













A

CENTURY OF PURITANISM,

AND

A CENTURY OF ITS OPPOSITES ;

WITH

RESULTS CONTRASTED TO ENFORCE PURITAN PRINCIPLES, AND  
TO TRACE WHAT IS PECULIAR IN THE PEOPLE OF LYNN  
TO WHAT IS PECULIAR IN ITS HISTORY.

By PARSONS COOKE,

PASTOR OF THE FIRST CHURCH IN LYNN.

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## PREFACE.

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THE people of Lynn are no race of imitators. They are in one sense, if not in the best sense, a peculiar people. And they have the advantage, or disadvantage, of being well known abroad. But the causes which have made them what they are, are not so well known abroad. Yet they should be. For such a knowledge is capable of being turned to a rich account. The religious history of the town has been very peculiar, and in that are found the sources of the existing peculiarities of the people. And all the remarkable turns of the history give illustration of the force of important principles of Christianity.

This work was first produced in the form of lectures for the pulpit; and that form is now only partially thrown off. So far as the interest of the book might be enhanced by retaining it, it has been retained. The work was first undertaken for the simple purpose of writing the history of the First Church of Lynn,

for mere local use. But we soon found that we were opening springs that ought to flow abroad. We found that it abounded in materials of general interest. It is local in the sense that it describes events, which occurred in a single place. But those events are full of instruction, as to the practical power of principles in which all Christians have a deep interest. A history of the battle of Waterloo has its local characters; but its history is a book for the world, because the world has a common interest in its events. So here, struggles have existed, and principles have produced their results, in which all Christians have a common interest. Hence our history, so far as it gives the narrative of the experience of the First Church in Lynn, is a mere thread upon which to hang our illustrations and arguments.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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THE church in Egypt and in the wilderness hardly sustained a more striking correspondence with its divinely chosen emblem — that of the bush burning but not consumed — than has the church that was first planted by the Puritan fathers in Lynn. Few churches have lived so long among so many powerful causes of death. The church in Egypt lived, in spite of the policies and forces employed to extinguish it, because it lived in the life of Christ and in the purpose of God, and its life was supported with a view to the wonderful events to be evolved in its future history. It lived in the life of its Redeemer, which no powers of earth or hell could quench. A like experience is often had in a branch of the church of Christ reduced to the last remnants, and yet preserved. Of this experience the church planted by the Puritans in Lynn has partaken largely. The bush inflamed, but not consumed, is an epitome of her

history. Her history is that of a church that has lived, by a supernatural vitality, in spite of powerful causes of destruction; and for nearly a century of her life she seemed to be approaching the grave.

The spiritual life of a church, in its outward demonstrations, is usually so frail and so feeble against opposing elements, that one would think that its enemies had need only to let it alone and see it die, or that a few vigorous onsets would destroy it. But in this instance, its half-extinct vitality was preserved, amid causes of destruction more than sufficient. As we trace the thread of its life backward, through the events which Providence appointed to it, it seems a wonder of wonders that it is now alive, and having the same unbroken current of life that was opened here by the Puritan immigrants, more than two hundred and twenty years ago.

From my first acquaintance with the outlines of this history, I felt that its materials should be gathered and preserved. But want of time has prevented my attempting it — till now the desire to see it done has kindled as a fire in my bones, and compelled me to do what I can towards it. The reasons why this history should be set forth are of two kinds — those that concern the people of Lynn, and those that are of general interest. The history of this church has many striking turns and contrasts, which illustrate princi-

ples in which all Christians are interested. As to these, all are naturally anxious to inquire what it was that produced the peculiar characteristics of the people in Lynn, for which she is famed the world over. This mystery has an easy solution, in the history before us. As a matter of mere philosophical inquiry, it is worth our perusal.

But for reasons still more general, so remarkable a history as this ought to be put on a legible record. History shows the hand of God, and is God's chosen method of instruction. Churches as well as individuals have their experience, and most effectually learn wisdom by that experience. Inspiration teaches mainly through historical facts, and church history is the burden of its labor, and in its pages church history is made to transcend all other histories in the dignity and elevating force of its themes. Moses, the first born of historians, gives but two or three of his chapters to the history of the world, and all the rest to that of the church. For the history of the church is the history of the people whom God has redeemed as his special treasure, on which his Spirit does its choicest work — the people in whom flows the very life of his Son: it is the history of that kingdom which consists not in meats and drinks, but in righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. It shows wonderful wisdom and power, preserving the church amid hostile

forces, and calls us at every turn to see this great sight, the bush inflamed but not consumed. As the value of the world is in the church, so the value of all history is in church history; and hence the two short books of church history, written by Luke, contain materials of more interest to the world,—yea, and what is destined to command more attention from the world, than all the books of merely secular history. The achievements of a single man, Saul of Tarsus, sketched there in a few chapters, are to emit more true and lasting glory than those of all the earth's plunderers, misnamed conquerors. In planting and sustaining, amid temptations and corruptions, branches of the church of Christ, in describing the sources from which came their assaults and salvations, in depicting the sublime qualities and shining examples of those whom God raises up, from time to time, to be her Aarons, Joshuas, Davids, and Solomons, we have themes which, for noble grandeur and thrilling interest, as much surpass the battles of the warrior as the interests of eternity surpass the trifles of time.

And their history is all a record of God's processes of teaching religion through experience—the most effective of all teaching. Because this is the most effective mode, the Author of the Bible has for the most part taught through historical facts; and when these were not at hand, has woven supposed facts into

fables, to serve in their stead. And a church may profit by its own experience as really as an individual. For each church has a life of its own, and one life extending through successive generations. So that the accumulated results of its experience, so far as they are preserved, may come together as in some sense the experience of its living members. The present members are interested in what was done by their predecessors, whose delinquencies have been occasions of present burdens, and whose prayers and godly zeal have been the occasion of present blessings. So the facts in the history of one branch of the church belong especially to that branch. Besides their general interest, they have a peculiar interest to them. They are in some sense matters of their experience, and sources of their instruction. They come home to them as they cannot to others. Though perhaps none of the blood of the founders of your church runs in your veins, yet the fact that you have brought your life into one current with theirs, makes their ecclesiastical experience, in more than a figurative sense, your experience, and gives you an interest in what was said and done, affecting the spiritual prosperity of that confederation of believers with which your own spiritual life is now blended. By such processes, the experience of one generation transmits itself to the succeeding; and the experience

of all generations, in one line of spiritual life, runs into the experience of the living generation, and should be made a source of ever-accumulating instruction. Hence we are bound to complete, as far as may be, the records of the past, and "tell it unto the generation following." For the history of the past and of the present constitutes the books which God has written out by the finger of his providence, and these books are committed in charge to us, to be copied out and preserved for the generations following.

But the materials of the history of this church ought to be well known, because they are in themselves peculiarly valuable. There are crises and events in this history that challenge special attention, for the illustration which they give to important principles. Few churches have had all the varieties of striking changes and perilous crises which this has undergone.

The *age* of this church is another reason why its history should be preserved. It were a wrong done to all our churches, if the history of one of the oldest existing Puritan churches in Massachusetts, and the oldest that occupies the place of its original planting in the whole country, should be lost. The fact that her elder sisters, that led in the van, have ceased to exist as churches of Christ, and sundered the thread of life and history that connected them with the Puritan origin, now gives special interest, and will in coming

generations give still more interest, to the few first planted churches that endured in the day of trial. A well-written history of this church, conducting the reader by a luminous path back to the springs so connecting the future expansions of the Puritan life with its origin, must be a valuable legacy to your successors here, and to the whole sisterhood of Puritan churches. While the Plymouth rock attracts the reverence of countless pilgrims, because it was the first that was pressed by the feet of the Pilgrim band, will not that one first planted here of those that still rest on the Rock of Ages be an object of interest, in coming times, with all those who are also built on the foundations of the prophets and apostles?

But there are local reasons of great force why this history should be written. Justice to the present members of the church requires it. A stranger to its history must judge of it by present appearances. And he cannot see why, after having had the ground so long, it should have covered so little of it. He naturally asks, Is that all that you have done by the labor of two hundred and twenty-three years? History comes in with a satisfactory answer to this question, and for that reason, if there were no other, it should be produced, and wrought into the common material of public knowledge. It is fit that the world should know how this church has been betrayed, per-

verted, and crippled; and how her life blood has been drawn from her, till she approached the very verge of annihilation; and with what protracted and desperate struggles, against what a host of obstacles, with what sacrifices, she has been brought back thus far. Let this be known, and she asks no other vindication from the suspicion of culpable feebleness.

Still more important is it that the *purity and efficiency of our evangelical principles* should be vindicated, by conveying to the public knowledge the facts in our history. At the first glance, the appearance is, that Puritanism has here had the ground for more than two centuries, and yet has suffered it to be overrun with briars and thorns. Few, even very few of the population of Lynn have a knowledge of our history sufficient to correct this impression. Most of the present generation of Lynn know that this is the original church, and suppose that it has always been, as to the doctrines preached, and as to the purpose of its efforts, what it now is. And from the fact that it has held its ground so long, and spread itself so little, it is that its principles must have little life and force. If the ground of this inference were a reality, we ought indeed to blush for being members of such a church; for we should give serious occasion to question the vitality and soundness of our principles. We blame not the world for judging a tree by its fruits. We have been forward to

court the application of this test to Puritanism. We have regarded the wonderful and beneficent results of Puritanism in forming the character and structure of this nation, and in diffusing manifold blessings over the world, as a triumphant proof of its identity with the religion of Christ. Nor do we shrink from the application of the same test to Puritanism so far as it has lived and labored in the life of this church. We only ask that the facts may be laid out to view, so that Puritanism may be made responsible only for what belongs to it; that that may not be taken as a fruit of Puritanism which was the product of its opposites. History embraces materials for setting out with the clearness of a sunbeam the fact, that while this church contained, in individual members, some remnants of Puritan life, and always professed adherence to the Puritan faith, her ministry was for nearly a century heartily and industriously at work in opposition to that faith and life. We claim that this hostile ministry of three generations shall not be charged to us as a Puritan ministry, and that its fruits shall be carried to the tree that produced them; and then we are quite willing that the rule of judging the tree by its fruits shall have a full application.

For the present and future success of our principles, we depend much on the state of the public conscience respecting them — on what is the general esti-

mate of their purity and intrinsic power. Who does not see that the progress of our principles here is impeded by a world of misconception of the nature alluded to. The remembrance and traditions of past scandals have so prejudiced the public mind, and so small is the desire to know the truth respecting us, that probably not one in ten of the whole population has any thing approximating to the true idea of our history, or of the Puritan life. Our principles lie under mountains of reproach, by reason of false representations made of them, during nearly a century, by ministers falsely assuming their name, to undermine and destroy them. With a vast multitude really ignorant of us, we bear odium coming from the malfeasance of some of our predecessors. Could we stand simply upon our merits, that is, the merits of our principles, while these principles are actually held and preached, it were less to be regretted. But it will take one century, at least, for this church to *live* down the reproaches accumulated by the abuse which she suffered in the century gone. Neither our preaching nor our lives, could they attain an apostolic excellence, would extinguish the countless traditions that convey the offensive odors of other times down to the nostrils of the present. It was a capital stroke of policy in Satan to put his own agents into the pastorate of this church, and employ them so

effectually to destroy the life of Puritanism in it, and then make the world believe that those agents of his were true samples of Puritanism, and their work the proper fruits of an orthodox faith. And lest Satan should keep the advantage of this lie, we have need to open before this generation the history of the past, and remove the disguises.

The history should be known for still another reason. The religious character of the town of Lynn is an enigma to those who are strangers to its history. Here, in the very heart of New England, on the very ground of the first planting of the principal colony, is a people, most of whom, perhaps, are lineal descendants of the first founders of the colony, presenting a religious character, in the general, very averse from the principles of the founders, and very unlike the general religious character of the other New England towns. This statement will not, of course, be taken as an offence; for those who have departed from the Puritan faith glory in that departure, and must, of course, receive this statement as a complimentary concession. But whether it be so or not, the fact is indisputable, that Lynn, in its religious character, is widely diverse from that which has been generally characteristic of New England; and it is important that the world should better know the source of this diversity. We have here vastly more than

our proportion of infidelity, Universalism, and home heathenism; and, with the materials which exist for the history of the first church, it is not difficult to tell whence they come; and the knowledge of their source is the first step to a knowledge of their remedy. If every man, woman, and child now knew, as they might know, what has brought in these soul-destroying *isms*, they could be resisted with double the effect with which they now can be.

It is, then, no mere desire for literary exercise or entertainment which has impelled me to this work, but a purpose of public instruction on matters of vital interest. What I propose is, an effort to take away from the public mind a misconception which vastly hinders the progress of the pure gospel of Christ. The facts of this history will be presented, not as gratifications to an antiquarian or literary curiosity, but as proofs of the life and power of evangelical truth, and the destructive power of its opposites. I never undertook any work with a more earnest purpose to promote the ends of the gospel, and under a more urgent sense of its necessity. If the general current of men's apprehensions touching the fruits of Puritanism here could be changed into correspondence with the facts by any effort of mine, I should, in procuring that change, have lived to higher purpose than ever before.

Suppose the devil, having made a Judas out of one of Christ's disciples, should have succeeded, in a given place, to make all men regard that Judas as a true specimen of Christ's disciples, and his work the true result of Christianity, and so to have wrought it into men's common ideas of Christianity, that, on every mention of the name *Christian*, the image of Judas and his work would come before the mind,—would you not preach Christianity with small success to such a people till you had first disabused their minds? So here, traditions of the past history of this church, and some of its ministers, are so abundant, and so charged with poison, that when Puritan orthodoxy is named, the repulsive features of some odious betrayers of the truth pass before the fancy as specimens of the thing. Urgent reasons, therefore, demand that this people should have the means of knowing that Judases are not the true disciples of Christ.

But some may misgive, and feel that no demonstration can vindicate Puritanism on ground where it has had such experience — for it once had the ground, and failed to keep it. It will be said, that after all showing, the fact exists, that Puritanism failed to perpetuate its expansive force in this instance; and does not such a failure betray an intrinsic weakness? Let this point be especially considered; for what is pertinent to it is applicable to all the instances which have

occurred in the whole of the Unitarian apostasy from Puritanism throughout New England. The question is, Does not a failure to hold the ground that it once had betray an intrinsic weakness? Not at all. Puritanism, or any other agent, works only where it is, and no longer than it is there. To prove that Puritanism made a failure, you must show that the failure in the forth-putting of Puritan life, and strength, and fruits took place while Puritan doctrines were preached — which is contrary to the fact. Puritan doctrine ceased to be preached in this church long before the fruit and life of those doctrines disappeared. Yea, by a sort of miracle of grace, a few buried embers of the original flame underlay the ashes and rubbish that were heaped upon them through the most adverse times; and from these, in our own times, the fire on our altars has been rekindled to a flame which gives promise of spreading far and wide.

Besides, if a religious system has a failure in every instance wherein the treachery of its ministers, by bringing in its opposites, causes it to give place, then is the gospel of Christ itself a grand failure; for over all the ground where Christ preached it with his living voice, it long since wholly ceased; and in every church, without an exception, that was gathered by the apostles of Christ, it has failed to perpetuate itself.

The question as to the failure or performance of a

religious system is, What fruits does it produce where and while it is in real action? If, when Puritan doctrines are preached, and Puritan institutions are maintained, the proper results of the gospel — such as the conversion and sanctification of men — are experienced; and more especially, if time proves the conversions to be genuine in the permanent holy life and beneficent character of the converts; if a consistent, abiding, and vigorous Christian life is produced by such preaching, then there has been no failure, however long or short may be the ministry that does this. If, after the ministry of a church has done this for a century, by some fatal mistake an anti-Puritan minister is put into a Puritan pulpit, whatever the failure may be called, it is not Puritanism failing to produce the proper results of gospel preaching.

Having undertaken this work for grave reasons, those reasons will compel me to speak as one that is serious in a serious cause. I shall have need, for public reasons, to speak some things, which, in ordinary circumstances, perhaps, it would be wise not to speak. I acknowledge the general correctness of the heathen maxim, "*Nil mortuis nisi bonum.*" But this must have its limitations, or no true history could be written. Pertinent is the reply of an English queen, made to a courtier, touching this matter. The courtier, in order to flatter the queen, had cast reproach

on a writer of the history of the Scotch church for having set forth, in true colors, the picture of "Bloody Mary." He said, "Is it not a shame, that, without any consideration of your royal person, this man should dare to throw such calumnies upon a queen to whom your royal highness has succeeded?" "Not at all," she replied. "Is it not enough that by fulsome praises great persons must be lulled to sleep all their lives, but must flattery follow them to their graves? How should they fear the judgment of posterity, if historians were not allowed to speak the truth of them after their death?" The same principle applies to men bearing responsibilities in the church. The conventionalities of society guard them against too free a speech of their misdeeds while they live—and shall they also shut the mouth of history after they are dead? Truth is the polestar of the historian, to which he must adhere in spite of any loves or hates of the dead. So, whenever, in the course of this history, we have occasion to say what we would prefer not to say, of the living or dead, we shall simply ask, Does truth, or the true ends of our work, require it to be said? We shall speak under the urgency of the necessities of the case. Historical facts that exist, and are material to the purpose, must not be omitted from motives of delicacy. And, as an interpreter of the facts, I must express without reserve

my own convictions. In speaking, as I shall have need to speak, of the tendencies of this and that system, I must speak with at least my usual frankness; and my readers must bear with me for what may seem to them my imprudence. I have in this matter taken upon myself much labor, with the hope of a commensurate good; and I am unwilling to lose my labor by any false delicacy restraining me from speaking the thing that needs to be spoken.

But under the pretext of charity and impartiality towards all forms of religion, there lurks a very prevalent contempt of all religions, and of the issues of all religious questions. This indifferentism, Gallio-like, takes to itself airs of superior dignity, and assumes to treat all questions of right or wrong in religion as equally beneath its notice. Such questions are, forsooth, well enough to occupy the attention of women and children; but an enlarged and liberal mind can look down upon their littleness. Persons of this class are essentially atheistic, and would be glad to see religion blotted from the memory of men. Yet for such a horrible vice they claim the credit of equal justice to all religions, yea, of a superior magnanimity, that looks with equal kindness on the weaknesses of all — yea, of especial peacemakers, who are pained at any earnest discussions of religious questions, and cannot endure to see neighbors set at

variance on questions so trivial as those of right and wrong in religion. If it were a question of politics, to determine whether A, B, or C should have the offices, it might justify any amount of agitation. But if the question affect only morals and religion, — only man's life or death for eternity, — then it grieves them to see neighbors divided on matters so trivial. Then the thought is, All denominations are equally sincere, equally silly, equally right, and equally wrong, and all discussions between them are to be ruled out as unprofitable.

This view of things extensively obtains, and it is the only consistent view with those who despise all religion. And yet the facts to be disclosed in this history will show it to be at war with common sense, even when restricted to the interests of the present world. For it does not provide for the plain fact that different religions produce different forms of civilization, pure or corrupt, according to their respective natures. This might be verified in all history. It will be specially verified in the history of Lynn, when we have shown what the peculiar form of religion that predominates in Lynn has done in forming the peculiar character of the people of Lynn. Whether it flatters our vanity or not, it cannot be denied that we are a peculiar people, and that a peculiar form of religion has entered largely into the causes of this

peculiarity. And every where, in spite of you, the question of this or that religion will go far to determine the civil character of the people. And the characteristics of the people of any community involve important secular interests, as well as religious, affecting even the value of your houses and lands.

When the change of the character of the ministry in Lynn, and in that the change of the character of the people, began, probably many thought it of no consequence, because it was only a religious matter, and would not change the latitude or climate of the place, nor alter the qualities of the soil. But religious causes went forward to their inevitable result on social character, and made the people of Lynn what they now are. Still the town of Lynn stands on the map just where it ever stood; the sea breezes continue as of old; the fogs make their accustomed visits; the waves continue their roll on the beach. But the characteristics of the people have become what they are, and widely different from what they were. In short, the history of Lynn is in itself one of the striking illustrations of the effects of different religions on civil character and secular interests; and in that single view it is of great value.



# HISTORY

OF THE

## FIRST CHURCH IN LYNN.

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### CHAPTER I.

THE RELATIVE AGE OF THE CHURCH.—THE TIME OF ITS ORIGIN.—ITS FIRST PREACHER, MR. BACHELOR.—THE ORIGINAL MATERIALS OF THE CHURCH.—SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF THE FIRST PASTOR.

THE order in which the first planting of the churches in the Massachusetts colony was conducted was—the church in Salem first; next that in Charlestown, which afterwards removed to Boston; next that in Dorchester; next in Roxbury; and next in Lynn. That in Lynn was formed in May, 1632. In October of the same year the Charlestown church removed to Boston, leaving a minority to organize a new church, which is now the first church in Charlestown; so that the Lynn church is from May to October

older than that in Charlestown. All the churches that were planted here before the church in Lynn have now ceased to be numbered among the churches of the Puritan faith; and the same may be said of those that were planted before it in the Plymouth colony. A claim has been set up to the effect that the church that was planted in Scituate in 1634, and afterwards removed to Barnstable, is older, because it was a transplant of the church first organized in Southwark, London. It has also been claimed that the church in Windsor, Connecticut, is the same organization that commenced in Dorchester and removed to Windsor. We have not yet seen the evidence that fully clears the way to the conviction of either of these positions. But we prefer here to make no assertions touching disputed points. We will state only what no one disputes; and that is, that the first church in Lynn has been longer on the ground where it was first originally planted than any Congregational church in America. And if what is claimed for the Barnstable church be true, this in Lynn has been longer on its ground than any other in the world. A question has been raised, whether the church in Lynn which commenced under the ministry of

Mr. Bachellor was the same with the present church — that is, whether, in the interim between Mr. Bachellor's leaving and Mr. Whiting's installation, the organization was not broken. But that point was settled by a council at the time. It appears, from Winthrop's Journal, a council was called in Lynn, in 1634, to settle a division. Some of the opponents of Mr. Bachellor questioned whether they were a true church, and withdrew from the communion. "Both parties, after much debate, being heard, it was determined that they were a true church, though not constituted in due order; yet after consent and practice of church estate had supplied that defect, and all were reconciled at that time."

The settlement of Lynn by the English began in 1629. In that year, according to Lewis's History, five families, including twenty persons, located themselves at Wood End — so called after the name of Wood, the head of one of the families. The next year brought an addition of fifty persons, who settled themselves over all parts of the town. It was three years after the first family came before a church was formed. Then Rev. Stephen Bachellor came from England with his family and seven other persons, who settled with him at

Lynn. There appear to have been no formal proceedings in the organization of the church beyond the adoption of a covenant by the members. He commenced preaching to his friends, and the other people before in Lynn joining with them. But very soon a contention grew up between him and the greatest part of the church, and he desired a dismissal for himself and his first members. This was granted on condition of their leaving town. Then he and his dismissed friends renewed their covenant between themselves, and set up for a distinct church. At this the body of the people in town were offended, as it would stand in their way of settling another minister. They complained to the magistrates, who forbade Mr. Bachellor to proceed any further in that way till the cause was considered by the other ministers. But he refused to desist; whereupon they sent for him, and, upon his refusal to come, a marshal was sent to fetch him. Upon his appearance and submission, and promise to remove out of town within three months, he was discharged.

At the time of his coming hither Mr. Bachellor was seventy-one years old, though he had not then wholly outlived the sins of his youth. He lived

afterwards also an irregular life, subject to not a little scandal, which we have no inclination here to repeat, till he had seen near a hundred years. He was a man of strong mind and strong passions, and must have gone to the grave with a heavy account to settle.

So in the very commencement of the history, I have had occasion to speak in terms not complimentary of one of its characters ; and I shall have much occasion to do the like hereafter — while, perhaps, some of the descendants of the persons not complimented may be among my readers. But they must find my apology in the fact, that the Bible histories never conceal such facts for any reasons of delicacy of that kind, but that some of the most honored names are set in the lineage of great offenders. The prophet Samuel was a descendant of Korah ; and Heman, the master of inspired song under David, was one of the sons of Korah. And Lewis's History makes this same Mr. Bachellor, of whom we have spoken, an ancestor of Daniel Webster.

Having thus touched the first springs of the history of the church in Lynn, glance now at its first materials, and see how it was planted — a noble vine — wholly a right seed. What sort of men

were these first fathers of Lynn, whose blood now runs in the veins of so many of its present inhabitants, whose confederated godliness and Christian enterprise opened here the current of spiritual life, with whose onward flow that of its present members has coalesced? They were no mean men for that day, nor for any day. They were a part of that company which God had picked out from the choice material of English society, to be actors in one of the great events of this world, and one of the great events of the church—the founding of the last, freest, greatest of empires. They were no speculating adventurers, roving vagrants, tossed like bubbles and froth on the waves of events, having a chance lighting upon this shore. They were not the chips and shavings of English society, but its substantial material, separated from the rest by powerful causes, in order to execute a great purpose of Jehovah. They were men whose minds and hearts were large enough to entertain some sense of the grandeur of their mission. The impulse which severed them from their country, to seek and prepare a new one, was one which only minds in the best sense great could entertain. It was no sordid expectation of riches that brought them hither.

It was their love of truth, and their hope of founding a far-spreading empire for truth and salvation, that impelled them to face poverty and peril, and the rigors of a life in a wilderness. They had a higher end than that of securing freer civil institutions. Indeed, they found no fault with what institutions they had at home, only so far as religion was hindered by them. They had little studied or cared for the maxims of political philosophy; and the civil liberty which they in fact wrought out was a mere incident—the product of the womb that conceived and developed their empire of freedom—freedom “to feed upon immortal truth, to soar, and to anticipate the skies.” The ends of civil liberty so vast, which they accomplished, were the result of their aspirations to a still grander purpose. In short, they were men of broad views, of lofty spirit, fit to be, as they were, founders of a nation and master builders in the church.

The *ministers* of these immigrants hither were in scholarship among the brightest lights of their age, and in piety and flaming devotion to their Master's cause they were second to none of any age. These were of the same material of which

the martyrs were made. Open now their printed pages, covered with the dust of two centuries, obscured by the antiquation of the costume of their thoughts, and yet you will, as you read, begin to feel a glow inflaming your own heart, and proceeding from inextinguishable fires of genius and fervors of piety.

But the ministry had not a monopoly of talent or worth. Who were the people, the laymen, that first set themselves down upon this shore, and extended their lines along from Salem to Lynn, Charlestown, Boston, Roxbury, and Dorchester? In them English society had its best representatives — asking the pardon of noblemen, so called. These were doubly noble — noble by nature and by grace, born from above, and instinct with lofty aspirations. Here were *gentlemen* of ancient and aristocratic families — merchants, artificers, and husbandmen; estimated on the common scale, men above their assumed employment; but estimated by a truer wisdom, just the men for the work. In the labors of the wilderness they proved themselves what afterwards their brethren in England and the like of them were, as the citizen soldiers of Cromwell's army — not disdaining the place of a common sol-

dier, while fit perhaps themselves to command an army. God had served a summons on the spirits of just that class of men in England which he wanted for a new and strange work that he had to do ; and, obedient to the call, men who were strangers to each other came forth out of diverse and distant places, guided by the plain hand of Providence, and impelled, each by his own particular occasions, to come together in this work. They broke away from all the attractions of home and country, and undertook a fearful voyage over almost trackless seas, into a terrible desert. If these were not heroes, tell us who were.

Such in general was the character of the men of this colony. Nor have we reason to think that those who chose Lynn for their seat were in any respect behind their brethren. When our thoughts glance back to their humble beginnings, — their log cabins, their cleared patches in the woods, their scanty means and pauper life, — we must guard against measuring their qualities by their conditions. Those conditions were the cradle that contained an infant Hercules. Those cabins sheltered heroes and saints of the first water. At work upon that forest were minds

that made bishops sit uneasy in their seats, and caused the frame of English society to tremble ; and the like of which, a few years later, made the English monarchy a ruin. In that forest were men of whom the halls and palaces of the mother country were not worthy—men who came hither because they had souls and designs too great, beneficent, and free for bishops and princes to comprehend.

We have few records of the every-day life and general spirit of that little company whom we call our founders, and who first on this ground opened the forest to the daylight. But one or two important facts may speak volumes as to their character. Theirs was a day when ministers were in a way to be more plenty than people among the emigrants, because they first and most severely felt the hand of persecution. Hence, from the first, it was common for a single church to sustain two ministers ; most of the first churches here did it. Their doctrine requiring two ministers for each church was the offspring of this plenty of ministers. The churches desired to gather into the colony as many ministers as possible, to meet the growing occasions and intensify the religious light and

influence. So they made great sacrifices to sustain those which came over. These sacrifices were made for the common good, and evinced their public spirit. And in this good work the first planters in Lynn, seeking the common good, were not behind. In less than ten years after the first tree was here felled by an English axe, and in less than two years after the first pastor of the church was settled, there was settled with him a colleague, both of whom were sustained out of the small means of the infant church, each of whom had gifts and graces fit for the pastorate of the most enlightened church in the mother country, having been among the choice products of English universities. This double pastorage was sustained for twenty years — not of course for any necessity of this church, but for the public good ; for one such pastor as our Whiting might have sufficed to all the needful ministrations of two or three score of families. Yet for the common good, and to add to the general religious force of the colony, their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. They sustained two ministers, not as drones or pensioners, but as active laborers. And while these labored to rich results among

their own people, one of them, through his pen and the press, gave forth a light which guided many, both here and in England, in the path of life.

We have seen that this church existed several years before it had a settled pastor. Its first preacher, Mr. Bachellor, who was here at its commencement, never acquired that relation. Rev. Samuel Whiting came hither in 1636, and, in a pastorate of forty-one years, probably did more than any other to give character to the church. Samuel Whiting was the son of a mayor of the city of Boston, in England — born in 1597 — a graduate of the English University of Cambridge. His conversion took place at the university, under the instrumentality of his tutor, Mr. Yates, and his religious character was very much developed under the ministries of Drs. Sibbs and Preston. After finishing his course at the university, he became a chaplain in a distinguished family for three years, where with great zeal and fidelity he served the cause of religion. He spent the next three years in Lynn, England, as a colleague in the ministry with Mr. Price, an excellent minister. Here his work was interrupted by persecutions for his non-conformity. He

was cited before the high commission court, and he expected severe treatment there. But the death of King James happening just at that time, found other employment for his persecutors, and the process was dropped.

Leaving Lynn from necessity, he exercised his ministry for some time with much fruit in the vicinity of his native place, Boston. Here he came into intimate communion with Mr. Cotton, afterwards so renowned a leader in the Boston of New England. Mr. Whiting married in England, and had three children there. But his wife and two of his children died before he entertained the purpose of coming hither. For his second wife he married the daughter of Oliver St. John, a gentleman of a distinguished family, and chief justice of England in Cromwell's time. She was a person of singular piety and gravity. She bore the whole burden of her husband's secular cares, and yet led a life of marked devotion and communion with God. She was wont to write out the sermons which she heard with much dexterity and fulness. She not only wrote them, but lived them, and lived on them through the week.

This after-writing of sermons was facilitated from the fact that the sermons of that

day were not usually read by the preacher from manuscripts. They were either spoken extempore, as to language, or from memory. None of the preachers who first came over read sermons, except Mr. Wareham, of Dorchester. He produced quite a sensation by introducing the practice of reading sermons from the pulpit. It was an unheard-of practice among preachers that were in earnest, and it was much opposed by those who had never heard him. But when the same persons came to hear him, they admired his energy and eloquence. Baxter was also one of the few readers of sermons in his days, a little later, and his defence of the practice is to the point. He said, "It is not for want of our abilities that makes us use our notes, but it is a regard for our work and the good of our hearers. I use notes as much as any man when I take pains, and as little as any man when I am lazy, or have not leisure to prepare. It is easier to us to preach three sermons without notes than one with them." There was so much reason in these views that they soon prevailed with the New England ministers. In those days of unwritten sermons it was the custom of the hearers to take notes, or write

out from memory what they could of the sermon, and rehearse it in the family at the evening prayers. In this, it seems, Mrs. Whiting was especially expert; and this the author of the History of Lynn mistakes for her having aided her husband in the composition of sermons. But while true history gave her not this honor, it attributes to her a service of more value to her husband and her people — that which comes from the sympathy of earnest piety and devotedness to the minister's success in his calling, and her discreet coöperation in her proper sphere. And happy was Lynn in having such a pastor's wife employing her rare gifts to divide the cares and strengthen the heart and influence of her husband, while cradling the infancy of a church in a forest. And sublime was the spectacle of that daughter of wealth and rank enacting the Christian heroine here, while her father was filling the highest seat of justice in England, great among the great men of his times. She lived with her husband forty-seven years, and died at the age of seventy-three. She had four sons and two daughters. Three of her sons were devoted ministers of Christ. One of them was, in his father's old age, an assistant of him here for a

while. One son and one daughter died in Lynn. His son Samuel was a minister in Billerica. His son John went to England. His son Joseph went to South Hampton, Long Island, and settled in the ministry there. His daughter became the wife of Rev. Jeremiah Hobart, of Topsfield.

But we return to the matter of Mr. Whiting's emigration from England. After Mr. Cotton had come over, the persecutions against Mr. Whiting were renewed, and he found that he must be gone. When the time of trial came, his wife showed no unwillingness to quit the circles of polished life in which she had been reared, and devoting her rich endowments of mind and heart to the toil of nursing an infant church in this wilderness. Her friends opposed, but she forwarded her husband's inclination. He had lands in England, which, if he had retained them, might have yielded him an income supplemental to his scanty living here. But he said, "I am going to sacrifice unto the Lord in the wilderness, and I will not leave a hoof behind me." After a voyage of six weeks, he arrived in Boston, May 26, 1636; and most happy was he there in meeting with many of his former friends who had come over before him.

The amiableness and magnanimity of the man appears in his intercourse with his colleague. Impelled by a previous friendship for Mr. Cobbett, before he had himself got well settled and engaged in his work, on Mr. Cobbett's arrival he moved his people to invite his friend to take part of his ministry. And the historian says, "They continued a sweet pair of brothers till, on the removal of Mr. Norton to Boston, and Mr. Rogers to heaven, Mr. Cobbett was translated to Ipswich." "The rays with which they illumined the house of God sweetly united. They were almost every day together, and thought it a long day if they were not so. The one rarely travelled abroad without the other; and these two angelic men seemed willing to give one another as little of jostle as did the ascending and descending angels on Jacob's ladder." If any are curious to know what earthly maintenance these angelic men had, and how much they must have lived on angels' food for want of human sustenance, they may get some idea from a passage of Mather. He says, "The ungrateful inhabitants of Lynn one year passed a town vote that they could not allow their ministers above thirty pounds apiece that year for their

salary, and behold the God who will not be mocked immediately caused the town to lose more than three hundred pounds, in the single article of their cattle, by one disaster." How much deduction from their salary had been made he does not tell us ; and they might have been relatively an ungrateful people in that act. But the sixty pounds which they then paid, considering the value of money then, and the small means of the people, were paid at a greater sacrifice than is often now made for the support of the ministry.

Such a blessing of God attended the small means of these ministers, that, in some respects, they that gathered little had no lack. Mr. Whiting said that he questioned whether, if he had remained in England, where his means were much more considerable, he could have brought up three sons at a university there. Owing to the skilful stewardship of his wife, to a legacy from a relative, and more to the blessing of God providing for his faithful servants, he did not die a pauper. His estate at his death was as good as one of six thousand dollars would now be.

At the age of sixty-two he began to endure the sufferings incident to the disease called the stone. This visitation lasted twenty years, till

his death, though, with all the suffering it brought to him, it never kept him from his pulpit labors.

Mather says of him that he was an accomplished and accurate scholar — especially accurate in the Hebrew, elegant in Latin, and much conversant with history. His sweetness of temper was an essential stroke in his character. His meekness of wisdom outshone all his other attainments. His face was the image of his mind, which, like the upper regions, was marvellously free from the storms of passion. He was eminently a holy man, much devoted to prayer and reading the Scriptures. He conducted the worship of his family like a true child of Abram. His counsel to his children was grave and memorable. He cultivated heavenly dispositions by much meditation. He having a walk for that purpose in his orchard, some of his flock, that saw him constantly taking his turns in that walk, with hand, eye, and soul directed to heaven, would say, "There does our dear pastor walk with God every day." The ground which he hallowed by that walk with God was not far distant from the place of our sanctuary. His house was in Shepard Street, opposite the meeting house, which

stood near the corner, east of Shepard Street and north of Summer Street.

A passage between him and Mr. Norton, of Boston, illustrates his character. Mr. Norton was deeply engaged in writing in Latin an account and description of the New England churches, for the information of Christians on the continent. Some of his hearers imagined that his sermons, the mean while, had not the accuracy of his former efforts. This, says Mather, was reported to him whom I may call the angel of the church in Lynn. Mr. Whiting, upon this, said to Mr. Norton, "Sir, there are some of your people who think that the services wherein you are engaged for all the churches take off something of the edge of the ministry with which you should serve your own particular church. I would entreat you, sir, to consider this matter; for our greatest work is to preach the gospel to that flock whereof we are overseers." He took the hint with kindness, and profited by it.

Mr. Whiting spent his time chiefly in his study. He made no visits to his people but those which had a strictly religious intent. He

had a rare faculty of speaking a word in season. His end in preaching was to profit, rather than please—to speak what was useful, rather than what was profound or popular. In authorship he did not abound as much as his colleague did. He published two books—the one a volume of sermons on Abram's intercession for Sodom, and the other upon the last judgment.

Such, in brief, were the character and works of the first pastor of this church; and happy would it have been for her, and for the spiritual condition of this large population, if the character of all his successors had been formed upon the same basis and model with his.

It would be a gratification if we could recover the form of the covenant of the church used under the pastorate of Mr. Whiting. That, however, seems to be beyond our reach. The copy which Mr. Lewis gives, as transcribed by him “from the leaf of a pocket Bible belonging to one of the ministers,” is not, what he calls it, the original covenant, for two reasons—first, that its being on the leaf of a Bible of an unnamed minister is no sufficient evidence that it was used by the first minister. But the more conclusive reason is,

it has a form attached to it to be used on the half-way covenant principle ; whereas the half-way covenant was unknown in New England till long after this church commenced ; and there is good reason for believing that it did not come into use here earlier than Mr. Henchman's time at the earliest.

## CHAPTER II.

INFLUENCE OF THE COMMEMORATION OF ANCESTORS. —  
MR. WHITING AND THE COURTS ON CLASHING JURIS-  
DICTIONS. — LIFE OF REV. THOMAS COBBETT.

IN the first glances at the field of our history, we have seen a church planted, a noble vine wholly of the right seed. Never, in all the expansions of Christianity in the world, was a church planted with a better original material. And it ought to subserve an important purpose to hold up to view the men whom God gave to be the first founders here. It was said of the ancient Scythians — a race of savages much like the American Indians — that when in their battles they came to the graves of their dead fathers, they would there stand immovable, and die on the spot, rather than retreat. And ought not the graves or the revered memory of such fathers as these to inspire a resolution to stand fast in the faith, the order and the power of godliness, in which those fathers stood? In these days, when there has been such a broad defection

from Puritan principles and character, it would seem pertinent to show the graves of the dead fathers to their degenerate children, to rebuke their apostasies, and more especially when these same apostates pride themselves so much on their ancestry. Dwelling on the secular results which have come from the great Puritan enterprise, those farthest gone from those principles which made the Puritans what they were, are now ready to boast of a Puritan ancestry. They build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and reflect not that they have gone over to the side of those who killed the prophets; reflect not that their whole belief and life are in conflict with that which gave their fathers their renown. If for nothing else, it is pertinent to show such men the graves of their fathers, in order to show them how unlike their fathers they have become, and what dishonor they are doing to the memory of such fathers.

Suppose those men of sainted memory could come back to the scenes of their prayers and toils. While their hearts would swell with rapture in view of the astonishing results which in two centuries God has brought from their enter-

prise, they would find in the wide and shocking degeneracy of men in whose veins flows their blood, and in whose names their own are repeated, enough to restore the balance of humility in their minds. Most humiliating would be the fact that while wealth, and splendor, and a teeming population cover the ground from which their toil removed the forest, a clear majority of their children have become men of other principles and another spirit from themselves. And with what indignation would the shades of these men repel the incense which is burned to their names by a posterity that contemptuously treads under foot the principles which they held dearer than life, and for which they suffered the loss of all things! It were worth the while to open the graves of the dead, and show what kind of men those fathers were, if for no other purpose, to show to so many of the living, who bless themselves in a Puritan ancestry, how little they have in common with their ancestors.

We have given a sketch of Mr. Whiting; we will here add one item. There was a passage between him and the county court, which presents him to good advantage. The documents are given at large in Lewis's History. The facts

are these. John Hathorne complained to the church that Andrew Mansfield and William Langley had perjured themselves, by giving false testimony before the court at Ipswich. These persons were tried by the church, and found guilty of perjury. They then procured an indictment for slander against Hathorne, in that he brought the charge of perjury before the church, making an act of discipline an indictable offence ; and the court found him guilty upon that indictment. But before giving sentence, the court addressed a letter to the church, expressing their grief that the civil and ecclesiastical courts should give contrary judgments in the same case, and desiring the church to review their proceedings, and find cause to reverse them. To this letter, on behalf of the church, Mr. Whiting wrote a reply, which is admirable, both in its mild and Christian spirit, and in its clear and sound judgment of the merits of the case. He tells the court that if their principle be carried out, there can be no discipline in the churches ; for if delinquents, when censured in churches, may get revenge by penalties from the courts, on actions of slander, the ecclesiastical authority is wholly subjected to the civil, and

church discipline is impossible. The court answered the letter, disclaiming all purpose to interfere with church discipline, but declining to show how discipline could consist with such action ; and they sentenced the accused to pay a heavy fine.

It was not wonderful that such questions of clashing jurisdictions should arise in a new community, where all things were new, and where precedents and settled principles, guiding the separate and neutral action of a free church and a free commonwealth, were wanting. Now that the true principle on this subject has long since been settled, it is gratifying to see that our present laws fully sustain the ground assumed by Mr. Whiting — that legitimate church action is not fettered by the authority of the civil courts ; but that when a charge of immorality is brought into a church against an offending member for trial, and tried, neither the person bringing the charge, nor the church condemning the accused upon it, is liable to action before the civil courts. It now seems strange to us that the court did not see that their infliction of penalties for acts of church discipline went to defeat the very purpose for which the church in

the wilderness had come hither—to wit, the free exercise of their religious rights, and the rearing of a church on the model of the New Testament.

We now proceed to sketch the life of Rev. Thomas Cobbett, for twenty years the colleague of Mr. Whiting.

Mr. Cobbett was born at Newbury, England, in 1608, of poor parents; but Providence, having a great work for him to do, opened for him the way to attain the qualifications to do it, as he has done in numberless instances of the kind. In nothing does God more illustrate his independence of human resources than in the way in which he calls and qualifies the instruments of his most difficult and honorable works from the humbler ranks in life, and appropriates to his own use the sometimes superior energies of body and mind that have been cultivated in early years by conflicts with poverty. Yea, he claims it as his prerogative, when he will, to lift the poor from the dunghill, that he may set him among princes. Mr. Cobbett found means to secure an education at the University of Oxford. Being driven from thence by the plague before he had quite completed his course, he finished it under

the private tuition of Dr. Twisse, who was afterwards the moderator of the famous Westminster Assembly, and who was one of the greatest scholars of his age. Mr. Cobbett commenced preaching in England, but was soon compelled to flee for safety from persecution to New England. He came over in the same vessel with Mr. Davenport, of New Haven.

When he arrived, Mr. Whiting, impelled by a previous friendship, secured his settlement with himself, as co-pastor of the church in Lynn; and with what cordiality the coöperation continued for twenty years we have seen. During those twenty years, great changes were made upon the face of the forest here, and doubtless great progress in fixing a settled character of truth and godliness in the church, which in that time must have sensibly grown by additions of their own children. But greater changes had taken place in the mother country. The monarchy had gone out, and the commonwealth had come in. And these exiles sympathized in those wonderful events no less than their countrymen at home. Indeed, they had great occasion; for they saw in them the triumph of their own principles, the achievement on English soil of the

liberty for which they had suffered the loss of all things; and one of the many books which our Cobbett published was one written with reference to the principles then in contest—a work on toleration, defining the duties of the civil magistrate in relation to religious liberty. This was dedicated to Cromwell. To it was appended a defence of the New England government against the charge of persecution.

It is a noticeable fact, that Mr. Cobbett was one of the most, if not the most voluminous author of his day in New England, and also the most that Lynn to this time can boast of. Mather calls him one of the principal scribes of New England, who wrote more books than most of the divines which did their part to make a Kirjath Sepher—a city of letters—of this wilderness; in every one of which he proved himself a scribe well instructed. And he brought forth instruction from a rich treasure. The story of his life might be well made out by an account of his books. A writer of books at that day must have been impelled by strong motives, considering the obstructions in the way of their publication. There was no printing office in the colony. All books must be sent

over to London to be published ; and then for a part of the time there was a censorship upon the press, which subjected authors to the caprices of a bishop's chaplain, besides the ordinary difficulties of finding a publisher. To show the delays attending such publications, one of Mr. Cobbett's works was written and completed in the year 1653, and its publication bears date of 1657. These four years between the completion of the writing and the publication would cool the ardor of most authors.

Yet, with these impediments, Mr. Cobbett abounded in published works. One of these, which has been as much praised as any, was a work on infant baptism. Among the first planters of this colony there was here and there one who had sympathies, more or less, with the Anabaptists in England, though it was much later than this before the Baptist denomination made any considerable progress in this colony. But it seems as early as Mr. Cobbett's time some efforts were made by individuals to spread that doctrine among his people. The work which he published to counteract the leaven we have not been able to obtain ; but of it the renowned John Cotton speaks in these terms :—

“Cobbett, when he saw that some of Christ’s sheep committed to him were caught in the snares and brambles of antipedobaptism, inflamed with zeal for God, and moved with Christ’s compassion towards erring disciples, collected what books he could of the antipedobaptists, and weighed their arguments in the balances of the sanctuary. He carefully examined cart loads of their productions, and seizing on the arguments by which they had their success, with great acumen, sagacity, and labor, he left nothing untouched that could contribute to illustrate the truth, and disperse the clouds of error.”

Of this testimony Mather says, “Such commendation from so reverend and renowned a pen is to have one’s life sufficiently written.”

There is one thing that deserves to be noticed here; that is, that the religious life which was developed by these Puritan fathers attached great importance to the covenant which, between God and man, pledged the godly training and salvation of children. And of our first pastors in Lynn, historians testify of the one that “he conducted the worship of his family like a true child of Abram;” and of the other,

that he ably and successfully discussed the whole subject, and delivered from the brambles those of his people who had been entangled in them. And we shall sooner or later learn that one of the causes of the depressed tone of life in our churches now is the less regard which prevails in them for the Abrahamic covenant. Their treatment of this subject differed in one respect essentially from ours. They made the fact that there was a sprinkling among them of men who scrupled the practice of infant baptism, such as Williams, Chauncy, and Oakes, a reason for its thorough discussion and more earnest profession. The more it was called in question, the more they adhered to it. They saw that the life and force of their churches were identified with it, and would as soon have surrendered their whole profession as that. But in modern times, the opposition to it is made an occasion of a less bold profession and practice of it—a habit and inclination of the public mind which is fraught with incalculable mischief.

But there is one book of Mr. Cobbett's, which, if he had written no others, would have entitled him to stand in the first rank of authors on practical and experimental religion. It is entitled

“A Practical Discourse of Prayer, wherein is handled the Duty, the Qualifications of Prayer — the several Sorts of Prayer, as ejaculatory, private, public, and secret Prayer,” by Thomas Cobbett, minister of the word, at Lynn, New England. Printed at London, 1657. This book is now in process of republication by the Congregational Board of Publication. It bears on the face of it, as the reader will see when it comes forth, the proof that it comes of the opening of a treasury of a soul that has had large and rich experience in prayer. There is about it a remarkable unction, fervor, and force. There is a lucid and logical arrangement of the materials, a great compactness and condensation of thought; the intricate and difficult points are illumined by a mind deeply experienced in prayer, and richly stored with divine truth. The thoughts come out all warm and glowing, from a heart deeply moved by the Spirit of God. We have no book on the same subjects, now in the course of general reading, which can compare with it. And it ought to be republished, and placed in every Christian family.

Nor am I alone in this high estimation. I was induced to take the pains to find a copy of it, by

Cotton Mather's high encomiums of it. He says, that "of all the books written by Cobbett, none deserves more to be read by the world, and to live till the general burning of the world, than that on prayer. He was himself eminently a man of prayer. His prayers were not more observable, throughout New England, for the argumentative, the importunate, and, I had almost said, filially familiar strains of them, than for the wonderful success that attended them. Our Cobbett was ever pulling at that golden chain, the one end of which is tied to the tongue of man, and the other to the ear of God ; and he often pulled to marvellous purpose."

"A son of this man of prayer," says Mather, "was taken by the Indians, with little expectation of his ever being recovered. Whereupon Mr. Cobbett called about thirty of the Christians of the neighborhood to his house, and there they prayed together for the young man's deliverance. The old man's heart was now no more sad. He believed that the prayers would be answered, and fully declared his conviction. Within a few days the young man returned to his father, under circumstances little short of a miracle." The facts are given more at

length, in a letter of Mr. Cobbett to Increase Mather.

This son of Mr. Cobbett was Thomas Cobbett, Jr., then a seaman at Portsmouth. He was taken by the Indians and carried to Penobscot, and was kept by them nine weeks. Meanwhile prayer was made for him in the church of God without ceasing — in Mr. Moody's congregation in Portsmouth, in Mr. Shepard's in Charlestown, in the churches in Boston, and many others. When Mr. Moody first sent the information to Lynn of the capture of the young man, Mr. Cobbett caused one of the deacons at once to call into his house as many of the praying people as could be easily collected. About thirty-six met and prayed through several hours. Mr. Cobbett began and ended the service. He had, at the same time, a son sick at home; and they prayed that that son might recover, and that his recovery might be to them a pledge of the deliverance of the other. Mr. Cobbett said, "I was sweetly guided in the course of that service, and was even persuaded that the Lord had heard our prayers, and could not but express as much to some of our godly friends." His sick son began to amend at once.

Mather says, the instances of surprising effects following this man's prayers were so many, that they cannot be given in detail. It was generally supposed that the enemies of New England owed their wondrous disasters as much to his prayers, as to any other cause. As Knox's prayers were sometimes more feared than an army of ten thousand men, so Cobbett's prayers were esteemed of no little significancy to the welfare of the country. But Cobbett was not alone among his compeers as a man of prayer. The biographies given of a large proportion of the first New England ministers describe their remarkable gifts or power in prayer.

Of Mr. Norton, first a minister at Ipswich, and afterwards minister in Boston, it was said, that it even transported the souls of his hearers to accompany him in his devotions. A godly man of Ipswich, after his removal to Boston, was in a habit of travelling on foot about thirty miles, to attend the weekly lecture, and would profess that it was worth a great journey to be a partaker in one of Mr. Norton's prayers. This incident, related by Mather, the History of Lynn, by an unaccountable mistake, attributes to

Mr. Cobbett, as though he was in a habit of making those pedestrian tours.

Of Mr. Wilson, of Boston, at whose instance Mr. Norton's removal to Boston had been procured, it was said that his faith, in connection with answers to prayer, had become proverbial. While Mr. Norton's removal was in debate, some one said to Mr. Rogers that he feared Mr. Wilson's arguments would prevail to secure his removal. Mr. Rogers replied, that he was more afraid of his faith than his arguments. Mr. Wilson's whole experience was full of memorable providences, connected with his prayers. An Indian had seized an English girl, and was carrying her off in a canoe, rowing very swiftly. The soldiers feared to fire upon him, lest they should kill the girl. They asked Mr. Wilson what to do ; he lifted his heart to God in prayer, and told them to fear not to fire, for God will direct the aim. It was done ; the Indian was killed, and the girl unharmed. This is but a specimen of countless occurrences of his life.

Hooker, the first minister of Cambridge, and afterwards of Hartford, had similar experiences. When he fled from the officers sent to arrest him, to take ship for Holland, and had barely

time to reach the ship, a friend inquired, "What if the wind should not be fair when you arrive?" He replied, "Leave that with Him who keeps the winds in the hollow of his hand." The wind was opposite till he went on board, then shifted at once, and aided his escape. Being himself eminently a man of prayer, he taught that prayer was the principal of a minister's work, and that it was by this that he was to carry on the rest, and that such extraordinary favors as the life of religion and the power of godliness must be preserved by extraordinary efforts at prayer and fasting. But in prayer he would have strength rather than length. There was a battle to be fought between the Mohegan Indians, the friends of the English, and the Narragansetts, who were plotting their destruction. On this occasion, Mr. Hooker interceded for the Mohegans, and used as an argument the promise, "I will bless him that blesseth thee," and his prayer prevailed.

Of Jonathan Burr, a minister in Dorchester, accounts are given that show that prayer was the leading business and purpose of his everyday life.

Thomas Shepard's journal, after his death,

showed a life devoted to prayer, being full of remarkable passages between himself and God. It was he who said, "God will curse that man's labors that lumbers up and down all the week in the world, and then on Saturday afternoon goes into his study, when, God knows, that time were little enough to pray in, and weep in, and get his heart in a fit frame for the Sabbath."

We have not room for other examples, such as that of Cotton and Eliot, and many others no less distinguished as wrestlers with God. We give these as illustrations of the temper of those men whom God chose to do for him that great work upon our foundations. And we do it also to reveal the secret of the power which they exerted, and the wonderful success which crowned their toils. Here was the secret spring of that force which made Puritanism lay so strong a hand upon the world.

It was a distinguished favor to this church that its foundations were laid by such men as Whiting and Cobbett. If their character may indicate any thing of the character of the church — and how could such men labor so long without impressing their character on the church,

if they had nothing of it before? — then was this church planted a noble vine. Its foundations were laid in such prayers as we have described — prayers that may live and prevail for centuries after the hearts that swelled in their utterance have mouldered in the dust.

Would that our own hearts could come into closer sympathy with those our first men and first ministers. And it is well to investigate their history, that we may know them better and catch more of their spirit. When our admiration kindles upon them, there is a quickening and assimilating power in that admiration. And it is well to hold the mind in as near contact with them as we can. It is well to make it real to our habitual thoughts, at how many points we are identified with them — that what was their work, in the rearing of this church, is now our work; that our spiritual life flows in channels which they opened; that our places of abode were first occupied by them; that the ground which we tread was pressed by their feet, the air which we breathe bore the sound of their supplications and their songs to heaven; that the features of the natural scenery around us were familiar to their eyes; that while in

study, labor, or meditation, while in their morning and evening walks, they looked out upon those highlands, upon that "High Rock," upon that Nahant, upon that splendid beach, and that vast expanse of waters. Thus from one and the same book of nature they and we have read of the beauty and majesty of the Creator's works, just as we have read from the same gospel the same way of life and salvation, and from the same fountain of life have been made to drink into one spirit with them.

Yea, in our national characteristics, and modes of civilization, we are essentially one with them ; and the improvements which we have made, setting us at a distance from them, are improvements made upon their models, and in the light which they had kindled. In those things in which we differ from other nations—our language, our idioms of thought and feeling, our arts and habits of life, our social structure and institutions—we are either one with them, or drawing from them as our spring. As one life pervades the root and the branches of a tree, so our life, civil, social, and spiritual, is one with theirs.

Those men were conscious that they were lay-

ing the foundations of many generations. Read their writings, listen to all their intercommunications of their plans and purposes, and you will see that they lived mainly for their posterity, and for a glorious future. The toils which they endured on this ground might have been avoided, if they sought only their own salvation. Nay, the force of their labor and the energy of their prayers were spent that there might be a perpetuation of life and fruitfulness in the vine which they were planting and nurturing ; that many generations might sit under its shadow, and partake of its fruits with great delight. And who knows that the wonderful preservation of this church from extinction, for that whole century, when she had so many more chances of death than life, was not owing to the prayers of its founders? If those men did not succeed to impress any thing of their character on children's children to remotest times, they singularly failed of their purpose. We have now a rich legacy in the prayers—the yet unanswered prayers—which they uttered while planting and watering here. Who can say that that cause which kept this church

from sinking wholly, when she was so nearly under water, will not hereafter operate to a large expansion of your prosperity? The church sent forth by the immortal Robinson, and watched over on the heath of Plymouth by the devoted Brewster; the church that broke ground in Salem, under Higginson and Skelton; the church which Wilson conducted to Boston, and the church which the name of Cotton illustrated,—these and many others, around which hallowed recollections cluster, have gone to the ranks of those that deny the Lord that bought them; while this, for a long time as much exposed, now stands united in the profession of Puritan principles.

Those sainted men have labored, and we have entered into their labors—deriving precious advantages from their toils and tears. These advantages bring with them important obligations—obligations resting on us to take up and carry on their work. We have the same conflict which they had to sustain, though in a different form. The same principles of the gospel, requiring evangelical and vital godliness, are now beset with a host, though with differ-

ent arms and tactics. And by all that is sacred and stirring in their names and mighty deeds, we are impelled to imitate their holy zeal, valor, and power of intercession with God.

And, as they had a future before them, looming in the prospect with thrilling grandeur, so have we. We see how their prayers and labors touched the springs of immense and ever-expanding influence. And if we copy their godliness, and their power with God, those who come after us may see and say the same of us. The call for Christian heroes, though in another manner, is now as loud as it was then. The opportunity to spread our power for good over the ages to come is now as great as then. And the obligations coming directly from God press as heavily upon us as upon them. And in some sense their destiny is not complete except as it completes itself in the worthy conduct of us their children. "These all, 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. Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of wit-

nesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith."

### CHAPTER III.

EVANESCENCE OF EARTHLY FAME.—LIFE OF REV. JEREMIAH SHEPARD.—PURITAN CHURCH ARCHITECTURE.—THE “TUNNEL” MEETING HOUSE.—ORIGIN OF THE QUAKERS.—ORIGIN OF LYNNFIELD PARISH.—GENERAL PROSPERITY OF SHEPARD’S MINISTRY.

WE have given a sketch of the lives of that “*dulce par fratrum*” which held the first pastorate of this church, and labored and prayed so long for its establishment and growth, with a harmony more than earthly. The meagreness of that sketch may teach us how vain it is, not only to lay up *treasures* on earth, but also to seek to build a monument, or to perpetuate for ourselves a fame on earth. Those were great times, and great men that lived and wrought in those times. But how little of what was done on this soil during the forty years of that pastorate can be now recalled from oblivion! Those ministers, and the Christians that sustained and coöperated with them here, lived to a great purpose; and not one thing which they did is forgotten before God. Could all be rehearsed now, as it will be

rehearsed in the great day, it would present before you the image of those men shining as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. And yet the fact that it is the way of this world to let such memorials of the great and good perish from the earth, so that the few relics of their memory which we have gathered are all that we can gather, when we so much desire more, should teach us the vanity of all efforts to make an abiding impress of ourselves on this world. If such an impress is made, it is made on a fluid mass, on a generation hastening like a flowing stream, to be lost in the ocean of eternity. It is like letters in the sand, soon to be swept by winds or waves.

In this case the loss is ours, and not that of the worthies with whom we vainly seek a better acquaintance. They are still to be had in everlasting remembrance. A glorious commemoration of their labors and fruits of labor awaits the day of the manifestation of the sons of God. Then their history will be written and read in a manner that is worthy of them. Meanwhile, our effort made in vain to get full materials of their history may admonish us how little the world will know of us, and what a narrow space

our names and lives will fill in the recollections of men on earth, in a few years after we shall have left the scene. Our death, when it comes, will make scarce a ripple on the surface of the common mind. And soon earth will have forgotten that she bore us on her bosom. Let, then, earth's remembrances be estimated only for what they are worth, while we seek that honor which comes from God only, having higher reasons for all the good we attempt on earth—the reason that it is so much done for Christ, to be remembered and rewarded by him.

The second in the series of pastorates of this church was filled by Rev. Jeremiah Shepard, commencing in the year 1679. His father, Rev. Thomas Shepard, of Cambridge, was one of the most effective preachers of the Puritan age; and the motive for establishing the college at Cambridge was, that the students might be under his ministry. He died in middle life, and while his son Jeremiah was an infant. Jeremiah was the son of his third wife, to whom he had been married but a short time, and who afterwards married Mr. Mitchel, the successor of Mr. Shepard in the ministry at Cambridge—a man of like spirit with him; so that our Shepard had his

training and education wholly under Mr. Mitchel. As Mr. Shepard and Mr. Mitchel attached great importance to the Abrahamic covenant, so their family felt its influence. He was remarkably blessed in the character of his children. He had three sons, all of whom were ministers. Of the two elder Mather gives a particular account ; but he says nothing of the youngest, that is, of Jeremiah ; for he was living when Mather wrote. His oldest son, Thomas, was settled in Charlestown, and died there in middle life. The small pox was raging in the town. He felt it to be his duty to visit one of his people who was dying with it. Conscious of his danger, he took his life in his hand, and made the visit, and took the disease, and died. Such was the eminence of his standing in the ministry, and such the manner of his death, that it created an almost unparalleled sensation throughout New England. His second son, Samuel Shepard, was pastor of the church in Rowley, where he died at the age of twenty-six — eleven years before his brother Jeremiah was settled in Lynn. He was an excellent preacher, and ardently beloved by his people. For one of his age, he had made rare attainments in communion with God.

We have less information about Jeremiah Shepard. We know that, like his brothers, he sprang from a noble stock ; and though his father had not the charge of his training, his stepfather was hardly less distinguished for all the qualities that would insure a wise and godly education. Young Shepard graduated at Cambridge, at the age of twenty-one ; but he did not enter the ministry till he was thirty-one. Then he was ordained pastor in Lynn.

And here is the point where we have most occasion to regret the loss of the early records of the church. Down to this time we have something of the history of the church in the brief biographies of her ministers, which the published histories had preserved. But when our Shepard had finished his course, the ministers of New England had become so numerous that it was not customary to make public records of the lives of all. I have gleaned from the town records all the allusions to him and his work which there appear ; and these, by reason of a loss of records of the town, do not extend back to the time of the commencement of his ministry. The town records clearly show that his relations with his people, from first to last, were harmoni-

ous ; and that, by the way, is one reason why the materials for writing his history are so scarce. It is wars and strifes, whether in churches or states, that most rapidly accumulate materials for the historian.

We have the means of knowing what were the doctrines which he preached, and something of his talents and manner as a preacher, in some printed sermons of his now extant in the library of the Old South Church in Boston. His doctrines were Calvinistic, after the type of those of his father and of the Puritan founders. These sermons show him to be an earnest preacher, and specially careful to distinguish between true and false conversions ; and they give all the evidence that sermons can give that their author was a true minister, possessed of a really regenerate character.

He was ordained and commenced his ministry here in the first tabernacle, in the rude sanctuary that was built by the first fathers of the town. For three years he preached in the same house that had been illumined by the ministry of those precious men, Cobbett and Whiting ; and though the house, which, from the peculiarity of its structure, — having its bell tower set on the cen-

tre of its square roof, — was nicknamed the *Tunnel*, was in the matter of architecture probably a decided advance upon it, yet it could not be said that the glory of the latter house was greater than that of the former. There must have been, at the time of Mr. Shepard's settlement here, a large society compared with its earlier years, though its numbers were small compared with those of later times, and scattered over a large surface, embracing Saugus and Lynnfield. The erection of the Tunnel meeting house, in 1682, must have been no trifling event for Lynn in those times. Though in its old age it was not admired for its architectural taste, or its magnificence, yet, considering the penury of the times, it did honor to the people that reared it. It showed that in the early days of Mr. Shepard's ministry there were energy and public spirit in the society, resulting from the sound doctrine which till that time had been maintained. And it is worthy of a passing remark, that notwithstanding a false doctrine so long occupied the pulpits of this church — that is, within three years of a century — it never built a pulpit or a meeting house. It did so

much to impoverish and dilapidate its outward condition, but little to improve it.

It is well known that the first planters here, while under the privations of a life in the wilderness, did not emulate the splendor nor style of English cathedrals. They had good reasons for rejecting the style of church building that Popery had bequeathed to England, and that still contributed to keep alive in the popular mind a taste for Popish things. The nature and spirit of their religion differed enough from that which had driven them out to beget a different style of church building. The house should be built so as best to fit the uses to which it was to be put. If the house was to be used by a teaching ministry, it should be built so as to be most convenient for teaching and hearing the gospel, and impressing the mind with the simplicity that is in Christ; but if it is built to accommodate a religion that appeals to the imagination through pompous rites and ceremonies, then it needs as much and as specific architectural fitness to the scenes to be enacted in it as the theatre does for the scenes to be enacted in it. For this kind of religion, relying not on a

preached gospel, but on the impressiveness of its shows, its pomps, and ceremonies, the Gothic structure, with stained glass, obstructing and discoloring the light of heaven about in the same proportion that its ministry discolors the light of the gospel, is well adapted. What is called the dim religious light in such a house answers well to a religion that lives more in the twilight than in the open day, and has its fit appendages in the gorgeous vestments of its priesthood. But for a church whose ministry is one of truth and light, such architectural arrangements are most unfit, because all minds are more or less susceptible of impressions from the scenery around them ; and imaginative minds, especially those of the young, are liable, when worshipping in such houses, to take impressions in favor of a pompous religion, and acquire tendencies towards Romanism.

Our fathers were aware of these weaknesses of human nature — were well acquainted with Romanism and its causes, and were not ignorant of Satan's devices ; and it was a point of great interest with them to keep clear of every thing that would foster tendencies to Romanism, or its half-way house, that is, the house of bondage

out of which they came. It is very true that they made their protest against the Romish style of architecture more graphic than was needful, when they reared structures the like of which did not exist in heaven or earth, or such as that Tunnel. But it is no disparagement to say, that with all their other gettings, they had not acquired a cultivated taste in architecture — that they were more profound in the truths of salvation than they were conversant with models and standards of taste in building. Something must be pardoned to the vagaries of an untaught fancy; and possibly there might have lurked under the oddities of some of their architectural plans something of sarcasm, or something of the intent with which they sometimes surmounted the steeple with a cock instead of a cross, to indicate, not the profession of the primacy of St. Peter, but the admonition to Peter that he had denied his Master. But we may pardon what was grotesque in those buildings, in view of the important practical principle to which their builders aimed. They sought to exclude a superstitious reverence from being attached to boards and shingles, and brick and mortar; and if they built houses that were not a likeness

of any thing in heaven or earth, they kept at so much greater distance from violating the second commandment ; for the church out of which they had come approximated to a breach of that commandment, in attaching a superstitious reverence to the brick and mortar, or boards and shingles, of their consecrated houses. And when our fathers built such houses, they made it plain that they were not building houses to worship, but only houses to worship in. They caused it to be clearly understood that those structures were not objects of reverence, but convenient places for teaching religion and worshipping God, and having no sacredness different in kind from the chamber whither the good man resorts for his daily closet worship. And most effectually did they guard against their meeting houses serving as lures to Popery, or stepping stones to a religion of pompous rites.

When the meeting house to which we refer was built, the church had been in existence here fifty years ; and though the society must have been numerous, — second on the scale of numbers in the whole colony, — its aggregate ability could not have been large. With the ideas which we attach to the force of our towns, we

can hardly realize how feeble were the hands that laid the foundations here. Eight years after this church commenced, and two years after its first pastor was settled, there were in all the colonies of New England only four thousand people—a little more than a quarter as many as the present inhabitants of Lynn; and for the next twenty years, because the Puritan cause was in the ascendancy in England, the Puritans had no cause to emigrate to this wilderness. For that time, more persons went from here to England than came from England hither; so that the population of Lynn, being confined to its increase by births for that time, must have been very small for the first thirty years. Over the territory now embraced in Lynn, Lynnfield, and Saugus, there were scattered here and there a family, having their centre of attraction in the rude meeting house which stood on the north-east corner made by Shepard Street and Summer Street. Small in resources, they were strong in the faith of the gospel, and abundant in religious privileges, having the whole labors of two most learned and devoted ministers.

In 1660, that is, nineteen years before Mr. Shepard's ministry commenced, the altered state

of things in England effected an increase of immigration ; and it would be natural to conclude that this town, being near the main port of ingress, would receive strength from that source. Be that as it may, soon after Mr. Shepard's ministry commenced, the first meeting house had become too strait for its occupants ; for its age could not have disqualified it for use. In building the new house called the Tunnel, either from motives of economy, or other cause, the house was built without pews. Then, when an individual family preferred to have a pew of its own, separate from the common seats, which extended over the floor, it applied to the town for liberty to build a pew. This liberty was granted by vote of the town, to the effect that such a family might have liberty to build and occupy a pew of such a size by the wall of the house, on condition of keeping the window in repair. The builder of the pew was restricted in nothing but the space he was to occupy. The style of building was left to his own fancy, and all varieties of taste had room for display in the matter. Nor were even the sizes of the pews the same. Some were large, and some small ; and the whole must have presented a rare spectacle. A

considerable portion of town legislation, from year to year, in early times, consisted in granting individual families permissions to build a pew in such a part of the house, of such and such dimensions, and under such and such conditions. After the tier of pews extended round the house, by the wall, permissions were given to build pews in the body of the house, beginning at the end opposite the pulpit, and gradually extending forward, the temporary seats giving place to pews. The house was fifty feet long and forty-four wide. The best idea may be formed of its size from that of the Universalist Church on Commercial Street; for the frame of that is the frame of the Tunnel, enlarged. The frame of the Tunnel was moved from the common to that site without being taken down. Some years after its removal, it was enlarged by the addition of ten or fifteen feet to its length. But as the Tunnel had galleries, it would probably seat many more people than that house will now.

Ten years after the Tunnel was built, there were indications that the house was filled, and seats difficult to be had. The town voted that such and such persons might sit in the deacons'

seat ; and afterwards, that such and such persons might sit in the pulpit, if they would keep the pulpit window in repair. The Tunnel meeting house did service one hundred and forty-five years, before it was removed and remodelled.

It is very clear, from the records, that Mr. Shepard had a united congregation. For the forty-one years of his ministry, the records do not indicate that there was a single jar. At his settlement, his salary was fixed at eighty pounds, with the use of the parsonage lands, and the avails of a free contribution taken up once in a year. This contribution seemed to fill the place that is now filled in some congregations by donation parties. It was in vogue here for more than a hundred years. But a salary of eighty pounds was an indeterminate quantity, as the value of the currency was constantly shifting. So there was another occasion besides the free contribution to indicate the varying temperature of the people's regard towards their minister. It was customary, at the annual meeting of the town every year, to vote on the sum that they were required to give their minister, to make his salary as good as the eighty pounds when he was settled. In after years the sum was most fre-

quently *ninety*. But in one year it was only sixty. In one year there were indications of hard times. Mr. Shepard was by his consent elected the schoolmaster of the town, and allowed to serve the town in the double capacity of minister and school teacher. That year his salary was ninety pounds -- no more than he had in many other years. It was doubtless so arranged, as a matter of necessary economy for both parties. In another year he agreed to do the duties of a grammar school master, for as many months as the law required a grammar school to be kept, and to the extent of holding himself in readiness to teach all grammar scholars that should come to him.

It was during the ministry of Mr. Shepard that the Society of Friends, or Quakers, had its main growth in Lynn, in which time most of the friction between that denomination and ours occurred. And this is the place for a brief sketch of the origin of the sect. A more particular account of the persecutions inflicted on them, furnished by a member of that society, will be reserved for the next chapter.

In the year 1656, Mary Fisher and Ann Austin arrived at Boston, being the first of the Eng

lish Quakers that visited this country ; though Cotton Mather tells us, that there were individual instances of persons embracing the Quaker principles in Salem before that time. When these women arrived the magistrates ordered them to be detained on board the ship, and the books which they had brought with them for circulation to be seized. The captain of the vessel, Simon Kempthorn of Charlestown, was required speedily to transport them to Barbadoes, whence they had come. Their books were burned, and themselves kept in close confinement, so as not to be able to communicate their opinions to any one till they were carried back.

This Mary Fisher was a woman of mark. She had been imprisoned in England for speaking in a church. She had visited the University of Cambridge, and publicly addressed the students in the streets ; for which she was arrested by the mayor, and publicly whipped. Afterwards, for what she called a declaring of the truth in the "steeple house" of Pontefract, she was imprisoned six months, and then three months more of imprisonment were added, because she expressed no repentance, and refused to give sureties for her good behavior. In the year 1655 she was

again imprisoned some months for interrupting public worship. In that year she sailed for the West Indies, from whence she came hither. In 1660 she made a visit to the sultan, Mahomet IV., then at Adrianople. She was courteously received by his majesty, in his camp. But what results followed her mission we are not informed. After these adventures, Mary Fisher married and had children.

But Ann Austin was advanced in years when she came hither on that mission ; and she was then the mother of five children. She returned to England, and was there again imprisoned for preaching. She died of the plague, at the time of what was called the great plague in London.

Scarcely had the ship which bore away these two witnesses of the Quaker principles left the shore, when another vessel, having on board eight Quakers, arrived in Boston — to wit, Christopher Holden, John Copeland, Thomas Thurston, William Brand, Mary Prince, Sarah Gibbons, Mary Weatherhead, and Dorothy Waugh. Officers at once were sent on board to seize their books, and take their persons before the court. In their examination a discussion took place between a minister of Boston

and the Quakers. After the examination the court required the prisoners to be confined till the ship in which they came should return, and to return in it."

While these proceedings were taking place, Nicolas Upsal, a citizen of Boston, by his zeal in defence of the Quakers, was assumed to be identified with them, and so was required to leave the colony. In a few months after, in 1657, Mary Dyer and Ann Burden arrived in Boston, from London. They were at once confined. Mary Dyer had a husband in Rhode Island, who was not a Quaker, who came and took her away, and the other was sent back to England.

As ship owners were unwilling now to give a passage to Quakers from England, one of their number had built a small vessel, which he devoted to their service, and eleven persons took passage in it for the voyage to New England. They arrived at New York, where a part of the company remained, and whence the rest went to Rhode Island.

Two of the company, Christopher Holden and John Copeland, made their way through Plymouth colony to Massachusetts. They went to Salem, held meetings, and made converts there.

They entered the congregation and commenced a speech, but were not allowed to proceed. They were taken to Boston and examined, and severely punished by whipping. Another of the company, Richard Doudney, afterwards came into the colony, and suffered in like manner. These were banished.

During these proceedings, the preachers of the Quaker doctrines were increasing. Individuals were constantly appearing here and there, in all the colonies; and the vigilance and severity of the magistrates seemed to produce no results, but to increase the numbers of the invaders. But, unhappily, the magistrates did not learn from this, as they should have learned, that nothing was to be expected from another increase of severity, and that they were acting upon a false principle. Hence the General Court, at Boston, proceeded to pass a law of banishment on the Quakers, and forbidding their return on pain of death. This law was passed by a majority of one, in the House of Representatives, and that in the absence of one who was opposed to it. This law was executed in the form of death in three instances.

William Robinson, who had been some time in

Virginia, and Marmaduke Stevenson, recently from Barbadoes, met in Rhode Island, and felt themselves called upon to risk their lives to test the Massachusetts law. They arrived in Boston on Fast day, and entered the congregation, and commenced an address. This was bearding the lion in his den. The indignation of the magistrates was aroused. They were at once imprisoned. After examination by the magistrates, they were punished with whipping, and ordered not to appear in the colony again on pain of death. In this sentence of banishment, Mary Dyer, who had come hither from Rhode Island, was included. Robinson and Stevenson determined to remain in the colony; and Mary Dyer, for the present, returned to Rhode Island. The former proceeded to Salem, where they held a meeting in the woods; and the fact of their being under sentence of death brought great crowds to hear them. They then went as far east as Portsmouth. While they were on their eastern journey, Mary Dyer returned to Boston, where she was soon recognized and arrested. In a few days, Stevenson and Robinson returned to Boston. They came, as their writers testify, "to look the bloody laws in the face."

They had spent about a month in preaching, with the sentence of death suspended over them. Having done this, they said they went under "a divine call to lay down their lives." They were at once arrested. The rulers had now in custody three persons who had forfeited their lives under the statute, and who were virtually challenging them to take them if they dared. There was now no escape from the alternative of an execution or an abandonment of that law. The prisoners were brought before the magistrates, and questioned why they returned; and they said, "In obedience to a divine call." Sentence was first passed on Robinson, then on Stevenson, and then on Mary Dyer. In a week after this the sentence was executed on the two men, and the woman was reprieved after the men were executed. She was ordered to go with a guard fifteen miles, in the direction of Rhode Island. Declining the guard, she returned home of her own accord. But she soon again conceived herself to have a divine call to return to Boston, where she arrived in 1660. Yet, for ten days after her arrival, no attempt was made to arrest her. She was finally brought before the court. Governor Endicott pronounced the sentence

upon her, and she replied, "This is no more than thou saidst before." While she was now under sentence, her husband (not a Quaker) wrote to the governor, interceding for her life. He calls her zeal, which had exposed her life, an "inconsiderate madness;" and that idea should have prevailed for her release; but it did not. She was led to the gallows the next day after her condemnation. There she was told that if she would go home, she might come down, and save her life. But she refused, and was executed. She had been previously distinguished in the history of New England. Twenty years before this she had been the companion of the famous Mrs. Hutchinson, the leader of the Antinomians. She and her husband had been expelled at that time, and settled in Rhode Island. Her husband was one of the eighteen that formed the body politic of that colony, and he was secretary of the colony.

The severity of these proceedings created a revulsion of feeling with the people, by which a mitigation of the rigors of the laws was secured. Our own views of these persecutions will be given in the next chapter: we have intended here only a sketch of the facts, and in this, in

order to be sure of doing justice to the Quakers, we have followed their authorities, which leave out some things which are very material to the Puritan view of it.

It was not till after these conflicts of the government with the Quakers that the church in Lynn came into conflict with them. The precise dates of their beginnings here will be given by the Quakers themselves, in the next chapter. Suffice it here to say, that the friction between theirs and ours had some small beginnings in Mr. Whiting's pastorate. But it was most considerable in the time of Mr. Shepard. He came into active conflict, as will be seen; and in one instance he and his people observed a day of special prayer and fasting, in view of the alarming spread of Quaker principles among them. This conflict extended through the whole of Mr. Shepard's ministry. A year or two after the close of it, a compromise appears to have been effected, between the two interests, touching the subject of taxation to support the ministry, which was the main matter of irritation. In that compromise, the whole conflict seems to have terminated.

It is difficult for a minister, in times of such

excitement, to be wise and successful in all his measures. But we are happy to find evidence that in his trials Mr. Shepard earnestly sought wisdom from above. This is indicated in his observance of a season of special fasting and prayer. And we have evidence that he did not seek in vain. His example, for its wisdom and success, became a matter of history. Mather (p. 566) recommends it as an example to be followed in other places, where similar troubles existed. Speaking of other means of defence, he says, —

“After all, y<sup>e</sup>a, before all, make the experiment which the good people of Lynn made, a little while ago, with a success truly observable and memorable. The Quakers made a more than ordinary descent upon the town of Lynn, and Quakerism suddenly spread there at such a rate as to alarm the neighborhood. The pastor of the church there indicated a day of prayer, with fasting, to implore the help of Heaven against the unaccountable enchantment, and the good people presented accordingly, July 19, 1694, their fervent supplications to the Lord, that the spiritual plague might proceed no farther. The spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ gave

a remarkable effect unto this holy method of encountering the charms of Quakerism. It proved a better method than any coercion of the civil magistrate. [The progress of] Quakerism in Lynn received, as I am informed, a death wound from that very day ; and the number of Quakers in that place has been so far from increasing, that I am told it has rather decreased notably."

It is clear, from the records of the parish, that in a few years after this, at least, the mutual friction between the two societies had ceased.

Mr. Shepard's ministry was decidedly prosperous. Besides colonies that had gone from Lynn to people other townships, the church, in the latter part of his ministry, was able to colonize in the erection of another parish, in 1712. The town "voted, that all that part of the town which lies northerly of the highway that leads from Salem to Reading be set off as a precinct ; and when they shall have a meeting house, and minister qualified according to law to preach the word of God amongst them, then they shall be wholly free from paying to the ministry of the town, and not before ; and if afterwards they shall cease

to maintain a minister among them, they are to pay to the minister of the town as heretofore."

These were the beginnings of Lynnfield. Several years later the new parish petitioned to be set off as a town, or to be taxed for the support of both ministers, in a common tax of the town, both of which requests were denied.

One indication of outward prosperity of the church at the close of Mr. Shepard's ministry, — and so far as that can go, an indication of internal thrift, — appears in that at that time was made to the church the gift, or rather several gifts, of the valuable service of silver plate. Making allowance for the much higher value of money at that time, this appears to us a splendid gift, and betokens the existence both of wealth and generosity then in the church.

During Mr. Shepard's ministry of forty-one years many events of deep interest to minister and people occurred, and doubtless many which would be read with interest in after times, if their memory had been preserved. From a handful of people, the congregation had become two bands. The usual results attending the gospel dispensation were here experienced. There were births into the church, and deaths from it; scenes

of rejoicing and scenes of mourning. There was a faithful ministry travailing in birth for the people, till Christ should be formed in them; and, invisible to the eye, there were angels rejoicing over sinners repenting. There is clear evidence that Mr. Shepard lived in the affections of his people, and served them faithfully in the gospel, not shunning to declare all the counsel of God. Nor was he thrown aside by them in his old age, as we shall see in the sequel. Up to the time of his death, during pastorates that had brought the church's history down to the eighty-eighth year of its age, the relations of minister and people had been eminently happy. There had been no disaffections or divisions of the people, and no delinquencies or heresies of pastors. Except the comet-like luminary, or perhaps we should say the sundog, that attended the first rising of the church, which passed away with the vapors of its morning, and left no impress of its character upon the church, all the ministers with whom this church had connection were worthy of her and blessings to her.

And it is no small advantage to the church that her first ministers were *models* of all that is excellent in ministerial character, and that their

people had a proportionate elevation of intelligence and Christian character. If all their successors had been men of like spirit, and had kept through the intermediate generations an open channel for their influence to be transmitted unimpaired to us, what advantages might we not have reaped from their labors! As it is, it is not in vain that we build on foundations that such men have laid; that they have labored, and we have entered into their labors; that we guard the sacred fire on this altar, the flame of spiritual life which was first kindled here, by the fire descending from heaven upon their hearts, and that this fire, long depressed, has never been wholly extinct. And to those who doubt of the pure and noble tendencies of the doctrines which we profess, it is not in vain that we challenge their inspection of those tendencies on the men who perilled all earthly hopes for their preservation and propagation here.

Having proceeded thus far in our history, we invite reflection on the ground which we have gone over for another purpose, and that is, to see what has been gained by all departures from Puritan principles and character. Ages distinguished for great improvements have passed

away since those men went to heaven ; an era of improvement, which it was their mission to open, has developed grand results. But all these improvements have shown no way of making better men, or better Christians, than those. No principle, or set of principles, has been found that would produce a piety in better correspondence with that of Christ and his apostles, or bring the power of the gospel more effectually to bear upon the minds of men. Impelled by that aversion to truth which is a part of human depravity, many sects have split off from the Puritan stock, and each conceives a great improvement in its own principles, as compared with that of our fathers. But in what does the improvement consist? Grant that your principles better agree with the conceits of a proud mind, that has never bowed before the cross of Christ ; grant that they give greater license to the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life ; grant that they frown less upon the genteeler vices, and open a seeming way to heaven for the whole race of worldlings and despisers of godliness, — do they make better men and better Christians, and do they produce better results on the world, more beneficially affect-

ing all the interests of time and eternity than these? Would they furnish more sure ground on which to stand in the hour of death? If the tree is to be known by its fruits, if the character of a religion is to be tested by the character that it produces, we have only to ask, Where, in all the history of the world, will you find, in higher and more symmetrical development, all the elements of godliness and the moral sublime, than in those Puritans whom we are allowed to call our fathers?

## CHAPTER IV.

PERSECUTIONS. — ALL SECTIONS OF THE CHURCH INVOLVED. — THE FACTS IN THE CASE. — PERSECUTIONS OF THE BAPTISTS. — EARLY HISTORY OF THE LYNN QUAKERS. — THE CREED OF THE QUAKERS. — EXAGGERATIONS ON BOTH SIDES. — QUAKERS ALSO PERSECUTED. — THE QUAKERS' DIVINE CALL. — THE FACTS AND PRINCIPLES THAT LED TO IT.

BUT the Puritan fathers persecuted the Baptists and the Quakers. And ought not this fact to silence every thing that can be said of their virtues? If so, then no virtue existed, which had a title to commendation, from their time back to the first ages of the church. From the first dawn of the reformation till the planting of New England, no branch of the church, and none of the illustrious heroes of the church, had a better theory or practice of religious freedom than these Puritan fathers. And if they are to be condemned for this imperfection of their principles, the condemnation would take a fearful sweep, and involve most of the most honored names in Christian history. But before we con-

sider this question, let us ascertain the facts in the case.

In the first place, how far was this church engaged in persecuting the Baptists? Under this head I have been able to find no instances except those reported in Lewis's History of Lynn. The case of Lady Moody, there reported, belonged to Salem. The only member of the Lynn congregation that came under persecutions was William Wittier. In 1643 he was convicted by the court in Salem, "for having called our ordinance of God a badge of the Whore, and sentenced to acknowledge his fault, and to ask Mr. Cobbett's forgiveness in saying that he spoke against his conscience." Then, in 1646, he was presented to the court again, for saying "that they who staid while the child is baptized worshipped the devil, and did take the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost in vain." For this he was sentenced to make a public confession to the congregation, or answer it at the next General Court.

In 1651 three men, Clark, Crandall, and Homes, came hither from Rhode Island, and went to the house of Wittier at Swampscot, and re-baptized him. These strangers coming from

Rhode Island to spread their tenets, roused the vigilance of the magistrates, who had them arrested and presented to the court in Boston, where they were sentenced to pay fines, one of thirty, one of twenty, and one of five pounds. One of these, Homes, refused to pay his fine, or allow his friends to pay it for him. For this he was imprisoned more than a month, and then severely whipped. After this Wittier was again presented to the court in Salem, for neglecting public worship, and being rebaptized. But we are not told that any proceedings were had in the case. This, as far as I can learn, is the sum of what the fathers of the Lynn church did in a way of persecution of the Baptists. How far they persecuted the Quakers will be seen in the following sketch of the history of Quakerism in Lynn, which has been prepared, at my request, by Mr. Samuel Boice, one of the prominent members of the Lynn society.

#### MR. BOICE'S STATEMENT.

The Meeting of Friends in Lynn has always been a component part of Salem Monthly Meeting, which includes Boston, Salem, and Lynn.

A few Friends came from England into this

vicinity in the early years of the existence of the society.

Mary Fisher and Ann Austin arrived in the territory then comprehended under the name of the Massachusetts colony, and landed at Boston, in 1656. This was about two years subsequent to the period at which it is known that Friends were residing within the precincts of Sandwich Monthly Meeting, then the "colony of Plymouth."

They were immediately imprisoned, upon the ground of a fear that they might introduce heretical doctrines into the colony; and an order from the council held in Boston was issued for their trunks to be searched for any printed works they might have brought, and about one hundred books were taken from them, which were ordered to be burned and destroyed by the common executioner.

The captain of the vessel in which they came was required to give bonds of one hundred pounds that he would transport them speedily to Barbadoes; and after an imprisonment of nearly five weeks in the jail, they were conveyed to Barbadoes in the vessel in which they came, the jailer taking their beds and their Bible for jail fees.

In two days after their departure, eight other Friends, four men and four women, arrived in Boston, who were also committed to prison and banished.

In regard to this interesting period, James Bowden, in his history of the rise of the society, has made the following remarks:—

"The tyranny which marked the conduct of

the rulers of Massachusetts began to open the eyes of many of the settlers to the incongruity of the spirit which prompted such deeds with *that* of the benign religion of Jesus Christ.

“Notwithstanding the earnest endeavors of the priests and rulers, by the stringent clauses of their act against the Quakers, to prevent the introduction of their tenets, a desire was excited in the minds of not a few to acquaint themselves more intimately with the doctrines and practices of a sect whose presence it was deemed improper to allow among them; and thus very soon a knowledge of Quaker doctrines was more or less spread abroad in all the New England colonies.”  
— *J. Bowden*, p. 51.

In the year 1657 several ministers of the society arrived in divers parts of New England, and Christopher Holden and John Copeland went to Salem, where, according to Sewell's History, the former “spoke a few words in their meeting after the priest had done.” And it is supposed that a small meeting was set up about this time, or soon afterwards, in Salem, composed of those in Salem and Lynn, who had embraced the principles of Friends.

In confirmation of this opinion the following extract from Bowden's History (p. 155) is inserted:—

“But it was at and near Salem, about sixteen miles north of Boston, that the largest number of convincements took place.

“In 1657 it is stated that there were ‘divers Friends’ in that locality. During the summer of 1658 the sufferings of eight families are distinctly recorded, and in the ninth month fifteen

individuals were summoned at one time to the court held at Salem, for not attending Puritan meetings. Neal states that about this time as many as twenty were taken at once from a meeting held at the house of Nicholas Phelps, about five miles from Salem." — See *Neal's History*, vol. i. p. 304.

It has been understood among Friends (whether by tradition or otherwise the writer cannot say) that the first Friends' Meetings in this vicinity were held in a house on what is called the old road to Salem, and near the Lynn Mineral Spring farm. This opinion is confirmed from the fact that Nicholas Phelps's house was "about five miles from Salem."

During the year 1657, Christopher Holden, John Copeland, and Richard Doudney were arrested, and after being whipped were imprisoned in Boston; and in order to correct the public mind in regard to their principles, they issued a declaration of their faith.

A copy of all that is preserved of this document here follows:—

*A Declaration of Faith, and an Exhortation to Obedience thereto, issued by Christopher Holden, John Copeland, and Richard Doudney, while in Prison at Boston, in New England, 1657.*

"Whereas it is reported, by them that have not a bridle to their tongues, that we, who are by the world called Quakers, are blasphemers, heretics, and deceivers, and that we do deny the Scriptures, and the truth therein contained,—

therefore we, who are here in prison, shall in a few words, in truth and plainness, declare unto all people that may see this the ground of our religion, and the faith that we contend for, and the cause wherefore we suffer.

“Therefore, when you have read our words, let the meek spirit bear rule, and weigh them in the equal balance, and stand out of prejudice, in the light that judgeth all things, and measureth and manifesteth all things.

“As [for us] we do believe in the only true and living God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all things in them contained, and doth uphold all things that he hath created by the word of his power.

“Who, at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he hath spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath made heir of all things, by whom he hath made the world. The which Son is that Jesus Christ that was born of the Virgin; who suffered for our offences, and is risen again for our justification, and is ascended into the highest heavens, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father. Even in him do we believe; who is the only begotten Son of the Father, full of grace and truth. And in him do we trust alone for salvation; by whose blood we are washed from sin; through whom we have access to the Father with boldness, being justified by faith, in believing in his name. Who hath sent forth the Holy Ghost, to wit, the Spirit of Truth, that proceedeth from the Father and the Son; by which we are sealed and adopted

sons and heirs of the kingdom of heaven. From the which Spirit, the Scriptures of truth were given forth, as saith the apostle Peter, 'Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.'

"The which were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world are come; and are profitable for the man of God, to reprove, and to exhort, and to admonish, as the spirit of God bringeth them unto him, and openeth them in him, and giveth him the understanding of them.

"So that before all [men] we do declare that we do believe in God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, according as they are [declared of in the] Scriptures; and the Scriptures we own to be a true declaration of the Father, Son, and Spirit, in [which] is declared what was in the beginning, what was present, and was to come.

"Therefore, all [ye] people in whom honesty is! Stand still and consider. Believe not them that say, Report, and we will report it—that say, Come, let us smite them with the tongue; but try all things, and hold fast that which is good. Again we say, take heed of believing and giving credit to reports; for know that the truth in all ages was spoken against, and they that lived in it were, in all ages of the world, hated, persecuted, and imprisoned, under the name of heretics, blasphemers, and "

[Here part of the paper is torn off; and it can only be known by an unintelligible shred that fourteen lines are lost. We read again as follows:—]

"That showeth you the secrets of your hearts,

and the deeds that are not good. Therefore, while you have the light, believe in the light, that you may be the children of the light; for, as you love it and obey it, it will lead you to repentance, bring you to know Him in whom is remission of sins, in whom God is well pleased; who will give you an entrance into the kingdom of God, an inheritance among them that are sanctified.

“For this is the desire of our souls for all that have the least breathings after God, that they may come to know him in deed and in truth, and find his power in and with them, to keep them from falling, and to present them faultless before the throne of his glory; who is the strength and life of all who put their trust in him; who upholdeth all things by the word of his power; who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.

“Thus we remain friends to all that fear the Lord, who are sufferers, not for evil doing, but for bearing testimony to the truth, in obedience to the Lord God of life; unto whom we commit our cause; who is risen to plead the cause of the innocent, and to help him that hath no help on the earth; who will be avenged on all his enemies, and will repay the proud doers.

“CHRISTOPHER HOLDEN.

“JOHN COPELAND.

“RICHARD DOUDNEY.

“From the House of Correction, the 1st of the eight month, 1657, in Boston.”

See *Bowden's History of Friends in America*, vol. i. pp. 90 to 92.

The first assembly of Salem Monthly Meeting, of which we have any record, was on the 4th of the fifth month, 1677. But it is highly probable that Monthly Meetings had been held there for a considerable time previous, the records of which were not preserved.

We find a record was made in 1675, stating that a cow was taken by distraint from George Oakes, of Lynn, valued at three pounds, for Samuel Whiting, priest.

At a Monthly Meeting held in Salem, the 28th of the twelfth month, 1688, it was concluded to have a meeting once a month settled at Lynn, for the ease of those Friends who are inhabitants there.

And in the fifth month, 1689, the Monthly Meeting was held there, as appears by the following extract from the records:—

“At our men’s Monthly Meeting at Lynn, held at Samuel Collin’s house, the 18th of the fifth month, 1689. Friends there present, Thomas Maule, Daniel Southwick, John Blothen, William Williams, Samuel Gaskin, Jun., Samuel Collins, Thomas Groves, Edward Gaskin, James Goodridge. The Monthly Meeting has been held, from that time to the present, a portion of the time in Lynn, and it is now held there eight months of the year, and the other four months in Salem. For many years it was held a part of the time in Boston.\*

By referring to the records of the meeting it appears that Friends in Lynn suffered severely for many years, by having their property taken from them by distraint, for priests’ wages, repairing meeting houses, and for military fines.

\* See Appendix.

Much of the property taken for priest's wages was for Jeremiah Shepard.

A copy of the account of some of their sufferings will be found at the close of this brief history of the society. See *Appendix*.

As Friends, in those days, sometimes entered the places of worship of other societies, the following remarks, taken from Bowden's History, are deemed important to the reader:—

“The circumstance of our early Friends entering the public places of worship, in the times of the commonwealth, is one which has been much misunderstood and greatly misrepresented.

“For these acts of dedication they have been calumniated as disturbers of religious congregations, and as outraging the peace and order of the churches. This estimate, doubtless, has been formed with reference to usages of more modern date; but to decide upon the conduct of Friends, in this particular, from a consideration of present circumstances, would be exceedingly erroneous. In preaching in the national places of worship, they did but avail themselves of a common liberty, in a period of extraordinary excitement on religious things. There were numerous other religious meetings held in those times, but into none of these did Friends obtrude themselves. Some probably will agree that the fact of their being so severely punished, for persisting in this practice, may be adduced in support of its irregularity; but it may be answered, that the preaching of Friends almost every where at that time, whether in steeple houses or private houses, or in doors or out of doors, equally called down the rigor of ecclesiastical vengeance. It was

not, in fact, because Friends preached in those places, so much as for what they preached, that they suffered. When George Fox was committed to Derby prison in 1650, after preaching in the steeple house, at 'a great lecture,' the mittimus states that his offence was for uttering and broaching of divers blasphemous opinions.\*

"In 1659 Gilbert Latey went to Dunstan's steeple house in the west, where the noted Dr. Manton preached.

"At the conclusion of the sermon, Gilbert Latey addressed the assembly relative to some errors in Manton's sermon, for which he was seized by a constable, and taken before a magistrate, who, however, gave G. Latey leave to speak for himself. The statement he made satisfied the justice, and he replied that he had heard the people called Quakers were a sort of mad, whimsical folks; 'but,' said he, 'for this man, he talks very rationally, and I think, for my part, you should not have brought him to me.' † To which the constable replied, 'Sir, I think so too.' This occurred eleven years after G. Fox first visited a steeple house, and during that time Friends had suffered very much for speaking in steeple houses; yet now a magistrate declares that speaking rationally after the speaker had finished in a steeple house is not an offence for which a man ought to be brought before him.

"But the ministry of Friends struck at the very

\* These charges against George Fox were false, as an evidence of which the reader is referred to his Journal; and particularly to his letter to the governor, council, and government of Barbadoes.

† See Life of Gilbert Latey.

foundation of all hierarchal systems, and the discovery of this circumstance prompted the priests to call in the aid of the civil power to suppress the promulgation of views so opposed to ecclesiastical domination."—See *Bowden's History*, pp. 80, 81.

Much that is untrue has been written of Friends for venturing into the public places of worship in Massachusetts.

They are said on these occasions to have thrust themselves into worshipping assemblies, and interrupted the worship or the sermon, with outcries of contradiction and cursing. In New England, as in Old England, some of our early ministers believed it required of them to enter the public places of worship; but in no one instance do we find, as has been alleged, that they interrupted the minister in his sermon. The few occasions on which they presented themselves before the congregations in New England, they did not attempt to address the assembly until the minister had concluded; and then they were stopped, violently assailed, and dragged to prison.

Excepting Marmaduke Stevenson, however, the four Friends who were put to death at Boston do not appear to have apprehended that this service was required of them. The plea, therefore, of disturbing religious assemblies does not apply in the most extreme cases of Puritan cruelty. These suffered martyrdom for the mere profession and promulgation of their religious views.

It has been adduced as evidence of the grave misconduct of the early Friends in New Eng-

land, and as palliating circumstances for the severities to which they were subjected, that natural decency was outraged by two women Friends going unclothed, one into the public place of worship in a small town, and the other through the streets of Salem. On investigation, however, it will be found that these extraordinary circumstances will not avail the apologists of the fathers. When Deborah Wilson and Lydia Wardwell went partially unclothed, in the manner described, a particular explanation of which will appear in the following chapter, it was not until nine years after the commencement of the New England cruelties of Friends, and four years after the last case of martyrdom, and when the persecution had very much subsided. This is a fact which the modern defenders of the Pilgrims have omitted to state, and by the absence of which their readers are led to believe that it was in consequence of these and other acts of misconduct that the rulers of Massachusetts adopted their extreme measures towards Friends. — *Bowden's History*, pp. 247, 248.

The "explanation" for Lydia Wardwell and Deborah Wilson's going partially unclothed is as follows:—

"Among the sufferings of Friends in New England, the case of Eliakim and Lydia Wardwell, of Hampton, deserves particular notice. On one occasion, Eliakim Wardwell had a horse worth fourteen pounds taken from him, for merely receiving the banished Wenlock Christison into his house. He was also frequently fined for absenting himself from the Puritan

worship; and to satisfy these unjust demands, nearly the whole of his property was carried off. The case of Lydia, his wife, was a very peculiar one. Having become convinced of the principles of Friends, and consequently ceasing to attend the Puritan worship, she was several times requested to attend the congregation, and give a reason for the change of her opinion and practice. She at last went, but under circumstances which were extraordinary and humiliating. She had been deeply impressed with the want of true religion among many of the high professors and rulers of New England, and with their unblushing violation of the plainest doctrines of Christ in the persecution of Friends, but more especially with the immodest and revolting manner in which females had been publicly stripped and scourged.

“Although stated to have been a ‘chaste and tender woman,’ and of ‘exemplary modesty,’ she believed it required of her to appear similarly unclothed in the congregation at Newbury, as a token of the miserable state of their spiritual condition, and as a testimony against the frequent practice of publicly whipping females in the manner referred to. It was to be expected that the appearance of Lydia Wardwell under such circumstances would be resented by those for whom the sign was intended. She was immediately arrested, and hurried before the authorities of the neighboring town of Ipswich, where she was barbarously scourged; her husband was also severely whipped for countenancing this apprehended act of duty on the part of his wife. The transaction appears to have taken place in the year 1665.

“About the same time, Deborah Wilson, who is described as ‘a young woman of a very modest and retired life, and sober conversation,’ under an impression of religious duty, went in a similar state through the streets of Salem, as a sign against the ‘cruelty and immodesty of the authorities,’ in stripping and whipping females. The punishment to which Lydia Wardwell had been exposed was soon inflicted on Deborah Wilson.” — *Bowden's History*, pp. 272, 273.

We are glad, however, to find that there is ground for believing that the course pursued by the priests and magistrates of that day towards Friends did not meet with the general approbation of the public mind. In reference thereto, J. Bowden has made the following remarks:—

“Notwithstanding the intolerant course pursued by the priests and magistrates on this occasion, [arresting and imprisoning Friends on their arrival in Boston from England,] it must not be supposed that the proceedings met with the sanction of the inhabitants generally; and it is only proper to add that the language of their governor gave rise to very intelligible marks of dissatisfaction.” — See *Bowden*, p. 44.

Friends in Lynn continued to increase in number, until they built a meeting house, which was erected in the year 1678, on what is now called Broad Street, in front of the lot occupied for a burying ground. The place was originally called Wolf Hill.

About the year 1700, George Keith, who had once been a Friend, but who, several years previous to this, had departed from their principles, and become their opposer, came to Lynn, and

called at the house of Samuel Collins, to see John Richardson, a Friend from England, who was there, and who was travelling in this country as a minister. This house stood on Essex Street, where the one now stands which was built by the late Ezra Collins. G. Keith had a company of his friends with him, and wished to have a dispute with John Richardson; and after some discussion in front of the house, in which G. Keith was very much vanquished, they separated. The next day, Friends assembled at their meeting house, to hold their monthly meeting; and John Richardson being there, George Keith and his company came to meeting; and John Richardson, in giving an account of what occurred, states as follows, viz. : —

“So the meeting being gathered, and immediately after, George stood up to tell us, as before, that he was come in the queen’s name to gather Quakers from Quakerism to the good old mother church, the church of England, as he called it, and that he could prove out of our own books that we held errors, heresies, damnable doctrines, and blasphemies, with a threat to look to ourselves to answer, or else the auditory would conclude that what he exhibited against us was true. I expected some of the elder Friends would say something to him; but none did; and having a deep concern upon my mind lest truth, or the friends of truth, should suffer through our mismanagement, and such as waited for occasion might have it administered by us against ourselves, under this concern I stood up and signified to the people what manner of man George Keith was: notwithstanding he had walked

many years amongst us, yet towards the latter end of his so walking with us he grew very troublesome, by reason of a contentious spirit which did possess him; and after much labor, and exercising of patience, and extending of love towards him, in order to recover and reclaim him, all that labor of love and much forbearance would not avail, but he still persisted in the work of contention and disturbance; then he was publicly disowned and testified against by us, as a person with whom we had no unity or fellowship.

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“Then pausing a little, George being quiet, a Friend stood up with a short but lively testimony, and then my companion; all this in much weight, and with good demonstration. After them it pleased the Lord to open my mouth, I think in as much strength, clearness, and demonstration as ever, beginning with the following words: In that way you call heresy do we worship the God of our fathers, believing all things that are written concerning Jesus Christ, both as to his Godhead and manhood; giving a summary account of his birth, working of miracles, some of his doctrine, sufferings and death, ascension and glorification, the coming of the Spirit of truth, or Comforter, to lead all those who receive, believe, and obey it into all truth; having great openings concerning the law and the prophets, and the beginning, service, and end of the ministration of John the Baptist. The people appeared very attentive, for the Lord’s heavenly baptizing power was amongst us that day. It was thought many were there who had not been

at any of our meetings of worship before ; and the presence of the priests there opened a door for all the rest.

“ Being clear, I left them to the grace of God, and to their free teacher, Christ, whose heavenly power in the appearance of his spirit, the last and lasting dispensation, was exalted that day above all the shadowy and typical things that ever had been in the world. A good meeting it was ; and Friends were mutually comforted and edified in the eternal presence of the Lord.

“ The priest of this place, whose name was Shepard, before my mouth was opened in testimony, made preparation to write ; and when I began to speak, he had his hat upon his knee, and his paper upon its crown, and pen and ink in his hands, and made many motions to write, but wrote nothing ; as he began, so he ended, without writing at all. As Friends entered the meeting house, the Lord’s power—even that power which cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon, which had been at work—kept down in a good degree the wrong spirit in George, for he appeared much down ; but this busy priest called to him several times to make his reply to what I had spoken. After some time, I said to the priest, in behalf of the meeting, that he might have liberty to make reply. He proposed to have another day appointed for a dispute ; to which I said, if he did make a voluntary challenge, which he should not say we put him upon, we, or some of us, meaning Friends, if a day and place were agreed upon, should find it our concern to answer him as well as we could. He said he would have Mr. Keith to be with him.

I told him if he should, and meddled in the dispute, if I was there I should reject him, for reasons before assigned. When the priest had said this, and somewhat more, an elder of the Presbyterian congregation clapped him on the shoulder, and bid him sit down; so he was quiet; and then stood up George Keith, and owned he had been refreshed amongst us that day, and had heard a great many sound truths, with some errors, but that it was not the common doctrine which the Quakers preached.

“I then stood up and said I had something to say to obviate what George Keith would insinuate; for his drift was, to infuse an opinion into them that the Quakers did not commonly preach up faith in the manhood of Christ, as I had done that day. I appealed to the auditory, whether any thought there was a necessity frequently to press a matter so universally received among Christians, as faith in the manhood of Christ was; yet we, as a people, had so often and clearly demonstrated our faith in the manhood of Christ, both in our testimonies and writings, as might satisfy any unbiassed person, or such who were not prejudiced against us; and we know not of any people who believe more scripturally in the manhood of Christ than we do. But inasmuch as the grace, light, and Holy Spirit is highly concerned in the work of man's salvation, as well as what Christ did for us without us, and this being yet much a mystery to many called Christians, it pleases God to open in the course of our ministry into the meaning and mystery thereof, and to press the latter more than the former. To which George made no reply, but began to ex-

hibit his charges against us, and said he could prove them out of our Friends' books, naming George Fox, and Edward Burrough, &c. He had in a paper a great many quotations out of Friends' books, and a young man with him had many books in a bag, out of which he said he would prove the charges he was about to exhibit against us.

"He was now crowded up into the gallery, between me and the rail, with a paper in his hand; and I, standing over him, and being taller, could see his quotations, and his paraphrases upon them; on which I told him loudly, that all the meeting might hear, that he offered violence to that sense and understanding which God had given him, and he knew in his conscience we were not that people, neither were our Friends' writings either damnable or blasphemous, as he through envy endeavored to make the world believe; and that he would not have peace in so doing, but trouble from the Lord in his conscience.

"I spoke in the Lord's dreadful power, and George trembled, so much as I seldom saw any man do. I pitied him in my heart; yet, as Moses said once concerning Israel, I felt the wrath of the Lord go forth against him.

"George said, 'Do not judge me.' I replied, 'The Lord judges, and all who are truly one in spirit with the Lord cannot but judge thee.' So he gave over; and it appearing a suitable time to break up the meeting, Friends parted in great love, tenderness, and brokenness of heart; for the Lord's mighty power had been in and over the meeting, from the beginning to the end

thereof. Glorified and renowned be his most excellent name, now and forever ; for his mercies are many to those that love and fear Him who is the fulness of all good."—See *Life of John Richardson, published in Friends' Library*, pp. 91 to 93.

In the course of time, the meeting house built by Friends not being sufficient for their accommodation, they erected another ; and in the year 1816 the society had become so numerous that a larger house was again needed, when the one now occupied by them was built. It stood on Broad Street, on the lot used by them as a burying ground, until the year 1852, when it was moved a few rods back from the street, to the place where it now stands, on Silsbee Street.

The old meeting house was moved on to James Breed's wharf, where it now stands, and is used for storing lumber, and for other purposes.

In the eighth month of the year 1816, Salem Quarterly Meeting, which is composed of three monthly meetings, was first held in Lynn, and it is still held there annually, at the same period in the year.

In 1835 there were about one hundred families belonging to the particular meeting at Lynn ; and there are not far from that number at the present time.

In 1777, the attention of Friends was turned to the setting up of a school ; and after some months' consideration, a school was established by Lynn preparative meeting for the children of Friends, and those who attended Friends' meeting. It was taught a while by John Pope ;

Henry Oliver succeeded him as teacher, and after Henry Oliver, Micajah Collins taught it for many years, until within about one year previous to its being closed. It was taught the last year by Paul W. Newhall. This was the second school set up in Lynn.

The school house first stood on Broad Street, on the Union Store lot. It was then moved into Market Street, and stood in front of the land where Francis S. and Henry Newhall's house now stands. After standing there a few years, the house was sold, and another building obtained, and placed upon the lot on Broad Street, in which the school was held. After some years, this building was sold to Moses A. Tucker; it was moved to Salem turnpike, where it now remains, and is converted into a dwelling house, and occupied by him.

A new school house was then built upon the same lot on Broad Street, in which the school house was held for many years. This building is now known as the Union Store. The school was supported several years by Friends.

In 1784, application was made to the selectmen of Lynn for the proportion of the money which Friends were annually paying for the support of the public schools to be refunded to them, in order that it might be used towards defraying the expense of their own school.

Objections were at first made to this request; but after some time had elapsed, Friends were allowed to draw back annually a portion of this money, for that purpose. The school was continued about forty years, and this privilege was granted them most of the time.

A school has been kept up and supported by Friends the greater part of the time since that period.

The society in this country and in England has from time to time published its declarations of faith; and the following extracts are taken from a brief account of the rise of the society, and the principles of Friends, prepared by one of their prominent members:—

“The religious society of Friends, commonly called Quakers, is a body of Christian professors, which arose in England about the middle of the seventeenth century.

“The ministry of George Fox was chiefly instrumental, under the divine blessing, in convincing those who joined him of those Christian principles and testimonies which distinguish the society; and his pious labors contributed in no small degree to their establishment as an organized body, having a regular form of church government and discipline.

“To the light of Christ Jesus in the conscience he endeavored to turn the attention of all, as that by which sin was manifested and re-proved, duty unfolded, and ability given to run with alacrity and joy in the way of God’s commandments. The preaching of this doctrine was glad tidings of great joy to many longing souls, who eagerly embraced it, as that for which they had been seeking; and as they walked in this divine light, they experienced a growth in grace and in Christian knowledge, and gradually came to be established as pillars in the house of God.

“Many of these, before they joined with George Fox, had been highly esteemed in the various

religious societies of the day for their distinguished piety and experience, being punctual in the performance of all their religious duties, and regular in partaking of what are termed 'the ordinances.'

"But notwithstanding they endeavored to be faithful to the degree of knowledge they had received, their minds were not yet at rest.

"They did not witness that redemption from sin, and that establishment in the truth, which they read of in the Bible as the privilege and duty of Christians; and hence they were induced to believe that there was a purer and more spiritual way than they had yet found. They felt that they needed to know more of the power of Christ Jesus in their own hearts, making them new creatures, bruising Satan, and putting him under their feet, and renewing their souls up into the divine image which was lost in Adam's fall, and sanctifying them wholly, in body, soul, and spirit, through the inward operations of the Holy Ghost and fire.

"The doctrines of the society may be briefly stated as follows: they believe in one only wise, omnipotent, and everlasting God, the creator and upholder of all things, visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, the mediator between God and man; and in the Holy Spirit, which proceedeth from the Father and the Son — one God, blessed forever. In expressing their views relative to the awful and mysterious doctrine of 'the three that bear record in heaven,' they have carefully avoided the use of unscriptural terms, invented to define Him who is undefinable, and have scrupulously

adhered to the safe and simple language of Holy Scripture, as contained in Matt. xxviii. 18, 19, &c.

“They own and believe in Jesus Christ, the beloved and only begotten Son of God, who was conceived of the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary. In him we have redemption, through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins, who is the express image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature, by whom all things were created that are in heaven or in earth, visible or invisible, whether they be thrones, dominions, principalities, or powers. They also believe that he was made a sacrifice for sin, who knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; that he was crucified for mankind in the flesh, without the gates of Jerusalem; that he was buried, and rose again the third day, by the power of the Father, for our justification, and that he ascended up into heaven, and now sitteth at the right hand of God, our holy mediator, advocate, and intercessor. They believe that he alone is the redeemer and savior of man, the captain of salvation, who saves from sin as well as from hell and the wrath to come, and destroys the works of the devil. He is the seed of the woman that bruises the serpent’s head, even Christ Jesus, the alpha and omega, the first and the last. He is, as the Scriptures of truth say of him, our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; neither is there salvation in any other; for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we may be saved.

“The society of Friends have uniformly declared their belief in the divinity and manhood

of the Lord Jesus ; that he was both true God and perfect man, and that his sacrifice of himself upon the cross was a propitiation and atonement for the sins of the whole world, and that the remission of sins, which any partake of, is only in and by virtue of that most satisfactory sacrifice, and no otherwise.

“ Friends believe also in the Holy Spirit, or Comforter, the promise of the Father, whom Christ declared he would send in his name, to lead and guide his followers into all truth, to teach them all things, and to bring all things to their remembrance.

“ A manifestation of this spirit they believe is given to every man, to profit withal ; that it convicts for sin, and, as attended to, gives power to the soul to overcome and forsake it ; it opens to the mind the mysteries of salvation, enables it savingly to understand the truths recorded in the Holy Scriptures, and gives it the living, practical, and heartfelt experience of those things which pertain to its everlasting welfare. They believe that the saving knowledge of God and Christ cannot be attained in any other way than by the revelation of this spirit ; for the apostle says, ‘ What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him ? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God. Now, we have received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God, that we might know the things which are freely given to us of God.’ If, therefore, the things which properly appertain to man cannot be discerned by any lower principle than the spirit of man, those things which properly relate

to God and Christ cannot be known by any power inferior to that of the Holy Spirit.

“They believe that man was created in the image of God, capable of understanding the divine law, and of holding communion with his Maker.

“Through transgression he fell from this blessed state, and lost the heavenly image. His posterity come into the world in the image of the earthly man ; and, until renewed by the quickening and regenerating power of the heavenly man, Christ Jesus, manifested in the soul, they are fallen, degenerated, and dead to the divine life in which Adam originally stood, and are subject to the power, nature, and seed of the serpent ; and not only their words and deeds, but their imaginations, are evil perpetually in the sight of God. Man, therefore, in this state, can know nothing aright concerning God ; his thoughts and conceptions of spiritual things, until he is disjoined from his evil seed, and united to the divine light, Christ Jesus, are unprofitable to himself and to others.

“But while it entertains these views of the lost and undone condition of man in the fall, the society does not believe that mankind are punishable for Adam’s sin, or that we partake of his guilt, until we make it our own by transgression of the divine law.

“But God, who, out of his infinite love, sent his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, into the world to taste death for every man, hath granted to all men, of whatever nation or country, a day or time of visitation, during which it is possible for

them to partake of the benefits of Christ's death, and be saved.

“For this end he hath communicated to every man a measure of the light of his own Son, a measure of grace or the Holy Spirit ; by which he invites, calls, exhorts, and strives with every man, in order to save him ; which light or grace, as it is received and not resisted, works the salvation of all, even of those who are ignorant of Adam's fall, and of the death and sufferings of Christ ; both by bringing them to a sense of their own misery, and to be sharers in the sufferings of Christ, inwardly ; and by making them partakers of his resurrection, in becoming holy, pure, and righteous, and recovered out of their sins. By which also are saved they that have the knowledge of Christ outwardly, in that it opens their understandings rightly to use and apply the things delivered in the Scriptures, and to receive the saving use of them. But this Holy Spirit, or light of Christ, may be resisted and rejected ; in which, then, God is said to be resisted and pressed down, and Christ to be again crucified and put to open shame ; and to those who thus resist and refuse him, he becomes their condemnation.

“The society believes that it is not by our works wrought in our will, nor yet by good works considered as of themselves, that we are justified, but by Christ, who is both the gift and the giver, and the cause producing the effects in us. As he hath reconciled us while we were enemies, so doth he also, in his wisdom, save and justify us after this manner ; as saith the same apostle elsewhere — ‘Not by works of righteousness

which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost ; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ, our Savior, that, being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.' We renounce all natural power and ability in ourselves, to bring us out of our lost and fallen condition and first nature, and confess that as of ourselves we are able to do nothing that is good, so neither can we procure remission of sins or justification by any act of our own, so as to merit it, or to draw it as a debt from God due to us ; but we acknowledge all to be of and from his love, which is the original and fundamental cause of our acceptance. God manifested his love toward us, in the sending of his beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, into the world, who gave himself an offering for us and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet smelling savor — and having made peace through the blood of the cross, that he might reconcile us unto himself, and by the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot unto God, he suffered for our sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God.

“ In a word, if justification be considered in its full and just latitude, neither Christ's work without us, in the prepared body, nor his work within us, by his Holy Spirit, is to be excluded ; for both have their place and service in our complete justification. By the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ without us, we, truly repenting and believing, are, through the mercy of God, justified from the imputation of sins and transgressions that are past, as though they had never been

committed ; and by the mighty work of Christ within us, the power, nature, and habits of sin are destroyed ; that as sin once reigned unto death, even so now grace reigneth, through righteousness, unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. All this is effected, not by a bare or naked act of faith, separate from obedience, but in the obedience of faith ; Christ being the author of eternal salvation to none but those that obey him.

“The society of Friends believes that there will be a resurrection, both of the righteous and the wicked ; the one to eternal life and blessedness, and the other to everlasting misery and torment ; agreeably to Matt. xxv. 31-46. John v. 25-30. 1 Cor. xv. 12-58.

“That God will judge the world by that Man whom he hath ordained, even Christ Jesus the Lord, who will render unto every man according to his works ; to them, who, by patient continuing in well doing, during this life, seek for glory and honor, immortality and eternal life ; but unto the contentious and disobedient, who obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that sinneth, for God is no respecter of persons.

“The religious society of Friends has always believed that the Holy Scriptures were written by divine inspiration, and contain a declaration of all the fundamental doctrines and principles relating to eternal life and salvation, and that whatsoever doctrine or practice is contrary to them is to be rejected as false and erroneous ; that they are a declaration of the mind and will

of God, in and to the several ages in which they were written, and are obligatory on us, and are to be read, believed, and fulfilled, by the assistance of divine grace. Though it does not call them 'the Word of God,' believing that epithet peculiarly applicable to the Lord Jesus, yet it believes them to be the words of God, written by holy men as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; that they were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope; and that they are able to make wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. It looks upon them as the only fit outward judge and test of controversies among Christians, and is very willing that all its doctrines and practices should be tried by them, freely admitting that whatsoever any do, pretending to the Spirit, which is contrary to the Scriptures, be condemned as a delusion of the devil.

"As there is one Lord and one faith, so there is but one baptism, of which the water baptism of John was a figure. The baptism which belongs to the gospel, the society of Friends believes, is, 'not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.' This answer of a good conscience can only be produced by the purifying operation of the Holy Spirit, transforming and renewing the heart, and bringing the will into conformity to the divine will. The distinction between Christ's baptism and that of water is clearly pointed out by John: 'I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes

I am not worthy to bear : he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire, whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.'

"In conformity with this declaration, the society holds that the baptism which now saves is inward and spiritual ; that true Christians are 'baptized by one Spirit into one body ;' that 'as many as are baptized into Christ have put on Christ ;' and that, 'if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature ; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new, and all things of God.'

"Respecting the communion of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, the society of Friends believes that it is inward and spiritual — a real participation of his divine nature through faith in him, and obedience to the power of the Holy Ghost, by which the soul is enabled daily to feed upon the flesh and blood of our crucified and risen Lord, and is thus nourished and strengthened. Of this spiritual communion, the breaking of bread and drinking of wine by our Savior with his disciples was figurative ; the true Christian supper being that set forth in the Revelation : 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock ; if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.'

"As the Lord Jesus declared, 'Without me ye can do nothing,' the society of Friends holds the doctrine that man can do nothing that tends to the glory of God and his own salvation without the immediate assistance of the spirit of

Christ ; and that this aid is especially necessary in the performance of the highest act of which he is capable, even the worship of the Almighty. This worship must be in spirit and in truth — an intercourse between the soul and its great Creator, which is not dependent upon, or necessarily connected with, any thing which one man can do for another. It is the practice, therefore, of the society to sit down in solemn silence to worship God ; that each one may be engaged to gather inward to the gift of divine grace, in order to experience ability reverently to wait upon the Father of spirits, and to offer unto him through Christ Jesus, our holy Mediator, a sacrifice well pleasing in his sight, whether it be in silent mental adoration, the secret breathing of the soul unto him, the public ministry of the gospel, or vocal prayer, or thanksgiving. Those who are thus gathered are the true worshippers, ‘ who worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.’

“ In relation to the ministry of the gospel, the society holds that the authority and qualification for this important work are the special gift of Christ Jesus, the great head of the church, bestowed both upon men and women, without distinction of rank, talent, or learning, and must be received immediately from him, through the revelation of his Spirit in the heart, agreeably to the declarations of the apostle : ‘ He gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of

Christ.' 'To one is given, by the Spirit, the word of wisdom ; to another the word of knowledge, by the same Spirit ; to another faith ; to another the gifts of healing ; to another the working of miracles ; to another prophecy ; to another discerning of spirits ; to another divers kinds of tongues ; to another the interpretation of tongues ; but all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.' 'If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God ; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth ; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ.'

"Viewing the command of our Savior, 'Freely ye have received, freely give,' as of lasting obligation upon all his ministers, the society has, from the first, steadfastly maintained the doctrine, that the gospel is to be preached without money and without price ; and has borne a constant and faithful testimony, through much suffering, against a man-made, hireling ministry, which derives its qualification and authority from human learning and ordination ; which does not recognize a direct divine call to this solemn work, or acknowledge its dependence, for the performance of it, upon the renewed motions and assistance of the Holy Spirit. When a minister believes himself called to religious service abroad, — the expense of accomplishing which is beyond his means, — if his brethren unite with his engaging in it, and set him at liberty therefor, the meeting he belongs to is required to see that the service be not hindered for the want of pecuniary means.

“The society of Friends believes that war is wholly at variance with the spirit of the gospel, which continually breathes peace on earth and good will to men.

“That, as the reign of the Prince of Peace comes to be set up in the hearts of men, ‘nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.’

“In conformity with the precepts and examples of the apostles and primitive believers, the society enjoins upon its members a simple and unostentatious mode of living, free from needless care and expense ; moderation in the pursuit of business ; and that they discountenance music, dancing, stage plays, horse races, and all other vain and unprofitable amusements ; as well as the changeable fashions and manners of the world, in dress, language, or the furniture of their houses ; that, daily living in the fear of God, and under the power of the cross of Christ, which crucifies to the world and all its lusts, they may show forth a conduct and conversation becoming their Christian profession, and adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things.”

*Remarks on the foregoing.*

In forming a just estimate of the acts of alleged persecutions, allowance must be made on both sides for the excitements under which the writers of the times testified. That the excitements of mind attending this conflict were

great, involving a serious disturbance and clouding of the judgment of both parties, so far as the matter of the conflict was concerned, is manifest to all who have read any thing of the history. This is the reason why I have preferred to give the reader a statement of the Quaker side, as made by Quakers, that by a fair comparison of both sides, and with a reasonable allowance for exaggeration on both sides, he may form his own judgment as to the truth.

It is also material that we should take into account the evidence which exists that the Quakers, if they could have changed places with the magistrates, would in their circumstances have done the like. Cotton Mather (*Magnalia*, vol. ii. p. 456) gives an account of the George Keith alluded to in Mr. Boice's statement. He says that in 1694 he printed a treatise in confutation of thirty gross errors of the Quakers, and by that means raised about him a storm of persecution from the Friends of Pennsylvania, who had formerly made such tragical outcries against New England persecutions, and who punished Keith by imprisonment, and involved his adherents in his persecutions. In 1694 an almanac was put forth in Philadelphia by a Quaker; and touching this

matter, it had the following articles in its tables of chronology :

“ Since the English in New England }  
 hanged their own countrymen for reli- } 36 years.  
 gion. }

“ Since, at Philadelphia some did }  
 little less by taking away goods, and } 3 years.”  
 imprisoning some and condemning }  
 others, without trial, for religious dis- }  
 sent. }

This fact, that Quakers, settled with civil institutions of their own in Philadelphia, brought a civil force to bear to restrain just that kind of molestation which called forth the civil penalties in Massachusetts, is very material, in showing that persecution was the error of the times, from which even the sect that furnished the martyrs were not exempt. And what is more important is, that this persecution by Quakers took place one generation later than the persecution of the Quakers here ; that is, thirty years after its abandonment in Massachusetts, and after all the illustrations of its evils had by experience.

Another thing to be taken into the account is, that some of the offences for which Quakers

were punished were such as would *now* be punished by civil penalties. One instance of this is had in the case referred to by Mr. Boice, in which Quaker women stripped themselves to complete nakedness, and went thus naked into a public congregation while at worship, under pretence of showing the people the nakedness of their sins. For this they were arrested and publicly whipped; and the civil law, as it now exists, would punish such offences as severely.

But the most common form of aggression was that of attempts to interrupt, with Quaker speeches, the public worship of the Puritans. That, I believe, all Quaker writers justify on various grounds. One suggestion is, that it was the custom, in Cromwell's time, for preachers to allow speeches by others after their sermons. But where that was the custom, it never contemplated the introduction of debates as matters of strife, or doctrines opposed to what were received by the congregation. Nor was there liberty for any speaking, except when expressly granted by the preacher. And it would be as much an offence for strangers to bring in strange doctrine, and force it upon the attention of the congregation, at the close of the sermon,

as if no such habits of liberty existed. The fact, if it be a fact, that the Quakers never interrupted the sermons, made no difference. It matters not at what stage of the proceedings in public worship the interruption occurs. It is equally offensive, and we have an equal right to be protected against it. Such an interruption as was then offered would by our present laws be counted a breach of the peace; and if a stranger were to attend a Quaker meeting, where a general liberty of speaking is accorded to the members, and insist on speaking against the wishes of the worshippers, the penalty could be made to reach him for the intrusion. That matter stands on precisely the same ground with the attempts made by the Comeouters, a few years ago, to force themselves on our congregations in Lynn. The present laws did not justify those attempts, though made on the same ground, of an assumed divine call.

Then as to this divine call, which the Quakers claimed as their warrant for disturbing their neighbors, as it was a call not sustained by the written word of God, nor by any miraculous warrant to speak in God's name, it could have no force with those to whom the Quakers declared their

message. When prophets and apostles came to the people, with a message from God, they produced the proof (in the form of a miracle) that God had sent them. But when the Quakers came with such a pretended message, they required men to believe it, without other proof than their simple word ; while it would require very *strong* proof, not less than a miracle, to convince a reasonable man that God had sent them to do some of the things which they did—such, for instance, as to expose their nakedness before a worshipping assembly. Pertinent to the case was that injunction of Paul —“Believe not every spirit ; but try the spirits whether they be of God.” And by what rule must they be tried ? By the written word of God. The Spirit of God in the mind never prompts us to do what the Spirit of God in the Scriptures has forbidden. There is the true limit to all credit, to all alleged calls from God. If one feels himself moved, by the Spirit of God, to do that, the right of which another questions, the other, so far as he is interested, has a right to deny that the motion has a divine source, and to act on the denial, unless the other can show a warrant in the Scriptures, or in a

miracle wrought to prove that God speaks through him. So all that the Quakers said about their divine call to do as they did, had not the weight of a feather in justifying acts of aggression upon the peace and rights of their neighbors.

One thing more must be taken into the account. *Tempora mutantur, et mutamur in illis.* The Quakers have changed, and the Puritans have changed, since those days. Without a loss of the essential principles of Puritanism, the truest descendants of the first fathers here have in several respects modified, by the lights of experience, the principles, habits, and spirit which attended the first development. Puritanism as a system of doctrines — it was old as the Bible. But Puritanism as a civil and social fabric was new. So far as it was a system of doctrines drawn from the Bible, it remains unchanged to this day. And the Puritans of this day adopt the very creeds which were framed in the days of the original Puritans. But Puritanism, considered as a form of Christian civilization, was a new system in its time, and it put its adherents into a new position, and into new relations to the systems around them. And to

suppose that they could strike out a system that should need no modifications by experience, would be to suppose them omniscient. Their habit of enforcing uniformity was one of the errors in which they had been educated, and which required time and experience to change.

And the Quakers, too, have changed no less from the principles, habits, and spirit of their founders. The very word *Quaker* had its origin in a habit not now existing. If we may credit contemporary writers, even under a discount of fifty per cent. we shall find that the doctrines announced by the first heralds and martyrs of the system were very different from what now appear in the creed of the sounder bodies of Friends.

It must be borne in mind, that, when we condemn these Puritan fathers for their shortcomings in religious freedom, we are condemning those who were in their time "the foremost men of all this world" in the very matter of religious freedom, and the men to whom the world is most indebted for breaking the iron tyranny of ages, and leading the way to what freedom we now enjoy. When they first commenced the exercise of civil power here, there

was no government in Christendom that did not sustain the church by civil coercion. We have, then, only to blame them for not having attained what none of the wise and good in all the earth had attained.

The friction engendered by the requirement that all the colonists should be taxed to support the ministry, was one of the greatest sources of disaster to the Puritan cause. But the parish in Lynn took early measures to mitigate the evils of this law, and so far to relax its force as to maintain good neighborhood with the Quakers. In the year 1722 they voted —

“ The parish considering that sundry of our neighbors called Quakers, who have in times past requested to be dismissed from paying taxes to our minister, Rev. Nathaniel Henchman, which in some respects hath been granted, — but now our parish observing said Quakers frequently purchasing lands, that have usually paid to the support of our minister in times past, and under like obligation with our other lands to pay to the maintenance of our minister, — wherefore, voted, that all the lands belonging to said parish, purchased by said Quakers (not meaning one of another) since the settlement of our

present minister, as also all other ratable lands, in whose hands soever, shall for the future pay to said parish, excepting only such lands and estates of the several Quakers hereafter named, now freed from paying to the parish the present year, and the same to be at the discretion of the parish, from year to year, whether to pay or not."

Then follows a list of fifteen persons that were exempt. Similar votes, exempting individuals in about the same number, were passed from year to year, for several years. From this it seems that it had been the custom before this to exempt individuals to some extent. The claim here made, that all the lands belonging to the parish were under obligation to pay to the maintenance of the minister, bears a tacit reference to the original conditions on which lands were granted from the corporation to the individual. Each township was a branch of the original Massachusetts corporation, and as such it was the common proprietor of the land in the township granted to it, by the court or corporation of the colony. Now, the town, in granting its common property to individuals, did it under the condition that it should contribute its share

to bear the common burdens of the town, one of which was the support of the ministry. This was "the obligation which lay upon the land," a reserve tacitly made in the original grant, and which could not be nullified in passing from one owner to another. It was a condition in the deed which bound and attached it to the titles of all future owners.

Touching this habit of taxing and coercion in religious matters, while we confess that our fathers committed great errors, we feel bound to vindicate them from a mass of misconceptions which has grown up around the subject. The main misconception has come from overlooking the peculiar nature of the first constitution of the colony, which was primarily a corporation of stockholders in a trading company, and only incidentally a civil constitution. The civil functions exercised were the result which necessity grafted upon the charter. Suppose a company incorporated here for settling a colony and managing the needful property like that in Kansas Territory, where there is a civil government, and where they have no occasion for civil functions, should, under a like charter, attempt the settlement of a colony in some island of the Pacific

where no actual civil jurisdiction exists, and suppose they were to constitute the officers acting under their charter, from the necessity of the case, the source of civil authority. Then you would have a parallel to the government of Massachusetts in its first origin. The president and directors of this trading company, from necessity, exercised civil powers. The civil powers came in as an incident to the corporate functions. Modifications of this form of government were made from time to time, till this trading corporation had become what was called the Great and General Court of Massachusetts.

For this reason there was not at the beginning any attempt to lay a platform of government on any deliberately framed bill of rights. For civil rights were a mere incident in the framing of the charter for the trading company. Those were afterwards learned only under the dictates of necessity. It was no object of the first planters to attract to them persons of all characters and creeds, and have a frame of government suited to such a mixed society. They sought the opposite of this. They sought, first of all, an asylum from persecutions for themselves, and they did at least all that was

prudent to keep away from them all persons not of their mind.

While their civil government was having a gradual formation by experiments and use, under the guide of necessity, with its theory very little elaborated in the minds of its administrators, — while, so to speak, they were feeling their way along in untried and little illumined paths, — the storm of Quakerism overtook them. But it was a development of which the Quakerism of the present day can give us little idea. Now, Quakers are the most quiet of all citizens, and they are loyal supporters of civil government. But those were the reverse. They came hither for the purpose of detaching the people both from the ministry and the magistracy, and denouncing both in the severest terms. The government of the infant colony was weak. The people were few; probably not over six thousand in all New England. There was more apparent danger from the frenzy and the constant influx of Quaker declaimers than there was from any other experience which the colony had. The onset was fierce and efficient among imaginative and susceptible minds, and spread a contagion of feeling

approaching to insanity wherever it went. The wisest men of the colony trembled with expectation that all was to be thrown into confusion. The declaimers went about disturbing public worship, denouncing the laws, and vociferating, "We deny thy Christ! We deny thy God! And the Bible is the word of the devil!" For some of those violent proceedings men would now be restrained by civil force. But they were immensely more injurious then, when the civil government was weak, having no settled principles on which rulers and people could rely. Yet even the panic of the times—for panic it was—did not justify the acts of severity used. Though the aim of the assailants evidently was to displace civil government, and throw all into confusion, it did not take the form of treason; and did not justify the taking of life, nor the cruel scourgings which in some instances were inflicted. The husband of Mary Dyer told the truth when he pleaded that she might be let off on the ground of derangement. Between a frenzy of that kind and a monomania, that throws the reason from one of its seats, it were difficult to distinguish. Those people, then, should have been restrained by

civil force only as deranged people are restrained. Their conviction of a divine call to do absurd things was all real to them, because the reason, in that particular, had been unseated. And the error of our fathers consisted somewhat of a deficient philosophy of the human mind ; and they attributed to invisible spirits and malignant agents what came of natural disorders of mind.

Yet it is but justice that we should hear the contemporary defences which were made for them. And these bring us to the principle which underlay all that was exclusive in their policy. They said that the Quakers themselves would say, that if *they* had got into a corner, with immense toil and expense, and made a wilderness habitable, for the purpose of being undisturbed in the exercise of their worship, they would never bear to have New Englanders come among them, to interrupt their public worship, and seduce their children from it. They would, at least after mild entreaties, oblige them to depart.

This shows them standing upon their rights, as having founded the colony for their own religious purposes, to the injury of the rights of

no others. They claimed that they had come into this wilderness, and made themselves proprietors of the lands, for their religious ends; that the whole land covered by their charter was simply their property — the property of the corporation first, then of its branches in the several townships to which the company had granted it, and then of the individual freeholders to whom the towns had granted it. They did not invite men of other creeds to come in and share in the property and privileges which at great toil and expense they had procured. Their regulation that none but church members should vote for corporate officers has been little understood. The truth is, that when that law was made, there were next to none but church members here. Probably ninety-nine out of a hundred, having the other qualifications, were church members. Those who were not were mostly interlopers and strangers, having interests and plans opposite to those of the colonists. There was no oppression in this law when it was made. For there were properly no stockholders in the company, and none who on any grounds could claim to be partners in it, who were not church members. And it was

made to exclude those from acting as stockholders who were not such, and whose acts were feared as hostile to the interests in the company. What of wrong existed in the case lay not in the making of that law, when the church and the state actually consisted of the same persons, but in not repealing it when the church ceased to be the state, and when it went to disfranchise their own children as well as strangers. It rested on an erroneous and impracticable assumption, to wit, that it was possible and right for men of one set of views in religion to appropriate one portion of the earth to themselves, and on it rear a nation, excluding, as the Shakers or the Mormons do, all other men. Now, as long as the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof, this, as a permanent result, on a large scale, cannot be done. The will of Providence and the nature of man are against it. Hence this law, though right as a protective regulation at the commencement, was, *in its permanency*, a violation of natural rights. When the same persons were both the church and state, the union of church and state was no wrong. But when the state was composed of different persons from the church, then the

forced union involved violence and injustice. And this was the error of our fathers. Their act was defensible in its origin, and indefensible in its continuance. It was necessary to their end of securing here a home for Puritanism away from the clashings of opposite religions till their foundations could be firmly laid.

The like may be said of the custom of warning out of town all unauthorized new comers, as undisputed residence in a township would secure a partnership in town property and privileges, bought by the common toil and funds of the proprietors, and render the town liable to their support as paupers; the new comers were usually met with a protest, in the form of a warning to depart. Now, the facts were, that besides what property each one held as his own, the town had a large amount of common or undivided lands, of which each lawful inhabitant had a joint interest, which they might at any time divide among themselves. And if strangers came in without a protest, and shared with them in the property and privileges of the town, there would have been a wrong. But in the *now* existing state of things, when strangers come in to share, not the property, but the debts

of the town, it would be a great absurdity to warn them out, as it would be to confine the elective franchise to church members.

But, according to the basis on which our fathers stood, be it right or wrong, there was a necessity for it; in that each town corporation was a branch of the original Massachusetts corporation, existing for the holding and management of its property for its specific end.

So, when persons of other religions came in to propagate their peculiar views among their children, it was at least natural that they should turn the cold shoulder to them. They felt that they had a right to come away to this desolate corner of the world, and here be undisturbed; that they here had just rights of proprietorship which ought to shield them from the conflicts from which they had fled. They felt as one would feel when a furious zealot had intruded into his house against his will, and made an onset on his children, to detach them from his faith and worship. Such a man would feel, whether right or not, that his ownership of his house entitled him to expel the intruder.

This principle will clearly explain where it does not justify their treatment of Mary Fisher

and Ann Austin, and the other Quakers who made disturbance in the colony in a violent crusade against ministers and magistrates. It will also explain, if not justify, the provisions which the corporation made, that all its taxable lands should contribute to support the ministry. And we see why it is that the first parish in Lynn claimed that all the lands that belonged to the parish at the time of the settlement of a minister were pledged for his support. This principle grew necessarily from the origin and structure of the colony, and while all the people were of one mind, it involved no injustice. The error lay in sustaining and enforcing the principle after a considerable portion of other men had acquired a civil status and the rights of citizenship among them. It was not the intent of Providence that they should be able, as they doubtless desired, through all generations to keep out of their community all men of other principles. Taking in all the interests of the world, it was not best that they should. Puritanism, being the completest embodiment of the life principles of the New Testament, was of too much value to the world to be thus isolated, cooped, and cribbed. In the intent of Provi-

dence, it was the opening of a fountain of healing power for the world. He would have the world come in contact with it. As soon, therefore, as it was made plain to them that their asylum from persecution was to become something more than a model plantation for a Christian community, even the germ of a mighty nation, upon which God was to gather outcasts from all nations, and work wonders before the world, they should have adjusted their polity to their destiny, and have abandoned that exclusive principle, and have admitted an equality of religious rights to all.

But while our judgment, aided by the experience of two centuries, can detect these faults in the course of the Puritan fathers, who of us is sure that *he*, with only their means of knowing the harmonies of civil and religious freedom, would have judged better than they? A cruiser, following the wake of other voyagers, or guided by charts made and corrected by the experience of centuries, may sneer, if he will, at the devious course of a Columbus, pushing a voyage of discovery in untravelled seas. Yet, in the *errors* of Columbus, being the steps to the discovery of a continent, there is more to admire than in the skilful navigation of a mere follower of

charts. So it was with our fathers. They were laying their course in an unknown sea, towards a new world of light and liberty, having no lights of others' experience to guide them. And their errors evince more of wisdom than any of their critics have attained.

But, perhaps, it will be said, that the true principles of religious liberty were announced to them by their opponents. That is true. But they were not brought to them tested by experience. They came to them, not as what any nation under heaven had practised, but as what was desired for the furtherance of interests hostile to their own. They were first announced to them in the ravings of men who said, "We deny thy God, we deny thy Christ, and thy Bible is the word of the devil," and by a class of men who afterwards persecuted in their turn; and it was no easy matter to receive a new truth from such dispensers.

As to their practice of supporting the ministry by a tax, we have need better to discriminate, and find where the error lay. The support of the ministry, by some means, was to them an indispensable necessity. The ministry was the cause of their coming hither; and the

ministry was the main instrument of rearing such institutions, and such a people, as they came hither to rear. And who shall say that they did not take the course, which, for the time being, would best secure the end? and who shall say that they had not then a right to take it? Institutions must have some adjustment to previous habits of the people. This people had been in a habit of being taxed for the support of the ministry. But in their outset here, they made the experiment of supporting it by free and unregulated contributions. And, because not accustomed to it, they could not do it without a great inequality of burdens coming upon the more generous. Just that method which you say they should have adopted they did adopt, and found it a failure. Then, simply for the sake of equalizing the burdens upon the people, all of whom were equally bound to bear them, — and not for the oppression of aliens and strangers, that did not at all come into account, — they made this law. They made it on the assumption that this people was to be a homogeneous people. And as long as they continued so, there was no injustice in it. And though they continued the law too long, they did this

on the assumption that what had made a residence in New England desirable, and what attracted strangers here, was the result of that institution which this tax sustained. And hence they concluded it equitable and just, that those who came to partake of the advantages of New England institutions should contribute to that which produced them.

Though this principle is faulty, the fault was not that it did injury to men of other views, who found themselves here before strangers had fairly a claim to come in and make themselves at home. We think the question now in contest respecting the rights of foreigners to come in and stand on an equal platform with native citizens, and share equally in all the results of our fathers' toil and blood, and equally in the control of our institutions, involves the same principle. If our fathers did wrong in not giving full freedom and equality of privileges to all comers, then we do wrong in withholding the same.

If this view be correct, that principle of taxing for the support of the ministry was not unjust when it was adopted. For there is no injustice in a homogeneous community tax-

ing themselves, as the best way of equalizing a common burden. It was not wrong, in the sense of being inexpedient *for the time*, and for that people. For experience proved it better than the opposite method. The wrong consisted in the fact that it did not admit of exceptions, and was not gradually relaxed and laid aside, to meet the gradual change in the people.

This was a grievous wrong, and grievously have we suffered for it. The Puritan churches in Massachusetts have been immense losers by holding on to this principle of taxing all comers. After men of other sects had fairly acquired independent rights of citizens here, such taxes upon them became unjust, and so became fuel for the flames of discontent with the existing order of things, and a constant stimulus to war against it.

No religious denomination could stand in such relations to a people not wholly united without immense damage. And when the rigor of this principle began to be relaxed, it was put in a shape still worse for us. Then the law compelled all to pay a tax to our parishes, unless they could show a certificate that they belonged to *some other denomination*. This law

operated as a premium for getting up other denominations. The cases were countless in which disaffected individuals, having occasion to drive a parish quarrel to a splitting point, and hindered by this law from starting another church of the same denomination, they were compelled, in order to compass their ends, to *assume the principles* of another denomination. Probably a majority of the churches of opposing sects in this state had their origin in just this cause; and the wonder is, that their number is not greater. It also operated in favor of Unitarianism. When orthodox members of a parish had, unfortunately, and at unawares, come under a Unitarian ministry, and felt the necessity of seceding, for the truth's sake, they could not be allowed to secede as Congregationalists, for the laws then regarded Unitarians as Congregationalists, and so they were compelled to remain. In one instance, an orthodox church seceded from a Unitarian congregation, and from necessity took the Presbyterian form. Unitarianism owes its existence and present strength more to this law than to any other external cause. It operated powerfully, in another direction, to this end. The

compulsory provision for the support of the ministry fostered that careless, worldly spirit in the ministry which makes the Unitarian doctrine welcome. The minister was not dependent for his worldly success on the spiritual energy and vitality of his ministry, and was brought under temptation to give way to flesh-pleasing delusions.

While we mourn at the many defections from the Puritan faith, and lament that we cannot see on this ground that people which New England would have presented, if this faith had been sustained in its vigor, and with one mind,—while we deplore the manifold moral mischiefs that have come from the laxer faiths, and the no-faiths, that have in such abundance succeeded,—we find our consolation in the thought, that He who causes the wrath of man to praise him is acting from a plan more broad than we can compass, and that he has suffered these evils to come in, that he might make them tributary to a good more vast than could have come from any of the issues which we could have conceived to be preferable.

In the multiplication of sects we see one of the mysteries of God's spiritual providence. In

not hindering it, God seems to have opened the way for great hinderances to his own cause. And so it is for the present, and in some respects. And yet even now, in many forms, good is coming out of the evil ; and hereafter, in ways not now conceived, it must contribute to give breadth and quickening to the whole work of evangelizing the world.

And one of the many ways in which it does good is that of discipline, in the formation of Christian character. It is no small matter for the Christian to meet all the requisites of Christian society, constituted, as it now is, of persons of all varieties of views. It is no easy matter to carry out a generous obedience to the laws of Christian charity, and at the same time with unflinching honesty to meet all the demands of Christian truth, and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. In order to this, we must discriminate, and know what principles do, and what do not, consist with Christian character, and be always ready to recognize Christian character, under whatever names we find it, and as ready to refuse to give God-speed to any one who brings another gospel. It requires, under these circumstances, not a little of

wisdom and grace to meet our responsibilities. And in this school, perhaps unconsciously to themselves, Christians come under a constant discipline. Let us obediently and earnestly meet the difficulties of our position, ever seeking that wisdom which is from above, which is first pure and then peaceable. While we take heed that we offend not one of these little ones, under the penalties attached to that offence, let us not forget those words of the apostle — “Though we, or an angel from heaven bring any other gospel, let him be accursed.”

## CHAPTER V.

CLOSE OF MR. SHEPARD'S MINISTRY.—CALLING OF A COLLEAGUE.—SETTLEMENT OF MR. HENCHMAN.—HIS OPPOSING THE REVIVAL.—HIS CONFLICT WITH WHITEFIELD.—CONSEQUENT PARISH QUARRELS.

MR. SHEPARD had filled out a ministry of more than forty years, and had attained the age of seventy-one years, when, in view of his bodily infirmities, it was thought best that he should have the aid of a colleague. So in January, 1719, "at a meeting of the lower part of the body of the town of Lynn, considering the age and bodily infirmity of our reverend pastor, Mr. Shepard, and his inability to carry on the whole work of the ministry, it was voted that another minister be called to settle in the work of the ministry." The way was now opened for the hearing of candidates. But it is probable that Mr. Henchman had preached here before. For it was not usual at that time to give one a call after so short a probation. For only twenty-three days after this vote, the church voted a call to Mr. Henchman ;

and in a week after that, the parish voted their concurrence. Hence it is probable that, by reason of the infirmities of Mr. Shepard, Mr. Henchman had supplied his pulpit before any resolution had been taken to settle a colleague.

But as the parish was now in a way to have two ministers to support, they set about devising ways and means. A proposition was made to Mr. Shepard to relinquish the use of a part of the parsonage lands, and the town was moved to grant a part of the land on the Common for the use of the ministers, in addition to the lands of the town then in use by Mr. Shepard. This last proposition was granted by the town; but five persons, one of them a deacon, probably of the new parish, recorded their protest against it. Having thus secured parsonage lands for the use of the new minister, the parish voted for Mr. Henchman a salary of ninety pounds during Mr. Shepard's life, and one hundred and fifteen pounds after his death, and a gratuity of one hundred and sixty pounds as a settlement. No diminution appears to have been intended in Mr. Shepard's salary on the settlement of his colleague. And from the society's ability to support two ministers, and give the new one a

greater salary and a liberal bonus, it may be inferred that they had a good degree of prosperity under Mr. Shepard's ministry. It was but a few years before this that the hive had swarmed in the establishment of the Lynnfield parish; and now it had so far recovered its strength that it was able, without apparent hesitation, to make such liberal outlays. Here was evidence of a relative ability that it never afterwards had. Here, in the absence of historic materials, is very decisive inferential proof that in the general interests of the society, Mr. Shepard's ministry was very prosperous; and we doubt not that it was in its spiritual interests.

In March of this year Mr. Henchman gave his answer, accepting the call. This was dated in March, but it was not read in parish meeting till June 20. The reason of the delay may be easily conjectured, for on the 2d of June Mr. Shepard died. It would seem that proceedings about the ordination had been delayed by his sickness and expected death. So Mr. Henchman received and accepted the call as a colleague pastor, but was ordained as the sole pastor of the church. One expression in his answer in which he accepts the "terms freely and voluntarily" voted by the

parish, would show that he thought them specially generous; and hence it would seem that the people had high expectations of their young pastor. Yet the settlement of this pastor gave a new and disastrous turn to affairs. Up to this time, from the settlement of the first pastor, every thing, for aught that appears, was prosperous. The truth had been preached by men who felt its power, and the ordinary outward indications of thrift appeared. But now, unconsciously to themselves, the church had introduced a pastor to whose labors God would not attach his blessing. Without intending it, they had come under a ministry of another spirit, and under another system of doctrines. Churches are not in a habit of attaching much importance to shades of difference in doctrine, and some cannot even patiently endure those that give to them any importance, and thereby they incur great hazard in settling ministers. In this case, it was probably not evident to indiscriminating minds that Mr. Henchman seriously differed in views from Mr. Shepard; perhaps Mr. Shepard himself did not know it, and perhaps he did; for an aged minister receiving a colleague often has strong reasons to keep to himself his con-

victions in such a case, while the best interests of his people require that they should be known and fully respected. Possibly, in this case, that alone might have saved this church all the mischiefs that have come upon its successive generations through the unsound teaching of its pastors.

It is clear that the people did not apprehend that they made any departure from the original principles by settling that pastor; for subsequently evidence comes out that they were satisfied with his ministry in its earliest years, and yet, that when his unsoundness was discovered, the people were sound, and were displeased with his defections. A few years before this, Cotton Mather had said, that a minister in New England denying the proper deity of Christ was not known; and probably up to this time even Arminians were rare. As little danger was apprehended in the form of a change of doctrines, the vigilance of the church was not awake. Tares were sown while men slept. But about this time such defections began to be frequent, by reason of a decline of divine life in the churches, which was manifest and mourned over at a much earlier period; and through want of vigilance not this church alone, but many others,

about this time came under the ministry which finally led them away to another gospel. A church that comes to settle a new minister, after having been long under the sound and faithful ministry of another, has come to a critical point — a position of rare temptation. Observe it when you will, such churches will be found usually to make choice of a minister who has strong points of contrast with their former minister ; and that however much they may have valued the former. This results unavoidably from principles of human nature. After the general mind of a people has become familiar with certain habits and qualities of a long-cherished pastor, when they come to their next choice of a pastor, they are naturally better pleased with one whose engaging qualities lie in another direction. This, resulting from common laws of the human mind, involves no blame, provided the qualities chosen are good and involve no departure from truth. But here lies the danger. The same law of mind which gives novelties of manner and gifts an attraction, predisposes a people to adopt novelties in doctrine. A new minister, it may be, brings with him new theories, which he presents in a plausible form ; of course careful not

to exhibit them in direct antagonism to the received doctrine, careful not to rouse suspicion in any form. The congregation, not suspecting error, are taken with what seems to them new and striking ideas, and before they are aware have slid away from the foundations. Something like this probably took place on the settlement of Mr. Henchman, though the congregation were more than usually reluctant to follow him into his errors when they came to understand them.

And here allow me to be a little personal, for one object which I have had in giving this history is to make its facts a source of instruction against future departures from the truth. In a few years, more or less, this church will again have the critical and important duty devolved upon it of the choice of a pastor; and I wish that then the burnt child may dread the fire. I expect that you will choose one whose desirable qualities are the opposite of my own. Nor, should I then be in the land of the living, will I take it unkindly in you, provided the points of his contrast do not involve a defection from the original faith of this church — provided you will not repeat the experiment which was made in the

settlement of Mr. Henchman, and choose one whose apparently slight departures from the foundations shall lead on to new defections and a repetition of the scenes of darkness through which you have gone. As it is very possible that Satan may then set for you the old snare, I wish now to take the opportunity to record in advance my protest against it. I wish to convey to those who may be actors in that scene my solemn charge before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and in view of all the plagues written in the book of the history of this church, that they see to it that the minister whom they place in this pulpit have the two indispensable requisites—that he be thoroughly grounded in the truth, and earnest in the possession and promotion of vital godliness. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit.

It was, as I have intimated, near the commencement of the coming in of Arminian errors upon the Puritan churches when Mr. Henchman was settled. There had been an abatement of the original zeal of the Puritans; the tone of general religious life was depressed. And compared with the stricter morals that obtained in the first generation, when most of the people

were Christians, and eminently such, — there had been an alarming incursion of immorality. Connected with this general depression of religious life, there were laxer views of doctrine among some of the ministers. They professed a general adherence to Puritan standards, claiming only to make some verbal and unimportant modifications. As parishes now make little account of any differences of doctrine among ministers professing orthodoxy, much less did they then. So this church then settled a minister of reputed orthodoxy, whose inclinations to heresy were not discovered from his preaching. Yet in that settlement they procured among them the planting of the seeds of error, whose harvest was most disastrous.

In the first years of Mr. Henchman's ministry, his errors were little observed, and he gave general satisfaction to his people. The doctrines which they heard were not so manifestly different from what they had previously heard as to awake any alarm. The change probably consisted mostly of omissions. But his lax doctrines had produced their relaxing effects on his own mind, and made him of another spirit from his predecessor. And as he progressed in this dete-

rioration faster than he carried his people with him, he at length became involved in a conflict with them which ended only with his life. His sun set in a gloomy cloud.

The first occasion of an earnest conflict was the revival of religion which took place in the time of Whitefield. But the awakened interest commenced here, and there was a collision of the parish with their minister before Whitefield came. It seems that, by the labors of other ministers, the revived religious feeling, which attended what was called the "Great Awakening" in other places, was extended to this place. The people, it seems, importuned their minister to encourage these labors of other ministers. To evade this importunity, he made a formal proposal to the parish meeting, that he himself would preach lectures on other days than the Sabbath. From this it appears that it had not been his custom to preach at all except on the Sabbath, and the preparatory lecture. Now, the proposal to preach extra lectures was so extraordinary as to be exhibited at a parish meeting, and to call forth a vote of thanks. This shows the set formality, deadness, and meagreness of his ministrations. Now, he hoped, by a proposal

so extraordinary as that of extra sermons by himself, to allay all desire for other preachers. The parish responded to his offer, with a vote of thanks, and a promise to attend his lectures, whenever "he sees cause to commence" them ; intimating a doubt whether he would commence, and whether much good was to be expected from them if he did. And upon this, October 17, 1741, they voted, —

"The parish being sensible that by the blessing of God a goodly number of young people and others are at this time under great concern about their future state, and desirous to have the word of God preached to them, not only on the Lord's day, but at other proper times, — and whereas a number of reverend and worthy ministers have already come to us in the fulness of the gospel of Christ, but, through mistake and misunderstanding of things, some of them have been obliged to preach in private houses, where one half that would gladly have heard the word could not be accommodated, — and whereas the aforesaid ministers, as well as many others of our neighboring ministers, have manifested their readiness to give what Christian aid they can, by preaching among us, and the parish

are still desirous of hearing any of the neighboring ministers in the meeting house, when the Rev. Mr. Henchman is willing they should,— therefore voted, that whenever any of the afore-said ministers shall come into this part of the parish in order to preach the gospel, the committee shall give orders to the sexton for the timely ringing of the bell and opening the doors,—Rev. Mr. Henchman being seasonably informed of it.”

This carries a semblance of preserving the pastor's right of control, under the phrase, “Mr. Henchman being willing.” But it provides for opening the house whether he is willing or not. It was a disorderly procedure, which they probably justified to themselves on the ground of the pastor's delinquency and abuse of power. It was not the orderly course for redress. Having intrusted the pastor's work to his hand, they should have left it there till they saw cause to take it out of his hands.

The orderly course would have been to have procured his dismissal, on charges brought against him. There was, evidently, sufficient ground for his dismissal, and enough of religious principle in the parish at that time to have carried it.

And if they had carried it, they would have saved the church from what she afterwards experienced. But by taking an irregular course, acknowledging him as their pastor, and taking a part of the pastor's work out of his hands, they perhaps secured their immediate object, but lost the main result. They secured liberty for others to preach against the pastor's will, but they left him on the ground to tread out and destroy all the fruits of the preaching. They left him, hater of the revivals as he was, to work against them. He would not be at all likely to gather in and promote the spiritual growth of the converts. And a natural result was, that that revival brought comparatively little strength to the church; though, doubtless, it was one means, under God, of saving it from entire extinction.

But we see not how to reconcile this action of the parish with some of the traditions preserved in Lewis's History. One of these is, that in 1742, on the 11th of March, Mr. Whitefield preached in Lynn, and some were seriously impressed by his preaching; and that these were the first instances of the kind occurring in the town. But more than six months before

this the parish had testified by vote that a goodly number were in this condition. It is possible that there is some mistake in dates. Then, if in 1741 the parish voted to open the house to such ministers as Mr. Whitefield was, we see not how it consists with another record in Lewis's History. This record purports that in 1745 "Mr. Whitefield came to Lynn, on the 3d of July, and requested of Mr. Henchman permission to preach in his meeting house, which was refused. Some of the people resolved that he should have liberty to preach, and taking the great doors from Theophilus Hallowell's barn, and placing them on some barrels, they made a stage, on the eastern part of the common, from which he delivered his address." But our difficulty of reconciling the apparent discrepancy does not disprove the statement. For in the four years that intervened, Mr. Henchman might have regained his control of the house.

On the excitement which followed his first resistance of Mr. Whitefield, Mr. Henchman published a pamphlet, setting forth the reasons of his opposition. This was replied to by Rev. William Hobby, of Reading. To this Mr. Henchman rejoined, in a pamphlet published March

28, 1745. In this it appeared that Mr. Henchman was the only clergyman in this neighborhood who had written and printed in opposition to Mr. Whitefield's "principles and practices."

The pamphlet contains little of substantial argument, but enough of bitter invective, personal spite, sarcasm, and poorly sustained burlesque.

It is sad for the reputation of Mr. Henchman that he has left such memorials of himself. He has, however, here preserved, in a small compass, much of what was alleged against Whitefield's opponents, and some severe hints against himself.

This instance of the parish voting to open their house against the will of their pastor, when they should have taken regular steps for his dismissal, reveals, in a strong light, the necessity of taking, in cases of difficulty, only the regular course. This was one of the crises in the history of this church. If, then, the people had taken the proper steps to secure a faithful ministry, the whole after history of this church might have been changed. On a matter so small as an irregular proceeding to right a wrong, disaster was procured for successive generations.

These events happened about the middle of Mr. Henchman's ministry. Until a few years before, there was no indication of any coldness between the minister and people. Indeed, the records show not a little of the people's cordial respect towards him. The necessity of voting from year to year how much to give him, to make up for the depreciation of the currency, served as a thermometer of the general feeling. In the early years connected with these votes, there are often expressions about giving him a "handsome support." In later years there are no such flourishes of the pen. After the controversy about Whitefield, the relations of minister and people were fatally marred. The contest, it is true, was about money. But that it had its origin in dissatisfaction on other grounds, is fully shown by the records. In 1738 the parish voted—"Whereas the parish apprehend that our minister's conduct in the ministry has been for some time past disagreeable to the parish, wherefore voted, that when the parish can be well assured that he will alter his conduct wherein it has been amiss, and do for us as the generality of ministers do for their people, and as he himself did for us when he was first settled,

then the parish will give him a handsome support."

This comes in as a preface to the whole conflict, and reveals its cause. It is as clear as if it said, in so many words, that all the differences which we have about money, and which we are likely to have, grow out of dissatisfaction with your ministry. Fortunately for the interpretation involved, this vote comes soon after the commencement of the difficulties about salary. This vote was passed three years before Mr. Whitefield came here. So that neither the religious movement in Lynn nor the dissatisfaction with Mr. Henchman was caused by Mr. Whitefield. The revival which commenced in Northampton, under the preaching of Edwards, had pervaded the country. Every where the minds of the people were more or less moved. The people of Lynn partook of the general movement, and hence their dissatisfaction with their minister opposing it. If Mr. Henchman's opposition had been simply directed against Mr. Whitefield, he might have had plausible grounds for it. For many things in Whitefield's course were questioned by good men — by men no less than Edwards, who did not coöperate with Whitefield.

But Henchman's opposition to the revival began before any question was raised about Whitefield and his itinerancy. And this opposition clearly showed him opposed to vital religion, and the doctrines which were preached in that revival. He sympathized, as his pamphlet shows, with Dr. Chauncey, whom he quoted with approbation, and who was the champion and exponent of the liberal party, as it then was—and who, in truth, was the patriarch of our Unitarianism. Mr. Henchman was, doubtless, like a large class of ministers in his time, who were called Arminians,—having the form of godliness, but denying the power thereof,—making a great account of a Puritan ancestry, and a determined opposition to Puritan doctrines, spirit, and life—sticklers for forms and institutions established by Puritans, even to the teaching of the Assembly's Catechism, when they preached doctrines contrary to it; careful to keep in the background those vital points of truth which sustain the work of conversion. The writings of Edwards, by the prevalent views which he controverts, clearly show what were the views of this class of ministers who were his opponents. The course of decline from Puritan truth, which has

since found its *ne plus ultra* in Unitarianism, was then in its first stages. Our ministers then stood in two classes, — very distinct to a discriminating mind, but not to the common apprehension of the people, — till the test of the Great Awakening was applied, and then it was found that their difference touched the essentials and life of religion. Mr. Henchman's views and party associations were such, that if he had lived till Unitarianism was developed, he would not have failed to be a Unitarian.

As to the barrenness of his ministry, we have some evidence. He had labored here forty years — had a flourishing church and society when he commenced, and at the close of his life he left but eighteen male members in the church, two of whom were slaves. And judging him by the company which he kept, we have no reason to think that he insisted on regenerate character as a condition of membership in the church — though that was not formally dispensed with till the next pastorate. But if his church, after forty years' labor, and those forty years embracing the period of the Great Awakening, was so small, and some of these not even professing regeneration, the fruits of his ministry were few.

When his ministry commenced, none thought him to have made any serious departure from the Puritan faith. Unless he was unlike others of his class, he claimed to be orthodox, in the Puritan sense — varying from the standards only in unimportant matters, but making very important improvements in the mode of stating the doctrines. If the people heard any thing of the differences among ministers, they thought it to be only a dispute about words. These Arminian ministers had the address to stigmatize the adherents to the Puritan faith and the friends of revivals as New Lights — a term which involved both a falsehood and a reproach. Thus they carried the representation that that form of teaching which was consuming the piety of the church, and bringing in still greater errors, was the original teaching of the Puritans. The people were, as they too often are, averse to discriminating; were too charitable to think that any ministers professing orthodoxy could hold serious errors; and thought that so little error might be safely tolerated. Yet these slightly erroneous ministers, these improvers of theology, were the authors of a heresy that blotted out for us a hundred churches.

Take your stand at any point in the history of this church during its decline, and contemplate the disasters that came in,—see how her gold had become dim, and her most fine gold changed,—and you may make the first minister who began the defection, in an important sense, responsible for all. He made, it seemed, only a small departure from the standards,—too small for many to see it,—and yet it was great enough to be the head spring of immense mischiefs. In the corruption of public morals, in the generation of pernicious errors which have sprung up here as in a hotbed, this whole community, in one way and another, has felt the curse of that first step in departing from the truth.

Mark the contrast between the beginning and the end of that pastorate. At its beginning there was a strong, united, and devoted church. At the end of a forty years' ministry there was but a miserable remnant of a church. The minister's heart and purpose were set against the truth, and, by consequence, against vital religion in the church. Consciously or unconsciously, the main force of his endeavor was to undo the the very work which Christ's ministers are sent to do. By stealthy processes, this was done for

the first half of his ministry. Then he and the vital force of the church came into open conflict. And in that conflict he had a fearful triumph. He left the church, at his death, with as little signs of life as he could wish. The daughter of Zion sat in the dust.

## CHAPTER VI.

FURTHER SKETCH OF MR. HENCHMAN'S HISTORY.— HIS LAWSUIT WITH THE PARISH.— HIS DEATH.— FORMATION OF THE WEST END PARISH.— SETTLEMENT OF MR. TREADWELL.— CHANGE OF TERMS OF ADMISSION TO COMMUNION.— HALF WAY COVENANT.— MINISTERS IN THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR.— MR. TREADWELL'S DISMISSION.— SETTLEMENT OF MR. PARSONS.— CONFLICTS WITH HIM.— SECESSION OF METHODISTS.

MR. HENCHMAN is said to have been very affable in his manners; and in his personal intercourse with Mr. Whitefield he is said to have treated him with great kindness and respect. He was very young when he settled in this place—only twenty years of age. He graduated at Cambridge when he was only seventeen. He was the son of Nathaniel Henchman, a deacon of one of the churches in Boston, who was by trade a bookbinder. The house which Mr. Henchman occupied was on the site of that now in building by Andrews Breed, Esq., the mayor of Lynn. After filling out a ministry of forty-one years, he died, December 23. The storm which

came up while his funeral was in attendance, and which prevented his burial on the day appointed, even though the corpse had been carried to the meeting house, was in keeping with the tedious storm of the moral elements in which his sun went down.

We have seen that his opposition to vital religion disaffected his people, and involved them in a controversy of twenty-five years about his salary. The controversy began in the spirit and ended in the flesh. The great point on which it was commenced was that of vital godliness—whether that should be sustained or crushed. In this he triumphed. In the history of that controversy, we have the spectacle of a professed minister of Christ employing the force of his position and office to undo the work which his predecessors had done, and lay waste the vineyard which he came to cultivate. That work of twenty-five years was done with fearful efficiency in exterminating the remnants of spiritual religion in the church. The first parish vote, which informs us of the existence of a controversy, is one which tells him, that if he will be a better minister he shall be better paid. Upon that vote a committee was sent to notify him of

the particular matters of complaint. Six months after, an answer to this vote was made in parish meeting, but no action was taken upon it. The next year a committee was sent to him to inquire what sum would satisfy his claims as to arrears. And he answered, two hundred and sixty pounds ; and by a large majority it was voted not to give it. It was voted that they would give him a free contribution, to meet deficiencies of the last two years, if he would discharge them all. This was accepted, and the debt discharged. In 1745, the year of Mr. Whitefield's second visit, a meeting was called to see if the parish would take any measures to accommodate the unhappy differences between them and their minister. A committee was appointed to discourse with him. But what came of the discourse we are not informed. Six years later, he sent a memorial to the parish. A committee was appointed to consider and report upon it. The committee reported an answer, which was adopted. The next year a committee was appointed "to discourse with him with respect to the uneasiness between him and the parish, and devise measures to make him and the parish easy." The next year he read to the parish an address, and they voted

not to receive it. The next year a committee was appointed to see if they could prevail with him to take his salary and discharge the parish ; if otherwise, to know if he will agree to dissolve his connection with them. This measure produced no fruit. In 1755 a committee was sent to him to propose to refer the matters in dispute for the five years back to disinterested men, mutually chosen, and also to desire him to explain some parts of his address. This proposal came to nothing. The next year, in parish meeting, a vote was put "to see if the parish would comply with any of his twelve proposals," and decided in the negative. Then a vote was passed to make no proposals to him. At the parish meeting a committee was raised to consider two proposals made by him. In 1756 the parish appointed agents "to defend them against an action of trespass upon the case lately commenced by Rev. Nathaniel Henchman, to be tried at the Superior Court in Salem." The only remaining record of the quarrel bears date four years later, in 1760. This record says, that a committee was appointed to consider and report upon an address of Mr. Henchman's ; that they reported, and their report was accepted.

The next year after this address, that is, December 23, 1761, Mr. Henchman died. In June following, the parish adjusted accounts with his heirs, paying them eighty-four pounds.

This is one of the most persevering of parish quarrels on record, and it was carried nearer to the grave than was desirable. What sadder spectacle could be exhibited, than that of a minister of Christ, set to watch for souls, as they that must give account, spending a quarter of a century in one ceaseless quarrel about his salary; and a part of the time carrying on a lawsuit with the people to whom he professed every Sabbath to be preaching the gospel! No clearer evidence is wanted to prove that he was a stranger to the spirit of the gospel.

Several noteworthy events affecting the parish took place during Mr. Henchman's ministry. The next year after his settlement, that is, in 1721, the parish ceased to have its business done in town meeting. The separation was effected on this wise: At a town meeting there was an adjournment of town business for half an hour, to give the members of the parish time for preliminary action. Then, in a meeting ordered by those of the selectmen belonging to the parish,

a vote of members of the parish was passed, ordering Richard Johnson and Theophilus Burrill to call a parish meeting for organizing. The meeting was called, and a hundred voters attended, and unanimously concurred in the proceedings. In 1631 the first movement was made towards setting off the West End, now Saugus, into a separate parish. Thomas Cheever and others first petitioned to be thus set off. The parish refused; the petitioners carried their request to the General Court. The parish appointed a committee to make answer to it before the court. A committee of the General Court had a meeting at the house of Richard Mower, innholder, in Lynn, to hear the matter debated. The court did not fully grant the request. But they granted the West End people liberty to sustain separate worship, by being taxed in a common tax with the old parish, and receiving from the proceeds of the tax thirty-five out of one hundred and eighty pounds. The West End parish had separate worship eight years on this basis, when again they petitioned the old parish to be set off, and had their petition granted on condition that the united tax should cease. But there was still a difficulty in the way. For, two

years later, the old parish had another meeting, and appointed a committee to make answer to Thomas Cheever and others' petition to be set off in a distinct parish; so that the separation was not accomplished as late as 1743.

After the decease of Mr. Henchman, the church was without a pastor about fourteen months. Then Rev. John Treadwell was ordained, March 2, 1763. A meeting of the church a little more than a month after his ordination was recorded, and that is the earliest record of the church now extant. And the action of the church there recorded is remarkable for being a step downwards. On the settlement of a new pastor, instead of taking measures to elevate their course, and increase their spiritual efficiency, the church vote to abandon one of the important usages established by the Puritans, on the basis of the Bible, for sustaining the purity and life of the church. The vote alluded to was passed April 13, 1768, as follows:—

“Voted, 1. That in the case of admitting members into full communion, although the church is far from discouraging a relation of Christian experience, but would gladly receive one, whenever offered, yet they would not insist

upon it ; but instead of this, that they who desire admission into the church should be received upon their consenting to a confession of faith which the church have approved and fixed upon.

“ Voted, 2. That none be allowed the privilege of baptism for their children, but such as are members of the church, without their personal owning of the covenant.” Here were two important steps taken — first, a virtual sanction of admitting members without their giving evidence of regenerate character. For such, in the technical language of the times, was the meaning of “relating experience.” And secondly, an adoption of what was called the half way covenant, or the baptism of the church's grandchildren. For the rule implies that persons not members of the church may have their children baptized on their owning the covenant. From the first the practice of the churches differed as to the degree of publicity attached to the relation of experience. In some cases it was required to be before the church ; in others it was to be written, and read to the church ; in others it was only given to officers of the church. But this vote allows members to come

into the church without any thing of the kind, or without any evidence or pretence of regeneration. The vote is an abandonment of a previously existing usage, and it involves a radical change of the church constitution, yea, a removal of the main article of its constitution — that article which is necessary to constitute the church a body of professing Christians. As no unregenerate man is, properly speaking, a Christian, the church that has ceased to make a profession of regenerate character a condition of membership has ceased to profess themselves Christians.

This question, whether church members should profess to be Christians, was that on which Edwards came to a rupture with his church. All that he insisted on was, that the candidate should seriously and understandingly assert his conviction and hope that he had undergone a change of heart. That was called a relation of experience; and the excluding of this, or ceasing to require any thing more than a decent outward morality, was a violent blow dealt upon the constitution of the Puritan churches, and immense mischiefs followed. This departure from first principles began early in our churches.

It was introduced, as many evils are, by a very great and good man, the distinguished Solomon Stoddard, of Northampton. Through his great influence it was widely extended, though against the vigorous opposition of Increase Mather and others. When Stoddard first introduced it, the practice was universally against it. But having depravity and the name of a great and good man on its side, the leaven gradually extended, while the churches were losing their primitive vigor ; so that, when Edwards took a stand against it, it had acquired force enough to sweep him from his place. The introduction of this change of constitution in this church led the way to laxity of both doctrine and practice. The half way covenant here introduced was continued till into Mr. Rockward's pastorate. He in a sermon stated his views against it, and expressed his unwillingness himself to baptize any on that basis, or to receive any new members upon it ; but said that he would not stand in the way of those who had come in upon it, procuring the baptisms to be done by other ministers on an exchange with him. And in two, and only two, instances that was done ; and there ended the practice of baptizing the

church's grandchildren, which had here existed near seventy years.

In 1771, eight years later than the vote referred to, the church made a more specific provision for admitting members on the half way covenant. It was then voted that those so admitted should assent to the same confession of faith that was used in admitting members to full communion, and then they should adopt a covenant in the following form: "You likewise acknowledge yourself under the bonds of that covenant in which you have been dedicated to God by baptism—the great requirements of which are repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and a life of obedience to the gospel. With these requirements, depending on the grace of God, and in a course of diligent seeking him, you promise to endeavor a hearty compliance. Particularly, you promise to maintain the worship of God in your family, and to bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

Now, whatever doctrine was contained in the confession of faith, this covenant imbodyed the gist of Arminianism. The person taking the covenant is supposed to be unregenerate, and is

made in a covenant with God to promise to endeavor to repent and believe. That is, he is taught that there is a virtue and an acceptableness in his covenanting with God, while in unregeneracy, and promising with unregenerate dispositions, that he will hereafter repent. It is of course assumed that there are duties to be done before the first duty of repentance and faith, which are stepping stones to it. And an unregenerate person is made to pledge himself that he will do the duties that lead on to repentance and faith. Here is imbodyed, to be taught by church authority, an error which has been the ruin of thousands. And it is reasonable to conclude that the doctrine which was here taught in the church covenant was also taught from the pulpit. Hence the evidence is conclusive, that Mr. Treadwell's teaching coincided with the Arminian scheme ; though we are happy to have learned that he, after his dismissal, embraced more scriptural views, and was, near the close of his life, zealous in support of the doctrines of grace.

Mr. Treadwell was dismissed in 1782 having been pastor of the church about nineteen years. Except in the case of the release of Mr. Cob-

bett, a colleague pastor, to accept a call to Ipswich, this was the first instance in which the church had dismissed one of her pastors. Thus for one hundred and fifty years she never, properly speaking, dismissed a pastor. Since that time, however, for over seventy years, she has not had a pastor that died while in office. The aggregate time of the first three pastorates was one hundred and twenty-five years; and that of the next six was only fifty-four. The last six have only averaged nine years each; the first three averaged forty-one each.

Aside from the consequences of the mischiefs done to the church in the ministry of Mr. Henchman, and the tendencies thereby set in the downward direction, there were external causes, serving to depress religion in the time of Mr. Treadwell's ministry. That was the time of the revolutionary war. This war brought in a state of things which was most disastrous to all our churches. The whole mind of ministers and people was absorbed in the struggle, which could hardly have been more exciting if the life of every person depended on the issue. And that war, like all others, brought in with it a rush of demoralizing elements. And the evil

would naturally press heavier here, where the work of moral ruin was previously in progress. If the minister had been ever so sound, he would have found it difficult to have stayed the course of declension at that time. When members of the congregation were pouring forth their blood at Lexington and Bunker Hill, the proper work of the ministry could have little place. For the people of Lynn were not behind the rest in their zeal in this cause. Intelligence of the commencement of the war came upon the people of Lynn as a midnight cry. By night the report came to Lynn that the British troops were marching from Boston towards Concord, and many rushed forth on the instant, without waiting to be organized—were on the ground in season to have their share in the battle of Lexington, in which four of the Lynn delegation sacrificed their lives. When the war had begun in earnest, and the town chose a committee of safety to conduct the war measures on behalf of the town, the ministers of the two parishes, Messrs. Treadwell and Roby, and Deacon Mansfield, constituted that committee. Mr. Lewis tells us that Mr. Treadwell, always foremost in patriotic proceedings, appeared on the Sabbath

in the pulpit with a loaded musket, and with a cartridge box under one arm and a sermon under the other. This reveals what must have been the occupation of the public mind, and how little opportunity there was for the ministry to wield its spiritual weapons when necessitated to bear so close upon it those which were carnal. Yet most of the time of his ministry was taken up either with the war or with its preliminary agitations.

The negotiations preliminary to his settlement here were protracted and complex. In July, 1761, the parish unanimously concurred with the church in giving him a call, voting him a salary of one hundred pounds, and a settlement of two hundred and the use of the parsonage lands. He did not like the form in which the vote was put; so he proposed some modifications and conditions that seemed important to him, but which are not easy now to be understood. And before the matter was settled to his mind there were eight successive meetings, in a series extending over six months; and it would require a keen inspection to see any important difference between the first vote and the last.

Nothing appears in the records to show any want of harmony in his relations with the people till he had been here about ten years, and till the necessity of voting money to supply deficiencies of salary, coming from the depreciation of paper money, occasioned differences. In 1781 a dispute had arisen on a claim of his for arrearages for two previous years. The parish invited him to attend their meeting and confer with them about it. This he refused. He requested them to build a parsonage, and they refused. The next year he read a memorial to the parish, setting forth his claims upon them, and also a paper to the church, called his grievances. About this time he seems to have discontinued his ministry, and in March, 1782, the parish sent to him a committee to inquire whether he considered his pastoral relation as dissolved; and he replied that he did not know. They inquired what measures he would take to dissolve it, and he gave no answer. Afterwards, in March, a committee was sent to him to see on what terms he would be dismissed, and he gave no definite answer. Upon this the parish assumed that the pulpit was vacant, and raised a committee to supply it. In January

after, a committee was raised to confer with him about the disputed arrears of salary in the previous years, and they reported that his claim was groundless. The parish then voted to pay his salary till he had ceased to preach. And in that informal manner the relation was terminated.

After Mr. Treadwell's dismissal, the church was vacant about two years. Rev. Obadiah Parsons was installed February 4, 1784. We are prepared to see that at this time the church was exceedingly reduced, both in numbers and spiritual character. When Mr. Treadwell was settled, the church had only eighteen male members. In the nineteen years of his ministry, a considerable portion of these must have died or have been dismissed, and only fourteen male members were admitted during that time. Those brought into the church under such influences as we have seen prevailing in those times could have little attachment to its principles and little of a healthy zeal for religion. If they had regenerate character, it must have been for the most part under a cloud. The deacons of the church under Mr. Parsons's administration were William Farrington and Theophilus Hallowell.

How reliable they were is known from the fact of their desertion of the church in the hour of its greatest peril, and carrying with them the property of the church, and refusing to restore it till compelled by process of law. They might have been pious men, but their piety was not in lively exercise at that time. Nor was their piety formed on the basis of the doctrines of grace. For if it had been, they would not have abandoned them for opposite views. There is one fact bearing on this subject that ought to be named, and that is, that it was very difficult to find men that would serve as deacons when these deacons came into office. The church had two vacancies to fill, and they chose Samuel Burrill and Benjamin Johnson—these declined; then William Farrington and Colonel Mansfield—these declined; then John Burrill—and he declined. Finally the office was accepted by Theophilus Hallowell and William Farrington, whose official career was somewhat distinguished. This office would hardly have been found thus asking charity had it not been for the low condition of the church. Three of the men at this time elected to the office were afterwards leaders in the secession. They concurred in introducing Mr.

Parsons. And, from their position, it especially belonged to them to take the lead in his dismissal, when they found him to be an injury. Mr. Benjamin Johnson, who introduced Jesse Lee, the first Methodist preacher here, was one of two who constituted the committee for supplying the pulpit during the interval between Mr. Treadwell's ministry and Mr. Parsons's. The suspicions as to Mr. Parsons's habits were then not unknown ; for he had been dismissed from Gloucester by a council, which had acted on such suspicions. Though the council dismissed him with clean papers, they failed to clear all suspicions from the public mind. There is reason to believe that, while the parish believed him to be innocent of the matter of the accusations, there were some individuals who were willing to see the society broken up, by settling a minister whose future developments would be likely to effect that result. Some years ago, an aged member of this church, now dead, (David Walker,) informed me that, in his boyhood, he heard between two neighbors living in Market Street a conversation to this effect : "Are you going to get that Parsons to preach here ?" "Yes." "Don't you know that he is an adulterer ?"

“Yes; and that is one motive which I have in getting him.”

Now, taking this into view, with the fact that some persons here had, according to Mr. Stevens's History, formed a predilection for Methodist preaching more than ten years before this time, it might seem that there was on the part of some a willingness to see this church go to ruin, to make way for another. And this derives probability from the fact that those who had been foremost in the settlement of Mr. Parsons took no part in the work of relieving the church of the scandal. But when that subject came under agitation, they led off the secession. The person who took the lead in bringing formal charges against the pastor was John Carnes, one whose name does not appear in the proceedings for his settlement.

In the early part of Mr. Parsons's ministry, an effort was made by the parish to repair its external and secular interests. Up to this time there was no parsonage house. Mr. Treadwell had made proposals to encourage the building of one, but the parish refused to do it. But now it was undertaken, and carried through in 1787. But there was great and long-continued difficulty

in collecting the taxes occasioned by the building.

Mr. Parsons was called to settle here in 1783. He had preached here as a candidate. But before the church had on their part voted to give him a call, the parish, October 16, 1783, appointed a committee to apply to the clerk of the council that had advised the dismissal of Mr. Parsons from his former charge in Gloucester, for a copy of the result of council. It is clear from this that suspicions were afloat, and though the council had not condemned him, the public mind was not satisfied. They procured a copy of the result of council, and on this the parish voted, that from what they had heard of Mr. Parsons's character, they were satisfied, and approved of his preaching here. They also voted to move the church to act in the matter of giving him a call. The church gave the call. The parish was notified to meet to act on the same subject. They met. But in the mean time a new breeze had crossed their path, affecting the reputation of their candidate. So, instead of voting the call, they appointed a committee "to inquire further into the Rev. Mr. Parsons's character." After a week's inquiry, at an adjourned

meeting, the parish seem to have got satisfaction. So they gave him a call. He was accordingly installed.

But it came out afterwards, that the council, whose result at his former dismissal had satisfied the people, had slightly healed the wound upon his character. For it broke out anew. We know not how soon. Four years after his installation we find the parish engaged in building a parsonage, which we think they could not have undertaken if they at that time had not a general confidence in him. But three years later, that is, in 1790, we find the people in a sad condition. John Carnes and others had tabled charges before the church affecting the moral character of their minister. A meeting of the parish was called in that year to see what measures the parish would take in vindication of the Rev. Mr. Parsons's character against certain charges exhibited by John Carnes and others. This meeting voted to procure a copy of the charges, and to choose a committee to act with the church in making full inquiry into the articles of grievance. The committee reported, but as to the nature of the report we have no information. The next step taken by the parish is

quite remarkable. They "voted that it is the sense of this parish that the welfare of the parish requires that all proceedings with regard to the pastor should utterly cease." This was a vote which, passed in such circumstances, after such charges had been formally brought and not cleared, would have ruined the reputation of an innocent man, and which never would have been passed but from a consciousness that their pastor's character was incapable of defence. This vote of the parish was laid before the church as a sort of injunction against any further proceedings by them. There were evidently two parties in the parish; the one wishing for a full investigation as a means of throwing off the incubus, and the other determined to sustain the minister in spite of his delinquencies. One party seemed to have prevailed when an investigation was decided on, and the other when it was voted to hush up the matter. The church made no answer to the parish's injunction. At the next meeting the parish chose a committee to apply to the church for an answer. But no answer appears on the records.

The next record is unintelligible. It is to the effect that at an adjourned meeting the parish

chose a committee of nine persons to wait on the council. From this it might appear that the church, instead of being hushed, had pressed the matter to a hearing before a council, and that this is a vote of the parish in concurrence. Here the loss of the church records leaves us in the dark. A council might have been resolved on, and Mr. Parsons might have prevented it. The next action of the parish on the subject would seem to indicate that something of the kind had taken place. For it was called as with an expectation of closing accounts with the pastor. The notification calls the parish to see if they will give Mr. Parsons one hundred and ten pounds to dissolve his relation; and if they will not do that, to see whether they will divide the parish property between the friends and the opponents of Mr. Parsons; or, if they will not do that, to see if the parish will consent to Mr. Parsons's continuing in the ministry, provided his friends will maintain him; and if they will do neither, to take measures to bring about his dismissal. This meeting was evidently called at the instance of Mr. Parsons's friends. But at the meeting his opponents appear to have been in the majority. John Carnes was chosen moderator, and all the

propositions of the call were voted down. In a week after this there came down upon the parish an avalanche. A list of one hundred and eight names was handed in, indicating that so many had become members of a Methodist society, and ceased to be taxable to the first parish. This occurred in May, 1791, which was about six months after Jesse Lee commenced his operations here. So that while these proceedings for and against the dismissal of Mr. Parsons were going on in the parish, the springs of Methodism here were gushing forth, and some of the former leading men of the parish were now leading in another direction. They had introduced a consuming fire, and escaped in the light of it. For the months then passing, the mind of this community was deeply agitated. All that was exciting in the first movements for the forming of the Methodist society, and in connection with the conflict in the old parish, was in process together.

The next parish meeting was called "to adopt such measures as the present unhappy state of the parish called for;" and Mr. Parsons was invited to attend the meeting, but refused. At this meeting it was voted that the contract

between Mr. Parsons and the parish ought to be dissolved. A committee of nine persons was sent to him to see on what terms he would consent to a dissolution. This negotiation ended in a written document drawn up between the parties, by which the dissolution was effected, February 22, 1792.

Being dismissed from the parish, he took no care to pass the forms of dismissal from the church. So he left them, taking with him his church records, if he ever made any. And when the church sought his concurrence in measures for his dismissal, he maintained a sullen silence. At a church meeting, June 1, 1792, it was voted that it was desirable that the pastoral relation should be dissolved as soon as it conveniently could be. A copy of the vote was sent to Mr. Parsons by Colonel Mansfield. It was also voted that, if he be dissatisfied with this proceeding, the church are ready to join with him in a council. At the next meeting the messenger reported that Mr. Parsons was out of town on a journey, and could not be seen. The meeting was adjourned for another opportunity. They met again, and Mr. Parsons had contrived to dodge the messenger again. So they ordered

still another attempt to notify him. The unavoidable hinderances of the messenger had prevented the notification being effected. The church adjourned once more, and Mr. Parsons was again out of the way. Still the church determined to do nothing rashly, and thought it best to wait a little longer, though they supposed that he was aware of their action. They adjourned once more, and then, at their adjourned meeting, they passed a vote declaring the pastoral relation dissolved, at the same time declaring their readiness to refer the matter to a council, if he desired it. When Colonel Mansfield communicated this vote to Mr. Parsons, he merely replied, that he had nothing to say.

Mr. Parsons's actual ministry ended at the time when he made terms of agreement with the parish to that effect. At that time he preached a farewell sermon. And as he regarded the Methodists as the cause of his difficulties, he directed the main force of his parting benedictions towards them. He is represented to have been a man of strong natural talents, a person of large frame and fine appearance, eminently social in his habits, but more devoted to his own pleasures than to the work of the

ministry. He scrupled not to take his place in every scene of conviviality. But in those times such habits might not have discredited him, had there been no grounds of suspicion affecting his chastity.

When he left Lynn, he returned to Gloucester, and engaged in teaching—where he remained till he died, at the age of fifty-five, in the year 1801. He had graduated at Cambridge in 1768, and was ordained pastor of the third church in Gloucester, November 11, 1772. He was dismissed November 15, 1779, and installed in Lynn in 1784.

The ministries of Mr. Treadwell and Mr. Parsons, though both were depressing to the vitality of the church, presented strong points of contrast. Mr. Treadwell appears to have been a gentleman of spotless character. His records show that he was, according to his principles, solicitous for the welfare of the church. But Mr. Parsons has not so much as left us any records. The talents and respectability of Mr. Treadwell may be gathered from the positions which he attained in civil life after he left the ministry. From Lynn he removed to Ipswich, his native place, where he was chosen

a representative to the legislature. He resided in Ipswich five years, and then removed to Salem. He also represented Salem in the legislature, and Essex county in the Senate, and also became a judge of the Court of Common Pleas. He had a son, born in Lynn, who became a physician in Salem. And a son of that son is now a physician of high standing there. In the later periods of his life, Judge Treadwell was an intimate friend of the senior Dr. Worcester, of Salem, agreeing in sentiments with him, and sympathizing in his conflicts for the truth.

In the time when Mr. Treadwell entered the ministry, very lax notions prevailed as to what constitutes a call to that office. And probably he was one of the many who entered it merely as a respectable profession, without that adaptation of mind and inclination of heart to it which constitutes a call from the Holy Ghost. This may be inferred from his leaving the ministry in the manner which he did, to devote himself to secular callings, without any apparent necessity, and without taking the trouble to preserve his nominal standing in the ministry by an orderly dismissal.

Of the history of Mr. Parsons little has been preserved, except what we have stated in a previous page, to wit, that he was settled in Gloucester in 1772, and dismissed there in 1779; and so must have been in the ministry seven years when he came to Lynn. After he left Lynn he went to Gloucester, where he lived nine years, and died. The maiden name of his wife, that is, Wigglesworth, is a name distinguished in Puritan history.

The results of the two pastorates now under review give us an opportunity to compare two kinds of ministerial deficiency. Mr. Treadwell's personal character was unimpeachable. Yet, for want of an exhibition of the strong points of evangelical truth, he failed in the production of life, energy, and purity in the church. As to Mr. Parsons's doctrines, we have no means of knowledge, though we have no reason to think them different from what had been preached here for sixty years before. And if they had been as orthodox as those of Paul, the truth held in unrighteousness would have availed little. In some respects a ministry deficient in moral character is worse, and in all views it strikes the common apprehension as more revolt-

ing, than one that is deficient in the only cardinal truths of Christianity. But the latter will work as irresistibly towards the destruction of vital religion in the church as the other. Its injury to public morals is not so direct, immediate, and sweeping. Yet even as to morals, it will work destruction by undermining the foundations.

And if this be so, a people in the calling of a minister have as much reason to see to it that evangelical truth be in him, in all its length and breadth, rooted and grounded, as they have to find him blameless in morals. With good reason does the apostle enumerate "*heresies*" among the works of the flesh. And he gives heresies a high position in the climax. He says, "Now the works of the flesh are these — adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, wrath, strife, seditions, *heresies*, envyings, murders, drunkenness." This seems to be a severe handling of a sin no worse than teaching contrary to the truth of Christ. But its malignant character lies in setting aside of Christ and his salvation, and in its tendency to dissolve all obligation to Christian obedience; to sap the foundations of Christian faith and hope, and overthrow Christian worship and

morals. It is thus a wholesale sin. Hence the apostle tells us that "he that abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God." So, he says, "If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed."

## CHAPTER VII.

HOW LIFE WAS PRESERVED AMID SO MUCH DEATH.—  
CHURCH REDUCED TO FIVE MALE MEMBERS.— SKETCH  
OF THE FIRST INTRODUCTION OF METHODISM TO LYNN.—  
FIRST METHODISM IN THE COUNTRY.— LEE'S ITINER-  
ANCY.— CARRYING OFF THE CHURCH PLATE.— CALL OF  
DR. HARRIS.— METHODIST APPEALS TO IGNORANT PAS-  
SIONS.

WE have come now to a period in the history of this church when its few remaining members must have given up in despair, had it not been for a special Providence guiding them otherwise, and a purpose of God to preserve it for good in after times. Had not God left to us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, blotted from existence. And had not that remnant been impelled by the providence of God to do what their apparent prospects showed little encouragement for doing, they would have abandoned the enterprise in despair. The discouragements which met in their case were complicate and appalling. A secession of more than a hundred taxable persons had left them at once. The

parish was still divided, as the recent votes in relation to Mr. Parsons showed. And as to the church, its numbers were few, and its piety depressed. As men who live long in a pestilential atmosphere, though they escape death, yet have their life and energy greatly depressed, so those of the few remaining members of the church that at this time had any thing of spiritual life must have been under great disadvantages as to its development, and have had but little vigor of Christian character, compared with what they would have had in other circumstances. The preservation of spiritual life at all, in such circumstances, was a wonder akin to that of life preserved in a fiery furnace.

The methods which God took to preserve a remnant of spiritual vitality, in spite of so many causes working death, may be illustrated in the experience of an individual now living, whose conversion took place much later than this, at a time when the pastor of the church was a professed Unitarian. She was abroad on a visit, and under the preaching of Dr. Emmons she became hopefully converted. When she returned, she applied to the pastor for admission to the church. He of course had no objections; but in

discovering the change of her views connected with her conversion, he was not a little annoyed, and especially that she had adopted the doctrine of total depravity. He scouted it as vulgar. This shows the way in which some living members came into the church, and the life of the church was perpetuated by the providence of God in spite of the ministry employed to extinguish it. Essentially what was realized in this case might have been in many others. In the intercourse of the people with other ministers, and from the reading of the word of God, and Christian books, some few would probably come under renewing power ; and these, coming into the church, were its preservation from extinction.

After the Methodist secession, there were only five male members left in the church. These were John Mansfield, John Carnes, John Burrill, Nathaniel Sargent, and Theophilus Bacheller. There were then twenty-one female members. A church of twenty-six members, all told, and members subject to all their disadvantages, was a frail body to stand in the tempest and convulsions that were breaking around them. The Methodists were gathering in a single month

members enough to double theirs. What prepared the way for the introduction of Methodism here, and what were its results, and what were the practical lessons which it teaches, may come under more distinct notice hereafter. I must here confine myself to a sketch of its introduction. It was introduced here by one of the leading men of the town. Mr. Benjamin Johnson was a man of wealth and extensive business connections. He had taken the lead in giving importance to that branch of business which has since so predominated in Lynn. And to have come in under the auspices of such a person was a great advantage to any new enterprise. Probably there were at that time few, if any, in Lynn whose name could have given the cause more strength. To be taken under the patronage of one of the fathers of the town, and set in at once at the head of influence, was a new experience for Methodism. The transition which Mr. Lee experienced in coming hither from Boston, when he was on the borders of despair, was refreshing. Jesse Lee was a man in whom energy, zeal, perseverance, and all the desirable characteristics of the Methodist ministry predominated. He had a large, commanding figure, a pleasing coun-

tenance, and great affability and tact in making an impression favorable to himself. He was a native of Virginia, and commenced his ministry there. He came hither from the south. He had labored the year before in Connecticut. That state preceded this by one year in the reception of Methodism. About that time, the Arminian doctrine had become very prevalent in the Congregational churches there. And through the prevalence of this, Methodism found a way of access. It seems to have been effectually repelled where the ministers stood firm on the Puritan platform, and their churches were well indoctrinated, as we shall hereafter see. Take the city of Hartford for a specimen. The two Congregational churches there at that time held thoroughly the Calvinistic system. Methodism approached the place early, and made some encouraging beginnings there, but never got a permanent footing till Maffit introduced it, when that comet was sweeping the horizon. In one of the early instances in which Methodism proposed itself to Hartford, it was brought thither by Asbury, the first Methodist bishop. Dr. Strong was then the pastor of the first church. He was requested to grant permission for Asbury

to preach in his house. He did it without hesitation, and gave notice on the Sabbath that the Right Reverend Asbury, bishop of the Methodist Episcopal church in the United States, would preach in that house that evening. Moved by the sound of such imposing titles, and wondering what the Methodist Episcopal church of the United States might be, almost the whole city came together to hear him. Though Mr. Asbury might have been a very good man, and good preacher, he could not redeem all the promises of such a prospectus, and the people went away with their curiosity satisfied for that time. And Bishop Asbury went away without having done all the good that he would have done.

But Jesse Lee was the proper father of Methodism in Connecticut. He commenced in the vicinity of Bridgeport, and succeeded in establishing some classes there, before he came hither. He transplanted the stock into New England, after it had had an extensive planting in some of the other states. It was introduced into New York in 1766. It had extended south, along the line of the Atlantic states, till it numbered forty-three thousand members and

two hundred preachers. That was the strength of the body when it sent a mission to the home of the Puritans, and laid out New England as so much waste ground to be recovered to Christianity.

And it may be pertinent here to give the origin of the first budding of the stock after it was transplanted from the old country, and set in American soil. I give it as related by Dr. Bangs, a father of Methodism, and published in Rupp's History of All Religions: "A few Methodist emigrants from Ireland landed in New York in 1766. One of them, Philip Embury, had been a local preacher. But finding there no Methodists, they attended public worship nowhere, and came near making shipwreck of faith and a good conscience. The next year there came over another Irish Methodist family, in which was a woman whose zeal was alive. She learned the facts of the declension of those that had preceded her, and found that they were freely mingling in the amusements of the world. This excited her indignation. She suddenly entered the room where they were assembled, snatched from them the cards with which they were playing, threw them into the fire, and

turned to Mr. Embury, and said, 'You must preach to us, or we shall all go to hell together.' He said that he had no house nor congregation. At length he yielded to the persuasion to preach in his own house to these few emigrants; and this little assembly was the first Methodist church in this country, and the mother of all the rest. And the Methodist ministry here began in one who could so easily pass from the pulpit to the card table, and from the card table back to the pulpit."

But to return to Mr. Lee. He had commenced his work in Connecticut, and was seeking to get a foothold in Boston. After a laborious attempt, he was well nigh giving it up in despair, when he received a letter from Mr. Johnson, inviting him to Lynn. Mr. Johnson was at this time a member of the Congregational church. But twenty years before this, he had at the south heard Methodist preachers, and was pleased with them. And contemplating the state of things here, with no reference to what had gone before, it might be supposed that a serious man might conclude, that the sad disease of the public mind might demand some remedies out of the common course. From Mr.

Johnson being pleased with Methodist preaching enough to take the pains to call it in from abroad, it is probable that its doctrines were his doctrines; though this was not true of all that seceded from the First Church on that occasion. Deacon Farrington, after some years' trial, left the Methodists, and came back to the old church where Calvinism was professed and encouraged in the church, however it was treated in the pulpit. And Deacon Hallowell never gave up the doctrine of the saints' perseverance, nor struck his surrender to the Methodist system of doctrines. Indeed, the earlier times of Methodism in Lynn were better than these. In the first generation of Methodists here, there was more of conservative element. Many of the leading men who then gave tone to the body were men of another spirit. Some of that old school of Methodists were on the ground when I came here. Elijah Downing was second to no one for character and influence in the Methodist body. Yet Elijah Downing adhered to the Calvinist system of doctrines till the day of his death. Jonathan Tuttle was not as decidedly Calvinistic as he, but his sympathies for Calvinists were strong, and he had more in common with

us than most of his sect, and would very frequently be found in attendance on our preaching in preference to his own. But this is a digression.

Obedient to his call, on the 14th of December, 1790, Jesse Lee arrived at the house of Mr. Johnson. He says, "I got there a little after dark, and felt as though I was at home as soon as I arrived." A desire was expressed by the people to have a Methodist society established in the town before they heard him preach. So clear is the evidence that the way had been fully prepared for Methodism before the coming of its apostle. By three successive ministries preaching Arminianism, the common mind had imbibed those views of religion in which Methodism consists. The mass of the people, so far as they had any religious inclinations, were Methodists in all but the outward organization, and so prepared to seek that with the forwardness which they manifested. And when Lee came hither to make Methodists of the people, he found that the work had been done for him. In the evening next after his arrival he preached the first Methodist sermon in Lynn. He said, "I had a good many hearers, and great freedom

in preaching. I bore public testimony against unconditional election and reprobation." But it so happened that he gave his testimony against culprits that were not in court. For precious little was there of a belief of those doctrines in Lynn. His next sermon was at Mr. Lye's, at Wood End. Here too was a large assembly, including several Quakers. He had not met with a company of people for a long time that had so much of the appearance of Methodists. This is effectual testimony as to the existing views of the people. The house of Mr. Johnson, where he found his first home, was in Market Street, on the present site of the Exchange Building. The people flocked to hear his preaching by hundreds. In February he formed his first class, consisting of eight persons. A week after twenty-one were added. In May the number was fifty-one. At that time one hundred and eight persons "signed off" from the first parish. The first meetings of the society were held in the house of Mr. Johnson. Soon his large dwelling house proved insufficient for the worshippers. Then his barn became their sanctuary. This stood near the corner of Market and Essex Streets. Here the

gospel trumpet sounded so loud as to be heard at the distance of a mile.

Among the persons engaged in putting forward the Methodist enterprise, next to Benjamin Johnson, was Enoch Mudge, the father of the preacher of that name. And the house of Mr. Mudge divided with Mr. Johnson the honor of the head quarters of the new phalanx. And that house stood on the very ground on which our meeting house is built. It was removed to give place to this house, and now stands the last in Commercial Street, next to the West Lynn depot. This, then, is one of the localities where the prayers and counsels that impelled the first springs of the movement were held ; and those Methodists whose memory went back to the beginnings naturally looked on with sadness, when they saw that house removed to give place to another altar.

Mr. Lee was allowed in some instances to preach in the evening in the meeting house of the first parish. The denying him of this privilege was one impulse, which put forward the building of the first Methodist meeting house. That house was built so as to be used for worship in twelve days from the commencement of

cutting the timber in the forest. It was not finished inside for a long time. It was the wish and ruling of Mr. Lee that the meeting house should be built with all possible plainness, without steeple or pews, or other ordinary features of meeting houses. And there is a tradition that when he came to Lynn on a visit, many years after his mission here, and saw the present meeting house of the first Methodist church, with its steeple and bell, and all the common conveniences of meeting houses, he was indignant at the mark of degeneracy in his church, and even refused to preach in the new house. When that new house was built, the first one was removed from its site at the east end of the Common, and purchased by a company, that intended to make it a political reading room. It was allowed by vote of this parish to be set on its parsonage lands for a term of years. But as the war of 1812 soon after ceased, and the political excitement declined, it was little used for that purpose. It was next purchased by an individual interested in promoting a Baptist society. Its next service was to cradle the infancy of the Baptist church, and our parish sold the land for its site as a Baptist church. Afterwards it was

used many years as a school house. Then it came into the possession of the Irish Romanists, who are remodelling it for future centuries. It has attained the age of sixty-four years, and is useful as a measure of the age of Lynn Methodism.

To the Methodist pioneers Lynn was a paradise, in which they found refreshment from the toils and rigors of their work in less inviting fields. Mr. Lee's journal flashes with delight when he speaks of it. Bishop Asbury, when here on a visit, called it "the perfection of beauty." With a sort of prophetic impulse, in a case which required no spirit of prophecy, he said, "Here we shall make a firm stand, and from this central point, from Lynn, shall the light of Methodism and truth radiate through the state." Methodism never would have acquired any thing like its present position, had it not been for the early encouragement which it found here, through the disastrous defections of the ministers and people from the Puritan faith. Even in Boston, with all the defections there, it found it next to impossible to make a beginning. And it could do nothing there till it had acquired a vantage ground here.

The society formed here by Mr. Lee was, as

we have seen, composed in part of the members of the first church. Mr. Johnson, and the two deacons, Farrington and Hallowell, and we know not how many more, especially of females, were members of this church. Nor did they go out empty. They, in one respect at least, imitated the Israelites' flight from Egypt. They spoiled the Egyptians. They took with them the communion vessels of the church, which, being numerous and made of solid silver, were very valuable. They had been mostly given to the church, eighty years before, by individuals whose names and act of gift had been engraved on the vessels themselves; so that there could be no mistake as to the donors' intent, that they should be for the perpetual use of this church alone, and not the personal property of individuals becoming members for a while, and then dividing the spoil. They were given by orthodox men before Methodism had a being, and before the defection from the original principles began. Most of them bear the date of 1721, which was the year when Mr. Shepard's ministry closed. They came from men reared under his ministry, and as the result of the full prosperity of the church which his ministry produced. So that

there was no shadow of ground to claim that they equitably belonged to Methodists, rearing altar against altar ; so that their claim to have the *half* of those vessels if the church would consent to divide with them, or the whole if they would not, was preposterous. We see not how they could have made it plausible to their own minds, except on the ground that the old church was dead, and they were heirs and administrators upon its estate. Probably they had something of this feeling. But in that case they showed an indecent haste to administer on the estate before the old lady had ceased to breathe.

After the church had waded through all the difficulties of completing the dismissal of Mr. Parsons, and the difficulties of ascertaining whether he were dismissed or not, they undertook another difficult work—the recovery of their property. They began by appointing a meeting of the church, and inviting the seceding brethren to be present to confer with them. The record says, that “those brethren entered into a very long conversation upon various matters, and then introduced the matter of the plate, and proposed a division of it, or the loan of a part of it to their society ; and they did

not incline that any other matter should be taken up. The church put the question to them whether they were Congregationalists. To that they made no answer, but left the impression that they were Methodists, and determined to continue so." Though they were leading members of the Methodist society, they threatened to call a meeting of the Congregational church, and carry a majority with them, and procure a settlement of the question to their mind. When they retired from the conference, the church voted that "these brethren, having seceded to another denomination, were no longer members of this church." And they also voted "that they would proceed in a regular manner towards the settlement of a minister, who shall be a man of piety and learning," and also to prepare the way for the administration of the Lord's supper, which seems to have been intermitted during the confusion attending the last days of Mr. Parsons's ministry. A day was appointed for the administration of the ordinance, and Mr. Robey, of Saugus, was invited to administer it. A committee was sent to the absconding deacons for the church plate to be used on the occasion. But it was refused, except on condi-

tion that they would be content to receive half of it. They were asked to give their answer in writing, but they would not do it. They said that they had pledged themselves to their associates that they would not do it. The whole was demanded in the name of the church, and was refused. The ordinance of the supper was administered at the appointed time. The plate of the Saugus church was borrowed, and Messrs. Burrill and Sargent officiated as deacons.

At an adjourned meeting in 1792, it was voted to commence a suit for the church plate, and that the parish should be invited to join with the church in it. It was also voted to request the parish to unite with the church in observing a day of fasting and prayer, "that they might be directed in the choice of a minister, who is both pious and learned," and also that the parish unite with the church in the employment of persons to preach as candidates. The parish concurred in all these proposals. The fast was observed November 25, 1792. The public exercises were conducted by Rev. Messrs. Mottey, Robey, Payson, and Barnard. In July follow-

ing, the church gave a call to Thaddeus Mason Harris, afterwards Dr. Harris, of Dorchester, who had preached here some time as a candidate. He declined, because he had "reason to expect to be equally useful and more happy in the undivided and undistracted town of Dorchester." He was highly respectable for character and talents, and a most zealous Unitarian, though even the name of Unitarianism was not known by the people when they called him. If he had been settled here, the church from that time forward would doubtless have been a Unitarian church. Here, then, was another point of its history, where it escaped extinction. The fact that the church then called a minister who afterwards assumed the type and name of Unitarian, is no proof of any intention of theirs to depart from the original foundations. For in those days those who had Unitarian tendencies carefully concealed them. And very few, if any, of the ministers had proceeded further than the half way house of Arminianism. Few, if any, denied the proper deity of Christ. And it was not to be expected that a church whose antecedents had such connections with Pelagian or

Arminian preaching should take alarm at any thing in the cautious outgivings of Dr. Harris while in his youth.

In about a year after the declinature of Dr. Harris, the church gave a call to Mr. Thomas C. Thacher. That was a cloudy day when this church voted that call: already reduced, as to all the elements of strength, numbers, piety, discrimination of doctrine, and zeal for the truth, she now came into a way to be still more reduced. She might have conceived that she had touched the bottom of her depressions when the secession took place. But the worst trials were yet to come.

There seems to be a special significancy in the aspirations of the church, now put forth, for a ministry that is both pious and learned. For this a day of prayer was appointed. And repeatedly in the record of votes is a record made of a purpose to secure a minister that is learned and pious.

There is in this recorded determination a tacit answer to the claim which came in with the Methodist preaching — to the effect that preachers should be pious, and then it was no matter whether they were learned or not. In some

instances this notion was carried so far as to involve the idea that the more ignorance one had, the better were his qualifications to preach. This pretence has sometimes come forth in forms so gross as to provoke the challenge to tell how much ignorance is necessary to qualify one to be a good minister. Justice requires us here to say, that Methodists have now wholly abandoned the appeals to ignorant passion and prejudice against learning in the ministry, by which they had so much of their first success. Whatever errors they once had on that subject, they have fully repented of, and are now zealous, as far as their circumstances and means will allow, to secure a learned ministry. Yet, while tracing the lines of history, we are bound to take notice of facts of an opposite kind, in their early days,—especially of a fact which was so material as that,—one which contributed so much to their success, and which was such an element in the agitation of the popular mind. Doubtless, at that time this was a great theme of popular disputation ; some insisting, from the contrasts drawn from Mr. Parsons, that it was only needful that a minister should be pious, and others granting that their last learned min-

ister was not pious, yet insisting that such a thing was possible as a minister that is both learned and pious.

Be that as it may, the general history is clear. Methodist preaching in those days was plentifully interlarded with phrases framed to cast odium on a learned ministry, and on those who held with Paul, that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel. The declamation against a ministry that required a salary on which to live, had so large a part in the first Methodist preaching, and formed such an element in Methodist character, that now, when salaries are found to be necessary to Methodist ministers, its results are one of the greatest hinderances to Methodist progress. The curses sent forth against those who preached the gospel and lived of the gospel have returned upon their authors, in habits of those people formed after their preaching.

In those times, and by those people, a preacher's learning was taken as a ground of presumption that he had not the true inspiration. This was the argument by which thousands were gained to the standard of Wesley ; and yet with great inconsistency, — since Wesley's learning

was no small element of his power, and the very preachers who gloried in the inspirations of ignorance, and denounced a learned ministry, gave to Wesley especial homage. Yet, in that day, the ministry of the old church only reaped what they had sown. By covering up the light which our Puritan fathers had kindled here, they had been the occasion of such an amount of popular ignorance, that hundreds were ready to be caught with such chaff. If Samuel Whiting, or the like of him, had been the minister of this church till the present time, Jesse Lee would have declaimed against a learned ministry in vain. If the Bible learning and the Bible spirit, which dwelt in Whiting and in the church nursed by him, had been cherished by all the successive generations as he cherished it, it would have been impossible to cast a sneer upon it. So, in some sense, it was a retribution in kind, when that little forlorn hope of a church was so hard pressed by such opprobrious words. "The fathers had eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth were set on edge." Those children were identified with a church that had sustained a ministry in putting out the true light, and now a visitation comes upon them in the

form of an open warfare against Bible learning. The popular mind around them is charged with the belief that learning in the ministry is exclusive of piety in the ministry.

But we have digressed from the history of the church plate. The Methodists persisted in retaining the plate, and the parish assumed the pecuniary responsibility of the lawsuit for its recovery from them, and retained Mr. Sullivan, who was afterwards governor of the state, as counsel to carry on the prosecution. But after proceedings had gone far enough to convince the Methodists that they could not retain the plate without a lawsuit, and probably to convince them that there was no hope of success in such a suit, they gave it up. At what time it was given up the record does not show. Under date of January, 1797, there is a record made which gives a description of each article. But this is near six years after they were first taken by the Methodists, and five years after a demand was made for them. And when they did come back, one of the deacons who took them away came with them. For at the same meeting in which a record was made of the plate received, a record was made that William Farrington, on his re-

quest, was received into the church and restored to its communion. After Mr. Thacher was settled, three years before this, and while the question of the plate was still pending, the church, as it seems to us, not knowing all the circumstances of the case, very unwisely by vote requested them to come back. They had gone out from them, and the church had very properly, upon that, voted that they were not of them, and no longer members with them. But now, after Mr. Thacher came in, and, as it would seem, under his suggestion, they had a meeting, in which deploring the smallness of their number, they appointed a committee to invite the seceding members to return, and assuring the deacons that they would be allowed to resume their office in case of their returning. The votes in this case are in Mr. Thacher's style, and plainly show his hand ; and he thus gives the reason for such a procedure : "The church is the rather influenced to this procedure from the convictions of duty, and that it might be a fact of public notoriety, that no barrier has been erected by them in hinderance of the return of the said brethren and sisters." Now there was plainly no such duty in the case, and there could be no

apparent ground on which the responsibility of their not returning could be thrown upon the church.

In the interim between Mr. Parsons's departure and Mr. Thacher's advent, the church had Mr. Robey, of Saugus, for their adviser. And during that trying period all their votes and proceedings are characterized with sound discretion and full knowledge of ecclesiastical principles and usages. Under the same auspices such a vote as this would not have occurred.

Now we have two conflicting churches—the one in the flush of youth, and with the prestige of great success, and the other under great discouragement and disgrace. It appears a tempest-tossed and barely floating wreck, with a few hands desperately employed to keep her from sinking. Her antecedents, and the remembrance of what she had suffered, were enough to crush her. While the other was known only as a new and successful body. We contrast these two alone, not that these occupied the whole town, but because they occupied the whole field of conflict. The Quakers have not, in these times at least, been a church militant. Their zeal for proselytes has not troubled their neighbors.

And however extensive their influence has been in their own sphere, that sphere has not been one of aggression. Besides the Quaker society, the Congregational church and the Methodist church were the only churches in the place at the commencement of the present century. And it will be seen at a glance what vast advantages, in this state of things, lay on the side of Methodism, to put its own impress on the rapidly growing population, and make them what it would have them. And now we can look back and see how it has done it. In one year after Lee commenced his labors here, he reported one hundred and eighteen members received to his church. The next year he had one hundred and sixty-six. But the next year—the year in which Mr. Thacher was settled—the Methodist membership declined, and continued to decline for six years, till, in 1801, only eighty-two members were reported. The next year it rose to one hundred and twenty-one. Twenty years later the number was four hundred. Nine years ago the number of Methodist professors in all the town was about eight hundred. At that date Lynn had furnished twenty-one Methodist preachers.

It will be seen that great results, affecting the character of the town and the interests of innumerable minds, were brought in by the change in Lynn's ecclesiastical history that we have here had under notice. The nature of those results remains yet to be spoken of.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### ESTIMATE OF METHODISM.

I AM now coming under the necessity of saying some things which will be unpleasant for me to say, and for many to read. That I take no pleasure in speaking of the faults of Methodism may be learned from the testimony of my stated hearers, who will bear me witness that the name *Methodism* has been strange to my pulpit. But since Providence now opens the way for me to speak of the results of near twenty years' observation, made here upon the throbbings of the very heart of New England Methodism, I feel called upon to record my deliberately formed judgment.

In doing it, I shall first set before my mind's eye some real Christians, whom I find in the Methodist body, for my audience, and invite them to come with me to a survey of some facts which should enter into a true estimate of Methodism. But let me first detain you with a few preliminary words.

When Methodism came into Lynn, it came to claim its own. Whatever hindered its coming hither, Puritanism did not. Calvinism was not here in any living force. For a long time all the preaching that was in Lynn had been a preaching of just the same doctrines that are now heard in our Methodist pulpits. So, when Jesse Lee arrived to plant the Methodist standard, he declared that he had not for a long time felt himself so much as if at home, and among Methodists. And why should he not be at home? The people were like Methodists because they were Methodists. The whole current of their preaching for fifty years had been the preaching of Methodist doctrines, without Methodist forms and names. The difference between Mr. Henchman's preaching and Mr. Lee's was, that the one was dead and the other was alive. And a living dog is better than a dead lion. So the people would readily welcome an enginery that could infuse life into a system which they had already cherished. Indeed, so well had the ground been prepared for such a one as Jesse Lee, that if there had been no Jesse Lee, the soil would have spontaneously produced one. Then there was no Universalism or Unitarianism, and

little of professed infidelity. Most who were not Calvinists were Arminians. All irreligion, and much of the apparent religion, sympathized with Arminianism. So Methodism had this advantage, that its doctrines were in favor even with the irreligious. It had affinities of faith with the opposers of vital godliness even while it had so much appearance of vitality. The change which it brought to Lynn was an artificial life infused into a preëxisting body of doctrines. Arminianism used with no more outward forces than are needful to the effect of the truth, is sure eventually to become cold and dead. Yet it is capable of great energy when set in the Methodist system, employed as a galvanic apparatus to give it seeming life. So Romanism is a most energetic system in its way. That, too, has its basis in the Arminian doctrines. It, like Methodism, denies the doctrines of election, of efficacious grace, of perseverance. And it inculcates the existence of sinless perfection, and even more, of works of supererogation; that is, becoming more than perfect. And with these Methodist doctrines Romanism has wrought with fearful power. But the power lay especially in a machinery so well fitted to the doctrines.

These doctrines are nowhere found to have a vitality in themselves, or in the Holy Ghost, which gives a power to the simple preaching of them. They need the bellows to raise the flame, which expires as soon as the bellows rests. Where Arminianism is simply preached, and no more enforced by machinery than gospel truth is required to be enforced, it is powerless. Yet when set in the system of Romanism, addressing with superhuman dexterity so many principles and passions of depraved nature, it has made the world to tremble before it. But a power that is imparted by machinery cannot be the power of God unto salvation. The faith of believers does not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. So, invariably, Arminianism, wherever it has gone unsupported by the Methodist economy, or the Romish economy, or something like it, has put into the sleep of death every considerable branch of the church that has adopted it. The modern development of it, under the auspices of Arminius himself, appropriated to itself what was at a time the preponderant power of the church in Holland; and now the Dutch Remonstrants in all the Netherlands have dwindled to the compass of four

thousand people. In France and Switzerland, the stealthy infusion of this doctrine brought the once Calvinistic churches to the brink of the grave. In England, the Presbyterian church came to its death by it. In Scotland, Moderatism, another name for Arminianism, went far enough to show that it was working only death. In Massachusetts, it rocked the cradle of infant Unitarianism in a hundred churches. For all these churches abandoned Calvinism, and became Arminians before they became Unitarians. In truth, there was here no apostasy from Calvinism to Unitarianism. But it was in all cases the natural transition from Arminianism to Unitarianism.

These historical facts illustrate the incompetency of Arminianism, or of the Methodist doctrines, to supply the energy of a religious body without artificial and unscriptural appliances, such as Methodism has. This of itself shows those doctrines to be fundamentally wrong, and not, like the gospel truth, the proper channels of divine life. Doctrines that cannot preserve church life by the preaching and ordinances which God has appointed, without the aid of a galvanic battery, are not the incorruptible

seed that liveth and abideth forever. But do not Calvinistic churches die out? That is the question. Do they? Do churches *while Calvinistic* die out? Single branches, from local causes, here and there may die from a tree that has a living root and stock; but where did the main body of any community of Calvinistic churches die out before they had lost their Calvinism? And very rarely did any go away from Calvinism but through the Arminian road. There have, as we have already seen, been many instances in which churches have first migrated into different regions of doctrines, and then have sickened and died. And the adoption of simple Arminianism by a church has, in the light of all history, been shown to be the first stage of a consumption on its vitals. This approach to death has come for want of the quickening force of the doctrines of the cross. The church is sanctified through the truth. Cut off from the truth, no human art can prolong its life.

“But *great success* has attended Methodism.” True; and still greater success has attended Romanism, and for a like cause. But it is yet to be proved whether it is not, in the preponderant result, success in turning men from the sim-

plicity that is in Christ. But we shall have more of this hereafter. One great difficulty which we have ever felt about it is, that Methodist teaching seems to be framed to meet the tastes of depraved minds ; that Methodism has its success more in that it can preach what the enemies of the cross wish to hear, than in any thing else. It labors not to bring men up to religion, but to bring religion down to the depraved inclinations of men.

So, when Methodism came to Lynn, it produced great results, because it took hold of the doctrines which lay in the minds of almost all men here, and wrought them with the steam, levers, and pulleys of a new engine.

But why did it come hither under the hand of a detachment sent from the main body of Methodists holding the less evangelized fields of the south? Why did it come to Lynn in the person of a Virginian? Mr. Stevens, in his Memorials of Methodism, tells us that it came as a protest against some of the main doctrines of Puritanism. If that were so, Lynn was the last place to which it should have come, instead of the first, for there was the least of those doctrines here. He says, "It came with the voice of remonstrance

against some of the principal doctrines of the Puritan church, which it deemed derogatory to the gospel, and of dangerous practical consequence. Such were the tenets of preëlection, prereprobation, final perseverance, infant damnation, &c." — p. 41.

Now, let this be borne in mind by those who say that there is no essential difference between us and the Methodists. The Methodists tell us here that there is a very important difference. From their position in the south they saw the land of the Puritans in such desolation as to move their compassions, to leave the waste places of the south and come over into this Macedonia, this more waste place, and help us from under the power of these dangerous doctrines. When the Methodist historian tells us that so renowned a missionary of theirs brought Methodism hither for such a cause, he tells us that it esteemed the religion of New England as worse than none. And that concurs with the present givings forth here in Methodist pulpits, just as often as those pulpits get inflamed on the subject of these horrible doctrines of Calvinism. What is here said of our teaching the doctrine of infant damnation will be more remarked upon hereafter.

It is said that the purpose of Methodism coming hither was to put forth a voice of remonstrance against Puritan doctrines, which were so dangerous and pernicious as to make this properly a missionary field. But how surprised will the reader be to find that this bearing testimony against Puritan doctrines was just the thing that the pioneers avoided whenever conversation on these doctrines was desired. Mr. Stevens tells us over and over again that their policy was, when ministers and leading members of the Puritan churches desired to converse with them about "*principles*," to evade the discussion if possible. He reports Mr. Lee as saying of Mr. Bartlett, of Reading, Connecticut, whom he calls the "pugnacious Congregationalist," that "the minister and a few other people came in, and wanted to enter into a conversation about principles, and inquired what kind of doctrines we held. But I said little." In Farmington he was invited to dine; but he said, "We had been there but a short time before the old man began to talk about principles, and the old lady to prepare dinner. \* \* \* I thought it best to be moving." The instances of this kind abound, showing that when the ministers and

people demanded of them a frank statement of the new principles which they were offering to the people, they could not get it. Then they thought it best "to be moving." Yet when there were none to call them in question, as in Lynn, there they were not averse to talking about principles. Then he says, "I bore public testimony against unconditional election." So did not the reformers of other days. Their mission required no skulking.

Mr. Stevens represents adroitness in dodging as well provided for in Methodism. He says it is a system made up of marked contrasts. "No church preaches more stanchly against Calvinism, Universalism, et cetæra; and yet the opposite doctrines are nowhere directly stated in our articles of religion." So Calvinism and Universalism are classed together, as equally bad, but neither of them marked in the creed as opponents to be met to the face. The discretion of the pulpit must determine if a sprinkling of Universalism here, and of Calvinism there, be not best. But this part of his statement is true, that none preach against Calvinism with more vehemence than Methodists. Here, in Lynn, where Calvinism little prevails,



obstacles. So it becomes a question of great interest to all the friends of Christ, What are the true results of Methodism here, in the place which God has allotted it, for showing its proper fruits? In this laboratory of peculiar elements of human character an experimental process has extended through a century, and now its result has come out for the instruction of the world. Now we have a rare opportunity to inspect the proper work of Methodism, and compare it with that of the gospel, pure and simple. And we are bound to improve it to the best advantage. And what has this system produced, so much in advance of Puritanism? Has it evangelized the people faster and in greater proportion? Has it produced a piety so much more clear and unquestioned?— conversions more genuine and reliable?— a Christian character more intelligent, staid, and free from backslidings?— more beneficent and ready to make sacrifices for Christianity? In short, has it shown results enough, better than those of Puritanism, to justify its having left the wastes of the south, and chosen out New England as the most waste of all the waste fields to be occupied? You see what a reputation Lynn has abroad. Methodists may

be partial to the work of their own hands, and rejoice in this reputation, and estimate the character of Lynn above that of all other people, because it is more to their taste and judgment. But surely they cannot place it *so much* above all people as to make Puritan places wastes, and this the garden of the Lord. We outsiders cannot see that it has any advantage over the other places. We have the impression that when laid in the balances it will be found wanting.

We not only see that Methodism has wrought serious injury to the religious and moral interests of the people, but the process by which it has done it is clear to our apprehension : that is the process which has multiplied spurious conversions. Some years ago a company of Methodist ministers had been assembled in Lynn, on a public occasion ; and at a casual meeting of many of them, where the presence of any one but a Methodist was not known to them, this evil was brought under discussion as an admitted fact ; and the question was, Why do so many more Methodist converts backslide than those of Congregationalists ? Various reasons were assigned, including some of what we think to be the true

reasons. This shows that they are not ignorant of the evil which they are doing.

This evil has large manifestations in Lynn — the place of Methodism's longest abode and greatest strength. During my residence here I have made extensive observations on the results of Methodist revivals. Were I disposed to be severe, as I have been represented to be, I should have drawn a life-like picture of what is said and done at the Methodist altar, or camp meetings, in Methodist revivals, constituting what may be called a religious comedy. But I spare the description ; for it is the *effect* of these comic operations with which we are specially concerned. And *this is a serious matter*. In whatever way a mind may be wrought upon under the excitements of such scenes, if the person can be made to speak, and shout "Glory to God!" he is treated as one converted. But after the excitement is gone he finds his mistake. Then he says to himself, "These ministers and Christians told us that that was conversion. Of course it is all the vital religion that *they* have experienced. So all vital religion is a sham. Say no more to us of conversion, for we have tried it, and found it a cheat." Now, fearless

of contradiction, I may affirm that there are thousands of people in Lynn that have taken up this conclusion from these premises.

I will not take upon me to assert the definite proportion of the Methodist conversions that prove spurious. The impression which I have gathered from laying a variety of facts together is, that about *nine tenths of the whole are found to be spurious* after a longer or shorter trial. This may be an over statement. If the actual proportion could be made out by statistics, it would be an important item of knowledge ; and I hope that some one who has the means of doing it will give us the facts in a reliable form. Until this is done, my impression will be, that the proportion is as I have stated it. I will give some of the instances on which I have based my conclusion. A case occurred, during Rev. Mr. Rockwood's ministry here, in Saugus village, in which he attended some of the meetings, and took pains to inform himself both of the proceedings and then of the results. In that case there were thirty converts received into the class, and at the end of a year only two of these remained in the church. One of those converts who characterized Mr. Rockwood's re-

marks in the meeting as "milk and water" must have been one of the two, for he became afterwards a Methodist minister, and still later a Universalist minister. I am also informed of another case, in the same village, which occurred later, in which forty persons were said to be converted, *every one of whom backslid*; and of still another, extending more through the town, in which one hundred and five were counted as converts, *all but two of whom fell away*.

Of the cases which have come under my own observation, the proportion of those falling away has not been as great; but it has been too great to be believed by those not familiar with Methodist operations. Where numbers have been given, it has appeared that about nine tenths have fallen away. And this I have been led to think is about the average proportion. But if I mistake when I say that nine tenths of Methodist converts backslide, let those who have the means correct the mistake. It is, in this community, a matter of common notoriety that a vast majority do thus backslide. And if the precise proportion can be given, it would be a valuable though sad contribution to our knowledge.

It is clear as noonday that the gospel, as preached by the apostles, was followed by no such disastrous results. One of the sad results of this state of things is the levity with which church relations and a profession of religion come to be treated, by reason of the fact that people come in and go out so easy, and are so often reconverted and backslidden, excommunicated and restored. As a specimen, there now occurs to me the case of one who had had numerous conversions. In speaking casually of the subject, without a thought of uttering any thing peculiar, she said she "*had been a member of the church, off and on, seventeen years.*" Nor was there any thing peculiar in it. There are hundreds who might say the same, and who would probably be as indifferent whether they were off or on. A man who had been often converted in this way, and whose moral habits in the intervals while backslidden were not the most correct, but who had attained the position of a class leader, was exhorting his mother to be born again, and become a dear good Methodist, and go to heaven. She replied to him, "You have been born again now ten times, and I am

afraid if you should be born ten times more you will not get to heaven.”

In short, it is none of the smallest of the evils of this system that it brings the matter of conversion to God, and covenanting with him in a public profession, into contempt. It is really sickening to see how this matter stands in the common mind, that gets its views of religion in familiarity with Methodist ideas and practices. The common speech of men on the subject here mingles more of the ludicrous than of the serious — just as the Methodist efforts in their revival scenes embrace of design so much that is comical.

Here is a process that issues, we will say, in deluding nine tenths of the professed converts, offering to every one invited to conversion a chance of ten to one that he will be cheated into a disastrous delusion. And where Methodism abounds, as in Lynn, it multiplies the deluded by hundreds at a time. And we insist that such a work should come under a solemn scrutiny. We ask the true Christians connected with Methodism, Are you willing to be responsible for this? Can you lay your hand upon your heart before God, and say that it is a work fit

for *Christians* to engage in? Go out with me while we count the fruits as they hang in clusters around us. This process on a broad scale has been going on in Lynn for sixty years. The main religious force of the town has been employed upon it. At short intervals, ever and anon, a hundred or more of the children and youth have been thus deceived. They have come under such influences and instruction, that they have no idea of any other conversion than this. They look back on what was seen and felt in that scene, where their fancies and their passions were wrought upon, and the idea which memory holds of that stands in their minds for Christian experience. Urge now upon them the duty of repentance and faith in Christ, and their inward thought is, this repentance and faith are a farce; for I have proved it in my own experience.

Now, it is a very serious matter to have so large a portion of the people, by such a systematic operation, divested of their faith in vital Christianity, hardened in heart, and put beyond the reach of gospel influences. It is this process more than all other causes that has swelled the amount of irreligion in Lynn. Soon after the second Universalist society here was organized,

with the help of one who was extensively acquainted with individuals, I went over, as far as practicable, the list of the persons that made up that society, and of nearly all it was found that they were such as had had experience of what is called conversion under Methodist operations. And in view of this tendency of things which we have described, the conclusion was inevitable, that the Methodist conversion was the cause of the Universalism. Indeed, if one has been made to believe that that evanescent impression over which Methodists are wont to raise the shout of glory is true conversion, he can hardly fail, after that impression is gone, to conclude that conversion is a dream. In short, we found that the warp and woof of the second Universalist society had been Methodist professors, and some had been Methodist preachers. And we concluded that the same was true essentially of the first Universalist society. We extended our inquiry among that large class of people who have no religious connections, and so far as we could ascertain, most of them, in themselves or their parents, had been set without the range of religious influence by a backsliding after a religious profession. For it must be

remembered that the evil stops not with one generation. When by a spurious conversion one's conclusions are fixed against Christianity, he too often carries his children with him. And so, if our Universalist societies have fewer Methodist backsliders now than they had at their first formation, it is in a great measure because that instead of the fathers there have come up the children. To me the conclusion seems irresistible, that a great majority of the opposers of evangelical religion in this place have been made such, either directly or indirectly, by an experience had in Methodist revivals. That these are natural results of such operations cannot be denied, and if my Methodist friends should think it worth their while to attempt any correction of my errors, I would invite their special attention to the facts which I have now stated. I ask them, and I ask all careful observers, Have I erred as to the number of spurious conversions, or as to the after condition of the deceived, or as to the proportion of such deceived ones now in the ranks of irreligion? If it be a fact that there is more of immorality, irreligion, rowdyism, and infidelity in Lynn, than in other New England towns where the Puritan

doctrines have had the ascendancy, Methodism has undoubtedly been the main cause of it. From what has been apparent in the history of Methodism in Lynn, it is plain that the Methodist ministry promotes Universalism much faster than a Universalist ministry can. For few are the converts gained by Universalist preaching, except of those who by a spurious conversion had been before made Universalists.

These statements, we know, will grieve many real Christians among the Methodists, who, from mistaken views, lend their aid to a system that produces these disastrous results. Yet many of these Christians are at least half aware of this state of things. The case of those ministers which I have referred to as debating the matter proves it. The serious and reflecting minds in that body cannot but have seen and mourned over the fact that a great part of those who came into the front door of their church are wont to go out at the back door. They cannot fail to see how hardened and hopeless are most of the cases of those who have gone through this delusion. And yet why do they continue the destructive process? Why will they put their hand to work a machinery which they see to be

piling up around us so many wrecks of character and hope? Here I must speak plainly, and say that the reason is, *because it promotes Methodism*. True, so many immortal men are made to die by it. But yet Methodism lives by it. By converting a hundred and retaining ten of the converts, an addition of ten is gained to Methodism. And where there are people enough to sustain this draught, Methodism may advance, but the ranks of irreligion advance faster. And so, because Methodism can be promoted by it, all this wreck and ruin are risked. And this motive presses with still more urgency, when it is seen that Methodism cannot live without these measures. If these were excluded, its power of self-preservation would be gone. If the Methodist ministry should cease to encourage the belief that that experience is conversion, and cease to preach the doctrines and use the measures that promote such conversions, Methodism would cease to exist under their hands. They might preach the gospel and gather men to Christ, but not to Methodism. The Christian men among the Methodists are to be blamed for continuing this hardening process upon the minds of the community, when they themselves see and de-

plore the evils, and still continue them. When I heard some eight or ten years ago of that consultation of Methodist ministers, which proved that their eyes were somewhat open to these evils, I hoped that some measures would be taken to remove or mitigate them. But in all this time not a finger has been lifted for a change, not the slightest abatement has been made of those extravagant and comic measures which have done the mischief. Nor will there be while Methodism exists. For they are the heart and lungs to its life and breath.

I have traced the irreligion prevalent in Lynn very much to this cause. It may be also well to remember that Lynn has some reputation abroad for tendencies to fanaticism and strange fancies. If Satan has any degrading and filthy delusion to play off, to bring the human race into greater contempt, Lynn is the place which he is wont to choose for its birth.

If mesmerism, biology, phrenology, necromancy, spiritual rapping, and any of the thousand and one of that class of the tricks is to be played off, it must go out from Lynn, the great mart of humbugs. And what has prepared the minds of so many people here to give entertain-

ment to such things? Lynn has been for sixty years the home and paradise of Methodism; and in the spurious conversions multiplied, you may see what has made it the cage of these unclean birds, and especially of that fanatical sect, which, under the various names of Comeouters, Abolitionists, Reformers, Philanthropists, Non-resistants, and what not, filled the place with noise and fury for some ten or fifteen years. Those Howling Dervishes had here their head quarters, and here their main support, while they made their discordant voices to be heard abroad through the land. And how came they to build their nest here? What had made the people here so liable to be carried about by every wind of doctrine? Methodism had been here for half a century, educating the people into unstable and excitable habits. Calvinism had left the ground, for a century, to the full sway of Arminian or Methodist doctrines. We do not assert that Methodism was the sole cause of the peculiar characteristics of Lynn. Other collateral causes have contributed a share of influence. And though a part of the present population has come in from abroad, like has attracted like, and to a great extent the immi-

grants have been similar to the original stock. After making all allowance for the intervention of other causes, it will be seen that Arminian or Methodist doctrine and practice have formed these characteristics ; and when the gust of that fanaticism swept over the place, it concentrated its main fury upon the only Puritan church then in the town—by the intensity of its hostility working out the highest possible commendation of our principles.

But am I mistaken as to the cause of these idiosyncrasies of Lynn? They have a cause. They have not come by chance. Something has wrought the mind of Lynn into its present character. It was not the pure gospel of Christ ; for that does not produce such fruits. It was not Calvinism ; for Calvinism, for more than a hundred years, has, till of late, had no perceptible presence with the general mass of mind. But Methodism has had a broad influence, and most of the people have, to a greater or less extent, felt its power. And if this is not the cause, let any one attempt to tell what is.

## CHAPTER IX.

### ESTIMATE OF METHODISM.

THE next feature of Methodism which we are to bring under examination is, its *missionary character*—or its assuming the ground of all other churches as its missionary field, or its concentrating its main force in aggressions, not on heathenism or infidelity, but upon Christian churches. Mr. Stevens says truly of his system, that it “is an economy thoroughly missionary, and yet almost entirely confined to home operations.” This statement is verified in the fact that the Methodist denomination in the United States, which boasts of being the largest denomination, does next to nothing in foreign missions to the heathen. It has a system which it calls foreign missions. But that system embraces missions to New Mexico, California, and Oregon; missions to France, Germany, and South America, laboring among Protestants and Catholics in those countries; and missions to Liberia. Only one of all the missions sustained

by this system is, properly speaking, a foreign mission to the heathen. That is the mission to China. Among the Romanists and Protestants in foreign countries, it works on the same principles that it does upon our churches — assuming that all have equal need to be converted to Methodism. Methodism is a system of *home missions*, in a more complete sense than any other, in that it makes all other churches immediately around it its missionary field; and in that sense it finds at home the field of its main operations.

This feature is not so prominent in English Methodists. They are more evangelical, and have an ecclesiastical system somewhat different from this. They have no bishops. They have done more in foreign missions to the heathen.

With American Methodism the first assumption is, that Christianity consists in making all men Methodists. It matters not whether they be Christians, Jews, Mohammedans, or heathen. They have all alike need to be made Methodists. And as Christian churches are more hopeful fields, where Methodists can be made faster, it is counted good economy to spend the main force

of Methodism among those Christian churches. Hence, as Mr. Stevens says, "Methodism is an economy thoroughly missionary, and yet almost entirely limited to home operations." It is not for preaching Christ where Christ is not named, but chiefly for building on other men's foundations. So it cannot work kindly and concurrently *with* other churches for the progress of a common Christianity, because it has a mission to *work upon them*. It virtually says to them, "We will bear our part in the Christian work, for our system is thoroughly missionary. But our part consists in making men Methodists, after you have made them Christians. Our system, being thoroughly missionary, is just the thing for felling forests and fertilizing the wastes. But our machinery is 'limited to home operations.' So *your gardens* are the *forests* and the *wastes* for us to subdue. So you may go forth and fell the trees, and clear the stumps; and when this is done we will show you the power of our machinery."

There is a capital fallacy in the missionary pretences of Methodism. Its organs are framed, like those of the leech, for drawing its life blood, not from the dead, but the living. No

city police has all the finger ends of its system so under command of the governing mind, as has the Methodist system. Each Methodist society is divided into smaller companies or classes of twelve, more or less. Each class leader is bound to see each member of his class, and also to report to his minister, or steward, once a week ; so as to bring each mind so often into contact with the central mind ; so as to give him the most effectual direction of all activities in the society. This makes each class a platoon under the charge of a sergeant, obeying the word of the captain. And the aggregate force of the company is usually employed for making Methodists out of an already Christian population ; in other words, for multiplying proselytes from other bodies. The fault is not in the casual and indiscreet zeal of an individual here and there. But proselyting is the main intent of the system. Christian communities are the chosen fields for missionary efforts ; and the more Christian they are, the more need, in a Methodist view, they have of being converted to Methodism — especially if they have become Christians after the type of Paul's religion. Then those horrible doctrines of Calvinism

require "a voice of remonstrance;" and generally the assumption which animates the whole working force of the machine is, that whatever is gathered out of the churches of Christ is so much gain. Methodism welcomes the son returning from Calvinism as heartily as one coming from heathenism, and bestows a hundred fold more labor to secure such converts.

Yet this ignoring of all Christians but Methodists is the worse for not being consistently carried out, so that others may know what to expect. In the general, the system acts as if there were no salvation out of the Methodist church, and as if a convert secured from Calvinism were a brand plucked from the burning. Yet when it has an advantage to gain, it can make good Christians out of Universalists, and even Calvinists. For the sake of advantage, it can allow one of its preachers to operate as seaman's preacher for the Unitarians, in a way that gives them full satisfaction for a score of years. When it has a meeting house to build, for drawing people from other churches, it can go round for the funds, hat in hand, sowing brotherly appellations broadcast on every field. Yet when it comes into action among its benefactors, it

counts all proselytes gained from their connections as so many saved from destruction. With *Christians* there is a sense of meanness attached to the zeal of gathering proselytes from Christian churches. It is regarded as an offence against the body of Christ. But Methodism glories in it as its main accomplishment. It never takes a place among the sisterhood of churches as having equal rights and common interests. It never applies the golden rule, limiting itself to that treatment of other sects which it would be willing to receive from them. It never supposes that it would be right for us to retaliate in kind, and labor as hard to proselyte its children and youth as it does ours; much less that it would be right for Calvinistic pulpits to utter themselves as freely against Methodism as Methodist pulpits speak against Calvinism. When any approaches are made by us to such freedom, Methodists are thrown into convulsions. Their pulpits are ever ringing changes upon the horrible doctrines of Calvinism, and uttering false imputations as to our preaching infant damnation, and it is considered all right, and nothing remarkable. Yet, after listening to this in silence for twenty years, when this pulpit for the

first time spoke out on the faults of Methodism, a holy indignation inflamed the breasts of thousands. It was regarded as an outrage not to be allowed in a Christian land. Two newspaper presses were employed to denounce and annihilate. Anonymous and threatening letters have been sent, addressing me as "THOU FIEND OF HELL," and bidding me " Beware!" If the writer had uttered blasphemies by the yard, he could not so much have raised the holy horror of the Methodist body, and its *pious* champion of that body connected with the Lynn Daily, (which, by the way, died in the cause,) as has the utterance of what appears on these pages. But why can freedom of speech exist only on one side? Why, forsooth, Methodism is true Christianity, and all else is false and ruinous.

But as a zeal for proselytes, making aggressions on other churches, is a main vice of the system, we may further illustrate it. There have been frequent instances since my residence in Lynn, generally in connection with Methodist revivals, in which the proselyting apparatus has been at work with special energy; and the resources which the system so liberally provides for this end have come into action upon the

young. Of late, one of these breezes has passed over us, but with no very formidable result.

When there went out from this church a colony to found the Central Church, they had hardly begun before the Methodists established a new station for preaching in the same locality, within a stone's throw of them, with a view to thwart them; and as soon as they found that impracticable, they discontinued it. But we have a better illustration in events now transpiring in Swampscot. That place was for many years regarded by all as a place needing gospel institutions. The Methodists were nearer, and, in Lynn, stronger than any other body, and the place naturally waited for them to occupy it. Year after year went by, and nothing was done. Methodism was "thoroughly a missionary economy, but chiefly limited to home operations;" and Swampscot, having no church in it, was too far from home. The difficulty probably was what a Methodist minister formerly here ascribed to the church in Saugus Village, at a time when it seemed to be under special disasters. He said that that church could not prosper, because it was too distant from any Calvinistic

church. So, of course, it was too far from home. Finding that nothing was to be attempted there by the Methodists, our denomination encouraged a preacher to labor there, putting a trembling hand to the work, doubtful whether we should succeed, especially because we expected the thwartings of the Methodists as soon as we should have gathered enough of a congregation to be a temptation to their missionary zeal. After nine years' patient labor, the small band there acquired strength enough to sustain its ministry, unaided from abroad. During this, Swampscot was a *foreign* field, not suitable for Methodist missions, which were intended for home operations; but after the Congregational society had attained a living position, and more especially after some symptoms of revival appeared, the time had come for a Methodist mission to be sent thither, and even forced upon the place, against the advice and wishes of some of the judicious Methodist people there, whose sense of propriety revolted at such proceedings. A minister was stationed there, and the whole Methodist ministry of Lynn, with its presiding elder, has been striving together with him to put forward the mission.

The time for the onset was chosen, when there was some special religious interest in connection with Mr. Clarke's labors. After he had toiled on for nine years in one of the hardest of fields, and when he saw some of the first symptoms of the hardness giving way, the Methodists, who till then had forborne to act, now rushed in. There was a particular neighborhood in which more religious interest was manifest, and where Mr. Clarke had weekly meetings in the evening. Here they established also a meeting, the same evening in the week. In one instance, when Mr. Clarke could not himself be present at the meeting of his appointment, the Methodist minister went in unasked, and took the control of it himself, and conducted it to suit himself; and at that time the females of Mr. Clarke's church were exhorted to violate its rules by speaking and exhorting in promiscuous assemblies. Mr. Clarke also had evening meetings in the village; and here too the Methodists came and established one on the same evening. Mr. Clarke changed the time of his meeting, to avoid the clashing. Then they changed the time of theirs. In another case, where Mr. Clarke's people had a district prayer meeting, they established a sewing circle

the same evening. Mr. Clarke changed his time, and then they changed theirs to correspond, and took special pains to drum up an attendance.

All delicacy as to the form of teasing Mr. Clarke's people to leave him has been laid aside. The minister has gone round from house to house, inviting the families of Mr. Clarke's congregation to secede. To his invitation, "Come and join us," the families replied, "We attend Mr. Clarke's meeting, and have pews in his house." He replied, "No matter; it is your duty to come and join the Methodists." With such unblushing impudence the work has been carried on. But so far as we are informed, this part of the work has excited only disgust in the persons assailed.

These thwartings were the only way in which the Methodists recognized the existence of any gospel or any church in Swampscot. From first to last, none of their ministers conferred with Mr. Clarke, or any of his church, to secure good feeling in conducting the operations. In no way have they acknowledged that the people have access to the preaching of the gospel in any form. Yet some of the people whom they have gathered have sent their children to Mr.

Clarke's Sabbath school, using its books, papers, and privileges, and paying nothing for them. But though the Methodists have asked no advice, they have been free to give it—have, where opportunity offered, urged female members of Mr. Clarke's church to violate its rules by exhorting in its meetings; they wishing not only to regulate their own affairs in their own way, but to force those of others into their own way, and get up division. They have, as usual, dealt in plentiful appeals, made to vulgar prejudices, as to the want of liberty in Congregational churches, to wit, the liberty of female speaking. They have sought to take advantage of the ignorance of foolish men, by saying, "Your minister will not change with Unitarian Baptists, but we will; and magnifying such like advantages of Methodism; and also the work has been carried on by a plentiful use of those caricatures of Calvinism which are so common with Methodists, and of which I shall have further occasion to speak.

Here, as in many other instances of Methodist beginnings, the work was first put forward by what are technically called backsliders; that is, persons who, for a long time before, were not only

neglecters of public worship, but delinquents in outward morality, and who, on the forthcoming of their new-born zeal, excused the past by saying that they "could not serve God except in their own way," and that while living within two miles of a Methodist church. It was on the basis of the action of such like men that the Methodist conference sent a preacher there; and this was similar to the first upspringing of the sect in this country.

I have already given, on the authority of Dr. Bangs, the first origin of American Methodism, in the preaching of Mr. Embury, whose transition from the pulpit to the card table, and back again, was so easy, and have shown how the church collected by him became the mother of American Methodist churches; and you have observed that this great church did not bring hither its first germ in an enterprise for the spread of the kingdom of Christ. It did not make its first appearance here in the person of devoted and holy men, taught by the grace of God to live soberly, righteously, and godly in the world.

How strongly this contrasts with the origin of New England Puritanism, brought hither in

the hearts of martyrs and confessors who give the light of a holy example to succeeding generations! Yet this Methodism is the thing that boasts of being raised up to spread holiness over the world, and that comes hither with a solemn "remonstrance against the principal doctrines of the Puritan church." This expansion of a germ conceived over a card table feels itself qualified to ignore all the Christianity that exists out of itself, and to ride roughshod over all our institutions, and churches, and preachers, as having not the gospel. As all American Methodism came of this transplant of backsliders, so it is no wonder if Methodist ministers foster with peculiar care all efforts having a like origin. That in Swampscot is one of the last examples.

But *Christian* churches are not wont to have such beginnings. The first Christian churches came up under the men who, whatever they had been before, were not employed as builders of the church till they had been turned from the power of Satan unto God, and till their conversion had undergone the clearest of all tests. There is too much conscience with people that gather around the standard of the cross, and under the preaching of the truth as it is in Jesus,

to work under leaders whose zeal and fluency in prayers and exhortations are made to compensate for want of blameless morals. A church that can spring to life under the hand of such men has not the Christian life. It is the fungus, the mushroom, and not the fruit-bearing tree, that sucks its life from decayed stumps. The mushroom may have a rapid growth and a wide circumference, but it bears no fruit.

What is in progress in Swampscot is no movement of inexperienced subalterns. The presiding elder of the district and all his subordinates have been upon the ground and put forward the work. And the complete interlocking of agencies in the Methodist system causes the guiding hand to be felt in the action of all bands, and makes the whole work the work of the ministry; and doubtless the movement recently conceived there, but defeated, to secure the building of a Town Hall at the town's expense, to serve as a Methodist meeting house, originated in the same source with other Methodist plans. But the working of the thing was perhaps best illustrated in what was called the "Social Levee" recently held there, to raise funds by the sale of tickets, and to give encouragement and a com-

mencing impulse to the work, at one of the public boarding houses there. There was a large crowd gathered from Lynn, led by the Lynn ministers and the presiding elder. In an address he said that the object of the meeting was to establish Methodism in Swampscot, and that they had reason to believe that the great crowd of persons present "represented the sympathy of the people in that cause"! Mr. Butler expressed in his prayer "the hope that at length the gospel would now be given to this people, so long neglected." There was in neither the prayers nor speeches the least recognition of the fact that the gospel ever had been preached there before. In such an offensive manner was that crowd, embracing the *élite* of Lynn Methodism, taught to reject as no gospel that promulgated by the Puritan churches, that which first planted New England, and made it the glory of all lands. So much for the proselyting feature of Methodism. I now ask the real Christians among the Methodists if this feature of their system, which places them in an attitude of hostility to all other Christians, which carries a warfare against churches that Christ owns by most indubitable signs, has their approbation.

And I appeal to the common sense of the Christian world, if such thwartings of an infant church, such efforts to pull down what other Christians have built, such a dog-in-the-manger process, is a Christian work. Ye know to whom Christ said, "Ye have taken away the key of knowledge; ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered." Is that system which counts among its good works that work in Swampscot to be sustained by Christian men?

Next, we invite the attention of such Christians to another habit of the system; that is, that of gross caricatures and abuse of Calvinism. This is busy with all the peculiar doctrines of the system of grace. But as a sample of the rest, I shall, for brevity's sake, select only one instance; that is, the representation that we teach the damnation of infants. It usually comes forth in the representation that our preachers declare that hell is paved with infants' skulls. And one remarkable thing about it is, that the regular hearers of Calvinist preachers have never heard the doctrine from any preacher, while a plentiful sprinkling of Methodists are ready to testify that they have heard this, and

that Calvinists preach it. But the scandal is not only sustained in the gossip of the people, but in the written and printed declarations of the Methodist ministry, in standard works. Mr. Stevens (p. 41) tells us that Methodism "had a momentous message to New England," to give its remonstrance against such Puritan doctrines as that of "*infant damnation, et cetera.*" And he here says that infant damnation was considered a fundamental truth at the time of Lee's visit to New England. He promises in the sequel to prove this; but I have not been so fortunate as to find the proof. So, then, it is not the mere gossip of the idle ones among the Methodists that keeps this slander alive: it is written and preserved in the standard works of Methodism, and its ministry is responsible for the gossip. And what are the form and state of that gossip? Wherever Methodism exists in any considerable numbers, you are sure to find individuals in abundance ready to testify on oath that with their own ears they heard this or that Calvinist minister declare in a sermon that hell is paved with infants' skulls. Such witnesses are always in sufficient number to command the general belief of Methodists. Yea,

the notion that Calvinists believe such a shocking absurdity is practically a part of the Methodist creed. It is what Methodism teaches to its children, in the house and by the way. As to the morality of such a use of such a fabrication I shall not speak. It originates not in ignorant malice, and cannot plead ignorance in excuse. For it is put forth by standard writers, of whom it would be an offence to say that they did not know the truth in the case. Such writers give the key note to the scandalous gabble, and then the volunteer witnesses chime in and declare on oath that they actually heard the Calvinist ministers preach it. In this way the falsehood has been kept alive from the days of Jesse Lee till now. It seems from Mr. Stevens's remark, that to make war upon us, with this fiction as the weapon of assault, was an important part of the mission of Methodism; and it has profited too much by it to be willing to let it die. And now, the great mass of Methodist minds in this vicinity really believe such arrant nonsense, for they have drank it in with their mothers' milk, and it probably would not be easy to convince them that our preaching does not describe such paving stones. This falsehood is one of the

leading instruments by which the work of Methodist proselytism is carried on. Now, I wish right here to appeal to my Methodist Christian friends, and ask them if this form of the wrath of man works the righteousness of God ; if that can be a good cause which goes forward by such means ; and is that body that lives by such means actuated by a Christian spirit, and in its successes do we see the smiles of God's approbation ? For the fabricating and keeping alive of such a monstrous defamation, not only are the individuals, but the body is, responsible. For it is done in its approved standard works, without a note of dissent, and with a general concurrence of the people. The system, therefore, stands indicted for a monstrous libel on a large body of God's people, for bearing false witness against its neighbor, for a grievous offence against individual character, and against the common Christianity. And the like may be said of the whole work of distorting and misrepresenting Calvinist doctrines, of which this is a specimen.

There is another matter — the tendency of the system to promote insincerity and a habit of hollow pretences. I have occasionally, in former times, been a spectator of Methodist revival

meetings. Among other things I have been struck with the sameness of the recitals of experience. There were some dozen or fifteen professed converts giving their experience, one after another. After I had heard the first two I had heard every fact and thought uttered by the whole fifteen, who repeated always the ideas, and most often the words, uttered by the first. It was nothing more than the recital of an old lesson from memory. That all these persons had had an experience, in all its forms and minuteness, to match a description that had been stereotyped before they were born, is incredible. I could not resist the impression that the whole was a mere matter of recitation from memory. Now, where young people are encouraged in such recitations, they are schooled to the utterance of untruths respecting their religious experience and their relations to God; and that is enough to harden the heart, and sear the conscience, and vitiate all experience.

The like may be said of the exercises of the class meeting, which is a mitigated form of the Romish confessional. Every member of the class, being called on once a week to give to others his internal history, is placed under constant

temptations, either to tread a beaten track of recital in which actual experience does not run, or to rely somewhat upon invention for the materials of a story that will make a good appearance before the class. In either way, the exercises operate as a school for training the mind to the use of false pretences. How far this machinery has produced its natural fruits, in actual character, it might be uncharitable to give an opinion.

In intimate connection with this is a spirit of self-glorification, in putting forth exaggerated representations of the operations and results of the system. I need not say in how many forms, and in what frequency, boasts are put forth that Methodism is the greatest *ism* of the country; and how often the representation is made, that nearly all missionary spirit in Christendom is absorbed in Methodism—while in truth the whole body in this country has but one inconsiderable foreign mission to the heathen, and its home missions are missions in no other sense than all its preaching stations, supported in part from common funds, are missions. Indeed, this exaggeration appears in its most expanded form, in what we have spoken of as the first postulate

of the Methodist theory ; to wit, that there are no Christians but Methodist. And then, in the reports of gains by reception of members, there is a necessary exaggeration which arithmetic cannot remedy. The reception of members from Methodist revivals is like an attempt to fill a sieve with water. The amount that you put in does not tell what is in at any given time, because the outgoes are a great part of what you put in. Hence Methodist statistics, in the column of additions of numbers, must show a result far above the actual membership. And nothing can be more deceptive than accounts of revivals, which are published in Methodist papers, wherein hundreds or fifties are reported as converted in a few days, here and there. If all those reported conversions had been genuine, the millennium would have been in upon us in full blaze before this. But to those who understand what Methodist revivals usually are, these reports convey no deception ; though they must be very demoralizing to those who pass them as current coin.

I am here reminded of an instance which occurred not far off, some years ago, which illustrates several points of this discourse. An excel-

lent Congregational minister, whose charity was greater than his caution, went into a partnership with the Methodists in his place in conducting meetings in a revival; not doubting that such good and pious men would refrain from all unfair and sectarian advantage. He brought his young people freely under the action of the Methodist ministers. He joined them in their preaching and exhortations, and all their manœuvres around the altar. They glorified him in their prayers, laid their hands on him and blessed him, and shouted "Glory" over the blessed union. Many converts were numbered off, from his own people as well as the others; and even before he began to suspect, he found all the converts actually connected with the Methodist classes. And while, in all simplicity, he was playing into their hands, according to the terms of the blessed union, one of the ministers had sent off a letter to the Methodist paper, heralding a glorious revival in that place, and declaring, as one of the sources of triumph, that the old church on the hill was broken up. This was an exaggeration, of course, for the old church yet stands; and yet it showed what was the sincerity of the partners, and

what end Methodists have in view in such unions.

My Methodist friends must bear with me while I conduct them one step farther, to show them a *time-serving* feature of their system. Mr. Stevens informs us that the written creed of Methodism is so framed as to allow its preachers to preach any thing between Universalism and Calvinism ; yea, to preach either of these doctrines—for the creed denies neither of them. So it warrants all varieties of doctrine that can be required in any latitude, and allows the preacher to meet the demands of the hearer. Where the popular currents require a close proximity to the Universalists, the creed does not stand in the way. When a close imitation of Calvinism is expedient, the creed has nothing to say. Father Taylor, in Boston, has a warrant in his creed for all his acts of communion with the Unitarians, from whom he gets his bread.

Indeed, time serving is a natural instinct and law of the system. Mr. Stevens tells us that the system sprang from no theory or principles, but was a mere creature of Providence. That is, it was created by force of circumstances, and

its modes of action were adjusted to the present expediency. These are his words : "It pretends to no theoretical foundations, and no divine right, but is the result of providential circumstances." And he quotes Mr. Van Buren as having said the best thing in its defence ; to wit, "It is a noble machine ; it works well ; let it alone." That is, principle is nothing ; divine right has nothing to do in the structure of a church ; right or wrong has no place here. If, through the flexibility of its arms, and the elasticity of its conscience, the machine can bend and stretch, so as to combine the advantage of opposites, — of both right and wrong doing, — it is a noble machine ; it works well ; let it alone. This, as far as I have been able to get it, is the all-pervading feeling with Methodism ; though of late some misgivings have been put forth in Methodist papers whether it does work well, and whether it does not require overhauling and a readjustment. But that is nothing to our present purpose, the system is sustained because it is supposed to work well, irrespective of any warrant for it in the Bible. And so it becomes a most practised time server. Wherever there is Methodist preaching the doctrines are Meth-

odist doctrines, in general, but contracted or expanded to meet the popular demand of that place ; not what every hearer demands,—for among contrary demands that is impossible,—but what, in the judgment of a skilful tactician, will carry with it the most of popular favor. This doctrinal elasticity of the system was turned to account in Swampscot, when an advantage might come from fraternizing with Unitarian Baptists. In communities where it would damage the credit of the system to exchange with Unitarians, it is not done. In large communities, like Boston, there are some Methodist ministers that thus exchange, and some that do not ; so that advantages may come from contrary sources.

The time serving of the system also appears in that policy before alluded to, which knows no Christians out of the pale of Methodism, except when some advantage is to be gained by union or a special letting forth of charity. When Methodism has funds to beg, or lines of intercourse with others to form for proselyting ends, or credit to gain in a community through the indorsement of others, then union prayer meetings are delightful, Christians of other denom-

inations are *special* brothers and sisters, and exchanges of pulpits with those Calvinists that preach a horrible predestination and a paving of hell with infant skulls are one of the necessities of Christian life.

I will add but one more thought under this head — that of time serving in the use of female preaching. There stands the divine prohibition, written in letters of light, so that he who runs may read : “LET THE WOMAN LEARN IN SILENCE WITH ALL SUBJECTION. BUT I SUFFER NOT A WOMAN TO TEACH, NOR TO USURP AUTHORITY OVER THE MAN.” “LET YOUR WOMEN KEEP SILENCE IN THE CHURCHES, FOR IT IS NOT PERMITTED FOR THEM TO SPEAK, FOR THEY ARE COMMANDED TO BE UNDER OBEDIENCE, AS ALSO SAITH THE LAW ;” that is, the Old Testament. Now, we all know what obedience in the church the Old Testament required of women ; excluding them from all the forms of public teaching of religion, except when speaking by miraculous inspiration. And this is just the exception which Paul makes ; and he tells us that just that obedience which the law, or the Old Testament, required, Christianity requires. Now, what can be unmistakable if this is not ? Yet, touching this matter

in the words of Mr. Stevens, Methodism knows no divine right, no right of God, to command what Methodist use and circumstances have found to be inexpedient. Methodism, being the creature of providential circumstances, has an inherent right to use whatever has been found to work well, though every page of inspired truth were to cry out against it. In its work of corrupting the minds of the young, it has found a vast advantage in mingling in its scenes of excitement some touches of comedy, and some varieties gained by female eloquence. The music is more complete when female voices sustain their parts. This female eloquence is an indispensable element to give to the scenes of the Methodist revival attractions which will make it compete, on its own ground, with the exhibitions at the Lyceum Hall, or other place of shows. And another glorious advantage of it is, that it is an attraction of which those Christians that follow the Bible cannot avail themselves. Here the liberty of Methodism, its liberty to trample on the word of God, is turned to a good account; and boasts of this liberty and freedom from divine obligation are very taking with the throng, that care nothing for the word of God.

So they say, "It is a noble machine ; it works well ; let it alone." What care they for the words of Paul, or of the Holy Ghost? They have tried their machine, and found that it works well, and what need they more? Most certainly it does work well for their ends. But an end that is served by a point blank resistance of the word of God is a godless end. God does not work against God. God in Methodism does not work against God in the Bible.

Perhaps it will be said that these good people really *believe* that the Bible allows this practice. If they do, it only shows the power of the system to warp even the understanding, and make its convictions subserve its occasions. The system has a fearful power, if it can blind the mind against the plainest truths of the Bible.

But it will be said that Methodism is sincere and conscientious in all its modes and movements; and in that it has a right to public consideration. But there is no greater mischief in this world than a perverted conscience, and sincerity in the wrong. Why, the late *Emperor of Russia* was not, in common life and in social relations, what would be called a wicked man.

He was conscientious and sincere in his fanatical view of destiny. He verily thought he did God service in provoking that war whose mere beginnings have caused rivers of blood to flow. He was conscientious, but his conscience has been the cause of more human woe than half a million of the most wicked wretches now on earth. A warped conscience is a more fearful instrument of mischief than a want of conscience. It is told of a New Zealand chief, that in his last illness his conscience awoke, and he was stung with remorse in view of one special act of his life ; and that act was his failure to do a work of vengeance. His father, after seizing a European vessel and murdering the crew, had, by his ignorance, set fire to the powder magazine and destroyed himself. Many years after a few Christian missionaries reached the island. And what especially awoke the remorse of the dying man was, that he had kindly entertained those missionaries, instead of killing and eating them, to avenge the death of his father — killed by European powder, though by his own hand. This was the result of a perverted conscience. The famous Emperor Charles V. had a like perverted con-

science ; and when he was conscious of drawing near to the grave, he too suffered remorse ; and for what ? For not having violated his plighted faith and honor, and killed Luther when he had him in his hands. He uttered his *conscientious* convictions when he said to the monks of Yuste, "The heretics must be burned. Not to burn them would be to incur the sin which I incurred when I let Luther escape. I did not put him to death because I would not violate the promise and the safe conduct which I had given to him. But I was wrong. I had no right to forgive a crime against God. It was my duty, without having any regard to my promise, to avenge the injury which his heresy had inflicted on God. I should have cut short his progress." Such was the conscience of one of the shrewdest of men and the greatest of monarchs. And it may show what a great evil is the human conscience under a wrong direction. And an immense responsibility rests on all to bring their conscience under the light and direction of eternal truth. The weakest of all excuses for an erroneous practice is, that it has come from a misdirected conscience.

## CHAPTER X.

### MODES OF DEFENCE AGAINST METHODIST AGGRESSION.

IN previous chapters I have spoken to my Methodist Christian friends to help them to a true estimate of the merits of their own system. I have now to speak to my other Christian friends of the course to be taken to stand unharmed against the busy proselyting agencies of Methodism.

The first step is to get a right estimate of Methodism, and its claims to consideration, as an evangelizing agent. The present apprehensions of most Christians are founded on too superficial a view, and will not be justified by an intimate inspection of operations and results. They wofully deceive themselves, who think that a great part of the work of bringing the world to the possession of the character required in the New Testament is to be done by Methodism. And the sooner we are undeceived in this thing the better. A system that works by compromises with the world — that seeks not so much to

bring the hearts of men up to the level of Christianity, as to bring religion down to the level of the tastes and passions of man — never will bring the world to Christ. And such we have shown this system to be in all its time-serving expedients. Its woman preaching, its comic operations at the altar and in the camp meeting, its boasts of liberty to do unlawful things, its liberality towards grosser errorists, its rejection of the doctrines of Scripture that are most offensive to the enemies of God, and its nameless forms of appeal to vulgar passions have this tendency. Now, the spirit which has dictated these things is not from above, and will not elevate, but depress, those into whom it is breathed ; and not until the mind has come into the true idea of the tendencies of the thing is it prepared to use its full strength in standing against it.

Allow me, then, a few words here upon this matter. Much is thought of the energy of the Methodist system, by many who themselves would not be willing to come under its monarchical government. They think there is a class of minds whom it reaches favorably. One has said that “some are foreordained to be

Methodists," meaning, we suppose, just this. But there is a fallacy in the assumption that true religion, on the whole, is promoted by such a compound of truth and error, mixed to the taste of persons of a peculiar temperament, and leading to results so diverse from those of uncorrupted truth.

Whatever the system may be here, it is charitably supposed by many that it is doing greater good at the west. But Methodism is not one thing in the west and another thing in the east. The same rules of action prevail, and the same minds direct the action, both east and west. True, "distance lends enchantment to the view." The thorn and thistle are not seen in the far-off landscape. To a considerable extent, Methodism at the west, being a lighter troop, has preceded other denominations, and so, for better or worse, has gathered in many that had emigrated thither from other churches. But careful inspection of the western field will beget serious doubts of the general result. One of the greatest obstacles which our home missionaries find to the spread of true religion there, comes from the thwartings and the corrupting influence of Methodist ministers. This is a fair inference from the

many cautious statements in the published reports of the missionaries. If the united conviction of the whole body of them could have expression, it would doubtless be, that it had been better for the west if a Methodist minister had not set foot upon it. We grant that in many instances, in the absence of a purer gospel, it has done good — a thing which may be granted even of Romanism. But that its good overbalances its evils is not so clear. While in these instances it does comparative good, it does many evils by the spread of errors, by corrupting the public views of religion, by dividing and crippling infant societies, by bringing religion into contempt through the loose principles and scandalous practices there more than here allowed in many of its ministers, by burning over the ground and preparing it for a growth of Universalism and infidelity. Yet it is customary to look to the west as the field of its most kindly operations. And if there is not on that field a preponderance of good, where shall we find it?

The question is not, let me say again, whether there are not good men and good results connected with the system, but whether, on the whole, the system does more harm than good.

The fact that it has great success decides nothing. The question is, whether the success enures to religion or irreligion. When in Lynn I count the multitudes which in Methodist revivals have been born into Universalism and irreligion, probably exceeding the present members of the Methodist churches, I cannot but feel that the preponderance is against the system. If the fruits be gathered, and the good be thrown into one scale, and the bad into the opposite, I greatly fear that the bad will preponderate. The Christian mind comes with reluctance to such a conclusion. That the largest religious denomination in the United States is working more evil than good is a discouraging idea. Yet, if it be true, it may go far to account for the fact, that the advance of pure religion is so disproportionate to the agencies seemingly at work for it. If added to the native wickedness of man, and all the other causes impeding the progress, we have the immense power of this organization to thwart and corrupt, it is no wonder if our progress is so slow.

It is no new thing for the cause of Christ to be hindered by many of his seeming and real friends. Baxter, in his directions to the con-

verted, says, "I tell you with shame and grief of heart, that abundance of weak, unsettled professors, that we hope have upright meanings in the main, have been more powerful instruments of Satan, to do his work in hindering the gospel, in vilifying the ministry, in dividing the church, and hindering the reformation, than most of the notoriously profane have been. \* \* \* Would he have the truth opposed, and error and darkness promoted, who must do it but professors of the truth? Persuade some of them that truth is error and error is truth, and the work will be done. They will furiously march out against their Master, and think they do him service while fighting against him."

The common reputation which the Methodist system has for having done great things for religion is no bar to a scrutiny of its results. The actual evils flowing from it, of which we have spoken, give at least *prima facie* ground for an inquest. After allowing all the good which any discriminating orthodox mind ascribes to it, we are compelled to throw into the opposite scale a greater amount of evil done by it.

Most of the forms of corrupted Christianity, with Romanism in the van, at some of their

stages stood before the Christian world in the equivocal position which this now holds — many doubting of them, and most hoping favorably, till finally an adverse judgment was passed upon their preponderant results. Now, the great question is forcing itself on the attention of the churches, whether this broad and efficient agency on the whole affects the interests of Christianity favorably or unfavorably — whether it produces a healthy or a morbid action? If the conclusion to which I have come be well founded, the church will sooner or later awake to the conviction that it is among the wholesale causes of corrupting the minds of men, and turning them away from the faith in Christ. If the religion of the New Testament is to prevail, the time must come when its friends shall take the attitude of defence against it.

Providence has cast my lot on the ground of its boasted achievements. I am now in the twentieth year of my residence in the garden of its luxuriance, and I feel bound to give to the world my testimony as to its results. There is no better Methodism in this country than in Lynn. Hither its best ministers are sent, and its choicest agencies are employed. Find it want-

ing here, and you find it wanting every where. Having summered and wintered it, I feel bound to give my mature judgment, that it has done more harm than good. If its doctrines and corrupting revival measures never had obtained here, and the field had been left open to missionary action connected with scriptural doctrines, such as *must* then have come in, it is not credible that irreligion would have here secured so broad a field.

But if this sad conclusion is well grounded, the first thing needful to stand firmly against the aggression is, to know it—to know that the aggression is one not of true religion, but of a false.

Another question respects what forms of action are expedient, touching the immediate efforts of proselyting. As to this I would remark that patience is one of the first requisites. I have been wont to say to myself when thus attacked, This onset has been suffered to take place by a wise Providence, perhaps, for purposes of chastisement and stimulating to duty. I regret the injury that it must do, but am not responsible for that. I will take it as an admonition that I am not sufficiently awake and

diligent. So, when thus assailed, I have usually begun with my own mind, committing the cause to God, and seeking his direction and aid in the regulation of my own spirit and action. As to action more specific and direct than this, I have rarely been inclined to it. I never undertook to run a race with zealous proselyters. For many years I have stood in perfect silence, and seen them work, only endeavoring to apply myself to my own proper work with greater diligence and prayerfulness, thinking it lawful thus to bring good out of evil.

But this "masterly inactivity," though generally best, does not exclude the striking of an effectual blow for the truth, when a specially favorable opportunity offers. There is a time to speak, and a time to be silent. Generally, when the heart of the church is alive, and its hands are active in promoting vital religion, it has its best defence from the hostile bands. But when it does this, it is best prepared to improve the opportunities that occur, now and then, to strike a blow that will tell. And the great fault of our ministry in this particular is, that they have, to too great extent, assumed that no defences are to be made. They have been delinquent in the

duty of contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. *Fas est ab hoste doceri.* We find that Lee and the other Methodist pioneers forbore their assaults when they were firmly met. But now almost universally our ministers are passive under Methodist assaults, and dispute no ground with them, in fear of being found contending against Christian men. It is this cautious policy of our ministers that has given Methodism its main success. What could it ask more of us than that we should make no resistance? While we should avoid needless contests, we should be able to discern and improve the proper times to repel an assault. Christianity does not require us to "bear all things" in the form of allowing all truths to be trodden down without an effort at protection.

But what shall be done, especially when the snares are laid for our youth to be taken by appeals to their curiosity in the comic actings had in the so called revival operations? It is a plain duty, in the light of Scripture and of facts, to show our children the true tendency of these things. While we speak of such operations as revivals produced by the Spirit of God, we give our sanction to their being thus treated by our

children ; and so we open the way to their being drawn in. But if we take up the conclusion that they are simply corruptions of revivals, it will become our duty to treat them as such before our children. We may not say that the Spirit of God never works, in spite of the repellent influences connected with them. It is not ours to limit the Holy One ; for he often works good in strange connections with evil. But, in view of the aggregate results of such measures, we are bound to deprecate them, and in all ways to discountenance them ; to make no secret of our regrets that some good men will do such things ; yea, to let it be known that we regard such things as no part of Christianity, but scandals in its way. Especially is it the duty of parents to restrain the curiosity of their children in the matter, by explaining and giving them to see why they dread such operations, by making clear to their minds the irreligious tendencies. In places where these snares are frequently laid, this should be a substantial part of family instruction. These things should be in thine heart, and thou shouldst teach them diligently to thy children. It is time to have done with that kind of charity which, out of tenderness to plausible

errorists, forbears to tell the truth. Those comedies have no claim to the name of revivals; and your children should be taught this with their first lessons.

Grant all that is claimed on the score of the sincerity of the actors — grant that this or that preacher sometimes preaches excellent sermons, and that a deep solemnity is sometimes produced in their meetings; but these mingle with so much that is of a contrary character as to spoil the result. But our judgment is determined not so much by present appearances as results afterwards developed. Our denomination once had some bitter experience in this line. Some twenty-five years ago there came in upon us, to a limited extent, a like visitation in connection with protracted meetings. Both the doctrines and the measures bordered closely upon those of the Methodists. Those spurious revivals spread like wildfire in Western New York, and the results were most disastrous. Heresies abounded, and churches were filled with spurious converts, by whom scandals were multiplied and the ministry was crippled.

It matters not under what auspices the thing is done. If, in a so called revival, where one is

converted nine are deceived, the work is essentially one of ruin ; and the ruin goes on by the credit which is given to it through the false charity exercised towards it by other Christians. In current phrase, we speak of such things as revivals, and we publish them in our papers as revivals, while, in fact, no dependence is to be placed upon them. If those whose sentiments give tone to Christian society would speak what they think, the evil would be checked. But they have been loath to do this, lest it should grieve some good men. Their kindly feelings have hindered the utterance of important truth. So our young people have been drawn in under the apprehension that what they were doing had the common sanction of Christians. Every Christian owes it to his generation to be outspoken in this matter, and let his real convictions be known.

Another question of duty touches exchanges of pulpits. When I came to this place I followed the course of my predecessors, whom I supposed to know more of the right in the case than I did ; but I soon saw what made me exceedingly reluctant to exchange. Though there is here so much interconnection of the families

of different denominations that we must needs disoblige our own friends not to exchange with Methodists, I found I must suppress my own convictions of right in order to do it. Methodist pulpits here, as every where else, abound in abusive misrepresentations and gross caricatures of our doctrines, including the famous imputation of preaching infant damnation. In Methodist prayer meetings public prayers were offered for me as an unconverted man. I saw that around me the great body of Universalists and infidels had been at least once converts, and that Methodism, by a wholesale operation, was working ruin. So I felt that I could not sanction, by such an act of fellowship, such a work of ruin. I could not indorse for a system that is so abusive to my own, and that, in the place of its most effectual operations, produces such a preponderance of tares instead of wheat. I distinguished between the men and the system. Of the Christian character of some of the Methodists I have no doubt ; and some of the ministers that have been here are worthy of all Christian regard ; but for the system, and its preponderant results, I cannot indorse.

Next, what should be our *course of preaching*

when we are surrounded by Methodists? As to my own course here, I may say, that in my pulpit exercises for these twenty years I have not known Methodism. I have aimed to preach the whole truth, just as if that form of error did not exist, not dwelling on particular doctrines, more or less, because they were so much controverted here, lest, if I did it, either more or less, I should mar the proportion and force of the doctrines. I felt that by turning aside neither to the right hand nor to the left—neither to repel Methodism nor to conciliate it—I should best do my work; and it is now my clear conviction that the influence of this church, and of its ministrations of truth, is stronger than if I had, by exchanges, indorsed for Methodism. Now, after all efforts at proselyting on the one hand, and the want of effort on the other, we are willing to compare balances of gain and loss.

Still, I think there have been times when this silence was an error—when manifest good might have come from a direct effort; and I think our ministers have generally erred on the side of silence. Strife, even for truth and right, is uncomfortable, and, in the view of many, odious. For many reasons, personal and social,

we prefer to suffer rather than contend ; and if it were *we*, and not the truth, that suffered, we might. But the more I have reflected, the more I think that we have erred in this matter. This policy of inaction binds us hand and foot against doing any thing for the truth, when so much is done against it. Lee was right in policy when he chose for the fields of his operations those places where the Congregational ministers were good easy souls, making no opposition, and where the deacons let the good lady provide him a dinner without their filling up the time with vexatious discourse about doctrines.

One essential way of resisting Methodism is, to keep the people rooted and grounded in the truth—in those doctrines of grace which are a terror to Methodism, by teaching them fully in the pulpit, Sabbath school, and family. This gives the people a power of discrimination, and an ability to detect the arts of deceivers. But there are times which specially call us to speak with reference to existing errors ; and wisdom is profitable to direct as to these times. Then the doctrines of grace give us a clear advantage against Methodism ; for they prepare the minds of the people to take up and carry out the dis-

cussions ; while the people reared under Methodism are, for the most part, specially deficient in doctrinal knowledge and discrimination. He that is girt about with truth is strong in his positions.

Perhaps God has suffered such a heresy to come in in order to compel the churches to live by the doctrines of grace, and give them an earnest inculcation. The force of Christianity very much inheres in them ; and if the churches fail to bring them forth in their strength, they become weak and decay. These onsets are the goads to stimulate us to the duty of a thorough indoctrination of the people.

Some feel that because we must needs have so much intercourse with our Methodist neighbors we must not come in conflict with their views ; but this is to betray God's truth for man's favor, and to prepare the ground for sowing the seeds of destructive error. No ; let the people be made to know that the difference between us and Methodism is important, and that great responsibilities attach to traversing the boundary.

As to union meetings with Methodists, — another point of inquiry, — I have observed that

Methodists never encourage such unions, except when they feel sure of turning them to a sectarian advantage. A missionary, who has been largely employed by the American Sunday School Union, in forming union schools in the destitute places in the west, gave it as the result of his experience, that, while all other evangelical denominations in such places are free to unite for such a purpose, the Methodist ministry invariably set their faces as a flint against such unions. The Methodist people frequently unite in forming such schools in the absence of their ministers ; but as soon as the ministers return, the schools are broken up. He gave me several striking instances, showing the application of this invariable rule of Methodism at the west. And if this rule of having no unions, except a union to promote Methodism, is limited to the west or east, I have been deceived. The position of Methodism, as to the great union societies, is in essential harmony with this rule. With the Tract Society, in which most denominations unite for publishing the gospel to the destitute, by colporteurs and the press, it has nothing to do. With the Sunday School Union, and all its ministrations to the destitute, on fields

where no one sect is strong enough to stand alone, it has nothing to do, except to thwart its agents whenever it can. And till within a few years it stood as entirely aloof from the American Bible Society, till it found that to be a bad policy. Now, it would seem to be plain that it is not our duty to hold union prayer meetings, or any other unions with those who will have no unions but unions to promote Methodism.

But why do I speak of this? If Methodists want no unions they will ask for none. True. But when they want them to promote Methodism, they do seek them. When that "old church on the hill" was to be broken up, the union that was needful, as the means to the end, was a very desirable and blessed thing. And on some occasions even *we* have been pressed with troublesome solicitations to go into such unions.

One thing to be guarded against in other places is not so needful here. In most places where Methodism comes in for an assault on existing churches, its strength consists in its weakness. It commences onsets and puts in circulation abusive caricatures of received doctrines, accuses others of teaching infant damnation, and then, if the accused even repel these

aspersions the cry of persecution is raised — “See, here we are a poor, feeble, inoffensive band, persecuted and crushed by the hand of the strong.” And with unreflecting minds such a wicked appeal to sympathy has its effect. Hence most have forborne to treat the mischief according to its merits, till it has gained a foothold. This has been its unvarying policy in all its propagation. But fortunately it cannot have application here, where it boasts of its numbers and strength. Here we may speak the truth without charge of persecution. For we are the weak and the down-trodden. And a poor thing indeed must Methodism be, if it cannot protect itself from persecution under the eaves of its cathedral church, where it has five churches, and five pastors, and one pastor of pastors, or bishop’s suffragan.

But I must not dismiss this subject without one remark to those who have taken up conclusions against vital Christianity from their delusion, adopted in spurious revivals. Your conclusion is legitimate from your premises, but your premises are bad. You have come to them not by the light of the word of God, but by pinning your faith on the sleeves of most

incompetent guides. "These be blind leaders of the blind; and if the blind lead the blind, shall not they both fall into the ditch?"

The grand fallacy of your conclusion is, that vital godliness, regeneration by the power of God, is nothing more than is usually experienced in the hocus pocus comedies of Methodist camp meetings. To such a conclusion you never come by comparing those operations and results with the word of God. And yet that written word of God is your only standard of duty here, and your only rule of judgment at the last day. To the law and the testimony; if they speak not according to these, it is because there is no light in them.

You are now resting in your conclusion that it is safe to live without God in the world, and safe to die as godless men die, because you have proved the spuriousness of a Methodist conversion—because you have detected one of the most shallow delusions, a delusion which the Bible repudiates, and for which the Bible is no more responsible than for the Tales of the Arabian Nights. Was that freak of fancy, that heat of passion, or that impulse to speak in a meeting, all that the Son of God inculcated,

when he said, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot see the kingdom of God"? Is no more than this intended in putting off the old man and in putting on the new man ; in being renewed in the temper of the mind ; in passing from death unto life, and from the power of Satan unto God? "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature ; old things are passed away, and all things are become new. Ye are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Now, after you shall have experienced all that the mind of the Spirit expresses in such language as this—if then you fall from it, because you find it a delusion, you may consider yourselves safe in irreligion, if safety be possible in a godless universe. But as it is, you are shutting out the light let down from heaven, and making a fearful plunge in the dark.

But these requisitions of the holy word must one day be met. You must then come to test the question, whether there is not something in the soul's new creation in Christ of which you have had no conception. And it is better to

test it now, before an open Bible, than hereafter in an open eternity.

But if your understandings are darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the blindness that is in your hearts, so that you can form no true conception of godliness, yet one would think that *your view of the results* of this delusion on the present character of men might create some misgivings. It requires no spiritual discernment to see that that course which you have travelled, beginning at the Methodist camp meeting, or altar, and leading downward, — that course which is here trod by thousands, — is a manifest course of injury to mind and morals. It is among us now very generally seen that the main cause of the deficiencies of morals, of sound intellect, of staidness of habits, as compared with other towns, which has given Lynn the name it has abroad, comes from the source which I have described — that the influence beginning at the Methodist altar, and proceeding down through Universalist and infidel channels, issues in just those things which are a disgrace to our body politic. And one would naturally think that any one seeing this, and finding himself in possession of that experience, would take

the alarm. Were I in that position,—looking back to the time when I underwent the common delusion, and then seeing myself on the lower steps of the descending scale, and looking around me, and seeing the marks of the moral scathing upon the mass of those who had travelled the same road,—that of itself would be enough to give me the alarm. As ever the movements of the popular mind peculiar to Lynn reminded me of their source, the question would return upon me, Can this be truth? Can this be a good tree, which produces such fruits? As ever I saw what special patronage all the shows and attractions for idle ones find in Lynn; how the mind of thousands here is tinder to every flying spark of temptation; what a small breath will raise a breeze of excitement; how often the town is disgraced by indignation meetings, on the most frivolous occasions, and by rowdy assemblages; what entertainments are here given to every impostor,—I should be alarmed to find myself under the action of the causes which have produced these results. We have, within a few days, had a shocking specimen of Lynn rowdyism, showing to what a depth of degradation and brutality the taste and

moral sense of a certain class of our people have attained. A vast crowd assembled as an escort of two lunatics, farcically nominated for the presidency of the United States, and paraded through the streets with an indescribable display of fantasticals, and then gathered into the Lyceum Hall for proceedings that would disgrace the heathen,—riding the lunatics across the stage on the stuffed skin of a swine—an appropriate idol for such worshippers. And so extensive is the taste for such inhuman sports in Lynn that a daily paper, patronizing, reporting, and applauding them, finds employment. Nor are our papers enough. Reports of the same are sent to Boston to be published, as if we needed more presses than we have to blazon abroad our own infamy. This recent instance is chosen for illustration, not because it is worse than others constantly occurring, but because it is recent. Something of the kind, showing in some form a heathenized and brutal taste of a multitude of people here, is an every-day affair. And those who do such things, and have pleasure in them that do them, also take pleasure in publishing them to the world. They glory in their shame, and involve the whole town in it. It is these

things, more than any thing else, that have made the name of Lynn a hissing and a byword abroad. And these things we think we have traced to their true source. Now, it seems to me that if I had cast off all sense of religious obligation, by having passed the process described, I should still be alarmed to find myself under the action of causes which have produced these results. Such demonstrations of heathenism here made are imperative as a voice from heaven, requiring me to give them a faithful utterance. Many good men, doubtless, think me imprudent, and having a zeal that is not according to knowledge; but that alters not the course of duty for me. I have tried to see things in that light; I have labored and prayed to know the path of duty; and I have even deferred taking up this history for years after I was convinced that it ought to be done, for this reason, among others, that I saw that I could not discharge my duty in it without traversing this very ground. And if I ever did a painful work from an urgent sense of duty, it was this. I have forecast the scenes of my dying bed, and asked myself whether I have put down any thing here which I would then wish to blot, with a pur-

pose to blot it now, if there be occasion. Still my sense of duty in the case falters not. As I expected, I have been assailed by all manner of missiles, and with imputations of the worst of motives ; but even from these I have derived no aid to reach another conclusion. Many wonder at my imprudence, and some pretend to think me a maniac. "But whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God, or whether we be sober, it is for your cause ; for the love of Christ constraineth us." Whether willingly or unwillingly, a dispensation is committed to me ; and woe be to me if I forbear to sustain this burden of the word of the Lord.

But it has been often said that though these things are all true, they ought not to be publicly exhibited. To meet this suggestion, I have only to ask the reader to turn back, and see *what things* have been here told, and what a ruinous process has here been exposed, and then say, If these things are so, is it not a plain duty to call public attention to them, that the way may be open for a reformation ? If there is a severity in the statements that does not inhere in the facts, I am an offender. If the facts are severe, the fault is with those who do and encourage

them. If it is wrong for me even to speak of such things, how wrong must it be for those who do them! If this system is working such injury, shall the injury be concealed that it may be continued, or shall it be brought to light and corrected? Is it a Christian spirit that dictates the concealment of a wrong, lest the exposure for correction shall hurt the feelings of the wrong doers? I would have gladly convinced myself that silence was my duty; but I reasoned thus with myself: Here is a manifest and growing evil, largely patronized by the popular mind; the current is setting strong towards destruction, and involving thousands in its sweep; there is no probability that it will correct itself, if some one does not point out the evil involved with the seeming good; individuals will see and deplore the error, but no corrective force will be embodied against it; however great the evil may be, it is sure to continue to spread while no public and earnest voice of reproof is uttered; but there is a peradventure that a faithful remonstrance put forth against it may so far arrest attention, secure public conviction, and elicit the suppressed thoughts of others, as to embody a moral force which will check the flowing tide,

and perhaps turn the current. But for this purpose no timid or half-suppressed utterance will do. Mere hints and insinuations that there possibly may be something wrong in the case will not suffice: the remonstrance must be outspoken and full. But that will awake angry feeling, and put in motion that unruly member, that embodies "a world of iniquity," for the destruction of my peace. This evil I must incur, or sit down and do nothing for the correction of the other and greater evil. But why should *I* incur it? It does not exist among the people of my charge. I am not responsible for what is done by others. But is it so? Am I a minister of Christ? and am I placed, in the providence of God, in circumstances where words of mine can have effect for the correction of any evils patronized by any class of men? I am responsible for those words. Wherever the authority of Christ extends, the duties of the ministers of Christ are commensurate with their influence.

The case presented to me, then, was this: These evils will continue, if I hold my peace, for they are not such as will correct themselves; but if I do what I can to give an effective testimony against them, I may strike a first blow

towards their destruction ; and if I fail, I shall have discharged a plain duty, and secured a good conscience.

Now, in executing this purpose, I have performed one of the most painful duties of my whole life. I have felt that a minister is not left wholly to his own pleasure in the choice of his themes, but must sometimes take up those which peril his own peace and comfort. If he sees principles and habits prevailing that are ruinous to men and dishonorable to God, he is bound to reprove them. If he has a heart loyal to Him who sent him, ever and anon these words will ring in his ears : " Son of man, I have made thee a watchman to the house of Israel ; therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, ' Thou shalt surely die,' and thou givest him not warning, the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hand."

I have not done what I have for my own gratification. I too well anticipated what a strife of tongues it would kindle around me. The loss of the good will of my neighbors is as important to me as to others ; and I trust I have not the

folly wantonly to incur it ; but if fidelity in the discharge of duty requires the sacrifice, it is my daily prayer that I may not shrink from it. I am happy to say that I have now finished that part of my work which consists of strictures on any other denomination than our own. From the commanding position which Methodism occupies in the religious history of Lynn, I could not fail of giving prominence to that, and of showing its relations to other developments. Now that that is done, the disagreeable part of my duty will be confined chiefly to our own body, of whose errors I have been no more sparing than I have of those of others. I have intended that this exhibition of truth should be "without partiality and without hypocrisy."

And what I have done I purpose to have put on record, and brought under the inspection of friends and foes. The work, of course, has its errors, and I wish them to be pointed out, and prevented from doing injury ; but, in the conviction that it contains substantial truth, and truth important to be told, I desire that the work may remain to be read after I am gone to my last account. In a little while, the tongue that now speaks will pass to the silence of the

grave ; the heartburnings which its utterances have kindled will be quenched ; but the principles involved will be as enduring as eternity. So it is a small thing to be judged of you, or of man's judgment. He that judgeth me is the Lord. Because we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ—because I must meet my neighbors there, to be judged with them, and undergo a scrutiny of my faithfulness to them, I prefer, if need be, to become, for the present, their enemy, by telling them the truth, rather than to stand there guilty of their blood. This part of my work is now done ; and I commend it to God, with whom are the issues of every work, and pray that whatever has been said amiss may be forgiven and prevented from doing injury ; and that what of it is true may exert the force of truth on the public heart and conscience, and bring forth fruit unto eternal life.

## CHAPTER XI.

MR. THACHER'S MINISTRY.—MR. HURD'S MINISTRY.

THOMAS CUSHING THACHER had the advantage of a true nobility in his ancestry. They, with their kindred, embraced some of the most precious names in New England's history. His father graduated at Cambridge at the age of seventeen ; was ordained the pastor of the church in Malden at the age of eighteen. He was a delightful yet pungent preacher. No young man preached to such crowded assemblies as he. Whitefield called him the young Elijah. He was a thorough Calvinist, and earnest for the Puritan faith. After a ministry of fifteen years in Malden, he became pastor of the Brattle Street Church, in Boston, where he labored seventeen years, and died in 1802, six years after the ordination of his son at Lynn, whose ordination sermon he preached and published. Among the numerous discourses which he published, there were three on the eternity of future punishment, prepared probably with a design to counterwork

the leaven of Dr. Chauncy's doctrine, then spreading in Boston. In prayer he was uncommonly gifted, uttering in pathetic language the devout feelings of his own heart, and exciting deep emotions in his hearers. He was, in short, one of the greater lights of the Boston pulpit.

That a son of so excellent and celebrated a minister should be willing to become the pastor of such a forlorn hope of a church must have been thought quite remarkable. It would be a pleasing duty, if the facts would warrant it, to show that the son equalled his father's excellence of gifts and graces. So, if we follow the traditions and lights which we have, and show that he fell far short of that, it will be not because we take any pleasure in relating such facts, but because the truth of history requires it, and because we have no other means of showing what was the low condition of the church, and by what means it was depressed. Mr. Thacher did not excel in native force, nor in discipline of mind; but the people heard some excellent sermons from him—even some of the same that had been preached by his father before him. He did not excel in evangelical doctrine. He once remarked, in answer to the question

whether he believed in the necessity of a change of heart, that if there were such a thing, he knew nothing of it. He did not excel in consistency in maintaining his sentiments ; for after his dismissal, he was asked by a Calvinist what his sentiments were, and he said that he was a Calvinist, and always had been. He did not excel in gifts in prayer, nor in a reverential regard for the work of prayer ; for he once remarked to an intimate friend that he “ had no *knack* in praying.” He was not intemperate, though he lived in times when the free use of ardent spirits was common with ministers and people, without forming an exception to the common practice. His influence on young men had less of moral restraint than could be desired. What he lacked in earnestness and zeal for the upbuilding of the church, he supplied in zeal for increasing the lodge of Freemasons. In short, his habits, tastes, tendencies, and sense of the proprieties of life were not all that might have been expected of one having his parentage and education in the most religious and refined circles.

His ministry continued eighteen years ; and, considering what the church was when he began, and what its experience was from that time on-

ward, it is a wonder that it could have lived half that time. The case to which I have referred, of persons converted abroad, and connecting themselves with this church, may indicate the way of explaining a part of the wonder. Where the Bible is read, and where religious books abound, and where families have religious connections abroad, and are in a way to hear evangelical preaching occasionally, the church in some instances may sustain a remnant of life, even in spite of its own ministry. Here there was some traditional truth, transmitted from earlier times, and some reverence for the memory of the Puritan fathers, which caused their books, lingering here and there in the families, to be read to effect; so that scattered seeds of truth would germinate, now and then, under the breath of the Spirit of God, without the aid of a skilful cultivator.

Mr. Thacher's records show a remarkable result. The most that he admitted to the church came in in the early periods of his ministry, before the true character of his ministry had time to make its full impression. Possibly at that time, having come recently from under the good influences of an education in the bosom of

piety and prayer, his ministry then exhibited more of the force of truth than in its later years. In his first year, Mr. Thacher admitted to the church sixteen persons, either by letter or profession. During the next six years he admitted twenty-two; and in all the last eleven years he admitted but one. Here is a remarkable fact—that for the whole term of eleven years, only one person came into the church, either by letter or profession. Things had probably come to such a condition, that a proper regard for one's reputation would prevent his connecting himself with the church.

The natural result was, a constant drain from the congregation, by secessions to the Methodists, on the part of those who had any serious impressions, and those on whom the maintenance of religious life in the society depended. And this was not all. The Baptist church here originated in dissatisfaction with Mr. Thacher's ministry, existing previous to any predilection for Baptist principles. The history, as I have received it, is this: Mr. Bacheller, the father of a present officer in that church, being dissatisfied with the state of things in Mr. Thacher's society, especially with the want of vital religion in

it, seceded to the Methodists, which then seemed to be the only alternative ; but after two years, more or less, his trial of the Methodists resulted in his utter dissatisfaction with their views. He then joined the Baptist church in Salem. He was in a habit of walking to Salem every Sabbath, to attend church. By this means he came gradually to a thorough adoption of Baptist principles. Then he commenced inviting his own ministers to preach in Lynn, in private houses. His son very early sympathized with his views, and used to attend meeting at Salem with him ; and when he came upon the stage, he and his wife, who was a very efficient helper in this work, were the most prominent builders in the Baptist society. And this was an event of no inconsiderable importance, among the first checks to the universal sway of Arminianism here. The Baptists faithfully preached the main doctrines of the cross ; and though the organizing of their church did not take place till after the end of Mr. Thacher's ministry, the causes of it were at work before ; and its commencing to exert an influence about the same time when evangelical doctrines were restored to this church aided in checking somewhat the tide

that set so strongly against the doctrines of the cross. And what good has come of the organizing of the Baptist church, came of Providence overruling the evils then existing in the old church. It appears that Mr. Bacheller was not a Baptist when he seceded to the Methodists, as is proved in the fact that he went to the Methodists. And the probability is, that had there been a faithful ministry in the old church, he never would have left it, and never would have led the way to the forming of another church. This is only one of many instances of the Baptist denomination profiting by defections from the Puritan faith in our own. At the commencement of the present century, only one Congregational church in Boston remained true to Puritan principles. All the rest had become Unitarian. But connected with them there were individuals whose hearts revolted from such heresies, and desired the sincere milk of the word. Many of these sought what it was difficult to find any where else in the two Baptist churches in Boston, these having excellent pastors — Messrs. Baldwin and Stillman. They went thither, not because they were Baptists, but because they loved the doctrines of the

cross. And their going thither was the occasion of their becoming Baptists; and that state of things was a harvest to the Baptist denomination in Boston.

In Lynn, Mr. Thacher's ministry had the misfortune of repelling the more sober-minded people in every direction. A more complete moral desert was rarely seen in a Christian land than that which lay around this church. The time just before the close of Mr. Thacher's ministry was probably the darkest day that this church ever saw. The professedly Unitarian ministry that followed his was an evident improvement. As to doctrines taught, it was no worse. It had no power to lift up and revive the church. But it did not in so many ways depress it, nor in so many ways counteract the influences coming in from other sources for good.

There were some pious individuals in the church; and the wonder is, that they so patiently endured so undesirable a ministry so long. How the facts were in this case we know very little; but observations taken in church difficulties, as presented in many ecclesiastical councils, have shown that some of the best men often adhere to the worst ministers, in cases of church

divisions about a minister. And this comes about as a misdirection of their own excellent tendencies. So we have this seeming contradiction — the best adhering to the worst, as the result of their own goodness. Some of the purest and most earnest minds, out of their love and veneration for the *ministry* itself, form an attachment to the person of a particular minister, which is so strong and confiding as to prevent their seeing his deficiencies, and to enlist them in his defence when he ought not to be defended. On this principle there is need of caution in applying the rule of "Like people, like priest." While bad men, from sympathy with wickedness, espouse the cause of an unworthy minister, good men, from love to the ministry, are sometimes blinded to the faults of the minister. And it is on this principle that we not unfrequently find some of the best people in a parish sustaining a minister that ought not to be sustained. Their love is of a kind that many waters will not quench, nor floods drown.

There is another way in which an unfruitful ministry sometimes holds its ground where it should not. It is the opposite of that which tends to parish quarrels. It is a chronic disease

of the public mind, by reason of which the people have come to such a contempt for the ministry that they care too little about the demerits of their minister to take the trouble to dismiss him. There are few scenes in the religious world more revolting and more illustrative of the depths of human depravity than are often exhibited in a people's contests about their minister. But such contests, however unchristian in the spirit in which they are conducted, do not reveal such hopeless wickedness as does the quietness of a people who sustain a minister without caring what his character may be. Where there is a mere contempt for the ministry, yet a desire, for secular reasons, to sustain it, there is no great carefulness as to what its character may be; and when a people have so far gone in that contempt as not to take the trouble to remove a minister, after he has become a nuisance, their moral sense is in a deep slumber.

Without affirming how far these general remarks have application to the period of the history that is now before us, it is clear that the apathy of the people as to the unfruitfulness of the ministry was culpable. And it should here be stated that the first suggestion for the dismis-

sion of Mr. Thacher came from abroad. The person who first moved the people in the matter was Mr. Newhall, the missionary, and the husband of the celebrated Harriet Newhall. He was temporarily residing with his relatives in Lynn. He became deeply affected with the deficiencies of the ministry, and labored to open the eyes of the people to their duty in the case. A parish meeting was called for, January 18, 1813, when a vote was passed — "That in the existing circumstances, the best interests of both pastor and people require that a separation should take place." It was voted to give him eight hundred dollars, and the use of the parsonage for one year. With these terms he complied, proposing that the society should assume his debts, — which they did, — and which, as I am informed, amounted to nineteen hundred dollars. This debt became a burden on the society, which, in its extreme feebleness, came near to crushing it, and which was not removed till, in the pastorate of Mr. Rockwood, help was received from abroad.

Mr. Thacher, in his letter to the parish communicating his resignation, tells them that he has been a faithful minister, and has always

sought their good, and laments that he has had so little fruit of his labor, but that his failure was partly owing to his insufficient support. He dwelt pathetically on the hardness of his case, in being set aside after he had passed the meridian of life. And indeed it was peculiarly hard — and the more so in that the unfruitfulness of his ministry here had made it impossible for him to find employment in other places. But for the church it was still more hard. It was well nigh a case of death to them. The personal evils to him, great as they were, were not to be thought of, compared with the evils affecting the immortal interests of hundreds.

In April following the dismissal of Mr. Thacher, a call was given to Mr. Isaac Hurd, of Charlestown. This took place at the time of the last war with Great Britain, when the public mind was deeply excited in politics, in which excitement some of the leading ministers in this vicinity took a prominent part. Little was then thought of the doctrines which preachers held ; and the political excitement made it a matter of still less interest. Mr. Hurd was a Unitarian in theory, though probably little was known of it. The council who installed him

was composed of both Unitarian and Orthodox ministers. For there had been no separation of the two interests then. His ordination sermon was preached by Dr. Osgood, of Medford, an Orthodox minister, but furiously devoted to politics. He took for his text this — “When Paul preached of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled ;” and he set forth the minister’s duty to preach so as to make wicked rulers tremble. He spoke eloquently of the evils and distresses which our rulers had brought upon the country by an unjust war, and then complained that some of the ministers were dumb dogs, that will not bark. That feature of the times indicated by such a sermon, on such an occasion, may show why so little was then thought of the question, whether a minister’s doctrines were true or false. As it was, Mr. Hurd seems to have been settled by a church that supposed themselves to be in the Puritan faith, without any divisions or questions being raised. It does not appear that Mr. Hurd made any concealment of his views. There was no examination of him by the council, according to the custom of these days. He read a profession of his faith to the council, and

they voted unanimously that it was satisfactory. And yet on that council were Drs. Osgood and Morse, and Mr. Wadsworth, of Danvers. Probably the terms of his profession were not very explicit, as none at that time took the ground of refusing to ordain a minister for want of Orthodoxy.

Though, as it respects the doctrines held by the minister, there had been little improvement by the change, in other respects there was a gain. Mr. Hurd was a gentleman, a scholar, and a man of sense, and serious and conscientious in the work which he had undertaken. And in these respects there was a vast gain. Yet his preaching was not that of Christ and him crucified, and so was not the power of God unto salvation, and so failed of imparting life to the church. A few members were admitted to the church during his ministry. But some of them had their conversion by means coming from abroad, and others of them afterwards seceded to the Unitarian society, when that was established. In all there were sixteen added by profession during his ministry. Of these five are now living members of the church.

The great thing wanted was an element of

life. The minister, not having received the doctrines of the cross, knew not for himself the way of life, nor how to guide others into it. Yet life, and interest felt in religion by the church and congregation, was the one thing which they lacked. The congregation were not so reduced that they could not well sustain the ministry, if they felt its power, and felt it to be worth sustaining. But moral lectures, theoretical essays, and preaching against the doctrines of grace, such as then constituted the main labor of ministers of that class, can awake no spiritual life in a people—as all experience from that time to this has demonstrated. There may be the wealth and willingness, for secular reasons, to sustain a ministry,—there may be in the ministry sustained all gentlemanly and scholarly attainments,—and yet, if the grand elements of the gospel as a way of salvation for sinners are kept out of the pulpit, that ministry, as to the life-sustaining purpose of the ministry, is “powerless as the moonlight cold on the cold snow.”

And the result here was, that in three years the interest and ability of the congregation to sustain a minister failed. And though no one was displeased with the minister, it was neces-

sary for him to seek a dissolution of his pastoral connection. In May, 1816, the pastor called a meeting of the church, and stated that the parish had not fulfilled its obligations to him, in consequence of embarrassments in their pecuniary condition, and there was no prospect that they would be able to do it for the future. What of the salary had been paid had come from borrowed money, and no payment had been made for the last two years ; that is, he had labored with them three years, while the members of the congregation had paid him nothing. Of course his remaining with them would only increase their embarrassments. He was willing to remain longer, if any good could be accomplished by it. But he was clear that none could be, and was impelled to ask a dismissal, which he accordingly did. In accepting his resignation, the parish expressed their deep regrets, and their full satisfaction with the manner in which he had discharged his ministry. The council who sanctioned his dismissal spoke in their result as if the question of life or death to the church had come to an issue. They exhorted them to make an effort to live, as follows : " Shall an ancient church be extinguished, the

place of whose solemnities has been venerable for a century? Shall a church numbered among the first monuments of our forefathers' zeal and piety go to decay, and its lively stones be built on foundations unknown to them, or disapproved by them? We hope better things of you, brethren, and things which accompany salvation, as a church, though we thus speak."

While Mr. Hurd's mind was occupied with the subject of his dismissal, it was coming to a decision of a still more important question. He had read the controversy between Worcester and Channing, and taken new impressions as to the divinity of Christ. And though the public knew nothing of his change of sentiments till after he left Lynn, he informed one of his friends before he left, that he had undergone such a change. Perhaps the fruitlessness of his ministry, as in the case of Dr. Chalmers, had been one means of his seeing his errors. Not long after he left Lynn, he preached to a Unitarian church in Exeter, New Hampshire. They gave him a call, not knowing the change in his views. For that reason he felt himself in honor bound to decline the call, and inform the society of the reason. They then renewed the call, and he

settled over them, and reclaimed them from their errors; and he has since fulfilled a long and highly useful ministry among them.

And here I feel a sensible relief in having finished the mournful recitals of a series of such ministries of errors. At this point our history emerges from shades to receive some of the first rays of the dawn of a better day. Only three years less than a century was this church under a cloud, and, properly speaking, without an evangelical ministry. And what a wonder is it that, for that length of time, it sustained a spark of evangelical life! Yet the power that was symbolized in the bush burning but not consumed — the hand that sustained the chosen tribes in the iron furnace of Egypt — that led them through the Red Sea — that upbore them through a forty years' experience of a life in the wilderness, — that hand sustained a remnant of life here. And all the wonder-working of Providence, by which this was done, is a token of an important mission which this church has yet to fulfil. A few years later than the time of which we now speak, it was seriously questioned by those who wished to sustain the cause of truth here, whether it would not be better to let the

old church expire, and bury with it all its embarrassments, and all the odium that attached to it, and all the contempts that had been heaped upon it. If that had been done; and if then a new organization had been attempted, — for which there would then have been no encouragement, — there would have been, even in case of the success of a new organization, a throwing away of all the advantages for which Providence had, in the labor of a century, kept the breath of life in the church; and in that, we think, there would have been the frustration of a great purpose. If, in the view of God, the life of this church was worth preserving, it must, after it had been preserved, have had in it a value that would more than overbalance all the disadvantage which its many years of sad experience had accumulated upon it. And if it had such a value at the time when its resurrection commenced, it has, under Providence, an important mission to fulfil. God has designs to accomplish through the future experience and agency of this church, which are fit to be the end of such an expensive train of means. He is to glorify himself enough in the future history of this church to exhibit him in triumph over

all the devices of the enemy, through which his name and truth have suffered contempt. He is yet here to show results that will vindicate his glory, and put a surpassing lustre on his truth. Such is the inference which I draw from what God has done to this church, as to what he intends to do with it, that I value a connection with it the more for the wonders of his hand in its preservation. I infer that it has an important mission to perform. And with faith can I give breath to its prayer — “Make us glad according to the days wherein we have seen evil, and the years wherein thou hast afflicted us. Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children. Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and the work of our hands, establish thou it.”

## CHAPTER XII.

### MR. ROCKWOOD'S MINISTRY.

THE church that had for a century shown great tenacity of life under the seeming death strokes repeated so long, now, under the appointment of Providence, comes into the way to receive a ministry of life. At this time the Unitarian controversy had awaked. The people were discovering the difference between the views which had now extensively obtained and the original Puritan doctrines. Concealments had been thrown off. The controversy between Worcester and Channing had opened the grand debate. Differences that had been very much confined to ministers now came forth upon the people. The Congregational denomination in Massachusetts was soon ranged in two conflicting parties. The society in Lynn, little as it had of Puritan force, or indeed of any force, showed the germs of two interests that were totally irreconcilable, and these about equally divided.

In employing candidates to fill its vacant pulpit, a sort of compromise was observed between Cambridge and Andover, as a source of supply. For near two years an alternation between the two was sustained. In the mean time, those in the society who had been Unitarians without knowing it began to make the discovery, when they had such opportunities to contrast the two systems. The Andover students brought certain strange things to their ears — things which had long ceased to awake the echoes of the "Old Tunnel." To show how this class of people were affected, I will give two or three extracts from a journal kept by one who afterwards became a member of the Unitarian society. "Dec. 28, 1817. Attended the old meeting; heard an uncharitable Hopkinsian Calvinistic sermon. Feb. 22, 1818. Attended public worship at the old meeting — sermon by Mr. Morse, son of Dr. Morse, of Charlestown: it was the true essence of Calvinism — very uncharitable — not profitable to any — cruel as the grave. In the afternoon staid at home." Yet, as there were life and force in Orthodox preaching, though it irritated some, it secured better attendance and fuller congregations than the opposites.

Now the life of the church trembled in the balances. A small weight would have struck the balance forever against her. If, in the then existing circumstances, she had settled a Unitarian minister, she was gone past recovery. The Unitarians believed they had a majority in the parish, and the Orthodox faintly hoped that they should have. This was in their favor, that their preaching drew the fullest houses. Among the candidates which the Orthodox employed was Mr. Otis Rockwood. He did not come here directly from Andover, but had previously been preaching some time in Charlestown for Dr. Morse; and it was not known to the people generally that he was an Andover student; and so he was heard with less prejudice; and many of the Unitarian portion of the people had expressed opinions so decidedly in his favor, before they knew of his connection with Andover, that they could not retract. The call to Mr. Rockwood from *the church* was unanimous. In the parish there was, as it was to have been expected, some division. The call from the church was given March 1, 1818. The meeting of the parish, to act in concurrence, was called for March 30. Of this meeting the private journal

from which we have quoted says, "The parish and church were very much divided, a part being in favor of Mr. Rockwood, while a decided majority was opposed to him, on the Calvinistic doctrine. It was finally voted, by a majority of three, to request him to preach one or two Sabbaths, before they decided upon giving him a call." This vote stands on the record of the parish. The same journal, under date of April 20, says of an adjourned meeting of the parish, "When the question concerning Mr. Rockwood was taken, there were about fifty present: twenty-six voted to give him a call, and eleven voted against it." So the call was made out; and from that 20th of April, 1818, the recovery of that church dates its commencement; though, like the return of life to a person apparently drowned, it was attended with not a few of agonies, convulsions, and dangers.

Mr. Rockwood at this time was under a call to settle as a colleague with Dr. Morse, of Charlestown, where all things in his work and prospects would have been pleasant; but he yielded to the earnest solicitations of friends, and to his own convictions of duty, to sacrifice his own interests in order to make the experi-

ment of life for this church. Neighboring ministers regarded it as but a doubtful experiment, but desired him to undertake it. He was ordained on the 1st of July. The church at that time consisted of eight males and thirty-two females — forty in all. The congregation varied from one hundred and fifty to two hundred.

The council that ordained Mr. Rockwood was composed mostly of the neighboring ministers, without regard to the distinction of Unitarian and Orthodox; but a majority were Orthodox. Here there was an examination of the candidate by the council, and some of the questions and answers were embodied in the result of the council. At the ordination, the sermon was preached by Professor Stuart, of Andover. A part of the Unitarian ministers on the council refused to vote for the ordination. A part of the Unitarians among the people at first acquiesced in his settlement, in the expectation that, because he was a young man, they should be able to mould him. One of the means by which they attempted to do this was to induce him to exchange with Unitarian ministers. He exchanged once with Mr. Bartlett, of Marblehead, who had not then avowed himself a Unitarian,

though he had shown evident leanings that way. After Mr. Bartlett had avowed himself he invited Mr. Rockwood again to exchange ; but he refused. Mr. Bartlett then threatened him, and told him that there were people in Lynn that wished to hear him preach, and that they would make him trouble if he did not exchange. He replied that he must then bear the consequences.

Soon after his ordination, Mr. Rockwood, feeling himself bound to instruct his people in the doctrines of the cross, of which they had heard so little, preached them frequently and plainly. This very soon awoke an opposition. Means were taken to put him down by terms of disparagement, arguing that he must be a small affair or he would not have become the pastor of so small a church. All possible measures were taken to thwart and impede him in his work. In those days it was a matter of course, almost, that ministers should be on the school committee ; but in some of the first years, efforts were made, and successfully made, to exclude him from this committee. And here we will anticipate a little, for the sake of speaking of Mr. Rockwood's experience on this committee, in

which he did the town essential service. While the Unitarian minister, Mr. Green, was on the committee, the reading of the Bible was ruled out of the schools, not formally, but effectually, by representing that it was unsuitable to be read in the schools. When Mr. Rockwood was put on the committee, it was, after some opposition by a part of the committee, restored. At that time Dr. Coffin was a frequent, if not a constant, member of this committee; and the schools of this town owe much to his zeal in the cause of education. He was then a member of the Unitarian society; but he cordially coöperated with Mr. Rockwood in all measures for the moral as well as intellectual interests of the schools. When Mr. Rockwood was about to leave the town, he said that the town had better give him a handsome salary to supervise the schools than to allow him to leave. Dr. Coffin's intercourse with Mr. Rockwood in these duties had a most happy influence on his own mind. It was doubtless among the means of preparing his mind for that change of views which issued in his dying full in the hopes of the gospel, and in full reliance on that almighty Savior whom the theories of his earlier days had set aside.

In some years Mr. Rockwood devoted one quarter of his available time to the schools. That is much more than any pastor can properly spare. Though he accomplished great good, affecting the general interests of the town, it was the diversion of so much of needed labor in the ministry, and so far at his own expense and that of the church. His health and ability to perform the needed pastoral labor were diminished by the means; and so it became one of the leading causes of his asking a dismissal when he did it.

When he commenced his labors here, there were but two families in the church that sustained family prayer. This shows, at a glance, how little he was sustained by the prayers of the church. There were doubtless praying hearts out of these families; but as far as the invisible prayer demonstrated itself by the visible, these two witnesses, prophesying in sackcloth, showed the church to have a remnant of life, and but a remnant. These were the signs put forth to show it to be just on the line between life and death.

Think of a young pastor opening his ministry in such a valley of death, as one sent to call

upon dry bones to hear the word of the Lord. On whom was he to rely for sympathy in his hours of anxiety or depression — for aid in the work of supplication, and in sustaining the social meetings? How discouraged must he have been when going forth to preach to those small assemblies, containing so few hearts in unison with his own, and so many that repelled his doctrines! Let it be remembered that he had not come into this trying position at unawares, nor by necessity, but by a deliberate self-sacrifice. He knew, and was told by neighboring ministers, that it was a doubtful experiment whether this church was to live or die. He made a voluntary offering of his ministerial prospects upon this altar, upon what chance there was for securing its life. For this he had foregone the opportunity of becoming the pastor of one of the most desirable churches in the state, after having fully counted the cost.

Now, among all the self-seeking with which we are familiar, it is refreshing to find such an example, so clearly after the Christian model. We are compelled to grant that even in the ministry many seek their own more than the things which are Jesus Christ's. And yet there are

some instances in which it can be proved that Christ has still a true ministry on earth. And those who by self-sacrifice make demonstration of that fact will not have lived in vain. They furnish the power and work out the material which is available to the whole ministry, when it goes forth upon the conscience of the world, and they thus produce results far from the narrow scene of their own labors.

Up to this time a very effectual obstacle had impeded the growth of the church. The ministry had been of such a kind that persons having serious impressions felt on that account a necessity of withdrawing to the Methodists for a sympathy and instruction which they could not find here. And thus the life blood of the church was so drawn away, that its pulse could hardly be discerned. This obstacle to increase was now removed, but a restoration to life was still a difficult process. What was ordained to life seemed to be unto death. The warm applications to the man nearly frozen to death threatened to kill him by the reaction. The doctrines of the cross, the source of life, were brought to bear. These awoke hostility, and induced another crisis, which threatened destruction to the

society. Now, to appreciate the difficulties of the minister's work, take your stand just here, and see how little he had to work with—how reduced was his church in numbers and piety—how small his congregation, and how divided. How hostile were the great mass of people around him to him and his doctrines—how disposed to unite in loading his church with contempt—what arguments for that contempt its history for a hundred years had piled up. See him in that position, bearing that burden, and tell how much ought to have been expected of him—how much more than to drag along the mere existence of the church. See how discouraging were his first efforts. The preaching of Christ crucified awoke a determined resistance.

This manifested itself for a few months in the common forms of complaint and irritation. Some members of the congregation went to Chelsea, and perhaps to other places out of town, to worship for a while. Mr. Rockwood was ordained in July. In October following, measures were taken towards a secession of those who were not satisfied. They were all evidently Unitarians, but from reasons of policy they chose

not to hoist Unitarian colors at first. They proclaimed themselves Episcopalians. The first developments of the buds of the Episcopal stock took place in a sermon preached in the old meeting house, on Sunday evening, October 18, 1818, a few months after Mr. Rockwood's settlement, by Rev. Thomas Carlisle, of Salem. Some weeks afterwards the same minister preached on the Sabbath in the Academy. On the 3d of the next January, Bishop Griswold sent a Mr. Chase, a minister in deacon's orders, resident in Salem, to preach. On the 27th of that month, Mr. Carlisle and Mr. Chase came hither, and organized an Episcopal society, consisting of Amos Rhodes, Samuel Brimblecom, J. F. Gardner, R. P. Hovey, William Chadwell, J. C. Jayne, James Lakeman, Ellis Newhall, and Joseph Lye. The usual congregation assembled for Episcopal services at the Academy was about thirty. For a part of the time they had preaching by Episcopal ministers, but for most of the time prayers and sermons were read by some of their own number. Colonel Brimblecom, Dr. Coffin, and Mr. Hovey, a young lawyer, contributed to sustain this service. But at length the society got weary of these proceedings. They found the same doc-

trines from which they had fled in the Liturgy, which they were required to read. At length they commenced omitting the parts of the prayers which contained the objectionable doctrines. This gave offence to the Episcopal clergy. And Mr. Carlisle, who stood to them in the nominal relation of rector, wrote to them a letter, advising them, that if the whole of the church service could not be read, it were best to close the church for the present. The journal from which we quote says, that "Mr. Carlisle's advice was received with joy rather than with grief, and we fondly hope a society will soon be established in this town on the immutable principles of Christian charity and benevolence." This experiment had been continued a little more than three years.

In less than a month after this, arrangements were made to commence Unitarian preaching in the Academy, preparatory to the formation of a Unitarian society. The first steps for a formal organization were taken April 4, 1822, by the choice of Colonel Brimblecom, Henry A. Breed, and William Chadwell, a committee. Three days after, a Unitarian society was formed, by the name of the "Second Congregational Soci-

ety." The society was organized under an act of incorporation, July 18. The house of worship, built at an expense of three thousand five hundred and fifteen dollars, exclusive of the foundation and pulpit, was dedicated April 30, 1823. December 23 of the same year, the formalities of organizing a church were passed. It was on this wise: George Bracket, Henry A. Breed, and Dr. Coffin acknowledged the church covenant, "which was their belief in the Holy Scriptures, in one God, in the divine mission of Christ, his death and resurrection, and a final retribution beyond the grave, and in all that Christ required his followers to believe." Over this society Rev. Samuel D. Green was settled as the first pastor, November 3, 1824.

This secession of course weakened the first parish. But this was not the most formidable difficulty. The parish was burdened with a debt of sixteen hundred dollars. Then, their meeting house, being one hundred and forty-five years old, was undesirable in form, inconvenient, uncomfortable, and much out of repair. It had become a reproach and a byword, being called the Old Tunnel. In every view the prospects of the society were disheartening. There had been

a few additions to the church of persons who gave promise of future activity ; but they were not favored with large pecuniary resources. At a society meeting it was suggested that it was not practicable to raise the necessary funds for the support of the pastor and other expenses, and it was proposed to sell the parsonage and other property, and pay all debts, and disband, and leave the members to unite with other societies according to their individual preferences. Here was another crisis in which life and death trembled in the balance.

A parish meeting to act upon this question took place at the house of Mr. Ephraim Sweetzer, in Federal Street. There were present among others Drs. Gardner and Hazletine, Messrs. Amariah Child, Amos Blanchard, Thomas Rhodes, Jesse Rhodes, John Alley, 3d, and Christopher Bubier. Mr. Alley moved that the property of the society be sold to pay the debts, preparatory to disbanding. The motion seemed to be in accordance with the general conviction of the meeting, as a necessity not to be avoided. When the question was about to be taken on it, Mr. Bubier, one of the younger members present, pleaded for a delay of action upon it, and made an earnest appeal on

the ground that it was to be the extinction of an ancient church, that ought for most sacred reasons to be preserved. After he had concluded, Dr. Hazletine took him aside, and labored to convince him that it was best to give up. He said he could hear the gospel cheaper and nearer home. And in answer to the question whether that which he would hear is the gospel, he said, "I have books at home that will convince you that there is not so much difference, and that Unitarians can be Christians." In justice to Dr. H., it should here be said that Unitarianism at that time had not displayed the features that it now has, and that nobody then saw the difference as it is now seen. His own views had a mixture of Arminianism; and, then, having property, and being liable to bear large burdens in the society, he was under a strong temptation to such a view. All of the meeting, as far as was known, were in favor of the motion, except Mr. Bubier and Mr. Jesse Rhodes. But the meeting was willing to postpone action, and give any an opportunity to show a better way. So they adjourned without taking the question.

In the time of the adjournment the facts were communicated to the pastor, and he took up the

question to see what could be done to save the church from ruin. He said that it did not become him as the pastor of this ancient church, nor did it become them as descendants and successors of the Puritans, to abandon the cause of evangelical truth in this place without further efforts and sacrifices to sustain it. He offered to put his shoulder with theirs under the burdens, and proposed to meet the society at their adjourned meeting and confer with them. At that meeting he proposed to relinquish two hundred dollars of his salary for that year, provided the society would pay him four hundred, and he would make it up to himself by teaching, if necessary. This proposal was accepted, and it imparted new encouragement to the desponding. The four hundred dollars were soon pledged. The pastor then applied to the "Society for promoting Christian Knowledge." They appropriated one hundred and fifty dollars a year for five years, on condition that the parish pay off the debt in that time. This relieved the pastor in part of what he had pledged. The other fifty dollars he relinquished for six years. A subscription was soon commenced to pay off the debt. By what was done here, and by friends

and societies abroad, the amount was raised and the debt paid.

Now, it was made clear that the society intended to live, that it had friends abroad and some recuperative energies at home. The bonds of union among its members became stronger, and many taunting reproaches from without were silenced. Taking advantage of the turning tide, the pastor suggested that now was the time for building a new meeting house. All felt the need of it, and it was not difficult to convince them that it was indispensable to any future prosperity, though it seemed hardly practicable to raise the requisite funds. The ministers of the association gave encouragement that the churches in the neighborhood would coöperate to the extent of a thousand dollars. With this encouragement the work was undertaken. The Old Tunnel frame was removed from its position on the Common to the corner of Commercial Street and the Common, and newly covered and roofed, and furnished with a new front and tower, and new interior and pews, so as to have the appearance of an entirely new building, neat and attractive. The congregation was small when it first removed to the new house; but it was not long

before the pews were nearly all sold or rented. Then it was demonstrated that the society would live. Prophecies of its fall had been falsified, and a gratifying triumph obtained. Occasional additions were made to the church, and the society had increasing prosperity in its general interests. In the year 1831 there was a revival of great interest and power, and, considering the size of the congregation, the number of additions made by it to the church was very large; and to quite the usual extent the fruits of it proved their genuineness by their permanency. The next year after this revival Mr. Rockwood asked and received a dismissal. The number of members in the church then was one hundred and twenty-eight — thirty-two males and ninety-six females; so that there had been a net gain of church members, in the thirteen years of his pastorate, of eighty-eight; and fifty-seven of these were added in the single year of 1831, the year before his resignation.

Now, it is natural to ask, Why, after such results, should a separation of pastor and people be allowed to take place? The very prosperity of the preceding year had contributed something towards it. The great exertions which

the pastor made in that revival had exhausted his energies and health, so that it was indispensable to him to relieve himself from his labors here entirely by a dismissal, or temporarily by absence from the people for a while ; and the circumstances did not admit of the latter course. The society was still in debt, occasioned by building the meeting house ; and he was in debt, occasioned by what he had done to aid the society ; and when he asked a dismissal, he put his request to the society in the form of an alternative — the alternative of refunding to him what he had in former years relinquished of his salary, and restoring his salary to its original sum, or of accepting his resignation. They, in the circumstances, did not feel able to do the former, and so he was dismissed.

Judging of that action on general principle, and with such a limited knowledge of details as a stranger to the transactions must have, the wisdom of the conclusion attained seems questionable. Considering the obstacles in the way, Mr. Rockwood's ministry had been fruitful in a very high degree ; and the year immediately preceding had gathered in more fruits than all the rest. Now, if breathing time could have been given

him, so that he could have returned to his work with recruited energies, the probabilities are, that the influence which he had here acquired with men's consciences, by his self-denying labors and his godly life, would have enabled him to work here with more effect than any other could ; for there is a great loss of power when a good minister is removed from a field where his name and the remembrance of what he has done is doing more, by a silent operation, than the most eloquent preaching of one minister can do. One who has upon the ground acquired the character of a faithful and successful minister, has secured a vantage ground not for slight reasons to be relinquished. But, wisely or unwisely, the dismissal took place June 6, 1832.

To illustrate the discouragements of Mr. Rockwood's position, one person remembers having spent a Sabbath here at that time, and attending at Mr. Rockwood's place of worship, and hearing Dr. Cornelius, one of the best preachers in the country, preach to a mere handful—some forty or fifty people—while Maffit was holding forth to immense crowds at the Methodist church. Such a mountebank and frothy declaimer, to say no worse, was then more to the taste of the

people than the burning eloquence of Cornelius. Two men were never more unlike. And the taste of the multitude, as shown in that instance plainly told on what the public mind had been fed, and how hopeless it was to call it back from the husks to the bread in our Father's house. That single fact shows at once that nothing could be done here till after years of patient toil, gaining little by little.

My first impression as to the results of Mr. Rockwood's labors here was received from his church records. I then knew little of the history of the case ; and even then I regarded it as a very successful ministry. But now that I can look somewhat into the depths of his position, and into the hole of the pit from which this church was digged, I am free to say that I regard his ministry as remarkably successful. In spite of all the obstacles, the proportion of additions to the church exceeded the average of what are called prosperous churches. But the true importance of the work which he did here consisted in breaking the force of the tide which was bearing all to destruction, and beginning to set it in an opposite direction. He found here a church having but two praying families, and

left it with many. He found few minds evincing an attachment to the doctrines of the cross, and left a church prepared to unite in a successor who gave fearless utterance to those doctrines. He found the church declining in life and strength, and left it in a state of thrift and rapid increase. And he has been honored of God to break the succession of an erroneous and life-depressing ministry, and head a new series of the preachers of the truth, to whose labors God will attach his blessing; and whoever comes in after generations to write the history of this church, and trace events as time will then have developed them, will trace great results to causes which had their spring under his labors.

The honor which the providence of God put upon his ministry was this, that it was the turning point of life to an apparently expiring church. He sacrificed his own interests and perilled his prospects of a happy settlement in the ministry to make here what was thought to be the doubtful experiment whether this church could live. Such instances of self-sacrifice on the part of ministers are little thought of. With most it is taken as a first principle that ministers

have a selfish motive for every act. And when he declined a call to one of the best churches in the state, that he might unite his fortunes here with an apparently sinking cause, he had no credit for his self-denial : it was even turned to his disadvantage ; and many inferred that he must be a small affair if he would consent to labor here with such a forlorn hope of a church. So little do the world, judging others by themselves, appreciate the moral sublime in self-denial. But it matters not. He has not lost his reward. Events in after years will show — they have already begun to show — more good accomplished, that is, more honor achieved, by that self-sacrificing ministry than is ordinarily secured by a ministry in our largest churches. It was the rescue from death of a church to whose preservation God had attached a great value. God has honored him by setting him at the head of a many-branching stream of life-giving influence here, where children and children's children will see cause to call him blessed.

## CHAPTER XIII.

REV. MR. PEABODY'S MINISTRY.—SETTLEMENT OF THE PRESENT PASTOR.—BUILDING OF THE MEETING HOUSE.—HISTORY OF THE DEBT AND ITS EXTINCTION.—THE TEMPERANCE CONFLICT.

THE church was not long vacant. Mr. Rockwood was dismissed in June, and August 13 the church voted a call to Mr. David Peabody, of Topsfield. This call was accepted, and the preliminaries arranged, so that the ordination took place November 15, 1832. In point of ministerial gifts and character, Mr. Peabody was all that could be desired. His pulpit talents were of a high order. Few young men on entering the ministry exceeded him. But what was more, he was earnestly devoted to his work, and, to the extent of his physical ability, laborious and faithful; and under his labors the society had the promise of an increase as rapid as possible, considering the many impediments in its way; and for a short time it had such an increase. But the prospects

were soon overcast. Mr. Peabody's health was feeble, tending to pulmonary consumption. It was feeble when he accepted the call, and in his acceptance he asked to be favored in that respect. Under the labor of the first years of his ministry, always specially trying to the health of a young minister, and subject to the influence of the sea breezes, so injurious to pulmonary complaints, he faltered. After a ministry of about two years and a half, March 29, 1835, he asked for a dismissal, on two grounds—the failure of his health, under the influence of the climate, making it probable that if he remained he should be wholly prostrate; and the great amount of labor necessary to be performed, by reason of the increase of numbers, and the circumstances of the town calling for much labor. It was with reluctance that the church yielded to this request. They voted that they were fully satisfied with the labors, doctrines, gifts, and graces of their pastor, and were willing to make any sacrifices to secure his continuance with them; but after a full and anxious hearing of the case the council judged that there was a necessity for the dismissal; and the event justified their conclusion. Mr. Peabody afterwards

assumed a pastoral charge, which he held for a short time, in Worcester ; and then for a short time held the office of a professor in Dartmouth College, where he died of the consumption that was upon him while in Lynn.

After Mr. Peabody's dismissal, the church was without a pastor nearly a year. The present pastor preached his first sermon here the first Sabbath in March, 1836, and was installed May 4. And here, perhaps, I should end my history, since, if I go further, I shall be compelled to speak in the first person more than is pleasant to do. Yet, since that time, important events in your history have occurred, of which I must have a better knowledge than my successors can have ; so I think it best to continue the narrative. The congregation at the time of my installation were worshipping in the house on the corner of Commercial Street, which was too small to accommodate all that wanted seats in it, and the seats were so few that the pews, unless put so high as to deter worshippers from occupying them, would not sustain the expenses ; and an extra effort by way of a subscription was needed. It was understood that more than twenty families were desirous of

taking pews in the house, when no pews were to be had. The population of the town was increasing at a rate unparalleled ; and it was felt that we ought to take the advantage open to us for increase, as we could not take it while confined to so small a house. Another thing which encouraged the undertaking of building anew, at that time, was the very thing that brought disaster upon it. It was at a time when the public mind every where was delirious with a commercial expansion. Speculation in every thing was rife. On paper fortunes were made in a day. And in such times the building of a house so large was regarded as a small affair, though all materials and expenses of building were at the highest price. Under these circumstances, a resolution was taken to build a house covering a larger area than any other in Essex county. It was taken at a parish meeting, where seventy voters were present, that is, well nigh all the members of the parish. An opposing vote was not given. One, and one only, advised against it ; and if circumstances could have continued as they were, it would have been a successful undertaking ; but when the work of building was about half way to its completion, and when it

was too late to retreat from it, the commercial crisis of 1837 came upon it, like a sudden tempest upon a ship with every sail spread, and it drove us well nigh to a wreck. Many of the members of the parish, on whom reliance was made to carry the burden, failed. The population of the town underwent a diminution of some thousands, by reason of its business being paralyzed. The congregation was diminished by removals. The aggregate property of the whole parish, leaving out that of a very few individuals, was not enough to pay the debt. So when the house was finished, and came to the sale of pews, comparatively few had the means for buying. The expense of the house had been, as is usual in such cases, vastly above the calculation. The house and land cost seventeen thousand dollars; and after the sale of the pews the debt upon the house stood at near twelve thousand dollars. The annual interest on this, being more than seven hundred dollars, was more than the society felt able to pay, if it had no other expenses.

In these circumstances, what was to be done? To pay the debt then was utterly impossible. A majority of the families severely felt the pressure

of the times ; and none had money to invest in meeting house property. These were dark days, when some of our wisest counsellors advised to abandon all in despair, and let it go for a failure. The time when the difficulties of the case came to be fully known and realized was in 1840. We had been two years under the burden, without realizing its full extent. Then, if those who advised to a failure had pushed their advice with earnestness, they would have carried it. To my view, a failure to pay that debt seemed equivalent to an extinction of the church. I knew that I could not labor here, as its pastor, if, added to all the other impediments, it was under the disgrace of a failure. When that question was mooted, I felt compelled to plead against a failure. I did it in a sermon of which the following were the closing words :—

“These are some of the grounds on which I stand, when I say that the thought of scattering to the four winds this heritage of the Lord must not, cannot, will not prevail. Shades of the sainted fathers, Puritans of hallowed memory, forbid it! Let the deliverances wrought for this church in her former trials forbid it! Let your love of truth, and determination to live

and die in its defence, forbid it! The report which has gone abroad that we are on the point of resolving to die, because we have not strength or courage to breathe any longer, I repel as a foul calumny. I am no prophet, or prophet's son; but my word is given for what it is worth, that we shall not die, but live, a rebuke to those enemies of God and truth who have prematurely put their mouth to the 'Trumpet,' to utter triumphs over our overthrow. God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble; therefore we will not fear. The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. The work which he has begun and conducted with so much care thus far will not be abandoned. This sanctuary, which has cost so many painful anxieties, we trust will stand, a monument of your zeal and self-denial, and echo to the songs of your children and your children's children, till it shall lift its tower amid the splendors of millennial glory."

This quotation is given to show, not the facts, but the feelings of the times. It was felt that the public mind, charged as it here was with hostility to our principles, would take no excuse for the failure of an Orthodox society. Socie-

ties of other principles might fail, and occasion loss to creditors, but not we. That had this society been the occasion — though innocent of occasion — of a loss of so many thousands to its creditors, its failure would have intombed the last hope of preserving this ancient church. Yet the payment of the debt then was impossible. The only ray of hope was by making a strenuous effort to pay the annual interest on the debt, in addition to the current expenses, till Providence might open some way — we knew not what way — to get relief. This effort was made; and, considering the small means then existing, it was nobly sustained. The house was mortgaged to the full extent to which mortgages would be taken; and yet a large debt stood without security, except that a single individual of the parish (Andrews Breed, Esq.) consented virtually to sustain the credit of it through those years when credit was no easy attainment, and when *our* credit especially was questionable. But for him we must have failed. He stood long in the gap, alone, till Providence brought in another friend, (Hon. Isaiah Breed,) equally able and generous, to divide with him and us the burdens. In this aid, furnished at

the time when it was indispensable to life, we are specially bound to notice the hand of God; and it is fitting that we should leave on record our acknowledgments to men. It is not usual for men of larger means to seek religious connections where large debts are to be lifted. But the burden of this debt was not carried by wealthy men alone, nor chiefly. After the two individuals alluded to had done most generously, it required the straining of every nerve of those who had little or nothing, to carry the load. In the early stage of the difficulty, besides their pew rents, a large number of the congregation contributed the avails of one day's labor in a month to pay the interest of the debt. After that, Sabbath contributions were adopted. By the utmost efforts of this kind the debt was kept from accumulating. Patience had a severe test. We lived in hope that the next year would bring better times. The next year came, and brought no relief. The burden which many felt it impossible to bear one year pressed with little mitigation for five years. In 1842 the debt had been by some special efforts brought down to ten thousand five hundred dollars. At that time, more than three thousand had been paid

in interest money. This was done with the greatest difficulty, when business was depressed, and labor found little remuneration. In the next year and a half, one thousand more of interest was paid, and three thousand to diminish the debt, leaving the debt at seven thousand five hundred. Then we went on paying the interest till 1847, when an effort was made to extinguish the whole at once.

And this, in the circumstances, is one of the most incredible events in the history, and ought to be told; and if I knew any way in which I could tell it, and lay myself wholly out of view, I would choose that way. But it is due to the grace of God that I should not cover it up for fear of personal appearances.

This, then, was the position in which we stood in 1847. We had paid on the house in those ten years, besides what was paid at the sale of the pews, and from the price of the old house—say five thousand dollars, more or less—we had paid in those ten years, principal and interest, about ten thousand dollars. There now remained seven thousand five hundred to pay. After so long a bearing of the burden, many were getting discouraged, and feeling that the debt never

could be paid. The debt — the debt — the debt — met us at every turn. The ability of the congregation had considerably increased. But the burden had pressed so long in one spot, that that spot was sore. In looking at the subject seriously, I began to think it possible that the debt, after all that we had done, might ruin us. I asked myself whether it might not be possible to rouse all to one determined effort to sweep it away. After a severe struggle, and much earnest prayer, I gained one important object. I convinced myself that there was a bare possibility of doing it. But as I knew not that an individual member of the parish thought it could be done, I had two difficult things to do — to convince others that it could be done, and show them a plan by which it might be done. Being very deficient in the talents of a financier, I undertook the latter part of the task with special distrust. But, in my own mind, I formed a plan which looked feasible, by which, through a generous, determined, and united effort, it seemed that it might be done.

Having triumphed in the struggle in my own mind, and brought forth a plan on which I conceived the work possible, my next, and, as it

seemed to me, the more difficult task was, to convince others that it might be done. For this end I prepared a discourse for the Friday evening lecture, and in it set forth my plans and exhortations, — not asking others to *go* and do this thing, but rather to *come* and do it. I promised to give towards the object more, in proportion to my means, than would be required of others. Before I opened my mouth to speak in the lecture of that evening, I was pressed with the consciousness that not an individual would have the least confidence in my plan. Yet my argument was favored somewhat by the felt necessities of the case. Providence had, seemingly, shut us up to do just that thing. Just before, from discouragement as to ever seeing the debt paid, there had been a sad falling off in the usual effort to pay the interest. Many had become weary of a constant giving, without diminishing the debt. And all efforts to renew their interest in it had failed.

And as we could not pay the interest, it was time to pay the principal. To make an effort to pay a part of it was impossible. Nothing would rouse to effort but the hope of being wholly free from debt. Nothing else could draw with suf-

ficient force on the common mind. Yet one risked the danger of being called delirious, if he asserted that the thing could be done — that by one voluntary effort such a people, most of them poor, could raise seven thousand dollars.

Standing on this vantage ground, my argument prevailed. Those who doubted at first, when they saw the general zeal that was kindled, became convinced. With wonderful unanimity and determination all the people, without exception, took hold and did with their might. Take it all in all, it was one of the most remarkable events which I have been permitted to witness. When I look back upon it now, I cannot conceive how I could have convinced myself that the thing was possible. I seem to have been under a strange delusion — delusion I should call it, if the event had not verified it. I cannot doubt that there was a special operation of the Holy Spirit, both upon my own mind and upon that of the people. I looked around on the facts, as they were, and I inquired for the persons able and willing to do so much. By no arithmetic could I make out the amount in that way. And yet, somehow, I wrought myself into a strong persuasion that it

would be done. I seemed to be renewing the experience of him who against hope believed in hope. And similar experience pervaded other minds.

There was a special hand of Providence in moving us to do this work *just then*. We could not go on longer as we were going. I had become discouraged with the position of things, and that very week I had had an invitation to listen to a call to another field, and was prompted to desire to have the matter decided, whether this church was to live or die. In every view a necessity came upon us to do that work just at that time. There had not been a single month in the whole ten years before when it would have been safe to have made the experiment. And if it had been delayed another month, it would have been impossible by reason of a commercial panic which then occurred. So our steps were ordered by One who was wiser than we, and who brought on the crisis when we were able to meet it. Another indispensable condition of our success was a complete union of minds and hearts, and a universal coöperation. If even a few of the least able had refused their aid, we should have failed. There

were none to stand aloof and criticize and discourage the plans of the rest. And it ought to be recorded in grateful acknowledgment of God's providence, that during all these struggles from the first incurring to the paying of the debt, the union of the society was perfect. That time filled out twelve years of my pastorate. And in all that time there had been scarce a ripple of discordant feeling in the society. Our very troubles served to exclude strifes. When, with hearts appalled and distressed, we consulted and prayed together for deliverance, we were well sustained in the consciousness of such a union as made available what strength we had.

Suffice it to say, that a debt of seven thousand five hundred dollars was cancelled by the earnest coöperation and self-sacrifice of a society, nine tenths of whom were persons of very limited means. In several instances individuals that had a single hundred dollars laid aside for a wet day gave it freely for the object. The result was astonishing both to us and to our neighbors. It had been confidently predicted, by persons of other societies, that we must fail. For ten years this had been the common belief.

We supposed others judged us by themselves ; knowing that if such a debt were upon them, as a society, and not affecting individual responsibility, they would not attempt to pay it. Be that as it may, the fact that our killing debt was cancelled, and that without aid from abroad, produced a perfect surprise on the public mind. From that time forth this congregation ceased to be despised. There was then existing towards it a great amount of hostility, and great effort had been made to overwhelm it with contempt. But whatever feelings other societies now entertained towards it, it was impossible to despise it. This event met and turned back a vast tide of reproach. Here was an example of self-sacrifice to sustain the integrity of the society, — an attachment to principle and to religious interests, — an example of union such as is rarely seen. And it manifestly had its effect on the public mind, and has ever since been one element of prosperity.

There are some minds that can contemplate no act of a religious man, or of a religious body, without referring it to some mean and selfish motive. They judge others as Satan judged of Job. Because Satan knew that if he had done

as Job had, it must have been for a selfish end, so he concluded that Job could have had no other. So he said, "Does Job serve God for nought?" So many judge of all Christians. Here was an event to tax the ingenuity of this class of people. In an act of self-sacrifice, hundreds had concurred to discharge a debt which no one individual was legally bound to discharge, and where no one could be charged with violating his moral obligations if he failed to do it. It was done at a great sacrifice of the individuals, — not of a few, but of all. It was done under such circumstances, that a refusal to make the sacrifice by a few out of the whole, would have defeated the plan. So here was at once a test and an illustration of the value of union. To what mean motive the opposers of religion ascribed it we never heard. We ourselves always felt that the hated Calvinism had much to do in it. We saw, or thought we saw, in the nature of our principles, taking hold as they do of God and eternity, that which furnished the sufficient motive for such a sacrifice. Much as the multitude here are wont to dress the Calvinistic system in bear skins, and let loose the dogs of defamation upon it, no congre-

gation opposing, Calvinism on this ground has exhibited an example of the force of moral principle, and of the power of religion upon themselves, equal to this. It were well to say less about those horrible doctrines till they were more carefully traced out in their results, to see if their fruits are so horrible. Either make the tree good and the fruit good, or the tree corrupt and its fruit corrupt.

But how happened it that the society should have been able all to think and act alike, at a crisis when the least schism would have caused a failure? It is due to the grace of God to refer this primarily to a purpose, on the part of God, to carry us safely through the crisis. He has all hearts in his hands, and he caused all hearts to be united, when it was with us a question of union or death. We purpose in the next chapter to speak more particularly of the causes of the general union that has prevailed in the society.

One item of noteworthy experience of this society, since my connection with it, has relation to the temperance enterprise. The temperance reform had been in progress in New England some eight years before I came hither; but up

to that time it had been chiefly under the auspices of evangelical ministers. In concurrence with others, I had, before I came hither, and from the start, lectured and preached extensively in favor of total abstinence from all intoxicating drinks. I did the same after I came. But soon after, there came up what was called the Washingtonian movement, — begun by Hawkins of Baltimore, a reformed drunkard, who lectured extensively, and touched a chord of sympathy with drunkards, which drew them in crowds to hear him and be healed of their plagues. This movement at first promised great things. My own anticipations of it were great. At first I did my utmost to put it forward. But it soon became to be a feature of the movement, that as you are to set a thief to catch a thief, so you must employ drunkards to reform drunkards. By the notoriety which the reformed drunkards acquired as speakers, the temptation became strong for drunkards to enter the reform on a short enlistment, to improve their gifts at public speaking. And many of this class of speakers sought notoriety by exaggerating the story of their own shame. There was a sort of competition among them to tell

the largest story of their own degradation. Many of them were men in all their habits thoroughly irreligious, and took occasion of their temperance speeches to pour abuse on the ministry and churches with whom the temperance enterprise began. These repulsive features of the thing soon arrayed against it most of the original friends of the temperance cause. I felt compelled at length to stand aloof from it ; but not till I had stood in my own pulpit with one of that class of lecturers, whose breath while he lectured was loaded with the fumes of brandy, and whose lecture was an enumeration of the men of genius who had been inebriates, so as to leave the impression that the use of brandy was one of the indications of superior intellect, and with one (as might be supposed) whose goodness was as the morning cloud and the early dew.

My standing aloof from this movement was seized upon as proof that I was opposed to the temperance cause. And a strong effort was made, by persons who afterwards figured more largely in other forms of opposition to us, to draw off and divide us on that ground. While these matters were in agitation, I was giving a course of lectures to young men on other sub-

jects, at five o'clock, P. M., on the Sabbath. And evidently with a design to thwart me in that, a gathering of the so called Washingtonians was appointed to take place on the Common, in front of our house, at the same time, and a notice was sent in for me to read. I stated to the congregation that I had received such a notice, but that in the circumstances it was not possible not to see in it a personal offence, and a clear intent to thwart my efforts. But I remarked that I should not postpone my own appointment; yet, instead of giving the lecture to young men, I should give a lecture to set forth my view of the so called Washingtonianism; not doubting that I should by that means draw as strongly upon the curiosity of their assembly as they would upon that of mine. When the hour for the lecture arrived, and when but a small part of what would otherwise have collected had arrived, a sudden shower came up, and those who had assembled for the open air speeches were compelled to flee into our house for shelter. So that Providence secured to me what had assembled for both congregations, and I went on quietly with my lecture before just the people that I would desire to have to hear it. In that lecture,

in describing the evils which had come in through the bad spirit of the lecturers and the habit of valuing lecturers in proportion to the depth of their boasted degradation, I used in my extempore speech the phrase "GRADUATES OF THE GUTTER." That shocked the keener sensibilities of some of the fraternity. It was taken up and put forth in the newspapers and platform speeches as if it contained what was more offensive than blasphemy. And it lived on ribald tongues and pens till the time came when the whole community had come much to my estimate of the preaching of graduates of the gutter, and so that the authorship of the phrase had become rather a compliment than a reproach.

This is one of the episodes to the history of our struggle with the parish debt. We had several of the kind, though essentially from the same source. I know not that they at all increased the burden. They certainly contributed to sustain the energy of the society and its determination to live.

The fact that that debt did not crush us came in a great measure from causes which could not operate in a society holding doctrines opposite to ours.

A religion that excludes that faith and trust in God which was the prime source of this movement, which excludes that conviction of eternal retributions that causes the true value of the gospel and its ordinances to be felt, could not have produced such a result. This case strongly illustrates the force of the doctrines of the cross as connected with the life and strength of a religious body. Indeed, the whole history of the elevations and depressions of this church concurs with all church history to show that what strength a congregation gains by encouraging a lax theology to secure the aid of those who cannot endure sound doctrine, is weakness in the end. That preaching which excludes the offence of the cross sooner or later exhausts the strength of the church. This chapter of the history of this church showing, in such a strong light the connection of the strong doctrines with the recuperative energy of the church, deserves to be written as with a pen of iron and the point of a diamond in the rock forever, that your children may avoid the rock on which the vessel has so often come near to being wrecked. Through this channel I would gladly address your children's children to latest times, and bid them

beware of checking the full utterance of those gospel truths which are offensive to the carnal mind, and which are yet the life and strength of God in his church, and the power of God unto salvation.

But, well as we knew the causes that conducted us to success in that perilous hour, that success was surprising to ourselves. The general mind of the society for the time when the effort was in progress seemed to be under a special excitement, and when the act was completed we could hardly believe our own ears. When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream ; then was our mouth filled with laughter and our tongue with singing. Then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them. The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad. They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

## CHAPTER XIV.

CAUSES OF UNION. — COMEOUTERS. — SPIRITUAL PROGRESS  
— SWAMPSCOT CHURCH. — CENTRAL CHURCH.

A CALVINISTIC church in Lynn has a peculiar position. The position of this church is well described in the language of the prophet. "Mine heritage is unto me as a speckled bird ; the birds round about are against her. Come, assemble all ye beasts of the field, come to devour. Many pastors have destroyed my vineyard ; they have trodden my portion under foot ; they have made my pleasant portion a desolate wilderness." The anti-evangelical element which has come in through Arminianism and Methodism, and issued in manifold radicalisms, has, in all its modes of development, borne a special hostility to this church. When the zeal of the radical reformers was at its height, it was concentrated upon us as the main barrier to that kind of reform. In ordinary preaching I made no allusions to it. But now and then a crisis came which gave an opportunity to speak for good.

In such cases I hesitated not to say what more prudent men might think imprudent. Then the hopes of opponents were, that a division would come in through a revulsion of a part against the rash utterance of the pulpit. After such hopes had been many times disappointed, then came up a mystery to be solved — Why the people did not embrace some of the convenient opportunities given them for division. This mystery was greater from the fact that in the agitating times referred to, most of the other societies in the place were divided on questions touching these reforms, and it seemed impossible to live in Lynn without a share in the tempest. During that time this society was one of the most united and conservative. This, to those who felt bound to convert the whole town to a comeouter rabble, was an offence and an enigma. They could refer it to nothing but priestcraft. Nor could they tell how priestcraft could work such a wonder.

The *prime* cause of it lay in the purpose and providence of God, who, in those days of rebuke and blasphemy, would have a witness for himself and a place of rest for his truth, and erect a barrier over which the fury of the mad-

dened elements might not go. Doctrines opposed to the truth of Christ had come in, and produced their proper fruits. The true results of those doctrines were displayed in the insane fury of the ranters. So it was important that in one part of the same field God's truth should be sustained, and its proper fruits be set forth to the view. So it was important that the remnant adhering to Puritan truth, which had been preserved in so many hairbreadth escapes, should then have the union and firmness to withstand the storm.

Here was the prime cause of our union. Not the least of the subordinate causes was, the sacrifices which the individuals of the society had made for the sake of the truth. Ever since the present generation came upon the stage, the life of the church had hung in suspense. Ever and anon a crisis had come, which required great effort and sacrifice to preserve its life. These sacrifices caused its life to be cherished with deep affection, and the thought of its division to be repelled as horrible.

Another cause of the union was found in the reaction of the instruments employed for division. One newspaper, sustained by its owner at

a great loss, made our destruction its main and declared purpose; and the whole labor of the party of which that was the organ assumed that nothing could be done for its ends in Lynn as long as this church existed. The pressure of that hostility bore on every accessible point of this society. Every individual of us felt its force; and against such a storm few would stand with us for other causes than an attachment to principle. By this means, the fearful and the self-seekers were sifted out, and only picked men were left, such as would be made to stand together the more firmly by all the cursing and bitterness that came in upon them.

The *doctrines* held by us were another cause of the union. These, if true, are tremendously true, and fit to command the whole heart and soul. And these, we trust, are to some practical effect believed; and the belief of them impels us to make sacrifices to sustain them, and will not allow us to fall out to their injury on every trivial occasion. We felt that this single church, standing alone for its principles amid so much opposition, bore immense responsibilities touching the future weal of this growing community. It was felt that we had come to a crisis, when

success would open issues of gladness on unborn generations, and defeat would intomb their last hope. So we dared not do otherwise than to stand firmly, shoulder to shoulder.

Another occasion of this harmony has been in keeping clear a distinction between the respective duties of the minister and people. The society never has been embarrassed by attempts at control on the part of the minister, nor has the minister been made the man of a party by the advice of parties respecting his duties. Except in the matter of lifting the debt, when there was a special occasion, I do not remember to have offered any influence to shape the organic action of the society. Generally, its action has been taken without my even knowing any thing of its intended measures till after their execution. Even when the meeting house was built, I gave no advice. The society has ever had men competent to manage its affairs wisely, and I have been happy to acknowledge their competence by avoiding all interference with their department of duty. And the same courtesy I have in a very special manner received from them. I have never in a single instance received advice or remonstrance as to the character of

my preaching. A few weeks after the commencement of my ministry here, a friend now in heaven called on me, and asked me if I would not make it a point always, in my public prayers, to pray for the abolition of slavery. I replied by asking him if he would not analyze his own feelings, and tell me if his desire to have me do it was not that he might be able to quote me as in sympathy with the abolition party. He confessed that it was. I told him that that was a proper subject for prayer, but prayer was not the proper way of promoting party interests in a congregation. I had often introduced this subject in public prayers, and was ever willing to do it, where and when it would not be construed as the evidence of my adhesion to this or that party. He confessed the reasonableness of my ground, and lived and died one of my warmest friends. Excepting this, I do not now remember a single attempt that has been made by any one to influence my action in the pulpit.

Sometimes I have felt it to be my duty to lift up my voice with strength against some prevailing errors or vices. At such times it would have been easy for a few to do us and the cause a great injury. Such are times when timid ones,

if there are any, are apt to throw their influence against the preacher, and help the errors or vices assailed by causing divisions to weaken the arm of the assailant. The first hope of the adversary, in such a case, always is, that the boldness of the stroke will create divisions among ourselves. But such has been the manner of my people in such cases, that they never have made me afraid to do what I have thought wise to attempt. When a bold stroke has been struck, there have been multitudes *out of the society* who have apparently gone into a panic, and have said, "He will ruin his society! Indeed, it is already broken up and scattering." But in such cases the society has not been made imprudent by my imprudence. They have not been wont to commit the imprudence of joining the alarm-cries coming from without, but have preferred quietly to await the issue, and see whether truth will not bear its own weight. This has been the greatest of all discouragements to opponents. After putting forth their worst emissions of bile, they have been wont to conclude with some expression of despair, "It is of no use; they are so under priestly tyranny that they will sustain him, let him say what he will." This sustaining

of the freedom of the pulpit, and backing its issues with one mind, has contributed vastly to our efficiency. However much the truths which I have uttered in the present series needed to be uttered in a way to command a public hearing and a public consideration, the utterance could not have been made with any hope of good but in the midst of a people of tried firmness, who were willing, for the truth's sake, to bear their share of the reproach.

I conceive that in this most trying duty of my whole ministry I have been called to do a work that will make a broader impression for good than any which I have done in this pulpit. After the surf and foam shall have passed away, and serious reflection shall come in, the effect will be seen. Yet I could not have been justified in undertaking such a work, had not former experience given me the assurance that no faltering on the part of my hearers would have neutralized the effort. I am well aware that it was no light burden laid upon my people. They have kindred social and business connections with men of opposite views, which are liable to be marred. Then it is some trial to the nerves to sit and hear the utterance of truths known to be

offensive to many that are present. And it requires some force of conscience to take and bear one's share of testimony in favor of rejected truths. This, indeed, is no more than is the duty of every one.

It were a base and mercenary view of gospel administrations that the truth must not be spoken till we have looked round and assured ourselves that no one's friends will be offended, no one's business be marred, and no one's prospects for office will be hurt. You have never required me to act on such a principle. And yet how often is the utterance of truth checked by such a principle! It is a mistake to think that all the reproach for the truth's sake is to be borne by ministers, who peril their salvation if they shun to declare all the counsel of God. As hearers have a common interest in the truth preached, they have a common responsibility with preachers in holding forth the word of life, and in backing its testimony and bearing its burdens. And to the fact that this society has not been behind in this duty they owe it that they have risen above the flood of contempt that had been poured upon them for the truth's sake.

Still another cause of our union may be found in one of the very things to which many would look for division. Now and then a crisis has come, when it has been a matter of plain duty to meet the errors by which we have been assailed, or some forms of public wickedness, in terms proportioned to the boldness of the aggression. Sometimes, when that has been done, some individuals, who had never entered into the true spirit of our mission, have been shaken off. Their own sense of expediency has been offended. They have felt bound to express their dissent by retiring; and in their retiring, they have taken away just those persons that would have caused divisions. So that in meeting this and that crisis with the boldness which the occasion required, instead of causing dangerous divisions we have secured ourselves against the hatching of future divisions. This operation is now so well understood, from past experience, that no panics exist if an individual at any time finds his sense of expediency violated, and goes where he can have it better satisfied. It is seen that such changes have contributed to make the society homogeneous and strong; for the strength of a

society is sometimes promoted by sifting out, as well as by attracting in.

Such is our apology for that union, that has been so great a scandal to our neighbors.

To appreciate the difficulties experienced in lifting the debt, it must be borne in mind that though we were at peace within, there was a storm without. The abolition excitement had then been in progress several years. And now, the antichristian tendencies of the Garrison and Parker school had just begun to reveal themselves. At the time of my settlement in Lynn, about half of the church were strongly in sympathy with the abolitionists. And because it then had not been clearly revealed whither Garrison was tending, they sympathized with him. And Garrison and his party had their prime seat of operations in Lynn. They claimed a special right to rule here, and took it as an indignity that a Calvinistic church should presume to exist on their ground. And as a part of this church were abolitionists, they expected of course to divide and make short work with it.

Knowing that the abolitionists in the church were, for the most part, sound and reliable as Christians, and ready to revolt against the real

designs of Garrison and company, I applied myself to make evident those designs, by distinguishing between the Christian and antichristian modes of reform. In this, however, as in other instances where party feeling intervened, I rarely mentioned the subject in the pulpit — reserving myself for some providential opportunity to do the work by a single effort. That opportunity came. I was invited to make a discourse at Andover on a public occasion, on just that subject. That discourse was by request published, under the title of “Moral Machinery Simplified.” Its effect on the public mind abroad exceeded all my anticipations. Many, and some for years afterwards, have thanked me for it, as the means of settling their own minds, then in perplexity. *Here* the truth and justice of that discourse were more readily admitted. For the living illustrations in the actual operations of Garrisonism were more abundant, and my having these illustrations before my eyes was probably a cause of the success which I had in the presentation of the subject. But, however much or little that effort did to settle the minds of people here, the actual revelations of an antichristian spirit and design in the reform-

ers soon brought this church to a fixed and united conclusion ; so that, while other churches were rent by abolition strifes, this has never been divided at all on the subject. And because it was not, it awoke the special hostility of the malignants. It is well known that the abolitionism of that party soon took the form of a war waged against the Sabbath, the ministry, the Bible, and civil government ; and, among all the religious societies of this town, ours was singled out for the special object of hostility. It was constantly declared that nothing could be done here for reform while that Calvinistic church existed. Hence it was to be inferred that our principles were in more direct antagonism with theirs than any other, and could offer a more compact resistance. Be that as it may, the main force of that hostility was concentrated upon us. A weekly newspaper was published for many years to sustain that warfare. We were constantly beset with teasings to give Comeouter notices from the pulpit, or to open our house to lectures of the fraternity. At one time there was a great passion for converting or conquering meeting houses. And while that fever raged I was honored with a special visit.

One Saturday evening I was called from my study, and as I entered the parlor I was met by Christopher Robinson, who introduced me to his friend S. S. Foster. Mr. Foster lost no time in making known his business — which was, to make arrangements to occupy my pulpit, for a speech on abolition, on the morrow. Then, in substance, the following dialogue ensued :—

*Foster.* I have special claims on the Congregationalists to aid me in my work ; for I belong to a Congregational church.

*Myself.* What church ?

*Foster.* That in Hanover, New Hampshire.

*Myself.* I have seen it stated in the papers that you were excommunicated from that church.

*Foster.* That is true ; but that does not prevent my belonging to it.

*Myself.* No ; if we understand that you belong to it *as a minus quantity*.

*Foster.* Be that as it may, I belong to the general humanity, and I wish to know if I can have your permission to address the people in your meeting house, on the subject of humanity, the next Sabbath.

*Myself.* To that I can give you a categorical answer — No.

*Foster.* Can I have it a part of the day ?

*Myself.* No, sir.

*Foster.* Can I have the vestry ?

*Myself.* No, sir.

*Foster.* Can I have it in the evening ?

*Myself.* No, sir.

*Foster.* Who are your parish committee ? Since you claim to control the house on the Sabbath, I will try to get it some other day.

*Myself.* I will save you that trouble. For this purpose you may consider me the parish committee. You cannot have it on any day.

*Foster.* Then if I cannot have my rights conceded to me, I must come and take them.

*Myself.* Pray, sir, what are your rights in the case ?

*Foster.* It is my right to address human beings on the subject of slavery and humanity wherever I can find them, and when your congregation shall assemble to-morrow it will be my right and duty to address them.

*Myself.* Very well ; then your duties and mine will clash. While it will be your duty to address the congregation, it will be mine to see that you are as quietly as possible removed from the house.

*Foster.* If this is the way you do business, I will go out into the streets and collect around me the mechanics of Lynn, and the working men, and tell them what a tyrant you are.

*Myself.* I believe that is now very well understood, for it is a threadbare story.

He left, saying that he was somewhat unwell ; but if he should be well enough on the morrow, he should be in his place to claim his rights. As I entered the meeting house on Sabbath morning, I communicated to a few individuals the facts in the case, that they might be ready. He came in and took his seat in a pew at the right hand of the pulpit ; and when I commenced the reading of the hymn for the second singing, he arose and commenced a speech. I requested him to be silent ; he continued. I spoke to him a second time, to require his silence ; but he persisted. Then he was taken in hand by several persons sitting near, who attempted to lead him out of the house. True to his non-resistant principles, he sank down in a passive state, and four bearers divided his four limbs between them for handles, and carried him out. Being resisted in his attempt to return, he made his way across the Common to the Baptist meeting

house, and was there carried out and shut up in a closet till the exercise was finished. While this work was in progress, simultaneous assaults were made by other men of the same party on several other meeting houses in the town ; for this was only a part of a concerted plan to take by storm the meeting houses, the fortresses of slavery.

This incident is given as an illustration of the spirit of the times. Lynn was then the home and centre of the sect that styled themselves Comeouters ; and they claimed this ground as especially their own. They represented this society and its minister as the greatest hinderance to their peculiar work ; and no effort was omitted that could tend to remove the hinderance. Arguments and reproaches were used to the exhaustion of their vocabulary. The grossest libels were published by tongue, pen, and press. My name was in constant requisition to point and inspire the wit of their speakers in all sorts of assemblies ; and to their newspaper, in its weekly issues, it had become as indispensable as the types. If I had any vanity in seeing my name in the papers, it was abundantly gratified ; and not only in Lynn, but all abroad, in the

speeches and newspaper articles put forth by these declaimers, it was used with great freedom and malignity. The result was a great addition to my influence abroad. Thousands who, but for these left-handed friends, would never have heard of me, were led to infer, from the manner in which my name was employed, that I had done a service, in opposition to such men, much more important than I had done ; so that, in fact, these revilers manufactured for me a reputation above my merits.

It is not pleasant to be the song of the drunkard, nor the cant of the Comeouter ; yet I have never suffered an hour's loss of sleep from all that sort of abuse, and have taken no pains for defence of personal reputation when the grossest calumnies were abroad. And after so much experience of the care of Providence in this matter, I shall, if possible, be less moved by the present renewal of the dimications of scurrilous newspapers, only construing the fact that these are so persevered in as a sure proof that the impression made is deep, and will be lasting, and that it has been made *by truth* ; for otherwise it would have been repelled by more worthy means.

But to return from this digression. While the pseudo-reformers were alert against us, and watching to take advantage of every word or act, I had occasion to give public notice of two intended sermons on the subject of temperance, setting forth views in opposition to those of our assailants ; but they, assuming that I should say something that I should be unwilling to have published, incurred the expense of bringing in a professional reporter, to secure a verbatim report of my double sermon. The person employed was no doubt a skilful stenographer, and I would have been glad to have had him succeed. Nor was it a fault of his that he did not ; but my infirmity of rapid utterance, which has baffled all my efforts at control, baffled him also.

The report which he made was a miserable jumble. The editor of the reform newspaper gave, in his next paper, a paragraph of it as a specimen, with the announcement that the whole was to be published in a pamphlet. I informed him, through a note in another paper, that his report was worthless, and that if he wished to publish the sermon as it was, he was welcome to the use of my manuscript. His printer came to me in trouble, and inquired what he should do.

He said the sermons were all in type, and he could not print from the manuscript without a loss of the whole labor of composition. I told him it was a matter of indifference to me. If he chose to save expense, and publish the false report, I was willing, now that the falsity of it was known ; or if he chose to publish from the manuscript, it was at his service. He finally concluded to reset the whole, and print it correctly. So I secured an object which I much desired — the publication of the sermon without expense ; and he incurred, in the reporting and false printing, an extra expense of about forty dollars, which was an entire waste.

This incident is of value only as it illustrates the spirit with which a scandalous press was employed, then as now, as one of the many instruments of assault upon us. Every thing that was said in this pulpit, that could in any way be tortured into a shape convenient for use in that paper, was sure to come back with its tortures the next week ; and that organized hostility was carried on till Providence, by a special hand, interfered, and suffered the true fruits of that reform to be produced in the person of one of its leading agents, in a way that shocked the

public conscience, and exploded the conspiracy of the reformers.

Were it proper here to give the details of those events which constituted the finale of that conspiracy, it would remarkably illustrate the providence of God, causing the wicked to be snared in the work of their own hands. It was the carrying out of the very licentious principles for which they had been contending that generated the explosion that blew them to fragments. Could the story be told, it would seem like romance. Could we give the history of one individual, — the leading figure in the group — describe him as he was while occupying a commanding position — a professor of religion — his transit thence to the leadership of the Comeouters — all the characteristic things said and done while he supplied the material of the war, and prompted its measures; and then could we tell to after ages what the living now know of the events which put an end to his reforming career, and what evils have come upon his house and himself, by plain consequence of his principles and conduct, — it would be a source of important instruction. He must be blind who cannot see the hand of God in such an experience

of one who had borne such a part in a noisy and filthy warfare against all that is sacred in Christianity. And while we remember how often that man has uttered, and caused to be uttered and printed, at his expense, the declaration that nothing could be done for humanity in Lynn till this church could be destroyed, it becomes us especially to recognize a divine hand in that disastrous fall, deploring the ruin of a fellow-man, and standing in awe of the judgments of God, fulfilling those words of Christ respecting his kingdom — “Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken; and on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.” These things have happened for examples, and should be written for admonition. God brings good out of evil; and the fall and ruin of some he makes to contribute to the standing and salvation of others. “I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree; but he passed away, and lo, he was not! yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.”

We have thus far spoken chiefly of our experience in outward condition. For spiritual progress our field has been a peculiarly hard one. What progress we have made has been

against mountains of impediments. By reason of the untoward events in former generations which we have described, the public mind had become broadly and deeply hostile to evangelical truth and godliness. The whole field on which we have stood to cast the good seed has been thick set with tares and cockles. And then an untold amount of prejudice existed against this church, sustained by the memory and traditions of the malign events that have happened to it. Against these impediments we have labored on from year to year, making some progress, and grateful for some progress when we knew that the progress must be slow, and encouraged by evident signs that the prejudice is wearing away. That effort made to pay that hopeless debt did much to command a public respect for this church, and give it an influence with men's consciences which it had not before. It showed a force of moral principle and an attachment to religious truth which the public conscience could not but approve. It has been worth all it cost in the effect it has had on the public mind. Men of other persuasions have been compelled to ask themselves whether, if the case were theirs, they should have paid the

debt, when no individuals were legally bound for it.

But whether the cause be this or that, the effect is manifest. There has been a great and favorable change in the relative position and influence of this society. One person of sound judgment, who has been long conversant with our history, but who is not a member of our society, once remarked to me that the influence and force of Orthodox Congregationalism over the general mind in this place had advanced ten-fold within the last fifteen years. Whether this be an overstatement of the matter or not, it is clear to every observer of both the past and present that the advance has been great. Where is now the congregation in Lynn whose moral force over adjacent minds, hostile as those minds may be to its principles, is greater than that of this?

That the impediments, great as they now are, are decidedly less than they were, is evident to my own consciousness. I can study and preach with vastly more of hope than I could ten or fifteen years ago, for the same labor appears to produce more results. The seed sown does not so much rebound as if falling on a rock.

We have had no very extensive revivals of religion. There have been two seasons that might be called revivals. But most of the conversions and additions to the church have been in individual cases, occurring when there was no general revival. Since my connection with the church, two hundred and forty-six members have been admitted, that is, an average of thirteen a year ; and these are nineteen more members than are now in the church. Of these, one hundred and twenty-two — about half — were admitted by profession. This is a small number considering the time and size of the congregation, but not small considering the tide which has set against us. During this time there have been two offshoots, or colonies, from us ; for that in Swampscot took a sufficient proportion of its members from us to entitle it to that name, though, by reason of its distance from us, it diminished our numbers but very little. And now, reckoning in the worshippers of the three congregations, the number of Congregational worshippers on the ground is four times what it was when we first entered our present meeting house. That probably cannot be said of any other denomination in town.

The most considerable diminution of our numbers was made in the commencement of the Central Church. The individual (Hon. Isaiah Breed) who bore the greatest burden of that enterprise had sustained the heaviest burden in the event of finally extinguishing our debt. He had come to us from another denomination, while we were under our greatest embarrassments, and put his shoulder generously under our burdens. And he could not have manifested a deeper interest, nor acted with a higher generosity, if he had been with us from the first. And while he helped to carry our burdens, it was distinctly understood that one of his motives was, that the way might sooner be opened for the commencement of a new church in his own neighborhood, where all felt that one was so much needed. Accordingly, as soon as we had had breathing time, after our debt was paid, that is, in the fall of 1849, separate worship on the Sabbath was commenced in the locality of the Central Church. On many accounts the fact was regretted by us. We were sorry to lose friends who had wrought with us so effectually. But the expediency of the undertaking was clear to all, and nothing could be said against it.

That society has now had separate worship five years and a half; and during that time the relations between the two societies have been eminently happy—a fact which deserves our grateful acknowledgments.

For the last thirty years, in spite of all the adverse experiences, and the hardness of the field, beset with briars and thorns, the Congregational interest has here made a very encouraging advance. Go back in thought to that meeting of the society held in the time of Mr. Rockwood's ministry, when the motion was made to disband. See what was then the extent of the Congregational interest in all the town, including Swampscot; and then survey the three congregations that have now acquired an independent position here; and you will see that there has been a progress fully rewarding all the faith and patience that have been spent in it, and fully justifying our erecting here our "stone of help," and engraving on it, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

It is instructive to retrace the instances in the history of this church wherein it had a hair's-breadth escape from extinction. There were two instances within the last twenty years: that

when the extent of the debt was first realized, and the question of a failure was seriously debated, and that when life depended on what was seemingly impossible — our paying the whole debt at once. We have also found one such crisis in Mr. Rockwood's ministry. There was another at the time of the dismissal of Mr. Hurd ; and at the dismissal of Mr. Thacher, the council found occasion to exhort the church not to die, in terms which indicated that it was near death. There was another when the question of life turned on Dr. Harris declining a call. But the most discouraging of all was when, under the ministry of Mr. Parsons, one hundred and eight persons at once certificated from the society, and when the church was reduced to five male members. In all those cases, the hand of God preserving the church was clear to be seen. Most pertinent to our case are those words of the Psalmist, "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side when men rose up against us, then had they swallowed us up quick."

It is natural, before we close these remarks, to compare the type of religion now in vogue here with what prevailed in the first generations of Lynn. With the present prevailing sect in

Lynn, the pulpits are constantly ringing with denunciations of the horrible Calvinistic doctrines — such as the doctrine of election, and of the saints' perseverance, and the like. These plain truths of the Bible are held up to popular odium, as demoralizing and soul-destroying ; and the current representation here is, that any thing but Arminianism, if it do not entirely exclude Christian character, must allow of only a stinted growth of it. Now, let us compare the type of Christian character which here abounds under Arminian auspices with what Calvinism produced in Whiting and Cobbett, and the like of them, under their ministry. Those so called horrible doctrines, election and perseverance, which are now declared to have such a licentious tendency, were among the prime elements of their spiritual life ; and with such food and drink, such strong meat, they attained vigor and stature. If their doctrines were so much the worse, and yours so much the better, it were well to show it in the superior holiness of life attained.

Now recall the description given by contemporary historians of the first pastors of this church. What is said of Whiting, whom they called, by way of eminence, "the man of God"? — who,

though skilful in doctrine, was said to have done the things that are to be taught better than he taught the things which are to be done; whose meekness of wisdom so outshone his rich attainments in sacred learning that his face, the image of his mind, was ever unclouded with storms of passion; whose daily walk with God was manifest to his people, and a subject of common remark and admiration; who had rare skill and success in speaking a word in season to the wicked. Recall also what is said of his colleague, Cobbett; how, as a prince, he had power with God in prayer; what remarkable answers to prayer he obtained; how he is said to have been always pulling at that golden chain which ties the tongue of man to the ear of God. Yea, read his remarkable treatise on prayer, which on every page reveals a mind richly freighted with the treasures of experience in prayer, and in the applications of Scripture to it, and the equal of which treatise on that subject has not been produced from that day to this. Read the testimony of historians, who say that the country so owed its preservation to his prayers that in his death it lost its chariots and horsemen. Yea, behold those two men in their associate

labors and communings, as exemplifying the love of the Spirit. The historian says, "Great was the love that sweetened the labors and whole conversation and vicinity of these fellow-laborers—the rays with which they illumined the house of God sweetly united. They were almost every day together, and thought it a long day if they were not. And these two angelic men seemed willing to give one another as little jostle as the angels upon Jacob's ladder, while one was ascending and the other descending." Such was the piety of those ministers. And without resorting to the rule, "Like people like priest," we learn enough respecting their people to know that they were congenial spirits with them, and held them in high esteem for their eminent godliness.

Now, such was the type of the piety that ruled in the persons of these lovers and preachers of these horrible doctrines of Calvinism. The tree is known by its fruits. And if you can show no better fruits than these, the conclusion is, that your trees are no better. After your most glowing declamation against the doctrines of grace, we ask the liberty of only one question—and that is, Where are your facts? Where are your

results corresponding to the claimed superiority of your principles? We grant that those men were eminent, and above the average products of our system, now put forth with too little energy. And so is the present piety of Lynn Methodism above the average products of its system. This is the paradise of that system, and until it can show that it has made an advance on the piety existing on the same ground two centuries before, it may as well be silent as to the horrible doctrines held by those men of God. For if, after all the boasts made of having more reasonable and scriptural doctrines, and all that is said of the ruinous tendency of the doctrines of the cross, you have brought in, instead of the full-souled and manly piety and martyr spirit of the Puritans, a weak and sickly product, the improvement is not to be spoken of.

Our civil and social interests have incurred great danger, through the departure of so many from the original and Puritan faith. All history, Mr. Bancroft being judge, shows Calvinism to be the great generator and preserver of free institutions. And in the experience of our country, the increase of radicalism, vice, and crime, which is now a source of alarm, has

kept pace with the people's departures from Calvinism. Our only safety lies in a return to the patriotism, the love of order and freedom, which conducted us through the war for independence. But we cannot rear the fruit without the tree, nor secure the patriotism without recalling the Calvinism that produced it, nor save the coming generations from impending ruin, without a broad and earnest inculcation of the doctrines of the cross. If there be such a difference in the civil and social products of the different faiths, we have — to say nothing of the immortal interests imperilled — great reason to dread the civil consequences of the prevalent latitudinarian and licentious views of religion. And one ground of hope for Lynn is, that for the last quarter of a century, Calvinism in it has several times doubled its amount of life and influence.

## APPENDIX.

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WE requested Mr. Boice, consulting the records of the society of Friends, to furnish us in detail all the instances in which that society suffered any thing like persecution from ours. And he has done it. But we give in a condensed form the results of the list which he has furnished. We intended to spread out all the details; but the work has filled so much more space than we had expected, that we have crowded out not a little of our own material that we intended to insert. All the ends of the publication of this list will be answered by this condensation of the facts.

It does not appear that any acts of persecution took place, except that of distraint of goods, and fines for refusing military service. Most of the cases of distraint of goods are dated in the latter part of Mr. Shepard's ministry. None of them bear date earlier than 1697, and none later than 1717. So they all come within the space of twenty years. A small portion of them were for military fines; the rest to support the ministry, and pay expenses on the meeting house. The aggregate sum of the value of all goods distrained for those purposes through those twenty years is one hundred and twelve pounds eighteen shillings. The instances specified of persons having goods distrained are fifty-three; but the number must somewhat exceed this, as in some cases et ceteras are put down. Such is the substance of the paper referred to.

The explanation of the causes of that action, so far as it con

cerns the support of the ministry, we have given in full. So far as it relates to military fines, we think that, if this were all that the Friends paid for their defence from Indian wars, so rife in those days, they were let off easy; for then the military work was no children's play. To this their reply would be, that the non-resistant principles of the Quakers were their defence. This is a matter of mere assumption and much question, to say the least. But if it were so touching Quakers living in separate communities, where their non-resistant principles could be known to the Indians, and the Romish priests who guided their operations, and who would be sure to hate them none the less for their Quakerism, it could not be so with Quakers living in communities with the Puritans undistinguished. If the settlement in Lynn, as it then stood, had come under a sudden assault and massacre by the Indians, by what process could the tomahawk have distinguished and passed by the Quaker families? And this community of exposure to the tomahawk by a promiscuous residence with the Puritans, chosen by the Quakers against the desire of the others, was a fact for which only themselves were responsible. They had chosen a residence where all were exposed to a common danger, but were not forced to go forth in person for wars of defence; and it was no hardship that, to so small an extent, their money was taken for the common purposes, any more than it now is that they pay taxes to the common purposes of government, one of which purposes is that of national military defence. In other words, the principle on which military fines were collected from Quakers then was the same as that on which Quakers now pay taxes to the government; and this is not regarded as a matter of persecution.











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