indian men of this meeting, besides women . . . which we suppose to exceed the number of the men."

We thus see that the church in Watertown was probably four years, certainly two years, in advance of any other in the Bay Colony in the missionary field. Perhaps the fact that Eliot found his first Indian audience among the Watertown Indians may be taken as evidence that the missionary spirit was here before him, and that Mayhew was but acting out at Edgartown an impulse received at home. Be this as it may, to Mayhew belongs the honor of the first serious attempt to get the Golden Rule into the working relations of white men with red men in the realm of New England.

There is one further matter of no small interest that deserves mention in any list of Watertown's claims to historical eminence.

There has been much debate over the question of the origin of our New England form of town government under "select-men." Professor Alexander Johnston says that Dorchester and Watertown led the way in this matter in October, 1633. The writer of this statement was noted for his scrupulous carefulness and accuracy, and I feel sure that he must have had documentary evidence for his assertion. I have not, as yet, been able to find his authority for saying that Watertown chose select-men in 1633, but I feel justified in saying that the committee of twelve chosen in Dorchester were not "select-men" in the modern sense of the term. They were simply an

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advisory committee, having no more authority than any other twelve men in the town. On the other hand, the first entry in our Watertown records tells of the choice of a real board of select-men. There is no hint in the subsequent records of any such limitations of the functions and authority of this board as we find in the case of Dorchester. And, moreover, the form of the record implies that this was not the first time that the town had chosen such a board.

We have seen that the freemen of Watertown were exceedingly jealous of their rights, exceedingly clear-headed in their understanding of what those rights were, and equally clear-headed in taking measures to define and preserve their privileges as English freemen. We may be very sure that such men did not for the first time in their history elect an executive board to order their "civill affaires" for a year without defining the limits of the authority with which they clothed their officers. We may, therefore, affirm, with a conviction amounting to practical certainty, that there *must* have been such a town-meeting as that which Professor Johnston places in October, 1633, at which select-men were chosen and at which the freemen defined the authority of the office they created.

The case, therefore, stands in this way: If Dorchester and Watertown acted together, in October, 1633, we may confidently claim for Watertown the first board of select-men, for what Dorchester elected was simply an advisory committee.

If, on the other hand, we suppose (against the strongest probability) that Watertown took action for the first time on the 23d of August, 1634, we are still in the lead, for, according to the record, a board

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of select-men was chosen while Dorchester was still living with its committee of twelve.

It would be interesting, were there time to do it, to trace the course of religious thought from the year 1630, to the opening of the eighteenth century. But a more interesting thing (as it seems to me) is possible, viz., to give you a glimpse of the inside of the old church, where your fathers and mothers sat, and of the kind of service in which they participated. Such a glimpse will show, very vividly, the state of religious thought at the time when the Weston church began its separate life. The materials for the picture I am to present, I have taken from an account written at the time by Reverend John Bailey, minister of the church from 1686 to 1692.

It is Sunday afternoon, November 20, 1687. In the old square church, on Meeting-House Common, Goodman Benjamin Crispe, who has a salary of four pounds and ten shillings for taking care of the meeting house, standing in the middle of the broad aisle, gravely rings the bell to summon the people to their "second service," while they as gravely hear and obey the call. Soberly entering they take their places, as the select-men have decreed. Here are Adamses and Allens, and Barnards and Benjamins and Bigelows and Bonds and Brights and Browns, and Coolidges, and Garfields and Goddards, and Harringtons and Hoars, and Jennisons and Jameses, and Livermores, and Masons, and Pierces and Phillipses, and Sangers and Shermans and Springs and Stearnes and Stones, and Warrens and Whitneys and Woodwardes and Wymans, names that keep still, for the most, their places on the voting-lists. From sheds and neighboring barns, where their long-

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enduring horses wait, from hospitable firesides where those living at a distance have taken their lunch and exchanged the gossip of the countryside, they have come to listen to "the Word" from the lips of their famous minister. With them are "very many from Dedham, Wooburn, Barnstable, Cambridge, Old Church in Boston, and ye New Church in Boston, Cambridge Village, Concord, Dorchester, Roxbury, Newbury, Charlestown, and Weymouth," who have come for a day of Gospel refreshing to the church by the Charles. These crowd the boxes and some have to seek accommodations with the young men on "the four backer seats in the gallery," and "the back seats by the west door." The deacons and elders are in state on their seats in front of the pulpit. Suddenly all rise and stand while the minister walks up the aisle and up the pulpit stairs. He is a man of medium height in cassock and bands, that in part conceal his emaciated figure. His worn face shows trace of his life of toil and warfare and imprisonment. It is very sad, and yet is lighted by a fevered enthusiasm. He invokes the favor of God upon the service, announces a hymn and takes his seat. The deacon rises (Deacon William Bond) and says they will sing to the tune of "St. David's," and gives them two lines of the hymn, which is taken up from the deacon's pitch and sung "rather better than they sang in Roxbury." Then comes a long Bible-reading and a longer prayer, a second hymn to the tune "Oxford" and a sermon of an hour or more in length, after which they sing "Martyrs." Mr. Bailey then announces that the communion service will be observed, and asks the deacons who are present from other churches to come forward and sit

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with the officers of the Watertown church. He then descends from the pulpit and takes his place at the table which stands in front of the congregation, uncovers the bread, pours out the wine, and then proceeds to deliver, what he calls in his book, "Sacramental Sayings." The short November day is drawing toward its close and the shadows begin to gather in the dimly lighted room, and in this shuddering silence the mystic rite is transacted, while an awful foreboding of glory or of doom rests upon the souls of all the company. When the ceremony is ended the minister again rises and gives a parting exhortation. I give it to you in his own words, set down by his own hand, two hundred and three years ago.

"Here I stood up," he writes, "and spake to the spectators (which were very many on every side) and held y^e cup in my hand and said this blood cryes to you and that three (3) things, viz.: That ye would come to it, that ye would drink of it, that ye would wash in it. It cryes to you as in Pm. 9:2 to 8th v. I said can you be saved without this blood? This bleeding X cryes come, drink, wash, and be pardoned, sanctified and saved forever. It is the blood of God that cryes after you all, both on y^e right and left hand, and before me in both galleries, and will you, can you refuse this X and his blood? Then this bowll shall rise up in judgment against you, and so shall this good company and your poor minister. Is there any unbelieving Thomas among you? This dear X says, come and thrust your hands up to y^e elbows in my blood. Come, oh come all Watertown, to the blood! Come, tho' y^e worst of sinners, ye are wei-

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come! This blood will cry against you if slighted or refused by you. O, saith X, there be some here that have slain me, and others here have slighted me as if not worth y^e minding. And to all that slight his sacred ordinances, God saith (or may say) my curse be upon them and my Son's blood. Oh, saith all heaven, let them never prosper in basket nor in store, in soul nor in body, in time nor in eternity, that despise such a matchless offer of love. Heaven, earth, hell, cryes out anathemas, and let them be damned (say they) and damned forever that slight such blood! They all pray, as I may so say, against you! The angells saying, shall I go to take off the heads of these dead doggs and devils incarnate? Y^e very seats and galleries crying, shall I let them fall and break their necks, and let them go quick into y^e pitt? Ye devils saying, let us have them! We never sinned against this blood thus! Oh, that I had good ground to imagine that you are thinking to say, Oh dear sir, you have said enough! Say no more of it! We will go home and close with Christ and wash in his blood! Then I will say no more! But I leave all this with J. X. to take an answer with you this night, whether you will receive or reject."

These are the very words that rang out in the November twilight, and filled the old church with their fervid appeal. They are the words of a man in deadly earnest, for whom *Duty* was a term of solemn import and imperial command. The dialect is strange and harsh as that of Cromwell's Ironsides, but it has the ring of a downright and fearless manhood. We recognize the spirit of the covenant of 1630, and are introduced to men whose words were

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not intended to conceal their thoughts. They were men with a mission, each man of them was here on God's business, to build his life into the divine commonwealth, and so they began by binding themselves "by oath and solemn protestation" to God and to each other in a covenant never to be broken.

The spirit of that old covenant is needed still. That and that alone is the true state and church builder. Across the years the fathers call on us to stand up and stand *together*, for God, and man, and the worship that keeps earth in loving and safe alliance with Heaven.

The BIOGRAPHICAL ADDRESSES



PARSONAGE OF THE FIRST PARISH CHURCH, WESTON. BUILT 1877.

REVEREND JOSEPH MORS AND REVEREND WILLIAM WILLIAMS

BY REVEREND CHARLES FRANK RUSSELL

THE Reverend Joseph Mors, first minister of this precinct or parish (though never the settled minister of this church) was born at Medfield, Massachusetts, May 25, 1671, the son of Joseph and of Priscilla (Colburn) Mors. His ancestors were of that excellent company that came from England about 1630, when nearly fifteen hundred souls were added to the inhabitants of Massachusetts Colony. He was probably fitted for college by the schools and the minister of Medfield, and he then entered Harvard, graduating in 1695, twenty-first in a class of twenty-two. The records of the University for that period are most scanty, and a search of its books only reveals that he spent very little money, that he was sometimes fined as a punishment, and that he broke more window glass than his income justified. It would appear that he was poor in purse and in scholarship, with inclination toward mischief, but in none of these matters was extraordinary.

After graduating he taught school as have so many of his fellow graduates. At Dedham, while teaching, it is said he studied theology with the Reverend Joseph Belcher. Mr. Belcher gave him the right hand of fellowship when he was or-

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dained at Dorchester Village about twenty years after, and there were probably intimate relations between the school-master and the minister of every town. Mr. Mors afterward taught in Providence, Rhode Island, where he met Miss Amity Harris, also a teacher, whom he married. Some of his relatives were living at Watertown, and through information given by them, or that he might settle near his friends, it is probable that he came to this precinct about 1701, and taught a school here. He was not without means, for he purchased from the landholders close about this church various parcels of land, upon one of which was a house in which he lived. This house was near the one now occupied by Deacon Henry White and the farm included the meadow land on the south side of Four Mile Brook, now partly owned by Mr. Horace Sears. It is probable that the street now called School Street was afterward laid out through what had been Mr. Mors's land.

The farmers of Watertown, living in what is now known as Weston, met as early as 1695, says Doctor Kendal in his centennial sermon, and agreed to build a meeting house thirty feet square. The building of this house progressed slowly and on June 14, 1698, old style, which equals June 24, new style, the General Court "upon reading the report of a Committee of the Court upon the Petition of the Inhabitants of the West End of the Town of Watertown praying to be a distinct precinct for the setting up of the public worship of God among themselves: Resolved and ordered that the Petitioners be and hereby are permitted and allowed to invite, procure and settle a learned

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and Orthodox Minister to dispense the word of God to them . . . and have liberty for the building and the furnishing of a meeting house according as shall be determined by a Major vote, and also to nominate and appoint a Committee of three or more persons to transact and manage that affair." Doctor Kendal tells us further that meetings of the precinct thus created, and as should be observed created for strictly religious purposes (this portion of the town being in civil matters still a part of Watertown) were held November 8, and 15, 1698, at which officers were chosen. These were the officers of the precinct or what we should now call the parish, that is of a body of men and women united and active for the establishing and maintaining of the public worship of God, and these proceedings show that the precinct created by order of the General Court was at once alive and moving. In these meetings further provision was made to complete the meeting house, but it was not till March, 1700, that the building was occupied. In October, of that year, the Reverend Mr. Symmes was chosen minister by the precinct but he declined. It was into this precinct thus created, with its meeting house at length fit for use, that Mr. Mors moved with his wife in 1701.

He soon must have been invited to preach, for in December, of that year, the precinct "voted that Mr. Mors should continue in order for a settlement," and his preaching must have been satisfactory to the majority for in July, 1702, he was called to settle with the precinct in the ministry, though out of forty-two votes twelve were against him. That forty-two legal voters could be found to attend a parish meeting shows a state of wholesome interest which is not

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common in these days. Over the first call Mr. Mors seems to have hesitated, for in August, a day of fasting and prayer was appointed and in September, the precinct renewed their call, granting him an annual salary and engaged, as an encouragement to settle, to build him a house forty by twenty feet, that is nearly as large as the newly finished church. In November, Mr. Mors accepted the call with some conditions. In June, 1703, the precinct voted to accept his answer and to begin the house they had promised to build him. In September, they voted to raise the house on October 4. The next year it was put into his possession and a grant of money made to enable him to finish it. But that year, 1704, differences began between him and the people. He had never been ordained and therefore had never gathered a church nor become what was known as a settled minister, and the opposition which had voted against his call had gathered strength. It is not possible now to ascertain the grounds of dissatisfaction. Some papers of that date yet in existence seem to show that he had been accused of giving the dimensions of his sleigh to a neighbor on the Sabbath day, and that there were questions raised as to his veracity. These charges are similar to those made against him at Canton where he was afterwards tried. There was in our ancestors a demand for an exactness of statement which few men can arrive at and any deviation from this exactness they were wont to call lying. There was in Mr. Mors little power of exact statement and yet his recorded deviations from the truth were always most trivial and of consequence neither to himself nor others. If they existed at all

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they seem to me exasperating rather than wrong, the outcome of vague thought rather than of a vicious will or a dull conscience; and to talk of worldly things on Sunday no longer condemns a minister. But the differences could not be settled. The advice of the neighboring clergy was several times asked and received. It was voted at a council of churches held March 6, 1706, that after a month Mr. Joseph Mors cease to preach at Watertown Farms. The vote of the council seems to have been carried into effect for, in January, 1801, he moved to New Village, Dorchester; now Canton. A settlement of the financial relation between precinct and minister was not at once arrived at. The matter was carried to the Court of Quarter Sessions, and on December 31, 1707, Mr. Mors conveyed his premises in Weston to a committee of the precinct, and thus finally severed his relations with our town. He had preached here for over three years and was undoubtedly the first minister of this parish, though never the minister of this church. He preached in Canton as minister to the parish there from 1707, to 1717. A council was called of the neighboring churches which met June, 1717; a covenant was adopted and signed by twenty persons; a church thus formed, and on October 30, of that year, in the forty-seventh year of his age and the thirteenth of his preaching Mr. Mors was ordained and settled as pastor at Dorchester Village and began to administer the sacraments of the church. Here Mr. Mors remained with various vicissitudes till 1727, when he was dismissed by his church after having been tried and condemned by a council upon charges much like those made against

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him at Weston. His condemnation and dismissal did not prevent him being called to Randolph in 1729, but he declined the call and remained at Canton [Dorchester Village] till his death in 1732. Mr. Mors is said to have been an amiable man and a correct scholar. He certainly had the power of making devoted friends as well as enduring enemies. His care of the Indians at Dorchester when they were in distress, together with the devotion of his wife to their education, so endeared him to them that they made him a gift of land, and when through some flaw in the title he lost it, they renewed and enlarged their gift with expressions of deep gratitude. He left at his death a considerable property for those days. He was without doubt a man of many excellent qualities, and bore as well as the majority of men would have done the office of first minister to this young and undisciplined parish. The epitaph which is still legible on his tombstone at Canton reveals the checkered nature of his reputation, and with its characterization we must leave him.

Within this silent grave here now doth lie
Him that is gone into Eternity
Who when he lived was by good men respected
Although by others was perhaps rejected
Yet that don't hinder his triumphing Joy
With saints above where nought can him annoy.

The Reverend William Williams, who, three years after Mr. Mors left Weston, became the second minister of this precinct or parish and the first minister of this church, came of an illustrious family. His father, the Reverend William Williams of Hatfield, graduated from Harvard in 1665, and



TOMBSTONE OF REVEREND JOSEPH MORS.

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married first a daughter of Seaborn Cotton [so called because born on the voyage of the Griffin to Boston] whom his father John Cotton refused to baptize, because at the time not being the minister of a congregation he did not feel he had the right to administer any of the sacraments. This Reverend William Williams of Hatfield afterward married a daughter of the Reverend Solomon Stoddard of Northampton, one of the most respected and influential men of his time, and by these two wives he had eight children, the oldest of whom was William Williams of Weston. William Williams of Hatfield was a man of great talent. Jonathan Edwards his nephew said of him: "He was a man of eminent gifts qualifying him for all the work of the ministry." His other children, brothers and sisters of William Williams of Weston, were all of them distinguished. His second son, the Reverend Elisha Williams, Tutor and Rector of Yale College, was also representative of his town in the Connecticut Assembly, and Colonel of the Connecticut regiment sent to Canada in 1746. His third son, the Reverend Solomon Williams, was a graduate and Doctor of Divinity of Yale, whose son was Colonel of a Connecticut regiment and one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. A nephew of William Williams of Hatfield, a cousin of our William Williams, was that Colonel Israel Williams who founded Williams College. Another nephew was Jonathan Edwards, and in various ways William Williams of Hatfield, and therefore his son, William Williams of Weston, was connected with the most learned and influential men of his day.

William Williams of Weston was born at Hatfield

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in 1688, and was brought up within that devoted and cultured circle of clergymen of which his father was an illustrious member. He was probably fitted for college by his father and graduated from Harvard sixth in a class of twelve in 1705. The college books show that he was well supplied with money and averaged well in conduct as he did in scholarship. The Weston precinct, after having been cited many times to the Court of Quarter Sessions for not having a settled minister, agreed, February, 1708, on William Williams and called him to this place. Some time was taken for consideration and to arrange the preliminaries and it was not till a year and a half afterwards, in August, 1709, that Mr. Williams accepted the call. A church was then gathered here through the dismissal of members from the churches at Watertown and Sudbury and the receiving of some who had not hitherto been communicants; a covenant was adopted; deacons elected; and on November 1, of that year, Mr. Williams was ordained by his father, assisted by the Reverend Mr. Hobart of Newton, and the Reverend Mr. Baxter of Medfield, and thereby the first church in Weston came into being. He married in 1710, the eldest daughter of the Reverend Solomon Stoddard of Northampton, the sister of his father's second wife, and thereby brought to Weston as his helpmate one educated in the finest ecclesiastical traditions of the Commonwealth; one connected with many of its eminent and successful ministers. Here he had eight children born, and for forty-two years ministered to the parish which greatly prospered under his care and which knew a smooth and progressive life. He kept a most careful record of such actions

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of the church and parish as seemed to him important, and appears singularly devoted to the welfare of his congregation. In all matters of conduct and discipline he was thoroughly considerate and careful, speaking the truth that had been revealed to him in love, and in all difficulties held the esteem and confidence of his people. He was liberal in thought and open minded; he modified the covenant which he had prepared for the church at the time he organized it, when the young folk desired it; he early adopted singing by rule, when such singing was thought by the conservative pernicious. He had a most excellent reputation abroad as a preacher; he preached the Election Sermon before the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company in 1737; and in 1741, preached the General Election Sermon before Governor Belcher, his Majesty's Council, and the House of Representatives, in which he spoke with such boldness and such devotion to liberty that one cannot help believing that his work here greatly prepared our people for the devotion they afterwards displayed in the Revolution. Besides these two sermons already mentioned he published others, one on Saving Faith, printed in 1741, which was bound up with one by the Reverend Mr. Cotton of Newton and one by the Reverend Mr. Appleton of Cambridge, the three prefaced by an introduction by Mr. Williams. In this preface he says that the sermons were published at the request of the congregation at Newton where they had been preached; that they had been the cause of the addition of eighty members to the church of Newton, and that here in Weston about this time sixty young persons had willingly taken upon them-

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selves baptismal vows and joined the church, the rest of the town most of them having done it before.

He was happy in his children. His oldest son, one of the first settlers in Pittsfield, became distinguished in the French and Indian Wars, holding the rank of colonel, and is said to have been an eminent man and much beloved, a judge of the court in Berkshire county. His youngest son Solomon was a physician; two of his daughters married clergymen; another a physician; all seem to have been well to do and to have often visited him in Weston. His wife if (after full allowance for his partiality) we may trust the description of her given in the sermon which he preached to this church at her funeral, justified her origin and her education, and as a wife, a mother, as his assistant in his ministry to this parish, was a blessing, an inspirer and a true helper. When he lost her, he lost the stay of his life; when she was gone life declined for him. We have no means of knowing what caused his dismissal from this church by mutual consent in 1750, for it was the choice of the council, the minister, and the congregation, that all record of this council should be obliterated. These causes however were not such as to prevent him remaining a member of this church or sharing its sacraments. We should respect the wishes of our fathers and not seek to know what they judged best to withdraw from our knowledge.

We know enough of Mr. Williams to say, that he was of most excellent ancestry and closely connected with the best families in this region; that he had the best education his times afforded; that he was a good preacher, being asked to preach on



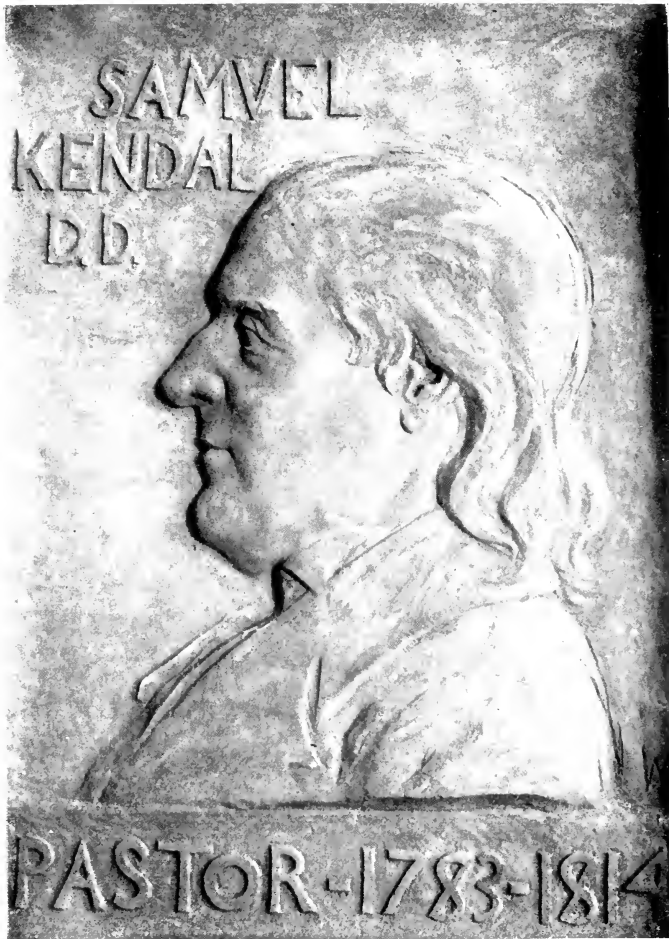
TOMBSTONE OF REVEREND WILLIAM WILLIAMS

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those occasions when the highest available talent is sought; that he was in sympathy with those struggles for liberty which our fathers were continually making in this Commonwealth; and that he was one of that school of progressive ministers who made possible the Christian freedom in which this church now rejoices. He was the friend and intimate of the best men of his day; he had a noble wife who must have been a helpful and refining influence in the community; his children testify of his care and worth. He was devout in his temper and ever active for the good of his people. He has come out of the mists of the past to me as an ideal country minister, and his careful records show that this parish was greatly helped by his charge of it. He added in the first thirty years of his ministry three hundred fourteen persons to the church, and in 1746, when he ceased preaching, there were then in the church (the others having died or removed) two hundred seven communicants. The time he preached here was that of Queen Anne and George the First, a time of great literary activity and of stirring political events in England. Here in New England was the persistent strife of the Massachusetts representatives with the royal governors in which was won a steady advance toward the liberty and independence which culminated in the Revolution. Some knowledge of that literary activity must have penetrated as far as here, and we know that Mr. Williams was a sharer in the agitations of his times. From what I have thus drawn from ancient records I picture our church and its first minister. The church was in its first vigorous youth; near enough to Boston, the metropolis of all the English colonies,

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to be a sharer in its eager growing life and yet far enough withdrawn to be saved from many trials, and to enable its members to enjoy that country life we yet rejoice in. And Mr. Williams was a fit man for the church's service; learned for his time; having a Harvard degree as all our ministers have had save one, and therefore in unison with the advancing literary and religious spirit which has always centred there, the friend of its professors and officers; a patriot, a lover of civic liberty; devout, with his life centred in his parish and yet known and honored far beyond its borders; the head of a hospitable home in which visited the best of his time; one to whom was given to see his church prosper under his care and to know the delight which comes from a deserved success. He created in this parish the church which is the soul of it, and how much we owe him for the spirit which now animates it we may not clearly estimate, but we may be sure we owe him much.



REVEREND SAMUEL KENDAL, D.D.

REVEREND SAMUEL WOODWARD AND
REVEREND SAMUEL KENDAL, D.D.

BY REVEREND FRANCIS BICKFORD HORN BROOKE

DURING the pastorates of Mr. Woodward and Doctor Kendal the people of Weston met for public worship in the meeting house which was erected in 1722, in the pastorate of Mr. Williams, and which was finally displaced, when Doctor Field was pastor, in 1840, by another meeting house, which has since been succeeded by the present one. This old meeting house in which these two ministers preached and prayed stood a few rods in front of the structure which has taken its place, and faced the street which now leads to the high school. It was a fair example of the ecclesiastical architecture of New England in the eighteenth century. In its outward appearance it was almost the same as the meeting house which the town of Wayland has wisely retained to this day. For whatever artistic defects the old New England meeting house had, and however plain and bare it appeared, it was one of the best arrangements, so far as acoustic properties are concerned, ever devised. The interior of the old meeting house was of the usual type. The galleries filled three sides, and the pulpit was made high with reference to them. The seats were movable, so that when the people rose to pray they were lifted up, and when the long prayer was at last

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ended, they came down with a simultaneous bang which formed a sort of supplementary Amen. In Doctor Kendal's time, and probably before it, the minister at the close of the service came out of the pulpit, took his wife on his arm, and together they passed down the aisle, bowing to the standing members of the congregation as they moved along. Then the magnates of the town left their seats, and after them the rest of the people. But in spite of all this stately decorum certain incidents which occurred show that human nature, in some of its manifestations, was by no means suppressed. At one time in the ministry of Doctor Kendal a young man was elected clerk of the parish. One of his duties was to read after the sermon the intentions of marriage. At some social gathering his friends dared him to read some notices of this kind which were unauthorized by the parties named in them. So one Sunday, when Doctor Kendal was absent, our young clerk, with a roguish twinkle in his eye that showed he was up to some mischief, rose and read a few proper notices and then read two or three which were either ridiculous or preposterous. His young friends listened with delight, but the old ladies were filled with indignation, and told him, what was no doubt true, that if Doctor Kendal had been there he would not have dared to do such an outrageous thing. Probably people remembered that incident long after the sermon and preacher of the day had been forgotten. At another time a man, who was somewhat deaf, had been made a justice of the peace. As he sat the next Sunday morning in his seat among the town dignitaries he was inflated with the sense of his

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importance, and was resolved to magnify his office. Suddenly, while Doctor Kendal was preaching, a noise like that of thunder was heard. Our new magistrate thought his opportunity had come. Rising from his seat, he called out in the most impressive tones: "Reverend Sir, desist." Then, when the minister had desisted, he said: "Whoever it was that fired off a gun in this meeting house, let him be brought before me to-morrow morning at ten o'clock." But after a while his friends gathered round him and made him, in spite of his deafness, understand that no gun had been fired, and that the noise had been caused by Black Bet, who weighed two hundred and fifty pounds, falling on the floor of the gallery in a fit. In no way daunted, our magistrate rose again and said: "If what I thought happened had happened what I did was right and proper. Reverend Sir, proceed."

The pulpit of this old meeting house was occupied from 1751, to 1814, by two ministers, Reverend Samuel Woodward and Reverend Samuel Kendal. During these years a change, slow but sure, was taking place in the religious thought and life of New England. In the first half of this period orthodoxy or Calvinism was still rigidly maintained, but rather as a memory of the past than as a possession of the present. The old formulas were repeated, but with little enthusiasm. In the second half of this period doubt or uncertainty with regard to some of the time-honored doctrines was making its way among many ministers. These doubts, however, found little or no public utterance. Doctrines in which ministers no longer heartily believed were not mentioned, so that what they did not say was often more signifi-

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cant than what they did. Each of the Weston ministers was a representative of the religious condition of the time at which he served this church. Mr. Samuel Woodward, who was minister from September 25, 1751, to October 5, 1782, was born in the town of Newton, February 1, 1727. His parents, Ebenezer Woodward and Mindwell Stone, were also natives of the same town. The family was an old and honored one. Mr. Woodward graduated at Harvard College in 1748, and at the age of twenty-four he became the minister of Weston, having been chosen by a unanimous vote. Evidently in those days youth was just as popular as it is now. His letter with regard to his call shows less of the heedless enthusiasm of youth and more of the prudence of experience than would be expected from so young a man. Like a wise person he consulted with his friends, for he says: "Friends tell me that I can by no means live within your offers." The parish agreed with this view of the matter and gave him what he deemed sufficient for his needs. Soon after his settlement in Weston, on January 11, 1753, Mr. Woodward was married to Miss Abigail Williams, a daughter of the Reverend Warham Williams, the minister at Waltham, who was himself son of the Reverend John Williams of Deerfield, who had been carried away with his family into captivity in 1704. Mr. Woodward and his wife had a family of twelve children. Most of them, however, died very early. His oldest son, Samuel, who graduated at Harvard College in 1776, served as a surgeon in the American army, and afterward practised medicine at Newburg, New York. He was married in February, 1784, and died March 29, 1785, leaving a son, who

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died soon after him. Mr. Woodward's third son, Cyrus, entered Harvard and died there during his sophomore year, September 10, 1782. His fourth son, Warham, was, in later life, in business in Charleston, South Carolina, but left no children. Mr. Woodward had no grandchildren to bear his name. His daughters, Abigail and Miranda, became the wives of his successor, Doctor Kendal, and their descendants are at this day living in Weston and Newton. The house which Mr. Woodward built and in which he lived is the one now occupied by Brenton H. Dickson, Esquire. Mr. Woodward lived and labored at a time when the energy and intensity of the movement begun by Edwards and inspired by Whitefield were almost exhausted. People were ready to settle down into a comfortable routine, and to accept the orthodox standards without being very strenuous about them. The work of the average minister consisted in preaching sermons which stated, in the customary manner, what people accepted as a matter of course, and in attending to the duties which usually belonged to his office. Mr. Woodward seems to have been adapted by the constitution of his nature to his environment. He was not expected to be striking or original, and, so far as our knowledge goes, he never disappointed expectation. He never startled his hearers with novelties, nor did he puzzle his own brain or theirs with discussions of abstruse problems. If we may judge him by his letter accepting his call to Weston, and his only printed sermon, he had the gift of continuance with few or none of the graces of style. In this respect, however, he was like all his contemporaries. He seems to have been a man who was sincerely and

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earnestly devoted to his chosen work. He was not eloquent in the pulpit, perhaps never cared to be so, but he was amiable in temper and gracious in manner everywhere. Those who knew him seem to have liked him, and that was everything in a small parish and in a time when people lived in more permanent relations than they do in these days of long vacations and frequent migrations. His personality must have been attractive to win and hold the respect and affection of his parish, as we are told he did. No one, however, seems to have remembered any particular remark he made, or any particular thing he did. He lived in Weston thirty-one years, but although I knew his two granddaughters well, and saw them often, I cannot recall a single incident they related about him. The reason is that he always said and did what was expected of him, and the expected is always easily forgotten. It is creditable to him that, in his simple, sincere, and conventional way, he has left the impression of a faithful and loving soul in the memories of those who knew him. The stream that glides unnoticed through the land carries none the less a blessing in its course. There are, however, two or three incidents in Mr. Woodward's ministry which tell us something of the man. He was the minister of Weston during the Revolutionary war. On the morning of April 19, 1775, a company of one hundred men assembled, it is said, in front of the house of Captain Lamson, which stood where the farm-house of Mr. George C. Davis now stands. There Mr. Woodward offered prayer, and then taking a gun he fell into the ranks to march with his fellow townsmen to the aid of the embattled farmers who were struggling for national independence at Con-

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cord, showing by this act, as the old record states, that he meant "to put his preaching into practice." He rendered active service for one day and then returned to his pulpit. In September, 1776, he read the Declaration of Independence in the meeting house. This was done in obedience to the order of the council, but we may feel sure that Mr. Woodward would have read it without any command.

Another incident of his life, of a more personal nature, occurred at the close of his ministry. His son, Cyrus, a promising youth of nineteen, a member of the sophomore class at Harvard, suddenly died of a fever on September 10, 1782. The Sunday after his interment Mr. Woodward preached his funeral sermon. His subject was: "Submission to the Providence of God a Christian Duty," from the text: "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Job i. 21. It is, so far as its form and phrasing are concerned, a very ordinary sermon, no better than many which before had made little impression. But the circumstances under which it was spoken endow it with life and reality. In this sermon a father's heart throbs with sorrow for his son, as he seeks to impart the comfort which he himself needs so much. The reader of the sermon, even now, more than a hundred years after it was spoken, feels the pathetic note in one of its opening sentences: "Submission eases the mind, and mitigates that sorrow that otherwise is ready to oppress and sink the heart." The preacher had said, using the words attributed to David on the death of his child: "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." The words were prophetic, for the minister had preached his

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last sermon. In a few days he was taken with a fever, and on October 5, 1782, passed to where God had called his dear one on. He lies buried in the cemetery of the town of Weston, and a memorial tablet records his virtues. In his centennial discourse Doctor Kendal, who was his successor in the ministry, says: "He died greatly beloved and lamented by the people of his charge, by his brethren in office, and by an extensive circle of acquaintance. His memory is yet dear to many of this society."

Samuel Kendal, who succeeded Mr. Woodward, was born July 11, 1753. He is the first minister of Weston of whom we have distinct and vivid remembrance. Those who preceded him seem like shadows, but he stands before us a well-defined and robust figure. We know him as a strong man who wrestled with the hard conditions of his life, and prevailed.

He seems to have inherited the vigor of his constitution from his father, Elisha Kendal, who survived his son ten years, and who died at the great age of ninety-nine. It is said that when he was ninety he walked from Weston to Salem in one day. It may be due to his influence that Doctor Kendal resolved in early youth to become a minister, for he was a simple-hearted, deeply religious man, who always loved to remember that he had been converted under the preaching of Whitefield. When Doctor Kendal was nineteen he had saved enough money from his earnings to purchase his freedom, and started at once from Nova Scotia, whither his father had removed from New England, for Massachusetts, in order there to pursue his studies. He crossed the Bay of Fundy in a boat so



TOMBSTONE OF REVEREND SAMUEL WOODWARD.

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small that he was able to carry it. He studied in Sherborn, his birthplace, until he was ready to enter Harvard. But the Revolutionary war broke out, and he abandoned his studies to become a soldier. When he had served several years in the continental army he re-entered Harvard and graduated in the class of 1782. While in college he supported himself by working at odd times as a farm laborer and by teaching school at Waltham in his vacations. He either earned so much, or lived so frugally, that on the day he left college he had paid all his debts and had two hundred dollars left. He was thirty years old when he was settled as minister of Weston. The hard work, begun in early youth, was never suspended. He not only maintained himself, but his father and sisters. To do this, he not only served the parish by preaching two sermons every Sunday and by meeting all the calls that are apt to be made upon a minister, but he also carried on the work of a small farm, and prepared young men for college. For all that, great capacity for hard work was required. But in attending to various outside duties he did not neglect the work of his profession. His sermons were marked by more than usual ability, so that he was in constant demand for public occasions. Many of his sermons were printed and bear witness to his practical wisdom and his command of effective speech. They must have been interesting to the audiences to whom they were spoken. A series of seven sermons, preached to young people, was published in a volume in 1809. Although the statement of the doctrines in them lacks definiteness, and although they assume a state of thought and feeling that has long since vanished, they still indicate that

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the preacher had a clear view of certain facts of human experience. Here is a statement which is eternally true: "My friends, be persuaded to try and prove your hearts by this rule and not to trust to sudden impulses, to transient feelings, which are not accompanied and followed with rational piety and practical goodness. You may be assured that unless you bring forth the fruits of righteousness you have no internal principle of holiness. . . . Beware of taking that for true religion which is only the sudden and transient effect of animal passion."

His election sermon preached May 30, 1804, is a thoughtful, impressive, and suggestive discussion of the theme: "That religion and the moral and social virtues of which that is the great spring, are, under God, the life and security of a free people." The sermon reads well to-day, and of how few sermons can that be said almost a century after they were spoken. The sermon throughout is marked by elevation of tone, and closes with unusual eloquence. Here is a sentence which has more significance to-day, perhaps, than it had when spoken: "The ideas of some seem to have been that there must be a system of political morality established, whose object shall be to fix certain rules of social duty to the observance of which all shall be obliged by the authority of the state. But if such system is to rest solely on the authority of human laws, and to be the result of human wisdom only, its fitness will always be liable to doubts, and a violation of its principles and rules thought no great crime."

His sermon preached at the ordination of the Reverend Isaac Allen is a good statement of his ideal of the minister's life and work. It contains

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passages which give a glimpse of the thoughts of the hearts of many ministers at that time: "It is the privilege of all and the special duty of every minister to take his account of the religion he professes and teaches, not from human creeds, but from the oracles of God. The peculiar doctrines of the gospel, those which distinguish Christianity from every other system of religion and morality, faithfulness obliges him to teach and enforce by the proper authority, the word of Christ and of his apostles. They must not be corrupted by human refinements. As they are found, they should be stated, without distorting their features, on the one hand, by a metaphysical subtlety which will conform them to a favorite system of speculative opinions; and without, on the other hand, explaining away their natural meaning to accommodate them to what some choose to call a liberal way of thinking. It is apprehended that we are in danger of opposite extremes, each of which strengthens and renders the other more injurious, and that they combine their influence to lessen in the minds of men the credit of the gospel. The faithful minister, avoiding both, will preach as the truth is in Jesus."

The *Century Sermon* is a painstaking and complete account of the origin and growth of the town and church of Weston. It is inspired by Doctor Kendal's love and esteem for the parish which he had honored by his long and faithful and distinguished service.

In his excellent account of Doctor Kendal, in his *Annals of the American Pulpit*, Doctor Sprague gives a complete list of Doctor Kendal's published writings. There are also three sermons in MS., one

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of which was preached at Weston, December 29, 1799: "The sabbath after the news of General Washington's death arrived among us." The text is from 2 Samuel iii. 38: "Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?" It begins with the following words: "How melancholy, how deeply afflicting to every true American, is the thought, that the great, the illustrious Washington is no more! How unwilling we are to realize the sad, the painful truth. What feelings does it awake in the heart of sensibility to think that death hath despoiled such greatness and triumphed over so much goodness!" These MSS. and nearly all these printed sermons are in the possession of his granddaughters, Mrs. Knox and Miss Maria Jane Marshall. It is to be hoped that all of them may be found and preserved. Such documents are becoming more rare, and therefore every year more valuable, to the local historian.

Doctor Kendal, from all that we hear of him, was a man with whom everybody instinctively felt it was not prudent to trifle. Doctor Sprague says he was commanding and impressive, while Doctor Kendall, of Plymouth, speaks of his "large, firmly built frame," and his "commanding and dignified appearance." He dominated everywhere, not merely by virtue of his office, but by the force of his character. Some incidents in his life reveal him better than any words. An old man came to his home, which stood on the place now occupied by Francis B. Sears, Esquire, to be married to his second wife. When Doctor Kendal asked him to stand up he grumbled and said: "It seems to me this is a new fashion." "New or not," was the reply, "you will

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be married that way or not at all," and the man was married that time standing. One Sunday afternoon a man was driving through the town in violation of the law. Doctor Kendal met him and commanded him to stop, but he kept on. Then the minister took the horses by the reins and stood in front of them until the sun had set. Not until then did he allow him to continue his journey. During his ministry Methodist preachers began to come into the town and to hold their meetings in private houses. No doubt they were earnest and devoted men, but it must be confessed that their zeal was often untempered by courtesy. One of them in particular was in the habit of speaking of the ministers of the established church of New England as "dumb dogs who could not bark." Doctor Kendal determined to attend one of these meetings. But when he got there the courage of the Methodist preacher failed him. He could not face the majestic presence of that parish minister, and for once at least he himself could not bark. Another story told me by his oldest daughter, Mrs. Marshall, shows how impressive his pulpit manner was. One Sunday afternoon a great thunder-storm was impending, and he read a hymn appropriate to the occasion, in such a way that people trembled as if awed by the presence of God.

But with all his dignity of bearing Doctor Kendal was a man of gracious manner. Doctor Sprague speaks of his fine social qualities, and of his evident desire to interest and gratify the boy of fifteen who happened to be his guest, and calls him "one of the most genial and pleasant of men." There are evidences that he had a sense of humor, which no

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doubt helped him to bear the trials of life. On the night of February 19, 1791, his house was burned to the ground and everything in it consumed. As he looked on and saw his manuscripts going up in the flames, he remarked that for once at least his sermons were able to give light. This remark reveals much of his nature.

It is not easy to decide just where Doctor Kendall theologically belonged, his doctrinal expressions are indeterminate. In his sermons he declares man's inability and his consequent need of divine grace and pardon. He indicates his belief in the fall of man. He has, he says, "fallen from his original dignity." He also speaks of his need of redemption through Jesus Christ, but that redemption seems to consist in man "copying after the moral perfections of the Saviour of the world." There is no expression anywhere in regard to the relation of Jesus to God, and none in regard to the nature of his atoning work. His idea of seeking God is wholly practical: "But how, it may be asked, are we to seek? I answer by breaking off your sins by righteousness, and your iniquities by turning to the Lord; by ceasing to do evil, and learning to do well; by setting the Lord always before your face; by the exercise of faith, repentance, and watchfulness; by humiliation, prayer, and supplication; by exerting all your powers to avoid sin and to honor God and keep his commandments, imploring his gracious assistance in every duty, and his acceptance through the mediator." (Sermons, pp. 76-77.) His temper was pre-eminently practical and not philosophical. The characterization of Doctor Kendall, of Plymouth, is judicious and accurate: "His mind was

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vigorous, comprehensive, and well stored, but he was much more at home in the region of common sense and practical thought than of philosophical speculation." He looked at life with honest straightforwardness and saw it as it was without much conscious reference to theories or dogmas. What was real to himself he said; all else he left unspoken.

Doctor Sprague, when he was preparing his *Annals of the American Pulpit*, wanted to place him among the Trinitarian Congregationalists, but finally concluded not to do so. The fact that he received his degree of D.D. from Yale College in 1806, shows that he was not regarded as out of accord with the ancient orthodoxy of New England. But that he inclined to the side of theological freedom is evident in his *Century Sermon*. At that time, when many were attempting, in the interest of the old doctrinal views, to establish an organization, called the consociation, which, unlike the time-honored council, should have judicial authority, Doctor Kendal inveighed against it: "As St. Paul said to the Philippians: 'Beware of the concision,' I say unto you brethren: Beware of consociation. Never suffer this engine to enter within the walls of this church." Doctor Lamson, who was brought up in his church, says: "I remember that when I went to Andover to complete my preparation for college, and heard Doctor Griffin, Doctors Woods and Stuart, and others preach, the views were absolutely new to me. I had never heard anything of the kind from Doctor Kendal or from those who occupied his pulpit by exchange." His own children did not know his theological position. When his daughter Abigail, afterward Mrs. Samuel

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Hobbs, visited Hartford, Connecticut, and was asked, by some of the ladies she met there, whether her father was an Arian or a Calvinist, she was unable to answer. On her return, when she told her father how ashamed she was not to know which of these titles belonged to him, he said: "My daughter I am glad you didn't know. I don't want to wear any party label. I suppose I am a moderate Calvinist." In this case, as in many others, it is probable there was a maximum of moderation and a minimum of Calvinism. Perhaps Doctor Kendal himself was not aware where he really belonged. He had moved on into a new realm of thought and feeling with those around him, without knowing it, like those of whom Swedenborg tells us, who were in the other world while all the time they were thinking they were in this.

One so strong and well as Doctor Kendal might have expected to attain to great age. He had never seemed more vigorous than when in 1813, he preached his centennial sermon. In the thirty years of his ministry he had been absent only one Sunday from public worship. But he seemed to have a premonition of the approaching end. He speaks as one about to depart, and says of himself: "The time is fast approaching when the lips of the present speaker will be closed. He does not expect to attain to the days of the years of his fathers, to whom long life has been granted."

This was in 1813. In 1814, he attended the ordination services of Edward Everett, as minister of Brattle Street Church, Boston, and while there became ill of typhus fever and died on February 16, 1814. That he had done his life work wisely

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and well is shown in the fact that he had so imbued his people with the spirit of the new vision then breaking upon New England that, when it appeared, they were ready, without controversy and without division, to enter into the life and thought to which it summoned them.

REVEREND JOSEPH FIELD, D.D.

BY CHARLES HENRY FISKE, ESQUIRE

THE fourth minister regularly ordained and settled over this parish was Joseph Field, junior, the successor of Reverend Doctor Kendal. His active pastorate extended over a period of just fifty years, one quarter of the term of the existence of this church, the longest service of any minister here. At the end of this time he sent in his resignation, and continued thereafter pastor emeritus until his death, some four years later.

His father was Deacon Joseph Field, of the New South Church in Boston, Church Green, a well to do Boston merchant engaged in the shipping trade, principally with Russia, a member of the firm of Wales & Field, which had its warehouse on Long Wharf. He married Elizabeth Wales, widow of Thomas Bigelow of Providence, Rhode Island, a relation of his partner. They had four children, the third child and only son being the minister, the subject of this memoir.

The father was a typical gentleman of the old school, particularly strenuous in retaining the old style of dress, in small clothes, which he wore until his death. It is said that on one occasion, while attending a ministers' meeting at his son's house in Weston, he discovered, among the guests, Reverend Doctor Ezra Ripley, the Concord minister, the



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only other person present dressed in the same old-fashioned manner; and these two old gentlemen were so affected by the circumstance that they ran forward, embraced and kissed each other. Joseph Field, senior, died May 16, 1837.

The Field family is of English descent; the supposed first ancestor to come to this country to settle was Zechariah Field, born in Ardsley, Suffolk County, England, about the year 1600, who emigrated in 1630, lived originally in Dorchester, and after several changes of residence finally took up his abode in Hatfield, Connecticut, where he died about 1666. From this Zechariah, or one of his brothers, the Joseph Field branch of the family is supposed to be descended.

Zechariah's grandfather was Sir John Feld or Field, of Ardsley, who was knighted for his astronomical discoveries, and, as a recognition of his services to the cause of science, the following crest was granted to him September 21, 1558: "A dexter arm issuing out of clouds proper fessways, habited gules, holding in the hand also proper, a sphere or." The arms consisted of sheaves of wheat on a plain groundwork, evidently a play upon the name, wheat being one of the chief products of fields. This coat of arms, with the crest, is engraved upon some of the old family silver now in the possession of the children of the minister Field.

Joseph Field, junior, was born in Boston, December 8, 1788. On reaching the proper age he became a member of his father's church, the New South. He attended the well known and fashionable classical school of the day in Boston, kept by the Reverend John Sylvester John Gardiner, at the time

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assistant rector of Trinity Church in Boston. From this school he entered Harvard College in 1805, and was graduated in the class of 1809, one of the smallest classes in numbers for several years before or after, but which contained some distinguished persons. He outlived all but two of his classmates, and strange to say, both of the survivors were ministers.

Very little is known of his college life, except that he devoted much of his spare time to music, of which he was very fond. He was a remarkable flutist and a good singer. This naturally threw him into intimate relations with other music-lovers, among whom was Alpheus Bigelow, of Weston, the founder and first president of the Pierian Sodality of Harvard College and a member of the class of 1810. When the subject of settling Mr. Field in Weston was under consideration, Mr. Bigelow exerted his influence in favor of his intimate college friend, probably anticipating great pleasure in having for a neighbor a person with such congenial tastes.

Mr. Field had a gift for poetical composition, so much so that on his Commencement day, out of thirteen parts assigned, although only twelve were given out, Mr. Field had the fifth, numerically, "A Poem in English on Climate," eighty lines in length. He composed several hymns, none of which, except possibly the one mentioned later, is known to be now extant.

After graduation, Mr. Field adopted the ministry for his profession, and for that purpose studied with Reverend Doctor Kirkland, until the latter became President of Harvard College; and thereafter with Reverend Doctor William Ellery Channing. At this

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time there was no divinity school in Cambridge, connected with the college.

After finishing his studies, he received from the Boston Association of Ministers the following certificate to preach :

“ Boston, Sept. 17, 1812.

“ We, the members of the Boston Association of Congregational Ministers, having examined Mr. Joseph Field as to his qualifications to preach the Gospel, do certify that from the testimony which he has produced from respectable sources of his moral and religious character, & from the evidence which we have now received of his abilities and theological learning, do approve him as qualified for the work of the Christian ministry. We accordingly recommend him to the acceptance & employment of the Churches; & cordially pray that his labors may be succeeded by the blessing of God.

Per order & in behalf of the Association,

JOHN LATHROP, Moderator.

THOMAS GRAY, Scribe.”

Some time after this, he received a call to settle over the church in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, which however he declined on the ground that two of the members opposed him and he preferred more unanimity. He also preached as a candidate in Brattle Street Church, Boston; but Edward Everett, who was also a candidate, received the call.

After the death of Reverend Doctor Kendal, the Weston parish took steps to secure a minister. At first, Reverend Joseph Allen was invited to supply the pulpit, and would probably have received a call, but his health at that time was poor, and he felt un-

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able to undertake the task. The parish then invited young Mr. Field to supply the pulpit for a few Sundays, and he proved very acceptable to the members, as his qualities of mind well accorded with their views at the time.

The situation was changing; the great struggles, both in the religious and the political world, had in a measure subsided. The church had been torn apart by internal dissensions between the conservatives and liberals; a struggle which was then gradually subsiding. The country at large had experienced the hardships of war to establish its supremacy. While these disturbing elements were progressing, there was need of a more combative spirit, and a stronger controversial manner of thought and action was demanded. War had now ceased, and had given way to the simpler and more passive qualities. The old fighters had served their usefulness, and now the dawn of peace appeared on the horizon.

To the members of this country parish, at the time isolated as it was from the noise and bustle of city life, Mr. Field, as an apostle of peace, was very acceptable. At a legal town meeting held December 27, 1814, of which Isaac Fiske was the moderator, and also town clerk, it was "voted to give Mr. Joseph Field, junior, an invitation to settle in the Gospel ministry in the town of Weston, and to give him as annual salary the sum of eight hundred dollars during the time that he shall be the minister in Weston; and that the moderator make known to him the doings of the town relative to his invitation to settle in the ministry here, and the salary proposed by them, and to request his answers

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thereto;" and the meeting was adjourned to January 9, 1815, to receive his answer. The church also met on the same date, and voted to give him a call. In accordance with these votes the following letter was sent to him:

“WESTON, Dec. 27, 1814.

“Respected Sir,

“In compliance to a vote of the town, as well as in the gratification of my own wishes, it is my duty to communicate to you the result of the proceedings of the Town and Church of Weston this day. The Church have voted to give you a call, two only excepted: the town have concurred in the invitation, three only excepted. The objections in Church and town were not against you, but founded in a desire to hear you or some other person further. In them, I will assure you, you will ever find friends and supporters. Although they voted agst the call, they did not agst the salary. The town, three or four excepted, voted to give you, in case you should accept their invitation, the annual salary of eight hundred dollars, to be paid so long as you remain their minister. More unanimity was scarcely ever shown in the proceeding of any society in relation to the settlement of a minister, than we witnessed this day. We rejoice and congratulate ourselves. I enclose you a copy of the record of our proceedings. I ardently pray that you will accept our invitation, and that your acceptance will be the commencement of a friendship here, to be consummated in immortal felicity.

I am, Sir, with sentiments of respect,

Your friend, ISAAC FISKE.

Mr. Joseph Field, jr.”

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The two became next door neighbors and life-long friends and companions; and the prayer as expressed in the letter was thus answered.

Mr. Field accepted the call, in a letter, of which the following is a copy :

“ BOSTON, Jan'y 7th, 1815.

“ My Christian friends :

“ The result of your late meeting and the vote by which you express your desire of my becoming your pastor has been officially announced to me. When I consider the office I am thus invited to accept; the duties which you are calling on me to perform; the character which I am to assume; the relation in which I am to stand towards you; my mind is filled with anxiety and solicitude. I feel that it is no light matter to take upon me the loads of a Christian minister. I feel that I am now called upon to decide a question most important : the most interesting in its effects both to you and to myself, whose decision involves subjects of the highest concern ; consequences that extend beyond the grave. In forming a connection so lasting, so solemn, so intimate as that between a minister and people, perhaps more time than you have given might have been desired for reflection and consideration, but the peace and harmony with which you have acted, and the unanimity which you have shown, has prevented those difficulties which might otherwise have arisen in my mind, and, by opening to me the prospect of being useful and successful in my calling, has made the path of duty more plain and easy before me. In forming my determination, however, I trust I have not acted with rashness, nor been influenced by any but the purest motives ;

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and it is not without having first seriously considered the duties of the station and deeply and prayerfully reflected upon the importance of the subject, that I now, with the approbation of those whose opinions are ever to be valued by me, and impelled by the feelings of my own heart, solemnly accept in the presence of that being whose servant I am and whose cause I am to defend, the invitation you have given me to exercise over you the pastoral charge. In doing this, I am sensible of my inability to fulfil, so perfectly as I would wish, the many obligations which arise out of the ministerial office, an office which I enter upon with more diffidence, when I reflect upon the ability and faithfulness with which he discharged its duties whose labors I am to continue. I tremble indeed at the great and awful responsibility of the station. But I put my trust in God and look up to him for strength, for knowledge, for help; and I earnestly hope and entreat your prayers, my brethren, may mingle with mine, in imploring our common father and friend, that he will make me sufficient for these things; that he will give me a double portion of his spirit; that the connection in which we are about to engage may be mutually useful, and that having been faithful to each other on earth, we may hereafter meet in another and a better world to enjoy forever the riches of divine love. With esteem and respect I subscribe myself yours,

JOSEPH FIELD, JR."

At an adjourned meeting of the church held January 29, 1815, the following letter was presented:

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“Jan. 15, 1815.

“This may certify that Mr. Joseph Field, junior, is a member in full communion with the New South Church in this place. He is of unimpeachable standing with us, and as such is affectionately recommended to the fellowship of the Church of Christ in Weston.

SAM'L. THACHER, pastor N. S. C.”

It was therefore voted “that the Reverend Joseph Field, junior, be admitted as a member in full communion with the Church of Christ in Weston.”

The Church voted to ordain him February 1, 1815; and to invite as an ecclesiastical council for that purpose the following :

“Church of Christ in Lincoln; Church of Christ in West Cambridge; Church in Brattle Street in the town of Boston; The Church in Dorchester; The Church in Barnstable; The Colidge Church in Cambridge, of which Reverend Doctors Kirkland and Ware are Pastors; The Church in Bolton; The Church in East Sudbury; The Church in Medford; The Church in Brighton; The First Church in Cambridge; The First Church in Watertown; The First Church in Waltham; and Reverend Mr. McKean as representing the Colidge.” The invitations were dated January 16, 1815, and signed by the committee, Eben Hobbs, Joseph Russell, Nathan Warren, Thomas Bigelow, Ira Draper, requesting the presence of the Reverend Pastors and such delegates as they may see fit to appoint to assist at the ordination.

At the ordination Mr. Field read his profession of faith to the council, and answered such questions

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as were propounded to him. The council voted that Reverend Mr. Stearns give the charge; Reverend Mr. Ripley express the fellowship of the churches; Reverend Doctor Holmes make the consecratory prayer; Reverend Mr. Thacher make the introductory prayer; and Reverend Mr. Pratt make the concluding prayer. Reverend Doctor Kirkland preached the ordination sermon. With such an array of talent as this, doubtless the exercises were very impressive and effective.

These ceremonies took place in the old wooden meeting house built in 1722; the second meeting house, as there had previously been a small building which was used only for a few years. The meeting house in which he was ordained was finally taken down, and a new one built and dedicated in 1840.

The day of Mr. Field's ordination was memorable for its intense cold. Gibbs, President Kirkland's coachman, who drove him up from Cambridge on that morning, froze his nose and ears; and what was worse for all, except possibly for poor Gibbs, at the banquet served on that day, according to tradition, the fruit froze on the tables.

Mr. Field was the first distinctively Unitarian minister settled here, although Doctor Kendal was of that way of thinking, according to Mr. Field. The Church of Christ in West Cambridge, of which Reverend Thaddeus Fiske was pastor, was invited to the council, and Mr. Field was accustomed to exchange with him. This shows that at this time the lines were not necessarily sharply drawn between the two branches of the Congregational church.

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Mr. Field was the last graduate of Harvard College to be settled over this parish. In the early part of his ministry he wore bands, and also a gown presented to him by the ladies of his parish. At a later date he left off both of these, preferring to conduct the services in plain clothes.

The first child whom he baptized here was Mary Ann, daughter of his friend Alpheus Bigelow.

He was married October 16, 1816, by Reverend Doctor Porter, the predecessor of Reverend Doctor George Putnam of Roxbury, to Charlotte Maria Leatham of Roxbury, one of three sisters, English ladies of quality, who had come to this country with their step-mother after the death of their father. Another one of these three sisters became the wife of Mr. Robert Hooper, a well-known Boston merchant. Mrs. Field was very highly educated, with a thorough knowledge of the French and Italian languages, which was considered a necessary accomplishment for well educated ladies of those days; and moreover she was musical, being a good singer and pianist. The mutual tastes of the two doubtless strongly attracted each to the other, and brightened the prospect of the quiet country life into which they had unitedly cast their lot.

Mr. Field, before his marriage, lived in the house of Mrs. Kendal, widow of the former minister; afterward he purchased of his friend Isaac Fiske his house and land on Main Street, Mr. Fiske building for himself on an adjoining spot; and in this house Mr. and Mrs. Field began their housekeeping, lived all their lives, and died. Their home was the centre of refinement and culture.

There were born to them six children, two sons

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and four daughters; but only one son and one daughter survived their parents, the latter still occupying the same house. Mrs. Field survived her husband and died March 22, 1881. On August 29, 1817, Mr. Field was commissioned by his Excellency Governor John Brooks, chaplain of the Third Regiment of Infantry of the Massachusetts Militia, which office he held until March 30, 1824, when he was honorably discharged.

It is said that during his term of service the Weston Independent Light Infantry when it met for drill was accustomed to form into line at Flagg's tavern, and on its march along the road towards the middle of the town would often halt in front of Reverend Mr. Field's house and fire a volley as a salute. With the old-fashioned firearms of the time, this made a great noise, which would so terrify his children that they dreaded the company's approach, and, on being apprised of it, would run and conceal themselves under the beds, or other hiding places until it had passed; so little love did they then have for martial glory.

The minister's salary was formerly paid by the town, and a ministerial tax was levied for that purpose; but those however who attended other churches were given certificates of that fact, and were accordingly exempt from this tax. The last assessment by the town for that purpose was in 1824; and the first record of the payment of the ministerial salary on the church book is May 5, 1826, for the year ending May 1, 1826. The salary voted him in the beginning was never changed and was paid to him for the most part regularly.

The ladies of the society paid the sum of thirty

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dollars, October 31, 1826, to constitute him a life member of the American Unitarian Association; and later, the parish constituted him a life member of the American Bible Society. He was a member of the Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Indians and Others in North America. He was elected on February 2, 1837, a member of the Board of Overseers of Harvard College, and he held this office until 1853. His notification was as follows:

“BOSTON, 2 February, 1837.

“Rev. and Dear Sir: At a meeting of the Overseers of Harvard University this day you were elected member of the Board. This is to signify your election and to ask your acceptance.

JOHN PIERCE, Secretary of the Board.

Rev. Joseph Field.”

On September 25, 1840, his Alma Mater conferred upon him the degree of D.D., of which he was notified as follows:

“REV'D JOSEPH FIELD, D.D.

Sir—I have the honor to transmit the accompanying Diploma from the President and Fellows of Harvard University of the Degree of Doctor of Divinity. Permit me to avail myself of the occasion to express the sentiments of great respect with which I am

Your hble. svt.,

JOSIAH QUINCY.

Cambridge, 25 Sept., 1840.”

Doctor Field, during his life here, made it a rule never to vote in town meeting, and he never held

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any town office, except as member of the School Committee.

In 1826, the former method of choosing the School Committee simply by districts was modified, and at a town meeting held April 26, of that year, it was voted "to choose a school committee, consisting of a chairman and six others, one to be in each School District. Whereupon Reverend Joseph Field was chosen chairman, and it was voted to excuse him from all the duty of a Committeeman, except that of examining the instructors and attending the schools." He remained on the school board until 1853. He took great interest in the work and was very popular with both teachers and children. His visitations to the schools were looked forward to with interest and pleasure, as he always had something cheering and encouraging to say; and if it were ever necessary to administer a reproof, he softened the blow with kindly words.

He was always greatly interested in children, and his affection and love for them was strong and tender. He is reported to have said that no child's face was too dirty to be kissed. It was his habit to have a pleasant playful smile for any such whom he met, not permitting them to pass without some kind word or deed. His form and manner are well enshrined in many hearts then youthful but now grown old.

In 1840, the old fashioned church-building, which was out of repair and had survived its usefulness, was taken down, and a new building erected on nearly the same site. It was dedicated December 10, 1840, the printed order of exercises, still preserved, has been reproduced photographically and is as follows:

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ORDER OF EXERCISES

—AT THE—

Dedication of the New Meeting House,

Belonging to the

CONGREGATIONAL PARISH

OF WESTON,

December, 10th, 1840.

1. SENTENCE.

*And ye shall seek me and find me, when ye shall seek for me
with all your heart.*

2. INTRODUCTORY PRAYER.

BY REV. DR. LAMSON.

3. READING of the SCRIPTURES,

BY REV. MR. GANNETT.

4. ORIGINAL HYMN.

This house, henceforth, not ours, but thine.

We dedicate to thee,
Here may thy glory ever shine,
O God thy Spirit be.

We bring no costly sacrifice,
Unto thy holy bill;
We bid no perfumed incense rise,
But strive to do thy will.

Thy praise in solemn strains we sing,
From worldly thoughts apart;

Accept the off'ring which we bring,
The off'ring of the heart.

And be this house, (whats'er our lot,
Or joy or grief be given),
To each a hallowed, holy spot,
To each, the gate of heav'n.

Then, when this temple shall decay,
We'll worship Thee above;
In realms where reign eternal day,
Peace, Purity and Love.

5. SERMON.

6. ANTHEM.

I will extol Thee, my God, O king; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever. Every day will I bless thee, and I will praise thy name forever. Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable. One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts. I will speak of the glorious honor of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works. And men shall speak of the might of thy terrible acts; and I will declare thy greatness. The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger, and of great mercy. The Lord is good, is good to all; and his tender mercies are over all his works. All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord, and thy Saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power. To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.

7. PRAYER OF DEDICATION.

BY REV. MR. ALLEN.

8. HYMN.

The perfect world by Adam trod,
Was the first temple built by God:
His fist laid the corner-stone,
And heaved its pillars, one by one.

He hung its starry roof on high—
The broad, limitless sky;
He spread its pavement, green and bright,
And curmish'd it with morning light.

The mountains in their places stood—
The sea, the sky—and all was good;
And, when its first pure praises rang
The morning stars together sang.

Lord! 'tis not ours to make the sea,
And earth, and skies, a house for thee;
But in thy sight our offering stands,
An humble temple, made with hands.

9. CONCLUDING PRAYER.

BY REV. MR. RIPLEY.

10. MOTET.

Holy! holy! holy! is the Lord!
Holy is the Lord of Sabaoth,
Heaven and earth is full of his glory,
Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord,
Messiah in the Highest.

11. BENEDICTION.

S. H. Dickinson, Printer, 60 Washington Street, Boston.

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The erection of the new building was necessitated by the fact that the old one was so much out of repair as to render it unsuitable and unfit for public worship; and it was easier to raise the necessary funds for a new building than for the repair of the old one. The new building contained fifty-eight pews with a gallery over the entrance for the singers. The sum of \$4008.94 was raised and the whole building cost only \$3873.35, leaving a surplus of \$135.59.

About this time a collection was taken up among the members to purchase a new Bible, and the one bound in red morocco now in use in the pulpit was procured. The old Bible, the one probably used at Mr. Field's ordination and supposed, with good reason and without much doubt, to be the one which the celebrated Samuel Dexter by his will directed to be purchased and presented to this church, was disposed of by sale to Leonard Cushing, one of the church members. Samuel Dexter had moved to Weston to live with his son-in-law Artemas Ward, in the house now owned by Mary Frances Pierce and Joseph F. Pierce, members of the family of the late Benjamin Pierce. He became a great friend of Reverend Doctor Kendal, and engaged him to preach his funeral sermon. This Bible has, since its sale, remained, carefully preserved, as a highly valued and cherished heirloom in the Leonard Cushing family; and for some years past has been the property of Sarah Maria Barry, wife of Mr. Charles Barry of Melrose, Massachusetts, a grand-daughter of Leonard Cushing; and she, on this day, very considerately and generously, has presented to this church this precious volume, that it may find its resting place here, where it probably was conse-

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crated and began its sphere of usefulness, and where it will, it is hoped, be carefully guarded as a most valued visible link connecting the beginning and close of the century of its church life.

Doctor Field was often called to Boston to attend religious and society meetings, and to transact other business; and his custom was to drive in the old sulky, staying sometimes in Boston in the house of Mrs. Thomas Marshall, the daughter of Doctor Kendal, whom he had met in former times at her father's home in Weston, and with whom a strong friendship had been established.

One of the pleasantest houses which he was accustomed to visit was that of Reverend Mr. Ripley in Waltham, where he was wont to call often, either to attend some ministers' meeting, or else stopping on his way to or from Boston, either alone, or with one or two others of the clergymen, congenial spirits, such as Thomas Brattle Gannett, Doctor Converse Francis and others. It is said that on these occasions the house would often ring with noise and laughter, so much so that when any great commotion was heard in the parlor, the family were wont to say that the ministers had come.

It was in this way also that he met and became acquainted with Mrs. Samuel Ripley, one of the finest scholars of her age, and was inspired with the deepest reverence and respect for her learning and ability. He met at Mrs. Ripley's house Harriet Martineau, who was then her guest. He was also a frequent and welcome visitor at the hospitable home of Doctor Ebenezer Hobbs of Waltham with whose family he had a life-long intimacy.

During his ministry here he had tempting calls

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to settle elsewhere; at one time he was called to the Waltham parish; and on another occasion Judge Prescott and Judge Shaw offered to form a church for him in Boston; but he declined them all, as he preferred his own much loved flock here. Thus his life and work went on apace along the smooth and quiet pathway, his heart cheered by the genial companionship of his many friends and his tasks often lightened by the much loved tones of music and harmony.

He made regular exchanges with the best of his surrounding ministers, and his appearance in the pulpit on an exchange was most welcome to the different congregations. Reverend Doctor Hill is credited with saying that in his pulpit at Waltham Doctor Field was preferred to all others of his exchanges; and Mrs. Hill, in reply to an inquiry from her husband as to what made Doctor Field so popular there, said: "The modest sincerity of the man, his good sound sense, and his unfeigned piety."

Doctor Field was an easy flowing writer, an agreeable deliverer, and a good reader. He was devout and religious in style, not polemic or controversial, but plain and simple, seeking not to convince or drive by argument, but gently to attract and gain over by the beauties of his subject. His writings were more like the placid and refreshing calm of the little country brook with its fascinating music, as its waters gently course along, and wash its pebbled bed, than like the rush and roar of the mighty stream, which overcomes by its force all obstacles in its way.

His sermons were not didactic discussions, but

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attractive poems, pleasurable and short, from which we departed rested, not wearied. He was particularly apt in special occasions, especially at funerals, finding something good in the life of everyone. It was his custom to conduct two religious services each Sunday, one in the morning and the other in the afternoon.

With such qualities as these, this parish was influenced, guided and blessed for fifty years. At last the cares and duties began to grow irksome to him on account of his great age, and he felt the need of rest. He accordingly sent in his resignation, to take effect on his fiftieth anniversary, which was accepted, only however as far as his pastoral duties were concerned.

His last sermon was delivered February 1, 1865, which occasion was observed with services, in which the neighboring clergymen and others participated. The exercises were afterwards printed in pamphlet form. His discourse contains a stirring appeal for the Christian work and life, and a review of his long ministerial service, the results of which he sums up in his usual modest way. He speaks of the changes in the ecclesiastical world, and says that he has urged others to practise the Christian duty of healing the wounds of a dissenting judgment with the balm of a kindred heart.

He occupied his pulpit only once again, when he welcomed to his own place his successor, Reverend Edmund Hamilton Sears, extending to him the right hand of fellowship; at whose ordination over a neighboring church he had many years before preached the sermon.

He thereafter set the good example of punctually

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and regularly attending the Sunday religious services as long as his health and strength permitted. He thereafter calmly and patiently awaited his end; which occurred November 5, 1869, when he died as he had lived, cheerfully and peacefully, with his wheat-sheaves full of golden grain, the mellowed fruit of the fifty years of active and devoted service. Three days after his death he was borne across the road to his final, peaceful resting-place, almost directly opposite his house, by the side of his dear ones, and near so many of his beloved flock, whose life paths he had often brightened, and whose dying moments he had cheered and comforted by his word.

It was certainly a most appropriate and worthy act of his friends to place, in the chancel of this beautiful church building, now covering the site of the building in which he had so long ministered, the window to his memory; such a symbolic illustration from the life of the Master, the Good Shepherd, tenderly caring for the lambs, who giveth his life for the sheep.

REVEREND EDMUND HAMILTON
SEARS, D.D.

BY REVEREND ALFRED PORTER PUTNAM, D.D.

THE preacher, author, poet, and saint of whom I am to speak is too well known to us all and to the Christian world at large, to call for much mention of dates, places, and outward events by way of biographical detail, on such an occasion, or in such a presence as this. Yet we cannot think of him apart from the homes and churches where his beautiful and beneficent life-work was wrought, and where his influence and memory will specially and evermore abide as a holy fragrance and benediction.

For present purposes, it is only necessary to cull a few leading facts from his personal history as it is related in the very fitting and welcome memorial volume recently published by his family. First, however, it may be said that he was descended from one of the Pilgrim fathers, Richard Sayer (Sears) who belonged to the congregation of John Robinson at Leyden, emigrated to America in 1630, and originally settled in Plymouth, where he married Dorothy Thacher; and then, in 1643, moved to Sursuit (now East Dennis) farther down the Cape, where he became the venerated patriarch of the little company whom he led thither and whom once or



REVEREND EDMUND HAMILTON SEARS, D.D.

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twice he served as deputy in the General Court of the colony. He died at the age of eighty-six, and was buried in the old neighboring Yarmouth churchyard; and there one of his numerous progeny of our own time, the late David Sears, of Boston, "erected with filial affection a costly monument to his memory." The thrilling story of this Richard Sayer and of his ancestral line back to an English progenitor of the same name, in the sixteenth century, with a vivid account of the great events and terrible persecutions through which they passed in the mother-country and the Netherlands during the period of the Reformation, Doctor Sears himself has given us, in his wonderfully interesting book, *Pictures of the Olden Time*, 1857, concerning which Honorable Robert C. Winthrop wrote: "The work is one of great interest and beauty, showing the true spirit of an antiquary, as well as a warm and just appreciation of the Pilgrim character. Had the health of Doctor Sears allowed him oftener to indulge his genius in writings of this kind, he might have had a high place in historical literature. But he devoted his life and strength to sacred themes, and he has won a reputation in that better line which will long survive him." The volume is but another striking illustration of the fact that the virtues and the glory of the Pilgrim fathers came forth tested, refined, and exalted, from the fiery ordeals of the antecedent history. Doctor Sears inherited abundantly what was best in their faith and character.

He was born at Sandisfield, Massachusetts, April 6, 1810. In his childhood and youth he attended school in his native town, and subsequently spent nine months at the Westfield Academy, while during

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these earlier years he worked on his father's farm, as age and occasion allowed. In 1831, he entered Union College, Schenectady, New York (then under the presidency of Doctor Nott) as a member of the sophomore class; was graduated in due course; and then for a brief time studied law and afterward taught school at Brattleborough, Vermont. Desirous of preparing himself for the Christian ministry he next became, for a year, a divinity student under the instruction of Reverend Addison Brown, of that place. From Brattleborough, he went to the Cambridge theological school, entering his class in the second year as before, and graduating with it in 1837. For the following twelvemonth he preached in the West, mostly at Toledo, Ohio; and then returned to Massachusetts, where he was ordained to his chosen work and became pastor of the Unitarian society in Wayland, February 20, 1839. On November 7, of the same year, he married Ellen Bacon, of Barnstable, Massachusetts, whose lovely Christian spirit, so strong and trustful, and so full of wisdom and good works, was destined to cheer and help him all the way, and to be of inestimable service to the successive churches of his care. An earnest and indefatigable student at school and college, Doctor Sears was not less devoted and zealous in his work as preacher and pastor. What with his delicate frame and many an illness during the whole of his ministry, we shall marvel that he accomplished so much. But well he knew the sympathy and support of a consecrated and congenial home. In 1840, he accepted a call to Lancaster, where six years of hard toil impaired his health and obliged him at length to resign the post and seek rest and restoration; and so, in 1847, by

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the advice of his physician, he returned to Wayland, where, on a farm which he bought for the purpose, the needed strength came back to him, though "slowly, very slowly." In 1848, we find him there once more the minister of his former church, whose people he was to serve again for a longer term than before, or "during the greater part of seventeen years." From 1859, to 1871, he was associated with Reverend Rufus Ellis, D.D., in the editorial charge of *The Monthly Religious Magazine*, of Boston; and in 1873, he travelled abroad, visiting England, France, and Holland. In 1865, he had begun to preach here at Weston as colleague of the venerable Doctor Field; and in 1866, having been called to be your pastor, he removed hither with his family, and it was here that he finally ceased from his labors. He died on January 16, 1876, and she who knew him best—the charming Ellen Bacon of his early manhood, sharer of his joys and sorrows, mother of his children, and servant of the church—wrote out of her grief-stricken heart: "He lived a pure, beautiful life, and now he has gone to the rest for which he longed, my precious, sainted one."

His life was not marked by striking changes, or much disturbance or noise. It was passed in quiet neighborhoods and claimed little attention or concern from the multitudes. Yet it was in just such peaceful retirements that this modest, meditative man of God loved most to dwell and work, thereby doing probably a greater and more lasting good than might have been achieved had he occupied what some would have regarded as a more important official position, or had he been engaged in wider and more conspicuous or pretentious external activities.

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But here it was seen again that one's best and most far-reaching and permanent effect upon others, or his truest self-development and success in life, does not so much depend on outward station and honors, much publicity and multifarious care and clatter, as upon the still hours, when, removed from earth's din and strife, he may hold communion with nature and nature's God, think and read about the vast questions and everlasting realities, and give to the world, in the written and printed page, the rich fruits of the unobtrusive yet faithful exercise of his mind. Our revered and ascended friend, though he was by no means averse to human fellowship and co-operative usefulness, but ever yearned to receive helpful sympathy as well as to give it, was yet constitutionally disinclined to have much to do with conventions and organizations, machinery and management, platforms and display. Like Channing, Bushnell, and most of the profoundest thinkers and peerless preachers, he found the secret of his power in the deep wells of seclusion, in whose calm, untroubled waters he could see mirrored clearly the divine face of Truth and the serene glories of the spiritual and eternal world. In connection with what he calls the "holy ministries of solitude and silence," he says in one of his books: "There is much reading and meeting-going, and hurrying to and fro on business, but little of the brooding spirit of thought. . . . We live in external things and seek external excitements, and thus the mind takes into itself so much of what is coarse and earthly. . . . We need to pass alternately from the inward to the outward, and from the outward back again to the inward; for unless we seek these meditative moods, we sink lower and

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lower, till we are buried in sense. We lose all heavenly-mindedness, all clear intuition. We lose the tidings of immortality that float around us and sound fainter and fainter within us. We lose that knowledge of ourselves which is the first condition of our regeneration, and without which all other knowledge is superficial. And we never ascend the glory-smitten summits whence a contemplative faith gazes full into the opening paradise of God."

We like to think of him as there, in his quiet retreats and amidst his rural environments, holding familiar and delightful converse with his cherished friends and neighbors, and interesting himself in whatever concerned the welfare of the community immediately around him; but still more as he was "in the spirit" indeed, and was intently occupied with the transcendent themes of God and the soul of man, birth and death, life, the resurrection and immortality, the ever unfolding ways of Providence, and the new heaven and the new earth, wherein shall dwell righteousness. What one who was so pure and so true, so gifted and so wise, so near and so like to his Master, would have to say to us, from time to time, as the outcome of all his more solitary and profound experiences, must needs be a priceless bequest to the churches of every name. "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

To many of you it was given habitually to see his face and hear his voice; often and directly to drink in the inspirations of his thought; to love him and to be loved by him, and to follow him as he went in and out before you for many years; to re-

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ceive from his stainless hands the water of holy baptism and his welcome into the church of Christ, and to have him set the seal to your marriage vows; to gladden still more all your joys, and to solace and strengthen you in the dark hours of fear and anxiety, pain and bereavement. Happy the people who could claim him as their minister, and who were thoughtful, discerning, and noble enough to see and feel what he was, and to prize him aright for his own worth's sake and for the dear Lord's sake; and we all know, and give God thanks, that, with others who were likewise privileged, you realized so well what a ministering angel was with you, and that, having so loved and venerated him while yet he was in the flesh, you still so tenderly and gratefully remember him and make him a very part of your life, now that he is in the heavens.

But through his published works, whose riches had been communicated to you in manifold ways before they had been given to the press, his ministry was vastly greater than it could have otherwise been. Silent and unseen, their influence has gone abroad into many sects or communions, to quicken thought, to feed the better life, to throw fresh light on the Bible page and help souls to solve perplexing problems, to reveal more clearly the common ground on which contending Christian schools and denominations may meet and rest in essential and fraternal union, to give finer and grander conceptions of God, and truth, and duty, and wonderfully to spiritualize for us our inherited and mere popular or prevalent religion of cumbersome creeds and dogmas, forms and traditions. It is quite noteworthy, as it is certainly very gratifying, that they have found their

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way to intelligent and reflecting minds of many differing faiths, everywhere evoking most fervent expressions of thankful praise. In style as well as in matter, in finest sentiment as well as in affluent learning, in poetic grace and beauty as well as in vital piety and intellectual power, they easily take their place among the choicest offerings of the sanctified spirit, in the whole range of Christian literature. Dealing with the deep things of God, they present the author's thought and argument in no dry and lifeless form, but clothe them, rather, with a charm that bears the delighted reader rapidly on to the end, yet never suffers him to lose sight of the steady purpose and the sure conclusion of the whole matter. Theology, which is so often made hard and prosaic, is here, under Doctor Sears's magic touch, rendered attractive and interesting. Whether he summarizes for us the teachings of Plato, the Gnostics, or the Puritan reformers, or, in book or magazine, engages with keen and trenchant pen in controversy with the rationalistic or unbelieving critics of his day, or gives us his admirable paper on *The Saxon and the Norman*, or out of a mass of genealogical and historical lore weaves his captivating *Pictures of the Olden Time*, there is always this same poetic glow, as pure and pleasing as it is original and rare. Possibly one might think that it is sometimes in excess, yet on the other hand one would not know where or how to spare the brilliant coloring.

Doctor Sears, withal, was one of our finest hymn-writers. He seems to have inherited the gift, or at least the love of song, from his father, who, though a "strong-minded landholder and thrifty farmer" with

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a scant education, was fond of the muses, was a great admirer of Pope's *Iliad*, Watts's lyrics, and other works of the kind, and was wont to chant their strains. The son easily caught the taste, and soon, he himself tells us, "began to produce lyrics and epics without number." Intensely interested in books of history, biography, and travel, as he had also been an enthusiast in mathematical studies, he yet continued to indulge freely his "rhyming propensity," and he adds: "My ear became quick to the harmonies of language, and I do not think I could have had a more profitable exercise in the best classical schools in New England." The father and the son were building better than they knew. Thence came we know not how many beautiful hymns and poems in subsequent years. We only know that, strewn through his two volumes of eloquent and edifying sermons, *Sermons and Songs*, 1875, and *Christ in the Life*, 1877, are forty or fifty of these precious offerings of his genius, readily accessible to all and quite enough to place him high among the immortal bards. "Calm on the listening ear of night," which is now in wellnigh all the best church collections, Doctor Holmes declared to be the finest hymn in the English language. The other Christmas song, from the same source: "It came upon the midnight clear," is almost as good, and some of the compilers, I notice, give it the preference. Then what shall we say of such effusions as his "Song of Victory," "Ideals," "Above the Storms," "Feed My Lambs," "Chambers of Imagery," "Show Us the Father," "My Psalm," and many another of like exceeding merit, the last-mentioned written as the "earthly house" was crumbling and the melo-

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dies and splendors of the heavenly world were already breaking upon the soul :

“ For through the rents already made
I see thy glorious face,
And songs unheard by mortal ears
Chant thy redeeming grace.”

His Christian hymns, rich in thought, warm with the spirit's fire, beautiful in imagery, and felicitous in expression and rhythm, are unconstrained and free, and rise naturally and easily to the loftiest heights of faith's devotion. The divine *afflatus* is surely there, and blended together are the exquisite poetic element, the trust of a believing, consecrated soul, the clear vision of eternal things, and the purity and peace, the love and the joy of one who, though on earth, was yet in heaven.

It was because he was a poet that this master in Israel was all the more enabled to interpret for us so successfully the oracles of God. The bane of biblical exegesis and theological discussion in all the past has been that scholars and disputants have been in bondage to the letter, and have known so little of the freedom and insight of the spirit. No book is so full of poetry, metaphor, simile, allegory, symbol, and imagination as the Bible. But literalists, destitute of the imaginative element, have seized upon what was only figurative or emblematic and hardened it into dogma, losing sight of the real, divine truth which it was meant merely to shadow forth, and which, when rightly apprehended, is forever the life of the soul. Hence the husks on which the generations have so largely fed, only to famish and suffer. To one who, like Doctor Sears, was a lover of the truth and a diligent and fearless seeker for it; and

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who, from his fine instinct and vision, as both bard and seer, could so clearly distinguish between substance and form, the Book of books was a revelation indeed, full of truth, full of wonders, full of God. No one of our teachers more than he, has opened up to us the Scripture and helped us to see its hidden meanings, to which we were so blind before, or which we saw only "through a glass darkly." The second coming of the Son of man is not a visible reappearance and bodily descent from heaven to earth, but his promised Paraclete or gift of the Holy Spirit, as on the Day of Pentecost and ever since. The Judgment is not some vast and dreadful scenic tribunal, in the presence of which the personal Christ in all his majesty will hurl his fatal thunders at the countless millions of the wicked, and extend his merciful welcome to a like innumerable array of the righteous, as with audible voice he pronounces the everlasting doom of the former, and the endless joy of the latter; but it is rather the silent, tremendous force of his eternal Word that finally cleaves asunder the good and the evil, and, by a spiritual law which is changeless and sure, assigns to each, alike in the here and the hereafter, its appropriate moral consequences of retribution or reward. The fires and woes of hell are the stings of a guilty conscience and the fact and sense of the soul's degradation; and the "white robes" of the redeemed "are put on, not from without, but from within, and are the exfigurations of that celestial purity and innocence" which Christ has there wrought. Of the Spirit-world he says: "It is above us, not in space, but in the higher degree of its life and the higher species of substances that compose it. But it is near

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us, and we are in it, because our souls are of like substance and are organisms to receive its spirit and breathe its airs, and have latent in them those orders of perceptive powers capable in due time of giving open relations with it and unobstructed sight of its transcendent glories.”

Not, of course, that such ideas and interpretations relating to the Bible, were at all new with Doctor Sears, or had not always been more or less familiar to spiritually minded students or teachers of the Word; but only that they were especially characteristic of his instructions and were more fully and finely worked out and set forth by him than by any other of our Unitarian writers or preachers. A study of his works shows that he was an extensive and careful reader of the best authors of many sects and communions in all Christian history, and that he brought thence rare treasures of thought and wisdom, old and new, with which to enrich his own mind and productions, profitably making use of all his aids, but being enslaved to none. As in the case of certain other superior men of the liberal school, he was much indebted to Swedenborg, and again and again refers to doctrines of the great Swedish seer as of prime value and helpfulness; but, while there was not a little affinity between the two on the more spiritual side, the unpretending thinker and scholar you knew so well found little else to attract and hold him in the revelations or philosophy of the New Jerusalem prophet. Emerson, also, knew Swedenborg, and was his debtor; but Emerson says: “Trust thyself; every heart vibrates to that iron string;” and: “Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind.”

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Doctor Sears was the helper he was, because with his erudition, broad views, and familiar acquaintance with the varied or hostile theories or beliefs of the Christian world, he was a man of much spirituality and faith, and held reverently and firmly to the Bible as the paramount word or revelation of God. Had he been skeptically inclined, he had accomplished comparatively little really worth the while. Men doubted enough already. It was not his, in the sphere of religion, to bring "coals to Newcastle." Still the hunger cry was: "What is Truth?" and: "What saith the Scripture?" as from a deep consciousness that a sure testimony was there that could not be ruled out of the account. Revelation, the preacher taught, is from within, and it is also from without; and he adds: "It is to clarify this inner light, to restore it to its ancient effulgence, to afford an unerring standard by which to distinguish it from the flicker of strange fire within us, it is for this that we have given us the Word written and the Word made flesh." But the Bible is not only a revelation of God: "It is also a revelation of man, an exhibition of the things hidden within us, hidden often far beneath the reach of our consciousness. The life of God and the life of man are both revealed here. Deep in our souls there are the same twofold forces—the divine life and the human—with their strivings and interactions; only as we become degenerate and live chiefly in externals, these things within us are seen dimly or not at all; but the Bible holds them up before us again on a page that is open and illumined."

The more radical or destructive critics had sought

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to undermine the book, to minimize or explain away many of its cardinal teachings, to eliminate from it the supernatural element, and to bring it down to the general level of other literature, as so marked by fables and legends, or errors and imperfections, that it had no special significance or efficacy as the Word of God; while the Christ who was in it was rated by them as an amiable and remarkable man indeed, yet altogether human, often mistaken, and quite faulty and peccable. The genuineness and the authenticity of the gospel narratives, not to speak of other books of the New Testament, were denied; the story of the resurrection, as told by the Evangelists, was discredited; and the amazing rise and spread of Christianity in its earliest years was based upon the alleged wild hallucinations of Mary Magdalene and the "epileptic fits" of Paul, without which, it was contended, the wondrous growths and triumphs would never have been. It was not possible for men to rest in such negations or perversions as these, or thus to account for the momentous events that have marked the progress of the Christian church, at first or later. Incautious souls were, for a time at least, caught in the snare. But Baur, Renan, and their congeners, whatever better service they rendered, a service which Doctor Sears was just to commend, are not the influential authorities they once were. But there was urgent need, nowhere more than in our liberal communion, of a return to first principles; of a more rational as well as more spiritual interpretation and philosophy of the Bible than the new schools had presented; of a restoration of Christ's image in its divine aspects as well as its human; and of some stern insistence that in this

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world's history great effects must have some fitting and adequate cause, and that Scripture is its own best witness, showing as it does that the life and character and the death and resurrection of Jesus were prophetic of what followed, and what followed required just that which went before. Few were more competent to discharge the service than Doctor Sears, and in several books I have not yet named, as well as in his controversial magazine articles to which I have referred, he wrought a work and bore a testimony in behalf of "the faith once delivered to the saints," for which the churches of all sects are his lasting debtors. With all his winning graces of spirit, he was of the church militant, and was a good fighter for the truth as God gave him to see the truth. We all know his unconquerable love of liberty; his righteous love of man, black or white, as the child of God; and his fearless, fiery words, in sermon and song, against slavery and the Fugitive Slave Law and the heartless and cruel oppressor, in all the terrible yet glorious years. The poet-preacher could do battle with error in theology as well as against wrong in the state; and if, in connection with his uncompromising support and defence of the gospel of the New Testament, the casuistries and absurdities of his opponents were sometimes such as to provoke his caustic pen, or his keen wit or satire, we must remember how strong was the temptation and how no doubt he was freely excused and forgiven by Mary Magdalene and Paul and indeed "all the Apostles." His was the sword of the Spirit, but it was always wielded in the love of truth, and of him who is the truth, as he is the way and the life. No pulseless, bloodless saint

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was he ; but a saint who endured “hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.”

Some of us well remember with what interest and delight many in all our churches welcomed and read the first book he gave to the public about forty-five years ago, entitled *Regeneration*. This central subject of religion had, of course, been treated by numberless writers before him, and possibly one might have been tempted to ask : “What more can be said on such a theme ? Who has anything new to offer here ?” Yet this was a book so exceptionally fresh and original in thought, style, and treatment that it had at once a multitude of appreciative and admiring readers ; nor was its mission by any means confined to one denomination alone. As far from Pelagius on the one hand as from Calvin on the other, it recognized the hereditary corruptions and the acquired evil instincts of man, but also the divine element that is in him, with his boundless receptive capacities for good. Its idea of the needed regeneration goes deeper than the motives and moralities with which most of our liberalism is content. It implies the reception of the Holy Spirit into the inmost being, the expulsion from the soul of all its foul inheritance and acquisitions, and the devotion of all its natural powers and affections to the service of God. Most forcibly he says : “Reformation is not regeneration, conformity is not worship, the wording and rewording of liturgies is not prayer, and hope of heaven is not the peace of its commencing dawn. Not until the Spirit abiding within has melted the soul beneath the glow of the divine charms, not until the angel band of heavenly affections comes in and the gang of selfish lusts goes out,

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do old things pass away and all things become new."

If most Unitarian books do not go to the root of the matter, it is because they disclose no sufficiently profound sense of the dreadful fact and nature of sin. Man must know himself and see the evil that is in him, as well as the good, before he can apply the effectual remedy for the curse and the woe and so rise to his proper destiny. Doctor Sears's appeal is here to the universal consciousness and the uniform testimony of the ages, and thus he finds a sure ground for the indispensable means of deliverance which only the Christ and the gospel supply. His volume is a distinct and invaluable aid to the better life, and, like all his writings, it abounds in beautiful thoughts and fine and impressive passages which, could they be combined with similar selections from his other works and all be interspersed with some of his choicest hymns, the whole published in a compact and convenient form, would constitute a *vade mecum* of inestimable worth to such as live in the Spirit and feed on the Word, or fain would know and follow the blessed way.

Regeneration contains the germs or partial developments of most of the author's doctrines and ideas which later appeared more fully in *Athanasia, or Foregleams of Immortality*, and *The Fourth Gospel, the Heart of Christ*, two books of still more special interest or significance. There are so many difficulties to be encountered, so many diverse views that prevail, and so many questions one may ask in connection with subjects like Nature and Supernaturalism, the Resurrection of Jesus and the General Resurrection, and the later Jewish and

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earlier Christian Pneumatology, that such a fresh and learned discussion of these and kindred themes as Doctor Sears gives us in his *Athanasia* is of first-rate importance. One may differ with the writer in relation to this matter, or that, of his treatise, but surely he will here find much to think about, much to help him, much to be thankful for. Very grand are all his words about the risen Christ and about the spiritual and atoning power or influence which comes to us thence, greater than any that proceeds even from the Christ crucified. It is the living Christ, who is the light and the life. Nor was the resurrection of our Lord the mere reanimation of the physical body, but it was the whole process through which he emerged out of earthly conditions to his place of power on high, the mortal being gradually extruded from the time of his reawakening on the third day, or even before it, until the supreme hour of his ascension and glorification, when the spiritual body, which had inhered in the natural, "fold within fold," was complete and perfect in its immortal investiture. With mankind in general, the emergence is immediate. "The immortal man within is more than the flesh that cumbered it, and is eternally organized the moment the encumbrance disappears. There is no death, therefore, but only the removal of deathly coverings; the word vanishes from the Christian vocabulary, and the thing it represented vanishes from the prospect of the Christian believer. "For ourselves," he adds, "we cannot raise to heaven a song too jubilant for this victory over the grave." His *Heart of Christ* was his masterwork and his last notable gift to the church, embodying the rich, ripe fruits of his life-long and most important studies, and

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constituting a most effective antidote to the skeptical theories and speculations with which it so largely deals. Doctor Andrew P. Peabody, unerring judge of books as of men, said of it that it was "the most unique and precious contribution of our time to Christian literature, and that, equally for its ability, its learning, and its wealth of devotional sentiment." Next to the Bible, it was Mrs. Ralph Waldo Emerson's most sacred book. Said the *Literary World*: "As an exposition of the Johannean theology, it has probably never been surpassed in acumen and thoroughness." And similar has been the general testimony of representative minds of evangelical communions. However many good Christians of the liberal faith might dissent from its affirmations of the pre-existence and supernatural birth of Christ, and might think that various other doctrines which he advances are too "orthodox;" or however many of the orthodox themselves might object to its anti-Trinitarianism, or its repudiation of the old vicarious or substitutional theory of the atonement, or of whatever other feature of the Calvinistic system; yet there was a wide agreement among Biblical scholars and thoughtful believers of every name, that here was a most striking and unanswerable argument for the validity and trustworthiness of the sacred records of which he treats and upon which all Christian sects must needs build and rest as upon a sure foundation.

The fourth gospel, especially, is the heart of Christ; and he who runs may read. With consummate ability and skill, and with ample learning, clearness, and force, the author sets before us the moral and intellectual condition of the eastern world

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in the first and second centuries, the leading features of the life and character of Jesus, the religions and philosophies that prevailed or were rife around the "beloved disciple" in his day, and the intimate relations he sustained to his Master and the apostles and the earliest of the fathers; and to establish the genuineness and authenticity of the productions commonly ascribed to him, follows back the line of historical evidence from the later time to the earlier, and then down from the earlier to the later, making narratives, epistles, the Apocalypse, and even apocryphal writings and the heretics themselves, tell, with cumulative effect, the same great story: that the New Testament is solid fact and history; and, if solid fact and history, then that the Logos of John's proem, here so prominently brought before us as the divine reason or the eternal Word, was incarnate in Jesus Christ as a glorious revelation of God, to be the light and the life of the world. "As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."

Was it miracle? It was the miracle of miracles, the wonder of wonders, and carries with it the marvellous deeds of the record, at which beholders exclaimed: "Truly, thou art the Son of God."

Was it law? Yes, but law of the spiritual realms, of whose nature and operations we, with our poor vision and limited attainments, know so little. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

Doctor Sears was a supernaturalist. The word

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nature, as he points out, has been used by different writers or schools with various significations. It is, "by common consent, applied to the world of sight, sound, and fragrance that lies over against the senses, and through them becomes an object of perception." It is also made to include man, with his "whole aggregate of human qualities." Then again, "all beings and things, from the mineral up to the highest angel." So, also, "we speak familiarly of the divine nature, meaning the sum of divine qualities and attributes," and it is pertinently added, with reference to this "game of words": "One who should be so disposed and could afford the time for such logomachy, might place all beings and things, including God himself, under the category of nature, and then of course it would be very easy for him to prove that the supernatural has no existence." And it is well said: "Nothing is to be gained by these tricks of language. . . . The nature-world is this range of existence, conditioned by time and space and subject to the laws of space and temporal change; whereas the range of existence conceived of as out of time and space, and therefore beyond the dominion of natural law, is the supersensible or supernatural world." The latter, like the former, has laws of its own, and "the laws of nature or of spirit are uniform," since, "the same antecedents being given, the same consequences will be given also." A surprise, or what is extraordinary, in one realm or the other argues no interference with, or violation of, eternal law; but is its proper and harmonious effect. But God works in and through all, forever creating and recreating, and making all things new. He is not only immanent,

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but also transcendent. He is in, but also above, nature, man, and Christ. His spirit enters and energizes them all, and permeates and inspires the written word and the church of the ages. "Nature is the perpetual effervescence of the divine power; the natural is the unbroken evolution of the supernatural; history from the first man to the last is the progressive unrolling of the plan of the infinite providence in which great events and small are taken up and glorified." "Expunge the supernatural from Christianity, make its Christ a common man, and his cross a human misfortune, and we tend by inevitable logic to that view of human nature which merges it in mere animal existence." And this, moreover: "The birth of Christ, his mission, his miracles, his death, his resurrection, his ascension, his coming again as the Paraclete, will be found so connected in the narratives of the New Testament that you cannot take out one without impairing the significance of all." Or, as Phillips Brooks says: "Christianity is supernatural, or it is nothing." Doctor Sears's contention was not for mere names, or words. So long as nature or naturalism is generally understood as including only the lower range of existence, there is need of the supernaturalism that means the higher range of existence and God as the originating, energizing and supreme life of all that is. It is the sublime fact which he still has in view, when with noble and prophetic eloquence he hails the end of the strife of tongues and the grander reign of truth.

"That we are on the verge of a new epoch when the spirit of God will utilize the accumulated knowledge of the modern age, taking up science, art, philosophy, into a higher unity, there to make them

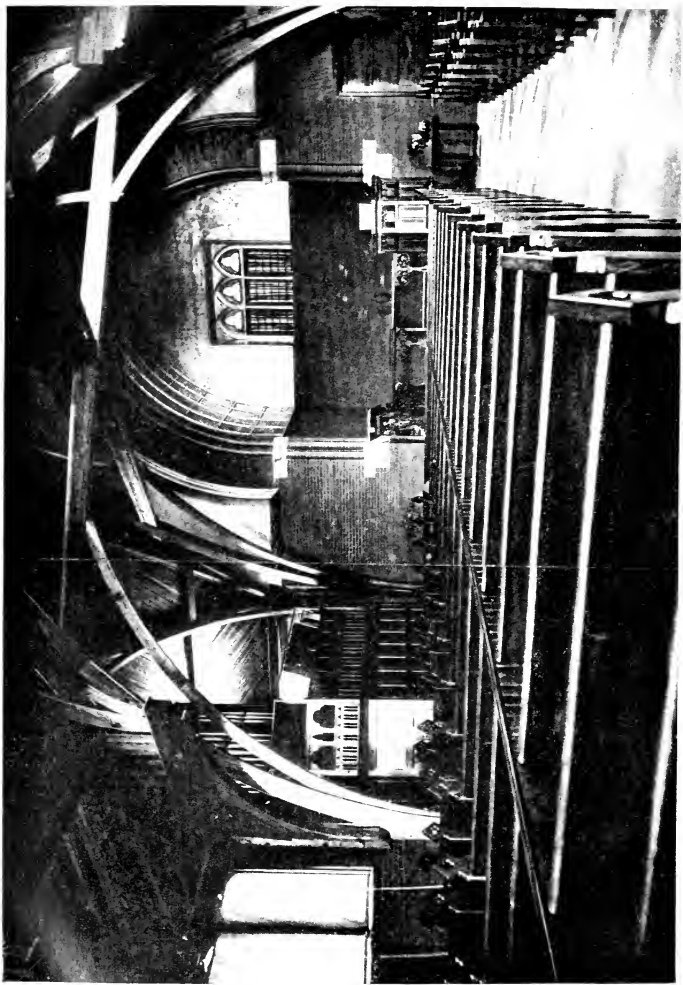
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resplendent with a light which is not their own, and the servitors of a more comprehending and adoring faith, there are tokens already both in the earth and the sky. And in that day, when the supernatural and the natural, no longer halved and sundered, are harmonized in one, we shall find the latter the medium through which the other appears more perfectly; and then special miracles will cease only because the whole cosmos is miracle, and more intelligently and completely than to the eye and ear of Plato, reports the mind of the Supreme and the music of the upper spheres."

It is with gratitude to God that we bear in remembrance the revered and beloved teacher, pastor, and friend. In connection with all his blessed ministries, it is ours to recall, for our own encouragement, with what purity and patience, with what gentleness and godliness, and with what faith and heroism he lived and served in all the labors and struggles of his lot, in its alternations of wearisome sickness and reviving health, and its mingled joys and sorrows; and what triumph and rest were his great and eternal reward at last. Embalmed in the heart of Christ, he is embalmed as well in all our hearts, to be to us a savor of life unto life, to bring us nearer and yet nearer to God, and fill us more and still more with the peace which the world cannot give and which it cannot take away.

The CHURCH *of the* LIVING GOD

The sermon here printed is an amended and enlarged version of four sermons, the first preached on the second Sunday of the Bicentennial Celebration, the others afterward.



INTERIOR OF FIRST PARISH CHURCH, WESTON. BUILT 1888.

THE FIRST PARISH AND CHURCH IN WESTON

A SUMMARY OF THEIR RECORDS

BY REVEREND CHARLES FRANK RUSSELL

The church of the living God ; the pillar and ground of the truth.—1 TIM. iii. 15.

THE lives of the ministers of this parish having already been presented to you, it has not seemed fit that I should ask you to consider them again in the historical sermons which I have been asked to preach, for of the lives of the earliest two I have spoken, and I have nothing new to add, and the lives of the later ones have been more ably presented than I can hope to present them. I have thought it well, therefore, to gather from a search of the records of the parish, the church, and the town as much knowledge of the life of this parish for the two hundred years of its existence as possible, and to offer that to you as my contribution to the festival which we are keeping.

A true history of the First Parish of Weston, from its creation by the General Court in 1698, to this hour, would consist not so much of an account of the events which have marked its existence, as of a delineation of its growth in thought, in feeling, and in purpose, and of the sources and the results of such a growth. For, as the life of any one of

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us is greater than the events that mark its existence, and more important than the birthdays which indicate its duration, so the life of this church of the living God is something greater and more important than the settlement of any minister, the erection of any building, or the enlargement or diminution of its congregation. A true history would lay emphasis on the change in its thought, the extension and broadening of its sympathy, and the purification of its aims.

For instance, when this church was first gathered in 1709, the members heard read, and assented to, the Confession of Faith put forth by the Synod of Churches held in Boston in 1680, and adopted a covenant in accord with it. There is not a member of this congregation who would now assent to that confession or vote for that covenant. Before Mr. Williams had finished his ministry here he had modified the covenant to satisfy his young people. The covenant thus modified has been further modified in the time of other ministers, and anyone may now join this church by signing a statement which says: "In the love of truth and in the spirit of Jesus Christ we join for the worship of God and the service of man." Again, the feeling of our ancestors was very strong against heretics. In the fundamental law of the Commonwealth, idolatry and witchcraft and blasphemy were punishable with death, and the persecution of the Quakers and the witches bears witness that these penalties were enforced. The first covenant of this church says: "We do heartily close in with the Boston Confession of Faith, and if any one of us shall go about to undermine it we will bear a due testimony against

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them." To-day no member of this parish desires to persecute any one for a difference of opinion, and all members would unite to defend such as honestly differed from them. The aim of the early Puritans was to create a state governed by the church, a theocracy in which the religious alone should rule. This parish to-day stands for complete separation of church and state, and would war with any religious body that sought supremacy in civic affairs. These great changes in thought, in feeling, in aim, which I have tried to illustrate, amounting in some cases to a complete reversal, are what make up the true life of this parish, and fully to display these would unfold its history. Such a full display is beyond my power, and would be impossible in any time I have at my disposal. But I shall ask you to notice certain movements which I think will illustrate the nature of the changes which have here taken place, that in our attention to events and persons we may not neglect what is after all most important in our survey of two hundred years of the life of this living church of the living God.

The movement which led to the establishment of this precinct or parish would seem to have had its source in a desire for the greater convenience of the inhabitants of this region. They were obliged to attend church at Watertown or Sudbury. The roads then were not as good as now, and they wished to do their duty, or to enjoy their pleasure, with less discomfort and less expenditure of time. They sought, therefore, to set up the public worship of God among themselves. This was very difficult to accomplish in those days of small things. That they were fifteen years in finishing their first

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church, thirty by thirty feet, does not prove less interest nor less devotion in them than in us who built this church in three. They were not only poor in purse, but in discipline and in courage. There was not yet with them power for common action, nor even organization for the ordinary business of existence. We do well in celebrating this date of June 24, 1698, when, in answer to their petition, the General Court granted them permission to settle a minister, to build a church, to appoint officers to transact and manage their affairs, and set bounds to their jurisdiction by establishing this precinct or parish; for this marks an important crisis in their existence. Those residing here had come of age, one might say, and wished to set up a household and a home of their own, and their right to do so the General Court had recognized, and power was given them to administer their own affairs. This power they exercised, as soon as convenient after it was given; and within four months officers were chosen, organized work was laid out, and this parish began the life which is yet strong and unfailing. The next three years were spent in furthering the construction of the meeting house and in devising means to settle and maintain a minister. We may be sure that there were many difficulties, not only as to money, but also as to temper, that agreement was not easy and that action was slow. But, by 1701, the meeting house was so far advanced as to be used, and Mr. Thomas Symmes (afterward settled at Boxford) having refused their call, Mr. Joseph Mors, already an inhabitant and probably a school-master in the precinct, was called to settle here in the ministry.

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I have already told what I have been able to learn of Mr. Mors. His work for the parish was at least this ; its members learned, under his ministry, how to differ among themselves and yet to hold together. From the first he had many opponents ; but the opposition among the members of the parish was not great enough to lead to its disintegration. Doctor Kendal says that a council condemned both minister and congregation, and that the friends of Mr. Mors then agreed to unite with their opponents in choice of some one else, if the precinct would join in calling in mediators to attempt a reconciliation between Mr. Mors and his adversaries. This was done without effect. Mr. Mors was then dismissed. After further trouble a settlement as to financial matters was made, and the precinct, undeterred by its mistakes, addressed itself again to setting up and maintaining the public worship of God in these parts.

In the spring of 1706, the year Mr. Mors left, the precinct was presented at the Court of Quarter Sessions for not having a settled minister. It made return at the session in September. In 1707, the precinct chose Mr. Nathaniel Gookin, afterward settled at Hampton, New Hampshire, as its minister, but he declined. In April, in May, and in June it made returns to the court, which persistently urged it to settle a minister. These proceedings were, without doubt, in favor of Mr. Mors, and there was fear that Mr. Mors might be settled here by the court, for in June of this year, at Concord, the precinct petitioned the court "that they would not put Mr. Joseph Mors into the work of the ministry in our precinct." In July, Mr. Thomas Tufts was chosen.

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He declined. On the last day of 1707, Mr. Mors deeded his housings and lands to a committee for the precinct. This action closed the controversy with Mr. Mors. Doctor Kendal, who had the use of records which are not now within reach, says of this trouble of the precinct with Mr. Mors: "I cannot but venerate the fathers of this Town when I trace the records of their proceedings." These hinderances did but strengthen the organic life of this parish and shape and augment its powers.

Early in January, 1708, a day of fasting and prayer was appointed, and the neighboring ministers were invited to join in this solemnity. In February, the precinct called Mr. William Williams whose history and characteristics I have sketched, and thereupon entered upon a vigorous and helpful existence, which under his ministry lasted forty-one years. Mr. Williams organized the first church here. He proposed, and the church adopted, a covenant. The sacraments were administered. This parish, already organized and disciplined, then, as the body of a church of Christ, began a new life. Out of the weakness of infancy into a healthy active youth this church grew under the care of Mr. Williams, and with the parish assumed an important place in the colony.

I think of this parish and church as attaining the height of their importance under Mr. Williams. When he was midway in ministering to this church there were not more than one hundred fifty thousand inhabitants in the New England colonies. Of these about fifteen thousand were in Boston. But at that time there were probably five hundred

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inhabitants in this precinct. Boston was then only thirty times greater than Weston, and the whole of New England was only three hundred times greater. Boston is now three hundred times greater and our country ten thousand times greater. I have not discovered trustworthy statistics as regards surrounding towns, but from these rough figures it is easy to see that the relative importance of Weston was immensely greater then than now. Into this important precinct came Mr. Williams, of good family, with the best of connections, excellently educated, with a wife fully his equal and trained in all the traditions of the best ecclesiastical circles; and it is not strange that the parish knew an outward activity which has never been excelled. The church of about thirty increased to over two hundred and attained a strength which has never since revealed any signs of weakness.

In 1713, the Town of Weston was created with substantially the same limits as the precinct. The church records, which at this date are the most important witness of the life of the parish, were admirably kept by Mr. Williams and give knowledge of the ways of thought and action of our fathers. In 1723, they relate, the town was afflicted by a sore sickness and mortality, and a meeting of the church was called "to enquire concerning the Voice of God to the Town therein. What sins and evils God was witnessing against, and what duties had been carelessly attended or neglected." It was thought that censoriousness, strife, intemperance, pride, evil speaking and uncharitableness were the chief sins of the time, and that to these must be added neglect of the Lord's Supper. These faults are notably faults

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of temper. Our fathers in a time of severe self-scrutiny found little in conduct to censure, and thought they chiefly ought to struggle against pride and uncharitableness if they would please heaven. It is doubtful if we should find our sins so light; but we should not think any unusual sickness the outcome of lack of righteousness, but rather of lack of forethought, and should call a meeting of the board of health rather than of the church. At this same meeting "discourse was had about the manner of singing Psalm tunes and the late endeavor to amend it, at which some are offended," and it was voted nearly unanimously that the church approve of regular singing or singing by rule, and that such singing should proceed the next Lord's day.

The manner of singing which was to be amended was that of singing by ear. The first comers from England brought with them Ainsworth's *Book of Psalms* in which were melodies printed in diamond shaped notes without bars, and while they used this book the singing was good of its kind. *The Bay Psalm Book* took the place of Ainsworth's about 1650, and as there was no music printed with it, its compilers recommended the use of the tunes printed in Ravenscroft's *Whole Booke of Psalmes*, a most admirable book. But there were few copies of Ravenscroft in America and the number soon diminished, and then tunes were sung from memory by those who had learned them from notes, and by ear by those who had only heard them sung by others. Gradually there grew up in the different churches different versions of the same tune, so that Thomas Walter in the introduction to his *The Grounds and Rules of Music explained*, Boston, 1721, could say: "Yea I have myself heard

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Oxford tune sung in three churches (which I purposely forbear to mention) with as much difference as there can possibly be between York and Oxford or any two other different tunes." There had further arisen a drawling and protraction of the notes especially in the country where, says Walter: "I myself have twice in one note paused to take breath." The confusion had grown so great that a part of two or three different tunes would be sung to one stanza and sometimes different portions of the congregation would be singing different tunes at the same time. Given the destitution as regards music it is not difficult to understand how this confusion arose. But it is not so easy to conceive that a great many congregations were attached to this confusion, were unwilling to change it, and were moved with indignation toward those who advocated a change. But so it was. "The very confusion and discord had become grateful to their ears" it has been said, "and melody sung in time and tune was really offensive." About 1720, the situation had become so intolerable, that a reform was undertaken which engaged the best men of the time, and it required ten years of contention to have singing by note generally adopted. Essays and sermons were published by Cotton Mather, Solomon Stoddard (father-in-law of Mr. Williams), Thomas Symmes, Josias Dwight and others in Massachusetts, and the General Association of Connecticut endorsed a sermon by Nathaniel Chauncy, all aimed at the introduction of singing by note. Weston by its vote in 1723, was very early in adopting the better way, and thereby placed itself, as it always has, with the party of reform and progress.

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The Great Awakening, the result of Whitefield's preaching in this country, made a strong impression on this parish. Mr. Williams seems to have been deeply engaged in it. At that time he preached his sermon on *Saving Faith*, in which he records that "in the last few months sixty young people had willingly taken their baptismal obligations, the rest of the Town most of them having done it before, and sixty-five persons had come into the communion of the Church." The names of these young people are given in the church records. But while Mr. Williams was deeply moved by the spiritual influences of the time, these influences did not lead to an increased severity nor to a more rigid application of doctrinal or traditional tests. Instead, he sought to enlarge the gate of heaven and make easy the path thereto. For it was voted in 1741: "Whereas some serious persons may have scruples about making relation of their experience or conviction in order to their being received into church fellowship, as thinking they are not obliged thereto by the gospel; that it shall not be imposed upon them as a necessary term of communion, but if they are of orderly good lives and give satisfaction to the minister of their knowledge of the Christian religion and understandingly make that profession of faith (publickly) which is printed at the end of Mr. Williams book it shall be satisfactory to the church." This was a most notable advance on the way from the first doctrinal position of the Puritans to the freedom of this time, and gives further evidence of the liberal character of Mr. Williams's mind. This vote, passed by this church at the last recorded meeting but one before Mr. Williams ceased to minister to it, is a

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fit ending to the record of his highly important service to this parish. Under his care this church made advance from childhood to full maturity, and therewith attained its most notable growth. In a material way, the parish finished its old meeting house and built a new one. Doctor Kendal records that Mr. Williams received four hundred twenty-five persons into the fellowship of the church and baptized one thousand eighty-two. This was a much greater addition, both actual and relative, than has been made by any other minister. The church and parish life was organized, compacted, ordered and placed beyond dangers from external or internal agitations. Spiritually, that life was deepened and broadened. The thought of the people was cleared and their sympathies were enlarged. Afterward the progress of the parish is less notable, if as sure. Foundations had been laid for the life that now is.

The ministry of Reverend Samuel Woodward covers one of the most critical periods of our national history, but to the matters of that time in which we know our fathers were deeply interested, our church records are signally without reference. Beyond permission to increase the number of psalm tunes, the adoption of the version of the psalms by Tate and Brady with the hymns of Doctor Watts, and the election of deacons, church meetings were devoted to the discipline of the personal shortcomings of church members, a matter we would now not care to undertake.

Mr. Woodward, like Mr. Williams before him, was ardently disposed to keep that watch over the conduct of his parishioners, which was then thought

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good. The character of our records when contrasted with what we know was occurring in the world about, often-times appears unnatural. In 1755, when Braddock was defeated, the church considered the neglect of Brother Abraham Gale as regards his watch over word and action. In 1765, the year of the passage of the Stamp Act, the church assembled to vote that it was in charity with Brother Nathan Fiske, no objection being made. From 1767, to 1778, which includes the Boston Massacre, the Tea Party, the Siege of Boston and the Declaration of Independence, there are no recorded meetings of the church. In 1778, when Washington was at Valley Forge, the church voted that when "any person was called to make their acknowledgment of, or Christian satisfaction for any offence, it should for the future be before the church only;" that is, not before the parish. There is no other record of church activity till Mr. Woodward's death.

This last vote wherein the parish is noted as different from the church, indicates the division that had developed between religious and secular life. When Mr. Williams came to Weston the church here, as elsewhere in New England, was yet all in all, and dominated all action of the precinct. But gradually through action of the General Court in making the precinct an independent town with the rights that go therewith, the repeal of the law limiting the suffrage to church members, the increased importance of political and secular affairs, the case was reversed, and the church became dependent on the town. At the time of Mr. Woodward's ministry this separation had been largely accomplished, and it is to the town records, as differing from those of the

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church, and yet as only the history of the secular side of it, that we must turn for knowledge of those manifestations of devotion, self-sacrifice, faith, and courage which the church ever seeks to produce, broaden and maintain.

The town records reveal that the men of Weston, all of them, at the date we are considering, supporters of this church, while conservative and somewhat slow in action, were eager and unflinching advocates of the cause of freedom and independence. In October, 1765, the seventh and last article of the town warrant was: "To know the minds of the town Conserning the Stamp act or Whether they will Give any Directions to their Representative to act there on." Upon which the town voted: "That they would Not give any Directions to their Representative Con Serning the Stamp act." In November 1766, the town "Voted to Give Instructions to their Representative Reletive to makeing good the Sufferes In the town of Boston by the outRages Committed there on the 27 of August 1765, . . . by the Roiters. But if upon a full Debate in the hous it appears to you that Some other meashures may be more Salutary we Leave it to you that the Same may be Done In that way." These riots were those that took place at the time when Mr. Oliver was constrained not to sell stamps, and the house of his brother-in-law "his Honor ouer Le^{wt} Govener" was so thoroughly sacked that he had to appear next day in Court without a wig. Weston did not sympathize with the "Le^{wt} Govener" but it wished to defend him from violence and injustice or recompense him for his losses thereby.

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In January, 1774, just after the Tea Party, the town met: "To Hear the Petition of Cap^t Braddyll Smith and others viz To Chuse a Committe to take into Consideration the Circumstances of our Publick affairs and to Corrospound with the NEIGHBOURING Towns and to Consider what is Best to be Done that our Injured Rights and Priviledges may be Restored and Secured," but the town thought best not to act thereon, though not from lack of sympathy it would seem, for the same year in September, when "it was Put to vote by yeas and nays to know the minde of the town Wheather they Send a Committe to the Provincial Congress to be holden at Concord it Passed in the affermetive" and when "it was Put to vote to Know the minde of the Town if they will Chuse a Committe of Corrospondance it Passed in the affairmetive." Again, in January, 1775, "the Major Part of the Electors Quallified according to the Royall Charter to vote then Present Did Elect and Depute Co^{ll} Braddyll Smith to Serve for and Represent them at a Provincial Congress to be Holden at Cambridge the first Day of Feb^r next By a unanamiss vote." In May, the town again "Did Elect and Depute Co^{ll} Braddyll Smith to Serve for and Represent them at a Provincial Congress to be Holden at Watertown on 31 first of may Instant to Consult Deliberate and Resolve upon Such further Measurs as under god Shall be Effectual to Save this People from Ruin." In May, 1776, the town "Voted that Colⁿ Smith should Use his Influence to Raise more men to Defend our lines against our Enemies" and on June 18, at a meeting "to know the minds of the town whether they will give their Representative

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Instructions to Use his Influence for Independance on Great Brittan if the honorable Congress think it best for the Interest of the Colonies. The Town voted in the Affermative." The Declaration of Independence is a part of our records and was read in public September 8, 1776, by Mr. Woodward as he attests. In this as elsewhere the town will be seen on the right side if somewhat slow.

The part taken by Weston in the Revolution, to my knowledge, has never adequately been noticed. It would appear that the town was intensely patriotic, and refused no demand for men or money or provisions which was made upon it. Its importance among the towns then in America I have already pointed out, and this importance at this period had not passed away. The nation is now so large that Weston is small and unimportant, but it was not so at the date we are considering. The town was at this time only the secular side of the church, and the spiritual life, which found its vent in devotion to religious and civil liberty, had been nourished and developed by this church. The meeting house was yet the most important factor in our country's inward life, and by the ministry of such men as Mr. Williams and Mr. Woodward was made possible and was advanced the liberty in which you and I rejoice. The relations between Mr. Woodward and the town seem to have been most cordial and pleasant. They voted him his salary yearly, but declined, as did the Massachusetts House of Representatives with its governor, to supply more than a yearly subsistence. These votes were passed without friction, and, when the times demanded, the salary was increased, though this increase was usually

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made by voting first his regular stipend of £66. 13s. 4d.; 10s. for his firewood; and then whatever sum they thought fit as a gratuity. In our town meeting, held May, 1780, it was voted to pay Reverend Mr. Samuel Woodward £4,000 for his salary for six months. This stipend, at the rate of \$40,000 a year, is thought to be the largest that this church has ever paid. The relations of the citizens among themselves seem to have been quite harmonious. There was, without doubt, as tradition says, a Tory party in the town, but it was never strong enough to carry its points in town meeting nor even to make there much of a showing.

In the theological agitations of the time, which were marked by the erasure of all Trinitarian references in the prayer book of King's Chapel by Doctor James Freeman in 1783, a year after the death of Mr. Woodward, Mr. Woodward seems to have taken little part. Doctor Kendal, who knew, says: "He was a serious, sensible, practical preacher, rarely entering upon controversial points, but always striving to mend the heart and life. Extremes he carefully avoided while he preached Christ and Him crucified, and adopted the evangelical style in his discourses." No doubt this is a correct characterization of Mr. Woodward's preaching, and yet it is the history of liberalism that where doctrinal tests are not insisted on, where controversy is avoided and stress is laid upon the conduct of life and the condition of the heart, there the mind of itself moves toward freedom, and creeds and articles of religion and statements of belief lose their hold. No doubt the agitation of secular affairs served to absorb the attention of our parish at the time of Mr. Wood-

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ward's ministry. But men's religious thought was being broadened by their devotion to civic freedom, and when they chose a minister to succeed Mr. Woodward they chose one not badly affected toward the new doctrines, one who, while he could command a D.D. from Yale, yet convinced Doctor Field, his successor, of his Unitarianism. Yet we must not think of this parish under Mr. Woodward as taking any position which separated it from the orthodox wing of Congregationalism. It was of that moderate school to which it has always belonged; not one of the leaders of reform, and yet on the side of advance and increased freedom; one of that body of healthy and living churches of the living God which remain forever the pillar and ground of the truth.

When Doctor Kendal came to this parish in 1783, the division between the spiritual side of life represented by the church, and the secular side represented by the town, had been greatly enlarged. The Revolution had emphasized the worth of the secular side and the town had grown in wealth. But up to this time, though ever growing more conscious of a difference, the church and town had been one. Hereafter appears in the records a certain party in the town which does not willingly support the state church, and we must bear in mind that though the town is largely made up of members of that church, yet there is an ever enlarging minority which worships elsewhere, and which afterward organized the Baptist and Methodist societies, which are yet with us. Eleven men protested against the calling, granting settlement money and salary to Doctor Kendal, as illegal and unconstitutional, pleaded the Bill of

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Rights and asked to have their protest recorded. This was granted, but the town proceeded to settle Doctor Kendal and provide for his maintenance with its customary generosity and carefulness, and there is no record of any friction between him and his sustainers. After the excitement of the Revolution the town records seem rather tame. There were certain difficulties as to reseating the meeting house. This was at first done according to the rates paid by each townsman. Afterward pews took the place of seats, and were first granted and then sold. In Doctor Kendal's time the meeting house, built while Mr. Williams was minister, was repaired at an expense of about \$4,000, porches and a steeple were added and other great changes made. After many failures, the town, in 1772, had voted to set aside seats for the singers. This marks the advent of the first choir. On one or two occasions money was voted for the use of the singers. In 1784, the town voted to accept the act of the General Court authorizing a lottery to raise means "for the purpose of widening the great Bridge in Watertown," in which the town was interested as an original part of Watertown. This lottery proved a failure, and the town afterward obtained release from liability concerning the bridge. There is little of moment in the records as regards the War of 1812. This town was not so important a factor in the national life at that time and the national government had become more capable. The records of the church at this period are much more interesting, as the following extract shows.

"At a church meeting holden on the 22nd day of Feb^r 1794, being duly warned and ap-

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pointed the Sabbath preceding for the following purposes, viz.

“1. To know the mind of the church, whether they will in any respect or cases alter the terms on which members are or may be admitted to fellowship; and to consider and act upon the matter at large as the church may think proper.

“2. To know whether they will take any measures to revive and administer the discipline of the church upon offending and irregular members.

“3. To consider whether it be expedient to make any alteration in the covenant now used by this church, and act as they may judge proper upon it.

“4. To know whether the church will introduce any new version of psalms, or do, and act anything relative to public worship:

“After considerable candid and christian conversation upon the several articles of business before the church, it was voted very unanimously to chuse a committee of five of the brethren to examine into the whole business, and report to the church at a future day what they think proper to be done upon each article.”

A committee was chosen and on April 17, 1794, Fast Day, the church met according to adjournment and the committee made the following report, viz.

“Brethren,

“Your committee have seriously attended to the business assigned them at your meeting on the 22d of Feb^y last, and have unanimously agreed to make the following report, viz.

“1st. We are unanimously of the opinion that where persons have been guilty of notorious violations of God’s law, instead of a particular confession

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to the church, specifying their faults, as has been usual heretofore, in some cases, a confession of sin in general terms in their relations, and profession of repentance and sorrow, shall be deemed satisfactory; and that such persons thereupon, if they exhibit other satisfactory marks of sincerity and seriousness, may be admitted to church fellow-ship, and to all christian privileges.

“Your committee think it their duty, and the duty of this church, to bear full testimony against all sin and impurity; and would not weaken, in the minds of any, the sense of their faults by unscriptural extenuations. The fault for which particular confession has usually been made they think is of such a nature as to require deep humiliation and repentance.

“2dly. We are of the opinion the church hath been too lax in their discipline; and do earnestly recommend that they endeavour to revive and exercise the discipline of God’s house upon offending members and to watch over those under their care, and over each other for good, more agreeably to the spirit of the gospel.

“3dly. That all things may be done without partiality we recommend that the following clause be introduced into the covenant entered into by those who do not join in full communion, but desire the privilege of baptism, viz. ‘You do now publicly profess repentance and sorrow for all your sins, and for every fault in particular by which you have knowingly offended God or any sober christians:’ And that this clause be the third sentence in said covenant; and that it be accepted instead of a particular confession.

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“4thly. Your committee are of the opinion that Doct^r Watts’ version of psalms and the hymns annexed thereto are better adapted to the purpose of public worship than the version now in use in this place; and do recommend that they be introduced and used in this church.

“Your committee take the liberty, in addition to their report on the several articles referred to their consideration, most seriously and earnestly to recommend a more strict observance of the Lord’s Day and attendance on public worship, as also greater attention and diligence among all heads of families in the government and instruction of those placed under their care, which we are fully persuaded would be happy and successful means to put a check to vice and impurity, to revive religion in the power of it, and to promote the practice of every virtue moral and social.

Samuel Kendal	} Committee.
Isaac Hobbs	
Elisha Stratton	
Joseph Russell	
Amos Biglow ”	

Upon hearing this report it was voted to accept it as a whole, and to adjourn to May 22, then to agree when Watts’s version of the psalms should be introduced. On May 22, it was voted to introduce Watts’s psalms in four weeks, but on June 8: “In consequence of the application and advice of some, who, upon further examination, were not fully willing that Doct^r Watts’ version of psalms and hymns should be introduced here without further consideration, the brethren of the church were requested

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to tarry; and the matter being opened to them it was mentioned and voted, that the introducing of them should be suspended till something further shall be acted relative to their being introduced."

At a meeting December 5, 1800, it was voted by a great majority that Doctor Belknap's collection should be introduced in place of Tate and Brady. At this meeting it was also voted "to permit the continuance of such instruments of musick, as have been here introduced, in public worship on the Lord's Day."

The meaning of these votes it is important to discern. First the amendment of the covenant is in the direction of all the other amendments made by this church; that is towards putting the conduct of life above any belief in doctrine and making entrance to fellowship easy. The change in hymn books is of the same character, but is yet more significant. This church was slow, but it was sure in its advance. Doctor Watts's version was very much better than that of Tate and Brady as all the members of the church knew, but it was not good enough for some of the more progressive. But they were obliged to wait six years before the church as a whole would agree with them. Doctor Belknap's collection was the first collection of hymns published in this country which was of a declared Unitarian character. In the preface to this collection Doctor Belknap substantially says that it has been so edited that it may be of use to those who cannot praise Jesus as God. In this action of our church is revealed the first evidence of that liberal disposition which led its members fourteen years later to call Doctor Field, who was avowedly of the Unitarian

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fold. Doctor Kendal was himself a moderate liberal. Doctor Field thought him a Unitarian, but he was in no wise obnoxious to the most conservative, as witness his D.D. from Yale. It was thought best by the conservative party to hold on to so important a man and keep him from taking a wrong position, and the Doctor was willing to be held. But Doctor Kendal's *Century Sermon* shows that the root of the matter was in him. He preached, and by his daily life taught, the principles that lead to the widest freedom. "Guard your Christian liberty" he tells this church in the *Century Sermon*; "study the principles of the Reformation, look to the example of the forefathers, defend your rights as a Church of Christ amenable only to your Lord and Master for your faith and worship." These are words that incite to an ever advancing church life, to an ever deepening communion with the living God.

There was but one other matter considered by the church during Doctor Kendal's ministry. The records are as follows :

"July 26, 1807. The Address and Constitution of the Evangelical Missionary Society having been publicly read some weeks before, and the church being at their communion this day, requested to tarry and act upon the subject, after divine service in the afternoon, did accordingly stop and attend to the business. The meeting was pretty full. Said Address and Constitution were again read, and, after some observations on the subject; it was moved and seconded that this church will become members of the Evangelical Missionary Society. The vote passed in the affirmative without a dissenting voice. It was then voted,

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“2ly. That they would choose a member of their own body to represent them in said Society.

“3ly. Voted that Brother Joseph Russell be their Representative for the ensuing year.

“4ly. Voted that they recommend it to the whole church and congregation to make a contribution to promote the objects of said Missionary Society, at as early a period from this time as may be convenient, and that their Pastor propose such contribution publickly as soon as opportunity will admit.”

The history of the Evangelical Missionary Society and its connection with this church are important as illustrating the theological position of Doctor Kendal and of this parish. The address which was read to this church must have been prepared early in 1807, or it may be in the previous year, for it was read in Weston, as our records show, some weeks before July 26, 1807. The address, which is here given in full, will explain the aim of the founders of the society.

“To all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and who wish that his gospel may everywhere be preached to the poor.

“BRETHREN AND FRIENDS:

“A number of ministers delegated from different Associations in the Counties of Worcester and Middlesex for the purpose of considering the subject, have thought it expedient to form a New Missionary Society, to aid in extending the means of christian knowledge among the destitute or poorly provided, in the infant settlements of our own country. After repeated and deliberate consultations, and prayer to the Great Fountain of wisdom for direc-

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tion, we have formed, and offer to the publick a constitution for such a society. The object to be effected is of great importance, and we trust will interest the feelings of all friends of Zion. To carry the benevolent designs of the institution into effect, we must solicit your charitable contributions. For your compliance with our request substantial reasons may be required. Such it is presumed will be suggested to your minds when the subject is taken into your serious consideration. Did we plead the cause of those in outward poverty and distress, did we ask you to give a portion to the hungry, to cover the naked, or by your liberality to loosen the chains of the unhappy captive, or to deliver him that is ready to perish, we are persuaded that you would be touched by a tender sympathy, and that your charity would afford relief. May we not, then, indulge a confidence that you will sensibly feel for those who may be perishing for lack of vision, who may be destitute of the means of christian knowledge, denied the ordinances of worship, and the light of the blessed gospel? If it would afford high satisfaction, to relieve the bodies of our fellow mortals, how much more to enlighten their minds, and promote the salvation of their souls! They who desire that Christ's kingdom may be extended, and 'that all men may come to the knowledge of the truth as it is in him and be saved,' can never want reasons for bestowing something to promote these great ends. Many Missionary Societies we know already exist; and the happy fruits of their labors have been seen and acknowledged. Facts, learned by actual experiments justify a hope of success in like attempts to propagate the gospel and invite us

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to lend our aid, and to emulate the pious zeal of those, who have gone before us in the benevolent work. We pray you to reflect on the subject, and hope everyone will give according to his ability. The widow's mite, the small portion bestowed by those in moderate circumstances, as well as the larger donations of the more affluent, will aid the important design, and we humbly trust will be abundantly rewarded by him, who regards the things done to his disciples on earth, as done to himself."

JOSEPH SUMNER, *Moderator.*
REUBEN HOLCOMB, } *Scribes.*
JOSEPH AVERY." }

The constitution which accompanied this address contained an article providing that as soon as it had been subscribed to by one hundred members, a meeting should be called to ratify it and organize a society. Many more than one hundred persons signed, and paid the two dollars required to make them annual members, or the ten dollars required to make them life members. Among the subscribers are the following names recorded as from Weston: Thomas Bigelow, Alpheus Bigelow, Jr., Isaac Fiske, Joseph Field, Jr., Amos Harrington, Nathan Hagar, John Hews, Samuel Kendal, Joseph Russell (for the church), George W. Smith, Thomas H. Townsend (life member), Nathan Upham, Micah Warren.

November 4, 1807, these subscribers met at Lancaster and elected the following officers:

"Honorable Elijah Brigham, Westborough,
President.
Rev. Ezra Ripley, Concord, *Vice-President.*

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Benjamin Hayward, Esquire, Worcester,
Treasurer.

Rev. Nathaniel Thayer, Lancaster,
Recording Secretary.

Rev. Aaron Bancroft, Worcester,"
Corresponding Secretary.

"Rev. Joseph Sumner, Shrewsbury,
Rev. Joseph Lee, Royalston,
Rev. Joseph Pope, Spencer,
Rev. Moses Adams, Acton,
Rev. Samuel Kendal, D.D., Weston,
Rev. Joseph Chickering, Woburn,
Thomas W. Ward, Esquire, Shrewsbury,
Mr. Ebenezer Torrey, Lancaster,
Joseph Allen, Esquire, Worcester,
Doctor Isaac Hurd, Concord,
Tilly Merrick, Esquire, Concord,
Mr. Joseph Russell, Weston." } *Trustees.*

The name of Mr. Joseph Russell continues among those of the trustees till 1811, when it is omitted, and then appears the name of Isaac Fiske till 1817, about which time the society passed out of the control of the country churches and was largely officered by Boston men. Doctor Kendal remained a trustee from the formation of the society till his death. He was further one of the executive committee of the trustees, to which committee were given the business affairs of the society, and he selected, engaged and paid the missionaries that the society supported. The fourth meeting of the society was held in Weston, October 2, 1812, at the house of Thomas Stratton, who then kept the Flagg Tavern in the house now occupied by Mr. George

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Emerson. At this meeting Doctor Kendal, the Reverend Ezra Ripley, and Doctor Aaron Bancroft (the executive committee for the year) reported as to a journey which they had undertaken to the then very distant town of Ellsworth, Maine, and the neighboring plantation of Jackson and Washington. At Ellsworth they had ordained Peter Nurse (once librarian of Harvard College and for some years a missionary in Maine supported by the Evangelical Missionary Society) and instituted a church, and at Jackson they had ordained Silas Warren and endeavored to provide him with a church. In this last matter they were balked by the opposition of the local churches of Bangor, Hallowell, Winthrop, and Bucksport which required a confession of faith as well as a covenant. The Massachusetts churches, together with the church at Castine, now Unitarian, were not willing to impose on a church yet unborn any statement of belief. The eight churches comprising the council were thus equally divided, and the matter of constituting the church was abandoned. They all agreed, however, that Mr. Warren was a suitable person to be ordained, and therefore proceeded to ordain him. The four churches which voted against the necessity of articles of faith have all since become Unitarian, and the four which voted otherwise are now Trinitarian.

In 1814, it was voted that a semi-annual meeting should be held in Boston. In 1815, such a meeting was held in the Old South Meeting House, when the Reverend Nathaniel Thayer preached the sermon. In this year the society was incorporated. In 1818, the annual meeting was held in Boston, and hereafter the society was controlled by the

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liberal churches of Boston. In 1820, Reverend Francis Parkman became secretary. In 1821, Doctor Channing announced the donation from an unknown friend of two thousand dollars, accompanied by the following declaration: "The enclosed sum the writer wishes to present to the Evangelical Missionary Society in Massachusetts to be appropriated by them in the manner judged most beneficial to the cause of liberal Christianity which the writer trusts is the cause of pure and undefiled religion."

In 1825, Doctor Joseph Field, of Weston, preached the semi-annual sermon at the church of what is now called The Third Religious Society, in Dorchester. In 1826, came a communication from the American Unitarian Association proposing that the Evangelical Missionary Society unite with the Association. This was decided adversely in 1827. The society had for many years as secretary the Reverend Chandler Robbins. It yet exists and distributes the income of a small endowment. It was one of the first missionary societies organized in this portion of the Commonwealth, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions having been organized in 1810, and the Home Missionary Society in 1826.

The history of the Evangelical Missionary Society has been thus drawn from its ancient records for two reasons. First: This parish was active in creating this early society for the spread of the gospel, both by the contributions of its own members and the thought and energy of its minister, Doctor Kendal, who, while he remained alive, was one of its most influential and important officers. Second: Its history illustrates the change in theology that

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was taking place in this and many other parishes, and the position of Doctor Kendal. When the society was formed in 1807, there was as yet no division between the Unitarian and Trinitarian parties in the state church. The officers of the Evangelical Missionary Society were of both parties, and were drawn from churches then in fellowship which afterward were sharply divided. But the majority of the supporters of the society were of the liberal way of thought, and the churches which formed and supported it largely became Unitarian. This indicates the position of this church under Doctor Kendal. It was then, as always, of the liberal, the progressive party, and had only to keep in the line of its previous growth to attain its present position. Doctor Kendal was of this same liberal party. His most intimate friends afterward became Unitarians; the societies with which he was connected afterward became liberal. It would seem that he was rightly placed by Sprague among the Unitarian clergy, and that this parish under his leadership was prepared for the more pronounced position which it assumed under Doctor Field.

The church records after the death of Doctor Kendal record; first, the appointment of a committee to act conjointly with the committee appointed by the town to supply the pulpit; then, the vote of the church to call Mr. Joseph Field, Jr., to settle as their gospel minister; then, the appointment of a committee to arrange for his ordination; then, the appointment of a committee to examine into the church funds, which were found satisfactory, there being sixty-seven dollars in the treasury when all debts were paid; and then, before Doctor Field's

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settlement, this significant vote: "That in future those who may wish to become members in full communion with the Church shall make application to the Pastor who shall give public notice of the same. And after they have stood propounded the usual time and no objections made, shall be admitted by a majority of the voters present after owning or assenting to the Covenant as read to them by the Pastor of said Church, on Communion days previous to the celebration of the Ordinance or on other days: Provided nevertheless that nothing in the above shall be so construed as to debar any who may wish to make a relation from so doing." This action taken the day before Doctor Field's ordination reveals an eagerness on the part of the church to secure yet more easy entrance to full communion and is in the line of its continuous procedure in the matter. At a church meeting, held about 1816, it was voted that the present service of plate for the communion table be sold, with the exception of the silver tankard, and a new one purchased. Later it was voted that any sum remaining in this transaction be added to the church funds, and that all contributions remaining in the hands of the deacons the first day of each May, arising from collections on communion days, be added to the church funds. There are recorded further, certain elections and resignations of deacons, some of which may have had theological signification, but as to this I have been unable to obtain information. Beyond this I have discovered only a list of baptisms, and records of admission to the church of certain persons by letter.

These seem meagre records for this most important period when the nation was overflowing with

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excess of life, but the cause is not difficult to discern. Once upon the church through its members had been laid the whole government of Weston. It had the care of the secular as well as the spiritual affairs of this section. It arranged for the highways, as well as the schools, for the preservation of order, as well as for the poor. Now all that was past. It had yielded the burden of all secular affairs to the town. Once the church sought to control the thought of its members and discipline their conduct, now it left the mind largely free and did not condemn nor criticise nor excommunicate those who shared in its communion. There was therefore much less to record.

But we are not to think that it was therefore inactive or without influence. Its work was as great, if less material, and its power as potent, if less easy to reckon and record. The great victory over slavery was the church's work. The decrease of intemperance was the result of its influence, the larger intellectual life had been fostered by it, the greater toleration was the offspring of its awakened sense of justice. It now moved the minds and hearts of men as its true, natural, and heaven-given labor. As the heart was once only a contracting centre of an artery, whose action was evident and the result of effort, but is now a highly complicated organ concealed and seemingly automatic, and yet is not less but more useful in man than in the worm, so the church differentiated from what was not properly its real mission and working without noise and in obscurity was yet the source of life to this parish, though its records are scanty and its force unacknowledged. To the enlightenment, purification,

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steadying of the souls of men it gave itself, that is to its true end, though in ways not susceptible of record, and was therefore the source of all that was helpful and good, thereby proving itself, in Doctor Kendal's time as ever, the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

The fifty years during which the Reverend Doctor Field was minister of this parish were some of the most important and eventful which this country has ever known.

When he came to Weston in 1815, the thirteen original colonies had been increased only by admission to the Union, of Vermont in 1791, Kentucky in 1792, Tennessee in 1796, Ohio in 1802, and Louisiana in 1812, while the vast region west and north of these states, to which Spain and France and England laid varying and indefinite claims, was yet unknown and undefined. When he resigned in 1865, this region had been explored, mapped, divided into states and territories, and the nation had attained the limits it now possesses. When he took this pulpit, Madison, the fourth president, was in the midst of his second term; when he left it, Lincoln was near the end of his life. The parish committee met to arrange for his ordination the day after the battle of New Orleans, and he preached his farewell sermon but a few weeks before Lee surrendered at Appomattox. As his ministry embraced the time of the Mexican War, his residence in this town included three of the four great wars which this country has waged.

But these political events give little indication of the immense change which took place in the social and economic life of the people during this period.

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There were no manufactories of any account when Doctor Field came to Weston. The nation was then almost wholly dependent upon agriculture, and yet there were no means by which the products of one section could be exchanged for those of another except along the sea coast; for though the steamboat had been invented and was coming into use on the rivers, there were vast regions to which it could give no service. When Doctor Field ceased preaching, there were over one hundred and fifty thousand different establishments engaged in manufacturing, employing more than two million hands, a number equal to more than a quarter of the population of the nation when he began here; there were over thirty thousand miles of railroad in operation, besides numerous and important canals; there were over eighty thousand miles of telegraph wire in use; and in place of the two thousand post offices with one half million dollars revenue in 1815, there were twenty-eight thousand offices with eight and a half million revenue in 1865.

Or take it on the intellectual side. When Doctor Field came to Weston, excepting the theological writings of Jonathan Edwards, the practical wisdom of Franklin, and the writings of such statesmen as Hamilton and Jefferson, there was no American literature. Before 1865, Bancroft had published all but the last volume of his history, Hildreth had finished his, Prescott had given to the world all his delightful works, Irving had completed his literary and his earthly career, Motley had written his histories, and Ticknor had brought to a close his account of Spanish literature. Cooper's first novel appeared in 1821, and his last in 1850. Hawthorne

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began the *Twice Told Tales* in 1837, and died in 1864. As to the poets, Poe was born in 1811, and was gone in 1849. Longfellow had written much the larger portion of his poetry and was at the height of his fame in 1865. Whittier was then well known. The muse of Bryant had already ceased to inspire him, and Emerson published nothing after 1867. When Doctor Field came to Weston there was no American literature. When he ceased to serve here, all our classics had been produced.

It is necessary to recall this immense expansion of territory, this extraordinary increase of wealth, this remarkable uplifting of life in the nation, that we may rightly grasp the life and growth of this parish during Doctor Field's term of service. For all these movements helped to mould and shape it and directly or indirectly to make it what it is. And in some instances what was true of the country in a large way was true in a measure of the parish, though certainly not in all. For there was here none of that increase of territory nor of population which was so remarkable in the nation. The boundaries of the town were the same when Doctor Field left as when he came, and there was no notable change in the amount or the character of the population; the wave of foreign immigration which submerged many a district during this fifty years hardly having entered this town. The manufacture of hand-made boots and shoes, which is the only manufacture which has greatly engaged the inhabitants of Weston, reached its height during Doctor Field's pastorate, and at its close was nearly extinct. The existence of the cotton industry which was so im-

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portant a factor in the fortune of many New England towns is only directly mentioned in the town or parish records by a resolution protesting against the back-water at the bridge between here and Auburn-dale, occasioned by the building of the dam of the Waltham Cotton Mill the first mill in the United States in which cotton cloth was made by power looms. The importance of this industry indirectly to Weston may be estimated by the fact that the yard of cotton which cost eighty cents in 1815, could be bought for five cents in 1861. Again the great internal improvements which brought the Mississippi river nearer Weston when Doctor Field resigned, than was New York when he settled here, touched the town when the Boston and Worcester Railroad was extended through the southern portion of Weston in 1834, and the Fitchburg through the northern, ten years later. But they did not occasion any noticeable or immediate change in the ways of life in this parish. Weston remained agricultural and was largely the home of farmers until Doctor Field ceased to preach here.

And yet though there were so few outward indications of the important development that the nation had known, there are not lacking facts which show that indirectly, Weston knew of, and in its measure partook of, the growth that went on about it. When Doctor Field came here the Union was not yet twenty-five years old, and was little more than an experiment. When he resigned, the Civil War was at an end, Nullification and Secession had both failed, and the Union was an accepted fact; proved able to withstand both outward and inward assaults. The records of the town show that its in-

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habitants were constantly of the party for the Union and for progress, and that the increasing and centralizing life of the country was here felt and sympathized with. Though the great extension of economic vigor found here no field for its manifestation, yet this town shared in its results. The taxes voted in 1815, excluding what were voted to Doctor Field, amounted to thirty-one hundred dollars, while in 1865, they were eighty-one hundred dollars, showing an increase of wealth in fifty years approaching to three hundred per cent., and this was far less than the real increase. But perhaps the sympathy with the new secular intellectual life is most interesting. The town voted for schools in 1815, eight hundred dollars, and in 1865, two thousand dollars, while the records show that this increased interest was not expressed solely in the way of voting money, but further, in a desire for better methods and tools, and for better teaching. The care of Weston for its poor has never been a shame to it as to so many New England towns, and the report of a committee, adopted by the town during Doctor Field's ministry, reveals that the increasing sense of humanity was here known and manifested. That period of growth, by which the wilderness was obliterated and civilization appeared as by magic, which characterized the nation at large during Doctor Field's ministry, had been passed through more quietly and slowly by Weston long before Doctor Field came to its pulpit. But the town was not without consciousness of and sympathy with the larger life which flowed about it and ever accepted whatever was new which it could use and assimilate.

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Though it is necessary to notice the national life of which it was a part, our interest is with the fortunes of the parish and especially with its spiritual life. When Doctor Field settled here it was still one with the town, and the church was supported by a tax laid upon all the inhabitants. I have before noticed the protest made by the Baptists against the settlement of Doctor Kendal; and their desire to be released from being taxed to support a minister not of their way of thinking is afterwards expressed, as is that of the Methodists. But the great majority of the town accepted Doctor Field as minister of all its territory and resisted the collection of the minister's tax no more than they did the collection of all taxes. There is less recorded opposition to the settlement of Doctor Field than to that of Doctor Kendal.

There was however a great change in opinion. The protest of the Baptists at Doctor Kendal's settlement had been founded on rights which they thought had been granted them by the constitution adopted in 1781, two years before Doctor Kendal's call here, and they and other dissenters from the state church (still recognized as such by that constitution) did not cease to agitate for release, for conscience' as well as pocket's sake, from the burden that was laid upon them. Gradually they accomplished what they sought. By acts of legislature, by votes of towns, by the slow change of public opinion, the right to have the taxes a man paid for the support of the ministry devoted to the support of the minister with whose belief he was in harmony, was more and more granted, until at length all who could show that they were regular attendants upon

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preaching other than that of the parish church had their taxes abated or paid by the town clerk to the dissenting minister they designated. In 1800, an article was put into the town warrant asking if the town would permit those persons who were termed Baptists and those termed Methodists to draw the sums they were assessed in the minister's tax out of the town treasury; and as late as 1822, the Baptists and Methodists petitioned to be exempted from paying for repairs to the parish church, the salary of the sexton, and for fuel. But such dissenters were yet few. The petition sent the town at Doctor Kendal's ordination was signed by only fourteen persons and the town refused to recognize some of these as members of a dissenting church. As late as 1820, the town voted to reject an amendment to the state constitution which separated church and town. When Doctor Field came to Weston the town and church were strongly united, and there seemed few signs of dissolution.

What signs there were indicated danger from disension within rather than from attacks without. The state church had long known differences of opinion as to some of the articles of faith thought most important by the fathers. As has been noted, King's Chapel in 1783, had adopted an edition of the prayer-book which excluded all recognition of the Trinity. But King's Chapel was not of the established, that is not of the Congregational churches. There was not wanting evidence however that Unitarianism was growing among Congregational churches. Not only were men like Doctor Mayhew of the West Church in Boston known to be doubters as to the Trinity and the doctrines that hinge

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thereon, but whole parishes had become heretical, and divisions began to take place. As early as 1792, the majority of the church at Taunton had separated from the parish through the opposition of a few of the society to some of the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith. This action was followed by many other churches, notably the First Church in Plymouth, a majority of which separated from the parish and a minority of the church on the settlement of Doctor James Kendall in 1802. In 1804, Doctor Henry Ware of Hingham, a man of well-known liberal views, was appointed Hollis Professor of Divinity at Harvard, and the college was thereby brought into the liberal ranks.

It became more and more necessary for men to take sides and the inaction which had been easy for Doctor Kendal was much less easy for Doctor Field. There is no reason to think that he hesitated. He had been educated at Harvard and under its liberal professors. He was avowedly in sympathy with their thought, and when this church called him in 1814, it was well aware of his position and chose him because it shared his views. There is nothing that proves more conclusively the liberal character of Doctor Kendal's thinking than this action of the church he had taught in calling to its ministry on his decease a man of well-known liberal belief. We have then this situation; the town of Weston supporting in the parish church by taxation laid upon all its inhabitants, except those who were Baptists or Methodists, a man known to be of the Unitarian wing of Congregationalism, and this situation continuing for fourteen years; for when in 1820,

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the opportunity was given to discontinue the situation if desired, by adopting the amendment to the constitution which dissolved this relation between the town and the church, Weston voted with the majority of the towns throughout the Commonwealth not to do so. So much stronger were the bonds of usage and association and tradition than those of theology with our fathers seventy-five years ago. We have an illustration of this extraordinary condition, in the Congregational churches to-day. The new or liberal-orthodox wing of the church, which looks to Andover for its inspiration and leadership, differs as much from the old orthodox wing as did Doctor Field from the minister of Park Street Church; but though there is much difference and friction there is yet no division. So there was much agitation among Congregationalists when Doctor Field was first settled here, but little division, and complete separation did not take place until some time afterward.

Much bitterness was added to the controversy soon after Doctor Field came to Weston by a decision of the Supreme Court that a church could not exist without a parish to hold it, as there can exist on earth, as far as we can see, no soul outside of a body. The majority of churches in Massachusetts were orthodox; the majority of parishes liberal. When a division took place the courts held that only the parish could hold property, records, communion plate, in fact any material and tangible things, and that the church had no legal existence apart from the parish. The courts even held that if the whole church went away the parish could proceed to create for itself a new church, but that the

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separating church, as such, could not create a new parish, since it had no legal, no real, existence. This decision was based on law and precedent, not on abstract justice, and since the courts to this day have always upheld it, we may believe that it was based on good law and practical justice. But none of us would deny that it occasioned great hardship, and that the origin of some of our Unitarian churches was and remains most disturbing. There were cases in which the whole church with the exception of one or two members left the parish and all the property which the two had held in common, and for conscience' sake began to create for itself new buildings, furniture, records, plate, funds, while the parish entered into wealth which it had neither zeal nor knowledge efficiently to employ. The Unitarian church, as such, was born rich, entering through inheritance into a large patrimony. The Orthodox church in very many cases, for Christ's sake, became poor. And this genesis is a most important factor in accounting for the difference in the growth of the two denominations. One was born to ease; the other to labor. One was ministered to by the past; the other must needs minister to the present. To one was given; from the other was demanded the utmost self-denial and sacrifice. One has held its own and slowly increased. The other has greatly multiplied in membership and wealth and is now far richer in things spiritual and material than the one to whom it once abandoned all it had. Fate thrust upon the Unitarian church the accumulations of the past and it has suffered from its gifts.

There were fifteen churches in this state in which there was no division, in which parish and church

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were, and remained one; where there was no strife and no bitterness and no separation. This parish, this church of Weston, was one of that happy number. The education in liberal thought and kindly feeling and continually renewed aims, which from the first it had received from its ministers (and in the beginning of this controversy notably from Doctor Kendal) now bore its wholesome fruit, and Doctor Field by his judicious, humane, devout ministry carried the church and parish past the crisis and held them united. Not till 1840, was the strife at an end. After that there were new Orthodox and new Unitarian churches established, but there were no further divisions. The separation was complete and the existence of two differing denominations was recognized by all. The liberal tendencies, which I have tried to point out as existing from the beginning, had carried this parish, this church, into its present well defined and advanced position.

It is difficult to say what led to the separation of this church from the town. It is usually stated that the adoption of the amendments to the constitution in 1820, required this. I cannot so read the amendments, and the articles which declared plainly for the separation of church and state were rejected by the voters of the Commonwealth. Further, the connection between town and state continued till 1824. I believe that the numerous decisions of the courts as to the division of property between parishes and churches led the church everywhere to seek such a separation for its own protection, and that the church in Weston acted in accord with a feeling that was wide-spread, and not under coercion. There is nothing in the records of the church or the town

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to account for this separation. In 1824, Doctor Field was voted his usual salary, and in 1825, no such provision was made. The church which was the original occupier of this territory, for whose support the precinct had been created, thus at length abandoned to the town all claim to govern or to be aided by that territory, or its inhabitants as such, and, of its own will, entered upon an independent existence. Just as here the thought of the church developed slowly and yet surely from the doctrines of the Westminster Confession of Faith to those represented by Doctor Field, so did its belief in the worth of a state ruled by a church, slowly and without friction change to a belief in the desirability of a state wholly independent of a church, to accomplish which the Church renounced whatever rights it possessed. Here in Weston have ever been the changes which give evidence of life; never those violent crises which accompany death.

During the years of Doctor Field's ministry, while town and church were one, the meeting house was repaired and the square pews removed and long ones substituted. The only mention of the War of 1812, is a vote in 1816, to allow fourteen dollars per month, for time actually in service, in addition to the United States pay, to all soldiers in the late war from Weston. In 1820, the town voted the sum of one hundred dollars for the "Instruction of Sacred Music in Weston," and that a Committee of five, three from the Congregational Society, one from the Baptist, and one from the Methodist, be authorized to draw and appropriate said money. This vote was renewed in substantially the same manner in 1826. We notice that this church was

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then known as the Congregational Society. The town warrant, long after the town ceased to vote the minister a salary, directed the constable to warn the inhabitants to assemble at the public meeting house. About 1837, the words "Mr. Field's Meeting house" are used. In the spring of 1840, the town meeting was called in the Unitarian meeting house. This was the last town meeting held in the old meeting house built during Mr. Williams's pastorate. April 6th, that year, the parish voted "it was expedient to pull down the old meeting house, and build a new one, and a committee was appointed to confer with one appointed by the town to see if they could unite in providing in the new church building a basement or other room for town purposes." These committees met but failed to agree. The church was built solely for church purposes and the town and parish were after this separate in all outward matters as they had been in financial. The town met in the hall in what is now Theodore Jones's house until 1847, when the present Town Hall was built. Hereafter the town records have only the interest for us which they have for other citizens, and I shall refer only to the records of the parish and the church.

The first parish meeting, separate from that of the town, was held in the spring of 1825. It was quite formal and only carried forward the work before done by the town in providing an organization to support and forward the church. The methods were those which had been used by the town. Assessors were elected who assessed the sums voted upon all members of the parish and these were collected by a person appointed for that purpose. But

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the old machinery did not work quite so well under the new voluntary system as under the old compulsory one. There is an indisposition in the Anglo-Saxon voter to pay taxes, and in 1830, certain members of the parish thought best to create a ministerial fund and fifteen hundred dollars were subscribed, and the foundation was thereby laid of that endowment which the parish now has, and of the method of raising money by voluntary subscriptions, by which it now works. This subscription seems to have made adequate financial provision for another seven years when a committee was appointed, one from each school district, to ascertain the proportional amount for each member of the parish in paying its various expenses. In this same year Doctor Field was called to Waltham, and fifty-two members of the parish requested him to remain and expressed a willingness to pay his salary that year, and thought they would be willing and able to pay it for the future. The names of the fifty-two are recorded and among them are those which are yet willing and able to support the ministry in this church. Doctor Field declined the call to Waltham.

In 1839, the matter of repairing the old meeting house was taken up and, as I have said, was in due time decided adversely and a new church built. It is interesting to note that like this present church, it was built without incurring any debt, and that as with this, various additions were made and ornamentations added for all of which money was provided before they were undertaken. The committee who built this present church was not aware, I am quite sure, of the action of the committee which

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built the former, but when it avoided debt proceeded unconsciously to express what was then and had long been the prevailing temper of this parish.

An illustration of what I have said of the antecedent occupying of the territory of Weston by the church is given in the request of the town in 1847, to be allowed to erect a Town Hall upon the common. This the parish as trustee of the church granted, but only so long as the building should be used for town purposes. In 1852, money was subscribed through the Ladies Benevolent Society for an organ which was bought and placed in the church. We have here recorded one of the numberless deeds of kindness for which this church is indebted to the Benevolent Society. In 1857, at the request of David Lane, then owning the land now occupied by Mrs. Chandler Robbins, the parish considered if it would move the church to the north side of the common and agreed to do so if Mr. Lane would comply with certain conditions, but as he refused the church was not moved.

This led to a committee being appointed in 1860, to settle the bounds of the parish land, and these bounds were then established. There are no references to the Civil War in the parish records.

In 1865, came this letter from Doctor Field :

“To the Parish Committee of the Unitarian Religious Society in Weston :

“WESTON, January 6, 1865.

“GENTLEMEN :

“The first day of February next, will be the fiftieth anniversary of my settlement over the Unitarian Religious Society in Weston.

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“It is my wish to have my relation to it as its Pastor dissolved on that day.

“With much respect and esteem,

Yours

JOSEPH FIELD.”

“The following is an answer from the society through the Parish committee :

“WESTON, January 16th, 1865.

“TO REV. JOSEPH FIELD, D.D.,

“Dear Sir :

“We as a society accept your resignation so far as the arduous duties, in relation to the Parish are concerned, but wishing to have you remain with us as Pastor over the congregation, with which you have been so long connected. We shall still hope to hear your voice in the Pulpit, whenever health or inclination will permit. †

“With a grateful appreciation of your long labors, and cordial good wishes, we remain

Yours truly—

“The following resolutions, were voted to be recorded, and a copy sent to Doctor Field :

“*Resolved*:—That with the deepest emotion we received the announcement of the resignation of Rev. Doct. Field, as Pastor of this church and Society, which sacred relation he has held for the long period of fifty years.

“*Resolved*:—That however painful the sundering of ties that have so long and so happily bound us as Pastor and People, duty compels, in consideration of his declining years, that we accept his resignation of the arduous duties of the Society.

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“*Resolved*:—That though we accept his resignation in part, we humbly trust that he will long be with and one of us still to aid and counsel, and that the happy union which has so long existed here, may be renewed and perpetuated in heaven.

“Recorded by WILLIAM H. FLOYD;

Parish Clerk.”

Thus do the parish records take notice of the end of this long and most important pastorate.

The period of Doctor Sears's ministry in Weston was not marked by such striking contrasts in the life of the nation as was that of his predecessor. Rather did this period include the quiet and continuous growth of tendencies which began their visible progress in Doctor Field's days and were still developing while Doctor Sears preached. Certain matters seemed indeed to be finished while Doctor Sears was here. The Civil War was not ended when Doctor Field resigned, but Doctor Sears saw the end of the struggle for a strong nation instead of a weak confederacy, of which the Civil War was the most notable illustration and the consummation, and the return of all the seceding states to the Union. The purchase of Alaska seemed to put an end to all possible extension of territory, though we now see things differently. But the increase of population that began when Doctor Field was here proceeded continuously during Doctor Sears's ministry, as did that of wealth and of manufactures and internal improvements. The increase of nearly eight million of inhabitants in the eleven years during which Doctor Sears remained here was almost four times the number of colonists who declared themselves indepen-

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dent of Great Britain in 1776. The United States became the second nation in wealth and in manufactures and possessed more miles of railroad than all the rest of the world, and was still adding to these before Mr. Hornbrooke came. On the other hand, though the nation had put down civil war, new internal dangers appeared. The rings in great cities became oppressive and the strife between capital and labor began.

But while these changes continued in the nation, there were few changes in the town. Its territory did not increase, nor was there any notable change in its population. But its wealth continued to be affected by the progress about it. In the last year of Doctor Field's ministry the town appropriated eight thousand dollars, and in the last year of Doctor Sears's, twelve thousand, an increase of fifty per cent. in the eleven years.

The question of internal improvement touched the town in 1870, when it was asked by the Massachusetts Central Railroad Company to subscribe to its capital stock. The town after a lengthy consideration voted not to do so. The method of arriving at the real desire of the town through passing a vote and then reconsidering it is well illustrated in the various fortunes which befell the creation of a new cemetery. The matter was before the town from 1865, to 1873. What one town meeting voted another reconsidered and rescinded. When a committee was empowered to do what the town voted to do, it apparently was not willing to exercise its right, against an active and earnest minority. After eight years of agitation and discussion the town voted in 1873, substantially as it had in 1865, but

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now the citizens were practically of one mind. This same method of decision, reconsidering, and redecision, was used when the first High School building was erected. Such methods enable townsmen by thought and discussion to attain unanimity of action and therefore are of great value, but such methods are very slow and unwieldy, and as the business of the towns of the Commonwealth has increased they have of necessity been abandoned. I have been told that Doctor Sears was influential in securing the vote against the purchase of stock in the Massachusetts Central Railroad; in the settlement of the cemetery question; and in the erection of the High School building. In 1875, the town received the gift of a town clock which was placed on the church. In 1865, it had been given a fund for the aid of the silent poor. Both these gifts were from members of this parish.

The parish call to Doctor Sears, as the records show, seems to have been unanimous, and his acceptance came at once. He had been for a number of months the assistant of Doctor Field and was already endeared to the parish, and the call and acceptance were but a matter of form. His letter accepting the call has only one condition. He suggests that the afternoon service be omitted during the most sultry portion of the summer months. Up to this date there had been two services each Sunday, morning and afternoon, and it is to be supposed that there had been a sufficient congregation at both to justify their continuance. In Doctor Sears's judgment the attendance on summer afternoons was no longer sufficient to make these meetings profitable. The Civil War had been a great disturber of traditions

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and an in-bringer of new customs. There is nothing further recorded, except the voting to raise a certain part of the expense of the parish by taxation, until 1873, when the records say: "In Parish Meeting October 13, 1873; 1st Made choice of Rev. E. H. Sears as Moderator. 2d Voted to build a Chapel. Made choice of the following persons as a Building Committee," (names given) "3rd Article was passed over. Voted to adjourn." The chapel thus summarily voted is the one now in use and is all that remains of the buildings occupied during Doctor Sears's preaching. It was built for Sunday school and parish work, and that there might be provided a place for evening services, the old church having been imperfectly furnished for lighting. Here again the temper of the parish as to debt was shown. The money was provided for the erection of the chapel before it was undertaken and the committee was enabled to report that it had done all that it had been created to do and that money remained in its hands. In 1875, the parish voted under certain conditions to allow a town clock to be placed within and upon its meeting house. There are no other parish records during Doctor Sears's ministry.

The church records show that there was no council at the installation of Doctor Sears; that Doctor Field welcomed the pastor elect to his duties in an address introductory to the Sunday morning service May 28, 1865, and that this was followed by a discourse from the pastor elect setting forth the idea of the Gospel Ministry and the reciprocal duties of minister and people. In December, of the second year of Doctor Sears's ministry, a meeting was held

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at the pastor's house for the consideration of various matters pertaining to the organization of the church, and committees were appointed to make a list of the actual living members of the church and to revise the church covenant. A committee reported at a meeting held in June, 1867, that there were thirty-six members of the church then living who had been admitted before Doctor Sears's pastorate. Of these thirty-six not more than three are now resident in the parish and but few more are alive. Thirty were afterward added to the church during Doctor Sears's services here and twelve received by letter.

The covenant which was prepared and presented by the committee appointed for this purpose again was in the line of further freedom. The declaration of faith is further reduced in extent and centred on a few fundamental doctrines and the covenant is to become a faithful disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. As a fuller declaration of faith was desired by the pastor, that of the Channing Church of Newton was adopted and ordered printed with the covenant.

In advancing the reorganization of the church, which Doctor Sears had very much at heart, the matter of the appointment of deacons was taken up in the autumn of 1874. Deacon Marshall Hews having resigned office on account of advanced age, it became necessary to fill his place. There seems to have been a feeling of aversion to the name of deacon with some of the members of the church, but it was voted to retain the name and office. When, however, a choice was made no one elected would accept the office with the name. Two church wardens were then elected for a year. But a new name

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could not thus summarily be applied to the officers of so ancient a church and I believe it has been little used. Four men and three women were also chosen as an executive committee of the church who were to do the work now assigned to the hospitality committee. Thus did Doctor Sears seek to revive the life of the church by providing new means for manifesting its energies.

In the autumn of 1867, the church and the parish united in adopting an answer (prepared by the pastor) to the request of the American Unitarian Association for a contribution, in which they declined to contribute. The action of the Association in those days was not in accord with the conservative position of Doctor Sears and this church. It approves itself to a wider constituency in these times of ours.

There are careful records, kept during Doctor Sears's administration, of the delegates sent to ordinations and installations and to the local and general conferences. Doctor Sears had taken a deep interest and had been active in the creation of local conferences as well as in the organization of the general conference, believing that much good would come from bringing the churches out of their individual isolation into a fuller knowledge of each other's thought; a deeper sympathy with each other's feelings; and more united action; and this church was naturally in harmony with him in the matter and the attendance at these conferences was good.

The movements in this parish during the ministry of Doctor Sears may be summarized as these; the ancient ways of parish life were accepted, and reformed only in such matters as seemed necessary; a

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new chapel was built and furnished, giving the parish a much needed instrument for its various activities; the financial condition of the parish, as ever sound and conservative, conformed slowly to the greatly increased wealth of its members. That is, while Doctor Sears was here, this parish, as from the first, grew slowly, and without cutting itself off from a most honorable past was never out of harmony with the demands and responsibilities of a living present.

As regards the church Doctor Sears sought to put new life into its ancient forms, and to retain it as a vigorous heart in the vigorous body of the parish. In so far as was required by the changed thought and feeling of its members he wished to change its organization, and when no deacons could be secured, devised the office of church warden. He also obtained from the church the election of an executive committee. These efforts for renewing the church's life were greatly successful, but this life did not flow freely in the new channels provided, for he worked against the continuous tendency of this church, which was to free itself more and more from organization and outward work, and to entrust all such doings to the parish. In the gradual growth from a conception of the church as the ruler of men's lives throughout the whole range of their activities, to a conception of it as a free body voluntarily united for spiritual communion and worship, no new measures by which outward action was to be achieved by the church could endure, and all the duties of the executive committee of the church were soon delegated to the parish. Turning to the intellectual and spiritual side of the church Doctor

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Sears must have felt some discord between its statement of faith with the aims it sought, its old covenant, and the beliefs and feelings of the church members he found here on his settlement, and therefore he sought to make its faith more real and its covenant more true, by giving it a new manifestation better in accord with the new thought and disposition. It is most interesting to notice how much more real and living is this new covenant than any of the old ones. Religion in this church and parish has ever become more and more one with life, and not something over against and in opposition to it, and the evidence of this is very easily read in these changes brought about during the pastorate of Doctor Sears.

And yet these outward movements are most feeble illustrations of the inward life of this parish. Under the ministry of such a devout, thoughtful, and conscientious minister as Doctor Sears, this parish must have been in accord with all the best life of the town. It must have cast its influence on the right side through that critical period of our national life when the South was being reconstructed. It must have been in harmony with the most enlightened efforts for the in-bringing of all true reforms and the advance of liberty and devotion. There was in it consecration, and self-denial, and loyalty to truth, and aspiration after yet holier living for its own members and for the world. As we reckon what has been recorded of Doctor Sears's ministry, we must not forget the spiritual life which sprang up wherever he was, and which, though not to be found in the parish or the church books, was not less certainly here.

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The call given June 25, 1876, to the Reverend Francis Bickford Hornbrooke was quite in accord with the teaching and the temper of Doctor Sears. Mr. Hornbrooke was at that time the minister of an Orthodox church in Connecticut, and the call was given without any condition as to his theological position. Mr. Hornbrooke wrote in his letter of acceptance: "The ideal Christian church has always seemed to me to be that in which the headship of Christ should be the only necessary postulate while all else should be left to the fullest and freest discussion." While it is certainly true that this very statement of the undogmatic nature of Mr. Hornbrooke's thought proved that he could be at home only in a Unitarian church, this unanimous call to a minister acceptably preaching to an Orthodox church also illustrates the emphasis which this parish had come to lay on life and character as against belief. It is to be noticed further as to this call, that while in old days this church, as other Massachusetts churches, called the minister and this was concurred in by the parish, in this case it is the parish that makes the call, and for the first time there is no record of any action of the church. From this date onward I find no meetings of the church to call, or concur in the settlement of a pastor.

The events of our national and of our town life which are included in the three years which Mr. Hornbrooke spent here are too recent to need recalling. There is little recorded of the action of the parish. His installation is given with some detail, and at the regular parish meeting in the spring of the following year a committee was appointed to solicit money to build a parsonage, and by June

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it had sufficient to warrant beginning the house which now belongs to the parish. In the fall this parsonage was completed and the treasurer was directed to pay the balance due above what had been subscribed. A list is given of the names of the subscribers, and the amount of their subscriptions, which indicates that much the larger portion of the funds needed for the parsonage had been raised in this manner. In old days it would have been raised by taxation, and up to this time a portion of the money needed for the current expenses of the parish had been raised by a tax levied by assessors elected each year. But just as this parish had ever tended to let a man believe as he would, so also it had been inclined to let him give what he would; to be free in purse as in mind. Gradually the expenses of the parish were more and more raised by voluntary gifts. In 1879, the next year but one after the building of the parsonage, the parish voted to reorganize. A set of by-laws was adopted which did away with assessors, and the whole expenditure of the parish was thrown upon the generosity of its members. Such a method would have seemed impossible to our ancestors, but certainly it is in line with the growth of the parish toward freedom. We of this church and parish are continuous witnesses of the uselessness of constraint. We allow our members to believe what they can and they are not of more depraved temper nor wicked conduct than their neighbors. We allow each man to give what he is willing and there is less friction and uncertainty than when a tax, which could be collected by law, was levied upon every member of the parish. We are free men in politics and in religion,

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and government does not disappear nor grow more lax, nor does worship cease, nor spiritual life decay. This parish having by steady growth freed itself from many constraints bears evidence of their uselessness to living progressive men. Under Mr. Hornbrooke's ministry the parish adopted the voluntary system and thus advanced freedom in financial affairs.

After Mr. Hornbrooke's ministry of three years came that of Mr. Hobart Clark of one. At the council at his ordination took place a discussion which shows that the change which we have been noticing in this parish was going on in others. The Reverend E. C. Guild inquired as to the usage at that time prevailing in regard to the formation of councils, whether it was understood among us that councils are no longer of churches, but of parishes, and it appeared that while usage was still divided, the majority looked to the parish for the appointment of delegates to councils, only two of the delegates then present having been appointed by a church, the rest by parishes, except one who had been appointed by a standing committee. What we have been observing as to this parish was thus taking place in others.

In 1880, was elected the first board of officers under the by-laws adopted a year before, and in 1881, in accord with these by-laws a report was made by the standing committee of the financial condition and prospects of the parish. The fund of fifteen hundred dollars begun by the members of the parish in 1830, had now increased to about four thousand dollars. The expenditures which were then eight hundred dollars had risen to nearly fif-

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teen hundred dollars. This amount, once the product of taxation, was now freely given. The property of the parish had been largely added to and in all ways was in a prosperous condition. The following year Mr. Clark resigned.

There are records of marriages of funerals and of baptisms during Mr. Hornbrooke's and Mr. Clark's ministry, but I have found no records of a meeting of the church. The parish had assumed so much of the work that the church had once done that there was now little need of meetings of the church, and except in the communion service its members do not appear to have come together under Mr. Hornbrooke or Mr. Clark.

I have thus followed the records of this parish, this church, from their beginning to the time of my own settlement here. I have tried to illustrate its growth by showing the changes that have taken place in its thought, its feeling, its aims. The creeds that seemed final statements of absolute truth to those that first gathered here have been again and again moulded to suit the expanding needs of its members. Once no one could vote in this Commonwealth even as to civic and secular interests, such as the repairs of roads, or the support of the poor, or the aid of schools, who had not given entire assent to the theology of the Westminster Catechism; now no doctrinal test is required even of those who are in full membership in this church. Once all the members of this portion of the established church must think alike under penalty of banishment, or death even; now we do not even inquire what our neighbor believes and we expect the freedom for ourselves that we give others. From

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limited and narrow thought to that which is much more free, this parish, this church has grown in the period we have been considering. And it is much the same as regards feeling. When this church was first gathered there had already been brought about a great change in the feeling as to heretics from that which had prevailed in the earliest days of this Commonwealth. It was in 1660, that Mary Dyer was put to death for being a Quaker, and some of the original members of the church that Mr. Williams gathered here may have been witnesses of her execution; but that day had passed before Mr. Williams settled here and the unorthodox were no longer in fear that the death penalty for heresy would be put in force. But they were yet suffering under severe penalties and might not without great danger enjoy any worship according to their own way of thinking. There are few records of how the change came about, but the feeling of this parish was ever growing sweeter and more tolerant. The *History of the First Baptist Church in Weston* says that no record exists of any one designated as a Baptist living in Weston earlier than 1772. In 1783, there were enough Baptists and with sufficient courage to protest against the settlement of Dr. Kendal, and a few years later they had a meeting house in the south part of the town. The Revolution had broadened men's minds and enlarged their hearts as regards religion as well as politics. Those that had been persecuted in 1660, had gained the right not only to live but to worship as they desired in a little over a hundred years. There was in no one's heart the desire to execute or to banish them. And what the members of this church

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would no longer do to men's bodies they learned in due time to concede as to their souls. There are no records to show the development of that kindness which will not believe that a human soul can be condemned to suffer eternally for any finite sin; but from confidence that only the elect can be saved to certainty that no soul can suffer more than shall be for its own purification and redemption this church has come, and its feeling as regards men's souls as well as their bodies has been wholly reversed. And I have sought to trace the change of aim from that which made the church sovereign in all matters, secular as well as spiritual, to that which confines the church to matters of spiritual life alone. In fact these changes of thought and feeling may be considered as only illustrations of this change in aim. From the church here has been taken away the care of all secular affairs and with it now is only responsibility for the life of the soul. Thus far has this church, this parish, moved in the years of its existence.

I have called this change a growth. In many ways it surely is. Certainly our thought is more clear, more in accord with what is known of life, more real, more right-wise than that of our fathers. Certainly our feelings are nobler, purer, less selfish, more nearly related with the divine than were theirs. Certainly the affairs of secular life are better administered by the town and the parish than they ever were by the church. But is the spiritual life of our members better than that of our fathers? Are we more consecrated to the truth which we more clearly discern? Do we manifest more actively the kindlier feelings which now are ours? Are we as

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devoted to the new aims we have adopted? Is the spiritual life within us as commanding and as much regarded as with them? These are the questions which we need to ask ourselves. May we so seek to answer them, each of us, that there may be no doubt that this is not only a law abiding, progressive and benevolent parish, but further, a church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

The ADDRESSES



REVEREND FRANCIS BICKFORD HORNBROOKE.

THE INFLUENCE OF PURITANISM ON OUR NATIONAL LIFE

BY HONORABLE CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS

I HAVE been invited to be present, on this, one of those occasions always so peculiarly interesting to me, when a congregation with two centuries of existence behind it meets to celebrate its anniversary; and I am to speak to you on "The Influence of Puritanism on our National Life." It is hardly necessary for me to say that this is a very considerable theme; and where, as now, no less than four others are expected to say something to you, on as many topics, a due regard for considerations other than the subject should influence the length of the discourse. Nevertheless, I have a traditional feeling that, when one addresses an audience from a pulpit, it is proper to begin with a text; so I shall now take, as the text for what I am to say, Exodus xx. 12, the familiar commandment:

"Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

Also another text, from Jeremiah xxxi. 29:

"The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge."

It would be easy for me to enter upon a discourse of the conventional kind on this well-worn, this now somewhat threadbare subject of Puritanism, and its effect upon our national life. I propose to do

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nothing of the sort, but to approach my theme from an entirely different point of view, illustrating what I have to say by an object lesson drawn from those events of the day which at this moment are uppermost in the minds of all. For the first time in the life of an entire generation, we are now engaged in war; no longer a strife like that with which some of us were familiar in our younger days, but purely what is known as a foreign war. We are engaged in a foreign war with that nation from which one half of the two American continents has been peopled. Two civilizations, we may say, to-day confront each other upon the battle-field; the trans-Atlantic civilizations of the Spanish-American and the Anglo-American races. And I can best illustrate what I have to say as to the effect of Puritanism upon national life by drawing the contrast, which will at once suggest itself to you, between the attributes of the two peoples—the two races, we might call them—who are thus brought in sharp contrast.

We see at once that the chief distinction between the two is that the Anglo-American upon this continent draws his inspiration from Puritanism, while the Spanish-American draws his inspiration from clericism. But, then, what is Puritanism? We hear, we have always heard, much talk about it; it has become a commonplace, a sort of designation conveying no very clear idea to the minds of most. Puritanism is commonly associated in our minds with New England and with the Commonwealth of England, with Cromwell, Milton, and Vane on the other side of the Atlantic, and here in Massachusetts with Winthrop and Saltonstall, Cotton, Sewall, and the Mathers. That is altogether too narrow a view

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of Puritanism. Puritanism was not confined to either old or New England; it was not even peculiar to the English-speaking race. Puritanism was in its time a phase of development; it was the protest of growing man against clericism, a yet earlier phase of growth. It appeared contemporaneously, and perhaps in a higher type, in Holland; it was to be found in Scotland; it made itself potently felt in France and in Germany. Puritanism, known as Lutheranism in Germany, was represented by the Huguenots in France; in Holland it was the Reformed Church of the Low Countries; in Scotland those of the faith were Presbyterians and Covenanters; in Switzerland, Calvinists; in England they were nicknamed Puritans; everywhere they were the rigid, intensely moral and severe protestants against clericism.

Of course, it goes without saying that no protest of that sort, involving as it did a life-and-death struggle extending through centuries, could possibly have been sustained, had not those concerned in it been men and women of the deepest possible conviction, beings who were prepared to face any result for what they believed to be true and right.

Thus, when we speak of Puritanism, we have a very vague idea of what the Puritanism even of New England meant. I presume that the period when this church of yours in Weston was subject to what would be known as the Puritan influence, was the period when Mr. Woodward and Doctor Kendal preached here, between 1750 and 1815. In the latter year the old Puritan teaching passed forever out of this church, as it did out of so many of our churches in New England, and was succeeded by what is properly known as "Channing Unitarianism"; a wider,

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a more liberal, I may be permitted to add, a far more Christian creed. Now, when we speak of Puritanism, nine persons out of ten have a vague idea of something antique and stern but, withal, very sincere and good; and this vague idea is combined in the mind of the average person with an impression of our own degeneracy, a modern falling away from the strict and lofty faith of the fathers; an impression which assumes, in a matter-of-course way, that, if we could but revive that ancient religion and elevate ourselves to its old tenets, our world would be better and wiser and purer than it is. Such study as I have given to history leads me to no such conclusion. On the contrary, Puritanism, like most passing phases of development in which men are nerved to the point necessary to enable them to deal with a great emergency—and that anti-clerical protest was a great emergency, being nothing less than a revolt against the most perfect and powerful system for the suppression of human thought ever devised—men who are nerved, I say, for such work as this, need to be made of stuff so stern that it has in it many unlovely qualities.

So I propose to take advantage of this occasion to give you a few specimens of the strong, orthodox doctrine preached from New England pulpits a century and a half ago, specimens in no way different from those ordinarily preached from those pulpits in Puritan times. I doubt if I can improve the occasion more usefully than by thus illustrating the doctrinal terrorism which, through a century and a half, was exercised in Massachusetts. I have here a volume of the sermons of the greatest theologian America ever produced. I am going to read passages

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from it as showing the discipline then brought to bear upon a Puritan congregation in New England. The preacher is speaking of the Hereafter, that Hereafter infinitely more of a mystery to us now than to him then:

“Let no impenitent sinner flatter himself vainly and foolishly. If it were indeed only a man, a being of like impotency and mutability with themselves, who had undertaken to deal with them, they might, perhaps, with some reason flatter themselves that they should after their death find some means to avoid the threatened punishment. But since an omniscient, omnipotent, immutable God hath undertaken it, vain are all such hopes. . . . There is no hope of escaping without notice when they leave the body. There is no hope that God, by reason of the multiplicity of affairs which he hath to mind, will happen to overlook them and not to notice them when they come to die; and so their souls will slip away privately and hide themselves in some secret corner, and so escape divine vengeance. There is no hope that they shall be missed in a crowd at the day of judgment, and that they can have opportunity to hide themselves in some cave or den of the mountains or in any secret hole of the earth; and that while so doing they will not be minded by reason of the many things which will be the objects of attention on that day. Neither is there any hope that they will be able to crowd themselves in among a multitude of the saints at the right hand of the judge, and so go to heaven undiscovered. Nor is there any hope that God will alter his mind, or that he will repent what he hath said; for he is not the son of man that he should repent.

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He said, and shall not he do it? Hath he spoken, and shall not make it good? Or did God ever undertake to do anything and fail? . . . Nor will they ever be able to make their escape. They will find no means to break prison and flee in hell. They will be held in chains of darkness for ever and ever. Malefactors have often found means to break prison and escape the hands of civil justice; but none ever escaped out of the prison of hell, which is God's prison. It is beyond any finite power or the united strength of all wicked men and devils to unlock and break down the door of that prison. Christ hath the key of hell; 'he shuts and no man opens.'

“Nor will they ever be able to find anything to relieve them in hell. They will never find any resting place there; any place of respite, any secret corner which will be cooler than the rest, where they may have a little respite, a small abatement of the extremity of their torment. They never will be able to find any cool stream or fountain in any part of that world of torment; no, nor so much as a drop of water to cool their tongues. They will find no company to give them any comfort, nor to do them the least good. They will find no place where they can remain, and rest, and take breath for one minute; for they will be tormented with fire and brimstone, and will have no rest, day or night, for ever and ever. . . . To help your conception, imagine yourself to be cast into a fiery oven, all of a glowing heat, or into the midst of a glowing brick-kiln, or of a great furnace, where your pain would be as much greater than that occasioned by accidentally touching a coal of fire, as the heat

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is greater. Imagine also that your body were to be there for a quarter of an hour, full of fire, as full within and without as the bright coal of fire, all the while full of quick sense; what horror would you feel at the entrance of such a furnace? And how long would that quarter of an hour seem to you? If it were to be measured by a glass, how long would the glass seem to be running? And after you had endured it for one minute, how overbearing would it be to you to think that you had it to endure the other fourteen?

“But what would be the effect on your soul, if you knew you must be there enduring that torment to the full for twenty-four hours? And how much greater would be the effect, if you knew you must endure it for a whole year; and how vastly greater still, if you knew you must endure it for a thousand years? O then, how would your heart sink, if you thought, if you knew, that you must bear it forever and ever? That there would be no end? That after millions of millions of ages, your torment would be no nearer to an end, than ever it was; and that you never, never should be delivered?”

That was the sort of doctrine on which they were fed in those Puritan days to which we look back, and from which we are accustomed to think that, on the whole, we have degenerated. I hardly so regard it. I cannot believe that to-day any father here, or any mother, who found a servant or a nurse-maid terrifying a little child with such pictures of horror, would tolerate that servant or nurse-maid for an instant. I do not believe that what is bad for a little child is good for grown persons. It was in that terrorism New England was brought up; it is

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from that terrorism that New England has, since the days of Channing, been emancipated. It has been a blessed deliverance.

But there is another side to Puritanism. I have spoken hitherto only of its doctrinal side; but there was a better aspect of Puritanism which went deeper, went into the bone and sinew of our race. We escaped from, or outgrew, its doctrines in due time; but the other side has abided with us. The disciplinary side of Puritanism we have retained, and it has been our saving grace. In this disciplinary side, three things were vital and important. These were; family discipline and obedience in the first place; in the second place, an individual sense of moral obligation—of the duty a man owed to himself, to what might be called self-respect—affecting, necessarily, his obligations to others; and, third, that element of public spirit, which can only grow up in a community accustomed to individuality and the forms of freedom. We have emancipated ourselves largely from the more extreme tenets of Calvinism; we have, with more doubtful results, emancipated ourselves in great degree from that domestic discipline which was so strong a feature in Puritanism. Whether we have in any degree lost the sense of personal obligation and self-respect, I am not prepared to say; but my own judgment would be that the tendency in that respect is greater now than heretofore. As for patriotism, or public spirit, so distinguishing a feature of Puritan times in New England, I do not believe we have in any way diminished it. On the contrary, I am inclined to think that it burns stronger to-day than ever before.

To develop this subject to its full extent would

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need hours. I have merely stated the characteristics of New England Puritanism; they were also the characteristics of the Huguenots of France; of the Lutheran Church of Holland and Germany; of the Calvinists of Switzerland. And wherever they were found, whether here, or among the Irish Presbyterians of North Carolina, or among the French Huguenots of South Carolina, or the Dutch Lutherans of New York, they have permeated the continent. And these influences have made the race of to-day; they have made up what we are in this conflict.

I now come to the second text, that from Jeremiah: "The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge." I have referred to the doctrines which were preached here in New England for two centuries. But, while our fathers preached hell-fire, the Spaniards, unfortunately, practised it. And the position of affairs in the struggle between ourselves and the government of Spain grows logically and naturally out of what was done in this way two and three centuries ago.

Between 1520, and 1550, Charles V., both Emperor of Germany and King of Spain, as he then was, published a series of laws, or edicts, to the effect that all those convicted of heresy should be beheaded, or burned, or buried alive. The penalties were thus various to meet the circumstances of each case; but capital punishment was always to be inflicted on the man who bought what was known as an heretical book, or sold it, or even copied it for his own use. Only a few days before his death, Charles signed a codicil to his will, recommending that no favor should ever be shown to heretics, and

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that care should be taken to uphold the Inquisition as the best means of accomplishing so praiseworthy an end. In Spain the Reformation—that is, the spirit of Puritanism, the protest against clericism—after a short struggle died completely away; in about ten years from its first appearance the last vestige of it vanished. The Dutch wished to adopt the reformed doctrine: therefore Philip, Charles's son, maintained against them a war of extermination which lasted thirty years, and which he continued till his death, for he was resolved utterly to extirpate the new creed. His command to Alva was that every heretic who refused to recant should be burned; if he did recant some indulgence was granted; but, having once been tainted, he must die; instead of being burned, therefore, he was to be beheaded. Eighty thousand persons in Holland and Flanders suffered death for that cause. This was the Puritan's "Hereafter" made present.

In 1602, at the very time when Puritanism began to make itself felt as the dominating force in Great Britain, a remnant of the Moors still survived in Spain. Known as Moriscos, they were the most industrious, the most frugal, the most peaceable portion of the population. It was determined by the clericists that they should be driven from the country. The Archbishop of Valencia thought children under seven years of age need not share in the general banishment; but might, without danger to the faith, be separated from their parents and kept in Spain. To this the Archbishop of Toledo strongly objected; he was unwilling, he said, to run the risk that pure Christian blood might by any chance be polluted with infidelity; and he declared that, rather

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than leave one unbeliever to corrupt the land, he would have all, men, women and children, at once put to the sword. That they should all be slain instead of banished was the desire of a powerful party in the church, who thought such a signal punishment would work good by striking terror into the heart of the nation. Bleda, a celebrated Dominican preacher, wished this to be done, and to be done thoroughly. He said that, for the sake of example, every Morisco in Spain should have his throat cut; because it was impossible to tell which of them were Christians at heart, and it was enough to leave the matter to God, who knew his own, and would reward in the next world those who were really Catholics. A new era was then to be inaugurated, an era in which Spain, purged of her heresy, was to be at rest, and men living in safety were to sleep under the shade of their own vineyards, sow their gardens in peace, and eat of the fruit of the trees they had planted. To this end, about one million of the most industrious inhabitants of Spain were, at about the time Massachusetts was settled, hunted out like noxious animals, and under circumstances of indescribable barbarity. Of 140,000 human beings of all ages and both sexes, then deported in a single body,—one of many such bodies—it is said that, in the space of a few months only, more than two-thirds suffered death in its most dreaded forms.

Thus, once more, the hell which the Puritan clergy preached, the priesthood of Spain practised. The modern theory of evolution, when not interfered with, leads, it is said, inevitably to a survival of the fittest; those intellectually and physically the most vigorous and alert. The end and aim of clericism

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was the exact reverse of this. Through the agency of the Inquisition, it was sought persistently to weed out, extirpate, and forever destroy whatever in the human progeny was intellectually alert, questioning or subversive of dogma. And in Spain it did its work thoroughly. Hence existing conditions.

Thus to-day Spain and this country are living object lessons upon the results of two systems. On the one hand, the effect of Puritanism; on the other the effect of the reverse of Puritanism, clericism. I do not think it is necessary to say more. The most any discourse can lead to is an object lesson; and that object lesson is shown you to-day more forcibly, more vividly, more effectively, by events going on before our eyes than by any discourse, no matter how ingenious, how eloquent, or how labored. Those opposed to us in the struggle now on foot, are simply illustrating the truth, eternal as immutable, expressed in the words of Jeremiah: "The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge;" and also in those other biblical words: "Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generations." For, be assured, there is no crime that, in due process of time and in ways often past finding out, is not avenged either upon the man who commits it or upon his descendants. The mill of God grinds slowly, but it grinds uncommon fine.

Thus, also, is it seen what a great, what an infinite difference there may be between preaching and practice. Right here, under the sway of doctrinal Puritanism, as I have said, in the meeting house which preceded this, the listener was terrified by the threat of hell-fire; but while he had the blaze

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of it continually before his theological eyes, and the smell of its sulphur in his moral nostrils, yet so far as the actual life of the community was concerned, hell-fire was a theory only, and a threat; while the principles of discipline, freedom, self-respect and liberty were practised. This was Puritanism; such was its influence on national life; and, from whatever point we regard it we see in every feature and aspect of our political existence of to-day, the effects of the Puritanism of two hundred and fifty years ago. Therefore, I close these few words upon a great theme with another text of scripture, of like tenor to that with which I began. It is from the gospel according to St. John iv. 37, as true to-day of Spain as it is of the United States:

“And herein is that saying true, One soweth and another reapeth. I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labor; other men labored, and ye are entered into their labors.”

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CONGREGATIONAL POLITY

BY REVEREND JAMES EELLS

IT is with extreme diffidence that I try to say anything upon a subject which has been so ably exploited by experts, and to such scholarly length. But the gratifying privilege of speaking at all on this most interesting and significant occasion emboldens me to attempt even the impossible.

My attention was fascinated by the word "Development"; it is so nearly synonymous with the term "evolution"; that trade-mark of much of cheap jugglery, though also the expression of the century's greatest thought. Professor Le Conte's definition furnishes the outline of my thought. He said: "Evolution is a continuous, progressive change, according to certain laws, by means of resident forces." Surely that is the story of "The Development of Congregational Polity," and may I speak to you a little while, using this definition as a text?

First, a change. In seeking the simple form from which to trace our modern system, it will not be necessary for us to go back to the protoplasmic germ of New Testament church organization, nor to seek the living among the dead of the Middle Ages. Let us, instead, go with the traveller to a little town in old England, with an eye for the things of to-day. 'Tis a commonplace village, rather



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disheartening to the seeker of romance. The loungers on the streets are "stolid, heavy people, typical north countrymen, with no faintest lingering tradition among them of that which we seek. The narrow pursuits of the ploughman and the reaper, the flat, naked, depressing landscape, the absence of historic response from the inhabitants beset us with the old scepticism about the coming of anything good out of this Nazareth." But this simple town is old Scrooby; and the Pilgrims "concerning whom poems have been written, and in whose honor orations without number have been made, were just such common country-folks as these, trudging through wheat-fields and along the clay highways in the days of Elizabeth and James. They were just such men as these, and they were not. They were such men as these would be if vivified by a great enthusiasm." We may not belittle the brave and stubborn loyalty to an idea, when it produces such steadfast courage as that of these men who lived long ago in this little hamlet and worshipped in the severe little church yonder, with its walls of stone three feet thick.

The ancient chronicler, Leland, has it that: "In the meane townlet of Scrooby, I marked two things: the parish-church, not big but very well builded; the second, was a great manor-place, standing within a moat, and longing to the Archbishop of York." The significance of this observation for us is this: "In that manor-place, about 50 years after Leland saw it, lived Elder Brewster, and in that little parish-church preached John Robinson." Can anyone doubt that here we are peering into the cradle of one of earth's greatest religious movements! In

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that manor-house the Protestant Non-conformists gathered to worship in simplicity and in truth. Brewster and "many more of those times begane to looke further into things," wrote Bradford; and when men begin to "looke further into things," God's clock is about to strike a new hour. All-day meetings were held in and about the old manor, meetings given to prayer, and to the speaking of things divine; and "here the Separatist rustics of Scrooby were moulded for suffering and endeavor." It was in 1606, that these people formed their fully organized Separatist church. The form of their organization was not original with them, however.

Thirty years before, Robert Browne had felt and taught that no true Christian could stay in the corrupt Church of England. He saw no hope of reform from the civil power; he denied, in fact, the authority of prince and magistrate in ecclesiastical affairs, and further declared that any company of believers who separated from the Established Church, formed of themselves a true church, competent to govern themselves according to their own decisions. The officers of such a church were, as deduced from the New Testament, a pastor, a teacher of doctrine, one or more elders, one or more deacons, and one or more widows. He completed his system by declaring that the relations between the churches should be sisterly, admitting of no control, but "inviting into mutuall love and kindnesse in speech and deed." But the times were not ripe for such splendid theorizing, although it was evidently not God's design that the world should forget it. Robert Browne died in darkness. His name was smothered by his proper friends, and jeered by his

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enemies. But his years of health and vigor and influence were devoted to the enunciation of those principles which were later to be developed by the genius and masterly ability of Barrowe. Henry Barrowe was a man of exceptional parts. He had been a courtier, had lived a courtier's gay and wild life. A chance sermon changed the whole course of his life. He became ardently religious, accepted the principles of the Separatists (as Browne's followers had come to be called) rejected all liturgies as "idolatrous, superstitious, and Popish," and declared that the governors and the polity of the English Church were un-Christian. Barrowe made a call, one fair day, upon his friend John Greenwood, who was confined in the Clink Prison for his Separatist opinions, and once inside the walls, the jailer would not release him! These two men were confined together for more than five years, and here they wrote tracts and booklets, defending their simple faith. But it was in pain, and sorrow and torment. Sheets of paper, one or two at a time, were smuggled in to them by their friends, and taken away when written upon. These sheets were carried to Holland, their contents were secretly printed, and brought back to England, where they were scattered to do their missionary work. One of these tracts, titled "A True Description of the Church," etc., became probably the standard of church polity for those who sympathized with the new movement, and it did not differ widely from the teaching of Browne, except that it placed the government of the church in the hands of the eldership, instead of leaving it where Browne thought it should be, in the hands of the whole brotherhood.

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It was a change toward a modified form of representative government rather than the insisting upon a pure democracy. This form of polity gave Elder Brewster his title, and was that which John Robinson filled so full of life at Scrooby, and at Leyden. But John Robinson was a man too large to be confined to any system, he believed too heartily in progression for that, and he admitted many to the communion whom Browne, or even Barrowe, would have kept away, as members of un-Christian churches because not formed upon their plan. Under Robinson's teaching the Pilgrims had already passed into what may be called a semi-separatism, and were ready soon to be guided by such minds as those of Cotton, Hooker, Davenport, and Mather. During the years following the debarking of the Pilgrim "Church of the Mayflower," there arose Saybrook Synods, and Cambridge Platforms, and Halfway Covenants, and various other sortings of opinions, but the polity of the church has been so entangled with questions of belief, so torn and rent by discussion and dissension, that it is no easy task to hold one's self rigidly and clearly to outlining a particular form of government. Congregationalism, too, as John Cotton baptized the new-born system, has coquetted desperately with the aristocratic Presbyterianism, as the stories of the old romancers tell of the rural maid and the lover of high degree. But such stories rarely turned out well, there was always some slight, or discontent, or worse as the result of such behavior, and the romance of church history furnishes no better moral. The "one or two elders" of Browne's polity developed into the controlling eldership of Barrowe's system; and this was so bewitchingly tempting that

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in 1801, the Presbyterian Church proposed a plan of union, which worked so well (for the Presbyterians, at least) that in the brief space of fifty years, "over 2,000 churches, which were in origin and usage Congregational, were transformed into Presbyterian churches." Then the plan of union was set aside, and the maid and the prince took separate paths. But the whilom intimacy taught good lessons to each. The Presbyterians learned a new meaning to be given to the cry "the voice of the people is the voice of God;" while the Congregationalists learned the better efficiency of organization, and the value of delegated work. Our custom of Standing Committees is doubtless the survival of Barrowe's eldership idea, the democracy of Congregationalism as modified by contact with Presbyterian aristocracy.

One De Rasières, merchant at Fort Amsterdam, wrote a letter in 1627, describing a visit to Plymouth, which gives a glimpse of the meeting house, and its congregation. He writes: "Upon the hill they have a large square house, with a flat roof, made of thick-sawn planks, stayed with oak beams, upon the top of which they have six cannons, which shoot iron balls of four or five pounds, and command the surrounding country. The lower part they use for their church, where they preach on Sunday and the usual holidays. They assemble by beat of drums, each with his musket, in front of Capt. Myles Standish's door; they have their cloaks on, and place themselves in order three abreast, and are led by a sergeant without beat of drum. Behind comes the governor, Wm. Bradford, in a long robe; beside him on the right hand comes the preacher, with his cloak on, and on the left the captain, with his side-

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arms and cloak on, and with a small cane in his hand; and so they march in good order and each sets his arms down near him." And from Winthrop's *Journal* we may learn that "on the Lord's Day there was a sacrament, which they did partake in; and in the afternoon Mr. Roger Williams (according to their custom) propounded a question, to which the pastor spake briefly; then Mr. Williams prophesied; and after, the governour of Plimouth spake to the question; after him, Elder Brewster; then some two or three more of the congregation. Then the elder desired the governour of Massachusetts and Mr. Wilson to speak to it, which they did. When this was ended, the deacon put the congregation in mind of their duty of contribution; whereupon the governour and all the rest went down to the deacons' seat, and put into the box, and returned." Sitting here, in these surroundings this afternoon, with a smile upon our faces at these quaint services of the olden time, it is easy for us to see how great a change has come, how widely divergent have grown the practices, how stiffened into a kind of respectable formalism so much of our worship has become, in contrast to the simple familiarity of the early days, a familiarity which was always dignified, always spontaneous, and which never bred contempt.

These manifold changes have not been hap-hazard. The working of certain laws is easily discerned. First, there is the law of environment. Church government is always modified by the political government at its side. The Roman Empire produced the church form of the Roman Pontiff. Aristocratic Scotland and scholarly Geneva produced the Presbyterian type. Democratic America necessitated

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Congregationalism. As well look for grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles, as to change the operation of that law. The radical Separatists in England protested not merely against ecclesiastical oppression, but as really (though not so openly) against the abuses by the State. Cromwell, later, with his Rump Parliament, was of necessity democratic in his ideas of church management. He had to be a simple Congregationalist, because he was so little of a royalist. The early colonial church was jealous of its autonomy, just as its people looked askance at the usurped power of their governors. Even had there existed no Established Church in England with its powerful prestige, the advocates of a congregational polity of independence would have found it hard to kick against the pricks of a popular royalist sympathy. When they came to this new land, they found no political environment; no environment at all, save the arching sky, the fruitful earth, and "God's primeval temples." The pilgrims wished to remain English, but they stipulated for English freedom. They did not at first cut themselves off from the mother country, but from that mother's oppression. So, it is only natural that we should hear Higginson declaring, as his little boat swung around Land's End: "We will not say, as the Separatists were wont to say on leaving England, 'Farewell, Babylon! Farewell, Rome!' but we will say 'Farewell, dear England; farewell, the Church of God in England, and all the Christian friends there.' We do not go to New England as separatists from the Church of England, though we cannot but separate from the corruptions in it; but we go to practise the positive part of church reformation and to

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propagate the gospel in America." Noble words, those. The ecclesiastical fanaticism, and the misguided statesmanship of the London court could not meet half-way that attitude of mind; and the continual oppressions, though across the wild leagues of the Atlantic, made it easier for the colonists eventually to separate themselves, and robbed the sin of schism of its heinousness. Along with this change, in strict accord with the law of environment, their church government became more liberal, more unreservedly given into the hands of the people themselves. Eggleston writes that there was "a lack of uniformity in the early Massachusetts churches, and some clashing of opinion. Some ministers left the colony dissatisfied; one or more of the churches long retained Presbyterian forms, and some stanch believers in presbyterial government lamented long afterward that New England ecclesiastical forms were not those of the Calvinistic churches of Europe. But the net result was that Robinsonian independency became the established religion in New England." The historian might truly have added "it was a foregone conclusion that it should be so, given the environment of political independence." To see the power of this law, even against inertia, it is only necessary to glance at the present-day usages of churches which are not Congregational in polity. Episcopacy gives to the bishop theoretical right to place a minister in any pulpit of the diocese, or the right to remove him, without recognizing the wishes of the people in the church concerned. So with Presbyterianism, only this episcopal power is lodged with a presbytery, instead of with one man. But what Episcopal

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or Presbyterian Church to-day would tolerate the exercise of that jurisdiction without consultation with the members of the individual church? Ministers are called, or refused, by the direct vote of the people in all instances, the bishop or presbytery merely sanctioning the choice, and contributing the formalities necessary to the occasion. This change is due to the action of a democratic environment, which has asserted itself since these forms of government were put upon paper. In all churches, whatever may be the means of ultimate formal expression, the voice of the people virtually controls all matters fundamental.

With this law of environment is coupled its complement, the law of adaptation to environment. A church, like any organism, can live its fullest life, in its most perfect strength, only as it comes most perfectly and consciously into accord with its environment. The church must fit itself to the kind of work to be done; it must also adapt itself to the likings, and needs, and tastes of the people. If it be the choice of a simple worship, and a simpler government, or of liturgical worship and a modified representative polity, the church which quickest sees, and best meets these serious demands, in accord with its own conscience, is the church able to do the most good in the best way; is, in fact, the church of most temporary and most lasting benefit to the community about it. So in the case of societies descended from the Puritan germ, with the former hatred of æsthetics and ceremony, one may find to-day, a prayer-book, or a half-way liturgy; or one may also find the barest basilica—four walls and an aisle carpet—and both are true churches; both are

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Congregational, and both have come to what they are through the operation of this law of adaptation to environment. We cannot prescribe for one another. The Congregational polity says we need not. It says rather: "Be the best you can be, where you are." The meeting houses of our fathers are strange to us. Doubtless our churches would seem extravagant, if no worse, to them. But we have done only what they did; we have adapted our church life to the environment of this later day precisely as they fitted theirs to the conditions of their own generation.

A third law has been at work during these changes, the law of conformity to type. In every true evolution the later form contains the essentials of the earlier. It is the claiming of kinship by the changed thing with its ancestor; the power within the individual to reproduce the characteristics of its order. That is conformity to type. Through all the changes in government and usages, the Congregational polity of to-day is at one with the main principles of the earlier form. It still guards sacredly the autonomy of the individual church; still believes in a "government of the people, by the people, for the people" (if one may turn to a religious use a saying than which there are few more essentially religious); still feels capable of defining its own theology; and still delights in a fellowship of heart, through all variance of practice. It is the sublime conformity to the pattern shown it in the mount; the making of all tabernacles in accordance with the vision of perfectness glimpsed on earth's high places. It is the beautiful expression of the "diversities of gifts but the same Spirit, and differences of administrations but the same Lord, and diversities of operations but

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it is the same God which worketh all in all." And though the stately, austere, old Puritan might feel out of place in some of our services, his dislike would be attributable to the conflict forced upon him in his day, from which, happily, we are free. But the polity would be familiar to him, though the organs, and the steam heat, and the pew cushions and the responsive reading might smack of a luxury which was denied him alike by choice and by necessity.

These changes, then, have come in accordance with certain laws, and were effected by means of resident forces. I can merely suggest these to you.

First: The power of the Individual. Individuality pushed to the extreme characterized our early Congregationalists. Individuality was their *raison d'être*. Individuality of garb, of thought, of taste, of everything. And often quite objectionable, that bristling of opinion must have been. But it was a good thing. They felt an individual responsibility as to church attendance; an individual injury in all backslidings; an individual privilege in sharing the administration of the church; an individual pride and joy in its successes. Historians are inclined to bemoan this quality, thinking that it led to selfism. But in the vast majority of cases it was rescued from selfish and petty provincialism by a beautiful devotion to somewhat greater than the individual, yet which could be attained only by the individual at his best. A large part of the success of the early churches was due, I take it, to this very quality of personal, undivided loyalty of each one to the church of his choice. The Puritan tolerated nothing vicarious in his suffering or in his joy.

Second: Then there was the power of Liberty.

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True, the dissensions, and the squabbles, and schisms, and persecutions which marred and harassed the early history of the churches, do not indicate this grace in its perfection. But we are tracing a process of growth. The Puritans came hither avowedly to be free themselves. It was no part of their original intent to set up a refuge for any kind of worship other than their own, nor would they tolerate any other form. It was small, and narrow, and bigoted, of course; but the perfect law of liberty was at work all the time; and liberty asserted itself, a century later, in the constitution of the states, which expressly allowed the freedom denied at the opening of the century. So liberty came to religion as a larger freedom was manifested in the political environment. Robinson's sweet spirit of catholicity was sure to bear much fruit in the aftertime. Churches straitened by an imposed uniformity chafe against the restraint and are harmed not only in their own lives, but are made, thereby, intolerant of every other form. So, too, every church which has secured liberty for itself, sooner or later accords that liberty to others. It pertains to the essence of freedom not to be monopolized. And thus it came about that this power of liberty, so dear to their hearts and ours, was one of the "resident forces" which broadened and developed the Congregational polity.

The third of these forces is the power of Truth. He who believes in himself, and is free, insists upon realizing his best self and freest liberty in obedience to the highest truth. God's truth absolutely refuses to be smothered or confined. Invariably it emerges from its concealment. Invari-

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ably it bursts old bottles. Invariably it utters itself in some willing life, which becomes henceforth the Voice of a Wilderness-cryer. The oldest thing in the world is truth; the newest thing is its latest expression. The early Congregationalists sought God's truth only in the Bible. The present-day Congregationalists seek and find it everywhere, and are devoutly trying to live by "every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." That accounts largely for the difference between the old and the new. And this seeking is the everlasting, ever brave, ever trusting, ever filial loyalty to God, who, even to the Pilgrims' thought, had some "greater light to shine from his Word than hath yet shone forth." It is the evolution of the truth-seeking spirit through the "resident force" of the truth, in accordance with the law of adaptation to the environment furnished by the age's attitude of mind, and actual attainment.

Last of all—yet in and through every other—is the consummate power of God. God was the realest fact in all the universe to these Pilgrim ancestors of ours. Their statements of belief, their grim practices, their indomitable conscience, even their form of church government, bear witness to the present power of their God. Deity dealt with them first hand. Necessity was laid upon them, and that necessity was divine. Outer and inner life—life public and domestic—were dominated by this tremendous thought of God. And we in our day, with what we call our "larger thought of him," may trace that claim, in so far as it is justifiable, to this process of evolution; and wherein it is only arrogant and vain we must revert to the type,

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and make our changed religion mean as much to us as their cruder, simpler belief meant to them. A life all filled with God, the present force, the rightful governor of living, and of church, and of state, whose will is good, whose blessing sure; from such belief has come upon us the blessing of him "that maketh rich and addeth no sorrow." So "God fulfils himself in many ways, lest one good custom should corrupt the world."

And now, my friends of this Weston church, one moment more, and I am done. You may read the story of this process in the noble history of your own church. You may discover how the changes have come about. You may see how the men and women who have lived and toiled here, in loyalty to liberty, and truth, and God, were the "resident forces" which accomplished their part of the glorious work. The laws of development are still and eternally operative. Over in the old book of beginnings which we call Genesis we may read; "The evening and the morning were the first day" of creation. The old night of chaotic formlessness, of potentialities yet unexpressed, needed for its perfection the coming of a new day of fulfilment and orderly energy. The night of your two hundred years yields now to its completing day. The evolution of this church, of any church is not yet accomplished. All up and down the eastern horizon play the promiseful shafts of light. The evening time of darkened counsel, of doubtful experiment, of incomplete attainment, is broken in upon by the dawn of larger things, of power, and peace, and of glorifying results. And as we stand here to-day at this stage of the growth, the hearts of all of us con-

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gratulate you upon the future of promise, and the retrospect of honor; for we may look back to the men of long ago, and see why it is that though “these having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.”

THE FORWARD LOOK

BY REVEREND SAMUEL McCHORD CROTHERS

ALL that is really involved in the forward look, all that belongs to its reasonable promise, is in the backward look as well. Our hope is the child of our experience. You have sung this afternoon "Our God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come"; if there is any hope in the years to come it is because there has been help in the years that are past. That is a very foolish optimism that makes a man say: "There was no good in the past, there was no grandeur in it, nothing worthy of our respect; and now, because all this is behind us, we will look forward with hope." We look forward with hope just because, through our mistakes and misconceptions of the past, we discern certain great permanent forces, because we know that today these same forces are at work, and are not to be exhausted.

I congratulate you in this church in Weston because you have a history that is almost unique. In these two hundred years that have passed, the churches of the civilized world have been going through, not one revolution, but many revolutions of thought. The sense of freedom, the sense of equality and fraternity, have been destroying the older thoughts. The sense of the worth of the individual soul has come, with its sharp challenge to



REVEREND CHARLES FRANK RUSSELL.

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kings and priests. New discoveries have been made which have destroyed old doctrines; and out of the discoveries and out of the changes there have come those most painful experiences, the breaking in sunder of old relations, the sense of the destruction of historic continuity, the severing of the sons from their fathers' house and their fathers' faith. Here in New England, when the sharp challenge of the newer thought came, it meant, in most of our towns, the sad controversy of the breaking up of the old churches. Here in Weston this church has lived through all this, has accepted the new freedom and the larger thought, and yet has not broken with the old life, with the sense of religion as an inheritance from the fathers to the children. So the changes which elsewhere meant so much of pain and misunderstanding have gone on here naturally and beautifully. For this you are to be congratulated, and because of this natural experience of the broadening of the larger life and thought, you are, in a peculiar way, fitted to be mediators between the old and the new.

What shall I say of the outlook into the future? We all believe, all reasonable men have ever believed, that religion, in its largest sense, as the spiritual development of the individual, must survive. Because men live in this wonderful universe, because they live with the ideal element in them, religion must grow. But what men have often doubted has been the future of the church, of any church. And among those who did the most for our liberal movement were many, a generation ago, who believed that, while religion as a spiritual force and as a personal possession is destined to grow, and must

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grow, the church, the organization of religion, is destined to fade away; that the religious soul outgrows the need of it.

There was a reason why this was so. The church had been identified with priestcraft, with spiritual tyranny, with clinging to outworn traditions, and for a man to be free he must defy the authority of the church. But now we are all coming to see, I think, that it is possible for a church to exist, not as having dominion over our faith, but as a helper to our joy; that there is a place, and must be a place, for organized religion. We feel what it means to have a great organization standing, generation after generation, for every great principle, how its very existence ennobles all who look up to it, how it has a strange power over us, over our imagination and over our emotion and over our loyalty. Who can define a nation? Who can tell why it is that, when it calls, men are eager in their response; how a youth does not question, but gives all, saying: "Here am I, send me! Send me into danger, send me into death, because I belong to this great body out of which I was born." This love of the nation is something more than the love of abstract justice or abstract principles; the man who loves America means something more than: "I believe in the Declaration of Independence, I believe in the principles of the Constitution." He means, not only this, but: "I believe in the people who on this continent have been living under these laws and are striving for their greater perfection. I believe in my fellow-citizens. I believe in this entity the Nation." In just such a way as that, I think, there is need of a church, never so much need, never so much con-

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sciousness of need, as in these days of difficulty and danger. There is need of some institution which shall stand, age after age, in a community for the very largest things, the very highest truths, the most humane relations. And do you know any institution so large in its idea, so compelling in its principles, as the church? Narrow it may be in its beginnings and in many of its forms, tyrannical it may have been in the past, but having within it a principle of growth.

What has been accomplished in the last two hundred years has been the bringing into the church, not by way of an apology, but as an abiding principle and law, of the idea of individual freedom. The church, you say, has no longer any right to intrude into what belongs to the private domain. It is not an institution to do your thinking for you, an external conscience to which you may appeal. All those things which belonged to the church as an external authority are being swept away. What remains?

Just the most beautiful, the most touching, the most compelling element in it; that which has always been its life and soul; that which in perfect freedom we may give ourselves unto: the thought of the church as a human brotherhood, a brotherhood of those who are conscious of common need, common desires, common capacities; the brotherhood of those who feel themselves in God's presence, under his law, and privileged to do his work. In a peculiar way, in this parish, this ideal of the church has become natural and easy. It is something which you have inherited from the past; it is something which you are to hand down in still larger and more

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beautiful fashion to the future. While we congratulate you on all the years that have passed and the gracious continuity of religion in this community, it is with hope, with an expectation of greater things, that we look to-day into the future.

The APPENDIX

ORDER OF THE GENERAL COURT

From the record in the State Library of Massachusetts of the proceedings of the General Court June 14, 1698, Old Style. [June 24, New Style.]

THE following Order Sent up from the Representatives was read and concurred with viz^t.—
Upon Reading the Report of a Committee of this Court upon the Petition of the Inhabitants of the West End of the Town of Watertown, Praying to be a distinct Precinct for the Setting up the publick worship of God among themselves
Resolved and Ordered

That the Petitioners be and hereby are permitted and allowed to invite procure and Settle a Learned and Orthodox Minister to dispense the Word of God unto them at the West End of the said Town of Watertown vis^t the Farmers and Inhabitants living on the West Side of Stoney brooke and that for that purpose they be a distinct and separate precinct and their Bounds to Extend from Charles River to Stony Brook Bridge the Brook being the bounds from said Bridge containing all the Farm Lands to Concord Line and from thence all Watertown Bounds to their utmost Southward Bounds and to Westward And that all the Present Inhabitants on the West Side of Stony Brook aforesaid, together with Such as shall from time to time Settle among them have Liberty to Convene together to advise, agree upon and take Such methods as may

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be Suitable and Convenient for the procuring encouraging Settling and Support of a Minister qualified as aforesaid and for the Building and furnishing of a meeting house according as shall be determined by a Major vote And also to Nominate and Appoint a Committee of three or more persons amongst themselves to Transact and Manage that affair And all the Inhabitants and Estates under their improvement lying on the West Side of Stoney Brook or within the precincts afore mentioned Shall Stand Charge towards Building of the meeting house, the Settlement and Support of the ministry in said place in manner as the Law relating to the Maintenance and Support of Ministers doth direct and provide and be assessed thereto proportionately by two or more assessors as shall from time to time be Elected and Appointed by the Major part of the said Inhabitants for that purpose who may also Nominate and Appoint a Collector to gather and pay in the same as by Warrant or Order under the hands of Such Assessors Shall be directed and Ordered.

W^M. STOUGHTON.

From A BRIEF & TRUE RECORD OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL AFFAIRS OF THE CHURCH, IN THE WEST PART OF WATERT^N COMMONLY CALL'D WATERT^N FARMS BY WILL^M WILLIAMS:

Oct^r 12th 1709,

was the Day appointed . . . by these Persons to meet and confer together (at my Lodging) when they Expresed their Charity towards Each other and that there was no discord between them, or any thing that should hinder their Communion and fellowship—

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Some time was Spent in reading the *Confession of Faith* put forth by the Last Synod of Churches held in *Boston* in N. E. (to which they assented), and in Praying for the Divine Blessing—.—The Covenant (w^{ch} was Afterwrd pub^l read) was read, and Subscrib'd by them All—,

The Covenant w^{ch} Sundry of the Inhab. &c.

We do under an abasing Sense of our unworthiness of Such a favour and unfitness for Such a Business, yet apprehending ourselves to be called of God to put ourselves into a way of Church communion, and to Seek the Settlement of all the Gosple Institutions among us, doe therefore in order thereto, and for y^e better promoting thereof as much as in us lies, knowing how prone we are to err, abjuring all confidence in ourselves, and relying on the Lord Jesus C^t for help,

Covenant as follows,

First, Having perused the *Confession of Faith* put forth by the last Synod of Churches, held in *Boston* in New England, we do heartily close in with it for the Substance of it, and promise to stand by, maintain, and if need be, contend for y^e Faith therein delivered to y^e People of God, and if any one of us shall go about to undermine it, we will bear a due Testimony ag^t them.

We do also combine to walk together as a particular Church of Christ, according to all those Holy rules of y^e Gosple prescrib'd to Such a Society, so farr as God has revealed, or shall reveall his mind to us in this Respect.

We do accordingly recognize the Covenant of Grace, in which we do profesedly acknowledge ourselves devoted to y^e fear and Service of the only true

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God our Supream Lord, and to y^e Lord Jefus Christ the High Priest, Prophet & King of his Church, unto the conduct of whose Spirit we Submit ourselves, and on whom alone we rely for pardon Grace and Glory; to whom we bind ourselves in an Everlasting Covenant never to be broken.

We likewise give up ourselves one unto another in the Lord, resolving by his help to cleave to each other, as fellow members of one Body in brotherly Love and holy Watchfulness over one another, for mutual Edification, and to Submit ourselves to all the Holy administrations appointed by him who is the head of his Church, dispensed according to the Rules of the Gosple, and to give our constant attendance on all the publick ordinances of Christ's Institution, walking orderly as becometh Saints.

We do also acknowledge our Posterity to be included with us in the Gosple Covenant, and blessing God for so rich a favour, do promise to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of y^e Lord, wth greatest care.

Further we promise to be carefull to y^e uttermost to procure the Settlement and continuance among us of all y^e offices and officers appointed by Christ, the chief Shepherd, for the edification of his church and accordingly to do our duty faithfully for their maintenance and encouragement, and to carry it towards them as becomes us.

Finally, we do acknowledge, and promise to preserve communion with the faithfull Churches of Christ, for the giving and receiving mutuall Counsell and assistance, in all cases wherein it shall be needfull.

Now the Good Lord be mercifull unto us, and as he

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hath put it into our hearts thus to devote ourselves to him, Let him pity and pardon our frailties, humble us out of all carnall confidence, and keep it forevermore upon our hearts to be faithfull to himself and one to another, for his Praife, and our **Eternall Comfort**, for **Christ Jesus sake**, to whom be **Glory for ever & ever, Amen.**

COVENANT ADOPTED 1720.

A Form of y^e Covenant assent^d. to by y^e young people—March 12, 1720—21.

You do thankfully acknowl: y^e Divine goodness towards you, that you have bin by y^e act of Your Parents dedicat^d. to God and h. had y^e Seal of his Coven^t. put upon you in your Baptism & by their pious care Educated in y^e C^h. Religion, do now willingly Ratify their Act, and Solemnly chuse y^e Lord—(Father, Son & H. Ghost, into y^e profession of whose name you h: bin Baptis^d.) for your God & portion.

And professing a serious belief of y^e S: Script^{rs}. as y^e word of God you resolve by his grace to take them for y^e Rule of y^r. Lives.

to guide & govern both y^r. Faith & practice, renouncing all y^t you know to be contrary to his revealed will.

You depend upon y^e L^d. J. Christ y^e Mediat^r of y^e Covenant for Right^{ss} & Strength—that you may be pardoned & accepted with God, and may be enabled to walk in Sincere obedience before him.

You do also Subject y^r selves to y^e Governm^t. of Christ in his Church, and to y^e regul^r. Administratⁿ. of it in this Chh while his providence shall continue you here.

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MODIFICATION OF FORM OF ADMISSION 1741.

Weston June 29, 1741.—At a Meeting of y^e Brethren of the Church, appointed for that Purpose,—

Discourse was had about y^e manner of Admission of Persons into Communion—

Voted, Whereas Some serious Persons may have Scruples in their minds about Making a Relation of their Experiences or Convict^{ns}. in order to their being receiv'd into Church-Fellowship as thinking they are not obliged thereto by y^e Gospel,—That it shall not be Impos'd upon them as a necessary Term of Communion, But that if they are of orderly, good lives, and give Satisfaction to y^e Minister of their Knowledge in the Christian Religion, and understandingly make that Profession of Faith, (publickly) which is printed at y^e end of M^r: William's Book, (entitl^d. *True Wisdom y^e most excell^t Good, to be earnestly Sought*) &c,—it shall be satisfactory to y^e Church—.

NOTE.—A somewhat extended search in the great libraries has failed to reveal a copy of this book, and the Profession of Faith printed at the end. But as no change in the latter is mentioned during the ministry of the Rev. Sam^l. Woodward, 1751–1782, it is very likely that the Profession of Faith adopted in 1741 was the same as that written on the inside cover of a Bible used by Rev. Mr. Woodward, and in his handwriting. This Profession follows.

COVENANTS USED BY REVEREND SAMUEL WOODWARD 1751 to 1782.

NOTE.—The following Covenants were written inside the cover of a Bible belonging to the Rev. Samuel Woodward. They bear marks of long usage, and were probably used throughout his ministry, 1751–1782. The Bible was printed in 1736; but Mr. Woodward put the date 1754 to some notes within it. The words in brackets have been added by the editor to supply missing parts.

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THE COV^t FOR COMUNICANTS.

Professing [a serious and hearty belief in the] S^s [you] do now in an Ev. Cov^t. give up y^r self [to God in J. C.] You do humbly & penitently ask of God the Pardon of all y^r *Sin* thro' y^e Blood of C—and with all y^r heart you desire to accept of J. C. as y^r Redeemer and only Saviour as he is offered to poor Sinners in the Gospel—You do also promise Solemnly before God, Holy Angels, and the Presence of y^s Assembly; that by the help of y^e Holy Sp. denying ungodliness and all ○ly Lusts you will Endeav^r to live soberly, righteously & God [ly?] in this Present ○ and that you will be working out y^r own Salvation with fear and trembling that you will forsake y^e vanities of y^s Evil ○ and approve y^r s: a true disciple of C by y^r good carriage both toward God & man.

You do also Submit and Subject y^r s to the Gov^t of C in his Chh, and to the Laws of His kingdom and Discipline regularly administered in this Chh. And particularly you promise So long as God Sh^l continue you among us to walk in regular Comunion with y^e Chh. in this Place, together with this People to attend on all the holy Institutions and ordinances of his house & to carry it here according to the [rules of the] Gospel and in all things agreeable to what you know or shall know to be your duty.

DO YOU THUS PROMISE?

I then in the name of Jesus C. declare you to be a member in full Comunion with y^e Church. And in the name of the Chh. I promise that by the help of y^e same spirit we will carry it toward you as toward members of the same body with ourselves.

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Watching over you for your good with a spirit of meekness love and tenderness earnestly praying that God may take delight in and dwell among us and that by us his kingdom may be advanced.

THE COV^t FOR NON COMMUNICANTS.

You do thankfully ack. the Div: Goodness [to] ward you, that you h. b. by the act of y^r Parents given up to God in y^r infancy, & h. had the Seal of the Cov.^t put upon you in your Bap[tism].

And having by y^r Care b. educated & instructed in the Xian Rlgn do now willingly ratify y^r act, & y^s day avouch the Lord to be your God.

And in a very Serious and Solemn manner do choose the Lord Jehovah Father, Son & holy Ghost into the Profession of whose name you h. b. baptised for y^r God & Portion, and do dedicate and devote your s: to the Service, Gl: & Enjoym^t. of y^r Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier.

And professing a Serious Belief of the Holy S^s as the word of God you do resolve by his Gr. to take them for the Rule of y^r Life to guide and govern both your F: and practice, renouncing all you know or shall kn. to be contrary to his revealed will.

You do also particularly promise that you will be prayerfull and diligent to obtain further Preparations of the Sanctuary that may encourage y^r approach unto God in all holy ordinances.

And being Sensible and acknowledging y^r own unworthiness to be in Cov^t with God, and Utter inability to keep Cov^t. with him by any Str. of your own, you depend on the Lord J. C. the Mediator of y^e Cov^t. for R. & Str. that you may be pardoned and

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accepted of God, enabled to keep Cov^t. & walk in New obedience before Him. You do also subject y^r s: to the Gov^t. of C in his Chh. and to the reg^t: adm: of it in y^s [Chh.] while his Providence shall continue you here.

PROFESSION OF FAITH.

NOTE.—After 1794, there is no mention of a Profession of Faith in the Church Books. But the following was given to the editor in June, 1856, by Dr. Field in response to a call for a copy of it. It is based on that used during the ministry of Rev. Dr. Woodward and presumably used during that of Rev. Dr. Kendal.

Possessing a serious & hearty belief in the Scriptures you do now in an everlasting covenant give yourself to God in Jesus Christ.

You humbly and penitentially ask of God the pardon of all your sins—through Christ—and with all your heart you desire to accept of him your redeemer & savior as he is offered to you in the Gospel.

You also promise before God & in the presence of this assembly—that by the help of the holy Spirit—denying ungodliness—you will endeavor to live soberly, righteously and piously, in the present world—working out your own salvation with fear and trembling & forsaking the sinful vanities of this life and approving yourself a true disciple of Jesus Christ by all good conduct toward God and man.

You do also submit & subject yourself to the government of Christ and to the laws of his kingdom and discipline as regularly administered here. And particularly, you do promise so long as God shall continue you among us, to walk in regular communion with the church of Christ in this place.

Together with this people to attend on all the holy institutions & ordinances of his house and to

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conduct here according to the rules of the Gospel and in all things agreeable to what you know or shall know to be your duty.

DO YOU THUS PROMISE ?

I then, in the name of Jesus Christ declare you to be a member in full communion with the church of Christ.

And in the name of the church I promise, that by the help of the same spirit we will conduct toward you as toward members of the same body with ourselves.

Watching over you for your Good with a spirit of meekness, love & tenderness earnestly praying that God may take delight in and dwell among us and that by us his kingdom may be advanced.

THE COVENANT AND DECLARATION OF FAITH OF THE
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL (UNITARIAN) CHURCH
IN WESTON, MASSACHUSETTS. UNANIMOUSLY
ADOPTED JUNE 30, 1867.

The following Statement of Faith, the original of which was prepared for the Channing church in Newton, has been adopted, in substance, by a number of churches in Massachusetts, and is now reprinted at the request of several clergymen and laymen of our denomination. Of course it is not intended as a creed in the sense in which that word is usually employed. Even in the churches where it has been adopted its acceptance is not made a condition of church-membership or of Christian fellowship. It is simply given for the convenience of many in our own connection who desire some brief

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outline of our faith which they may keep at hand, and to whom this statement may prove acceptable.

STATEMENT OF CHRISTIAN FAITH.

We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament contain a REVELATION of the will of God to man, which is in complete accordance with Reason, and which we accept as our guide in faith and practice. We believe in the Sufficiency of the Scriptures, and the Right of Private Judgment; that in no human tradition, articles, or creed, but in the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants; "so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation."

We believe, with the primitive Christians, in the FATHER, and in the SON, and in the HOLY SPIRIT.

We believe in GOD, the FATHER ALMIGHTY, Creator of heaven and earth, the Absolute, Supreme, Incomprehensible Being, who alone is Self-Existent, Everlasting, Omnipresent, Omnipotent, Omniscient, Unchangeable, Invisible, and Infinitely Holy, Just, and Good. We believe in the real and essential Unity of God; that the oneness of his personality is undivided; that God is a Spirit, whom both Nature and Scripture reveal to us as not plural, but strictly One. We believe, that, as the One God and Father of all, He only is entitled to supreme worship; and that the true worshippers should worship the Father in spirit and in truth. We believe in the Paternal Providence of the Deity; that He is not only our Sovereign, but our Heavenly Father; that his justice

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is in perfect harmony with his mercy; that, in his essence, God is Love.

We believe in **JESUS CHRIST**, the **SON OF GOD**,—the brightness of his glory, the express image of his person, the incarnation of the **Divine Word**; the **Mediator** between God and man; the infallible **Teacher**, the sufficient **Saviour**, the ever-living **Head** of the Church. We believe that he came out from God, and that in him it pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell; that all power was given him, and all things put under him, **He** only excepted who did put all things under him. We believe that in him, the **Anointed One**, the **Divine Life** was manifested for the redemption of the world; that he was the **Wisdom of God** and the **Power of God** to regenerate the human race; that in him God was manifest in the flesh, reconciling the world by his death, and saving it by his life. We believe in the miracles, the resurrection, and the sinless character of the **Son of Man**; that all prayer should be offered to the Father in his name and spirit; and that he is worthy of honor, love, trust, and obedience, as the **Author and Finisher** of our faith, our perfect **Exemplar**, our **Master**, **Redeemer**, and **Lord**.—To us, as to the apostles, there is but **One God the Father**, and **One Lord Jesus Christ**. Our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son. We seek that life eternal, which is to know **Him**, the only true **God**, and **Jesus Christ** whom **He** has sent; acknowledging that every tongue should confess that **Jesus Christ** is **Lord**, to the glory of **God the Father**.

We believe in the **HOLY SPIRIT**,—that purifying and quickening **Power** which proceedeth from the Father, and has no personality separate from him;

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which was signally poured upon the early disciples, and which God is ever ready to give to them that ask it. We believe in the reality and unspeakable importance of this Divine Presence in the Soul; that God himself is really with us, renewing our hearts, illuminating our minds, helping our infirmities, guiding our lives, and abiding with us as the Teacher, the Comforter, and the Sanctifier. We believe in the direct and immediate agency of the Spirit, arousing our souls to a consciousness of their deepest wants, and drawing us to the Son, till Christ is formed within us, and we are sanctified and justified in the name and power of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

We believe in HUMAN DEPRAVITY, the very great and general wickedness of mankind, and the alienation of men from God through ignorance and sin. We believe that this depravity arises from the abuse, perversion, and debasement of man's moral powers; that men have wandered away, and become corrupted by voluntary transgression, for which they are alone responsible. We believe, nevertheless, that all have the law of God written in their hearts, and have power to fulfil it; that our ability is equal to our duty; that we are guilty, not on account of our original constitution, but only on account of our wrong volitions and actions; and that no one is compelled by the necessity of his nature to do evil. We believe that none are wholly righteous, or totally depraved; that tendencies to sin as well as to goodness may be transmitted; yet that all men become sinners only by voluntarily yielding to temptation, consciously neglecting duty, and freely choosing disobedience. that all thereby are estranged

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from God, and in a state of condemnation, and need pardon and renewing grace.

We believe in the **ATONEMENT**, or **RECONCILIATION** of men to God; that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself; that Jesus has done all that was necessary to provide the means and way of our salvation; and that he has suffered, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God, and to make us at one with our Father in heaven. We believe that Christ's mission originated in the infinite love and mercy of the Father, who therefore needed not to be reconciled to us, but we to Him. We consider that our Saviour's sufferings were endured to deliver us not simply from punishment, but chiefly from sin; to save his people from their sins; to take away the sin of the world;—that he died, a sacrifice for sin, for the life of the world, giving himself for us to liberate us from the power of evil, and redeem us from all iniquity. We see, in the agony and crucifixion of the spotless Lamb of God, a most striking exhibition of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, Christ's love for man, God's compassion for the guilty, and his readiness to forgive the returning penitent. The cross appears to us as the very power of God to cleanse and save every soul that believeth; by the contemplation of it, we are inspired with the deepest humility, contrition, and gratitude; are led to the renunciation of our sins; and we, who were afar off, are brought nigh by the blood of Christ, and are thus reconciled to God by the death of his Son.

We believe in the indispensableness of **REGENERATION**, **CONVERSION**, newness of heart and life, a radical change of the motives and affections; a putting-off the life of the flesh, and a putting-on the life of

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the spirit. We believe, that, unless a man is born again from the natural or earthly to the spiritual or heavenly state, he cannot see the kingdom of God. And we believe that we cannot redeem ourselves from ourselves, nor, by our own unaided efforts, renew our inward spiritual being; but that this transformation must be wrought by means of a divine influence, imparted by the Holy Spirit, and received into our souls. And we believe that the true spiritual birth will be followed by a truly spiritual life; that love to God will show itself in love to man; that those who are Christ's will manifest a Christ-like walk and conversation. We hold that faith without works is dead; that charity, or love, is greater than either faith or hope; and that, if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

We believe in the FORGIVENESS and REMISSION OF SINS through the forbearance of God; that whoso confesseth and forsaketh his sins, will find mercy; that, if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins; and we trust, for our acceptance with God, not in any good works which we have done, but in his literally free and unpurchased grace, made known in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We believe that faith and not opinions, righteousness and not ceremonial, character and not creed, are the test of personal Christianity; that we are saved only so far as we are sanctified; and that there is no condemnation to those who are delivered from the law of sin, and brought into inward harmony with the Divine will, by the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

We believe in the Life and IMMORTALITY which

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have been brought to life through the Gospel. We believe in the reasonableness, necessity, and certainty of a **FUTURE RETRIBUTION**; that the rewards of righteousness and the punishments of transgression are far greater than can be conceived; that God is long-suffering, patient, forgiving, but will by no means clear the guilty. We believe that they only will enter heaven who have within them the kingdom of heaven; that the wicked cannot be happy until they become holy; that they must experience suffering proportioned to their guilt, while the good will enjoy happiness corresponding to their character.

We believe in the **EFFICACY OF PRAYER**, the duty of secret and domestic worship, and the obligation of parents to give their children a religious education. We believe that all true Christians should become members of the visible **CHURCH**, uphold the institutions and observe the ordinances of religion, use faithfully all means which will promote their spiritual progress, and be active in building up God's kingdom in the world.

We believe in the **BROTHERHOOD OF MAN**; that the strong should bear the infirmities of the weak; that Christians should labor and pray for the removal of all injustice and oppression, ignorance and superstition, and for that consummation when the Gospel of Christ shall be diffused in all the world, and the kingdom of God shall come, and his will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Finally, we believe in the transcendent worth and importance of **RELIGION**; that its claims and obligations are paramount, not only during temporary excitements, but at all times; and that religion should

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not be separated from life, nor life from religion. We believe in the necessity of having a living faith, and an experimental knowledge of Christianity; that every one should deliberately consecrate himself to the service of his Maker, become a new creature in Christ Jesus, live with an ever-wakeful sense of the Divine Presence, and have the eternal life abiding in him. We believe that religion consists, not simply in saying, knowing, or doing, but in being; that Christianity is not merely a profession, opinion, or deportment, but an inward and outward life; that there can be no substitute for personal holiness, a religious character, and a godly life; and, as our present and future happiness is placed in our own hands, that no solicitude can be too deep, and no effort too earnest, to secure the soul's redemption, sanctification, and eternal welfare.

COVENANT OF THE CHURCH, AND FORM OF ADMISSION.

You present yourselves here, wishing to manifest your faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and to unite with this Christian Church.

You believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament contain a revelation of the will of God, and of what we are to believe and do to obtain remission of sins, acceptance with God, and eternal salvation. You resolve and promise by God's grace assisting you, to search and conform to this revealed Word in heart and life as the rule of your faith and practice.

You promise to observe the ordinances of the Gospel in communion with this Church so long as

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God shall permit, behaving towards your fellow-members according to Christian precepts.

Humbly asking of God the forgiveness of all your sins, and relying on the assistance of his Holy Spirit, it is your heart's desire and earnest purpose to become a faithful disciple of our Lord and Saviour.

DO YOU THUS COVENANT AND PROMISE ?

We then receive you gladly into our number. We welcome you to the communion of Christian hearts. We earnestly desire to sympathize with you, and will endeavor to watch over and support you in the trials of life and the work of duty; and we engage to unite with you in the diligent use of Christian ordinances, and to yield obedience to all truth which shall be made known to us by his spirit and grace. And may God our Father grant that this union formed on earth may be continued in heaven, and fit us for the fellowship of the saints in light. Amen.

COVENANT AND DECLARATION OF FAITH ADOPTED FEBRUARY 24, 1884.

At a meeting of the church of the First Parish of Weston, February 24, 1884, "the Reverend Charles F. Russell put the following motion [nothing therein abolishing the form of admission to this Church as hitherto practised, which form still stands as the form of admission to full fellowship for all such persons as desire to use it]:

"Moved, that the persons who have signed their names to the following statement are thereby ad-

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mitted to full fellowship with and in the Church of Christ of the First Parish of Weston, Massachusetts.

“Statement: In the love of truth and in the spirit of Jesus Christ we join for the worship of God and the service of man.”

The church voted by written ballots in favor of the motion.

Arranged and Printed at
The Cheltenham Press
New York

