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AN HISTORICAL ADDRESS

Delivered at the Celebration of the

Two Hundredth Anniversary

....OF THE....

First Church of Christ,

IN GOLCHESTER, CONNECTICUT,

August 27th, 1903,

By EDWARD M. DAY, of Hartford, Connecticut.

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HISTORICAL ADDRESS.

About two hundred and five years ago—seventy-eight years after the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth, and thirty-six years after King Charles II granted the famous Charter to Connecticut, under which we lived so many years,—when this Colony consisted of thirty-three towns and contained about twelve thousand inhabitants,—in the year 1698, a settlement was begun at Jeremiah's Farm, or Twenty-Mile River, and this plantation was afterwards called Colchester.

As appears from the Colonial Records of the State of Connecticut :

“Att a Generall Court Holden at Hartford October the 13th: 1698: This Court upon the petition of Divers of the inhabitants in the Countie of Hartford Grant Libertye for a plantation at or near the place Called Jeremiahs farme upon the Rode to Newlondon, and Captn Danll Wetherell Captn John Hamlin Mr. Will Pitkin Captn John Chester Mr. Richard Christophers and Captn Samll ffordick they or the Majr part of them are by this Court appointed to be a Committee to lay out a town Ship there beginning at the North bound of twentie mile River and So to Extend Southward to a River called deep River And to extend Eastward from the bounds of Haddum Seven miles”—also in the next year:

“Att a Generll assembly Holden att Hartford May 11th 1699—Ordered and Enacted &c that the north bounds of the new Plantation Lately granted at or neer Jeremies farme upon the Roade to Newlondon Shall be (as formerly at twentye mile River, and the South bonds ioyned to the North bounds of Lyme, and the west bounds to Joyn to the East bounds of Middltown and the East bounds of Haddum and the East and North East bounds to Rune to the bounds of Lebanon and Norwich”,—and again,

“Att a Generall Assembly Holden at Hartford October 13, 1699—Michael Taintor Saml Northam and Nath'l Foot appearing in this Assembly in the behalfe of the New plantation called Colchester and complaining that they are obstructed in the improvement and settlement of said plantation by reason of severall persons that claim considerable tracts of land within the grant of said Township, and particularly severall of the inhabitants of Saybrook, This Court do therefore order that all persons claiming any lands there shall appear at the Generall Court in May next and make their claims appear, that so the Grantees may not be further obstructed in their settlement of said plantation and that the name of that plantation shall be called Colchester and belong to the County of New London, and further that this act be transmitted to the severall towns where any persons claiming land, there doe reside that so they may have reasonable notice thereof”.

The Act of the General Court of October, 1698, incorporated Colchester as a town of Hartford County, while the Act of October, 1699 took it from Hartford County and placed it in New London County. Afterwards it was again assigned to Hartford County, where it remained some time, but finally it was again made a part of New London County and has remained there ever since.

Most of the planters came from near-by towns already settled. Rev. John Bulkley was from Glastenbury; Daniel Clark, "Locksmith," Samuel Gilbert, and the Skinners were from Hartford, and the Foots from Wethersfield; Benjamin Graves came from New London; Jonathan Dunham from Haddam; the Gillets, Loomises, Josiah Phelps and Michael Taintor from Windsor. Others, however, emigrated from Massachusetts; Isaac Bigloo from Hadley, the Welleses from Hatfield; and Joseph Pomeroy from Northampton. Thomas Carrier, together with his two sons Richard and Andrew, were from Andover. Thomas Carrier, it is said, belonged to the body guard of King Charles I, of Great Britain, and was very fleet of foot. Tradition relates that he killed a king of England: perchance he may have seen the execution of his lord, the unhappy King Charles I. His descendants related that he died in 1735, being 113 years old.

The whole township, as granted to the original proprietors and afterwards confirmed by patent in 1703 by the General Court of the Colony, was by them shared with their associate planters. Then followed divisions of the township at intervals of time amongst the proprietors, a certain portion of the territory being included in a division. A division was then sub-divided into Rights, for which the proprietors cast lots. In this way half a century or more elapsed before the whole township was completely divided up and allotted among the original proprietors and the heirs of any of them that had died.

The Act of the General Court of October, 1699 says:

"And that the name of that plantation shall be called Colchester."

In those simple days people were not in such pursuit of a phantom called originality as many are to-day. Often the first settlers called a new town which they had founded by some old name, familiar to a part at least of its inhabitants, because it was the name of the town where their ancestors had lived and which thereafter should be the name of their home in this new land.

Not far from London, in the south-east part of England, lies a beautiful old town; ancient walls and churches and abbeys are there, built a long time ago. It is the oldest town in England. The Romans came there in 53 B. C. Long before that, Celts or Gauls had inhabited it. It is said that several families lived near this old town in England some of whose descendants after coming to this country, settled at Jeremiah's Farm, which they prevailed upon the General Court of this Colony to name Colchester. Although positive proof cannot be had, it is more than probable that this connection was true and that this town not only has a part in the beginnings of New England, but also is linked by its adopted name to the earliest life of Old England.

At the time that this town was settled, the relations in New England between Church and State were very close. The Colonies of Massachusetts and New Haven, in fact, had been founded upon strict theocratic principles, and their leaders had endeavored to establish Governments like to that of Moses, Joshua, and Samuel in the old days of Jewish history. They were to recognize no other Ruler save God Himself, and the Bible was to be their guide both in daily conduct and in weightier matters of legislation. "The State they were to found", says John Fiske, in his *Beginnings of New England*, "was to consist of a united body of believers; citizenship was to be co-extensive with church-membership; and in such a state there was apparently no more room for heretics than there was in Rome or Madrid." But this early theocratic idea did not gain great prevalence. The Colony of Connecticut had never adopted it and the Colony of New Haven abandoned it in 1662 when the Charter of King Charles II united these two colonies into a single colony, thereafter to be called the Colony of Connecticut. Still, a semblance of that primitive theocratic principle did obtain for many years in the Colony of Connecticut, and about the beginning of the eighteenth century the relations in this Colony between Church and State were much closer than seem natural or convenient to us of to-day.

The General Court of the Colony supervised the government of the Churches and took a controlling interest in their affairs. When disaffection arose among the members of the First Church of Christ in Hartford it took summary action and ordered at a session held on March 11th, 1657-8 that "Henceforth no person in this Jurisdiction shall in any way embody themselves into church estate, without consent of the General Court and the approbation of neighbor churches"; and "that there shall be no ministry or church administration entertained or attended by the inhabitants of any plantation in this Colony, distinct and separate from, and in opposition to that which is openly and publicly observed and dispensed by the settled and approved Minister of the place, except it be by approbation of the General Court and neighbor churches."

The inhabitants of each town were enjoined to attend some orthodox church each Sunday by a general law of the colony, and it was also made a legal duty upon parents to properly instruct their children in the Catechism. To provide for the certain maintenance of a Church in each town, an Act of the General Court of 1697 provided that the salary due the minister should be raised by a tax "levied and assessed on the several inhabitants in each town or plantation, according to their respective estates, as from time to time they shall be in the genell list," and "collected by such person or persons as the respective towns shall from year to year choose and appoint for that end."

At that time when the General Court allowed the inhabitants of any town the liberty to embody themselves into church estate upon securing the approbation of neighbor churches, it established an orthodox church, which in those days, meant a Church of the Congregational order, and provided for its support, as we have seen, by a general tax, even if all the tax-payers were not in sympathy with its policy. Later Acts of the

General Court, however, while requiring this tax to be paid, allowed it to be used by those so desiring towards the support of ministers of other denominations, if any such were found in any town carrying on ministrations, the first exemption being in favor of Episcopalians in 1727.

The Congregational Church was, then, the established Church of this Colony, which the inhabitants of each town were generally liable to support, and so continued, as I understand it, until the present constitution was adopted, in 1818, that instrument making a complete change by declaring that "no person shall be by law compelled to join or support, nor be charged with, or associated to any congregation, church, or religious association."

As was natural under a government which made the support of the churches obligatory, and especially in the very earliest days of a town, when it contained only one church, town matters and church matters were managed together. Alexander Johnston in his History of Connecticut, speaking of churches in the early days, says: "The township and the Church were co-terminous; the town, by which term, as distinguished from the territorial township, was meant the body of voters within the township, settled civil and ecclesiastical affairs indifferently in the same meeting, and as about all the voters were at first church-members, and agreed closely in creed and methods, this dual system produced little friction for a time." This statement of Prof. Johnston's, like many others in regard to the same matter, while accurately describing the conditions existing in the early days, fails to make clear just the relation which the town bore to the church, and just when the town ceased to act in regard to ecclesiastical matters and was superseded by an Ecclesiastical Society. In the case of *Huntington et al vs. Carpenter*, decided by the Supreme Court of the State of Connecticut in 1786, it was held:

"That the inhabitants of each town in this state (not divided into societies) are by law a corporation for the purpose of supporting public worship, and the gospel ministry, as well as for civil purposes; and in their corporate capacity, have power to receive and hold estates real and personal, for said uses, and to call and settle ministers, build meeting houses, &c.

2. The name and description by which they receive estates, and transact business in their ecclesiastical and civil capacity, is the same (to wit) the inhabitants of the town of, &c.

3. When part of the inhabitants of such town are constituted a new and distinct society, the remaining inhabitants are by law considered, for ecclesiastical purposes, as the same corporation, having continuance and succession, by the name of *the first society*, which before existed by the name of *the inhabitants of the town*, and as holding the meeting house, and all other estates that the inhabitants of such town received, acquired and held, for any of the uses for which societies are constituted, and as bound to perform all the contracts and agreements made by the inhabitants of such town, with the minister, for his support, or respecting any other matter proper to a society. This opinion is supported by former adjudications, and universal custom."

And again in 1796, in the case of Sedgwick et al vs. Pierce, the Superior Court laid down the same doctrine but in just a little different language. It held:

“Every town incorporated by law, contains in it all the rights, powers and privileges of an ecclesiastical society, and are subject to all the duties: and so long as they remain one entire body, may manage their ecclesiastical concerns in town meeting; but as soon as the inhabitants become separated, for ecclesiastical purposes, as a part being set off and annexed to other societies, they must cease to transact their ecclesiastical business in town meeting—as a town they include all the divisions—as an ecclesiastical society they exclude them. And this ecclesiastical society continues to exist through all the divisions and subdivisions, and hath right to have and hold all interests granted to the town for ecclesiastical uses, at a time when there was no other ecclesiastical society in the town that could take.”

These two decisions of the Supreme Court in regard to Ecclesiastical Societies are supported by later decisions affirming the same doctrines. Thus the town of Colchester, or the Inhabitants of the town of Colchester, at the time of its incorporation in 1698 possessed ecclesiastical powers,—that is, the legal right to hold property and incur obligations for religious purposes; while the First Church, the religious organization itself, was not established here until 1703. These ecclesiastical powers the town exercised in its regular town meeting until 1725—and possibly a little later—when a Second Society was set off by the General Court of the Colony, the inhabitants of that part of the town not included in this new Society continuing the ecclesiastical powers thus formerly used by the town under the name of the First Ecclesiastical Society. This, as I understand it, was the origin of the First Ecclesiastical Society.

Hence it is that from the early town records, and not from the records of the First Ecclesiastical Society, we are able to find facts relating to the early management of the affairs of this church. In fact, the town records contain all that we know concerning its early history. They antedate all other records concerning this church.

As for the church records themselves, they are contained in three books. The first one consists of some old leaves, saved, evidently, from an older book, and contains nothing prior to 1732; from then to the year 1792 there are quite a number of entries, being, however, for the most part, names of members, with a list of baptisms and marriages. From 1792 to the present day there are two books of Church records which are fairly complete, containing minutes of the actual doings and business of the Church.

For about all the facts that we have in regard to the founding of this town and this Church, we are indebted to Michael Taintor, an original planter and a very pains-taking scribe. He was born in Brainford, in October, 1652. It appears that in 1679 he was a leading citizen of Windsor. He was the first, and for a long series of years the only Justice of the Peace in Colchester; besides, he was also a Commissioner of the Court and Selectman and a member of the General Court of the

Colony at twenty-six different sessions. In addition to all these offices, he held the position of Town Clerk of Colchester for the first thirty years of its history. The records which he so faithfully kept have since been published by one of his descendants, and this volume, called "Extracts from the Records of Colchester, with some transcripts from the recording of Michael Taintor," is one of the valuable historical books of the State. He lived to see Colchester well established, dying in 1731, being in his seventy-ninth year.

In October, 1703, the General Court of the Colony authorized the establishment of this Church. As appears in the Colonial Records of the State, "upon the desire of the inhabitants of Colchester, this Assembly grants them libertie to embody themselves into church estate and to call and settle an orthodox minister of ye gospel among them, proceeding therein with advice of and approbation of neighbor churches." On December 20th, 1703, acting upon this authority from the General Court, this Church was organized and Rev. John Bulkley was ordained its first Pastor. But even before this it would seem that the work of the ministry had not been entirely neglected among the planters, for in Taintor's Records we find it recorded that "at a town meetinge held in Colchester, Janewary 21: 1702, it was granted to giue to ye Reuerd Mr. John Bulkley forty pownds as mony for his incoragement in ye worke of ye Ministry this yeare & to pay him 10 £ at ye end of every quarter."

Although this Church was organized in the year 1703, its first house of worship was not built until 1706, three years later. From Taintor's Record it appears that "At a Towne meetinge held in Colchester March the 20th: 1705-6 the Town voated to beuld a meeting hows of forty foots square prouided that thare be mony giuen enouf to procure the nailes & Glass—further the towne chose a Committie to Carie on the beuildinge the sd hows namely Serget Rowlee Deacon skinner Johon Skinner Joseph Chamberlin Thomas Browne". What we now call the northern part of the town seems to have been settled first and the meeting house was located on the east side of North Main Street, so-called, near the house of the late Henry S. Palmer. This first house of worship could not have been much more than a temporary shelter, for at a town meeting held June 11th, 1708, the "towne voated to beuld a New meeting hows with all Conuenient speed the length to be forty foots & the bredth to be thirty & six foots with a slatt Roufe", and at a later town meeting, held in 1709, the "town sold the old meeting hows to ebenezzer Coleman for eight pownds to be payd in nailes at mony price ondly Reserueing the boards of the floor & all other loose bords & the pulpit."

In all probability the first house of worship was occupied seven years after it was sold, or until the second house of worship was completed, in 1714 or 1715. By that time the center of the town was somewhat south from where the first meeting house stood, and so we are not surprised to find the second house of worship located in a different place. The second meeting house was probably built near the location of this present edifice but further to the east, in what is now the highway. It is said that some years since, stones were discovered in the adjoining street,

supposed to be parts of the foundation of this building. We further find that at a town meeting held December 30th, 1717, "it was voated And agreed that thare should Be Galeries Buelt: in the meeting hows with all conuenient speed—& Mr Charels Williams mr Samuells Northam & Sergt Nathaniell kellogg ware chosen a Comitie to Carie on the work of buelding & finishing the said Galleries." Prof. Williston Walker, in his History of the Congregational Churches in the United States remarks that "It has often, though erroneously, been intimated that the New England meeting houses were studiously mean. On the contrary they were from the first the most elaborate structures that the comparatively unskilled carpenters and masons could erect. x x x The 'meeting house' of colonial days was prevailingly a square or slightly oblong structure entered by a door on the side and at each end, and having within a pulpit well raised up on the side wall opposite the main door, from which nearly to the pulpit a broad aisle ran".

The life of the people in these times of beginnings was very simple. They lived in modest wooden houses, sparingly furnished; raised their own grain and cattle; and wore garments of plain homespun, with the exception of the minister, who was noticeable in black broad-cloth, and the magistrate adorned, for the sake of his office, with lace and gold.

Church services on Sunday began at nine o'clock in the morning and at two in the afternoon. It is said that the sermon was of about an hour's length, as gauged by an hour-glass placed upon the pulpit, and that an unliturgical prayer occupied about a quarter of an hour. The rather long interval between the morning and afternoon services offered a welcome opportunity for social chat and general discussion to a people busily engaged and largely separated during the week. The meeting house was not warmed, and Dr. Edwin P. Parker, in his History of the Second Church of Hartford, refers to the diary of Judge Sewall, who notes that on one occasion "the Communion bread was frozen pretty hard and rattled sadly into the plates." The meeting house was typical of its name. It was the center of the religious, social and political life of colonial New England, and was the common meeting place of the settlers for discussing all matters in which they were interested. In Colchester the meeting house served as the public sign-post, for in Taintor's Records we find that a vote of the town provided that a town meeting could be properly warned by "seting up sd paper of notice on the meeting hows".

The meeting house had no bell to summon the people to worship, but lest some careless planter should be forgetful of divine service, it was the custom to beat a drum on the Lord's Day, and in 1722 the town passed a vote giving to "Nathanll kellogg Junr twelve shillings for the year Insuing to beat the Drum on Sabath Days for meetings—he finding himself a Drum—"

The town also in its town meetings appointed someone to care for the meeting house, named two tithing men, whose duty it was to spur up delinquent church members and keep order among the children, and also at the same time elected a seating committee. According to the custom of the time, the seats in the meeting house were assigned with a

regard to the supposed social prominence of the members. This duty devolved upon the seating committee, but at a town meeting held January 4th, 1715. the town itself dignified the different seats in the meeting house, voting that "the pue next ye pulpit to be the first—2d in dignety is the 2d pue and the fore seat to be equall In Dignitie. 3d in Dignety is the second seat—4th: is the third seat equall with ye third Pue—5. is the fourth seat equall with the fourth Pue—next the fifth seat: next: 6th—7th—8th—". This vote of the town did not take into consideration all the seats of the meeting house, and the others were to be assigned by the seaters in accordance with the list upon which the different members paid taxes during the previous year.

From this vote of the town and others that I might quote, it appears that the dignity of the pew occupied by any member of this Church at that time was generally determined by a careful inspection of the property upon which he paid taxes. However, there is one vote of the town in which it appears that the seaters were instructed to consider age with other unnamed qualifications.

At this period books were not possessed by the people to any great extent. Some especially well-to-do families had a few books, it is true, and the ministers owned various works of controversial theology. But it was only in 1700 that a copy of Milton or Shakespeare had reached Massachusetts, and in 1723 Harvard College had just received the works of Addison, Dryden, Pope, Locke, Steele, and Swift. To a people living thus in a simple and isolated manner, without means of communication and without much of an outside world with which to communicate, whose lives were enlivened only by Election or Thanksgiving days, or an occasional house-raising or corn-husking, with few books to read besides the Bible, it is not strange that the Church, offering social opportunities and intellectual entertainment, should bear a very deep meaning.

The early settler was a hardy and resolute planter, clearing the forests and cultivating the land; he was a legislator, elaborating in town meeting and the General Court, the principles of free government; he also was deeply religious and unusually theological. From his religious attitude towards God he derived that strength and zeal which he needed to work out his discouraging tasks; but in his theological discussions I am fain to believe he enjoyed a real intellectual pleasure. "There has never been a society in the world", says John Fiske, "in which theological problems have been so seriously and persistently discussed as in New England in the colonial period. The long sermons of the clergymen were usually learned and elaborate arguments of doctrinal points, bristling with quotations from the Bible or from famous books of controversial divinity, and in the long winter evenings the questions thus raised afforded the occasion for lively debate in every household." You will probably remember that it was Scott the Commentator, and not Scott the Novelist that the old gentleman in "The Guardian Angel" knew so much about.

Just exactly what the peculiar creed and policy of this Church were at first we have no means of knowing. In all probability it adopted in the first years of its organization what is generally known as the Say-

brook Platform. That was an ecclesiastical system promulgated by a synod composed of delegates from the different churches of the colony which met in September, 1708, at Saybrook, then the seat of Yale College. The Saybrook Platform suggested among other things a form of belief for the churches, which was based essentially upon the Westminster Confession of faith; declared that each church should discipline its members for any offense of a scandalous nature; provided that neighboring churches should consociate; and gave any such consociation cognizance of all proper matters arising among the churches within its circuit and regularly brought before it. The synod was called and this platform adopted on account of various differences and disparagements existing among the churches. The Saybrook Platform received the approval of the General Court which declared "its great approbation of such an happy agreement". In an address delivered at the 250th Anniversary of the First Church of Christ in Hartford, the late Dr. George Leon Walker said: "This system, bad or good, continued the legally recognized one in this State till 1784, and remained the voluntarily accepted method of the Churches much longer." That this Church accepted as its form of belief the creed offered in the Saybrook Platform and consociated with the other Churches of this County and State is beyond doubt. Dr. Benjamin Trumbull in a "Catalogue of the Congregational and consociated ministers of Connecticut from the year 1713 to the year 1764" includes Rev. John Bulkley and Rev. Ephraim Little, the first two Pastors of this Church; and this Church itself, also, in its own constitution, adopted February 6, 1792, makes reference to the seventh article of the Saybrook Platform in the matter of bringing any grievance before "the Council of the Consociation of this Circuit."

It is evident, therefore, that this method of Church government was adopted by this Church and was continued by it even after it had lost its legal sanction.

During the pastorate of the Rev. John Bulkley, the first Minister of this Church, two distinct parishes were set off from this Society. In May, 1725, the General Court of the Colony, upon the petition of the inhabitants of the south part of Colchester and the north part of Lyme, established the petitioners into a distinct parish, describing the territorial boundaries of the same, and later on authorized the inhabitants of this parish to embody themselves into church estate, naming the Society New Salem. And again, in October, 1728, the General Court, upon the petition of inhabitants of the west part of Colchester and of Haddam East, set off the Southwest, or Third Society, which in 1729 was authorized to have a church, and in 1739 was named Westchester. The report of the Committee, James Wadsworth, Thomas Kimberly, and Samuel Lyne, to whom this petition was referred by the General Court, says, among other things: "We also find the sum total of the list of estates in the above described and bounded part of Colchester to be £1910, 6s, 0d, which leaves the old parish but £7318 10s. and although we are on opinion that it will be very hard for so small a number of people under such circumstances to support the ministry among them, yet considering that they have one

Mr. Lewiss amongst them, who preacheth there and is highly esteemed of by them and doth, as we are informed, incline to settle with said people, and they are providing for him and probably his settlement will be easily gained; wherefore dare not to discourage their proceeding."

I know that you will all be interested to have me say something about the Reverend John Bulkley who ministered unto the people of Colchester even before any Church was established here and who was the Pastor of this Church from its organization in 1703 until the year 1731. Among his ancestors were men well known in England and New England, and many among his descendants have held high official position in this town and state. The Rev. John Bulkley was the son of the Rev. Gershom Bulkley and the grandson of the Rev. Peter Bulkley, the famous divine of Concord. Of the Rev. Peter Bulkley, Cotton Mather wrote: "He was a most exalted Christian, full of those devotions which accompany a conversation in heaven; especially so an exact Sabbath-keeper that if at any time he had been asked whether he strictly kept the Sabbath, he would have replied: *Christianus sum, intermittere non posum.*" The Rev. Gershom Bulkley, son of Peter Bulkley, and the father of Rev. John Bulkley, was a minister at New London, and later at Glastenbury which was then in the town of Wethersfield. The Rev. John Bulkley was graduated at Harvard College in the year 1699, and ordained at Colchester December 20th, 1703.

The Rev. Dr. Chauncy, in 1768 wrote: "Mr. John Bulkley I have seen and conversed with, though so long ago that I formed no judgment of him from my own knowledge. Mr. Whittlesey, of Wallingford, Mr. Chauncey, of Durham, and others I could mention, ever spoke of him as a first-rate genius; and I have often heard that Mr. Dummer and he, who were classmates in College, were counted the greatest geniuses of that day. The preference was given to Dummer in regard of quickness, brilliancy, and wit; to Bulkley in regard of solidity of mind and strength of judgment. Mr. Gershom Bulkley I have heard mentioned as a truly great man and eminent for his skill in chemistry; and the father of Gershom, Mr. Bulkley of Concord, was esteemed in his day one of the greatest men in this part of the world, but by all that I have been able to collect, the Colchester Bulkley surpassed his predecessors in the strength of his intellectual powers."

The Rev. John Bulkley bore the reputation of a very scholarly man, possessed of strong powers. Dr. Samuel Peters in his General History of Connecticut, published in 1781, says: "Colchester has to boast of Rev. John Bulkley for its first minister. John Bulkley was a great scholar, * * * * He was a lawyer, a physician, and a divine."

His salary as Pastor of this Church, was voted to him in the annual town meeting, sometimes in money and sometimes in money and merchandise combined. It was generally fixed at sums varying between £40. and £80. Thus at a town meeting held December 31, 1711, "the towne voated & granted to the Reuerant Mr. Bulkley for his salary for the year now past the sum of fiuety & fiue pownd in mony of wheat at 4s per bushell indian Corn at 2s per bushell—& merchantab: pork at 2½d per pownd—".

Although a salary for the minister of this Church varying from \$200. to \$500. may not seem to us very large now, yet this sum meant a great deal more then than it would now. I should say that Mr. Bulkley received an unusually good salary for the days in which he lived. Like the good old parson in Goldsmith's *Deserted Village*,

"A man he was to all the country dear,
And passing rich with forty pounds a year."

Certainly he needed a fair income, for his family included twelve children. It is said that he lived in a house located on South Main Street, near the one formerly owned by the Hon. Eliphalet Bulkeley.

Mr. Bulkley was the author of several books which were published. He wrote a preface to R. Wolcott's *Meditations*; in 1724 he published a tract entitled "An Inquiry into the rights of the Aboriginal Indians to the Lands of America", and this work was not long ago reprinted by the Massachusetts Historical Society; and in 1729 he published another tract "An impartial account of a late debate at Lyme upon the following points:—Whether it be the will of God that the infants of visible believers should be baptized; whether sprinkling be lawful and sufficient; and whether the present way of maintaining ministers by a public rate or tax be lawful". On May 14, 1713, he preached before the General Court of the Colony an Election Sermon upon "The necessity of Religion in Societies, and its serviceableness to promote the due and successful exercise of Government in them; Asserted and Shewed". This sermon was published, and a copy of it is in the Library of the Connecticut Historical Society of Hartford. (The text, which is from Gen. XX, 11, "And Abraham said because I thought surely the fear of God is not in this place; and they will slay me", etc., is first somewhat elaborated and explained, then the Doctrine is stated, substantiated by several different propositions; the Application coming next, illustrated by various Uses to which the text applies.) It is a curious sermon, bristling with scriptural and classical quotations, and filling up about seventy printed pages. That Mr. Bulkley should be invited to preach an Election Sermon before the General Court, shows the standing that he had in the Colony; while the sermon itself gives evidence of his deep learning in theology and politics, and illustrates the great power of reason and logic which he possessed. The following amusing anecdote is told concerning Mr. Bulkley, which I have taken from John W. Barber's *History of Connecticut*:

"The Rev. Mr. Bulkley of Colchester, Conn., was famous in his day as a casuist and sage counsellor. A church in his neighborhood had fallen into unhappy divisions and contentions, which they were unable to adjust among themselves. They deputed one of their number to the venerable Bulkley, for his services; with a request that he would send it to them in writing. The matters were taken into serious consideration, and the advice, with much deliberation, committed to writing. It so happened that Mr. Bulkley had a farm in an extreme part of the town, upon which he entrusted a tenant; in superscribing the two letters,

the one for the church was directed to the tenant, and the one for the tenant to the church. The church was convened to hear the advice which was to settle all their disputes. The moderator read as follows: You will see to the repair of the fences, that they be built high and strong, and you will take special care of the old black bull. This mystical advice puzzled the church at first, but an interpreter among the more discerning ones was soon found, who said, 'Brethren, this is the very advice we most need; the directions to repair the fences is to admonish us to take good heed in the admission and government of our members; we must guard the Church by our Master's laws, and keep out strange cattle from the fold. And we must in a particular manner set a watchful guard over the Devil, the old black bull, who has done so much hurt of late.' All perceived the wisdom and fitness of Mr. Bulkley's advice, and resolved to be governed by it. The consequence was, all the animosities subsided and harmony was restored to the long afflicted church. What the subject of the letter to the tenant was, and what good effect it had upon him, the story does not tell".

Mr. Bulkley's pastorate ended with his death on June 10th, 1731, and the Rev. Ephraim Little was called to become the next Pastor of this Church.

On an old leaf, now well browned by time, saved, evidently from an early book of church records, is the following account of the Ordination of the Rev. Ephraim Little:

"The Rev'd. Ephraim Little was ordained Pastor of the First Church of Christ in Colchester, in the Colony of Connecticut, on ye 20th of September: 1732—

The Rev'd. Mr. Stephen Hosmer, of East Haddam began with prayer; the Rev'd. Mr. Thomas Clapp of Windham preached from Cor. 2, 16, the Rev. Mr. Eliphalet Adams of New London gave the charge and the Rev'd. Mr. Solomon Williams of Lebanon gave the right hand of fellowship.—

Hic Labor hoc opus est."

Rev. Thomas Platt was afterwards President of Yale College and this ordination sermon you can find among his printed works.

Who the learned scribe was that made this record does not appear; very probably Mr. Little himself acted as Clerk of the Church at the time and made this entry. It is a little amusing to consider this Latin quotation "*Hic Labor hoc opus est*", which is appended to the account of Mr. Little's Ordination, taken in connection with its original meaning. Classical scholars who have not forgotten about the wanderings of the pious Aeneas will remember the lines:

Cum sic orsa loqui Vates: Sate sanguine divûm,
Tros Anchisiade, facilis descensus Averno;
Noctes atque dies patet atri ianua Ditis;
Sed revocare gradum superasque evadere ad auras,
Hoc opus, hic labor est.

Just the connection between the work of the pastor of this Church and the difficulties attendant upon extricating one's self from the shades of Avernus is not altogether plain.

The Rev. Ephraim Little was born at Scituate, Mass., in the year 1707, the son of David Little, a lawyer of that town. He was graduated at Harvard College in the year 1728.

Mr. Little's own family included twelve children, one of whom, Ephraim Little, Jr., was in the Revolutionary War, serving in the Company of Capt. James Green, of East Haddam.

At the beginning of the Rev. Mr. Little's pastorate here there were 105 persons in full communion with this church. Many additions were made to the church membership in the few years following the coming of the Rev. Mr. Little. In 1737 there were 30 additions, in 1734 ten, in 1735 nineteen, in 1736 thirty-four, in 1737 fourteen, in 1738 eleven, in 1741 twenty-seven, in 1742 thirty-seven. I mention these unusually large numbers, not to show the vigorous and fruitful work of Mr. Little, although they may have been due somewhat to his zeal, but rather as illustrative of a religious and spiritual awakening which was general throughout New England at about this time. In 1734 the Rev. Jonathan Edwards, afterwards President of Princeton College, preached a series of sermons at Northampton, Massachusetts, which aroused a deep spiritual concern among his hearers and started a religious movement sooner or later affecting many churches in Massachusetts and Connecticut. During this revival period the Rev. George Whitefield, a clergyman of the Established Church in England, but who was in full sympathy with the doctrines of the Congregationalists, was asked to visit New England. He was only twenty-five years of age, but was already famous on account of his new methods, his stirring oratory, and his burning zeal. Dr. George Leon Walker characterizes him as "of burning eloquence and impassioned piety, but censorious, denunciative, and lending all the weight of his tremendous popular influence to the encouragement of fanatic extravagance of experience and expression in his converts and followers." In 1740 Mr. Whitefield landed at Newport and went to Boston; from Boston he traveled toward Connecticut and preached at various places, the nearest point to Colchester being Middletown. It was a period of great religious and evangelistic excitement. Other ministers of an emotional nature took up the work and it is said that there has never been such an extensive manifestation of religious feeling in New England in any period of similar duration. It was called the "Great Awakening". But such sensational preaching as attended these revival meetings could not be expected to meet the entire approval of a dignified Calvinistic ministry. Two parties shortly appeared in New England,—the one, supporting this new method of dramatic exhortation, and the other, believing in a more sober appeal to faith. For some time these two parties bore nicknames; the revivalistic one being called the "New Lights," and their opponents the "Old Lights". That Colchester was affected by this general awakening, it seems to me impossible to doubt, for while the spell was on, there were unusually large numbers of members received into the church

and when the effect of it wore off, as it did soon, for it was not a movement of any duration, the additions to the church membership immediately decreased very materially,—five, one, three, two, one and one being added to the church in the respective years following.

The feeling against this new method of religious work became so extreme that the General Court of the Colony passed in May, 1742, an ecclesiastical law supplemental to the one adopting the Saybrook Platform in 1708, and provided various penalties in case of one minister leaving his own parish and going into another without the consent of the minister of that parish.

The Rev. Benjamin Pomeroy, of Hebron, who is spoken of as an able man, was an enthusiastic supporter of the New Lights party. He was a zealous follower of this new method of hortatory preaching and became quite a power. I have found in Dr. Benjamin Trumbull's history of Connecticut the following story about his visit to Colchester:

"A lecture was appointed at Colchester for Mr. Pomeroy to preach. Himself and Mr. Little, the pastor, had always lived in harmony; their parishes joined each other. Mr. Pomeroy went from home, supposing that he was about to afford him brotherly assistance and to oblige his people; but entirely contrary to his expectations Mr. Little, either from his own private feelings or from the influence of some of his principal hearers, forbade his going into the meeting house. There was a great collection of people from Colchester and the neighboring towns who were earnest to hear the word. Mr. Pomeroy considering that many souls might be quickened, strengthened, and converted, and that some souls might possibly be saved from his preaching, therefore judged it his indispensable duty to preach; accordingly, he retired a little from the meeting house to the shade of a grove and preached to a very numerous and attentive audience. A certificate was lodged against him, and for seven years he was deprived of his stated salary."

This incident indicates that a goodly number of the people of this vicinity were interested in the work of the New Lights party and responsive to its methods. It is also rather conclusive evidence that the Rev. Mr. Little, and perhaps the officers of this church, were members of the Old Lights party and not disposed to allow itinerant preaching in this parish. It seems, however, rather grievous that for such a slight crime as endeavoring to save souls Mr. Pomeroy should have offended against the law of the colony and been deprived of his salary for seven years.

During the pastorate of Mr. Little, the General Court of this Colony, in May, 1736, gave certain inhabitants of Colchester, Hebron, and Glasenbury leave to have an orthodox minister, but did not excuse them from paying taxes for the support of the Gospel in their own towns until May, 1747, when it established a distinct society for them, called Marlborough.

Also in May, 1774, another Society, called Antioch, was set off from Colchester by the General Court. I am informed that this parish was located in the south part of this town and that it at one time had a

church standing in the neighborhood of the place where Mr. T. Swan Rathburn now lives.

Thus four distinct societies were taken either in whole or in part from the original society of Colchester; two during the pastorate of Mr. Bulkley, and two during the pastorate of Mr. Little.

In the year 1771 a new house of worship was built to take the place of the one built somewhere about 1714. The late Rev. Samuel G. Willard at one time prepared a paper upon the "Four Houses of Worship of the First Ecclesiastical Society", and I know you will be glad to have me take the following account of this new house of worship from the pen of that beloved and faithful pastor. He says:

"In 1771 this Colchester Society built its third house of worship. The men who erected the first and second had been gathered to their fathers. The house had grown old. But the children and grandchildren, in their prosperity, would replace it by one larger and more imposing, whose extreme dimensions differed little from the one we now occupy. That house stood nearer the street than this; its side to the east; the front door in the center; from which the broad aisle extended to the deacon's seat in front of the pulpit. There were two side aisles, in the same direction, and another extending lengthwise of the building from the door in the tower, at the north end, to the opposite door at the south end. The high tower arising from the ground was surmounted by a tall, well-proportioned steeple, from which the bell, the same that rings to-day, successor to one that was ruined by harsh treatment, began about fifty years ago to pour out its sweet tones. The pulpit had its sounding-board, the admiration of the children and the innocent occasion of many mis-givings as to what would happen should it suddenly fall. There were galleries on three sides. The square pews, if full, caused a quarter or more of the congregation to sit with their backs to the pulpit. * * * Four pews, two at each corner, on the east side of the house, were assigned—the south to young gentlemen, and the north to young ladies, and as it seems at this distance with a touch of satire, the corner pew on the left of the pulpit was give to 'Certificate people'; that is, to those who had given written notice of their withdrawal from the society, but by law must attend public worship somewhere."

I am at a loss to add very much to this peculiarly interesting description of this third house of worship. The date, 1771, being the year in which the building was erected, was carved in large figures somewhere on the pulpit. The pulpit was of mahogany colored wood and shaped after the form of a wine-glass. The sounding-board, of the same color as the pulpit, was attached to the ceiling by a device bearing the figure of a dove, originally holding an olive leaf, but which was shot off by a young sportsman, said to have been a son of Dr. Watrous. Tradition relates that this edifice was truly beautiful, and one of the finest churches in the whole colony. To have erected such a church building as this, indicates in a way that prosperity had attended the work of the planters in their seventy years of labors.

The pastorate of the Rev. Ephraim Little continued until his death, on June 5th, 1787. He was in his eightieth year, and had been the shepherd of this flock almost fifty-five years. His pastorate is the longest one in the history of this church, and, indeed, of unusual length for any one pastorate in any church. I wish we knew more about Mr. Little and his work here, but they have gone hence who could even repeat what they had been told of the hope and fear, the joy and sorrow, the love and confidence of the people in those days that tried men's souls. The latter years of Mr. Little's service were marked by a great religious depression, noticeable here as also in other places; although we should naturally expect it to have been a time of religious activity. The colonies had made that supreme attempt against the most powerful nation of that time and had been successful. Although this church added very few names to its membership roll in those years,—in fact, adding more members in the years 1741 and 1742 than in all the forty-four years elapsing to the time of Mr. Little's death,—yet one loves to think that this church was a comfort and a source of help unto this people in those days when the clouds must have hung low and dark.

After Mr. Little's death this Church had no pastor until February 29th, 1792, when Rev. Salmon Cone was ordained, although in that interval of five years fifteen candidates had supplied the pulpit. The following anecdote, illustrative of the condition of this church at that time was told by Mr. Cone himself:

While the Society was holding their meeting to vote on the question of his settlement, and the members of the church were assembled by themselves, in one of the pews, to act on the same question, a member of the Society, casting his eyes toward the little company, inquired whether the same number of persons could not be picked from among them, equal in all respects to these church members? A venerable member of the Society by the name of Wright made the laconic reply: "You need not pick", to so low a state was the church reduced in point of numbers and standing.

The Rev. Salmon Cone was a native of Bolton, Conn., was graduated at Yale College in the year 1789, and was ordained to the work of the ministry, as pastor of this church, on February 29, 1792. The call of the church Mr. Cone accepted in a letter engaging "when Providence shall have constituted me pastor in said church, to perform the duty, so far as God shall enable, which results from that important station." At the Ordination services the Rev. Timothy Strong made the prayer, and Rev. Joseph Huntington, D.D., preached the sermon.

The first constitution of this church, of which we have any record was adopted just prior to Mr. Cone's settlement, on February 6, 1792. These articles provided for the government and administration of the church, and made especial provision for the proper punishment of any member guilty of any scandalous conduct. The provision in this constitution governing the admission of members into this church relates not only to the method adopted at that time, but mentions what it formerly had been, illustrating a system that has created much discussion

in Congregational history. Concerning the admission of members to the church, Article 2. provided "that such persons as have arrived to years of discretion and have acquired a competent degree of knowledge and sustain a good moral character, and have received the seal of Baptism, are satisfied in their own minds that it is their duty to join the church and partake of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, may be admitted.

And that such persons as have arrived to years of discretion and have acquired a competent degree of knowledge and sustain a good moral character, and are satisfied in their own minds that it is their duty to recognize their infant Baptism, or if unbaptized in infancy, to receive the seal of Baptism, and offer up their offspring (if any such they have) or such other children as belong to their household, to God in Baptism, and desire to come into covenant and put themselves under the watch of this church, may be admitted,—although they are not convinced that it is, and do not see it to be their duty to come to the Communion Table and partake of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper with us, which is agreeable to the universal practice of this Church from on or about the year 1702 at which time this church was first incorporated."

This provision authorizes a dual form of church-membership not now recognized;—that of admission upon confession of faith, and also that through Baptism. This doctrine was known as the "Half-way Covenant". Prof. Williston Walker, in his History of Congregationalism in the United States, gives a very clear account of this Half way Covenant, and you will pardon me perhaps if I quote a little of what he says:

"Unlike any other division of Protestantism at that day, except the Anabaptists, the Congregationalists maintained that only adult persons of Christian experience,—in the phrase of that day 'visible saints',—should be admitted to the covenant union which constituted the local church; but they also held that as in the Jewish Church of old, children shared in their parents' covenanting and were therefore truly members of the church to which their parents belonged. This infant membership was not the result of Baptism; rather it was the covenant relation already acquired by birth in a Christian household that gave right to this sacrament. But the fathers of New England at their coming held that it extended only to the immediate offspring of professed Christians and hence restricted Baptism to children, one of whose parents, at least, was a declared believer, in fellowship with some church. This restriction was comparatively easy at first, in spite of the two-fold entrance into church membership—by profession and by birth,—because the leaders in the emigration were men to tried religious experience, generally able to give a reason for their faith. The line of distinction was sharp between the consciously regenerate and that considerable class, even among the first settlers, who made no claim to a regenerative change. But with the growth of the children of these first covenanters the question was made much more difficult. These members of the second genera-

tion showed some decline from the ardent type of piety which marked many of the founders. They were prevailingly of moral life, anxious for the religious training of their children, and desirous of throwing about them the safe-guards of church-watch and discipline; but in many instances they could point to no conscious work of divine grace in their own personal experience.

What to do with these persons was not easy to decide. To admit them to the Lord's Supper would be to break down the whole theory of regenerate church-membership. * * * On the other hand, to deny some church standing to these non-regenerate children of the church, came to seem not only difficult but dangerous to the thinking of many of the leaders of New England. * * * In this dilemma the New England churches, after a long period of agitation, adopted a rather illogical compromise. The non-regenerate offspring of this church were held to be sufficiently in church-covenant to transmit the same degree of church-membership and its accompanying right to Baptism in turn to their children on condition of acquaintance with the main truths of the Gospel and a sincere promise to walk in fellowship with and under the discipline of the Church of which they were members,—a promise called 'owning the Covenant', under which they had been born. But while the abiding membership of this earnest but non-regenerate class was clearly recognized, its representatives were debarred from a place at the Lord's Table. This was known as the Half-way Covenant."

The constitution of 1792 speaks of this doctrine as having been the custom of this church since its foundation, and it does not appear to have been abrogated until the next constitution was adopted, on June 29th, 1824, when it was provided that admission to church-membership should be by confession of faith.

This constitution, (adopted June 29, 1824, while Mr. Cone was pastor), was a revision of the one of February 6th, 1792, making the important change which we have just mentioned, but in other respects very similar, although a little more simple.

In the second volume of the records of this Church, in the handwriting of the late Rev. Samuel G. Willard, is a confession of faith and form of covenant which was used by the Rev. Salmon Cone at least during the later years of his pastorate, for the admission of new members to this Church. It is typical of the Calvinistic beliefs of that day,—infallibility of the Scriptures, original sin, justification by faith, and eternal punishment are the essential statements of belief which it embodies, while the covenant is, perhaps, not very different from that always used by this church.

The first Conference House was built during Mr. Cone's pastorate. On December 4, 1826, at a regular meeting of the church, it was voted to consider the matter of a Conference House, and on June 10th, 1828, the church voted to erect such a building, fixing its dimensions at 30 feet by 24 feet, and appoint John Watrous, Salmon Cone, and E. W. Parsons as a Committee to carry on the work. Funds came in rather slowly to meet the necessary expenses, but the building was finally

completed by February 5th, 1830, although it was not entirely paid for until some time later, for on June 30th, 1839, the Record shows that Brother Joshua Clark reported that the lecture-room was then free from debt. This first Conference House was built by the members of the church and not by the First Ecclesiastical Society. It was located where the store of Mr. H. P. Buell now stands.

It is to be regretted that I have not been able to find out much in regard to the Rev. Salmon Cone. To satisfy the people of a growing town and to have held a successful pastorate in this church for 38 years must have required intellectual and moral qualities of no mean order. The church appears to have been active and growing during Mr. Cone's pastorate. There were large additions to its membership, and there were three revivals, the largest being in the year 1823, evidently one of much permanent religious effect, for in the six years from 1824 to 1830, one hundred and fifty persons united with this church.

Dr. Frederic Morgan in 1876 gave to the late Rev. Samuel G. Willard the following description of Rev. Salmon Cone: He was tall, perhaps five feet and eleven inches, rather spare, and was usually liked by people who heard him for the first time. His manner was conciliatory. He was prudent in speech and action; was not regarded as a hard student, but was fond of society and highly enjoyed conversation. He enjoyed teaching and occasionally taught in Bacon Academy in the absence of a principal.

Inasmuch as we have very little information of a personal nature concerning the Rev. Mr. Cone, I am loath to leave untold a little story concerning him that appears in Sprague's Annals, in a letter of Dr. Abel McEwen concerning Rev. David Austin, a man of evident eccentricity of character, and yet rather famous in his day:

"Mr. Cone of Colchester, not averse to help, with some stretch of kindness toward Mr. Austin, let him preach for him once or twice. One afternoon, as Mr. Cone was sitting oppressed with a hypochondriacal affection, he observed an unusual movement of his parishioners along the streets, and one of his family inquired the occasion of the movement. No one could inform him. Just then Mr. Austin came dashing up on his high nettled steed and suddenly entered the house.

'What', said Mr. Cone, 'is this movement of the people?'

'A lecture', was the reply.

'A lecture! I have not appointed one', said Mr. Cone.

'No', replied Mr. Austin, 'I appointed it'.

'But how is this?', answered the indignant pastor; 'appoint lectures in my parish without consulting me!'

With all meekness and benignity the interloper replied: 'Brother Cone, don't be angry. I confess it is a little irregular; but the pigeons are down, let us spring the net on them.'

Mr. Cone, suffering from feeble health, upon his own request, was dismissed from the pastorate of this church on August 11th, 1830. He afterwards supplied a pulpit in Goshen, Conn., for a short time, and died on March 24th, 1834, full of years and honors. Mr. Cone was the third

pastor of this church. At the time of his dismissal it was 127 years old. Mr. Bulkley was pastor almost 29 years; Mr. Little within a month or two of 55 years; and Mr. Cone more than 38 years. For any church to have had only three pastors in the first 127 years of its history, is a record that argues much for the pastors and much also for the church. It was now a strong and growing church, situated in one of the most beautiful and prosperous towns of the state. Colchester was no longer a mere plantation; it was a thriving community of about 3000 inhabitants. Prosperity had come with the years. Pleasant in situation by nature, yet stately houses adorning either side of these broad streets added to its beauty and gave it a homelike charm peculiar to itself. Bacon Academy was established here in 1803, and thus Colchester became the seat of an educational institution second to none in the state at that time as a preparatory school, bringing to her outside recognition and also home culture.

Upon the occasion of Mr. Salmon Cone's dismissal, on August 11th, 1830, the Rev. Lyman Strong was installed as the next pastor of this church. At the installation services the Rev. Joel Hawes, the widely known pastor of the Center Church in Hartford, preached the sermon, and Rev. Abel McEwen, of New London, made the installing prayer.

The career of Mr. Strong was somewhat varied. He was born at Southampton, Mass., in the year 1782, and graduated from Williams College. He studied medicine and practiced his profession for a time in Guilford, Conn. Later, he taught in a female seminary at Beaufort, S. C., and after that, studied theology. At one time he was a minister at Hebron, Conn. Although this church was evidently in a prosperous condition during his ministry, yet his relations with the people do not seem to have been such as to warrant a long pastorate. After he had been here four years, by mutual consent of the First Ecclesiastical Society, of this Church and of Mr. Strong, a meeting of the consociation of the churches and ministers of New London County was called to consider the question of Mr. Strong's dismissal. The consociation met at Colchester on June 25, 1835; Rev. Lyman Strong was its moderator, but on account of his personal interest in the matter, he withdrew from the chair and the Rev. Dr. Nott, of Franklin, was chosen in his stead. The consociation, finding that much disaffection, whether justified or unjustified, existed between the people and Mr. Strong, therefore voted: "That the pastoral relation of the Rev. Lyman Strong to the church and people of Colchester be, and it is hereby dissolved. Such is the spirit of innovation and instability of the churches and societies respecting the settlement of Ministers of the Gospel, that this Consociation feels itself bound to declare and to record the fact that in the present instance the Church and Society in Colchester, though full, explicit, and repeated opportunity was given, declined giving and failed to exhibit any reason or justification for their disaffection for Mr. Strong. On the other hand, undisputed statements were made to the Consociation that during his ministry the congregation to which he ministered was considerably increased and the church was greatly enlarged." After expressing its un-

bounded confidence in Mr. Strong, although deeming his dismissal best, the Consociation adjourned. This is the only time in the history of this Church that the relations of pastor and people were dissolved in this manner. No comment upon the action and statements of the Consociation is necessary. The situation is one that we often see,—a man who is an able minister and a good pastor, yet failing to acquire the confidence and support of the people of his church.

It is said that Mr. Strong was a courtly, dignified gentleman, highly esteemed by his friends and especially comforting in his ministrations among the poor and oppressed. Mr. Strong continued to reside in Colchester after his relations with this church were dissolved, and was always willing to be of service whenever a call came. Mr. Strong died on December 31, 1861. During the pastorate of Mr. Strong, on November 19th, 1834, the Rev. George Champion of Westchester, Conn., a graduate of Yale in 1831, and of the Andover Theological Seminary in 1834, was ordained to the work of the ministry in this Church. He was the first missionary to the Zulus, in the dark continent of Africa.

It was not until about a year after Mr. Strong's dismissal that another pastor was settled here. On June 15, 1836, the Consociation of the Churches of New London County met again for the purpose of installing the Rev. Joel R. Arnold whom this Church and Society had called. Dr. Samuel Nott, of Franklin, whose familiar name always appears upon occasions of this kind, offered the installing prayer, and the Rev. Mr. Hickock, of Litchfield, preached the sermon.

The Rev. Joel Ranney Arnold was born in Westminster, Vermont, on April 25th, 1794. He was the youngest son of Seth Arnold, a soldier in the Continental army during the war of the Revolution, and also a brother of Rev. S. S. Arnold, an honored minister for over fifty years in Vermont and New Hampshire. Mr. Arnold matriculated at Middlebury College in the year 1811, and upon his graduation studied medicine. Afterwards he gave up the practice of medicine and studied theology under the direction of his brother who was settled at Astead, N. H. His first parish was at Chester, N. H., from which place he went to Waterbury, Conn., and was pastor of the Congregational Church in that town from June, 1831, to June, 1836. He came to Colchester from Waterbury.

Mr. Arnold was a man of deep spiritual life and of splendid intellectual powers. His manner was somewhat brusque, but his unflinching honesty and innate goodness won for him the respect and confidence of his people. While of a temperament which was contemplative and seemingly sad, he yet possessed a genuine sense of wit and humor. He preached in the days when sermons were longer than we are accustomed to to-day, and his long, thoughtful, and logical discourses have left him a reputation as a preacher perhaps second to none among the ministers who have occupied this pulpit. "Priest" Arnold, as the Rev. Joel R. Arnolds was reverently called, was a man of strong mind, true learning, and lofty character.

The Rev. F. D. Avery who for so many years was pastor of the Congregational Church in Columbia, Conn., wrote me as follows:

“You inquire of me especially respecting the Rev. Joel R. Arnold. My personal acquaintance with him began when he was installed over the First Church in Coventry, in December, 1854, as I was a member of the Council. It seemed to me to be almost an impertinence in his case to pursue the usual course of testing his qualifications, but we sat at his feet to be instructed by his words of acumen and comprehensive clearness, as when he made the doctrine of the ‘Saints’ Perseverance’ to be the ‘Perseverance of God.’ In common with ministers in general, and those who knew and heard him, I regarded him as a very able,—exceptionally able preacher, setting into his discourse strong sentences of valuable truth calculated to hold attention and edify. He seemed to me not to be conscious of his real power in the pulpit. His life and character were most befitting his high calling.”

The period of Mr. Arnold’s pastorate here was one of marked growth and activity in this church. In these thirteen years, about 275 new members were added to the membership of the church, the numbers each year averaging about twenty-one. They were years of general religious awakening throughout the Congregational churches of New England, and the response to the evangelical work of the ministers was more marked than at any time during the past one hundred years. Mr. Arnold’s pastorate, coming in these fruitful years, was productive of large results.

In the year 1836 the Baptist Church was established here, and in 1843 the Methodist Episcopal Church, which had existed by circuit preaching since 1836, was also established with Robert Allyn as pastor.

The constitution of this church adopted in 1824 was superceded on October 13, 1836, by Articles of Faith and Covenant, “for the more orderly establishment and regulation” of the church. The declaration of faith contained in these articles of faith and covenant was very similar, in general, to that contained in the statement of faith used by the Rev. Salmon Cone, but was much more elaborate and complete. These articles of faith and covenant, together with a list of the members of the church, were published in 1842.

In the year 1841 the house of worship which had then been in use about 70 years, and which was admired by large numbers of the people, needing repairs, was relegated as of no further use and sacrificed for a new one. It almost seemed like a judgment from above, to those who deprecated its destruction, when the well-built and well-founded tower resisted the efforts of the brethren who gathered in large numbers to pull it down, bringing their cattle with them and breaking their chains in their endeavors, coming one day, and then coming another, and swearing some, I dare say, as Dr. Holmes says church people do at times with a “I dew vum”, or an “I tell yew”. But finally the old church came to the ground, and this present edifice, dear to the eye of us all, and whose replacement many of us would mourn, was erected. It was built partly out of timbers from the old church and was paid for by subscription. This was the fourth house of worship which the church had built.

Its dedication took place here on March 1st, 1842. The services were as follows:

Invocation and reading of the Scriptures by Rev. Lyman Strong. Dedicatory prayer by Rev. Joel R. Arnold. Sermon by Rev. Joel Hawes D. D. of Hartford, Conn., upon a text from Acts II: 47. Concluding prayer by Rev. Mr. Mills of the Baptist Church.

As an outcome of the general religious awakening and enthusiasm of 1841 and 1842, Sunday Schools, which originated with Robert Raikes, in Gloucester, England, in 1780, were introduced into the churches. Before this time, however, there had been Sunday Schools, but they were not an integral part of the churches; they were in charge of Sunday School Societies and independently managed. There is evidence that a Sunday School society was in existence in Colchester as early as 1810, but it was not until May 4th, 1849, that the Sunday School was incorporated into this church. At that time this church voted that "Whereas the Sabbath School Society connected with this Church and congregation has manifested a desire to transfer to this Church the interest and care of the Sabbath School, with the hope that it will be better provided for than formerly, therefore resolved, that we will accept of this transfer of the Sabbath School and will at the annual meeting of the Church elect officers to superintend its affairs and otherwise provide for its necessities."

After the Church took charge of the Sunday School it was for a time administered by a committee of five, one of whom acted as superintendent. Ebenezer Carpenter was the first superintendent, having been elected June 29th, 1849, and after that was continuously elected at each annual meeting of this Church until July 5, 1866, when he was succeeded by Russell Gillette. Erastus S. Day, and Sylvanus Backus followed after short periods. Deacon Alden A. Baker was elected June 3, 1874, as superintendent of the school and held the office until July 12, 1900, when he declined a further election and was succeeded by Mr. H. N. Dickinson.

The character of the town was somewhat changed in 1847, when the Haywood Rubber Company established its large manufacturing plant here, putting into practical form the famous discovery of Nathaniel Haywood—a man whose name is far up in the roll of our country's inventors. He discovered the process which led to the manufacture of rubber boots and shoes. Colchester owes much to this man and his family, and she should ever hold in grateful appreciation the many generous and lasting improvements that they have given her.

On June 27th, 1849, in a simple yet beautiful letter Mr. Arnold resigned from the pastorate of this church. He spoke of his unhappy anticipation of trouble when he first came and of the union and harmony that now prevailed; of his pleasant disappointment; of the kindness of the people, many of whom had helped him materially; that he considered his salary adequate, but that ill health made him unequal to the work of this parish. Upon motion of Deacon Morgan his resignation was accepted, and in accordance therewith Mr. Arnold was formally dismissed from this church on July 14th, 1849.

After leaving Colchester, Mr. Arnold was the stated supply at Middlebury, Vt., from September, 1851, to December, 1853, and was installed pastor of the First Congregational Church in Coventry in December,

1854, going from there to Wells River, New Hampshire, on July 4, 1865.

From July 17th, 1849, to October 21, 1851, this church had no settled pastor. On January 9, 1850, the Church voted to request the Society's Committee to engage the Rev. Henry M. Field, until the first of April, next, to supply the pulpit. Mr. Field was a son of the Rev. Dr. David Dudley Field, who at one time lived in Haddam, Conn., and later at Stockbridge, Mass. Among his brothers were Cyrus W. Field, David Dudley Field, and Stephen J. Field, all of them men who have attained to eminence. The Rev. Dr. H. M. Field is now widely known through his literary and religious writings, and is the editor and proprietor of the *New York Evangelist*. He accepted the invitation of this church to supply the pulpit at that time, and many of you will remember with great interest and pleasure his short term of service here.

Five different ministers were called to this pastorate during the vacancy that I have just mentioned, but it was not filled until the Rev. Erastus Dickinson accepted the call and was installed on October 21, 1851. The Rev. Walter Clark, of Hartford, preached the Installation sermon. The introductory prayer was made by Rev. J. R. Brown of Goshen, the installing prayer by Rev. Lyman Strong, the Charge to the Pastor by Rev. Anson S. Atwood of Mansfield, the Charge to the people by Rev. M. N. Morris of North Stonington, the Charge to the people by Rev. P. C. Nichols of Lebanon, and the concluding prayer by Rev. John Avery of Exeter.

Mr. Dickinson was born on April 1, 1807, at Plainfield, Mass., and was graduated at Amherst College in 1832. He subsequently studied theology at Andover Theological Seminary. His first charge was over the Congregational Church at Canton, Mass., where he was ordained in 1835, coming from there, in 1837, to Chaplin, Conn. He preached at Chaplin until 1849, and always considered his ministry at that place the most successful of his life. During 1849 and 1850 he preached at Marshfield, Mass.,—a place beloved of Daniel Webster,—coming from there to Colchester.

The pastorate of Mr. Dickinson here was the shortest one in the annals of this Church. He came October 21st, 1851, and on July 22, 1855, read a letter of resignation at the close of the afternoon service. The Church requested him to reconsider his action, and asked him to remain, but he replied that he did not feel inclined to withdraw his request. An Ecclesiastical Council held September 4th, 1855, dissolved the pastoral relation, extending its sympathy to the church thus left without a pastor, and expressing its confidence in Mr. Dickinson "as a worthy and esteemed brother in Christ, a laborious, discreet, and useful minister."

Mr. Dickinson went to Sudbury, Mass., being settled there until 1868, then going to Lakewood, New Jersey, where he lived until his death, on September 8th, 1888.

His daughter was the wife of the Rev. William Hayes Ward, Editor of the *New York Independent*. The *Lakewood Times and Journal* said of Mr. Dickinson at the time of his death: "As a preacher, he was earnest, devout, and sincere, and as a citizen he was generous, hospitable, and kind. All his life a student, and a worker in the cause which he

espoused, he yet found time to read widely and well, and as a conversationalist was always pleasing, refined, and intelligent." The close of Mr. Dickinson's pastorate completes practically a century and a half of the history of this church. That part of its history, so far as our personal recollection is concerned, has been both to you and me, to the greater extent, a closed book. We have thus far gone along together over the years, not taking from our own memory the tale that has been told, but reading a little here and there from the old records, repeating the stories once carelessly jotted down, and calling upon tradition to furnish us with information that no book contains, all the while endeavoring to suggest a fairly complete outline of this church's history.

But to go on, brings me to the times when memory will call to the minds of many of you the history of this church more vividly than any pen of mine can picture it. To those of you who remember back the better part of the past fifty years, it would be impossible for me adequately or satisfactorily to repeat the facts that you know so well. The few words more which I will add, may possibly touch upon some of the things that will come crowding into your minds.

About six months after Mr. Dickinson's pastorate closed, on February 21st, 1856, at a meeting of this Church, with Deacon Israel Newton as Moderator, it was voted to extend a call to the Rev. Lucius Curtis to become pastor of this Church. Mr. Curtis accepted the call and on May 28th, 1856, was installed as pastor.

At the installation services Dr. Abel McEwen, of New London, gave the charge to the pastor, Rev. J. A. Hazen, of Hanover, made the installing prayer, and Rev. T. D. Woolsey, President of Yale College, preached the installation sermon.

Mr. Curtis came to Colchester in the 44th year of his age, having been born at Torrington, Conn., November 16, 1812. Through both his father and his mother he traced his ancestry to some of the strongest families of early New England, and had a rich inheritance in religious and intellectual tendencies. He acquired his early education in Torrington Academy, and entered Williams College, from which he graduated in the year 1835. On leaving college, he went to Rochester, N. Y., where he taught in a private school for several years very successfully. Later, he determined upon entering the ministry and studied theology at Andover Theological Seminary, graduating from there in 1845, although he spent the middle year of his theological course at the Yale Theological Seminary. He was ordained to the work of the ministry at Woodbury, Conn., on July 8, 1846. This was his first pastorate, and he remained at Woodbury until June 7th, 1854, being then compelled, on account of poor health, to resign.

While pastor at Woodbury he was married to Miss Emily C. Whittelsey,—a fact in his life that the historian should not fail to record, although it is not within his power to express the influence which came to him in that sweet, sympathetic, appreciative and helpful companionship.

In the winter of 1854-5, Mr. Curtis supplied the pulpit in the Congregational Church in Lebanon, Conn., for about six months, coming from there to Colchester.

During the pastorate of Mr. Curtis here the growth of this church was marked and continuous. The records of the church show many additions, during these years, of men and women of strong Christian character and culture, who, through the succeeding years, even unto to-day, have given strength and power unto this church and town.

In the year 1857-8 the present Chapel, or Conference House, standing between Bacon Academy and this house of worship, was built by the First Ecclesiastical Society. The old Conference House, built in 1828, by the voluntary subscriptions of the members of the Church, was transferred to the First Ecclesiastical Society, and in 1854 Mr. Charles H. Rogers bought it. Mr. Rogers occupied it as a store for a time, as did Mr. H. P. Buell later. In 1890 it was destroyed by fire, and Mr. Buell erected his present block upon the place where it formerly stood.

The Chapel has been repaired and remodeled since the days when it was built, and affords now a most pleasant and attractive meeting place for various religious, educational, and social exercises.

I may say that Calvary Church was organized in Colchester in the year 1861.

As during the pastorate of the Rev. Mr. Little a great war occurred which affected even the remotest inhabitants of the then thirteen colonies, so in Mr. Curtis's pastorate another fierce conflict of arms brought to this peaceful town a patriotic call to go forth to a war waged in behalf of freedom and union. Large numbers went forth to that war from this town, proud in their strength, but sadness and sorrow were the portion of the homes of many of them who never came back. This church had a share in that great conflict, sending help and assistance to the soldiers at the front, and in 1863 raised \$1000. for their relief.

But even before the strife really began, when uncertainty and indecision seemed to threaten ruin to the Union, Mr. Curtis preached a sermon in this pulpit, on April 21, 1861, upon "Civil Government,—an Ordinance of God." This sermon met with such cordial approval that Ebenezer Carpenter, Horace Smith, M. Storrs, R. B. Gwyllim, S. A. Stebbins, J. T. Ashton, and forty others, requested that Mr. Curtis furnish them with a copy which they might publish. This was done.

In those days of doubt and fear, when despair and gloom darkened the vision of even the bravest and wisest, this sermon must have rung out clear and strong. The minister of this Church did not hesitate; did not trifle. His message, as found in this sermon, argues that civil government is a sacred ordinance and ought to vindicate its claim to loyal obedience.

Mr. Curtis also came into close personal contact with the war when he served as Chaplain on the Christian Commission from March 24th to April 20th, 1865. Of these days he kept a faithful account, mentioning the soldiers he assisted, the meetings that he held, and a little of the awfulness that he saw. That great war appealed to the strongest feelings of Mr. Curtis's Christian manhood, and his whole heart and soul were enlisted in vindication of our national government. In those days of

strife, he stood forth, bright and clear, as a Christian minister in word and deed, putting forth every effort in the service of his country.

Mr. Curtis continued as pastor of this church on through the war, resigning and being dismissed by an accredited Council of Churches on May 19, 1868, having ministered here twelve years.

You who knew him, loved and respected him; you who heard him, will remember him as a strong and spiritual preacher. He was a faithful pastor to his people, helping those in sorrow, and giving encouragement to all in their every day toil and labor. Colchester was a growing and busy community in the days of Mr. Curtis's pastorate, and it was a field calling forth his full powers, and gave an appreciative response to his highest efforts. Mr. Curtis came here fully equipped for his work and ripened in his own experience. He was a scholar and a reader of the old school, loving and appreciating classical learning, while ever keeping in close touch with advanced philosophical and theological investigation. But he was not a man who merely had a rich store of learning. He had a mind which saw clearly the great problems of life and could treat of them with force and vigor. Of a deep spiritual nature, he felt the nearness of God and saw His manifestations in all His wondrous works. He was a man of unusual sweetness and tenderness: his love of nature was deep and appreciative, and there is many a little poem among his writings suggested by something grand or beautiful which he had newly discovered. Literature was a field in which he reveled; there his rare spirit gave quick response to the high thoughts which other lives had felt and left behind. To Williams College, his Alma Mater, he was always loyal and devoted. He often returned there in Commencement season, and I have seen several addresses which he delivered there upon different occasions. Mr. Curtis was a dignified and courteous gentleman, always kindly and gracious. As one studies his life, there is no taint of false ambition or of superficial desires. Truth, Righteousness, Love, and Beauty, were the eternal rocks upon which his life was founded. The sermons of such a man cover necessarily a wide field and touch many a phase of life. He led his people into the peaceful places of God's pastures, where the sunshine made everything beautiful to behold; but if the storms came to bring trouble and fear, he yet taught them that God was there and His hand was ever outstretched to save. He lived near to God, as few of us do, and his life, whether directly given out in his spoken words, or shedding its influence unconsciously as men beheld his goings about, pointed always to that highest and best portion,—a Christian life.

Mr. Curtis's leaving Colchester caused much regret, but although he was earnestly requested to remain, he deemed it best to go. From here he went to Wisconsin, where for a short time he was preacher at the Ripon College Church. There he was offered a permanent pastorate, but did not accept it. From Ripon he went to Lyons, Iowa, where he was pastor of the church in that place for five years. During these years his health was not good, and he finally came to Hartford, Conn., where he resided until his death, on Feb'y. 12, 1901. He preached, during these

years, more or less in various pulpits, taught a little at Trinity College, was a familiar figure at various Congregational Councils, and devoted himself more especially to literary work.

Mr. Curtis published various sermons and wrote some articles for the reviews. His longest and most complete work was a book entitled "The Immortal Life", published after his death. The last years of his life had been given to this work. It is a strong, inductive argument for a belief in an immortal life, based upon the assumption that the world is rationally ordered; that human life is one with the life of God; that man is a personality belonging to the spiritual kingdom; and that the great law of life and the end of creation are fulfilled only by man's eternal existence. The book is replete with sound reasoning and is illustrated by many a choice selection from a long list of philosophical writings. It merited and received cordial approval of distinguished scholars and theologians.

Mr. Curtis I knew after I went to Hartford; I never knew him as many of you did in his years of activity as pastor of this church. But as I beheld him about the streets of his adopted city, or slowly taking his place in the First Church of Christ, whose regular meetings he faithfully attended, despite his feebleness, or the inclemency of the weather, I thought of him as a God-sent man who manfully kept the faith and whose life was crowned with the glory of righteousness. He frequently spoke to me of Colchester, and ever had a kindly interest in its welfare. Weakness toward the end, gave Mr. Curtis the appearance of one whose life was clearly spent, and who must soon go hence. He felt and realized this. Let me leave Mr. Curtis by quoting the beautiful little poem which he wrote shortly before his death, and which appears on the fore-page of the book I have mentioned as being his last work:

"The evening hour has come, the fainter light
Of closing day doth call me to my rest.
The landscape darkens to my fading sight
And golden tints are dying in the west.
Yet night uplifts the curtain day had drawn,
To show the stars and bring the brighter dawn."

For this church to have had as its pastor such a man as Mr. Curtis, was a rich blessing; but to have his work continued and developed by such a man as the Rev. Samuel G. Willard, his successor, is a fact in the history of this Church which may well give us pause. Mr. Curtis had been gone only about four months when the Rev. Samuel Gregory Willard was installed pastor of this church.

The first year of Mr. Willard's pastorate here was one of the most active in all the history of this church. Large numbers were added to the membership of the church, and each year after that during his pastorate, which lasted until June 12th, 1887, the growth of this church was marked. The number of new members joining this communion, while at all times comparatively large, varied of course somewhat according to the conditions of the community.

In the years 1869 and 1877 special religious services were held in this town by the Young Men's Christian Association of the State, and in these two years this church was seemingly more than ordinarily prosperous.

In 1870 Mr. Willard compiled and had printed the first complete list of the members of this Church. It was called a "Catalogue of the First Church of Christ in Colchester, Conn." and served as the basis for the new Complete Manual published in 1893.

In the year 1872, an organ was given to this Church by the late Mr. J. C. Hammond, and in that same year this house of worship was refurnished, the ladies of the church raising the funds which made this possible. About 1872 the debt of the First Ecclesiastical Society, amounting to \$1100. was paid by subscriptions, and in 1881 a further indebtedness of \$2500. which had been incurred was also finally paid. The clock upon the steeple of this edifice, which seems to most of us, and I am safe in saying to all the younger ones of us a part of this town, was set in place in 1872.

On February 27th, 1874, the church passed a vote allowing any one to join this communion by giving assent to the Apostles' Creed in place of the Articles of Faith as adopted in October, 1836, excepting, however, that no person should be elected to the office of pastor, deacon, or superintendent of the Sunday-School unless he heartily subscribed to the regularly formulated Articles of Faith.

In 1877 Dr. Frederick Morgan died, who for forty years had been a deacon of this church, and his name has become very familiar to the speaker, as he has looked through the records of this church, many of them made by this man, and others of them witnessing to his active participation in its affairs. In expressing sympathy for him in his long illness, this church voted him \$50.

This house of worship, since its erection in 1841, was several times repaired and refurnished, but in 1884 it became evident that some decided change must be made in its appointments, and the question arose whether it was more advisable to repair the old building or erect a new one. The matter was accordingly discussed by the members of the First Ecclesiastical Society, and finally it was decided to thoroughly repair the old church building. To superintend the work and carry out the plans, a committee was appointed, consisting of Deacon Alden H. Baker, Dr. S. E. Swift, William S. Curtis, E. B. Cogan and Sylvanus Backus. The work of renovation began in the summer months of the year 1884, and was finished before the next New Year. The whole building was completely repaired and refurnished.

The expense of this work was largely paid out of a legacy given to this Society by Mrs. Alfred B. Pierce, for herself and Mr. Pierce, and the memorial window on the north side of the church appropriately perpetuates their memory. The members of the Sunday-School also placed a window in the south side.

On January 1, 1885, the church was ready for occupancy and on that day dedicatory exercises were held in this house.

During Mr. Willard's pastorate, Mr. James L. Lindsley was chorister of this church and his efficient and devoted service merited and received the cordial appreciation of the people.

You will not expect me to mention individuals, except as they have become a part of this church's history, and yet I know that you will pardon me if I say that to William S. Ransom, for years a loyal son of this church although not now a resident of this town, a large measure of credit is due, for his devoted and noble service in organizing and perfecting this work of the young people of this church, whether the organization bear its original name of The Young People's Meeting, or its present title, The Christian Endeavor Society.

Mr. Willard's pastorate was a full and rich one. Words would fail me to speak of all that this church accomplished under his leadership. I have merely mentioned some facts that we must all have had in mind as we look back over those labors which were ended altogether too soon. His pastorate closed on June 12th, 1887. On the evening of that day, which was Children's Sunday, in his own home, ministered unto by the ones dear to him, while his fellow townsmen throughout this quiet community sat in waiting, the soul of this good man went hence. He had been ill for just a year, bearing with fortitude, and resignation his unwelcome helplessness. A large congregation from all over the state gathered on June 15th, in this house, to pay their last rites of honor and respect to their beloved pastor, fellow-townsmen, and associate.

At the time of his death Mr. Willard was in his sixty-eighth year, having been born in Wilton, Conn., November 8, 1819. His father was a physician, and his strong New England ancestry included the Rev. Samuel Willard, D.D., one of the early presidents of Harvard College. The Gregory family, from which his mother came, was no less distinguished. Mr. Willard graduated from Yale College in 1846 and from the Yale Theological Seminary in 1849. He was ordained and installed pastor of the Congregational Church in Willimantic, Conn., November 8, 1849, which was his first pastorate. This church was his second. Between these two churches he almost equally divided his labors, each pastorate lacking just a little of nineteen years.

The activities of Mr. Willard's life were wide and varied; religious, charitable and educational work in its divers forms of development easily won his earnest support and invariably demanded his active co-operation. He was a director of the Connecticut Home Missionary Society, a trustee of the fund for ministers from its inception, in 1864, registrar of the New London County Association of Congregational Churches, a corporate member of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, a life director of the Connecticut Bible Society, and a life member of the American Congregational Association of Boston, Mass. In 1865 he was one of several ministers and laymen who met in Norwich, Conn., and organized the Connecticut State Temperance Union, acting after that as chairman of the executive committee, until his resignation in 1879. In the year 1866, while residing in Willimantic, he represented the town of Windham in the General Assembly, and during that

session, largely through his energetic support, the Connecticut Hospital for the Insane, at Middletown, Conn., was established. He was elected at that time a trustee of the institution and held the office until his death. When the New London County Historical Association was organized, Mr. Willard became a charter member.

In 1867 he was elected a member of the corporation of Yale College and served as a member of its prudential committee. Mr. Willard loved Yale College; she was his Alma Mater, and strong associations and life-long friends there kept his interest in her welfare always fresh. No doubt to serve her as a member of the corporation was a welcome labor.

In this wide field of work beyond the local interests of his own parish, Mr. Willard filled out a large measure of service, but in his own town he gave his hearty and cordial support to every uplifting and helpful institution. Here he became a trustee of the Colchester Savings Bank, when it was organized, and acted as a director until his death. He was also a life member of the Colchester Library Association, and as acting school visitor and a member of the Board of Education, he gave largely of his time and experience to further and improve the educational conditions of this town. To all these positions he brought a conscientious attention, a courageous support, an unprejudiced judgment, and an unusual capacity for the orderly arrangement of details.

The Rev. Dr. J. W. Cooper, of New Britain, Conn., a member of the corporation of Yale University, once said to me: "We always placed a great deal of dependence upon Mr. Willard's judgment". And so it was. He was called to the councils of such a large number of boards of direction because he gave to them an intelligent sympathy, together with advice that it was safe to rely upon.

Many honors came to Mr. Willard and no doubt they brought to him satisfactory evidence of the appreciation of his life of service. But nearer and dearer to him than all these manifold distinctions which public institutions placed upon him, was his office of minister of this church and pastor to this people. The services of this church he loved, whether telling the people the plain truth of the Gospel from the pulpit, or in prayer meeting, or in those choice gatherings when a few of the younger ones sat at his feet as he instructed them in the study of the Bible. He preached sermons that were practical, sensible and helpful, setting forth God's truth as He has revealed it unto us, never ambitiously soaring beyond the message that he was conveying, and always stating clearly those great truths that are yet so simple,—righteousness, meekness, mercy and loving-kindness. In whatever pulpit he might stand he was a minister meet for his calling. When times of sorrow and trouble came, Mr. Willard's presence always brought comfort, while many a one in perplexity came to his own quiet home, whose habitation was peace, to find the crooked path made straight. His life was full,—full of work, of helpfulness, and encouragement. It is not for me to endeavor to make an estimate of his accomplishment or an analysis of his character. That was done by Dr. Burton in his appreciative address. For most of you no one need do it. His life was an open book to be read of all men. It was the great sermon

that he preached. Great, perhaps he was not from a worldly view-point, but he filled so well and completely the place that God called him to, that it sometimes seems we shall not look upon his like again. He brought to his work a complete education from the college which he loved so well; an unswerving faith in God and His Christ; a peculiar devotion to the work of the church; an unwearied study of truth in its various manifestations; a sincere sympathy with others and a most telling way of expressing it; and a character unsullied by self-consciousness and guided only by the pole-star of righteousness. He was loving and he was beloved. His kindness and his courteousness, together with his unquestioned sincerity, won him the respect and love of all who knew him,—the young and the old, his fellow-townsmen, his associates everywhere. Colchester loved and honored him, but more distinction came to Colchester through this man than she ever could give him. The temptation is strong to dwell upon his life. Often as I have thought of the press and strife of this busy and wearying life of to-day, my mind has reverted to that calm, persisting, and trusting man, interested alike in man's work and God's work, but to whom giving was more than getting, and righteousness more than great gain. Possibly some of you may have thought of him in the same way. So let us leave him. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace."

On September 14th, 1887, this church and society extended to the Rev. F. S. Hatch, formerly a professor in the Hartford Theological Seminary, a call to become pastor here. Mr. Hatch had served as a temporary pastor for the six months prior thereto, and during that time had made many friends here, and did much toward holding the people together. By his strong and interesting sermons, he drew together large congregations. Many regretted that he did not feel like accepting the call that was offered him, and this church to-day still holds a deep interest in his work. From Colchester he went to Munson, Mass., but he is now in India, have responded to a call from that country to go there and assist in the work of organizing the Christian Endeavor Society.

The Rev. C. F. Weeden became the next pastor of this church. He was called January 17th, 1888, and was ordained April 4, 1888. The ordination service consisted of the invocation by the Rev. Lucius Curtis, of Hartford, Conn., a sermon by the Rev. Joseph H. Twichell, of Hartford, Conn., the ordaining prayer, by the Rev. Dr. Lewellyn Pratt, of Norwich, Conn., and the charge to the people, by the Rev. F. S. Hatch.

Like the first three pastors of this church, Mr. Weeden came here directly upon finishing his theological studies. He was a native of Providence, R. I., and a graduate of Amherst College and of the Hartford Theological Seminary. Mr. Weeden's work here, coming at a time when the field was ripe unto the harvest, was very successful. Many among the young, and a considerable number of those of more mature years, came into the membership of this church. Mr. Weeden had an especially deep interest in the young people, with the result that they quickly responded to his call and loyally supported him in the work of the church. He did much for them and an appreciative band of young people will ever remember

him with cordial interest. Mr. Weeden made the social life of the parish of more than usual interest, and arranged the church services in a very attractive manner. Thus the church was kept alive and energetic under his enthusiastic leadership.

During his pastorate, in 1893, the Articles of Faith and Covenant of this church were revised and a Manual was printed. The confession of faith in this manual, which is the one now in use in the admission of members to this church, is a much more simple and uninvolved statement of belief than that found in the Articles of Faith of 1836. It contains all the essential elements of the Christian belief, but is broad enough and comprehensive enough to state with some degree of accuracy the faith of the Christian churches of to-day.

On January 17th, 1890, Mr. Charles N. Ransom was ordained in this church preparatory to sailing for Africa to engage in missionary work under the auspices of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

On May 17th, 1895, Mr. Weeden resigned from the pastorate of this church to accept a call to the Congregational Church in Norwood, Mass.

You all know Mr. Weeden; you know him as an unusually strong and earnest man, quick to help in times of need, yet absolutely uncompromising with wrong in whatever insidious form it might appear. You might not always agree with him, yet you knew that he was leading you in through the door into the sheep-fold. You heard him preach for seven years and you appreciated those carefully prepared and thoughtful sermons. You heard nothing sensational, yet I dare say you have not often listened to such clear and deep statements of God's truth. The ability, the earnestness and the steady development of Mr. Weeden have already won for him a large measure of success.

From Norwood, where he was until January 1, 1901, he went to Lynn, Mass. Here he is in charge of a large church and doing a splendid work. Occasionally an article is published from his pen, urging moral precepts upon the young, but his main work is in his church, where he gives a whole-hearted service. Mr. Weeden's career will ever be watched with deep interest by the members of his first charge.

On March 31, 1896, the Rev. Edmund C. Ingalls, a graduate of Harvard University and of the Andover Theological Seminary, was installed as pastor of this church. During this pastorate the name of the Church has been changed from that of the First Church of Christ, to the First Congregational Church, and action has been taken toward incorporating the Church and dissolving the First Ecclesiastical Society. Mr. Ingalls is now the pastor of this church. His kindly and conscientious ministry it is not for the historian of to-day to consider. It is a part of the present life of this church and not of its history.

Thus my account of this Church's history closes. You are all realizing its many imperfections and incompletenesses. The speaker is equally conscious of them also. It has been long and yet I have merely touched upon its main features.

I have said nothing about the different officers of the Church, and it has had many men in its service who have given a whole-hearted attention to its affairs.

I have said nothing about the women of the Church, yet much of its real work they have done.

I have said nothing about its support of missionary interests and Christian Charities,—but, in porportion to its resources, it always gave liberally.

I have said nothing about the men and women who have gone from this Church into other distant fields of Christian labor, the number of their names is large.

Nor have I said anything about that spirit of harmony and unity which has been the strength of this Church from the very beginning even unto to-day, a fact which at least I ought not to leave untold.

But if I had told of all these things the history of this Church would not be complete.

No one can tell it, for no one knows it. You perhaps know of the faith and strength and thoughts that it has given to you; you may even think of a life of Christian service that it has enabled you to live; but who shall speak of all that it meant to those large numbers, many of whom it almost seems that we must see here to-day—that unseen cloud of witnesses—who have gone hence and can no more speak to us of the things done here below?

It has done a good work; it has kept the faith; it has brought God to men.

May we not hope that for years to come, whose number no man knoweth, it may continue to publish the peaceable principles of God's Truth and to work the works of righteousness among men?





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