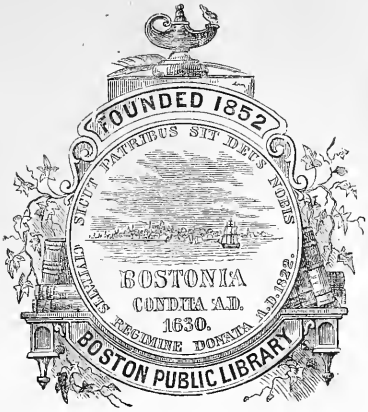

PAMPHLETS.

Salem.

Ecclesiastical.

Vol. II.

DR. EMERSON'S SERMON

ON THE

THIRTY-EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY

OF HIS ORDINATION.

ANNIVERSARY SERMON.

A

SERMON

DELIVERED IN THE SOUTH CHURCH, SALEM,

ON THE

THIRTY-EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY

OF HIS ORDINATION,

BY BROWN EMERSON, D. D.

Published at the request of the Committee of the Society.

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1843.

SERMON.

PSALM LXXVII. 10.

I WILL REMEMBER THE YEARS OF THE RIGHT HAND OF THE MOST HIGH.

It is not known when, by whom, or on what occasion, this Psalm was written. The writer, it is evident, was in great distress. Whether his distress was caused by personal affliction, or a view of public calamity, is quite uncertain; nor does it appear of much importance for us to know. Whatever was the cause, he found relief by recurring to the merciful interpositions of the Lord, as seen in the past history of his Providence. And nothing is better adapted than such a retrospect, to sustain the spirit in adversity, and to keep it humble in prosperity. It is very useful for any one, at stated seasons, to take a sober and discriminating review of the dealings of God with him; and, for similar reasons, it is useful for communities to trace the footsteps of his Providence in relation to them. With these views, I invite you to look back upon some of the leading events that have transpired within the time that has elapsed since my settlement among you.

This is the Thirty-Eighth anniversary of my ordination as your Pastor. The solemn service of consecration was per-

formed on the twenty-fourth day of April, 1805. The scene is still fresh in my memory, and the impression of it will remain while reason and conscience fulfil their office.

During the time of my residence here, many great and surprising changes have taken place in the political, social and moral condition of the world. At some of these changes it would be interesting to glance, did the limits prescribed for a single discourse permit. But the occasion requires, that I bring before you some of the principal facts that relate more particularly to this city, and to my connexion with this church and religious society.

Before entering upon this duty, however, it may be expected that I briefly refer to the most remarkable changes that have taken place in our own country, within the period of my residence in Salem. Many of them are so extraordinary in their character, and so deeply affect the interests of the nation, the church, and the world, that to pass them unnoticed, might be deemed an act of injustice to ourselves, and ingratitude to God.

Thirty-eight years ago, the power of Steam, in its most useful applications, was not known. There was not a boat in the United States, nor in the world, propelled by this mighty agent; and all intercourse by water depended upon the uncertainty of the winds, or the slow movement of the oar. Now, in spite of wind and tide, these leviathans of the deep are seen upon every lake, river and coast, pursuing the lofty race, with a speed that leaves in the distance every thing else that floats upon the wave.

In 1805, there was not a canal of any considerable length in the United States. Now, the produce of the country is

transported, in these artificial channels, in immense quantities and at low rates, over a space of four thousand miles.

In 1805, there was not a rail-road in the United States. Now, the aggregate length of these roads is five thousand miles. The astonishing facilities for travelling, and the interchange of commodities, furnished by this application of the power of steam, are very recent.

Eleven years ago, there were but six miles of rail-road in use in the vicinity of Boston. Now, Boston has a direct connexion with a web of railways one thousand two hundred and three miles in length, all of which, except about twenty-four miles, are actually in use, being a greater length of rail-road than there was in the whole world eleven years ago.

The following anecdote gives an interesting and amusing view of the facilities for travelling two hundred years ago, compared with those we now enjoy:

Several years after the settlement of this place, four men undertook to go from here to Boston by land, an expedition of such difficulty that it had never been attempted by civilized man. They accomplished the journey in four days, and so extraordinary was it deemed, that on the next Sabbath, they joined in offering a note of public thanksgiving and praise for that guardian hand, which had guided them through the toils and perils of the way, and brought them to their homes in safety. Now, without toil or danger, we are carried to the metropolis in thirty-five minutes!

The power of steam, directed by the ingenuity and skill of man, is working wonders for our country. Distant parts are brought into contact, sectional prejudices removed, mutual sympathy and attachment promoted, and the strength of the

nation consolidated. By the rapid and easy transportation of the products of industry, the property of the great interior states is immensely enhanced, the settlement of the country extended, new sources of wealth opened on every side, the comforts of life spread over the whole land, and the nation enriched beyond the reach of calculation. The vehicles of knowledge and the heralds of truth are sent in every direction, with the swiftness of the eagle, and the power of the pulpit and press increased a thousand fold.

Nor is the benefit of this recent invention confined to any part of the earth. Mighty ships, in mockery of the winds of heaven, are ploughing every ocean, bringing together the remotest regions of the globe, conveying every where the blessings of civilization and truth, and hastening the golden age, when the children of our common ancestor shall be united in one happy family.

The improvements of the age, in every department of science and industry, too numerous to be mentioned here, are producing the grandest results in the physical, social and moral condition of our race.

A few facts will show, in a striking light, the progress made in our country, within a few years, in the means for diffusing religious knowledge, and promoting the cause of truth and righteousness.

Before the year 1808, there was not a Theological Seminary in the United States. Now, these institutions, of such vital importance to the prosperity of religion, are established all over the land, under the care of every large and respectable denomination of Christians.

Until the year 1815, there was no such vehicle of intelli-

gence and truth as a religious newspaper. The Boston Recorder, now in the twenty-eighth year of its progress, led the van in this career of usefulness. Papers of this character are now issued from nearly every city and large town in the Union, diffusing the light of truth and the savor of piety through the nation, and in many places where the voice of the living preacher is seldom or never heard.

At the time of my settlement here, there was no such institution in this country as a Sabbath School, a Bible Society, a Foreign Missionary Society, a Tract Society, or any of the numerous organizations, which act upon a large scale, and are kept in vigorous operation by the charities of the Christian public.

Since that time, the Sabbath School is established in connexion with almost every church of every denomination in the land, imparting the bread of life to many hundreds of thousands, who are soon to wield the destinies of this mighty republic. The operations of the American Sunday School Union, in planting schools in every part of the country, in preparing suitable books, and establishing libraries of useful knowledge, are admirably adapted to the wants of the vast regions of the West. This Society was formed in 1824.

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, has pursued its noble object of spreading the gospel among the unevangelized in the four quarters of the globe, for thirty-three years. Their receipts the last year were over $318,000. They have under their care 26 missions; 85 stations; 134 ordained missionaries, and 179 female assistant missionaries. The whole number of laborers from the United States is 356; including native helpers, the whole

number of laborers sustained through the treasury of the Board is 488. They have also under their care 59 churches, containing upwards of 21,000 members, and 618 free schools containing more than 27,000 pupils.

It will interest many if I state a few facts relative to another of the principal benevolent institutions of the day. The American Home Missionary Society has employed, during the past year, chiefly in the wide fields of the West, 848 ministers of the gospel. In connexion with the efforts of these self-denying servants of the Lord, 68,000 persons have been brought under the influence of Sabbath School instruction, and 146,000 have been induced to take the Temperance Pledge. The receipts into the treasury of the Society, during the past year, were, in round numbers, $100,000.

Such institutions as these, for the projection and commencement of which we are indebted to our christian brethren of Great Britain, distinguish the present age as an era of light and love, and, next to our civil and religious institutions, should be considered the glory of our land. And I envy not that man the luxury of his moral sense, who either looks upon the benevolent efforts of the day with cold indifference, or turns away with feelings of disgust and hostility. They are regarded by those who look with just discrimination at the signs of the times, as unequivocal indications of the favor of the Almighty, and that the glorious things he has spoken concerning Zion are hastening to their accomplishment.

But I must come nearer home. It seems due to the occasion, that I here give, in a condensed form, a comparative

view of the state of religion, within the period of my residence in this place. And I remark in general, that in this vicinity, as well as throughout the commonwealth, there has been a gradual but rapid advance of evangelical truth and piety. The correctness of this remark is inferred from the following facts.

Thirty-eight years ago, the Essex South Association of Ministers was under the control of men, whose religious views were not those of the Reformation and of the fathers of New England. The more strictly evangelical, therefore, five or six in number, desirous of aiding each other in their work, formed what they called the Salem Ministerial Conference. But so few were there within Essex South district, and in Boston and vicinity, who harmonized with them in their views and measures, that several clergymen beyond the limits of this county, finding no body of ministers near them, with whom they could associate with satisfaction, came and united themselves with the Salem Conference. Some judgment may be formed of the activity and usefulness of this body from the single fact, that, in the spring of 1822, they resolved, and executed the resolution, that the members, two and two, should, once a quarter, visit the churches assigned them, so that every church in their connexion might have the benefit of a visit four times in each year. One year after this measure was adopted, the Conference, having been in operation nineteen years, finding the number of evangelical ministers within its limits greatly increased, and no longer seeing the necessity of a separate existence, was dissolved, and the members belonging to this district entered the Association of Salem and vicinity, now

called the Essex South Association, which, from that time, has been decidedly evangelical in its character. It now numbers twenty-five members. Similar and greater changes have taken place in Boston and many other parts of the commonwealth.

Laxness in religious sentiment and practice had, for many years, prevailed among the clergy and their people, to a degree so alarming, that many churches, connected with the old parishes, being crippled in their zeal "for the faith once delivered to the saints," and their efforts for the salvation of men, were constrained to separate themselves, build houses of worship, and settle pastors under whose ministry they could be edified and happy. Since these separations, painful and trying as they were, the Lord has visited those who were steadfast in the faith, with the effusions of his Spirit, in a measure unequalled, we believe, since the primitive days of the church.

Thirty-eight years ago, in all this region, a revival of religion was regarded with great distrust, if not aversion, and if a revival spirit appeared to be kindling, cold water was poured upon it until it was quenched, as a fire, which, if suffered to burn, would spread desolation and ruin in its progress. Now, revivals of religion are, in general, regarded, desired and received as the choicest blessings of heaven. And there is scarcely an evangelical congregation in all New England that has not received this blessing, in many cases often repeated, within a few years.

Let us now turn our thoughts to our own beloved city. Here, with the exception of Plymouth, where the pilgrims landed, was the first permanent settlement on these shores,

and the Church now under the pastoral care of the Rev. Charles W. Upham was the first that was ever formed in America. From 1629 to 1719, a space of ninety years, it was the only Congregational Church in Salem. The present pastor is the sixteenth in regular succession. Several of the pastors were distinguished for talents and great energy of character. Among these were Roger Williams, who was banished from the Colony in 1635, and Hugh Peters, his successor in office, who was hung and quartered in England, as a regicide, on the restoration of Charles II. It is remarkable, that two men, John Higginson and Dr. Prince, held the pastoral office 105 years, more than half the period of the church's existence.

The Society of Friends was formed in 1667, and now worship in their third meeting house, a neat brick building in Pine Street.

The Second Church was formed from the First in 1718, and Rev. James Flint, D. D. is the fifth pastor. Their present house of worship, the first built by the Society, is *one hundred and twenty-five* years of age.

St. Peter's Church, which was removed in 1833, to give place to a more durable edifice of stone, was built in 1733, and the Rev. Charles Mason is their tenth rector.

The Third Church was formed from the First in 1735, and prospered under the labors of its three first pastors, Messrs. Fiske, Leavitt and Huntington. But under the fourth pastor, Dr. Nathaniel Whitaker, a sharp contention arose between him and a part of the church, during which their house of worship was burnt, and a majority of the church adhering to Dr. Whitaker, became *Presbyterians,* built the

house of worship now called the Tabernacle, and took the same name as their ecclesiastical designation. Their present pastor is the Rev. Samuel M. Worcester. After this withdrawal of the majority, which took place in 1774, entering another denomination, and taking another name, the minority, in 1775, called an ecclesiastical council to decide the question, whether the minority, remaining on the Congregational platform, ought to be considered as the original Third Church formed in 1735? The council unanmously decided that it ought to be thus considered.* The church that I have the pleasure to serve, has, accordingly, from that time to the present, been considered and called the *Third Congregational Church in Salem.*

The North Church was formed from the First in 1772.—The spacious and elegant stone house, where they now worship, was built in 1836. Rev. John Brazer, D. D. is the third pastor.

The Howard Street Church was formed from the Tabernacle church in 1804. It was Presbyterian, and called The Branch, until 1827, when it became Congregational and took the name of Howard Street. The Rev. Joel Mann is the sixth pastor.

The First Baptist Church was formed in 1805. The Rev. Thomas D. Anderson is the fourth pastor.

The Christian Society, so called, was formed in 1807. The house of worship they built in Herbert street, has been purchased for the use of the Salem Moral Society, and is occupied as a Seaman's Chapel, the Rev. Michael Carlton,

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*See Appendix.

preacher. The Christian Society now worship at Masonic Hall, the present pastor being the Rev. Alexander G. Comings.

The Universalist Society was formed in 1809, and their present pastor, Rev. Linus S. Everett, is the eighth in succession.

St. Mary's (Roman Catholic) Church, was built in 1821. Dr. Thomas John O'Flaherty, is at present the officiating priest.

The First Methodist Society was formed in 1821. Rev. Jesse Fillmore, is the pastor.

The Independent Congregational Society was formed in 1824. The Rev. James W. Thompson is the second pastor.

The Second Baptist Church was organized in 1826. The Rev. Joseph Banvard is the fourth pastor.

The Crombie Street Church was formed in 1832. The Society purchased the Theatre and converted it to a handsome and commodious house for the worship of the true God. Rev. Alexander J. Sessions is the second pastor.

Two Methodist Societies have been recently established: one in Union Street, Rev. N. S. Spalding, pastor; and the other of colored persons in South Salem, Rev. J. N. Mars, pastor.

A Church has also been formed at the Seamen's Chapel; and, last of all, a Society of Mormons, who worship in Concert Hall.

Of eighty-eight, who have been removed from the pastoral office, in Salem, only twenty died in connexion with their charges.

In 1805, there were but *nine* churches in this town. Now there are *twenty*, and all provided with religious teachers.

This increase of churches has not been demanded by a proportional increase of population.

The ecclesiastical history of Salem does not well accord with the import of its name; for a large majority of the churches have arisen out of the troubled waters of dissension and strife. But as a civil community, the town has justly had the reputation of peacefulness, intelligence, industry and enterprize. It has furnished many eminent men, who have shone with surpassing lustre in the higher spheres of science, literature and commerce, and has had its full share of influence in the affairs both of the church and the state.

In the career of improvement, Salem, if behind the age in some respects, is in advance of it in others. In the department of School education, she stands pre-eminent. For this delightful elevation we are deeply indebted to the intelligent and self-sacrificing exertions of our late philanthropic Mayor, the Hon. Stephen C. Phillips, who, with laudable zeal, has devoted much time and property to this most noble object.

It has been represented by some, that we have long been either stationary or retrograde. But a slight comparison will show that even old Salem, though silent and unostentatious in her movements, has been going ahead.

Twenty years ago we had scarcely a comfortable side-walk in any of our streets, and but few public buildings that were worthy of particular notice. But we may now point the observant visitor, without mortification, to our Custom House, our City Hall, our Alms House, our East India Marine Hall, our noble Court House, and Mechanic Hall. Some of our public buildings, and in particular, by general consent,

this house of our solemnities, are confessedly erected on the finest models of architecture, and many private dwellings exhibit beautiful specimens of taste and elegance.

Many of our streets have been greatly improved, and the most beautiful street in the city has been almost entirely built since my residence here. When this house was dedicated, on the first day of January 1805, there were but two houses west of it on Chesnut street. Washington Square, a beautiful area of eight acres, well known to every citizen and visiter, now chequered with handsome gravelled walks, and enclosed by a neat fence and ornamental trees, affording a delightful promenade in summer, then contained the old dilapidated Alms House, and, near the centre, a frog pond, from which the amphibious tenants were soon after ejected.

Among the local improvements of our city, I ought to mention our Rural Cemetery, called Harmony Grove, the name given to it, more than forty years ago, by two young ladies, who often visited this shady retreat, in the evening twilight of summer, to catch the inspiration of its solitude. The grounds, containing nearly forty acres, were purchased and consecrated as a resting place for the dead, in 1840. The Grove is richly diversified with hill and dale, and spotted with many beautiful monuments of granite and marble. The whole scenery, from its impressive and strongly inviting character, has rendered it a place of great public resort.

Salem has long been distinguished for the intelligence, enterprize and wealth of her merchants. And they have erected a durable monument in the East India Marine Society, which was formed for the double purpose of affording relief to indigent members or their families, and pro-

moting the knowledge of navigation and trade. In furtherance of the latter object, the Society have a noble Hall, containing a Museum of very interesting curiosities, collected on a large scale from all parts of the earth, and open free of charge to visitors without distinction.

The town has also been distinguished for the sober, staid and industrious habits of her citizens. And she has never forfeited her claim to this character. The place was once, indeed, a theatre, on which were acted the scenes of an awful tragedy. One hundred and fifty years ago, twenty persons were condemned by the magistrates, and publicly executed, for the alleged crime of Witchcraft. The place of the execution has ever since been appropriately called Gallows Hill, and, until within about thirty years, the tree, with the very limb on which the victims were hung, was standing. But nothing now remains that may guide a stranger to the fatal spot. There seems to be no wish in the citizens to perpetuate the remembrance of that dreadful delusion. But it was not peculiar to Salem, nor to this country. It was a delusion of the age.

Having glanced at some of the changes that have taken place in the condition of our own country, and of this city, during my residence here, it is time that I give a sketch of the history of my connexion with this church and society. This has been lengthened out far beyond the usual term of such connexions at the present day. The restless spirit of the age, the love of novelty and change, the desire of experimenting in religion, as well as in philosophy and politics, has entered the church with disastrous results. So rapid has been the change in the ministry in the old sober county

of Essex, containing one hundred and sixty ministers, when all the churches of different denominations are supplied, that *one* only, who was ordained before me, Rev. Peter Eaton, D. D. of Boxford, remains as acting pastor of the same church. Most of the churches in the county have changed their pastors several times, and but a small proportion of them were removed by death. This frequency of change in the ministry, and the evils resulting from it, arise, in part, it is believed, from the too common practice of settling pastors either for a specified number of years, or on the condition that the connexion shall be dissolved at any time, at the desire of either party, provided it gives to the other a specified notice. The restless spirit, and love of change, of which I speak, is found among the ministers, as well as the churches and people. But it augurs well, that a disposition appears of late, to return to the good old way of our fathers. A good way, most surely, should not be forsaken because it is old, nor a new one preferred because it is new. Improvements may be expected, both in philosophy and religion, though not in their fundamental principles, and the mind should ever be open to the conviction of truth, from whatever source it may come. But theories or measures that claim the attraction of novelty, should not be hastily adopted, but candidly and thoroughly tested by those laws, either physical or moral, which are immutable as their Author. And in these days, when the foundations of religion and social order are so recklessly assailed, it becomes us to stand fast by the law of God.

But the spirit of restlessness in the church, so much to be deprecated, seems not, my brethren, to have found an en-

trance among you. With my ministry, feeble and defective as it is, you have hitherto been so far satisfied, as not to express a desire for a change. And the length of time I have been with you, and the years I have attained, will justify me in some remarks upon the character and results of my ministry.

I think I may, without arrogance, apply to it what the Apostle Paul said to the Ephesians respecting his ministry among them: "I have been with you at all seasons, and have kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ."*

"I have been with you at all seasons," in prosperity and adversity, in sickness and health, in joy and sorrow, striving to soften the pillow of disease, and soothe the anguish of bereavement, by pouring into your stricken hearts the oil of consolation. Many a trembling christian, who walked in darkness, or was in conflict with the last enemy, have I tried to sustain and comfort, by directing his mind to the Captain of Salvation, and to the crown of righteousness prepared for the victor's head. And many a dying sinner have I directed to the only hiding place from the wind and covert from the tempest.

I have been with you, not only at all seasons, but at all times. Such has been the state of my health, that I have never been unable, except on four Sabbaths, to perform the ordinary services of the pulpit. I have been with you in

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*Acts xx: 18, 20, 21.

season and out of season, always ready to attend your lectures, your church meetings, your conferences, your prayer meetings, your concerts, your funerals, your weddings, your family visits, and every other call, both public and private, which, in these days of general excitement and benevolent enterprize, make such heavy draughts upon the time, the intellect, and the physical strength of evangelical clergymen, especially in our cities and large towns.

I can further say, with the Apostle, "I have kept back nothing that was profitable unto you." I am far from saying, however, that I have preached the truth as plainly, as fervently, as forcibly, or as faithfully as did the great apostle, or as I might have done. But I do say, that, if not greatly deceived, I have never, through the fear of man or any other motive, designedly kept back any divine truth, or so presented it as to blunt its edge and prevent its intended effect. I have testified repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, aiming to hold up the glass of the divine law in such a manner, that, if you looked into it, you would not fail to see your true character, and urging the sinner to return to God, and penitently submit to him as his first duty, and to seek reconciliation through the atonement of Jesus Christ. The great doctrine of the cross, the central point, where all the rays of divine truth meet as in a burning focus, and from which they radiate, like the bright beams of the Sun, to enlighten, to warm, and to purify, I have delighted to illustrate and enforce, with all the power of reason and persuasion at my command. You will not understand me to suppose that my ministry has been without fault. I see

many deficiencies,—many things to condemn and lament, both in spirit and manner. Boasting is utterly excluded.

Yet, deficient as my ministry has been, the Lord has deigned to give it, in some degree, the seal of his approbation. And the present occasion seems to demand a statement of facts, in relation to ourselves, which, while they show that the blessing of heaven has come upon you, may incidentally prove that my feeble efforts have not been made in vain. Whatever of success has attended them, I ascribe, not to myself, but to the grace of God. I would give all the glory to his name.

My labors here commenced in the summer of 1804, in connexion with my venerated father, Dr. Hopkins, with whom I was associated as colleague pastor nine years and eight months. The number of persons admitted to this church since that time is 522. Within the same period, 96 have been dismissed to join other churches, and 13 have been separated by excommunication. The number now belonging to the church is 413, of whom 108 are males and 305 females. Within the same period, 120 church members have died, and only four, who were members when that period commenced, are now among the living. "There is one event to the righteous and to the wicked." The sentence of death is upon us all. And the mortality in the society, and in the community at large, is nearly in the same proportion as in the church. Many of the deceased members were distinguished by eminent piety and usefulness; and though their departure made sad breaches in the sacramental ranks, it is cheering to consider that they are free from the troubles of their pilgrimage, and inheriting the

promises. A remembrance of the path they trod, should quicken us to greater diligence in preparing for the same inheritance.

Among the departed members of the church, memory loves to linger upon the name and history of our late beloved pastor, the Rev. Daniel Hopkins, D. D. His ministry and his life were terminated here in December 1814, in the 81st year of his age, and the 37th of his ministry. Though many of you never saw him, yet by many others, who knew him well, his name is cherished with the tenderest recollections. A few days after his death, the following obituary notice, from the pen of the late Dr. Bentley, was published in the Salem Register:

"On Wednesday, 14th inst. died in this town, the Honorable and Reverend Daniel Hopkins, D. D., aged 80. He was a brother of the celebrated Samuel Hopkins, whose System of Divinity has been received with uncommon favor in New England. The deceased minister of Salem was appointed in July, 1775, a member of the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts, and in 1778, the year of his ordination, was a member of the Council of the Conventional Government which was appointed before the Constitution of the State was framed and adopted. He was an accomplished gentleman, esteemed for his ardent patriotism, and beloved by the people of his charge. They opened a house of worship for him, and have lately erected for him one of the most ornamental churches in America."

It enhances the value of this notice, that Dr. Hopkins and Dr. Bentley were antipodes both in politics and religion.

Another extract from the same paper will show the early and successful stand taken by leading men in this Society in the cause of temperance:

"It has been a well known and general practice at funerals, to set before the sextons who attended, a quantity of ardent spirits, which they were permitted to drink without restraint. This practice, so unnecessary in itself, so unbecoming the solemnity of the occasion, and so manifestly injurious in its consequences, was put a stop to in the following manner. At the interment of Dr. Hopkins, the committee of the New South Society came to the resolution to provide no ardent spirits for the sextons; and this determination so commended itself to the citizens of this place, that the sextons one and all requested their several societies to discontinue the practice of providing such refreshments for them."

The progress made in this and other lands in the Temperance Reformation since that time, and especially within the four past years, excites our admiration, and demands our praise to Him, who rules the hearts of men.

Since my settlement here, 1119 of this society have fallen victims to the king of terrors. This gives an average of about 30 to each year. I look around upon the congregation, and say, where are those proprietors of the house, and heads of families, who, thirty-eight years ago, stood here as pillars in the sanctuary? The storms have swept over them, and they are gone! Here and there one, like a solitary tree, yet stands erect, but the multitude are fallen. Another growth has come up and filled their places. But how soon

will they too be gone! The voice of warning comes to us from the tomb in deep and solemn tones:

"Vain man——thy end is nigh;
"Death, at the farthest, can't be far;
"Oh, think before thou die."

While I call up before you afflictive events of providence, it is proper that I also refer to some of a different character. During my residence here, 581 couples of this congregation have been united in the sacred bands of marriage; 80 of them by Dr. Hopkins, and 501 by myself. The greatest number of marriages in one year was 24, and the least was 9. The average number in a year for the whole period is 15.

Within the same period, 801 persons have been consecrated to God, in this house, in the holy ordinance of baptism. Of this number, 173 were adults and 628 children. The rite of infant consecration, with an application of the seal of God's gracious covenant, we, with the church universal, from the time of the apostles to the sixteenth century, believe to be an ordinance of heaven, extending from the days of Abraham to this day, never repealed, but still binding with all its force, and of inestimable importance to the cause of true religion. We regard it both as a sacred duty, and a high privilege, and rejoice in the belief, that, in in this divinely appointed way, the christian church will be perpetuated to the end of time.

Some of the facts that I have stated, lead to the conclusion, that God has poured out his Spirit upon us. And I would refer with adoring gratitude, to several seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. The most remark-

able and memorable of these were in the years 1810, 1821, 1824, 1831, 1840, and 1843. Besides these principal revivals, there have been, in the mean time, a number of lighter showers of divine grace, which have produced many fruits of righteousness. Most of the 522 who have been added to the church since my settlement, were fruits of these precious seasons of refreshing. Let us honor the Holy Spirit, the author of those sacred influences, by which men are awakened from the slumbers of impenitence, convinced of their guilt and ruin as sinners, renewed in the spirit of their minds, sanctified in heart and life, and fitted for the light and purity of heaven. And let our unceasing prayer and unwearied efforts be, that these seasons of refreshing may speedily return, with more glorious results than we have ever witnessed.

When we review our connexion as pastor and flock, we see much that demands our most fervent praise to the God of our mercies. He has seen fit, in his wise and holy providence, to lengthen out our connexion far beyond the average term, even in the days of our fathers. And during all this time, we have enjoyed as much harmony and mutual affection as often fall to the lot of imperfect mortals, especially in these days of agitation and change, as well in the ecclesiastical, as in the political and social relations.

Justice requires me to say, that as a church and a society, you have been distinguished by peace among yourselves, and peace with your minister. We have seen the harmony of other churches disturbed, and congregations rent into parties and torn asunder; and exciting causes have sometimes operated among us. But these causes have been effectually

resisted by your love of peace. This amiable virtue, when connected with the love of truth and righteousness, is clearly in accordance with the spirit of the gospel, and a trait of character to be most earnestly desired. Though liable to be mistaken for spiritual apathy, the opposite qualities are equally liable to be mistaken for spiritual zeal and faithfulness. Love of peace, on christian principles, is a modification of that charity, which the apostle describes as "the bond of perfectness," and the essence of all true religion.

I would not take to myself the credit of the harmony which has so long existed between us, and been strengthened by the exercise of social and christian affections. I may, however, say, that I have ever desired and earnestly sought to preserve peace and concord among the people of my charge, sometimes, indeed, at the sacrifice of inclination and feeling; and the same desire and effort, on your part, have doubtless been maintained at a similar sacrifice. You have borne with my imperfections, and been disposed to put upon them the most favorable construction they would bear. The expressions of your sympathy, kindness and generosity, in circumstances that called for them, will not be forgotten.

Feeble and imperfect as my ministrations have been, the Lord has deigned to bless us; and we have reason, this day, to take the cup of salvation, and call upon his name.

But here we ought to reflect, that, had we been, as pastor and flock, more prayerful, more watchful, more humble; in a word, more actively devoted to the service of God, the blessings of his grace would have been shed upon us, with

more copious effusions. We have reason, then, in the review, to humble ourselves before him, and stir up ourselves to greater fidelity and diligence. Much, very much, remains to be done. Many of this congregation, to whom the word of the Lord has been line upon line, and precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, have hitherto refused to submit to the terms of salvation. I call you, my dear friends, to witness this day, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse, and have labored to persuade you to be reconciled to God, by the motives exhibited in his word and providence. These motives I have aimed to illustrate and enforce, according to my ability and convictions of duty, ever appealing to the sacred oracles as the only safe standard of faith and practice. And I urge upon you the solemn consideration, that the preaching of the gospel, and every means of grace you enjoy, if not a savor of life unto life to you, will be a savor of death unto death. Let me not rise up as a swift witness against you, at the bar of judgment. To that bar we are hastening, fast as the revolutions of time. There, all the circumstances of our connexion will be brought under review, by the omniscient Judge, and retributions awarded according to character. Who can imagine the awful and glorious scenes of that day?

Since we know not how soon we shall be summoned to the bar, let us awake from our slumbers, and gird up the loins of our minds, that we may be prepared to enter into the joy of our Lord.

APPENDIX.

LIST OF THE PASTORS

OF THE

SEVERAL CHURCHES IN SALEM,

FROM THE SETTLEMENT OF THE TOWN.

First Church.

1629	Francis Higginson,	died	1630
1629	Samuel Skelton,	died	1634
1631	Roger Williams,	resigned	1635
1636	Hugh Peters,	resigned	1641
1636	John Fiske,	resigned	1639
1640	Edward Norris,	died	1658
1660	John Higginson,	died	1708
1672	Charles Nicholet,	resigned	1676
1683	Nicholas Noyes,	died	1717
1714	George Curwen,	died	1717
1718	Samuel Fiske,	resigned	1735
1736	John Sparhawk,	died	1755
1755	Thomas Barnard,	died	1776
1772	Asa Dunbar,	resigned	1779
1779	John Prince,	died	1836
1824	Charles Wentworth Upham.		

Second Church.

1719	Robert Staunton,	died	1727
1728	William Jennison,	resigned	1736
1737	James Diman,	died	1788
1783	William Bentley,	died	1819
1821	James Flint.		

Third Church.

1736	Samuel Fiske,	resigned	1745
1745	Dudley Leavitt,	died	1762
1763	John Huntington,	died	1766
1769	Nathaniel Whitaker,	withdrew	1774
1778	Daniel Hopkins,	died	1814
1805	Brown Emerson.		

The following is an extract from the Result of the Council, (Rev. Mr. Roby, of Lynn, Moderator) held in 1775, in the case of the Third Church, referred to in the preceding Sermon, p. 12 :—

"It appears to us, after serious and careful attention to the best light which could be obtained, That the above named Benjamin Ropes, &c. [14 brethren] together with those sisters above referred to, [24 in number] are, in a reasonable and just construction, *The Church*, which existed in the Rev. Mr. Leavitt's day, and was under his pastoral care, and which, before the ordination of the Rev. Mr. Huntington, consented to take the name of *The Third Congregational Church of Christ in Salem*, and that they are entitled to all the privileges of that Church.

"We find nothing that ought at all to deprive them of the communion of the churches; and we recommend to them the renewing of their covenant with God and with one another, at this time, and agree that the fellowship of the churches be renewedly given to them, as a church in good standing. We earnestly recommend to them that forgiving spirit,—that benevolent, inoffensive, prudent conduct,—which becomes christians, and is their defence and glory:—and our prayer is, that the God of love and peace may be with them."

"At Salem, Feb. 14—16, 1775."

St. Peter's Church.

1738	Charles Brockwell,	resigned	1746
1747	William McGilchrist,	died	1780
1771	Robert B. Nichols,	resigned	1774
1782	Nathaniel Fisher,	died	1812
1814	Thomas Carlisle,	resigned	1822
1823	Henry Wm. Ducachet,	resigned	1825
1827	Thomas Winthrop Coit,	resigned	1829
1829	Alexander V. Griswold,	resigned	1834
1834	John A. Vaughan,	resigned	1836
1837	Charles Mason.		

North Church.

1773	Thomas Barnard,	died	1814
1815	John Emery Abbot,	died	1819
1820	John Brazer.		

Tabernacle Church.

1774	Nathaniel Whitaker,	resigned	1784
1785	Joshua Spaulding,	resigned	1802
1803	Samuel Worcester,	died	1821
1819	Elias Cornelius,	resigned	1826
1827	John P. Cleaveland,	resigned	1834
1834	Samuel M. Worcester.		

*Branch Church.**

1805	Joshua Spaulding,	resigned	1814
1818	Henry Blatchford,	resigned	1820
1821	William Williams	resigned	1832
1833	George B. Cheever,	resigned	1837
1838	Charles T. Torrey,	resigned	1839
1840	Joel Mann.		

*This Church became Congregational, and took the name of HOWARD STREET CHURCH, in 1827.

First Baptist Church.

1805	Lucius Bolles,	resigned	1826
1826	Rufus Babcock,	resigned	1834
1834	John Wayland,	resigned	1841
1842	Thomas D. Anderson.		

Free-Will Baptist Church—"Christians."

1807	Abner Jones,	resigned	1812
1813	Samuel Rand,	resigned	1814
1814	Moses Howe,	resigned	1817
1821	Abner Jones.		

[The present pastor is the Rev. Alexander G. Comings. The names of all those succeeding Mr. Jones, could not be conveniently ascertained.]

Universalist Church.

1809	Edward Turner,	resigned	1814
1815	Hosea Ballou,	resigned	1817
1818	Joshua Flagg,	resigned	1820
1820	Barzillai Streeter,	resigned	1824
1825	Seth Stetson,	resigned	1828
1829	Lemuel Willis,	resigned	1837
1838	Matthew Hale Smith, [renounced &]	res'd	1841
1841	Linus S. Everett.		

St. Mary's Church.

1806	Bishop Cheverus, and Dr. Matignon officiated till		1811
1811	Dr. O'Brien,	resigned	1813
1813	Bishop Cheverus and Dr. Matignon, till		1819
1819	Paul McQuaid,	resigned	1822
	John Mahoney,		
	William Wiley,		
	John D. Brady,		
	James Strain,		
1842	Thomas John O'Flaherty.		

First Methodist Episcopal Church.

1822	Jesse Fillmore,	resigned	1832
1832	J. B. Brown,	resigned	1833
1833	J. Hamilton,	resigned	1834
1834	S. C. Macreading,	resigned	1834
1834	Aaron Waitt	resigned	1835
1835	J. Fillmore,	resigned	1835
1835	J. W. Downing,	resigned	1838
1838	S. G. Hiler,	resigned	1839
1840	J. Fillmore.		

Independent Congregational Church.

1824	Henry Colman,	resigned	1832
1832	James W. Thompson.		

Second Baptist Church.

1826	George Leonard,	resigned	1828
1829	Robert E. Pattison,	resigned	1830
1830	Cyrus P. Grosvenor,	resigned	1834
1835	Joseph Banvard.		

Crombie Street Church.

1832	William Williams,	resigned	1838
1838	Alexander Joseph Sessions.		

Second Methodist Church.

1841 N. S. Spalding.

Third Methodist Church.

1842 J. N. Mars.

Seamen's Church,

1842 Michael Carlton.

Mormon Church.

1842 Elder Snow.