



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

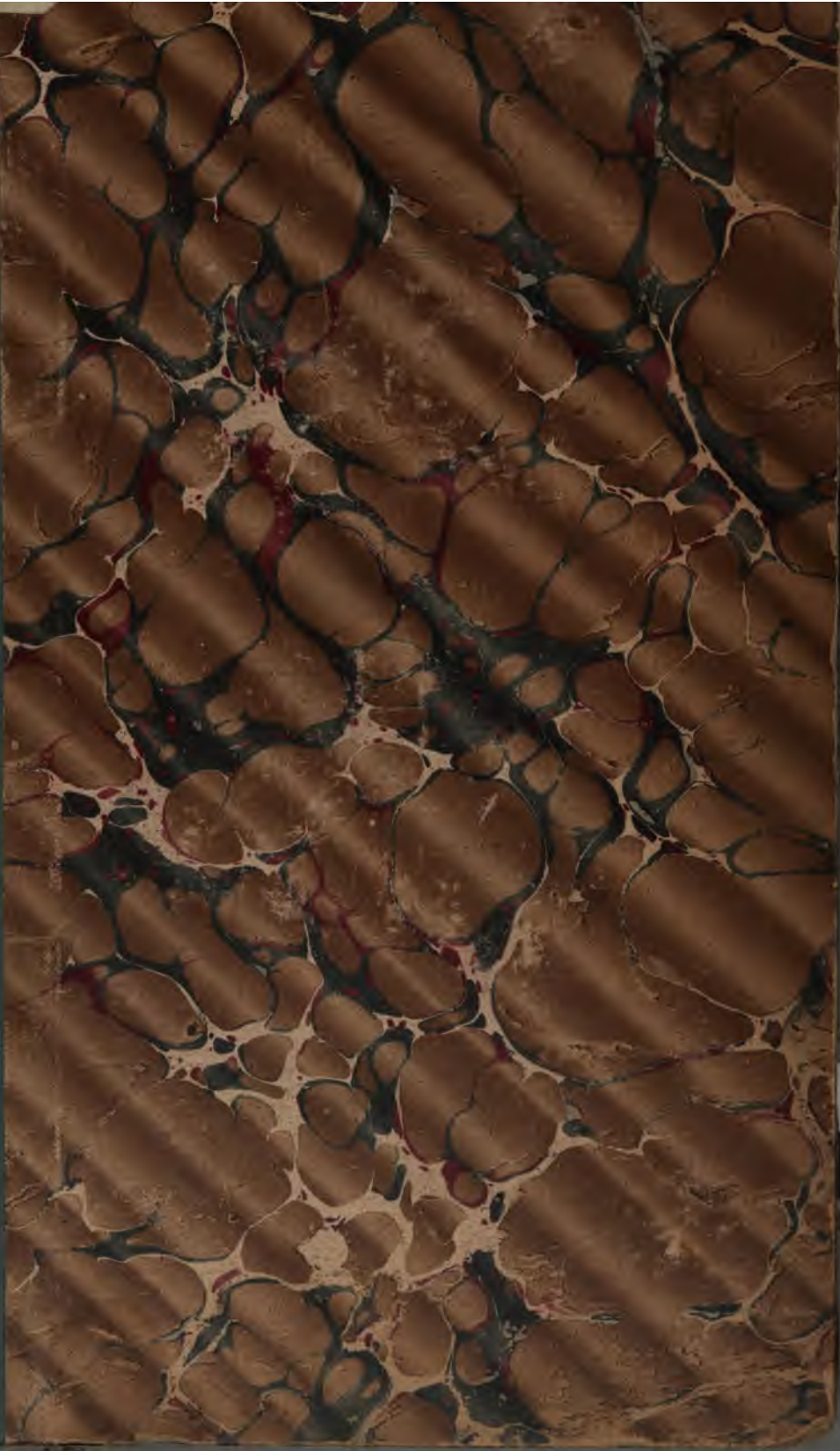
We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

Webster, N.H. - First Congregational Church
Edward Buxton - 1883



0511904.2010

HARVARD COLLEGE
LIBRARY



THE GIFT OF
LAWRENCE SHAW MAYO

CLASS OF 1910





1837.

1882.

FORTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

OR

THE SETTLEMENT

OF

REV. EDWARD BUXTON

AS

Pastor of the Second Congregational Church of Boscawon,

FROM THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WIMBORNE,
AND BARRING HIS RE-INSTALLMENT INTO THE
ACTIVE OFFICE OF THE MINISTRY.

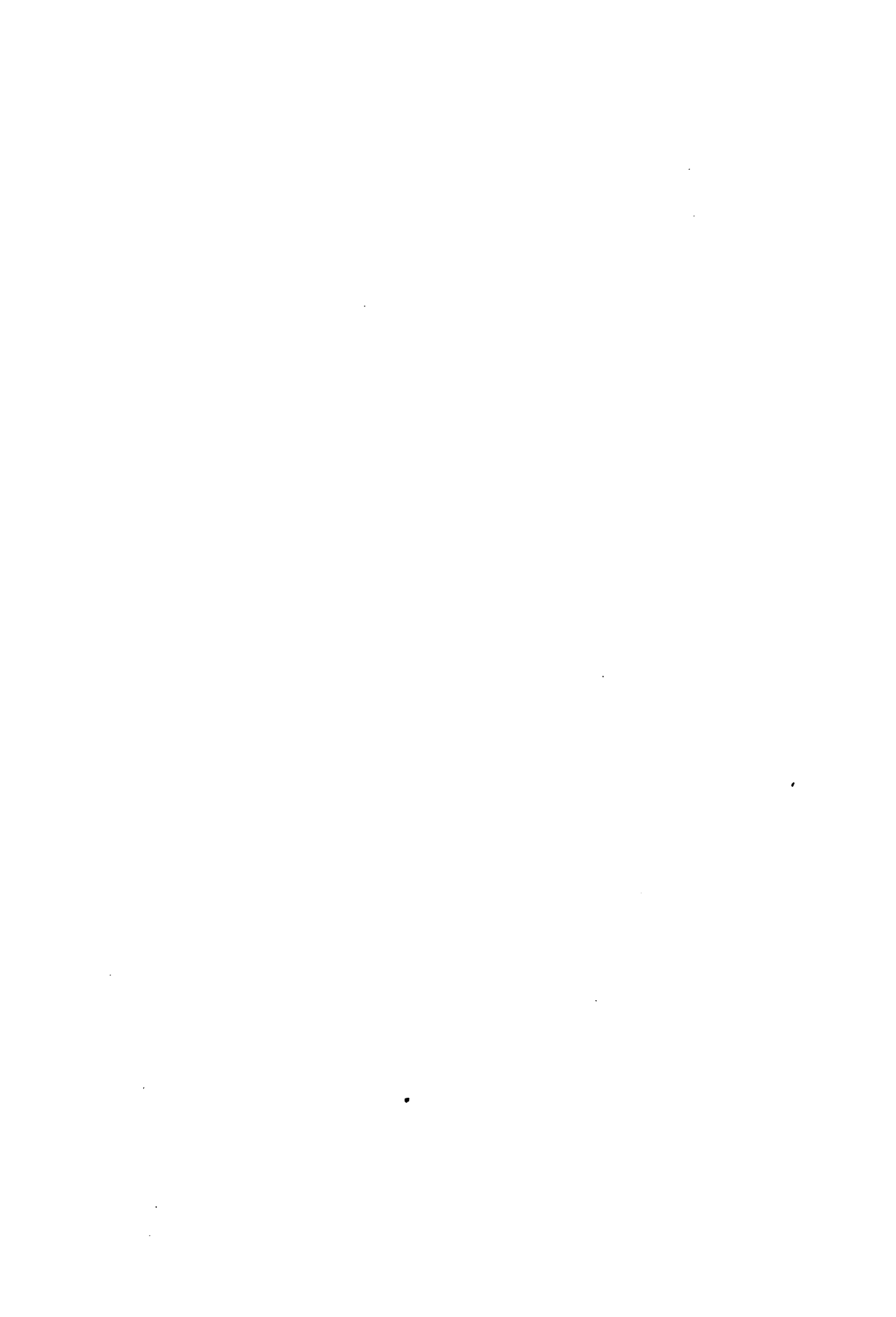
DECEMBER 18, 1882.

CONCORD.

PRINTED BY THE REPUBLICAN PRESS ASSOCIATION

1883.

—





Edw^d Burdett

1883

NO. 1

1883

CONCORD :

THE REPUBLICAN PRESS ASSOCIATION.

1883.



Edward Burston

1837.

1882.

FORTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY
OF
THE SETTLEMENT
OF
REV. EDWARD BUXTON

AS

Pastor of the Second Congregational Church of Boscawen,

NOW THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WEBSTER,
AND MARKING HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE
ACTIVE DUTIES OF THE MINISTRY,

DECEMBER 13, 1882.

CONCORD :

PRINTED BY THE REPUBLICAN PRESS ASSOCIATION.

1883.

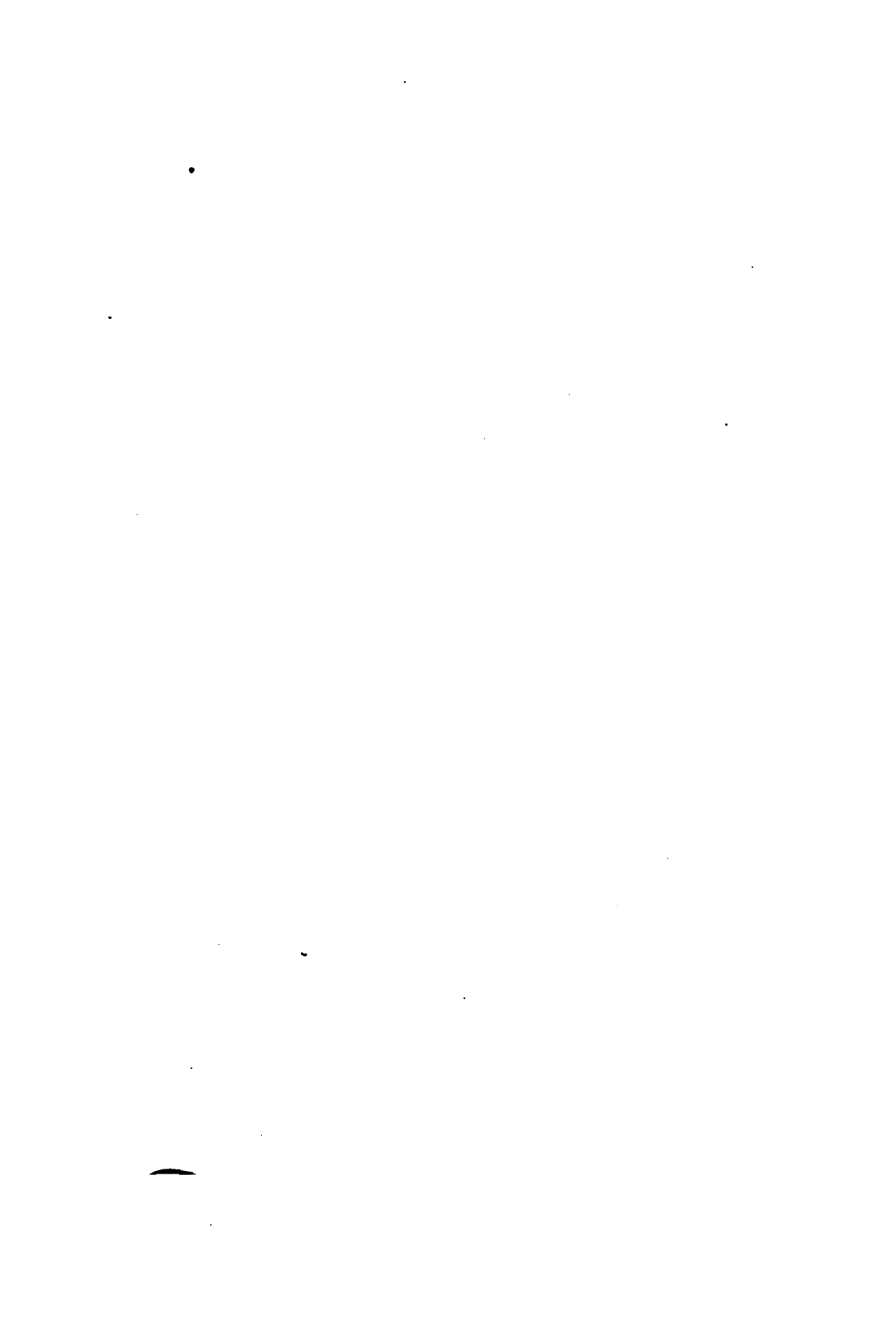
LB 11904.20.10



Lawrence Shaw

COMMITTEE OF PUBLICATION:

JOHN C. PEARSON, OF BOSCAWEN,
SHERMAN LITTLE, OF WEBSTER,
WILLIAM W. BURBANK, “
JAMES L. GERRISH, “
J. E. PECKER, OF CONCORD.



SKETCH OF REV. MR. BUXTON.

Rev. Edward Buxton was born in New Boston, N. H., August 17, 1803. He was educated at Phillips Exeter Academy, and was afterwards preceptor of the academy in Greenland. He studied theology with Rev. Samuel W. Clark, of Greenland, and was ordained to the ministry in that town April 10, 1836. He preached at Rochester for a few months; afterwards at Dorchester and Whitefield, and was installed over the Congregational church in Webster, December 13, 1837. He succeeded Rev. Ebenezer Price, A. M., who was the first pastor of the church, and whose connection with it was dissolved by mutual council, May 10, 1837, after a pastorate of almost thirty-three years. In 1876 Rev. Mr. Buxton was elected a delegate to the convention for the revision of the state constitution. As superintending school committee he has taken great interest in the cause of education, and has given individual instruction to many young ladies and gentlemen. He has been thrice married,—first, to Miss Elizabeth McFarland, daughter of Rev. Asa McFarland, D. D., of Concord; second, to Mrs. Lois Jewett, of Laconia; and third, to Mrs. Louise Jane (Dix) Pillsbury, widow of Gen. Moody A. Pillsbury, daughter of Col. Timothy Dix, and sister of Major-General and Governor John A. Dix, of New York. Mrs. Buxton is now living.



FORTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY.

The celebration of the forty-fifth anniversary of the settlement of Rev. Edward Buxton over the Congregational church in Webster, formerly the Second Congregational church in Boscawen, and marking his retirement from the active duties of the ministry, occurred December 13, 1882. The propriety of observing this event began to be discussed some months in advance by resident members of the church and parish. The movement resulted in calling an informal meeting of all interested persons, at which the general plan of the celebration was adopted, and the following committee of arrangements chosen :

EPHRAIM LITTLE,
WILLIAM W. BURBANK,
DEA. HENRY H. GERRISH,
HENRY L. DODGE,
MOODY A. PILLSBURY.

The committee subsequently issued a printed circular of invitation, also containing the programme of exercises. Copies of the above were mailed to all former members of the church and society, and to all other former residents whose addresses could be obtained. The alacrity with which the people of the

town, whether connected with the society or not, proffered their services, and the earnestness with which they labored to make the affair a success, were exceedingly gratifying to Father Buxton, as well as to the people of his charge. At the same time, there occurred the propriety of presenting to him a substantial token of regard, and generous contributions were soon tendered. This proposition was mentioned in the circular sent out, and Dea. Henry H. Gerrish was named as the person to whom people from abroad might send subscriptions.

In preparation for the event, the ancient church (a view of which is given) was decorated in an attractive and tasteful manner. In the rear and over the pulpit was the motto in evergreen, "Our Pastor: he points to Heaven and leads the way." Below was a crown, and the figures "1837-1882." On the front of the opposite gallery was the word "Immanuel;" on the right, "Behold, thy King cometh;" and on the left, "Christ the Lord." From the star in the centre of the ceiling lines of evergreen radiated to the corners of the gallery, and were looped along its front. The pulpit and its surroundings were adorned with bouquets and flowering plants.

For some days previous, the good ladies of the town were busily engaged in preparing articles of food for a collation, which were carried to the chapel and placed on tables in the gallery. The general committee also made arrangements for the further entertainment of visitors who might desire to remain in town over night.

THE DAY

opened with cold and threatening weather, and just before noon a heavy snow-storm set in which continued into the evening. The hour set for the exercises to begin was 2 P. M., and, notwithstanding the storm and heavy roads, there was a large attendance of Webster people, while surrounding places were all represented, even as far as and including Concord. A particularly gratifying feature was the good attendance of aged persons who had known Father Buxton during his entire pastorate.

The gathering was called to order by Ephraim Little, Chairman of the Committee and President of the Day, who briefly stated the object for which they had assembled, extended a kind welcome to all, and expressed his gratification at the good number present. The choir then sang the anthem, "The Earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof."

Prayer was offered by Rev. Frank Haley, M. D., of the First Congregational church of Boscawen.



HISTORICAL ADDRESS.

BY REV. E. BUXTON.

As I look on this assembly my mind is impressed with the remembrance of that which filled this house at my installation as pastor of this church forty-five years ago this day and hour. How different is this assembly from that, only a small proportion of which are still in the land of the living ; and how different are my condition and circumstances now from what they were, when, being examined as a candidate for installation, I answered the searching questions which were put to me by the ecclesiastical council that installed me as pastor of this church. Then I was anxiously anticipating the future under a solemn sense of the work on which I was about to enter, and of the responsibilities which would soon rest on me. Now I am reviewing that work and the bearing of those responsibilities as matter of historic interest. I still live, while the voices which were heard in my examination and installation services are all silent in death. The members of that ecclesiastical council have all been transferred from the church on earth to the church in heaven. But who can say that they are not with us, regarding with lively interest the services of this occasion ?

Oh! yes, here they come. They are passing before

my mind, and I will introduce them to you. Here comes my old friend, Rev. William Patrick, forty years the faithful, ever-cheery, and beloved pastor of the church in Canterbury. He was moderator of the council, and offered the installing prayer. And here is Rev. Moses Kimball, twelve years pastor of the church in Hopkinton. He was scribe of the council. Here, also, is Rev. Benjamin F. Foster, nearly thirteen years pastor of the church in Salisbury. To him was assigned the reading of the Scriptures and the invocation. And here is my excellent friend, Rev. Samuel W. Clark, eighteen years pastor of the church in Greenland. His pastoral labors were closed by sickness, which brought him calmly and peacefully to the grave. When he perceived that he was dying, he said to his wife, "My dear, God is come," and took leave of her. His brother William coming in at the instant offered a prayer at his bedside, at the close of which the dying man, with the palsy of death on his lips, said feebly, "I thank you." These dying words indicate the spirit of his life. He was an affectionate and kind-hearted man. He preached my installation sermon.

Here, also, is Rev. Amos Blanchard, nearly three years pastor of the church in Warner, and subsequently of that in Meriden. He offered the introductory prayer. Here, also, is Rev. Nathaniel Bouton, D. D., "whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches." He was about forty years pastor of the First Church in Concord. He gave the address to the church. Here, also, is Rev. Caleb B. Tracy, fourteen years settled in East Boscawen; and Rev.

Asa P. Tenney, for a long time pastor of the church in West Concord.

Such were the pastors that constituted the ecclesiastical council which installed me over this church. They, together with their delegates, have all passed away from earth, to mingle, we trust, with the spirits of the just in heaven. While I think of them the feeling comes over me to say, "When shall I wake and find me there?" There I should meet a large proportion of those who received me as their pastor at my installation. The church then consisted of one hundred and thirty-nine members, of whom one hundred and ten are in their graves, as to their mortal part; while, as we trust, their souls, being absent from the body, are present with the Lord. There is with them their former beloved minister, Rev. Ebenezer Price, with whom I spent more than twenty years of my pastorate, during most of which time he superintended our Sabbath-school. My intercourse with him was ever in entire harmony and cordiality. He most kindly recognized me as pastor of the church. Among the last words which he ever spoke to me he mingled expressions of affectionate regard, calling me his dear pastor. He was indeed a lovely specimen of what an ex-pastor should be. He came to his grave in a full age, "like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season." Without doubt he has many souls as the seals of his ministry and "crown of his rejoicing in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at his coming."

In taking a retrospective view of my pastorate, I must regard it chiefly in its spiritual nature, respon-

sibilities, and results. So far as I have acted in accordance with the divine purpose respecting it I have served him who has said, "My kingdom is not of this world." Here has been emphatically my life work. I recognize the divine purpose in the whole providential process by which I was inclined to it, prepared for it, brought into it, and have been kept in it through so many years. This divine purpose was first indicated by the fact that in my childhood my father consecrated me to the work of the gospel ministry. He said that one of his sons must be a minister of the gospel, and that I must be that one.

Early in my childhood I was taught the Assembly's Shorter Catechism, and was made to feel my need of a new heart. My spiritual enlightenment was gradual, and often obscured by the temptations and trials which beset my way in early life. Then a painful impediment of speech seemed to preclude the idea of my ever preaching the gospel. When, therefore, I came to choose a profession for life I selected medicine, but was prevented from entering on the practice of it by sickness brought on by severe application to study. On measurably recovering my health I engaged in teaching. While connected with the academy in Greenland, of this state, where my friend Rev. S. W. Clark was pastor of the church, I superintended the Sabbath-school, and in his absence from his people I was left so much in charge of them as to conduct their meetings, reading sermons to them on the Sabbath. Finding that I could perform such service acceptably, I felt that I was called to the work of preaching the gospel. I therefore studied

theology, and was licensed to preach by the Piscataqua Association, and labored some six months at Rochester in this state. I was then ordained as an evangelist for the service of the New Hampshire Home Missionary Society, and preached about a year in Lancaster, Dalton, and Whitefield, in Coös county. I was then invited by this church to preach to them as a candidate for settlement with them, and soon after accepted a call to become their pastor. This led to my installation, December 13, 1837.

From that period to the present my purpose of heart, and my experience under the trials and difficulties of my position, have ever kept me in sympathy with Paul's declaration to the Corinthian church, "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God; for I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified: and I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling."

When I came into this pastorate the peace of the church was disturbed by conflicting views and feelings, especially on the subject of American slavery. Though those conflicting elements were apparently quieted, their influence has retarded the progress of the church ever since.

But we have had several seasons of deep religious interest and spiritual ingathering. There have been added to the church 152 by profession, and 38 by letter; 88 have been dismissed, 7 excluded, and 116 have died. I have baptized 152 infants and 34 adults. I have solemnized 148 marriages.

In retiring from the active duties of the pastorate, I feel that it is incumbent on me to express my appreciation of the kindness and faithfulness with which this church and society have ever treated me. They have always received me to their dwellings with much respect and kindness; they have thrown the veil of charity over my shortcomings and errors; they have attended on my ministrations with marked attention and candor; they have promptly paid me my salary, and added thereto many valuable donations. I thank the people of Webster for the esteem and kindness with which they have invariably treated me. I thank the children and youth for the respectful and affectionate courtesy which they have ever extended to me. They can scarcely realize how much good they have done me by thus admitting me into their sympathies. I love the people of Webster, and shall never cease to pray that the blessing of God may rest on them.

The choir and congregation sang the hymn, "How firm a foundation."

In behalf of the people, Charles Carleton Coffin, A. M., of Boston, a native of Boscawen, delivered the following address :



Charles Carleton Coffin

ADDRESS.

We meet to-day to commemorate the organization of this church seventy-two years ago, and the settlement of him who on the 13th of June, 1837, began his labors as pastor, and who, after a lengthened and fruitful ministry, resigns the cares and labors of this office. It will be instructive, I doubt not, on this occasion, to briefly review the history of the church.

Previous to 1804, professed Christians of the first settlement of Beaver-dam brook were members of the Boscawen church formed October 8, 1791. One of the conditions of the grant of land to the proprietors of C. C. Cocook was, that one eighty-fourth part of the land should be set aside for a parsonage, and one additional eighty-fourth for the support of a minister. It was further stipulated that "any and all orthodox minister" should be invited to hold services of four years.

The polity of the churches of the New England was adopted by the Pilgrims, making every assembled body of believers a church, with power to regulate its affairs, independently of bishop, priest, or pope. This a majority vote, had been adopted by the settlers of New England. The Puritan settlers had government, and had made the church the state. The



Charles Carleton Coffin

ADDRESS.

We meet to-day to commemorate two events,—the organization of this church seventy-eight years ago, and the settlement of him who, on December 13, 1837, began his labors as pastor, and who, in the ripeness of years, after nearly half a century of service, resigns the cares and labors of the pastoral office. It will be instructive, I doubt not, on this occasion, to briefly review the history of the church.

Previous to 1804, professing Christians residing west of Beaver-dam brook were members of the Boscawen church formed October 8, 1740. One of the conditions of the grant of land to the proprietors of Contocook was, that one eighty-fourth part of the land should be set aside for a parsonage, and one additional eighty-fourth for the support of a minister. It was further conditioned that “a learned and orthodox minister” should be settled within the space of four years.

The polity of the churches of the New Testament, adopted by the Pilgrims, making every associated body of believers a church, with power to regulate its affairs, independently of bishop, priest, or pope, by a majority vote, had been adopted by the settlers of New England. The Puritan settlers had gone further, and had made the church the state. The town

was under obligation to support the preaching of the gospel.

Whoever studies the rise of the Puritans will see everywhere through their history an all-pervading sense of moral obligation. They owed allegiance to Almighty God. They made the state, therefore, theocratic. Each town was under obligation to support a minister. The minister had a claim upon the town for his salary, and could invoke the power of the law in case of delinquency on the part of the town. Under such an arrangement there were towns in which preaching was maintained even when there was no church organization.

The settlers of Boscawen reared their log meeting-house on the Plain, and buried their dead around it, calling Rev. Phinehas Stevens, a graduate of Harvard, to be their minister, who maintained that relation, greatly beloved by the people, till his death in 1757. He shared all their toils and hardships, shouldering his gun and going upon weary marches in pursuit of savage foes.

The movement of population westward to Water street, High street, and the families west of Blackwater, necessitated the building of a larger meeting-house in a more central locality in 1769, near the burial-ground on the road leading from Water street to the Plain, which, till 1792, was the one place of worship for all the citizens of the town.

At the close of the Revolution probably there were not more than twenty legal voters within the limits of the town of Webster; but during the succeeding decade there was a large influx of population, so

great that in 1791 we find seventy voters residing west of Beaver-dam brook petitioning for a new town to bear the name of Bristol. It is probable that there were from two hundred and fifty to three hundred inhabitants, who, to attend meeting, must make their way along the winding paths blazed through the forests, over roads from which the rocks had not been removed.

In the bright mid-summer days, when the woods were resonant with the songs of birds, when the wild flowers were blooming in the meadows, the weekly Sabbath journey on horseback, or even on foot, may not have been regarded by the sturdy men and women of that day as any great hardship; but in the short December day, in midwinter, when the snow was lying breast deep in the woods, or piled in drifts along the fences, and the mercury at zero, great must have been the longing for religious service, and lofty the sense of moral obligation, on the part of Eliphalet Kilborn, living on the bank of the Upper Blackwater, or Enoch Little, senior, on Little hill, to make the toilsome journey to the distant meeting-house. The sun would be sinking behind the Sunapee hills, and the twilight deepening, before they could reach their homes.

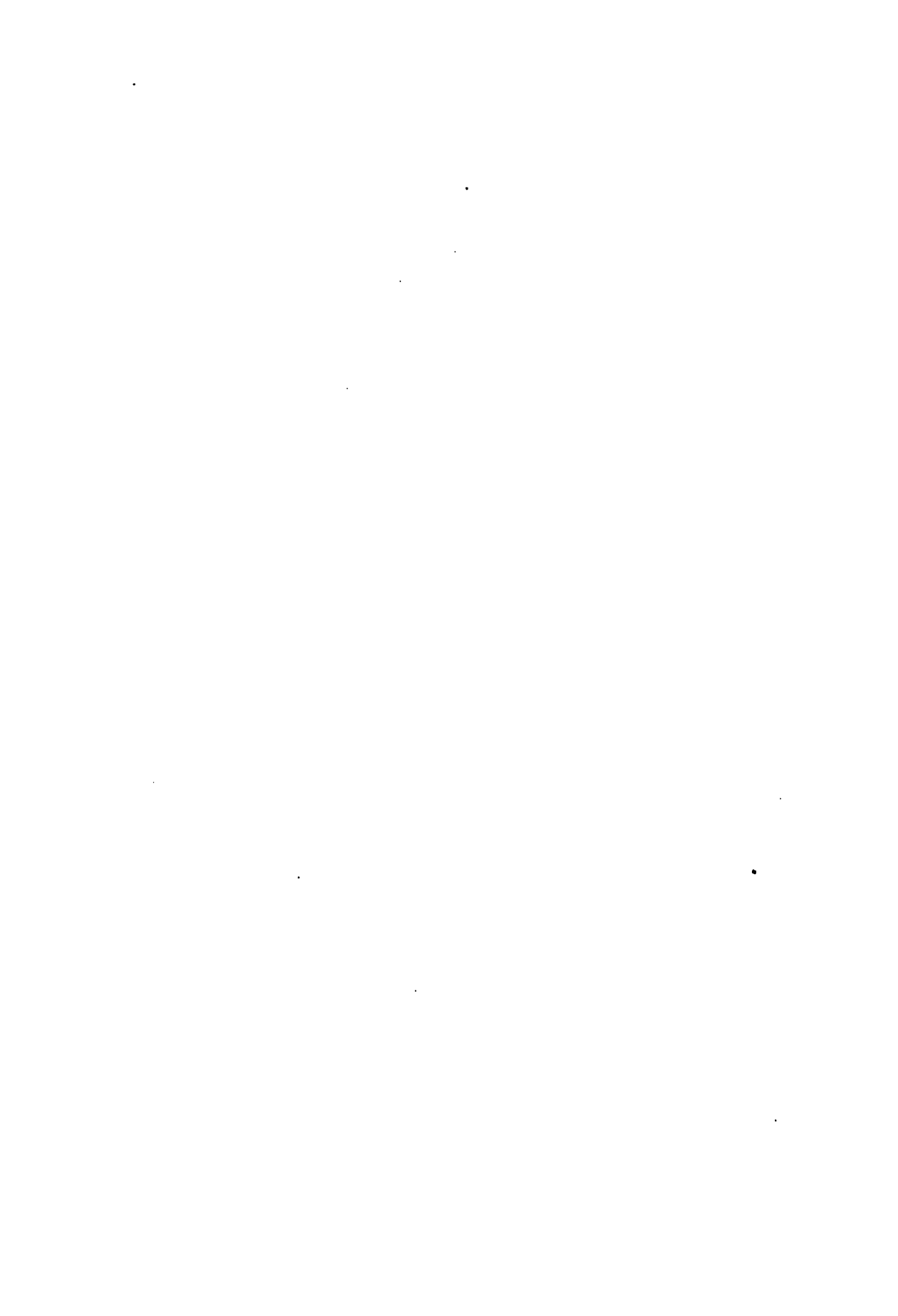
Although the meeting-house was so far away, in summer almost the entire population of the town assembled on Sunday. It was the habit of the time. Possibly there were other motives for attending meeting than a sense of moral obligation. A century ago there was no daily, no weekly mail, no post-office, no means of conveying information other than by special

messenger on urgent public business. The meeting-house, therefore, became the chief centre for the dissemination of news, the news-exchange, where, on Sunday noon, all could hear what had transpired during the week.

Possibly the young men thought not so much of the words of truth which might fall from the lips of the minister, as of the bright eyes and fair faces that perchance might beam upon them from the crowded congregation.

With the coming of winter there was diminished attendance, more staying at home. Sunday, therefore, in winter, became in a measure only a day of rest from toil.

We are to remember that they had few books ; that there were wanting aids to mental and moral culture. There is no road so easy as that broad way which leads downward. The people living west of Beaver Dam comprehended that unless their children attended meeting regularly there would be a lowering of the sense of moral obligation. The welfare of the community demanded another place of worship. Undoubtedly the building of a mill near that now owned by W. W. Burbank, making the locality a centre for business, had some weight in deciding the location of the meeting-house, now the town-house, erected in 1791, the town providing the frame, individuals boarding the house, and finishing and owning their pews. The people of all the surrounding towns came to the raising. Somehow everybody, whether attending meeting or not, made a point of being present at the raising of a meeting-house.





ERECTED 1781.

Possibly they were actuated by mixed motives,—to help on the cause of religion, and at the same time partaking of the plentiful supply of rum furnished on such occasions. It was estimated that more than one thousand persons were present at the raising.

From 1791 to 1804 religious services were held in the newly erected house on alternate Sabbaths by Rev. Mr. Wood. Under such an arrangement the people of Water street, High street, and those on Corser hill could attend service every Sunday without great inconvenience; but those residing on Little hill, White Plain, and on Pond hill, and those on Fish street, Boscawen Plain, and Fisherville, could only attend service on alternate Sundays.

The burning of the lower house in 1798, and the construction of the new edifice the next year on Boscawen Plain by an organized society, necessitated the inauguration of a new order of things,—the formation of the Westerly Religious Society and the voluntary support of the minister, the members consenting to be taxed according to the valuation of their property.

The time had come for the formation of a church, and we find Benjamin Sweat, Edward Gerald, Thomas Kilborn, Paul Clark, Ezekiel Morse, Samuel Pearson, Sarah Call, Sarah Sweatt, Anna Kilburn, and Mary Morse, six men and four women, associating themselves as a distinct church, September 26, 1804. The council of ministers and delegates assembled in the house now the residence of Henry L. Dodge, for the settlement of Rev. Ebenezer Price as pastor. Of ministers there were Rev. Walter Harris of Dun

barton, warm-hearted, zealous, fervent, able,—whom I once heard preach with great power in the Old North church in Concord,—Rev. Eli Smith of Hopkinton, Rev. Thomas Worcester of Salisbury, Rev. Mr. Hidden of Tamworth, Rev. Moses Sawyer of Henniker, Rev. Wm. Patrick of Canterbury, Rev. Samuel Wood of the first church of Boscawen.

Although the population had largely increased, although new roads had been laid out and the old ones greatly improved, the journey to and from the meeting-house on Sunday was no holiday affair, especially to the residents of Bashan.

There was no direct highway from Sweatt's mills, as now, to that section of the town,—none to Dingit Corner. We may think of Moses Gerrish and wife, in their attendance upon meeting, riding to Dingit Corner up Pleasant street to Mutton road, thence over Corser hill to the place of worship,—a seven-mile ride, the wife on the pillion behind her husband, with an infant in her arms. Comfortless such a journey on rainy days and in winter!

Allow me to present a picture of a Sabbath in Webster three fourths of a century ago. No bell summons the people, but they come at the appointed hour,—from the north, Dea. Eliphalet Kilborn, Nathan Pearson, and George Stone; from Battle street, Joseph and Benjamin Couch and Dea. Benjamin Sweatt; from Water street, Capt. Peter Kimball, stalwart in stature, wounded at Bennington, Joshua Jackman, Cutting Noyes, performer on the bass-viol, Silas Call, Daniel Pillsbury, and widow Rebecca Coffin; from High street, Mr. Morse, Joseph Ames, and

John Flanders ; from Pleasant street, David and Jonathan Corser, Thomas Kilborn, Jonathan Thurston, and Nicholas Noyes ; from Bashan, William Danforth, Benjamin Severance, and Moses Gerrish ; from Little hill, Noah, Friend, Joseph, Jesse, Enoch, and Benjamin Little, energetic sons of Enoch Little ; also Caleb Knight, from the farm now owned by George and Cyrus Stone ; Moses Coffin, from the present residence of Jabez Abbot ; Jeremiah Gerrish, from the present home of Charles Gliten ; from White Plain, Benjamin Austin, David and Thomas Carter—these and their neighbors on horseback, the wife upon a pillion, dismounting at the horse-block. In imagination we see Rev. Mr. Price, with a high sense of the dignity of the ministerial office, with courtly presence, conducting with becoming reverence the services of the day.

Rev. Mr. Price studied theology with Rev. Elihu Thayer, of Kingston. It was the era of long sermons. The people expected a long sermon. If they did not receive it, they were hardly getting their money's worth. We need not wonder if, under the fervor of the hour, the preacher became oblivious of the flight of time, and that it was some minutes past the hour of twelve when the forenoon sermon came to an end. In winter there was no fire to abate the keenness of the biting air nearer than the hearthstones of Paul Dodge and Samuel Morse, now the residence of Wm. Pearson. Not unfrequently a fire was kindled around the great pine stumps in the adjoining woods.

It was the period of horseback riding. Wagons

had not come into use. When the ground was covered with snow, some of the people came to meeting on ox-sleds.

It was the custom for all the members of the family to attend meeting, children in arms, even the house-dog keeping company; and it was made the duty of the tithingman to keep the dogs as well as the boys in order.

It is narrated that one young mother carried a pitcher of milk to feed her babe; that a dog scenting it thrust his head into the pitcher; that the congregation was suddenly startled by a shrill exclamation from a female voice, "Get out, you puppy!" that the mother, confused by the sudden turning of heads, further exclaimed, "Why, I have spoken in meeting; I keep talking all the time!" that the little dog, the while unable to withdraw his head from the pitcher, was making doleful howlings, the milk streaming about his ears,—all to the great delight of the boys in the gallery.

The years 1810–1815 was a period of theological discussion: The Unitarian movement, having its origin in Massachusetts, swept many of the churches of that commonwealth from their ancient moorings. One of the leaders was Rev. Mr. Worcester, brother of Rev. Thomas Worcester of Salisbury, who accepted the new belief. The Salisbury pulpit put forth the doctrine of the Unity, discarding the belief in the Trinity. This pulpit sent out its bugle notes for the old faith so clearly, that a few of the steadfast members of the Salisbury church, led by Dr. Job Wilson and wife, attached themselves to this church.





ERECTED 1823.

We get a glimpse of the times from Dea. Enoch Little's diary, Sept. 16, 1810: "Mr. Price whipt Mr. Worcester to-day."

Though the church was in no way affected by the movement toward Unitarianism, there had been for many years a dissenting element in the congregation. A portion of the people who owned pews did not accept the theological beliefs of the church. Those dissenting united in the formation of the Christian Union Society. A committee appointed by the town reported that the amount of taxes paid by the members of that society entitled them to use the house one fourth part of the time. The town voted to accept the report.

The Westerly Religious Society questioned the right of the town to control the use of the house, and appealed to the courts. Pending a decision, the house was taken possession of by the Christian Union Society, and the church found itself without a home.

There was much bitterness of feeling engendered for the moment. Hard words were used. There was coolness between old-time friends, but out of the bitterness came a determination to rear a new house of worship, and with it an energy that was the praise of even those who had not exercised the largest degree of Christian charity in the premises.

The first meeting was held May 19, 1823, and \$500 subscribed towards procuring the frame of this edifice. On the succeeding week there was a ringing of axes in the forests along the Blackwater, choppers and hewers waking the echoes from early morn till

dewy eve. On July 3 the frame was in its place. On December 25 the house was dedicated with appropriate religious services. For fifty-nine years it has been your church home. Through all the period there has been no interim of public worship, save on a very few tempestuous days.

It was a despondent day, that Sunday in April, when the church found itself without a home; but beyond question the forcible seizure of the old home was one of the best blessings that ever came to this church. It brought unity, determination, zeal, energy. It enforced self-denial, sacrifice,—awakened anew the sense of moral obligation. The church at once became strong and vigorous.

Far better in any event separation than contention. Is there a grander scene in history than the conduct of Abraham and Lot? Three score years have passed since this house was erected, and through all the period this community have been at peace. The bitterness of the hour quickly passed, and to-day every inhabitant of the town would find a welcome within these walls, and to your communion,—all who love the Master, irrespective of denominational name.

The time had come for Christian activity in benevolence, in missionary effort. The lay members of the church up to that period had taken little part in church meetings. Weekly conference and prayer-meetings were almost unknown. The Thursday lecture was the only weekly meeting.

The minister was expected to lead and direct in all church work;—but out of that prayer-meeting, by the hay-stack in Williamstown, Mass., held by Sam-

uel J. Mills and his four fellow-students in college in 1806, had come the American Board. Out of the resolve made in Rev. Mr. Wood's parlor in 1809, on High street, by nine ministers, to circulate four thousand copies of the little pamphlet entitled "The Child's Memorial," had come the American Tract Society, followed by the Bible Society in 1816.

The year 1881 was the centennial of the Sunday-school movement of Robert Raikes—the effort to induce the working people of England to learn to read instead of spending Sunday in drinking rum, playing games, and indulging in fighting.

It was in 1810 that Joanna Prince and Hannah Hill, of Beverly, Mass., school teachers, invited the children whom they taught during the week to commit passages of Scripture to memory to be recited on Sunday—the beginning of Sunday-school instruction in America. It was a new idea, an innovation, which did not meet the approbation of some of the ministers of the period. They were commanded to keep the Sabbath day holy;—would it not be breaking the ten commandments to teach a school on Sunday? The ministers discussed the question. It was the theme of conversation in private circles, the old men shaking their heads, the young men advocating the schools.

It was probably in 1816, the year succeeding a great revival, that the first Sunday-schools were held in this town, Sunday evenings, in summer, in some of the school-districts, the boys and girls standing in a class with their toes to a crack in the floor, bowing and courtesying when the teacher said "Attention!"

each scholar reciting the verses learned during the week.

I recall the anecdote that one girl, gifted in memorizing, went on for nearly an hour, till the wearied teacher informed her that he would hear the rest the next Sunday.

Memory goes back to the Sunday noons of 1830. The general Sunday-school had not been organized. I recall a group of men in yonder porch eating their dinners, Daniel Pillsbury producing a supply of green cucumbers from his lofty bell-crowned hat and capacious pockets, and distributing them to those around, eating them without salt as relishes to their doughnuts and cheese. The young men are in the horse-sheds discussing the good points of the horses and the young colts; the older boys are hunting birds' nests in Mr. Price's orchard, or helping themselves to caraway seed in Daniel Corser's garden.

I recall a dreary winter day. No stove sends out its warmth. The sun is clouded in—a blue day, the mercury at zero. The air is sharp and keen. Men sit with their coat collars about their ears, wearing their mittens, their breath turning to frost upon their mufflers. How I envied Stephen Sweatt with three capes to his surtout! There is a constant clattering of boot-heels as the people thump their feet upon the floor to keep the blood in circulation.

With the utterance of the Amen of the benediction there is a quick movement towards the neighboring houses,—women and girls to Rev. Mr. Price's, Hezekiah Fellows's, and Mr. Fisk's, now the residence of M. A. Pillsbury; a crowd of men and boys to the

houses of Daniel Corser, the residence of George Little, to Moses Fellows's, the home of our pastor, to Mr. John Danforth's, the residence of Mr. Heath. Some leap into their sleighs and ride to Dea. James Kilborn's, the residence of Mr. Tilton. In every kitchen great fires are blazing. In that of Daniel Corser I see Benjamin Little, Esq., Thomas Carter, and several other men advanced in years, light their pipes, the room gradually filling with a cloud of tobacco-smoke. Luncheons are eaten, foot-stoves are filled with live coals, and when the bell ceases its tolling the people are in their places patiently to endure a temperature at zero from one till three o'clock.

Then came the cold ride homeward, the blue-gray of the day deepening as the twilight came on before those living farthest from meeting finished their dinners.

In the evening came the Catechism, which must be rehearsed from "What is the chief end of man?" through the decrees of God, justification, adoption, effectual calling, and all the rest. I do not think that I very much appreciated then the hymn by Dr. Watts, descriptive of the Heavenly Jerusalem,

"Where Sabbaths have no end."

In 1830 began the temperance reformation. I recall the agitation, the holding of temperance meetings in the autumnal evenings in this house, the speeches of Z. G. Whitman in opposition and of Amos Couch, on Battle street, in favor of temperance, the earnest protest of some of the members of the church

to signing a pledge, or to the passage of resolutions ; not that they were not themselves temperate, or were opposed to temperance, but they protested against any infringement of Christian liberty.

The world has moved during the fifty years. The bill of supplies furnished by Hezekiah and Moses Fellows at the raising of this house included thirteen and one half gallons of rum. I am disposed to believe that if all the rum in the town were brought together at this moment it would not much exceed that quantity.

The question arises, How much has this church had to do with the changes in the drinking habits of the community? Would this people be as sober and temperate as to-day, if Benjamin Sweatt and his associates had not been organized as a church?

Let us pause in our historical review, and inquire briefly as to the meaning of the church.

We think of it as instituted by Jesus Christ as an *agency* for the conversion of the world to a belief in him as its Saviour; as a *family* holding sweet and tender relation to him; a family whose members are recruited on earth for the society of heaven.

“One family we dwell in Him,
One church above, beneath—
Though now divided by the stream,
The narrow stream of death.

“One army of the living God,
To his command we bow :
Part of the host have crossed the flood,
And part are crossing now.”

It seems to me that even this does not adequately express the meaning of the establishment of the

church, but that in a higher analysis it is the manifestation, the concentration, and, if I may use the term, almost the incarnation of God's thoughts and plans for the welfare of the world.

The last quarter of a century has been distinguished from all other periods of history by the inclination of men towards socialism, the formation of mutual aid and coöperative societies, encampments, fraternities, and brotherhoods, with pass-words and signals and mystic rites. It is a manifestation of the longing of the race to secure comfort and happiness, and to promote mutual well-being. It seems to me that the church has not as yet comprehended the meaning of this manifestation, this longing for association, this calling of men upon each other for a helping hand.

Oh! how infinitely beyond all societies for mutual help is that ideal upon which the church of the Lord Jesus Christ is founded—the seeking and saving of the lost, of helping those who have no power to help themselves. It is the unselfishness of the incomprehensible love behind the Christian ideal that is yet to win this world to Christ.

Infinitely beyond all charity and benevolence, which spring from the idea of mere mutual welfare, is that divine announcement in the chant of the cherubim eighteen hundred years ago to the shepherds of Bethlehem, at the birth of the Saviour, "On earth peace, GOOD WILL TO MEN."

What a declaration from Him who formed the church: "I came to seek and to save that which was *lost!*"

Institutions which have their origin in the tempo-

ral needs of men, when the purpose is complete will cease to exist : the church of Christ is the only organization among men which is perpetual and eternal.

The time may possibly come when this pulpit will be silent evermore, when there will be no worshippers within these walls, when the record will bear no name of living member on its page ; but even then it will not cease to exist.

The science of biology, which treats of the forces of life, recognizes the transmutation of moral as well as physical characteristics from generation to generation. No man liveth to himself alone. Material things decay : they perish with their using. We gather riches ; but they take wings, fire burns them, rust destroys, thieves steal them. Goodness endures. Moral forces never can perish : they are not born to die. In their nature they are eternal.

There is an oft-quoted but greatly misapplied passage from Shakspeare,—

“The evil that men do lives after them ;
The good is oft interred with their bones.”

It is from the harangue of the insincere and intriguing Marc Antony to the populace over the dead body of the murdered Cæsar. At best it is but a half truth, while its philosophy is wholly false. The great mystery underlying human existence is the conflict of moral forces, the existence of evil, and the redemption of man. If it be true that the good which we do is interred in the grave when our bodies are borne to their last resting-place, then we may as well cease all effort for the final redemption of the world from

sin. If it be true, our labor for the building up of moral agencies has been, in a great measure, in vain. If it be true, the Bible is false and Christianity a failure. If it be true, take down from the walls of your houses those heart-sustaining mottoes, suggestive of peace and rest and immortality, and write instead, for time and for eternity, "No hope!" But it is not true: the good which men do lives after them. The writer of the book of Revelation recognizes the great law as one of the crowning glories of the redemption. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

Generations come and go, advancing and passing away like the waves of the ocean upon the pebbled shore. We perform our little part, and disappear, often depressed in spirit, may be, as we descend the vale of years, that we have accomplished so little, forgetting that God has so arranged his economies that whatever we do, be it ever so little, for truth, justice, liberty, and righteousness, whatever we accomplish for the well-being of our fellow-men, becomes a vital, celestial, eternal force. It is of divine and heavenly origin, and in its nature imperishable. It is transmitted from generation to generation. Who can measure the odyllic force, the far-reaching, all-pervading influence, of that act of Benjamin Sweatt and his nine associates in the house of Henry L. Dodge, September 26, 1804?

In physics we have the microscope to make visible atoms of matter of inconceivable smallness; the mi-

rometer, to measure infinite distances and spaces; the telescope, to bring to view myriads of suns from the unfathomable deeps of heaven;—but genius never will invent nor the hand of man construct a metric measure that can determine moral force. Omnipotence alone keeps record of the weights and measures of the moral and spiritual realm.

Men do not gather figs from thistles. Far more intimate and subtle are the relations between sowing and reaping in the moral and spiritual realm than in the physical. We sow our wheat, but the midge destroys it; the rust disappoints the husbandman; the harvest fails; but no mildew ever can blight sincere and honest endeavor in the service of Almighty God.

Unrevealed to human eyes are God's harvest seasons. Many a sower has toiled through life always sowing, never reaping, never bringing home a single sheaf, going down to the grave in sadness, feeling that life has been a failure.

Without doubt Dea. Benjamin Sweatt, a man of prayer and of earnest endeavor, ceasing from his earthly labors in manhood's prime, felt in spirit that he had accomplished nothing.

Without doubt Dea. Eliphalet Kilborn, attaining the age of 92, counted his more than half a century of service as unprofitable to the Lord.

I recall the faltering words of Father Price, in his declining years: "It troubles me that I have accomplished so little." It is the truly noble that make no account of what they have done. But how far this little candle, lighted on September 26, 1804, throws its radiant beams!

Would Enoch Corser ever have been the power that he was for so many years in the pulpits of Loudon, Northfield, and Epping, if this candle had never been lighted? Would Jacob Little have left his impress upon all central Ohio? Would his brother Henry have been a beloved home missionary, organizer of thousands of Sunday-schools and scores of churches, if this church had not been organized? Would Arthur Little to-day be occupying an exalted place of influence and power? Would there be such a catalogue of worthy and illustrious names as might be presented of self-denying, earnest, devoted men and women, who have gone forth from this church to wield their influence for good in the crowded city where good and evil are ever waging mighty war, or on the distant prairies forming Sunday-schools, sustaining churches, moulding plastic minds, sowing seed beside all waters?

As we toss the pebble into the placid lake, and behold its wavelets roll to the farthest shore, so shall roll on forever, through time and through eternity, the results that have come from that simple act on a September afternoon in 1804.

Beneath the calm waters of tropical seas ages ago the little coral insect built his marble cell, lived his brief hour, and died. How insignificant, how useless, seemingly, its little life! Myriads, countless generations, build their cells, and die. Centuries roll away, and then islands rise from the sea. Palms wave in the summer air, birds sing in the branches of stately trees, savages rear their huts amid the dales. The missionary, sent forth and

sustained by your contributions, comes to teach them the way of life. So God's harvest-time comes—the sowing here, the reaping there.

This church, since 1830, has been transmitting itself over all the land. It has been dividing and distributing itself, transfusing its influence, power, and spirit to every section of the republic, multiplying its moral and spiritual force for the earthly and eternal welfare of the human race. Only through distribution and multiplication is the leaven of the kingdom of heaven to make its way, and the mustard-seed become the spreading tree with the birds singing in its branches.

As I stand here to-day I behold shadowy faces in all these pews. They are angelic faces now, translated from earth, purified in the air of heaven,—such faces as the great painter Raphael has outlined upon the canvas of the wonderful picture of the Madonna in the Dresden gallery.

Tuneful voices come to me from yonder gallery, silent evermore on earth, but rehearsing these many years the songs sung by the society of heaven.

“Never here, forever there,
Where all parting, pain, and care,
And death, and time shall disappear,—
Forever there, but never here.”

Forty-five years ago this 13th of December, beloved pastor, it was my privilege to stand in yonder gallery and join in the hymn that welcomed you to the beginning of your pastorate. To-day I deem it a high honor to be present on this commemorate

occasion, when, after forty-five years of service, you resign your office as pastor.

In the rotunda of the capital at Washington hangs a picture of the most impressive scene in the history of our country,—of Washington, after leading the armies of the United States through their eight years struggle to victory and independence, resigning his commission, and becoming once more a private citizen. The self-abnegation of that act has won the admiration of the world.

To-day you do not resign your commission from the great Head of the church to preach the gospel; you only lay down the burdens and cares of the ministerial office. Great as was the cause which called the father of our country from the quiet seclusion of his home on the banks of the Potomac, how incomparably greater that to which you have given the strength of your life. Through all the years you have had but one object in view, but one desire—to train this people for the society of heaven. With an utter abnegation of self, you have ever sought to promote their earthly and eternal welfare. You have looked never for an earthly reward, for you have been animated by the loftiest ideal of the universe—to seek and to save that which was lost.

No artist may portray this scene of to-day,—your retirement from the sacred office which you have so long and so worthily held; but, oh! how little do we know what pictures are hanging up yonder in our Father's hall of victories, painted by celestial hands! This only we know, that the victors in

self-abnegation shall cast down their crowns and sing, "Not unto us, but unto Him be all the glory!"

During the long period of your pastorate you have seen many changes. The tide of emigration had just begun to flow outward, when in 1837 you became the minister of this people. You have seen members of this honored and beloved church, on whom you relied for counsel and support, depart one by one. Without doubt you have at times felt a sinking at the heart; but never for an instant has there been a faltering in your labors. Those who remained needed all the more your care, and you have given it with untiring devotion. This thought has been your comfort and consolation, that, as a gardener from single parent stems fills his garden with roses, geraniums, and heliotrope, till the surrounding atmosphere is fragrant with their blooming, so from this garden of the Lord you have been sending out slips which are putting forth their blossoms over all the land.

Since you began your pastorate a generation has passed away. Ah! how many times have you performed the last sad rites for those who were very dear to you. The great majority have gone before you to become members of the society of the redeemed. Let it be your consolation that they are there to bid you welcome when in God's appointed time he shall call you thither.

But, dear pastor, you will, in one sense, never die. The house you live in, the earthly tenement, may waste away, but you yourself will only pass on.

Allow me to repeat the words of Jacob Little to Father Price :

“Mr. Price, you will never die. I have received from you precepts, doctrines, feelings, and ways of doing good, and in central Ohio I am impressing them on a great people. Sabbath-school teachers and preachers are coming up in my congregation to scatter what I have received from your lips, and pass it to the next generation. What you have taught by example and precept is spreading wider and wider, going on to the second and third generation, and will ever keep going, so that you will never die.”

“Because I live, ye shall live also,” are the words of him to whom you have given all the strength of your life.

Beloved pastor, on that day forty-five years ago, when you were installed as pastor of this church, one of your ministerial brethren welcomed you with the right hand of fellowship ; but he is not here. One by one all who took part in those exercises have gone on to their reward. Allow me, therefore, for and in behalf of the people, to extend once more to you the hand of that abiding friendship ; and I know that I do but give expression to the united wish of this church and people, that the remaining years of your life, be they many or be they few, may be full of peace and joy, crowned with the best of heaven’s blessings.

In behalf of the pastors of neighboring churches, Rev. J. H. Hoffman, of the Congregational society in Henniker, spoke as follows :

MR. CHAIRMAN: We read of sermons in stones, and good in everything. The character of the two preceding addresses is such that I could wish I were not here to speak.

It would have been more in keeping with the nature of things for old age, "rich in story," to speak in behalf of the neighboring ministers and churches; but, sir, your contemporaries are nearly all waiting to address to you good wishes "over there."

Age is no dishonor. The public mind, under God, declares it. The Christian children of the present generation will not cast away the fathers and mothers, and send them to the public squares. David, servant of God, taught that one's last days may be useful: "When I am old and grey-headed, O God, forsake me not, until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come."

There is strength and power in old age. It is your privilege, reverend sir, still to show the strength and power of your God to this generation and to every one that is to come. This can be done by a cheerful mien. Father Buxton, you have grappled with the "art of growing old beautifully," and have succeeded admirably.

There are advantages, and disadvantages, to one in mature years. Wilberforce has said, "It is beautiful to see an aged person contented with those pleasures which are within his reach." A beautiful life, as the years fill in, cheerfully takes a lower place. One beautiful thing in the life of John Quincy Adams was, that after being president of the United States,

he faithfully served in the lower house of congress greatly to the appreciation of the people. It requires grace to step down the ladder, but it may be a graceful act. Sir, you can serve in the lower house of congress, and to acceptance.

We love Richter. Writing upon old age he says, "A truly Christian man can look down upon the autumn of his existence : the more sand that has passed through the hour-glass of life, the more clearly can he see through the empty glass."

Some philosopher has said, "It is pleasant to grow old, with good health and a good friend." You have a good friend in your faithful companion ; you have a good friend in this church of Christ ; you have a good friend in the township of Webster ; and you have a good friend in your Master.

The Levites returned from the warfare of service at fifty, but by counsel, by their rich experience, they continued to be of great benefit to the younger brethren. To you, father in the gospel, be it said, "It is towards evening ; the shadows fall along your way." May your beautiful, strong, and godly old age be a continual inspiration to the living.

But, sir, I must attend to my duty. It is all said in a single sentence : the ministers of the neighboring churches love you, revered father.

They love you, first, for your fidelity to God. There is at present a vast amount of man worship. Give me this man !—oh, let me sit under the preaching of some famous man ! Daniel was loyal to God. You have been true to God. We love you for this.

Second. We love you for your fidelity to this

church of Christ and to the church universal. Here you have sown seed, harrowed it in, and "in due season" seen the harvest. Further, in your fidelity to this church you have set us a good example, in that you lived beside your predecessor, Rev. Mr. Price, for twenty years, and did not quarrel. I see before me Rev. Mr. Gordon, who now preaches the gospel from this pulpit;—he will take note of the above fact, and not fight with Father Buxton.

Third. We love you as a defender of the faith once delivered, one that was good enough for Abraham to live by and die in, one that "subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens."

Fourth. We love you as a guardian of the public peace and welfare in general. Mr. Coffin has well spoken of this.

Fifth. We love you as a man of progressive and intelligent ideas concerning the kingdom of Christ. Often have we sat at your feet, as we have met together to talk and pray of and for the kingdom of our Lord, and as often have we received solid instruction. For this we thank you. For all these things we love you, and will love you unto the end.

Accept, I pray you, the heartiest good wishes and a "GOD BLESS YOU!" from the ministers who labor in the neighboring churches.

The hymn, "If through unruffled seas," was rendered by the choir.

PRESENTATION.

Dea. Gerrish, from the committee, stepped forward and made a presentation of three hundred dollars to Father Buxton, as a testimonial of esteem and regard from the people of his charge, and other friends.

Rev. Mr. Buxton feelingly returned his thanks for the generous gift, and remarked that during his entire pastorate his salary had always been promptly paid.

After an invitation had been extended to all to remain and partake of the collation, the exercises of the afternoon closed.

INTERMISSION.

In the gallery a long table had been placed, which was laden with tempting dishes of food, and presented an attractive appearance. Grace was said by Rev. Charles E. Gordon, the new acting pastor of the Webster and Salisbury Congregational churches, after which full justice was done to the many good things that the ladies of Webster had so generously furnished. A social hour then followed, with introductions and the renewal of old acquaintances.

EVENING.

Upon reassembling, the president stated that he had received a large number of letters from absent friends who were unable to be present. He first read the following from Rev. Arthur Little, D. D., of the New England church, Chicago :

CHICAGO, December 9, 1882.

Gentlemen of the Anniversary Committee :

BRETHREN AND FRIENDS: I was greatly delighted at receiving your circular announcing your purpose to observe, in fitting manner, the forty-fifth anniversary of Mr. Buxton's settlement among you.

It would surely be a mistake, almost a crime, to allow such an event to pass without special emphasis. I should like to be there in person, and have a hand and voice in the services.

It is a significant event. Boscawen used to enjoy the unique pleasure of having a name all to itself, duplicated nowhere. I doubt if the event you are celebrating to-day can be anywhere duplicated in New Hampshire or in the country. I speak now of *active* pastorates continued for forty-five years. There have been a few such, and even a little longer. I do not, at this moment, recall another of equal length with that which our honored and beloved Father Buxton surrenders to-night.

Forty-five years! And what years they have been! No other such as these since the world began!

Mr. Buxton has seen more, experienced more, done more, lived more, enriched himself and others more, in these years than Methuselah in all the infantile, drowsy centuries of his existence.

“Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay.”

There were some other things happening in Webster in the year 1837, besides the settlement of th

minister, which have been of considerable importance to me. (Consult the Parish Register.) It was a great year for that town. I am thankful for it.

But it is a question whether it would have been any particular advantage to one to have been born in that town, or to have spent his boyhood in it, if there had been no settled minister there.

I have no time, this hurried Saturday morning, adequately to express my interest in the occasion, the reasons why it is worthy of your best commemoration, or my personal indebtedness to the noble man of God who is compelled by your kindness and love to lay aside, for a moment, his accustomed modesty and reserve, and become the central figure of attraction for the hour. He honors you quite as much as you will find it possible to honor him. When you have done your best, brought your choicest tokens and expressions of gratitude and appreciation, you will still be in his debt.

The money value of such a ministry in a country town is beyond all estimate. The intellectual, moral, and spiritual value can only be computed in that day when God shall make up his jewels.

The mere fact of a man staying forty-five years in such a town as Webster, with small contact with the outside world, not very much in the way of stimulus, and yet keeping fresh, active, abreast with the times, able to interest her people,—in a word, *sustaining* himself,—is in itself a thing truly sublime.

That such a thing has come to pass is a fact alike creditable to pastor and people. Both are to be congratulated.

The Congregational ministry has now become peripatetic, i. e., a travelling ministry. We speak of a settled ministry, and yet our clergymen stay in a given place, on an average, hardly as long as the Methodists, who are by principle itinerant. The thought of permanance ought to make glad your hearts this evening. It is the men with staying qualities that win.

What shall we say of Mr. Buxton's work, during the almost half century of labor among you,—in the homes, in the schools, in the church, in the Sunday-school, in the town at large, in the county, in the state?

In the good old days the minister used to make the town. Now the town makes the minister; and a minister is measured by the size of the town he is in. False estimate! Dr. Emmons was larger than Franklin, Dr. Hopkins than Newport, Dr. Edwards than Northampton.

Dr. Buxton (as he ought to be, and let us confer the degree to-night,—it is worth just as much by vote of parish as by the trustees of Dartmouth) has never been confined to the town he lived in, nor dependent upon it for his sweep of influence or enviable good name. But if he had been, it were ample field for all his energies and power. For forty-five years his hands have been on the main-springs and centres of good influence there. Think of the lives which he has been potential in shaping for good. They are not all in Webster now. Many, many of them have gone to their citizenship in the "city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." I can

recall some in California, in Minnesota, in Iowa, in Illinois, in Indiana, in Pennsylvania, in Massachusetts, and I doubt not they are to be found in almost every state in the Union. No! The man who preaches the gospel faithfully for forty-five years in a New England town is not the man of limited range of influence. He sweeps the continent, if not the globe.

Then, too, the *quality* of Mr. Buxton's service must be remembered. No man was ever more intolerant of anything superficial, unreal, pretentious. It has been his habit to go to the bottom and look after the foundations. He had little patience with a poor arithmetic lesson or a poor Christian experience. He always insisted upon thoroughness in both. He has always been wisely jealous of soundness in doctrine, believing this the best way to secure soundness in life.

I want to take this opportunity to thank him for his faithfulness in hammering the doctrines of the Bible into me. It has been more to me than Andover and Princeton combined,—among other reasons, because it came earlier. I fear he is among the last of so-called *doctrinal* preachers.

Now, one word as to the real secret of Mr. Buxton's power and abiding influence. It was not his preaching, not his rare mental acumen, not any great efforts of his, not any one signal achievement,—not these. It is all summed up in one word,—*his life*, his blameless life. That has been the secret of his power. It has been the man behind the sermon that has given potency to his ministry. Other men may

have preached more eloquent sermons perhaps: no man ever lived a more eloquent life. Did you ever know anybody who did not, at least, respect him? Did you ever hear the consistency of his daily life commented upon unfavorably or criticised by the bitterest foe of the Christian faith? Almost everybody loves him; almost everybody is glad to see him and talk with him; they like to hear him pray in the town-meeting.

Everywhere his life has stood for righteousness, peace, goodness, gentleness, and whatever beautifies the home and blesses a community. It may be said of him as was said of another,—

“ Such was our friend: formed on the good old plan,
 A true and brave and downright honest man.
 He blew no trumpet in the market-place,
 Nor in the church with hypocritic face
 Supplied with cant the lack of Christian grace;
 Loathing pretence, he did with cheerful will
 What others talked of, while their hands were still.
 His daily prayer, far better understood
 In acts than words, was simply doing good.
 So calm, so constant was his rectitude
 That by its loss alone we knew its worth,
 And feel how true a man has walked with us on earth.”

I must close. I have n't said what I meant to say. My heart is full. A pleasant evening to you. Make my hearty congratulations to Father Buxton. The dear Lord bless you all.

Affectionately yours,

ARTHUR LITTLE.

Interesting communications were also presented from Rev. A. W. Fiske of Fisherville, formerly pastor of the Congregational church in that place; Rev. E. H. Greeley of Concord, secretary of the New Hampshire Home Missionary Society; Rev. J. Rollins of Tilton, formerly of the Methodist church in Webster; Rev. John Gerrish, D. D., a native of Boscawen, and wife, of Kansas, Ill.; Rev. Howard Moody of Andover, previously of the Congregational church in Canterbury; Rev. Pres. Forrest Shepard of Norwich, Conn., a native of Boscawen, and who was baptized by Rev. Ebenezer Price in 1806; Rev. Levi Little of Taunton, Mass., who was born in Boscawen; E. Sewall Price of Boston, son of Rev. Father Price; Mrs. C. A. Carroll of Jackson, Mich.; Prof. Moses G. Farmer, the celebrated electrician of Boston; John P. Farmer of Glyndon, Minn.; Dea. Enoch Coffin of Beloit, Mich.; Miss E. M. Buxton, daughter of Rev. Father Buxton, and Miss Elizabeth F. Reed, of Steubenville, Ohio; Horace Little of Ridgeway, Elk county, Penn.; Silas C. Stone, Chas. H. Ames, son of Nathan P. Ames, and Mrs. Eunice F. Pillsbury, of Boston; Charles S. Pillsbury of Londonderry; Thomas H. Currie, M. D., of Lebanon; A. C. Sweatt of Fisherville; Gilman Sweatt of Manchester; Miss Vinie Dodge of Winona, Minn.; Miss Annette Cogswell of New York city; Miss Lydia Corser of Derry; Joseph A. Little of West Creek, Lake county, Ia.; and Walter H. Sargent of Bridgewater.

The following poem, written by Mrs. J. B. Goodhue, of Webster, was read by Miss Detta Goodhue.

What's the meaning of the gathering
 Of the people here to-night?
 Why the music and the speeches?
 Why this brilliant, cheery light?

Why are old and young so joyous—
 Happy faces all aglow?
 Why this feasting? We can tell you,
 Stranger, if you'd like to know.

We have come to meet our pastor,
 From each hamlet, vale, and hill,—
 Come with words of kindly greeting,
 That his heart with joy may thrill.

Years ago he came among us,
 In the flush of manhood's prime,
 Ere his eye had lost its brightness,
 Or his locks been bleached by time :

Came to dwell among this people,
 Seeking not for fame or gold,
 Only like a faithful shepherd
 Gathering lambs within the fold.

He has watched them from their cradles
 Through their childhood's happy days,
 Cheered them on in ways of knowledge
 By his heartfelt words of praise.

He has watched them grow to manhood,
 Filled with dreams of wealth and fame,
 Tried to lead their footsteps heavenward
 Through the precious Saviour's name.

By the bed of pain and anguish,
 Where the feeble sufferer lies,
 He has spoken words of comfort,
 Pointing upward to the skies.

In the homes of joy and gladness
 He was e'er a welcome guest :
 Loved and honored by the parents,
 Little children round him pressed.

Many has he joined in wedlock,
 Calling blessings on their head;
 Many times has bowed in sorrow,
 Grieving o'er the early dead.

He has not been free from trouble;
 Death has oft his shadow cast
 O'er his threshold, and forever
 From his sight his loved have passed.

In whatever place we've found him,
 He's been faithful to his trust,—
 Never weary, never faltering,
 Worn with labor, not with rust.

Now when time his locks has whitened,
 Bowed his form and dimmed his eye,
 Meet it is that he should listen,
 Lay his heavy labors by.

He has borne the toil and burden
 Of the noontide's fervid heat:
 Now as draw the shades around him
 May his evening rest be sweet.

Those who first gave cordial greeting,
 Nearly all have gone before,
 Waiting now to bid him welcome
 As he nears the "shining shore."

Stranger! this is why we're gathered
 Here within these walls to-night,—
 Why with happy hearts and voices
 Each and all as one unite

In a blessing on our pastor,
 Who from labor now can rest:
 Cherished by his loving people,
 May his last days be his best.

ADDRESSES.

In response to sentiments read, interesting remarks were made by Sherman Little, Hiram G. Stone, Dea. H. H. Gerrish, Dea. Henry F. Pearson, and Tyler C. Sweatt, of Webster, and by Rev. Mr. Gordon, Dea. T. D. Little, and Isaac N. Sawyer, of Salisbury.

J. E. Pecker, of Concord, formerly of Boscawen, stated that although the attendance was large, yet there were many not present whose thoughts would be with the old church on so interesting an occasion; and he therefore moved that a committee of five be appointed to publish the proceedings. He did not wish, however, to be made chairman.

The motion was seconded by John C. Pearson of Boscawen, formerly of Webster, and carried unanimously.

The president subsequently announced the committee to be,—

John C. Pearson, of Boscawen; William W. Burbank, Sherman Little, James L. Gerrish, of Webster; J. E. Pecker, of Concord.

A poem, written by Luther B. Little, A. B., a Dartmouth College graduate of 1882, now of Chicago, was read by Miss Sarah E. Sawyer.

FOR THE FORTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SETTLEMENT OF
MR. BUXTON IN WEBSTER.

When most men start out for to make a poem,
They pick their theme, and ask the Muse to show 'em
Why this and that thing happened as they did,
And thus they're sure to know what else were hid.



J. E. Peckham.

They take for theme some hero of renown,
 Some mighty battle or some war-sacked town,
 That everybody wants to know about,
 And having learned the facts, just write them out.
 I do not see why men write of "spring," and "snow,"
 And "heroes," "gods," and "war," and then let go
 Such themes as "honest men" and "patient wives,"
 Who toil and struggle and wear out their lives
 In doing good to ordinary man,
 And doing this, serve God as best they can.
 But thus it is: loud deeds and men are sung,
 And modesty moves not the Muse's tongue;
 And from this fact, through all the ages long,
 I doubt if ere my theme was writ in song,—
 For, whosoever's ears my subject jars on,
 'Tis simply this, "A Long-loved Country Parson."

Well-nigh a half a century ago,
 At time of year when earth is clad in snow,—
 As if 'twere fitting his first look should be
 Upon the town well decked in purity,—
 There came to Webster, or 'twas Boscawen then,
 One of the noblest of earth's noble men.
 And why a noble man, does some one ask?
 To tell the reasons is an endless task.
 What has he done? He's just stayed with the town,
 And lifted up, when other things pulled down.
 What did he come for? Not for gain, 'tis sure:
 The Webster minister is always poor;—
 Nor did he come for fame: fame does not come
 To Webster people, if they stay at home;—
 Nor yet for power: small power here would be:
 The Webster people never bend the knee
 To one who thinks to rule with iron sway:
 If one should come for this, he'd never stay.
 What did he come for to this lonely town?
 He came at duty's call, without a frown;
 He came to minister, to preach and pray,
 To do men good, to show the better way

Up from this black sin-tarnished mortal life
 To where men turn to angels and forget all strife.
 Of course he preached at church—all ministers do that :
 Of course he wore “ the cloth,” and donned a silken hat :
 Of course his looks were grave, his bearing dignified :
 Of course at him the young eyes opened wide.
 All these things were, of course, to be expected ;
 But still some other actions might have been detected.
 When to the grave a mourning band was brought,
 Their souls o’erburdened with the heavy thought
 That one was gone, it was this reverend man
 Who taught that death was but the broken span
 O’er which we leap from nothingness down here,
 Up to infinity in a holier sphere.
 When youth and maiden had each other tried
 Until their hearts in unity were tied,
 His was the word that made the knot secure :
 As two they came, as one they left his door.
 His own mind filled with depths of hidden lore,
 To other minds he opened wide the store.
 He loved the school ;—ah ! what a sight for pity
 The truant boy, when he was school committee !
 Music he loved, and his deep soul within
 He oft poured forth with bow and violin ;
 And song came from his lips with potent fire :
 Oh ! how he will enjoy the angel choir !
 As ever at early dawn was seen his study light,
 A beacon, firm set, shining into night,
 So have his pious walk, his blameless life,
 Shone out o’er all the land, with blessings rife ;
 For men, whom he has taught by word and deed
 Through all the land, still reap his well-sowed seed.
 Long has he lived, waited, and prayed, and worked,
 A quiet, simple man ; no duty shirked,
 No word unspoke : his life a finished shaft :
 His soul upon the Infinite a well set graft.

 And now, perchance, his active labors o’er,
 Although he works not as in years before,

Still may he live, and by his actions teach
 As potently as parson ere could preach.
 He came twoscore and five long years ago ;
 Here has his form been bent, his head turned snow ;—
 But let us hope long years before him yet,
 Ere on his head his diadem be set.

LUTHER B. LITTLE.

Chicago, Dec. 9, 1882.

The following poem, by Miss Getchell, of Newburyport, Mass., was not received until after the celebration closed.

THE PROPHET'S RECKONING.

I SAM. : XI AND XII.

The sun halts over Gilead ;
 The tide of battle stays ;
 The archers and the men of might
 Pant in the sultry rays :
 The long fierce shout of victory
 Rolls thro' the bare defiles,
 For the Ammonite stout is put to rout,
 And taken in his wiles.

A word speeds 'mong the swaying host ;
 The sling drops, and the spear :
 " Saul led ye on to conquest ;
 And the man of God is here :
 Arise, Judah and Israel !
 To Gilgal haste ye on ;
 Ye must crown the king with offering
 To the Lord, ere the day be done."

On Gilgal's place of sacrifice, .
 By the rocky altar's side,
 Stands the man of God, while circling up
 The smoke floats dense and wide.

His tall gaunt frame is stooping,
 And his head and feet are bare ;
 O'er his shoulders bowed, like a wind-swept cloud,
 Fly his snowy beard and hair.

“Listen, ye men of Israel !”
 'Tis the prophet's solemn voice :—
 “I have hearkened well to all your words ;
 Behold your kingly choice !
 I am old, and bent, and withered,
 My head has long been gray ;
 I have borne from the Lord to his people word,
 From my childhood to this day.

“Hearken ye ! bear me witness now,—
 When have I done you wrong ?
 Whose ox or ass have taken,
 The weak given to the strong ?
 Or whom oppressed, defrauded ?”
 And the people cried as one,—
 “There is nothing found all Israel round
 Wherein thou wrong hast done !”

“Hearken yet, men of Israel !
 The Lord your fathers freed
 Of old from Egypt's bondage sore,
 And ye shall be indeed
 His own, his chosen people still,
 If ye his voice obey,
 You and your king ever following
 His righteous laws always.

“As for me, the Lord forbid it
 That I should yield to sin,
 And cease to pray for you, or teach
 The way of right to win ;
 But fear the Lord, and while ye serve,
 His benefits rehearse,
 Else he will efface your name and race,
 And smite you with his curse.”

The slow years swell the centuries
 Till twenty-nine are told ;
 And now the cycle is complete,
 The new is as the old ;—
 But from peaceful farms and firesides
 The people wend their way,
 With no warrior's shout, nor battle rout,
 Nor gory marks of fray.

Over the rocky hillside ways
 They blithely flock to meet
 Many from near and far who come
 With gifts and cheer to greet
 Their fathers' teacher and their own,
 Pastor and guide and seer,
 Who from his place cries the word of grace,
 Unwearied from year to year.

Faithful in earnest laboring,
 Patient, exact, and just,
 Seeking howe'er, in calm or storm,
 To best fulfil his trust ;—
 Now in life's later afternoon,
 With twilight creeping on,
 May his rest be sweet, after glare and heat,
 Of a long day's toil well done.

“What grows upon your sterile hills?”
 Was asked the statesman sage ;
 “In ill-requited toil ye spend
 Your years from youth to age.”
 And he of the eagle-eye made speech
 E'en the simplest might understand :
 “The granite rock that bears Time's shock,
 And the brain that rules the land.”

While the changeless hills like sentinels
 Watch o'er the fathers' sleep,
 And prophet watchmen stand to point
 The way their sons must keep,—

Following the path they trod of old,
Who fears what may befall?
Prosperity crown the ancient town,
While the good Lord keeps us all!

Dec. 13, 1882.

John C. Pearson, a commissioner-elect of Merrimack county, and who was for many years one of the most substantial citizens of Webster, recalled many interesting reminiscences, and closed by paying a high compliment to the BOSTON DAILY JOURNAL, which had sent a special representative to report the proceedings, and stated that the Journal had been for many years extensively read in Webster, and had exerted great influence in shaping public opinion in that intelligent community.

The exercises of the evening were interspersed with singing of sacred music of the olden time.

The celebration, which had been from the beginning to the end a complete success in every particular, closed with singing the Doxology, and the pronouncing of the benediction by Rev. Mr. Gordon.











3 2044 018 166 363

This book should be returned to
the Library on or before the last date
stamped below.

A fine of five cents a day is incurred
by retaining it beyond the specified
time.

Please return promptly.

