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GOD'S DELIGHT IN THE GATES OF ZION.

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A SECOND DISCOURSE

ON THE

EARLY HISTORY

OF THE

Congregational Church and Society

IN

WEST BRATTLEBORO, VT.

COVERING TWO PASTORATES—23 YEARS,

OR FROM 1794 TO 1819.

GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

BY THE REV. LEWIS GROUT.

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DISCOURSE

PS. 87:2. THE LORD LOVETH THE GATES OF ZION MORE THAN ALL THE DWELLINGS OF JACOB.

The "gates" of a town, as used in the Scriptures, often signified a place of concourse. It was here that the priests sometimes delivered their sacred addresses, here the prophets sometimes proclaimed their predictions. It was here that ordinances were sometimes promulgated, and the law read; hence it came to signify a place for the worship and service of God, as where the Psalmist calls upon all to "enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise." "Zion," too, being used at first to denote a hill, sometimes called a "holy hill," in Jerusalem, came at length to be spoken of as a place "which the Lord had chosen for himself," "where he would dwell," "his habitation," "his tabernacle," "where the people appeared every one of them before him;" and so it came to signify, virtually, what we now call a church, or the place where God was wont to draw near to men by special manifestations of himself, and where the people were wont to draw specially near to him in worship and service; thus answering to what, in our day, is called "a house of worship," "the meeting house," or "sanctuary." Hence, as the Lord took a special delight in the gates of Zion in the days of old at Jerusalem, so in the church of our fathers, with all it involved or symbolized, and in every true, christian church of to-day, must we believe he takes a similar delight. As the public worship of God in the sanctuary in the olden days of Zion, was more costly, and required more of time, exertion, and sacrifice, than individual home worship in the dwellings of Jacob; so, in the generations of a century ago, such united, public worship was more costly, and required more of time, exertion, sacrifice, in the church of our fathers, than common home worship in the dwellings of men. And, in its naturally indicating, as this public worship did, in our fathers, the greater love of the supreme Object of worship, so it was naturally the more pleasing to that great Object, and brought the greater blessing upon the worshiper.

The worth and glory of the sanctuary, whether we call it the temple of the Lord, a meeting house, or a church, are seen in its being a memorial sign of Divine grace, a symbol of God's presence and favor, or, as the apostle says, "the pillar and ground of the truth." In the persevering efforts of our fathers to erect a meeting house, keep it in repair, enlarge it, improve it, whether on yonder Hill, or in this lovely vale, and in their continuing to gather in it from sabbath to sabbath through all the years for worship, they not only signified their faith in the being and grace of God, and in the saving power of his Gospel, but they bore

witness, also, to their belief in the church, as fitted to have a most happy influence on every good element and interest in society, and thus boldly, plainly, recognized the church as the place where God is wont to draw specially near to men, and so a place specially fitted for working out some of the grandest issues of life, whether personal or public, here on earth.

To some of us, who have come to the maturity of age, and have it in our power to go back in memory to the sabbath scenes and services of our early years, the very associations of the Lord's house are a most happy help to the culture of the religious sentiment and character. As one has said: "We are creatures of association. We are often moved more profoundly than we think, by our surroundings. The recollection of our experiences in the house of God are among the most precious treasures that memory hoards. The prayers we have heard there; the old hymns of the fathers, some of them redolent with the incense of a thousand years; the services which have moved us; the Scriptures read and expounded; certain texts which were new to us, and most timely; the light of the sun streaming in at the windows and seeming almost the glory of God's countenance; the seat where the mother sat, holding our childish hand, or the corner from which the father turned his loving eye upon us in mild reproof; the pews from which sainted men and women have gone to their rest,—oh, there are holy forces in such reminiscences! They are 'golden vials full of odors.' They come back upon us in after years, 'trailing clouds of glory.' They make the very walls of the house of God eloquent. The stone cries out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber answers it. The very silence of the place on a week day is more potent than angels' voices." Oh thou hallowed meeting house of my childhood and youthful days, still standing, as thou art, and in sacred use, God bless thee, and continue to make thee, as thou hast been, the gate of heaven to many souls; that when the Lord shall come to count and write up the people, he may say of thee, "This and that man was born there."

Such being the nature, design, influence, of a church, whether we look at it as a place of worship, or as a company of worshipers, it can but be, as I think, well-pleasing to God and becoming in us to look still further into the history of that which was first set up here in Brattleboro a century and a quarter since. For us to gather up, record and remember valuable facts in the lives and labors of our fathers is but a worthy service, due alike to them, to the God they served, to ourselves, their children, for whom they toiled and prayed, and to those who shall soon take the places which both we and our fathers have occupied. There is force, truth, and beauty in the motto of our former "Discourse," that, "In treasuring up the memorials of the Fathers we best manifest our regard for posterity;" not unlike to which is this other, that, "He who is not proud of his ancestors, either has no ancestors to be proud of, or else he is a degenerate son."

For us to be interested in this West Brattleboro Congregational Church is but yielding to a general law of our nature, and honoring the source of instruction given us of God in his Word. We are so made that both pleasure and profit invite to a study of the beginnings and early history of things. Builders, authors, inventors, battlefields, birthplaces and wedding days have ever been regarded as objects of notable interest. Those who make great discoveries in physical science, or in other secular and material directions, are generally counted benefactors and held in honor. And yet, in no way second to anything of this kind is the ground we have for a deep and abiding interest in the origin and early growth of the christian institutions our fathers planted for us. A study of the beginnings and unfoldings of religious enterprises is always attractive, profitable, to the thoughtful mind. History and narrative make a large part of the Bible. Take the historic element from the writings of Moses, from the Psalms, from the prophecies, from the gospels, from the Acts of the Apostles, and from the labors of Paul, and we have but a remnant left; nor would that remnant be very intelligible. The same spirit which planted churches in Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth and Rome, eighteen centuries since, planted institutions of the same kind more than a hundred years ago here in Vermont, the town of Brattleboro not excepted. And if God's way of setting up his kingdom in Palestine was instructive, how can a note of that way, as seen in the lives and labors of our own ecclesiastical fathers be devoid of interest to us? And, especially, of present interest to us of to-day, should be some account of that particular part of God's way of church-building, which dates back just one hundred years from this; when, in April, 1794, these fathers of ours began to take steps looking to the calling and settling of the Rev. William Wells to be their spiritual teacher, their pastor, and gospel preacher.

In "A Discourse* on the Early History of the Congregational Church in West Brattleboro, Vt., delivered Dec. 31, 1876," the narrative began with the earliest information we had concerning the incoming of civilization in this region, the chartering and organizing of the town, the gathering of a church, and the calling of the Rev. Abner Reeve to the charge of it. From this we went on to give a sketch of the life and labors of the church under Mr. Reeve's pastorate of about twenty-five (25) years, or down to the early part of 1794, when steps began to be taken to engage the Rev. William Wells as his successor.

Mr. Wells was born in Biggleswade, England, 1744, and educated at Daventry. He was settled as a dissenting minister, for 23 years, at Broomsgrove, in Worcestershire, Eng. Leaving that field, he came to this country, and landed with his family in Boston, June 13, 1793. From thence he came to Brattleboro in March, 1794, and settled on a farm, now a "Summer Retreat" for the Insaue, on the West River Road, about a mile north of

* See Appendix I.

the present "Brattleboro Retreat" (late "Asylum"). On his arrival here, the clerk of the town was requested to call a meeting to see if his services could be secured for the desk of the church;* thus: "We, the Subscribers, Inhabitants and Freeholders of the Town of Brattleboro, impressed with a sense that it is of the utmost importance to the welfare of ourselves and families, and highly essential to the peace and good order of the inhabitants in general, that the precepts of christianity and the rules of morality should be publickly and uniformly inculcated among us,—do hereby request you to warn a meeting of said inhabitants to be holden on Wednesday, the 2d day of April (1794)"—to see, among other things, "whether said inhabitants will agree to employ the Rev. William Wells to preach with us at present, and what sum of money they will raise for that purpose." Signed: Wm. Harris, Jonathan Dunklee, Lemuel Dickerman, C. Harris, Samuel Greenleaf, Jonas Knapp.

At this meeting the town voted to employ Mr. Wells, and allow him 30 s. per sabbath for his services. At another meeting, held December 8, the town voted to raise the sum of £54, on the polls and ratable property, to pay him up to that date; and appointed a committee to get his terms for the future. On the 30th of December the town voted to offer him £60 a year, and chose Messrs. Jonathan Goodenough, Samuel Warriner, and Doct. Lemuel Dickerman a committee to see if he would accept this amount. March 31, 1795, a meeting being called to see if the town would agree on any method to procure preaching in "Abner Reeve's congregation," and raise money for said purpose, they voted to employ Mr. Wells the ensuing year, and appointed a committee to report to him their action, and ask him to preach in the meeting house on the next sabbath. The next meeting was held September 30, 1795, "at the house of Rutherford Hays, Inn-keeper," to see about building a belfry, partly by "private subscription."† In this and in other things, we now begin to see the coming in of new ideas as to the proper way of managing and supporting religious interests, though the transition from the town to the society is gradual.

The following year, April 20, 1796, it was voted that the town clerk is a proper and legal clerk to serve in society business (as respecting the minister), and voted to employ Mr. Wells on a salary of £80 the ensuing year; the salary to be assessed on the list of 1796 and paid by the first of June, 1797. A meeting of the "Town or Society" being called for May 1, 1797, to see if

* The church or "meeting house" in which the people worshiped during the period of which we now speak, was built, that is, by a vote of the town, a frame was put up, enclosed and made ready to be occupied, in 1785; although the changing of benches for pews, building a belfry, and some other things were not done and finished till some ten or twelve years later (see my "Discourse" of 1876, p. 14). This house stood where the road now runs, nearly in front of the present meeting house, and close by where the octagon, on the northeast side of the street now stands; being "60 feet long, northwest and southeast, 48 feet wide, fronting southwest, and two stories high." This was the only meeting house in town at that time, or till 1816, when another was built and dedicated in the east village.

† See my "Discourse" of 1876, p. 14.

the "Town or Society" will take measures to procure preaching, it was voted to "improve" [employ?] the Rev. William Wells as a preacher the ensuing year, or until the Town shall or may procure a candidate for the gospel ministry in this Town, (if such a thing should happen to be within a year); if the said Wells shall agree to preach at the rate of £80 a year, the same to be raised by assessments. The following year, 1798, the same amount was voted for the same purpose, to be raised in the same way.

A meeting of the inhabitants of the town, except those exempted by law from paying ministers' taxes, having been called for April 15, 1799, and action taken to have preaching the ensuing year, it was voted to hire a candidate to preach on probation for settling, and raise \$400 salary—42 votes in the affirmative and 21 in the negative. Messrs. David Horton, Jonathan Townsend and Samuel Warriner were chosen a committee to take "measures for engaging a candidate for six sabbaths on probation; the Rev. Mr. Wells to be engaged to preach until a candidate could be employed.

A distinct Society, aside from the Town organization, for the support of the gospel, seems now to have come into being and operation, as witness the following record: "April 15, 1799: Whereas, the inhabitants of the Congregational Society have voted to hire a young candidate on probation, to preach in this place, therefore voted *unanimously* that the Rev. William Wells be presented with the grateful thanks of said Society for his former eminent and useful services, together with an expression of their highest wishes for his future happiness and prosperity." A committee having been appointed to wait on Mr. Wells with the above, it was voted that the Town clerk, treasurer, and collector, be the clerk, treasurer, and collector for the Society, and that the selectmen be the assessors for the Society.

But the move for a new minister does not seem to have been successful. For, the next year, March 29, 1800, "The Society for the support of the gospel in this town," having been convened at the meeting house, it was voted to hire the Rev. Mr. Wells for the ensuing year, and raise \$260, the same to be assessed, for the expense of preaching; a committee being chosen to carry this resolve into effect and take care of the prudential affairs of the Society. A year later, March 6, 1801, the Society having met and taken about the same action in respect to a minister and his salary, and having chosen Messrs. Lemuel Whitney, John W. Blake and Doct. G. H. Hall a prudential committee, it was voted to dismiss the fourth article of the warrant in relation to the raising of money for "the encouragement of *social worship* so far as it respects singing."

The first record of the Congregational Church in West Brattleboro, as distinct from the Society or Association of covenanters for the support of the gospel in this town, bears date, the 12th day of June, 1799, at which time "a meeting of the Congregational Church was held at the meeting house, Dea. Samuel

Warriner being moderator and Stephen Greenleaf, Jr., clerk; and one of the items of business transacted was a vote to give the widow E. Rogers, formerly of this town, a letter of dismission and recommendation from this church to some other. The second record bears date November 30, 1802, and speaks of a meeting of the church at the Hall of Mr. Rutherford Hays, where it was opened with prayer by the Rev. Wm. Wells, and a committee, Benj. Baker and Dea. Joshua Wilder, chosen to consider a case of discipline. This case, together with others, constituted the chief business for the next three meetings, though at one of these meetings the clerk was instructed to purchase a Book in which to keep a record of the proceedings of the church at their meetings. It was also voted that the Rev. Wm. Wells be requested (on communion days) to invite any members of regular standing in other churches to commune and partake with this church at the Lord's Table.

At a meeting of the church in January, 1803, which the Rev. Wm. Wells opened by an address to the Throne of Grace, a committee was chosen with discretionary powers to invite such persons of the Baptist persuasion in this town and others who may make application and who are of regular standing in the Baptist Church, to commune and partake with this church at the table of our common Lord. At a previous meeting, December 28, 1802, it was voted almost without a dissenting voice that their opinion of the method of admitting church members is briefly but clearly expressed in the following observations:—"As to candidates for church membership giving an account of their experience, in a minute and circumstantial manner, to the whole body of the church or to a committee appointed by the church,—as it has no foundation (as we can find) in Scripture, it is putting persons to an unnecessary piece of mortification, hurts the modesty of the most diffident and humble, gratifies the spirit of vanity and pride of such as value themselves upon their religious knowledge and attainments, and is the occasion of preventing many worthy persons from church communion." This action of the church was followed by two pages of remarks and explanations by the pastor.

The time had now come for a still further separation to be made between the ordinary and proper affairs of the town and those of the Congregational Society. This is seen in the fact that, with the opening of the following year, 1803, a record of the proceedings of the latter was made in a book of its own, procured for the purpose, and by a clerk of its own appointing. In 1799 the warrant calling a meeting to provide for preaching was addressed to all the inhabitants of the town except those who were legally exempted from paying taxes for this purpose. But the practice of levying a tax upon all except this class, annually, for raising the salary, which had prevailed now some eighteen years, was attended with both difficulty and more or less of discontent; and from this time onward the notification and warrant

is addressed only to the inhabitants and members of the Congregational Society, and the assessment made only upon such members.

The first entry in the "Records of the Congregational Society," as made in their new book, bears date, "Brattleboro, 7th April, 1803," and is, for substance as follows:—Pursuant to a legal request, the inhabitants of the Congregational Society were notified and warned to convene at the meeting house on the 19th of April, inst., at 2 P. M. The meeting, being opened agreeable to warning, proceeded to choose Lemuel Whitney, Esq., moderator, Stephen Greenleaf, clerk, Valentine Harris, treasurer, Messrs. Asa W. Burnap and S. Greenleaf, assessors, and Benj. Baker, collector. Voted to have preaching the ensuing year, to employ Rev. Wm. Wells, and raise \$300 for salary and other expenses; the same to be assessed on the valuation list of 1803, and paid into the treasury on the first day of March, 1804. Rutherford Hays, Esq., Waitstill Orvis, Esq., and Samuel Warriner, Esq., were chosen a committee to have care of the prudentials of the Society, abate such taxes as they might deem necessary, make such repairs in the meeting house as they might think proper, and take such measures with any person or persons, who may do any injury to the meeting house, as they may think expedient. The number of votes in respect to the minister and his salary, as above noticed, was more than twenty-five in the affirmative. The next year, 1804, the number was twenty-nine. In 1807 the number of votes in the affirmative was thirty, being the whole meeting.

At the annual meeting the following year, April 6, 1808, a committee of twenty-one persons volunteered and were chosen to agree with Mr. Wells to supply the pulpit, and be responsible to him to make up any deficiency in the sum of \$266.67, in case the collection thereof should be found impracticable; namely, Samuel Warriner, Jonathan Goodenough, Lemuel Dickerman, John W. Blake, Rutherford Hays, Noah Bennett, Joshua Wilder, Samuel Elliot, Nathaniel Barker, Wm. Whipple, Calvin Harris, Jonathan Dunklee, Jonas Mann, Silas Reeve, Solomon Wilder, James Blakeslee, John Steward, Nathaniel Blakeslee, Safford Bennett, Jonathan Townsend, and Wm. Holton.

The amount raised for the salary and contingent expenses in 1809 was only \$245. In 1810 it was voted to raise \$300; and seventy-three persons, their names given in the Record, voluntarily associated and covenanted, each with the other, by vote, to pay their proportion of all arrearages, in the manner heretofore noticed. In April, 1811, the "Cong'l Soc." met and passed the usual votes, and fifty-seven covenanted, as in former years, to pay arrearages. Similar action was taken in 1812.

At the annual meeting in April, 1813, they voted that the committee use their discretion in hiring some person to supply the pulpit the ensuing year, that two cents on the dollar of the list be assessed to defray expenses, and that the committee ascertain of Mr. Wells if he can supply the pulpit any part of the

ensuing year. In September, another meeting was called to inquire of the committee in relation to the past, and also in respect to future prospects, and to instruct them as to employing a preacher. This meeting having been adjourned, a committee was chosen to wait on Mr. Wells and have a full explanation with him upon his present connection with the parish, to learn from him his expectations and views about his continuing to supply the desk, solicit his aid in procuring a candidate, if agreeable, and to report to an adjourned meeting. Having met as adjourned, October 4, it was voted to employ some suitable person as a candidate between this and the first of December next. At a meeting held December 6, a vote was passed to circulate a subscription paper and meet again in four weeks; but of this we find no report.

The following year, 1814,* April 4, the usual officers being chosen, it was voted to see if any measures could be adopted to unite the town in employing a candidate, and to raise money for his support. Having voted to raise the money and employ a candidate, they instructed a committee to draft articles, and make assessments on valuation list of subscribers, also to receive donations from those who do not associate, if donations should be offered. It was also voted that two-thirds of the people subscribing shall be sufficient to hire or dismiss a minister, and that the articles shall be binding on the subscribers no longer than during the life of the first settled minister. May 11, the Associates in covenant, or subscribers to articles of Association for supporting the gospel, met and voted, by large majority, to raise two cents on the dollar on valuation list of Associates, and instructed the trustees to use their endeavors and discretion to supply the pulpit the present summer.

Judging from the Records of the church, it would seem that matters of discipline had a large place in the proceedings of that body during these years. July 4, 1805, a case of discipline having been considered, it was voted that any occasional communicant shall be indulged to sit and commune with this church for the term of one year, after which time they shall be urged to remove their relations to this church, unless some special reason shall be assigned to the contrary. In 1809 there were two additions to the church, which made a membership of 135. In 1811, October 13, a meeting was called by request of one of the members of the church, who submitted a paper to the effect that he regarded the system of doctrine called Calvinism, as set forth by some of the neighboring churches, to be according to the Scriptures, and that to explain away or deny any of these doctrines tends to unbelief and self-righteousness;—therefore requested that the church would commit him to the care and fellowship of the church in Marlboro, under the pastoral care of Rev. G. C. Lyman. The petition was unanimously rejected by the church, but the petitioner allowed full liberty to commune with the church in

* See Appendix II, on W. Wells.

Marlboro without abridging his privilege to commune and fellowship with the church in Brattleboro.

On the 20th of June, 1814, "the Congregational or Presbyterian Society" met, as warned, 93 out of 130 Associates being present, and of these, 91 voted to invite the Rev. Mr. Burge to settle and be installed among them as the pastor of the church in Brattleboro, and continue in that relation during his life, or until he shall be dismissed by the Society. At an adjourned meeting, July 2, it was voted that the salary should be \$600 annually, the trustees to raise and collect the same by assessments, deducting what may accrue from donations. The salary was to be paid on the first of January each year, and the stated services to be at the meeting house, lectures and funerals excepted,—108 out of 111, in the affirmative.

At a meeting of the church at the meeting house, dated Brattleboro, June 30, 1814, Dea. Nathaniel Samson* moderator, a committee of two members of the church, Doct. Lemuel Dickerman and Dea. Nathaniel Samson, was chosen to join the "Trustees of the Brattleboro Congregational or Presbyterian Society for supporting the gospel," to wait on Rev. Caleb Burge with a united call and invitation for him to accept the pastoral care and perform the ministerial labors for the church and people in this town, by being installed as their pastor and minister; and also to express the satisfaction of this church with his performances in the pulpit as a candidate, and their sincere desire to reap further benefits from his continued labors of love. At a joint meeting of the church and the Trustees of the Society, July 25, 1814, it was unanimously agreed to accept the answer of the Rev. C. Burge to the invitation to be installed as their minister, and further agreed to send to the following churches for assistance, by their pastors and delegates, in the installation, namely:—the churches in Hatfield, Newport, N. H., New Fane, Halifax, Shelburne, Westminster, Dummerston, Marlboro, Bernardston, and Greenfield, together with the Rev. William Wells of this town. Of the proceedings of this council I find no account in the Records of the church. September 15, 1814, Dr. Lemuel Dickerman was chosen a delegate of the church to attend, with the Rev. C. Burge, at the Consociation in Dummerston, that this church may be united with and become a member of said Consociation.

At a meeting of the society, April 10, 1815, the following officers were chosen:—Jonas Mann moderator; Stephen Greenleaf clerk; Silas Reeve treasurer; Nathaniel Samson, Waitstill Orvis and Valentine Harris trustees; John Kelsey, Abisha Samson and Reuben Stearnes committee; Russell Hays collector, to be paid six dollars for his services; salary and other expenses \$600. In 1816, November 25, it was moved by Col.

*The names of the Deacons of this church previous to 1820 were: Joshua Wilder, Jacob Spaulding, Samuel Warriner, Nathaniel Samson; the names of their successors, down to the present date, 1894, are: Russell Hayes, David Carpenter, Clark Jacobs, Joseph Wilder, Preston F. Perry, S. Gilbert Smith, Charles S. Clark, Cotton Mather, Hervey C. Harris.

Daniel Stewart that the question be tried relative to the second article of the warrant, viz: To dismiss the Rev. C. Burge. The yeas and nays were taken by dividing the house, and only eleven voted for dismissal. The question was thus decided in the negative. In 1817 the inhabitants comprising "the First Congregational Society" in Brattleboro were warned to meet at the "West Meeting house" in said Brattleboro. For salary and other expenses they raised \$550. The year following, in April, they voted to raise \$500. Six months later, October 5, a meeting was called to see if the existing relation with Mr. Burge could be dissolved; and a committee was chosen to confer with him on the necessity of dissolving the contract now existing by covenant between him and the society, and the making of a new contract on the ground of a subscription for his salary. The meeting was adjourned twice and then dissolved.

At a church meeting held in July, 1818, Rev. C. Burge moderator, the church adopted a covenant and a confession of faith,—both given in the Records of the church,—the following persons being present: Dea. Joshua Wilder, Dea. Nathaniel Samson, William Bigelow, Moses Nash, Ebenezer Hawes, Jonas Rice, Jonathan Herriek, Thaddeus Miller, Rutherford Hays, Isaiah Richardson, David Harris, Silas Reeve, Nathaniel Blakeslee, Samuel Bailey, Jonathan Dunklee, Stephen Greenleaf.* At this meeting it was voted to admit members only when they have been previously examined by the pastor and brethren of the church and duly propounded; that public offences require public confession; and that credible evidence of piety ought to be made the ground of fellowship and christian communion.

The Rev. Caleb Burge, who was installed in August, 1814, seems to have been dismissed during the year 1819, but at what particular date does not appear. During his ministry of five years no less than 96 persons were admitted to the church; 3 in 1814, 26 in 1815, 24 in 1816, 39 in 1817, and 4 in 1818.† At a church meeting held in the meeting house, September 9, 1819, Dea. Nathaniel Samson, Silas Reeve, and Asa Stoddard were chosen a committee to aid and assist in settling difficulties. Cases of discipline were considered, and the meeting adjourned to September 30, when cases of discipline were taken up again, one of which was: Whether a member be guilty of a breach of moral obligation and violate his contract in evading his obligation in putting his property out of the reach of covenant taxation. This was decided in the affirmative by a unanimous vote of sixteen. Three subsequent meetings, one at the school room in the Academy Hall, and one at the house of Anthony Van Doorn, were devoted chiefly to matters of discipline. August 7, 1820, a meeting was held to consider a case of discipline, and a vote passed

* Among these we find the name of the brother who, in 1811, asked to be let off from this church, that he might go where he thought he could get sounder doctrine.

† See Appendix III., Caleb Burge, etc.

making choice of the Rev. Mr. Tufts of Wardsboro as moderator of this church for the time being, or until the settlement of a minister in this parish.

The Congregational Society in the Western section of Brattleboro met, April 12, 1819, and voted to raise \$500 for salary. September 12, the Society and others who might be disposed to aid, assist, or encourage the preaching of the gospel in the West Parish in Brattleboro, met at the Academy Building to consider the expediency of engaging a candidate to preach the ensuing year; also the expediency of reorganizing the Society. This meeting was adjourned to October 4, to convene at the Counting Room of General Mann's store. Meeting here, at the time named, they adjourned to the Academy, and adopted articles, now read, for a new Society, and adjourned for a week. But of this meeting I find no record.

A meeting of the Society was held April 3d, 1820, at the house of Bixby and Barrett, and a vote passed to issue a subscription paper to raise money for the support of the gospel; and, on the 10th, having raised \$431, and voted to continue the effort, they instructed the Trustees to have the Desk supplied with a candidate. June 15, they expressed themselves satisfied with the performances of Mr. Hitchcock, and wished he might be engaged for a longer time. September 4, they met, and, having chosen officers, among whom were Nathaniel Samson, Stephen Greenleaf, Rutherford Hayes, Lemuel Dickerman, Moses Van Doorn and Anthony Van Doorn, voted full satisfaction with the ministerial performances of Jedadiah Stark, expressed a wish to call and settle him, and voted to raise a salary of \$400 per annum. September 26, they met and chose Samuel Clark, Esq., W. Orvis, and J. Kelsey a committee to confer with the church committee for calling and settling Mr. Stark. February 19, 1821, the society voted to raise money by subscription to pay the expenses of the ordination of Mr. Stark.

October 5, 1820, a church meeting was held in the West Parish meeting house, 22 members present, Rev. Mr. McGee in the chair, and a vote passed, 20 in the affirmative, to give Mr. Jedadiah L. Stark a call to the pastoral care of the church, the Society concurring; and Rutherford Hayes, Dea. Samson, and Dr. Dickerman were chosen a committee for this purpose. November 22, in joint committee of the church and society, it was unanimously agreed to accept the terms proposed in the answer of Mr. J. L. Stark, to be ordained and settled as their gospel minister, and agreed to send letters missive to the following churches; namely, Halifax, Brattleboro East Parish, Marlboro, Wardsboro, Dummerston, Putney, Winchester, Heath, Canterbury East Parish, Connecticut, and the Rev. Calvin Park, Professor in the college, Rhode Island. January 2, 1821, this council met at the house of Barrett and Bixby, and chose Rev. T. H. Wood moderator, and Rev. Hosea Beckley scribe. Having examined the candidate and expressed themselves satisfied as to

his fitness for the ministry, they voted to proceed to ordain him to-morrow (January 3), at 11 A. M., at which time the service was performed.

In coming now to notice some of the fruits of this Church and Society for the period* of which we speak, aside from maintaining its own life and growth, completing its house of worship, and furnishing a large and rich amount of material for another church, and a good man to go with it to organize it, and minister to it for a time, in the East village, a more particular, individual mention should be made of some of the good men and women to whom this parent church and society, meantime, gave birth and bent for various kinds of good work, both here at home and in foreign fields, as teachers, ministers and missionaries. Nor should we fail to mention some who distinguished themselves in other important professions and pursuits, not here only, but in other states and in other lands. As belonging to the class first named, teachers, preachers, etc., I find the following :—

Salmon Bennett, son of Noah Bennett, Sr., who was born here, on the "River Road," January 6, 1790, graduated from Middlebury college in 1815, studied Theology with Rev. E. H. Newton of Marlboro, was ordained pastor in Winchester, N. H., 1817, sermon by Rev. Caleb Burge. He afterwards preached a year in Roxbury, N. H., nine years in Marlboro, N. H., then in Boscowen, N. H., then in Halifax, Vt., till 1852, when he went to Chautauqua, York State, where he died in 1882.

Edmund Frost—"left handed, sure to hit a bird or a squirrel every time he tried"—was born in Brattleboro, November 16, 1791, graduated from Middlebury college in 1820, from Andover Theological Seminary in 1823, ordained in Salem, Mass., in September, and went out at once as a missionary of the American Board to Bombay, where he died October 18, 1825.

Alonzo Church was born on a farm, said to be the "Dwight Goodenough farm," just above the Brick yard in West Brattleboro, April 9, 1793. His father, Reuben Church, and his grandfather did their state and country good service in the Revolutionary war. Alonzo took a college course of study at Middlebury, where he paid his way by teaching school in the winters, and where he graduated in 1816; soon after which he went to Putnam, Georgia, and established a classical school in 1818. Joining the Presbyterian church, he was soon ordained a minister of that denomination, but continued to teach and became a Professor of Mathematics and Astronomy in Franklin College, Ga., in 1819; then President of the same in 1829, in which office he continued till his death in 1862. In 1830, his Alma Mater bestowed upon him the honorary title of A.M. and D.D.

Roswell Harris, son of William and Abiah Brooks Harris, was born March 6, 1798, fitted for college with the Rev. C. Burge,

* This period includes the history of this church during the twenty years of Mr. Wells' pastorate, or till he and some of its members withdrew to form another church in the East village, i. e., till 1814; also the pastorate of Caleb Burge from 1814 to 1819, together with an occasional reference to some events under the pastorate of Mr. Reeve.

graduated from Middlebury 1821 ; was Principal of our Academy 1821-1823 ; graduated from Andover 1826 ; was licensed by the Windham Association at Halifax 1826 ; Pastor in Salisbury, Mass., 1826-1828 ; Principal of Hampton, N. H., Academy 1828-1833, West Brattleboro Academy 1833-1837, and 1845-1853, and occasionally in subsequent years till he died here in 1871.

Edward R. Tyler, son of Royall and Mary P. Tyler, was born in Guilford, August 3, 1800, but in March, 1801, moved from there with his parents to Brattleboro, to the now Smith-Thurber farm, near the cemetery on the "Hill," where the first meeting house stood ; graduated with honors at Yale 1825 ; studied Theology at Andover, served as an able pastor at Middletown, Conn., 1827-1831, and at Colebrook 1833-1836 ; was agent of the Anti-Slavery Society a year ; editor of the *Connecticut Observer*, 1838-1842 ; editor of the *New Englander*, 1842-1848, in New Haven, where he died in 1848.

Joseph D. Tyler, a brother of Edward R., was born in Brattleboro, September 4, 1804 ; graduated from Yale 1829, and became a clergyman of the Episcopal church, but gave his life chiefly to the instruction of the deaf and dumb, first at Hartford, Conn., but chiefly as Principal of the Virginia Deaf and Dumb Asylum, in Staunton, Va., where he died in 1852.

George P. Tyler, brother of Edward and Joseph, was born December 10, 1809, graduated from Yale 1836, from Union Theological Seminary, N. Y., 1841, and received the honorary degree of D.D. from Middlebury 1864. He was ordained and installed pastor of a Presbyterian church in Lowville, N. Y., 1841, and from 1853 to 1866 was pastor of the Brattleboro East village Congregational church, from which he went to Olivet Presbyterian church, Lansingburg, N. Y., where he still remains, being now pastor Emeritus.

Thomas P. Tyler, D.D., brother of Edward, Joseph and George, was born November 20, 1815, graduated from Trinity College, Hartford, Conn., had charge of Brattleboro Academy for a time, became an Episcopal clergyman, was engaged in ministerial service for some years in the state of New York, and died here in Brattleboro some two or three years since.

John Calvin Holbrook, son of Dea. John and Sarah K. Holbrook, was born January 7, 1808. He studied two years at Hopkins Academy in Hadley, Mass., one year with Rev. E. H. Newton, Marlboro, and two years at the Military Academy, Norwich, Vt. ; was, for a time, clerk in Holbrook & Fessenden's book-store ; then a successor to his father in publishing books and making paper ; then a member of a publishing house in Boston ; then engaged with others in publishing the *Comprehensive Commentary* and other works in Brattleboro. Nor was it very long before he resolved to give up secular pursuits and devote himself to the ministry, went to Iowa and, in 1842, became pastor of a church in Dubuque. To serve this calling, the ministerial, in various forms and places, as pastor, correspondent for papers, or

as agent, secretary, or director, for educational, or missionary enterprises, as in Iowa, Chicago, Boston, New York, or Europe, and now in California, he has continued up to the present time.

Samuel Hayes Elliot, son of Hon. S. Elliot, who died here in West Brattleboro, December 10, 1845, was born October 23, 1809, prepared for college here at the Brattleboro Academy, graduated from Union College 1841, studied Theology at Yale, was pastor, first in Woodbridge, Conn., then at Jamestown, N. Y., then at Westville, Conn., from 1842 till 1855. He then gave up the ministry by reason of bronchial difficulties, and engaged in mercantile business in New Haven till his death, September 11, 1869.

Lewis E. Sikes was born in Northampton, Mass., October 19, 1810, but came with his parents to Brattleboro the following year, prepared for college here at the Academy, graduated from Union College 1841, studied Theology at Auburn and New Haven, served as an acting pastor two years in Townshend, Vt., then went West, where he engaged and continued in ministerial work for a third of a century, as in Illinois, Michigan, and Kansas, and died in the latter state in 1892.

Thomas K. Fessenden, son of Joseph and S. L. H. Fessenden, was born here September 10, 1813, began his studies with Rev. E. H. Newton, and continued them at Phillips Academy, and at Pittsfield, Mass.; graduated from Williams College 1833, after which he studied Theology at Andover, Yale, and Princeton; was licensed by our Windham Association, and served as a pastor in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and York State, till 1854; was a member of the Connecticut State Legislature three years; then established an Industrial School for Girls in Connecticut, where hundreds of girls were guided to good homes and noble lives; then raised \$300,000 for Hampton Institute, Va.; then gave himself to every good work where he was now residing, Farmington, till he went to his rest and reward, January 18, 1894.

James Herrick was born March 19, 1814, though not in Brattleboro. But from his father and grandparents being natives of this town, and from his making this his home for many years, he always looked upon himself and was looked upon by others as belonging here. It was here that he prepared for Williams College, where he graduated 1841, and from Andover in 1845; then went as a missionary of the American Board to Southern India, where he labored for forty years; then took up his abode here in West Brattleboro till his death, November 30, 1891.

Hiram Farnsworth, a native of this town, and a fellow student with Elliot, Sikes, Herrick, T. P. Barber,* myself and others here

* Theodore P. Barber, who fitted for college here, graduated from Yale 1842, started out as a tutor in Maryland, but soon became an Episcopal clergyman, and labored as such nearly fifty years in that State, should be included in this list, only he was not born till several years after his parents, Dea. Anson and Louisa P. Barber, withdrew from this first church and cast in their lot with the second in East Brattleboro, where they resided. For a like reason his younger sister, Louisa, for some years a distinguished teacher of a select school in Brattleboro, now the wife of Thomas Doane, Esq., Charlestown, Mass., is not included in our regular list. Some other names that would seem, by some, to belong here, are excluded in the same way.

at the Academy, having completed his college course, gave himself to teaching, at one time in New London, Conn.; after which he served as an officer in the Union army. The last I heard of him he was a highly esteemed citizen and postmaster in Topeka, Kansas.

Another West Brattleboro boy of the times of which I speak, who gave himself to the ministry, was Timothy Root, son of the Timothy Root who succeeded Bixby & Barrett in keeping the "Stewart Hotel," where the "Clark Block" now stands.

Still another child of this church in those early days, who, having attended the Academy here for a time and completed his studies, became a minister and went South to labor, was a Mr. Salisbury.

And still another, reputed to have been of this class, was Waitstill Orvis, who was born on a farm near the school house in District No. 11. But of this man, and a few others that might be named, such as Bliss Burnap and James Blakeslee, our information is too limited to make us quite sure of their properly belonging to the number of which we speak.

Nor was that term of two pastorates, that period of 25 years, now under review, other than rich in the goodly number of educated, honored, useful ladies to whom it gave origin, impress, inspiration for a blessed service in the world, as lady teachers, or as the wives of professional and other distinguished men in the various walks of life. As among this class we name a few:—

Sarah M. Woodman, of this village, who was among the first to be educated here at our Academy, married Rev. E. W. Plumb, D.D., a graduate of Middlebury College, 1824. Principal of Brattleboro Academy, 1824–1826, afterwards Principal of other Academies, and sometimes pastor of some church, till his death in 1879.

Two younger sisters, or half sisters,—Eliza and Fanny Woodman,—were also born and educated here, and married each a medical man, two brothers, by the name of Houghton from Halifax.

Laura A. Newton, youngest daughter of Major C. and Betsey Newton, born in Brattleboro May 29, 1807, was married, in 1835, to Rev. R. V. Hall, whose widely extended usefulness was due in large measure to her aid till she died, 1856, at Stanstead, P. Q.

Of the daughters of Rutherford and Chloe Smith Hays (Hayes), Sr., Polly, the eldest, born here near the close of last century, married John Noyes, a graduate of Yale, who taught in Chesterfield Academy, became a minister, then a merchant, and eventually a member of congress. Belinda married the Hon. Samuel Elliot of this town. Clarissa married Ayer Moody, a graduate of Dartmouth College. Sarah married Dyer Bancroft, a graduate of Williams College and a lawyer.

Ellen E. Lord was born in Putney in the early part of this century, but came at an early age with her mother to live in this village, where the writer now resides. Getting her education here at the Academy, she eventually married the Principal, Rev.

Thomas C. Biscoe, who was soon settled as a pastor in Grafton, Mass.

Sophia P. Eaton, born about 1808, educated here, having her home a mile out of the village on South street, was, at one time Preceptress of the Ladies' Department of the Academy, when Mr. Harris had charge of it; after which she married Rev. Mr. Perry, and went to live in Standish, Maine.

Amelia S. Tyler, daughter of the Hon. Royall Tyler, Sr., was born 1807, and in 1826 became Principal of a Female Seminary of a high order in Brattleboro.

Elizabeth H. Crosby, born here in West Brattleboro, January 27, 1817, having taken a liberal course of study here and at an Academy in Westfield, Mass., and taught several years, was married to Rev. James Herrick in 1845, and with him went at once to Southern India where they gave some 40 years to mission work under the auspices of the American Board.

Ruth Dunklee, born in West Brattleboro, February 4, 1817, having taken a course of study in part here, and in part at Mount Holyoke Seminary, eventually married Rev. Nelson Barbour, who, a graduate of Middlebury College, was first settled at Saxton's River in 1836, and afterwards a pastor in Dummerston and in other places in Vermont, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts.

Susan E. Arms, daughter of Dr. Willard Arms, who practiced medicine here some forty years, having graduated from the Brattleboro Academy, married Rev. Edward Wright, a graduate of Yale, and, from 1843 to 1852, pastor of a church in West Haven, Conn. Here they soon established "Oak Hill Ladies' Seminary," of which Mrs. Wright became Principal at the death of her husband in 1852. After some 25 years of successful teaching, during which time she married Rev. Mr. Atwater, she withdrew from that Institution and gave herself for a time to mission work in the South.

But a notice of the men and women who had their origin and early training in the families of this church and Society during the quarter of a century now before us, as educators, ministers, missionaries, should be so extended as to include other children which these families were bringing forth and preparing, at that time, to go out and bless the world, as in other professions and pursuits, legal, medical, mechanic, agricultural, commercial, or other of the important callings of men in the various walks of life; of whom the following are a few:—

Russell Hayes, eldest son of Rutherford and Chloe Smith Hayes, was born here in 1784, and spent a long life in most useful service as a farmer, helpful neighbor, Deacon in the church, and public benefactor in every direction, especially in respect to education and religion.

Rutherford Hayes, Jr., brother of Russell, and the father of President R. B. Hayes, was born here, January 4, 1787, and entered early upon a successful mercantile life. In 1817, he

removed with his family to Delaware, Ohio, where he became identified with the Presbyterian church.

Wm. R. Hayes, a brother of Russell and Rutherford, Jr., was born in 1804, graduated from Yale 1825, studied law at New Haven, and began the practice of law in Brattleboro in 1828. His heart was soon set on becoming a minister, but failing health prevented his preparing for that work, and he sought a milder climate in Barbadoes, where he became U. S. Consul. He devoted his life to the best of Christian enterprise, especially to the temperance cause and the abolition of slavery, and left a legacy of \$1,000 to the Academy here in his native village.

John R. Blake, born in 1793, was distinguished for a widely extended mercantile experience, for his efforts to have Brattleboro connected by steam with Boston and the rest of the world, for banking interests and operations in Brattleboro and Boston, and for legislative enterprise and activity as a member of the Legislature for several terms at Montpelier.

John S. Tyler, oldest son of Hon. Royall and Mary Tyler, was born in Guilford in 1796, but came in early childhood with his parents to live in Brattleboro. At the age of 14 he went to Boston and devoted his life in large measure to mercantile and marine affairs, became distinguished as a military general, held many civil offices of a high order, and was, for four years, a member of the Legislature of Massachusetts.

Josiah Goodhue, born in 1794, married Sarah Edwards in 1815, a descendant of Rev. Jonathan Edwards of Northampton, and made himself eminently useful in the service of the town. One of his daughters married W. P. Cune, at one time President of the Brattleboro Bank; another married ex-Governor Holbrook; another Dr. Hall of Northampton; and another, first, A. H. Bull, Esq., and, for a second husband, Dr. Chapin, of Flatbush, N. Y.

Joseph Steen, Esq., born March 2, 1797, at first a house-builder with his father, then a printer with Holbrook & Fessenden, and then, from 1830 to the close of his life, a book-seller, was one of the strongest, most highly esteemed and useful of Christian men and citizens.

C. C. Frost, born in 1805, had only common school advantages in his youth, and made the shoemaker's trade his business for life; and yet, with such diligence and success did he give himself at intervals to the study of different languages and the natural sciences, especially Botany, that he became, eventually, a world-wide authority in some of these branches, and had various degrees of honor conferred upon him by American colleges and some of the learned societies of Europe.

Wm. F. Richardson, one of the eldest of a large family of interesting children, sons and daughters of Isaiah R., was born here, July 20, 1816; acquired his education in part at the "old Brick school house," now no more, and in part at the Brattleboro Academy; after which he entered, in a quiet way, upon a useful, enterprising business career, in which he has been highly success-

ful, and yet found time to fill and honor several important public offices, as lister and selectman for the town, and still lives to enjoy the increasing esteem in which he has been held through all these years.

William S. Newton comes so virtually within the limits we are observing that we include his name with others. His maternal ancestors were distinguished among the early settlers of this now west parish; his mother, Betsy Harris, was sister of the ever honored "Preceptor Harris" of Brattleboro Academy; his wife was a native of this town: here at the Academy he was educated; here in Brattleboro he began business as a grocer, and continued in this trade till his town business left no time for it. He was elected town clerk in 1863, justice of the peace in the same year, Trustee of U. S. Dep. Money in 1870, Trustee in the Vermont Savings Bank 1881, and Vice-President of the same in 1892; in all which important offices he still continues, faithful, efficient, useful as ever.

George Baty Blake was born in 1808, and, being left an orphan in early life, had his home, for a time, in Stephen Greenleaf's family in this village. He eventually became eminently noted for his commercial, religious, patriotic, and philanthropic ability and enterprise. He often visited Europe for the purchase of goods, and there made the acquaintance of such men as Peabody, Cobden, and the Barings; became partner in several commercial firms; took a deep interest in the welfare of the Union during our late civil war, and ever had the highest regard for the various duties and interests of religion.

Royall Tyler, 2d, one of that large family of 12 children, among whom were Edward, Joseph, George, Thomas, and Miss Amelia, of whom I have spoken, was born April 19, 1812, graduated from Harvard 1834, admitted to the bar 1838, and made Judge of Probate in 1846. He is still with us (1894) highly esteemed, and doing good work as Judge in the Probate office.

Frederick Holbrook, the youngest of Dea. John Holbrook's children, of whom the Rev. John C., already named, was one, was born February 15, 1814. He has ever been interested in agricultural studies and pursuits, towards the advancement of which his travels in Europe, some years since, have been very helpful. As a legislator at Montpelier and a Governor of the state during our late civil war, he has done the town, the state and the nation most efficient, useful service. He is still with us, held in honor by all who know him, and by his happy influence, his council and cheer, prayers and sympathies, is still doing good work for the Master he serves.

Seth N. Herrick, whose honored ancestry here in West Brattleboro dates back four generations, was born here September 20, 1819. His early training and experience as a farmer's boy, a school master, and a student at Brattleboro Academy were a helpful preparation for his soon having a military appointment under Governor Slade; for serving the town as first con-

stable and collector for fifteen years, as Deputy Sheriff for thirty years, as High Sheriff two years, town representative at Montpelier two years, as chairman of the Board of Selectmen twenty years ; for serving as a member of the corporating Board of the Brattleboro Savings Bank, and being its Treasurer for its first three years, and being still a member of its Board of Trustees, and for his being set in other offices of trust and honor ; all which are a pleasing proof of the hold which his faithful, active, useful life has had, and still has, upon the confidence and esteem of his fellow citizens of all classes in this goodly town of his nativity.

In this list of now more than forty, I have named a few, only a few, of the able and successful men and women who had their stamp and start in life in the families of this church and society, chiefly during the twenty-five years now under review ; that is, some half a dozen of them under Pastor Reeve's ministrations, the rest of them virtually under Dr. Wells' pastorate of twenty years in this first church, and Mr. Burge's of five.

Surely, facts and thoughts, such as these, put emphasis and a happy comment upon the words of our fathers, when, in March, 1794, " being impressed," as they said, " with a sense that it is of the utmost importance to the welfare of ourselves and families, and highly essential to the peace and good order of the inhabitants in general, that the precepts of Christianity and the rules of morality should be publickly and uniformly inculcated among us," they called a meeting of the inhabitants of the town to be held April 2, just 100 years ago, to see, among other things, " whether said inhabitants would agree to employ the Rev. William Wells to preach with us."

I have now briefly sketched some of the more manifest toils and trials, struggles and triumphs of the fathers and mothers of this church and society in the generation that closed the last century and opened the present ; as, in a previous " Discourse," I briefly sketched some of these things in our ancestors of the preceding generation. And yet, how little have I done, how little could I do, except to give the framework, an outline of their lives and labors, and note some of the more tangible results ! To sketch their every-day life, their fireside enjoyments, their social experiences, private enterprises, successes, and reverses, or to measure the power of the gospel in promoting order, industry, kindly feeling in their large and ever growing families, in promoting peace, security, prosperity in the community at large, and in fitting them to send out happy, saving influences that should not only come down to us of to-day, but go abroad into all the earth ; to sketch all this and the hard work they did in their long summer days, or the books they read, the visits they made, and the suppers they had, during their long winter evenings ; to speak of the studies pursued and the training given in the schools, to which they sent their many children, or of the annual thanksgivings that brought them together as families in mutual gladness,

and in praise to God for his goodness ; to describe the usefulness of their "Ladies' Benevolent Society," in going to which, "in the summer time, each one of them wore a green silk calash, covering a lace cap, white as the new fallen snow ;" or speak of their singing schools, or of their mid-week and other meetings for prayer and conference, and tell how much of precious helpfulness the presence, the preaching, the prayers, the counsel and the cheer of the pastor and his deacons, and of all who loved the Lord and the gates of Zion, brought to these institutions and enterprises, would take long and be hard, even if it were possible.

I have given you the names of the ministers, the deacons, and of some others, in those early days, but not their sermons and prayers, their exhortations and witnessings, when their souls, all astrir with emotion, all aglow with the truth and Spirit of God, "flushed their cheeks and flashed from their eyes, when their burdened, loving hearts heaved with sighs and swum out in tears." The awakenings, conversions, reformations, wrought here in this way, in those olden times, by the Spirit of God through the earnest words and prayers of our fathers and mothers, were too spiritual, subjective, hidden, except as seen in their fruitage, their effects on life and character, for us to describe, till we can tell "whence cometh and whither goeth" that wind, the sound of which we hear, and the purifying, animating effects of which we feel ; or till we can print or paint the sunbeams, which bring us the light and life, warmth and growth, sweetness and beauty, in which we rejoice. What the gospel of God our Saviour did, in its faithful ministration and spiritual working, year by year, during that fourth of a century, how it met the needs of many souls, held back the young from the dangers to which youth and inexperience are exposed, and led them in the paths of righteousness ; how it girded parents and others in the maturity of their years for the burdens and cares of life, sustained the aged in the decline of their days ; how much it did to mold the minds of all, to inspire them with desires for a pure and noble life and bring them into communion with God, to comfort them in sorrow, cheer them in death, and prepare them for a blissful immortality, could be more easily described by the pen of the recording angel than by any human mind or hand.

But enough has been said to show how great is the debt of honor and thanks we, of to-day, owe our ancestors of a century ago, for the world-wide service they rendered the cause of truth and righteousness, education and enterprise, in those primitive, formative days of this parish, this town, this State ; also what cause we have for gratitude and praise to God for guiding and blessing those from whom we are descended, in their efforts to plant and perpetuate the institutions of religion, learning and humanity, for us and our children. Nor can we fail to see, with gratitude and gladness, in the subject before us, how great is the inspiring proof that God takes a special delight in the gates of Zion.

APPENDIX I.

When the Congregational Church in West Brattleboro was nearing what was believed or supposed to be its centennial, its pastor repeatedly asked and urged me to write its history. Knowing, as I did, that this would be no easy thing, I hesitated to undertake it, but finally consented and entered at once upon the work of gathering the needed material. Having gone carefully through all the "Records" that could be found in Brattleboro, whether of the town, the "Covenanters," the "Church" and "Society," or other organization, I borrowed "Records" from some of the neighboring towns. I consulted the "Records" of the county "Consociation," and of the State "Convention." I went to Montpelier and took a look into the "Records" of the State, and into some of the papers, pamphlets and books of the "Vt. Historical Society," out of which I gathered helpful material. I found something in Burlington, and something in the New Hampshire State "Records," in Concord; something in the writings and kind personal letters of the historians of the Vt. Churches, Messrs. White and Wild. I learned what I could from books, pamphlets, papers, manuscripts, local or otherwise, here in Brattleboro, and from correspondence with the kindred and friends of such pastors of the church as had ceased from their labors and gone to their reward; also from "Diaries" of certain intelligent, observing church members, who had departed this life in years ago; and especially from some of the oldest inhabitants of the town, most of whom soon went to their rest.

From such of this material as had respect to the first quarter of a century of the church, or till the close of Pastor Reeve's labors in 1793, I prepared a "Discourse," which was delivered here, Dec. 31, 1876, and afterwards published in pamphlet form. This "Second Discourse" continues that "Early History" for another quarter of a century, beginning, where the former ended, with April, 1794, just 100 years ago. Of that former "Discourse," of 1876, Rev. C. H. Merrill was kind enough to speak, in his "Historical Address" of 1886, (p. 6), and say: "It contains, in its extracts from the old records, nearly all that is extant previous to the beginning of the century. The instances in which I have had occasion to supplement it, after a careful examination of the originals, are few and unimportant." And yet I will here add a few notes.

In respect to the "glebe" and other lands that were included in grants of the Provincial or other Government for religious and educational purposes, spoken of in my first "Discourse," p. 19, and in other places, the following facts which I have from a learned friend, may help to a better understanding of the subject.

"The glebe became, by several laws of the State, the first of

which was passed in 1779, school lands; and neither the first settled minister, nor any religious society had anything to do with them.

The shares were of about 360 acres each, divided into two 100 acre lots and one about 160 acre lot. The first settled minister lived on one of the 100 acre lots, and probably sold the other two.

One of the 100 acre school lots, originally glebe lots, had its S.W. corner at the old graveyard back of Mrs. Bigelow's, and extended north 160 rods and east 100 rods.

The lots were not located together, but as they happened to be drawn, which was done soon after the charter was granted."

The "poreh," of which I spoke in that first "Discourse," (p. 19), was not taken from the house on the "Hill," but from the first that was built here in the village, a little north of where the present house stands. The mistake came from the understanding of some that the words, "old meeting house," "first meeting house," &c., referred to this, which was built in 1785, and not to the older house built in 1768.

As to the exact site of that first meeting house on the "Hill," a mile and a half, or more, west of north from Centerville, recent researches seem to point to some other place than the "spot" named in my first "Discourse;" though one of the objections to that, as being, probably, "the place of a house which had a cellar," is not conclusive. One of the oldest of my informants, who lived all his days near the cemetery, thought "the site was five or six rods westward from the present cemetery wall, and that the house, a gambrel-roofed building, was, at first, a dwelling house, and so had a cellar." Another, whose ancestors lived near the meeting house, and whose father used to point out the site to him, puts it much farther away, 40 or 50 rods to the westward, in what is now a pine grove, and says: "The place is still marked and known by the corner stones of the foundation still remaining where the building stood." But another of the old men, whom I knew in my younger days, once said he knew the exact site because of the corner stones that still remained; but on going, many years ago, with a now elderly neighbor of mine, to show him the spot, failing to find the stones, said they must have been taken away and put into a wall that had been recently built not far away.

Another, who is distinguished for general accuracy, a keen historic taste, and for a careful examination of this point, having given much study to this and kindred questions in the early settlement of the town, and having, withal, the best available means for such study, as in early surveys, which give "the center line" of the town, the site of the cemetery and common, and the laying out of roads in their relation to the center line, the cemetery, meeting house, and other points, in making public some of the results of his studies, two or three years since, placed the site of the meeting house "in what is now the open field, south of the cemetery, and a little to the west of the southwest

corner of the cemetery;" "a little west of where the southwest corner of the cemetery now is;" "in the open field southwest of the southwest corner of the cemetery." It will be noticed that these designations agree together, but they overlook the fact that the first limits of the cemetery were small as compared with the present; several additions having been made, in subsequent years, on the north and west sides of the original yard, which put the present western boundary of the cemetery farther west than it was at first. Making allowance for this, the above quoted writer now puts the site "as far east as the southwest corner of the present cemetery." And, as the road went between the southern boundary of the cemetery and the meeting house, if we extend the present western boundary southward some four or five rods, and then turn some two or three rods to the east, it would seem that we should come to the exact site.

Some of the reasons for the conclusion to which the above writer comes, in respect to the place and time of building the first meeting house in Brattleboro, are given in the extract which I here make from his article in the "Phoenix" of January 26, as follows:—

"Where and when the first meeting-house in this town was built has been the subject of some debate, as shown by the letter of Rev. Mr. Grout. The town was surveyed and allotted under the New Hampshire charter. Five acres were reserved for a common and burying-ground on the top of meeting-house hill, south of the centre line, and marked on the plan. They included the south part of the cemetery now there, and extended over a part of the open field south. The place was probably selected by Col. Josiah Willard, a commander at Fort Dummer, who became largely interested in the town, and had the lot out of which it was reserved. The meeting-house would, of course, be built upon this common near the burying-ground, as was the custom then. That it was so built is clearly shown by the laying out of a road from the meeting-house to Ebenezer Hawes's by Thomas Reeve and Noah Bennett, commissioners for laying out and regulating highways, June 23, 1774; 'Beginning at the burying yard in the centre line, from there running with the centre line on the south of said line the north side of the meeting-house to William Cune's land,' which was next west, etc. As the road was south of the centre line and north of the meeting-house, the latter must have been at least the width of the road south of the centre line, the place of which there is well known, and which would take it into the open field south of the cemetery. The burials of Elizabeth, a little daughter of Samuel Wells, in 1765, and Major John Arms in 1770, and other early burials, had been made further east, and the yard did not extend so far west as it does now, and going west from it north of the meeting-house might, and as the road ran from the meeting-house probably did, leave the meeting-house as far east as the southwest corner of the present cemetery.

After Judge Wells got a grant of the town from the province of New York he deeded the land to the trustees of the town for buildings for public worship of Almighty God; for a burying place, the profits of the pasturage to be for the use of the minister; and for training in the use of arms, or any other useful and entertaining exercise, and every other public use.

¹ See "Vt. Phoenix," March 21, 1890.

² "Vt. Phoenix," May 13, 1892.

³ Vt. Phoenix, July 21, 1893.

⁴ Vt. Phoenix, January 26, 1894.

No road led to the meeting-house or to that place on the first Tuesday in March, 1768. All the roads near there were further north. On the first Tuesday in March, 1769, Israel Field was chosen 'surveyor and overseer of the highways to inspect and oversee that the road from Nathaniel Church's to the meeting-house' be kept in good order and repair. This shows that the meeting-house and a road to it had been then built, and as they would not be built in January or February they must have been built in the season before of 1768. This agrees with the records of the covenanters, who, as shown in Mr. Grout's very valuable sermon, were holding meetings in March, 1769, and who must have built the meeting-house, for the town then by law could not do it.

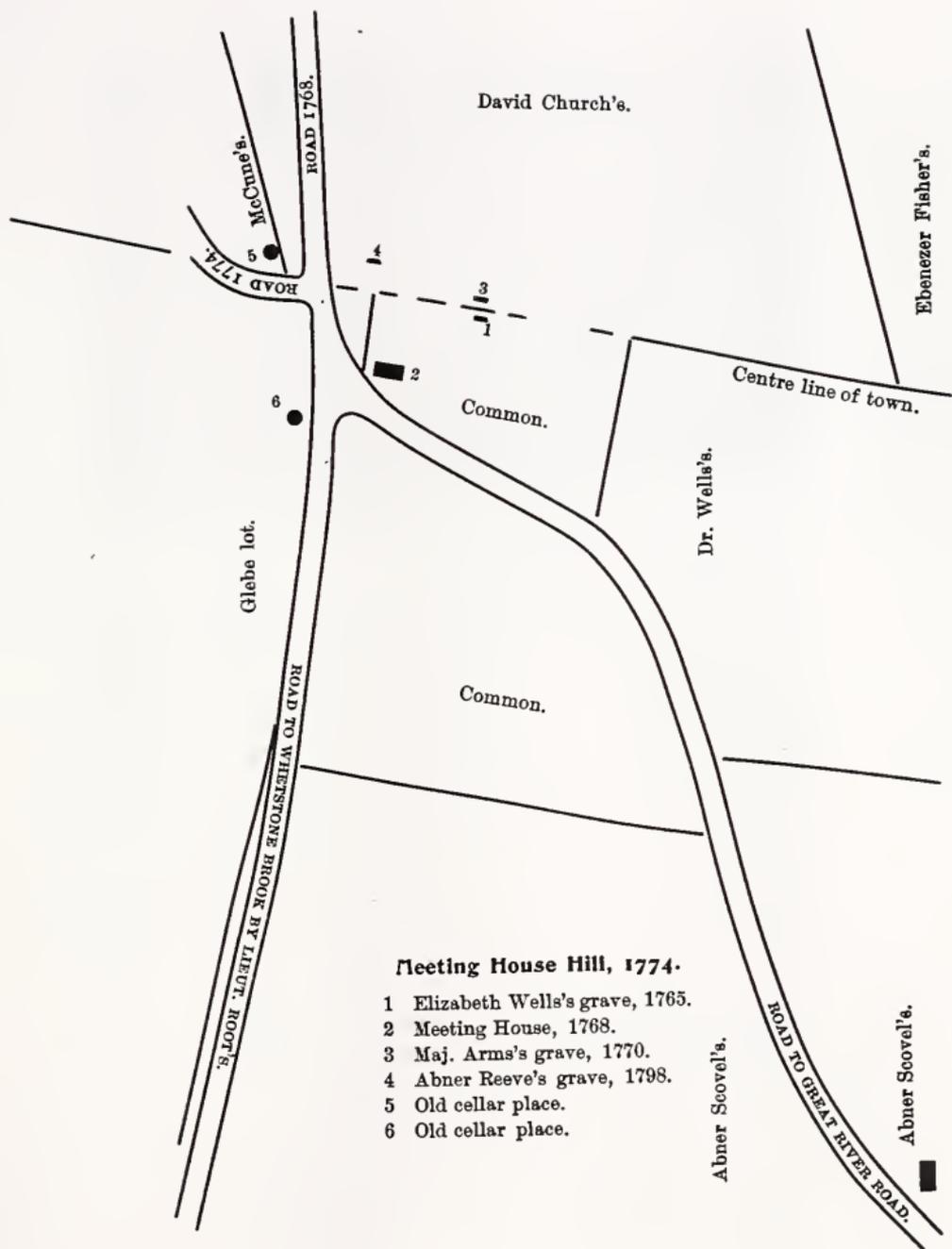
This first road to the meeting-house came up the hill from the north past where Mr. Doolittle now lives, and west of the burying-ground on to the common. Then a road was built from the east around up near where the road now goes part way up the hill, and then turned to the left on to the common. Then another was built from near where the first bridge is at West Brattleboro up to the west side of the common, and then turned to the right on to it. Then this road leading west, which went along the side hill to near Samuel Sargent's, crossing the brook there, was built."

The above road "from the east" was a branch from the road up the Connecticut, through what is now the east village, up Asylum street, past the Asylum, past the "Summer Retreat," then to the next "Retreat," then to Thurber's, the late S. G. Smith's, which is marked in the chart as Abner Scovel's; thence, previous to 1774, to "Meeting-house Hill," through the common;* thence, eventually, north-west past McCune's, along the side hill on the north of the Reeve's, now Bolander's, to the brook near Samuel Sargent's. Then a road led down the hill from the meeting house to the Reeve's (Bolander's) place; thence, eventually, to the Hayes' place, thence eastward to where the covered bridge now is; then further east to Lieut. Root's, late Dea. Wilder's; and here, turning to the left and going up the hill to the north, the road came to the common, meeting house and cemetery, *via* the road marked on the chart as the "Road to Whetstone Brook," which was made previous to 1774. Returning now to the "covered bridge" and going a little way east again, we wait till 1785 for a road to be opened eastward to the east village, the same year the meeting house was built in the west village.

When the above named little grave was made for Elizabeth Wells, 1765, probably the first in that region, it was in the lone woods, amid majestic trees, the entire hill being then covered with one dense, unbroken forest. From that grave westward there was now only a trail, a foot path, then a bridle path, then, in 1774, an open road full of stumps and stones, like all the new roads at that time, just passable for an ox cart or sled, the only kind of vehicle they had in those days.

And here it was, in those earliest days of the town, amid primal forests, that our great fathers gave themselves, promptly, to

* The only road to the cemetery on the "Hill," at the present time, is that which goes from Scovel's (now Thurber's) along the eastern side of the cemetery, to "Doolittle's" (once Field's), thence to Mac Veigh's (once Dr. Dickerman's, then Putnam's). The western boundary of the cemetery, at the present time, is a stone wall running north and south some two or three rods west of the "Reeve's grave"; and the southern boundary, a stone wall running east and west a little south of the "center line" and the little grave, as marked on the chart.





the best of things for church and State, by surveying the town, laying out roads, building a meeting house, and then covenanting together, as they did, Nov. 12, 1770, to establish and maintain the divinely ordered institutions and ministrations of the gospel.

The accompanying Topographical Chart of the interesting region of which we speak, showing a section of the center line of the town, a few of the earliest graves in the cemetery, one in 1765, another in 1770, the glebe, or land for school purposes, the common, the roads, lots, &c., on the "Hill," at the time of which we speak, was kindly made and furnished the writer by the reputed author of the very valuable historic articles from which we have quoted. The Chart is inserted here in the twofold hope that it may not only help to make our foregoing attempted pen sketch as to the site of the meeting house the more intelligible, but be also of pleasing interest and service to many in other respects. The chart being north and south on the page, right hand east, and left hand west, does not need any marking of the points of compass. The scale of distances on which it is constructed is 15 rods to the inch.

APPENDIX II.

Rev. William Wells began his labors as pastor of the first church in Brattleboro in March, 1794. After preaching here about 20 years, or till the first of April, 1814, he withdrew and entered upon a new enterprise in the east village, preaching in a school house, till a new meeting house was ready for him in 1816, when a new church was organized, July 15, 1816, being composed of 14 members, who withdrew from the parent church in West Brattleboro.

At the time of gathering much of the material for this and my former "Discourse," some 25 years ago, I found here a goodly number of intelligent, elderly men and women, who were well acquainted with Mr. Wells as a man and a minister, having been, as they were, regular attendants upon his ministrations for some years. In speaking of him, one says: "He was stout, thick-set, a pleasant, cultured Englishman; an easy, not energetic preacher; read his sermons, sometimes wrote shorthand; called himself 'a moderate Baxterian,' though I could never see where it came in. We young men used to go to his house for instruction when he lived where Col. Miles kept school," about a mile west of north from the Asylum, now "Retreat," a place now belonging to the Asylum, and made into "a Summer Retreat" for female inmates of that Institution. Another says: "He was a pleasant man, fleshy, not tall, used to wear a black velvet cap with a tassel that stood straight up on his head in the pulpit, and had a jointed pipe." Another: that, "He was an aristocrat, yet genial, social; used to call at my father's and always depended on having a pipe and a bowl of milk." Another: that, "He was a moderate preacher, social, fond of telling stories, a real Englishman."

Mr. Wells continued to serve the east village church till April, 1818, when he withdrew and went on a visit to England. Returning thence, he made his home with one of his daughters in Brattleboro till Dec., 1827, when he died at the age of 83 years.

The spirit and character of his teaching and labors have been well summed up by one who is now the ninth to succeed him in his second, or East Brattleboro parish, as in a late address of his, where he says of him: "His active history belongs chiefly to the formative times, when his earnest and charitable faith and genial piety were laying foundations in men's hearts and overcoming the rough and wild spirit that was, in early days, proverbially too much the character of this town. Personally and spiritually we see a kindly and noble figure in this large-hearted man. He was a man who would belong very sympathetically to the earnest school of men of to-day, who, mediators and broad churchmen in theology, touch very deeply the common heart of men, 'that

human heart by which we live'—men like Erskine, Maurice, Kingsley, Robertson. On that first communion Sunday he preached a sermon defining his position theologically. It was not a kindred task for him. More characteristic was his reply to one who asked him if there were Arians and Socinians in the region; that there were worse men than that—thieves, immoral men. With quiet humor he was wont to call himself a 'moderate Baxterian.' Still, the times, like our times, demanded clear and deep convictions, and into his views I will not go, except to refer to the beautiful covenant beginning thus: 'Admiring the infinite condescension and grace of God in opening a door of life and salvation to perishing sinners through the death and mediation of Jesus Christ.' This was the covenant which he used and introduced into the new church; on which, in very simple, unquestioning trust in the atonement of Jesus Christ, he rested his personal hope."

APPENDIX III.

Caleb Burge was born in Tolland, Conn., May 26, 1782, and moved with his parents, Nathaniel and Lucretia S. Burgess, to Springfield, Vt., in 1783. Here the name "Burgess" was changed, for a time, to "Burge." He had a younger brother, Dyer, who, eventually, changed his name back to "Burgess," was ordained pastor in Colebrook, N. H., in 1810, went to Ohio in 1817, where he became a Presbyterian, and took an honored position in that church, being, withal, greatly beloved by all who knew him. Caleb graduated from Middlebury college in 1806, and was ordained first pastor of the church in Guildhall, Vt., in August, 1808, where he was greatly blessed in his labors; 74 being added to his church in 1810, of whom 41 were added at one time. But for want of adequate support, as alleged, he was dismissed, Feb. 16, 1814. In June, 1814, a very unanimous call was extended to him by this church and society to settle here, which he accepted, and was, apparently, installed here early in the following August. Here he remained till 1819, five years. For his first wife he married Roxana Chapin, and for his second, Jerusha Hall, both of them natives of this county. His labors here seem to have been greatly blessed, about 100 additions having been made to the church during his five years' ministrations. From this he was called to settle as a pastor of the 1st church in Glastonbury, Conn. Of those who attended his services and knew him well, the writer has been told by one, that "he was, in person, a large, stout man, 6 feet 4 inches in stature;" by another, indeed by many others, that "he was a powerful preacher." One says, "He was a perfect Boanerges in the pulpit; some who have heard him will never forget it. But he was imperious. I have heard him say from the pulpit to the singers, "you, Mr. So-and-So, go and sit there, and you, Miss So-and-So, sit there." He would always have his own way." One of his parishioners, Mr. — —, is reported to have said to him, at one time, "Mr. Burge, when you are in the pulpit you ought never to come out, and when you are out never to go in." Another says, "Mr. Burge was a most discriminating preacher, and one of the most able advocates of the doctrines of the Bible in all this section of the country." He lived about two miles northwest of the village, on what was afterwards known as the "Harris place," now owned by Mr. Crosier. I had, for a time, before me, not long since, a copy of his very able and notable book—"An Essay on the Scriptural Doctrine of the Atonement; showing its Nature, its Necessity, and its Extent," &c., evidently written while he was here, and published in 1822 at Hartford, Conn., while he was pastor of the first church in Glastonbury—a book of about 300 pages, 12mo, and highly commended by such

theologians of that day as Drs. Emmons, Worcester, Spring, and Burton. He was honored with the degree of M.D. by Castleton Medical College in 1828.

The present pastor of the 1st church in Glastonbury, under date of Feb. 5, 1894, kindly replying to inquiries I made of him, says: "Rev. Caleb Burge was installed the 7th pastor of this church in August, 1821, and was dismissed Nov. 23, 1825. The only thing I can learn of his ministry is, that 36 were admitted to the church on confession, and that he was not generally liked. Some people objected to his combining in one the profession of medicine and that of a minister, though that was not necessarily a fault of his. He was generally regarded as an able preacher. In an anniversary sermon preached in 1876, Dr. Scudder, the pastor, says: 'After leaving Glastonbury, Mr. Burge moved westward and was preaching at Warsaw, N. Y. On attending a funeral, where he was to preach on the words: 'Be ye also ready,' descending a hill on the way, he was thrown from his vehicle and received a wound which resulted in his death in a few days. This occurred in the 56th year of his age.'" Dr. Chapin, in an exhaustive memorial address in 1853, says, that, 'for a few years preceding his death he gave up preaching and confined himself to the practice of medicine.'

West Brattleboro, Vt., April 2, 1894.

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