

THE DUTY OF A MINISTER OF JESUS
CHRIST ILLUSTRATED.

A

S E R M O N,

PREACHED AT THE

INSTALLATION

OF THE

Reverend JOHN H. STEPHENS,

TO THE MINISTERIAL OFFICE,

In the Church in Stoneham,

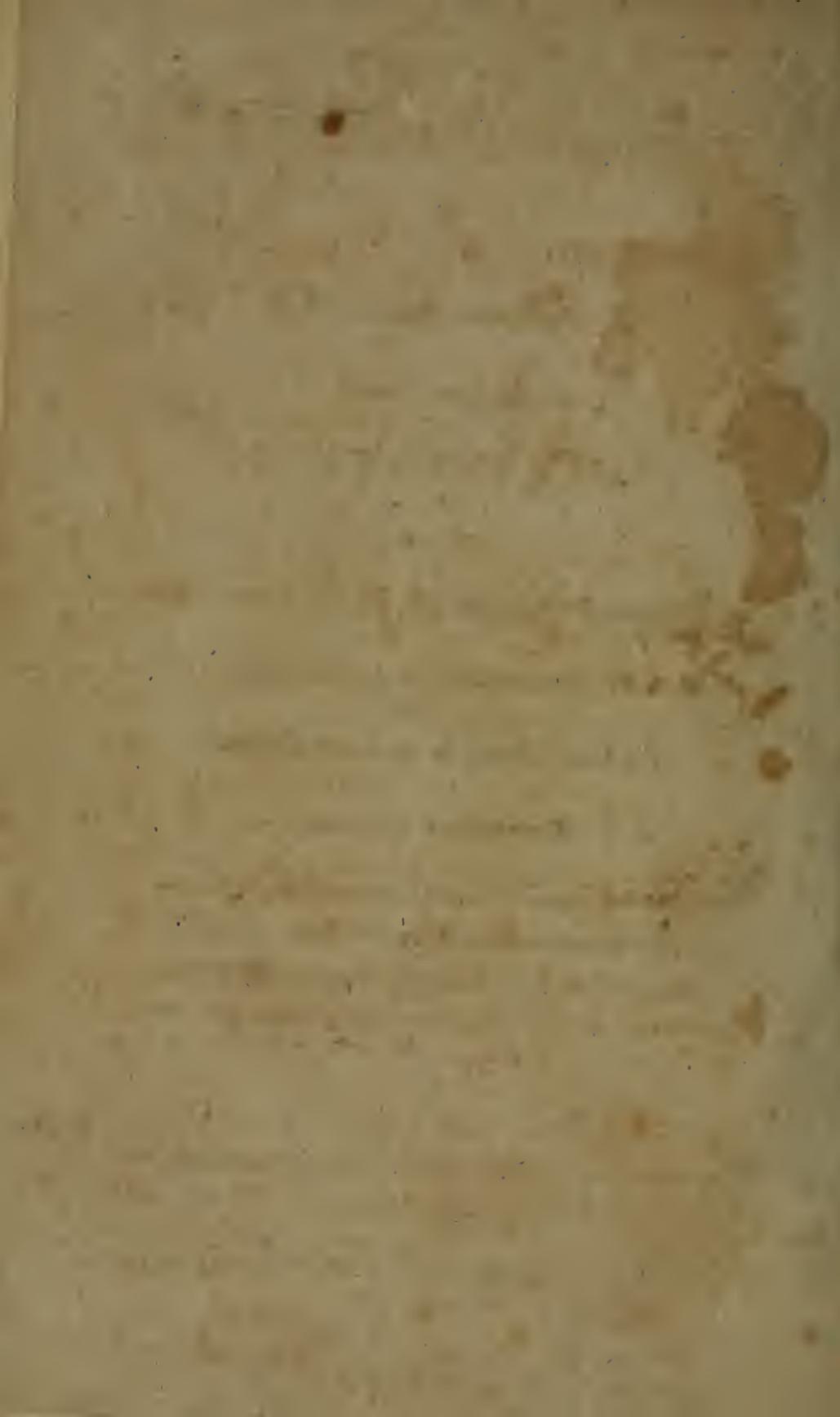
SEPTEMBER 11, 1795.

By EBENEZER BRADFORD, *A. M.*
Pastor of the first Church of Christ in ROWLEY.

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A N

INSTALLATION SERMON.

1 CORINTHIANS ix. 22.

I AM MADE ALL THINGS TO ALL MEN, THAT I MIGHT BY ALL MEANS SAVE SOME.

Men, Brethren and Fathers,

THE example of the great Apostle to the Gentiles, must be admitted by all as worthy of imitation. If so, what subject can be more suited to the present, solemn and joyful occasion, than that which is contained in our text.—I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. The holy Apostle, in the context, said, For though I be free from all men—that is, in bondage to none—yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. How condescending and benevolent is this! He farther said, And unto the Jews, I became as a Jew—that is to say, in circumstantial matters—that I might gain the Jews. To them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law. To them that are without law—that is to say, the Gentiles, as without law—(being not without law to God, but under the law of Christ) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: And then introduces

introduces the words of our text—*I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.*

THE Doctrine naturally arising from these words, is—That a good minister of Jesus Christ will, so far as it is lawful, cheerfully become all things to all men, that he may by all means save some.

IN illustrating this doctrine, we will in the

FIRST PLACE, shew what is implied in a Minister of Jesus Christ's becoming all things to all men.

II. TAKE notice of some of the motives which induce the faithful Ministers of the gospel to adopt this line of conduct.

III. CLOSE the subject with several inferences, and such addresses as are usual on occasions like the present.

My dear Brethren—That I might, before your eyes, exemplify the character which I have now undertaken to illustrate, permit me to ask you to bear your friend and brother upon your hearts before the throne of grace ; and plead him who heareth prayer, that he may discern the things which differ, and upon this occasion speak as a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.

ACCORDING to the method proposed, we are in the *first place*, to shew what is implied in a Minister of Jesus Christ's becoming all things to all men.

IN illustrating this idea, we would observe,

I. THAT it is implied in a Minister of Jesus Christ becoming all things to all men, that he accommodates himself to the various capacities of all men. He will not treat children as men, and men as children—the

ignorant

ignorant as wise, and the wise as ignorant. He will not treat those of weak and feeble powers as those of the most vigorous and shining abilities—but accommodate himself to the different capacities of those to whom he has the honour to bear the all-important messages of wisdom and grace. In all things taking great care to make himself clearly understood. He is by no means, like one of those foppish mortals, whose highest ambition is, by high sounding words, and well turned periods, destitute of ideas, to make his audience stare. On the one hand, he is careful not to shoot over the heads of the young and the weak; but entertain them with the first and the plainest principles of the gospel; for he finds, as the great Apostle did, that he must speak unto them as babes, and not men. On the other hand, he feels himself bound to accommodate himself to those of larger and more improved capacities; and consequently leaving the first principles of the doctrine of Christ—such as laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith towards God; such as the doctrine of baptisms, and laying on of hands; and of the resurrection from the dead, and of eternal judgment. He goes on unto perfection; that is to say, he launches out into the broad ocean of divinity, and entertains his more improved hearers, with things which are to them new and sublime. In his conduct to the weak, he imitates his divine Lord and Master, who said unto his disciples, “I have many things to say unto you, but ye are not yet

yet able to bear them. He imitates the great Apostle to the Gentiles, who fed babes with milk, and men with meat.

IN this connection permit us to observe, that although we are no enemies to metaphysical disquisitions on proper occasions, yet we must bear our testimony against composing sermons for common audiences in a refined and metaphysical way and manner. Our reasons for this are, because common audiences do not understand the terms made use of by such sermonizers; and of course such sermons are to them in an unknown tongue. Let us hear what the Apostle says upon this subject—"I thank God, I speak with tongues more than you all; yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding (that by my voice I might teach others also) than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue."

2. IN a Minister of Jesus Christ's becoming all things to all men, it is implied, that he adapts himself to the moral character of all men. That there is among men a diversity of moral character, is exceedingly evident both from scripture and observation.

THEY who attend to these mediums of information, will soon discover, that among their fellow creatures there are those who are penitent, and those who are impenitent; those who are believers, and those who are unbelievers; those who are righteous, and those who are unrighteous. They will be fully convinced that among men, there are such persons as in scripture language are styled

saints

faints, and such as are stiled sinners—such as the clean, and such as the unclean—such as serve God, and such as serve him not. They will discern a difference in the characters of the wicked, and in the characters of the good. Some of the wicked are more stupid and heaven daring than others; some of the good are more devout and unshaken in their faith than others. Some sinners are convinced of their iniquities, and of course are in great distress for their souls—others are in a state of ignorance and security. Some saints have obtained a full assurance of hope, and go on their way rejoicing—others are exercised with fears and doubts, and go on their way trembling.

Now, for a Minister of Jesus Christ to become *all things to all men*, it is implied, that he accommodates himself to the various moral characters of all men. In doing this, he will rightly divide the word, and give a portion unto every man, according to his moral character, in due season. To the unawakened, he will administer all suitable means of conviction; he will lay hold on his reason and conscience, and paint his abominable character in such language, that it will be almost impossible for him not to see himself a sinner—he will arrange in his view all the artillery of heaven, and point out the effects of its being discharged against his naked, his guilty soul. To the convinced, he will hold up the gospel of Jesus Christ, in all its divine pomp and un sullied glory, and urge home upon his conscience, the duties of immediate repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; in the ears of such an

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one, he will found the melting invitations of the Father, the Son and Holy Ghost, to lay hold on eternal life. To those who are despairing of salvation, on the account of the greatness of their sins—he will say, remember the riches of divine grace to Mary Magdeline, out of whom God cast seven devils—and recollect the goodness and mercy of God to a persecuting Saul, who had breathed out the language of havoc and destruction against the church, and blasphemy against the dear Redeemer.—He will call up their attention to the rich and sovereign displays of mercy, made to a Manasseh, who had filled Jerusalem with innocent blood—and to some of those who had embrued their hands in the blood of an incarnate God.—He will talk to them of the infinite merit of the blood of Christ to cleanse the vilest of the vile, from all unrighteousness; and so save them from sinking in despair, under a sight of the greatness of their sins.—He will lead them to bow down upon the bended knees of their souls, in the deepest humiliation, before the Majesty of all worlds, and say, pardon mine iniquity, O God, for it is great. To the strong, he will say, let him that thinketh that he standeth, take heed, lest he fall. To the weak in faith, he will say, look unto Christ, for by his strengthening you, you will be enabled to do all things, To the disobedient, such a minister of Christ will not fail of denouncing all the curses of the law—all the terrors of Mount Sinai. Hell itself will be laid open—will be presented without a covering, before their eyes; for knowing the terrors of the Lord, he will endeavour to persuade

persuade men thereby to attend to the truth. To the obedient, he will pronounce all the blessings of the new covenant; and, as far as in him lies, will unfold the world of glory, with all its astonishing excellencies to their anxious and waiting souls.

IN one word—in a Minister's being made all things to all men, he will be made a son of thunder unto the sinner of every denomination, and a son of consolation to the faint of every denomination. Thus do the faithful Ministers of Jesus Christ become all things to all men, by accommodating themselves to the moral characters of all men, and rightly dividing unto them, severally, the word of God in due season.

3. IT is implied, in a Minister of Jesus Christ's becoming all things to all men, that he accommodates himself to the various natural, moral and political situations of all men.

AMONG our fellow-creatures, we find some in a state of affluence, and others in a state of poverty and wretchedness; some in a state of health, and others in a state of disease, languor and almost death; some we find are triumphing in all the joys of a rational liberty; others sinking under the galling chains of the most abject and deplorable slavery; some are attacked with the fiery darts of the great adversary of souls, and sinking in despair—while others are enjoying the triumph of faith, and swimming down the tide of time with tranquil and placid spirits, as it were uninterrupted by the great adversary of souls. Some are laborious and

diligent, forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forward to the things which are before, and pressing to the mark of the prize of their high calling, which is in Christ Jesus their Lord—while others are backsliding, slothful and inattentive to the great things which concern their peace. Some are rioting in the worldly glory of riches, splendor and power; while others, destitute of both money and power, stand at a distance and sigh for these earthly toys. Some are heartily engaged in the cause of God—others are as heartily engaged in the cause of the Devil. Some are doing all in their power to support the truth of christianity, and propagate real religion among their fellow-creatures—others are as earnestly engaged to overturn the scriptures as the word of the living God; and propagate those things which are error and delusion. Some are in the strait and narrow way that leadeth to life eternal—others are in the broad road that leadeth to everlasting destruction. Of men in all offices—some inherit the spirit of their stations, and are faithful, and others wear the contrary characters. Now it is exceedingly evident, that if a minister of Jesus Christ would be made all things to all men, he must accommodate himself to the various situations of all men, with whom he has any thing to do; or he never can become all things to all men.

4. IT is implied in a minister of Jesus Christ's becoming all things to all men—that, so far as it is lawful, he complies with the various fashions of this world,
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and the various ceremonies of the different sects and denomination of christians. Among men there are many fashions, which in themselves are quite harmless. And among religious communities, there are several ceremonies which are purely circumstantial. The man, therefore, *who is made all things to all men*, will readily comply with the common and innocent fashions of the day in which he lives—His dress and manner of living will be such as is common for ministers where he dwells—He will be far from any peculiar fondness for any particular cut for his coat, or form for his hat—which may argue singularity of sentiment and bigotry of mind—but generously comply with the most decent and common modes of dress and manner of living among the people where God has cast his lot in life.

WITH respect to the diversity of circumstantial ceremonies, among christians, he will adopt the same line of conduct, and make it no term of communion at times to pray by form or extempore—to partake of the Lord's Supper kneeling or sitting—to preach by notes or without them—to sing new tunes or old ones—to sing in conjunction with instrumental music or without it—and ten thousand other circumstances of as little importance. He will feel in some measure as Paul did, when he said, *If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth.*

I AM not insensible, my brethren, that I shall be told, that the Apostle says, to the church at Rome, *be ye not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing*

renewing of your mind, that ye might prove what is that good and acceptable, and perfect will of God. How is this consistent with what you have said, concerning what you call the innocent compliance with the fashions of the world, and what you call circumstantial ceremonies, practised by the various sects and denominations of christians? We answer, *by conformity to this world*, which the Apostle forbids, we are to understand, a conformity in heart and not in dress, and ceremony purely circumstantial; as is evident, by his exhorting to them to be transformed by the renewing of their minds. We conclude therefore, both from the example and precept of the great Apostle to the Gentiles, that a faithful Minister of Jesus, will become all things to all men, by complying with the innocent modes of dress, and circumstantial ceremonies in religion, practised among the christians, where God has cast his lot.

5. It is implied in a Minister's being made all things to all men, that he supports the character of a teacher, a counsellor, pastor and pattern, to the people where God sends him.

As a teacher, his work will be exceedingly laborious; for he must not shun to declare the whole counsel of God to his hearers; if he does, he will not be clear from the blood of all men. It cannot be reasonably expected, that we should on this occasion enter into a particular enumeration of all those great and sublime doctrines. Such a Minister will, as far as he has opportunity, unfold to the minds of his dear people. We shall therefore, content ourselves, with
 mentioning

mentioning the outlines of that system of theology contained in the scriptures of divine truth.

THE first and most evident sentiment contained in the scriptures is, that in fact there is one God, existing in three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.—The evidences of this fact, and the character of this glorious being, will be subjects, on which the faithful preacher will dwell with great delight.

2. He will spare no pains to lay before the minds of his hearers, both their characters and situations, as they are by nature; in doing which, he will wisely shun the too common language of flattery, and mode of daubing with untempered mortar. He will feel himself impelled by the command of God—“Son of man cause Jerusalem to know her abominations”—not to deal deceitfully with his hearers, on a subject of such vast importance to their precious souls. With all his might, he will labour to point out to them, the nature of their sin and guilt, as well as the danger of their situation, while out of Christ.

3. As a teacher, such a Minister will unfold to the minds of his hearers, the gospel plan of salvation, which is in very deed, the wisdom of God, and the power of God to all them that believe.

HERE permit me to observe, he will be very particular in his descriptions of the being, the character, offices and work of the Mediator—of the gospel invitations, commands, promises and threatenings—of the several operations of the spirit of God—of the various

views

views of the mind, and exercises of the heart, which constitute the new creature—of the good words and works, in which all the followers of Christ cheerfully and perpetually abound. He will lay before his hearers, the great doctrines of the resurrection from the dead—and the general judgment.—He will shew, that the finally impenitent, must suffer the vengeance of eternal fire, in that world of horror and despair, prepared for the ungodly of all descriptions.—He will unfold to the view of believers, the glory of the world of God, as their proper inheritance, and present them with palms of honour and crowns of life, which fade not away.—As a counsellor, he will always be ready to advise the unawakened and secure sinner, to attend to his guilt, his danger, and his duty.—He will advise the convinced sinner, immediately to exercise repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.—He will cheerfully attend to every case of conscience, and administer good and wholesome doctrines upon each.—The converted he will counsel to enter into covenant with God and his people, and walk in all his commandments and ordinances, blameless.—He will enter into the knowledge of the particular obligations of men, to God and man, and advise all to comply with them.—He will in a special manner, study church discipline, and be ready to administer to the churches of his dear Lord and master, suitable advice, in all cases of difficulty.—As a pastor, he will be ready to administer the seals of the covenant to all properly qualified persons, and maintain the estab-

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lished discipline of the house of God.—As a pattern, he will be careful to believe, and practise, nothing in religion, but what is founded on the scriptures of divine truth.—He will feel and obey that sacred command—“ Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. The great duties, which in his discourses, he urges upon others, he will in his life exemplify before all men ; he will not only preach, but practise, every branch of the christian religion.

PERMIT me to close this description, in the poetic language of the ingenious Mr. COWPER, in which he draws the contrast between a true and false Minister.—

“ I VENERATE the man whose heart is warm,
 Whose hands are pure, whose doctrine and whose life,
 Coincident, exhibit lucid proof,
 That he is honest in the sacred cause.
 To such I render more than mere respect,
 Whose actions say, that they respect themselves.
 But, loose in morals, and in manners vain,
 From such Apostle's, *O ye mitred heads !*
 Preserve the church, and lay not careless hands
 On skulls, that cannot teach and will not learn.
 Would I describe a preacher, such as Paul,
 Were he on earth, would hear, approve and own,
 Paul should himself direct me.—I would trace
 His master strokes, and draw from his design :
 I would express him simple, grave, sincere ;
 In doctrine uncorrupt, in language plain ;
 And plain in manner. Decent, solemn, chaste,
 And natural in gestures. Much impress'd
 Himself, and conscious of his awful charge,

And

And anxious, mainly, that the flock he feeds
 May feel it too. Affectionate in look,
 And tender in address—as well becomes
 A messenger of grace to guilty men.
 Behold the picture! Is it like—Like whom?
 The things that mount the rostrum with a skip,
 And then skip down again.”—*Alas! Alas!*

THE *second general Head* of this discourse was to take notice of some of those motives, which induce the faithful Ministers of the gospel to *become all things to all men, that they might by all means save some.*

THE first motive to induce a faithful Minister of the gospel to adopt this laborious and self-denied line of conduct is, the glory of God. The Apostle says, this I do for the gospel's sake, that is to say, for the glory of God.

2. ANOTHER motive inducing the Ministers of the gospel, to that course of conduct we have described, is the good of mankind. “I am made all things to all men, that by all means I might save some,” said the Apostle. The salvation of some of the children of men, was an object of so great importance, in the Apostle's view, that he would willingly be “Made all things to all men, that he might by all means save some.”

3. SUCH a Minister's own salvation induces him to adopt this mode of proceeding. “This I do,” said the Apostle, “for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.”

THUS the glory of God, which is promoted by the honour of the gospel--the salvation of some of the hu-
 man

man race, together with the salvation of such a Minister's own soul—all powerfully operate to induce him to become all things to all men, that by all means he might save some.

FROM the subject thus illustrated, we will now draw a few inferences by way of

IMPROVEMENT.

1. FROM what hath been said, upon this subject, we may learn the great importance of a Minister of Jesus Christ's understanding human nature. Unless this should be his case, it will be impossible for him to *become all things to all men, that he might by all means save some.*

2. IT is exceedingly evident from the spirit of this subject, that a Minister of Jesus Christ ought to have an extensive and accurate acquaintance with the Christian religion, with true divinity.

3. FROM this subject we may see the importance of a Minister of Jesus Christ's being a good man. Without goodness of heart, no man could ever become all things to all men, for this purpose, that he might by all means gain some over to true religion and unfeigned piety.

4. WE may learn, that a Minister of Jesus Christ ought to be a man possessed not only with good natural powers and faculties, but improved by much study: Weak minds and unimproved faculties will always fall exceeding short of the mark of a faithful Minister of Christ:

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5. WE may learn that a Minister of Christ ought to be a man of great self-denial, as well as resolution and perseverance, or he will never become all things to all men, that he might by all means save some.

6. FROM what hath been said, we may learn, that a people ought to esteem, admire and attend to a Minister of Christ, who evidently condescends to become all things to all men, that he might by all means save some of their precious immortal souls.

WE shall now close the subject with such addresses as are usual on occasions like the present. And,

1st. PERMIT me to address a few words to my Reverend Fathers and Brethren in the Ministry.

Reverend, holy and beloved, Permit your unworthy friend and brother, to call upon you and himself, on this occasion, solemnly to examine whether you have become all things to all men, since you have engaged in the work of the ministry, for the express purpose of saving some of the poor ruined souls, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers?

HAVE you carefully adapted yourselves to the various capacities, moral characters and situations of your hearers? Have you complied with the innocent circumstantial fashions and religious ceremonies of the people where God has cast your lot? Have you acted well your parts as teachers, as counsellors, as pastors, and as patterns to the people of your various charges? Have you in very deed become all things to all men, that by all means you might save some. If you have
done

done these things, my fathers and brethren, you have undoubtedly imitated the great Apostle to the Gentiles; yea, you have imitated your divine Lord and Master; and are, through grace, worthy of that divine elogium, which by and by will be pronounced on each of you, *Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things—I will make thee ruler over many things—enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.* But if, on the contrary, you have been of a proud, haughty and bigotted spirit; if you have refused to accommodate yourselves to the different capacities of your hearers. If you have mixed and confounded moral characters, with each other, making little or no difference in your discourses between the clean & the unclean; between him that serveth God & him that serveth him not. If you have refused to study, and so far as is innocent and convenient, to comply with circumstantial matters, which have a tendency to ingratiate you into the favour of your people. If you have shunned to declare the whole counsel of God; if you have refused to administer the ordinances of God's house, and act well your parts as pastors of your several flocks; if you have been slothful in counselling, and backward in fitting good examples before your dear hearers. In one word, if you have neglected to become all things to all men, you have never felt the importance of promoting God's glory, the welfare of perishing sinners, yea, the worth of your own souls. Let us look into our own conduct, my fathers and brethren, and wherein we have been

been

been deficient in our duty, in *becoming all things to all men*, let us confess it before God, and plead his forgiveness. May God grant the richest effusions of his grace and love to you all. *Amen.*

OUR next address is due to the Pastor elect.

Reverend and dear Brother, You are about to be set over this dear church and people, with a particular and solemn charge to become all things to them all, that by all means you might save some of their precious souls. You have heard what is implied in this great duty. Are you now ready, in the most sincere and solemn manner, to dedicate yourself afresh unto the Lord, and unto the great work where unto you have been called? Providence has cast your lot among a people who evidently need such a Minister. We devoutly bless the God of all grace, that he has led this church and people, to make choice of you for their Minister; and that he has also led you to comply with their invitation.

WE would now earnestly call upon you, by the grace of God, firmly to resolve, that you will, agreeable to the true intent and meaning of our text, become all things to this people, that you might by all means save some of their perishing souls. O Brother! study their various capacities, characters and situations, and adapt yourself to the same; that you might glorify God, save yourself, and them that hear you. Be faithful as a teacher, counsellor, pastor, friend and pattern to this people.

people. Be careful, that you clear your garments of the blood of all men : For this purpose, may your mind be full of light, your heart full of love, and your life full of acts of righteousness—of good works.

Dear Brother, We bid you God's speed. Go and play the man—for your God, your people, and your own soul.

WE would now address the church and people of God in this place.

Men and brethren, It is unexpectedly, and we assure you, with no small pleasure, that we find you, who so lately were in a state of division and animosity, are now in such a state of peace and unanimity, as harmoniously to give this, our dear brother, a call to settle among you, in the work of the gospel ministry. You have this day heard his duty delineated; and if it be a fact, that it is his duty, to become all things to you; it must be also true, that it is your duty, to become all things to him. For the want of this christian condescension and love, many a church and people have been deprived of a preached gospel. The great God has looked down upon your former conduct towards your Ministers, and judged between you and them; what this judgment is, we pretend not to say; it will be unfolded, when the secrets of all men shall be laid before the universe. His eye is now upon you, and he knows what your conduct will be toward him, whom you have this day called to be your Minister. I believe

lieve it is the earnest and sincere prayer of this venerable council, as well as the prayer of the people of God in general, that the spirit of the gospel may be diffused throughout this town—that you and your Minister may have the spirit and temper of the followers of the Lamb of God.

BRETHREN, we most cordially bid you God's speed.

ONE word to this large audience and we have done.

IF it be the duty of the Ministers of Christ, to become all things to all men, that they might by all means save some, it must be your duty, with patience, humility and repentance, to hear and obey their messages from the God of love.

A M E N.

THE CHARGE,

GIVEN BY

The Reverend Mr. PRENTISS, of Reading.

WHATEVER office any man sustains, whether in church or state, it is of high importance that he be faithful therein. It is especially important, that christian Ministers be faithful in the discharge of the duties of their holy function, because the glory of God, the interest of Christ's kingdom, the temporal welfare of the people among whom they labour, and the eternal happiness of their own souls and of the souls of their flock, are all intimately concerned herein. St. Paul earnestly exhorted, and solemnly charged Timothy and Titus, young Ministers of Christ, to be faithful.

As you, Mr. JOHN HATHWAY STEVENS, have been invited, by the Church and People of this town, to the Pastoral office among them, and have accepted their invitation; we, the Elders, called to assist, on this occasion, being invested with gospel authority heretofore, do now, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, introduce you to the Pastoral office in this place, and commit to your ministerial charge, this flock and people
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of God. And we solemnly charge you, before God and this assembly, to be faithful, in this office, faithful to God, to Jesus Christ, to your own souls and to the souls of this people, so that you may not be *a castaway* yourself, and that *the blood of their souls may not be required at your hands.*

APPLY yourself, therefore, diligently to reading, meditation and prayer. *Study the holy scriptures,* that you may be able rightly to divide the word of truth, and to preach it consistently. *Preach the word,* the pure word of God, unadulterated by the glosses of fallible men. *Renounce the hidden things of dishonesty, and do not walk in craftiness, or handle the word of God deceitfully, but, by manifestation of the truth, commend yourself to every man's conscience, in the sight of God. Teach not, for doctrines of God, the sentiments or commandments of men. Call no man on earth, Master: One, in Heaven, is your Master, even Christ.* Let the bible, prayerfully studied, be your guide. *Preach not yourself, but Christ Jesus the Lord.* Preach his doctrines, precepts and example. Thus, *you will deliver sound doctrine, which cannot be condemned.*

Exhort, admonish, and reprove, with all patience and long-suffering. Strive to enlighten, convince and persuade your hearers. Let not your discourses be loose; incoherent, empty harrangues; but laboured, sentimental and consistent, calculated to profit, to instruct the mind, and to mend the heart.

WE exhort you to take heed to yourself, as well as to your doctrine, to your own heart and life, that your people may have no evil thing to say of you. Let your practise correspond with your preaching. Walk before them in the way of holiness. *Be an example to the flock, in conversation, in spirit, in piety, faith, purity and charity.* Be a man of prayer. Pray to your Lord, to guide and assist you, and to make you successful. Pray with and for your people. Bear them upon your heart, in all your private addresses to the throne of grace. If you love them, you will pray for them: if you pray for them, you will love them. Administer the holy ordinances to proper subjects, making a difference between the holy and unclean. Rule well in the house of God, *doing nothing by partiality.* Do not lord it over God's heritage. *You have no dominion over the faith of others, but are to be a helper of their joy.*

ZEAL, in so good a cause, is becoming. But let your zeal be always directed by wisdom, and tempered by prudence. Let it be the flame of love, but not a consuming fire. Avoid an uncharitable, censorious conduct, which is not the spirit of Christ or consonant with the gospel. This has injured the characters and prevented the usefulness of many Ministers. The gospel breathes love; and its Ministers, above all others, should be charitable and candid.

REMEMBER, Sir, you are set as a watchman in this place, and that you watch for their souls, as one that must give an account to your Lord. Be thou a faith-

ful watchman. *Warn the wicked, that he turn from his wickedness, and live. Warn the righteous, that he turn not from his righteousness, and die. Warn every man, and teach every man, in all wisdom, that you may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.* Finally, we charge you, to feed this flock of God, with knowledge and understanding. *Feed Christ's sheep and lambs.* Be thou a prudent shepherd, a diligent labourer, a faithful ambassador, an upright steward. a good minister, and a bright star, to direct souls to Christ.

ALTHOUGH your work is great and arduous, yet it is honourable. It is the service of God; and the Son of God hath put honour upon it, for he hath wrought in it. *He came, not to be ministered unto, but to minister.* And he hath said, *Lo, I am with you always. My grace is sufficient for you.* Although the ministerial office is attended with peculiar pains and trials, yet it has its comforts and advantages. You, Sir, have a fair opportunity, like your benevolent Lord, to do good, to save souls from death. And what can be more joyous to the heart of a good man, than to be a spiritual father to a numerous offspring of immortal children, to see them walking in the truth, to enjoy their affection, and to be blessed with the hope, that they will be his crown of rejoicing, in the day of the Lord? You serve a good master; and if you keep this charge, and are faithful, you will not lose your reward; you will receive a crown of life. Be of good courage, and the Lord be with thee.

Brethren

Brethren of this Church and Congregation, You have chosen this man to be your Minister. At your request he is, this day, regularly inducted to the pastoral office among you. You have heard the solemn charge which he has received. We now exhort and charge you, in the name of the Lord, to treat him with all the kindness and respect which are due to the servant of the Lord, so long as he shall act agreeable to this sacred character. Pray for him. Attend upon his ministry. Regard the word of the Lord from his mouth. Unite your exertions with his labours, to promote religion, and build up the Redeemer's kingdom in this place. Cultivate peace and love, harmony and good order, among yourselves, that the God of love and peace may dwell with you and bless you. Should you, hereafter, suppose (which God forbid) that your pastor, by any mal-conduct, shall have forfeited his ministerial character, still treat him with justice and candor, and let his conduct be fairly examined and impartially tried before he is condemned. If you should unjustly abuse and injure him, Christ will consider it as an injury offered to himself. We hope better things. We wish and pray, that you may long rejoice in his light, and that he may rejoice in your esteem and affection; that you may be mutually happy together in this world, and finally meet and rejoice together in the kingdom of Heaven. AMEN.

T H E

RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP,

B Y

The Reverend AARON GREEN, of MALDEN.

THE different religions which have obtained in the world, have usually been distinguished by some peculiar mark, name or character.

OUR blessed Lord and Master would have his disciples known by their mutual love, charity and endeared friendship. *A new commandment, says he, I give unto you, that ye love one another. By this, shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another.* Happy would it have been for the christian world, had his followers never have deviated from this excellent rule. But, alas! how often have they degenerated from that temper, which the gospel of Christ ever recommends, and of which he sat so amiable an example, into quite the opposite disposition.

OUR illustrious fathers severely felt the rage of a bitter and intolerant spirit. Persecuted at home, they sought an asylum abroad. And the same protecting Providence, which lead the children of Israel through the trackless desert, conducted them to this, which, though now a pleasant land, was then an inhospitable shore,

shore, a howling wilderness. Such was their zeal in the cause of religion, that they no sooner found a secure retreat, than they took care to plant gospel churches. Here therefore they planted churches, not on the unfocial principles of ecclesiastical separated independency, but on the more scriptural and benevolent principles of united love and fellowship. To express this truly benevolent idea, our venerable ancestors, following apostolic example, established this significant rite, which has uniformly prevailed on all such occasions as the present, of expressing the fellowship of the churches, by giving the right hand.

IN conformity, therefore, to the invariable practise of these congregational churches, and by the appointment of the council here convened, as well as in the name and behalf of the churches, whose messengers we are, I do, *Reverend and dear Sir*, give you the Right Hand of Fellowship. By this, we publicly recognize you as a Minister of Jesus Christ. We declare our willingness to help, support, and encourage you in the important work, in which you are engaged. We thus receive you as a brother, and fellow labourer, in the kingdom and patience of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We trust your feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. We trust you are ready and willing cheerfully to encounter all the difficulties of the ministerial office; that you have a zeal for God, otherwise, that you would not, a second time, have accepted the important charge. Therefore, welcome,
my

my brother, into the Lord's vineyard. You know the important office, which you now again sustain, and we trust it will be your constant endeavour to magnify it. Therefore, while this, the people of your charge, rest upon your heart, you will let holiness to the Lord be inscribed on all your deportment among them.

As your brethren, we shall always be ready to afford you all the assistance and support, which you may need, and we consistently be able to impart; and in return, you will permit us to expect the reciprocation of the same from you.

WHILE your aim is to win souls, your hands will be filled with work, and your heart warmed with love to the Lord Jesus. May he own you and bless you, as an able, a faithful and a successful Minister in his benevolent cause. I add no more, but my most fervent prayers to Almighty God, that by night and by day, when alone and in company, in prosperity and in adversity, you may still be with God; may the Almighty be your constant refuge; the most High your habitation, and underneath and around you, the everlasting arms.

WE congratulate you, our brethren of this church and congregation, on the joyous solemnities, which this day has afforded. We have heretofore trembled for you, lest division and confusion rearing their frightful heads among you, should destroy your peace and happiness. But such is your attachment to order, and such your love for the truth, that you have not only
 banished

banished confusion, with her evil work, but invited the pleasing fount of the gospel to entertain and instruct you. You have surmounted difficulties, which, with trembling hearts, we contemplated as serious and alarming; and we rejoice with you on the prospect, which this day presents.

ACCORDING to your request, we have granted our assistance in introducing this our brother into the important work of the ministry among you. Behold the man. Receive him as a gift of our ascended Lord and Saviour. Indulge him with your constant attention, your sympathy, your assistance and support. And may he prove a rich and a lasting blessing to you and to your children after you.

Finally, brethren, farewell, be perfect, be of good cheer, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.

A M E N.

