

AN
HISTORICAL DISCOURSE

DELIVERED AT

MALDEN, MASS.

ON THE DAY OF THE

ANNUAL THANKSGIVING,

DECEMBER 1, 1831,

CONTAINING

A SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF THAT TOWN FROM ITS
SETTLEMENT TO THE PRESENT TIME.

BY S. OSGOOD WRIGHT.

—
PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.
—

BOSTON :
LYCEUM PRESS.....LIGHT AND HARRIS,
No. 3 Cornhill.

1832.

AN
HISTORICAL DISCOURSE

DELIVERED AT
MALDEN, MASS.

ON THE DAY OF THE
ANNUAL THANKSGIVING,

DECEMBER 1, 1831,

CONTAINING

A SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF THAT TOWN FROM ITS
SETTLEMENT TO THE PRESENT TIME.

BY S. OSGOOD WRIGHT.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

BOSTON :
LYCEUM PRESS.....LIGHT AND HARRIS,
No. 3 Cornhill.

1832.

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS
AT AMHERST



UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
Special Collections & Rare Books

Spec.
Coll.
F
74
M2
W75
1832

DISCOURSE.

Hear this ye old men, and give ear, all ye inhabitants of the land. Hath this been in your days, or even in the days of your fathers? Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation.....JOEL i. 2, 3.

REPEATED blessings demand repeated expressions of thankfulness. And though there is no period of human life in which there is not occasion for an acknowledgment of the kindness of heaven; yet at such times as are peculiarly marked by custom, or important events, it is the imperious duty of men to engage in suitable acts of praise to him 'from whom cometh every good and every perfect gift.' A sense of our perpetual dependence upon the mercy and goodness of God, is altogether sufficient to awaken the most exquisite sensations in every heart. But when we trace the kindness that enriched those who have gone before us;—when we discover the train of smiling providences which, like a golden chain all sparkling with mercy drops, is lifting us up to heaven;—when we review those blessings which have fallen upon the pathway of our existence, 'as the rain upon the tender herb, or the dew upon the mown grass,'—then, gratitude should clad itself in the flowing robes of purest praise and adoration, and seek the loftiest ascriptions of honor to him who is 'God over all,' and in whose 'presence is fulness of joy; and at whose right hand there are pleasures forevermore.'

Desiring, upon this occasion, to call to your remembrance the mercies of God, I have designed as the theme of my discourse, some of the more conspicuous events that compose the history of this town, from its early settlement to the present period. Such a history is by no means unimportant; and it may be deemed not uninteresting to the present inhabitants of the town.

The materials for compiling a history of this nature, are not over ample ; but it has been my aim to make the best use in my power, of all the aid that has been afforded. Many facts and incidents that might have been collected half a century since, are now irrecoverably lost ; and in process of time, much now known may share the same fate ;—our records will moulder away with age ; the memories of those who stand as the talismen of former years, will become as a waste wilderness ; and thus many circumstances, full of interest, will pass beyond the reach of after generations, unless perpetuated by the pen of history.

The interesting circumstances composing the history of the settlement of New England, by adventurers from Great Britain, have so often engaged the attention of my audience, that they cannot have escaped recollection. Upon the page of history this event is written, as ‘ with a pen of iron, and the point of a diamond ;’—and the passing off of more than two centuries has not obliterated the record of that venerated hour, when our pilgrim fathers planted their footsteps on Plymouth Rock. It is unnecessary, therefore, to detail the cause and result of this enterprise. From this event, we are to date the mediate settlement of this town.

The precise period, after the settlement of Salem and Boston, when the tract of country now forming the town of MALDEN became a settlement, is not fully known. The soil that now bears upon its bosom our peaceful homes, like the extent of country around us, was once marked by the wild roamings of the red man of the forest, who gradually gave back, and yielded up his possession, as the strong tide of emigration rolled in. Probably, soon after the occupancy of Boston, the adventurers extended themselves over the proximate territory, and commenced clearing the forests and erecting dwellings.

MALDEN is not an original settlement ; that is, it was formed into a town from another. This is the case with a large portion of the towns in New England. At the first settlement of the country, an extent of territory, embracing many miles, and in some instances comprising what now forms five or six towns, was included in a single township. *Charlestown* formerly extended to *Stoneham*, and included all that is now Malden. When the population in one section of a township became sufficiently dense, the people gathered themselves into a church, and then obtained acts of incorporation. This town probably became incorporated about 1649. A great uncertainty exists respecting the time of the incorporation of all our ancient towns, arising from the fact that such acts cannot be found in print. The only source of information is the public record of that time. Whether the ancient acts of incorporation, swelled with words, as do such matters

at the present day, does not appear—the record, however, is extremely laconic. Thus—it is ‘ordered that Aggawam shall be called Ipswich.’ ‘Tri-mountain is made a town by the name of Boston.’ ‘The Mistick north side men are incorporated into a town called Malden.’ Therefore, by virtue of this last mentioned order, the bounds of the town of Malden were made to include all that part of Charlestown lying north of Mistick river.

How the town obtained its present name, is not certain. Probably from some person of note of that name; or it may be from some place in the mother country. Names were given to different places by our ancestors, sometimes as indicative of their local situation; or in honor of some individual; or in remembrance of the places they had left in the old world.

Though this place was made a town in 1649, there is no record of the doings of our fathers, in the affairs of the town, earlier than 1678. Our notice of its concerns cannot, therefore, extend farther back than this date. At this time, the inhabitants of the town were zealously engaged in their several occupations, pursuits and duties; and were enjoying the fruits of their sweat and toil.

Various and extensive municipal regulations were adopted and enforced in the different settlements in the Massachusetts Bay, at a very early period. Afterwards many of them became matters of general statute. Such was the minuteness of these by-laws, and such the comparatively trifling subjects to which they relate, that doubtless they would produce a smile from many a modern law-maker, though his best efforts could not produce aught better to answer the design. But we at once discover their importance, when it is remembered, that much of what was then necessary to be enforced by *penal authority*, is now enforced by custom; that vast portions of land was common property; and that while men were busy in clearing forests and cultivating a wild waste, there remained not that time and opportunity to erect fences and walls which are now afforded. A variety of orders were in force respecting cattle, sheep, swine, cutting of timber, wood, &c. By one early enactment, the town annually appointed a shepherd, whose calling was no doubt as honorable as that of carrying a sheriff’s sword or constable’s pole.

One or two extracts from a record of an early date, will afford a better idea of these regulations than any description.

‘1689. Voted, at a publick towne meeting, that no young trees under a foot over, are to be felled for fire wood under a penalty of paying five shillings for every such tree.’

‘The mark which capt. John line doe put upon ye ears of those his creturs which he usuly eare marks—That is, ye top of ye near eare cut square of and a slit down in the same eare. Also a half peney cut out of ye under side of ye furdur eare.’

The town laws required that all cattle should^d be marked, and each man's significant mark recorded in the town book.

The marks designating the lines of boundary between the different towns, were not formerly of a very enduring nature ; consisting ordinarily of a cut upon a tree, a stake, or a heap of stones thrown hastily together. This, together with the indefiniteness of the acts of incorporation, often made it necessary for the town to run the boundary line and renew the marks, in order to settle disputes between this and the neighboring towns, and secure their own rightful possessions.

As was usually the case in the first settlement of the country, this town possessed a large tract of undivided land, called THE COMMON, which was well furnished with wood and pasturing. Various laws were passed by the town for the preservation of the wood and timber thereon, until it was judged expedient to divide it, and make allotments thereof to the several inhabitants. Upon this subject the following order passed :

'Town Meeting : Nov. 20, 1694. Voted, That ye common shall be divided : bottom and top, yt is, land and wood.

'Nov. 26. Whereas we subscribers are requested or empowered by ye inhabitants of Malden, to prescribe a way for ye dividing of ye common, both land and wood—we considering ye generall method and way of their raising of Town charges for time past.

'*First*—We doe adjug there be a committee chose of indifferent men ; To set out so much land as shall be for perpetual common as they shall see fit.

'*Second*—That there be a true invoice taken of every true proprietor's estate. And twenty pounds added for ye heads of every freeholder according to Town vote, whether male or female.

'*Thirdly*—Then for ye rest of ye common draw lotts for equal proportions, According to ye invoice, beginning your lotts at ye upper end of your common, next Reding ; at ye southwest corner, and so run downwards in two divisions or more, if you see fit.

'Maj. WILLIAM JOHNSON,

'Capt. JOHN SMITH,

'Capt. JOHN BROWN.'

A committee of seven men were chosen to proceed in dividing the common according to this direction. They were to 'allow two polls in breadth between every range of lotts for highways ;' and every lot was to 'run 82 poles in length.' It was ordered, that this committee 'employ an artis to lay out the lotts. Every proprietor to pay his proportion of charge in money ;' else, the committee were empowered, after ten days, to sell the wood and timber for their own benefit.

Also, 'Every proprietor's name to be written distinctly, and ye lotts be well shuffled together, and one man chose by the town to draw them out of a bag. The first name drawn to have the first lot.'

Another vote was—‘Two and twenty pence per day is allowed to every man who carries the chain.’

Consequently, this common, consisting of 2000 acres, together with another tract, denominated ‘*the sheep pasture*,’ containing 300 acres, was divided among the inhabitants, comprising 74 freeholders, and the boundaries and passage-ways staked out agreeably to the proposed plan. This division was effected in 1695; and the several proprietors receiving their respective allotments, probably proceeded to make such improvement of their land, as wisdom and prudence dictated.

No occurrence of more than ordinary interest took place in the town, from the time of dividing the common until about the year 1727.

The precise period of erecting the first meeting house is not known. But that one existed in 1682, is evident from a town order of that date, which provides, ‘That the meeting house be repaired to keep out the weather, and save the sills from rotting.’ At this time, the town was also in possession of a bell, which for many years was placed upon an elevated rock, termed *Bell Rock*.* This custom of locating the town’s bell upon an elevation near the meeting house, obtained very general usage among the early settlers; for at that time a turret to a meeting house would have been a prodigy. Indeed, in most towns a bell would have been a luxury unthought of. The usual mode of notifying the people of the hour for worship, and other public occasions, was by beating a drum up and down the streets.

The subsequent increase of population rendered it necessary to make further provision for the accommodation of persons attending public worship. Accordingly an order passed in 1702, ‘for enlarging the meeting house by cutting it in two and carrying off one end 24 polls.’ An addition was to be made in the middle. The expense was to be defrayed by a free contribution. And as some of the inhabitants of Charlestown attended worship in this house, it was provided, ‘That if our Charlestown neighbors bring in the list they have now presented, amounting to £30; they have the liberty to come into said meeting house and hear the word of God, and to be seated by a committee.’† It is not easy to determine where those resided who are termed ‘Charlestown neighbors;’ whether they were inhabitants of the northern extremities of Charlestown, and to whom Malden meeting house was nearer than that of their own town, as they could

* Voted, ‘That Samuel Lewis is agreed withal to ring the bell, and to sweep the meeting house—for which he is to have £1 13s. in pay, by the year.’

† It was an early custom to make a yearly appropriation of pews to the families attending public worship, instead of selling them, as is now practised.

easily cross the ferry ; or whether they occupied a portion of Charlestown, which afterwards was annexed to Malden. In 1721, ' It was put to vote to see whether this town will join with our Charlestown neighbors in petitioning to ye Generall court, for their coming of from Charlestown, to be one Township with Malden, according to ye warrant. And ye vote past on the affirmative. And That is all yt dwell on ye north side of Mistick river up to Malden line, and from Boston line to Medford line.' The sum of £40 was raised by the town to enlarge the meeting house.

Matters relating to the place of worship appear to have gone on without difficulty, until 1727. At this time a proposition was brought forward, to see if the town would have two meeting houses ; which was negatived. An attempt was then made to obtain a grant of money from the town, to assist the people of the north part to establish preaching in the winter season, which also failed. The town then voted to build a new meeting house.

The course of proceedings now before the town did not meet general approbation. A flame of contention was kindled up between the inhabitants of the north, and those of the south part, which eventually produced a serious division of the community. The increase of population in the north part of the town, and their consequent extension still more northerly, doubtless, seemed to them a sufficient reason for erecting the new meeting house in a situation approximating nearer to the centre of the town than the old one was ;— while the south part, from long practice, had become attached to the old location ; and feeling a repugnance to comply with what they might have deemed a whim of their neighbors, most strenuously persisted in their first views.

In March, 1727, the town resolved that the new meeting house should be set upon a knoll, on the northwest of Mr. Emerson's orchard. This was near the place now occupied as the parsonage. The old meeting house was near the same place. Whether or not the inhabitants in the north part of the town were reasonable in their request, is to be decided by your own judgments.

Subsequently, this vote was reconsidered, and another taken, which provided said house should be fifty-five feet in length and forty-four wide ; that its location should be between the old meeting house and Bell Rock, which was a knoll northwest of the present parsonage ; that £500 be raised to defray the expense of building ; and finally, that said house should stand betweed Lewis's bridge (the bridge which passes over the tide waters in the centre of the town on Main street) and the pound ; (which was the place now occupied by the brick meeting house.)

At this stage of affairs, an aroused spirit came forth in its strength ; and if

‘Greek meets Greek, then comes the tug of war.’

A spirited protest was made against the proceedings of the town, in reconsidering the former votes, &c. Three different sites were now in view, all voted for by the town ; and who was to turn the true stone ? An expedient was adopted : the north part of the town were to choose one portion of a committee, and the south part the other portion, who were to settle the matter ; the town agreeing to abide by the decision. But how hard to abide by decisions which come in collision with settled wishes and unbending wills ! The committee decided, and the town refused to record their decision. This measure induced the inhabitants on the north side of the river, to enter a dissent respecting the vote against recording the decision, signed by sixty individuals.

In April, 1728, the town voted null and void all former proceedings in relation to building a meeting house ; and then resolved to erect one upon some land belonging to the town, near the old meeting house. To compensate the people living on the north side of the river, a grant of £10 was made them, to procure preaching in that part of the town after the new meeting house should be built.

To this course of proceedings, sixty-one individuals entered a protest ; and when it was resolved to raise money and employ workmen to build, another protest was entered. In 1729, when the town voted to accept a bargain made by their committee, a third protest was recorded.

The tone of feeling upon this subject had now gained a dizzy elevation, and was strongly embittered with curdling acrimony. But the south part of the town, apparently the majority, evinced some little relenting, and made a proposition to build the house half way between the arbitrated place, and the old location, which passed. It seems, however, that previous to this the General Court had ratified the proceedings of the committee of arbitration ; and it was voted to petition for an annulment of this ; leaving it optional with that body to send an agent to settle the affair, or suffer it to be decided by a majority of the inhabitants. The brethren of the north could not agree to this course, and to the number of sixty-four presented a dissent ; in which they said, that they deemed the movements of the other party as presumptuous, and going to despise the authority of the General Court. The records do not give a definite account of the final results of this warfare of opinion ; but from a record of 1730, it appears that the order of the court was obeyed, and that the inhabitants of the north obtained their wish. This record is

a protest made by that portion of the town against a motion to stand a trial with the person who built the house ; in which it is said that they dissent from said course, because they "think it very unreasonable to set a man to work and not to pay him his wages, but put him under the necessity to sue for his wages." And also—that they 'were willing to pay their full part.' These were very good reasons, surely ; and had they obtained their due weight, would have saved the opposing party the expense, as well as the chagrin, of a defeat in a lawsuit, which was had, and resulted against them. After this, it was agreed to pay the sum due, sell the old house, and meet in the new one 'to carry on the worship of God for the future.'

For many long months had this cloud of discontent lowered around the community, harassing and perplexing our good fathers, when it was measurably dissipated by the last mentioned agreement to worship together. But whether reciprocal kindness and brotherly unanimity took an universal possession of all hearts ; or whether the breach so long in existence, was only partially repaired, and the spirit of irreconciliation but smothered for a while, does not plainly appear from the records. However, in 1736, a spirit of disaffection arising either from the former cause or some new grievance, made its appearance. At this time, a petition was presented by a number of individuals, praying to be set off into a distinct parish, by the bounds mentioned in their petition. Probably about this time the petitioners for a new parish, erected a house of worship in the south part of the town, upon the pleasant elevation east of Malden bridge, on the Newburyport turnpike, known as '*Nelson hill*,' and instituted and carried on public worship therein. For in the same year, a proposition was before the town, respecting the payment of the salaries of the two ministers, equally alike, by a town rate, but it was not accepted.

Whether the petitioners, before mentioned, ever obtained their request to become a distinct parish, with the privilege of improving their portion of the ministerial funds, does not officially appear. But it is apparent that they met as such, and were thus recognised, in effect, at least, by the town, for a number of years. In 1775, a committee of the north parish was appointed to meet a committee of the south, 'to discourse together, and to consider what may be done that might be thought to be a proper means to unite both parishes, so as that they might be one again, and carry on the worship of God together.'

But whatever these worthies might have proposed and discoursed upon, their attempts to bring about a reconciliation, were undoubtedly useless. It was not until 1792, that an

union was effected. The parties then met, broke down the dividing wall, and embraced as brethren. The conditional pledge of union was, that the brethren from the south parish should not be taxed for repairs upon the meeting house; and when a new one should be built, both old houses should be considered the property of the town.

Rev. Mr. Emerson, one of the ministers of the town during this period, very feelingly notices the dissensions with which the town was afflicted, in a sermon preached in 1735. He speaks of them as ‘unhappy things that have *eaten* and devoured, in a great measure, their time, interest, comfort, love and charity.’ Happy would it be if no communities since that day had been obliged to take up the same lamentation.

The mode of providing for the proper care and regulation of the meeting house in primitive times, can be learned from one or two extracts from the records.

In 1697, it was voted to employ a man to ‘ring the bell, and to sweep, and see to the meeting house for this year, and to have for his paines, £2, 13s.; he also to have 3s. to dig graves.’

In 1684, an order passed in the following words:

‘At a meeting of ye selectmen, for ye regulation of Disorder in ye meeting house on ye Lord’s day, by boys and youths playing, it is ordered by ye selectmen, that all householders and masters of families in this town shall take their turns successively, every Lord’s day, below and in the galleries.’

This order was not at all too puritanic; and it would be well for some congregations at the present day, if they had as wise law-makers, or as thorough law-executors.

In 1675 and 1677, the General Court passed several laws, founded upon the system of Alfred the Great, designing thereby a better regulation of society, and a promotion of sound morals. These laws directed an appointment of *tythingmen* in each town, who were to have the inspection of ten or twelve families, and to prosecute for all transgressions of the laws within their tythings or districts. Record is made of their appointment in this town as early as 1678. There were two tythings in the town, the north and south. It was the duty of a tythingman to enforce the laws respecting the Sabbath, licensed houses, the use of spirituous liquors, and to see that no person was away from home after nine o’clock at night. How well they discharged the duties of their office, the unruly who fell within their grasp, would probably be the best judges.

During the excitement which prevailed in relation to the meeting house, the minds of the people were alarmed by a sudden and strange visitation. In 1736, a most alarming disease prevailed in the town, affecting especially the children.

In the midst of this pestilence the inhabitants cried out—‘Behold! The Lord hath created a new thing in the midst of us.’ ‘It is a very strange punishment that he is inflicting upon us.’ This disease was styled the ‘throat distemper.’ Its peculiar nature I am unable to describe; it seems, however, to have been quite contagious as well as painful in its march. Forty died in the town from the beginning of July to the 20th of October. Two families buried three; two others four each; and one family five. Many others who were afflicted with it recovered. The exact period of its rage, or the number of its victims, are not within the range of my knowledge.

It is almost impossible to gain an accurate knowledge of the ecclesiastical concerns of any of our towns. Records of this nature were not kept; or if so, they have been destroyed, perhaps, in the commotions which have shaken almost every community, or have mouldered away in the lapse of years. What could be collected from our own records upon this subject will follow.

The former inhabitants of the town were strenuous, (as were their brethren in other places,) in supporting the public worship of God; deeming this essential to the peace and well-being of any community; believing also, that it was the duty of every individual to assist in defraying the expense of supporting the preaching of the gospel. It will not here be contended that the course they pursued in raising the necessary means for accomplishing this object was the wisest that might have been adopted, since more modern systems have settled the question; but it doubtless seemed to them to be right; and it becomes us not to judge *them*, lest after generations should mete out to *us* the same measure.

An early vote of the town provides that ‘every person above 21 years be rated at 3s. a piece for the ministry.’ This assessment was afterwards increased.

It was a general custom throughout New England, as early as 1660, or 1670, for each town to own a portion of land, &c. for the use of the minister. The town of Malden made a purchase for this purpose in 1679, on the following conditions:

‘The Towne is to pay Mr. Blackm, or his order, at ye said House in this Towne, the sum of £125; whereof £65 to be in money, and to be paid in manner following namely, £30 in neat cattle, not exceeding eight years old, ye beginning of June next, and £32, 10s. money by ye middle of July next, and £32, 10s. money, and £30 in Indian Corne the twenty-fifth day of March 1680.’

The purchase thus made, together with some grants of land in other parts of the town, constituted what was termed *the parsonage*. Several acres of land were also given to the town by the General Court, lying partly in Worcester and partly in Shrewsbury.

With this provision, our fathers did not deem it necessary that their minister's salary should be adequate to enrich them as princes, but as all-sufficient to their comfort. In 1697, the salary of the minister amounted to £50 a year, with a free gift of thirty-five cords of wood drawn to his door. The manner of obtaining the wood, was by making a just proportion to each freeholder; and if he failed of performing his part, within a given time, he forfeited double the amount of his proportion. This continued to be the salary and practice of the town for a series of years; and it was not until 1708, that the salary was raised to £60: and some years afterwards increased to £63.

The manner of paying what was termed the 'minister rate,' was regulated by a town order to this effect:

'That each person's rate should be wrapped up in a paper, and the name of the person written on the paper, and put in the box; and all the naked money should be counted as strangers' money.'

This 'strangers' money' was what was contributed by individuals who attended meeting, but who did not belong to the town; and this money was sometimes appropriated to the use of the town, and sometimes given to the minister.

A century and a half ago the people were generally united in one religious faith, and the minister was considered the minister of the town. Who officiated in this capacity at the first establishment of a church in this place, I cannot ascertain. In 1678, the name of a Mr. *Blackman* occurs in the records, respecting some transactions between him and the town relating to his removing, from which I infer that he was then the minister. In 1680 mention is made of Mr. *Thomas Cheever* as minister; but it does not appear how long he resided here. Rev. *Michael Wigglesworth's* name is first mentioned in an order appointing 'the officers of cutters and drawers of wood for him,' in 1692. A Mr. *Metcalf*, together with a Mr. *Barnard*, were candidates for a settlement here soon after Mr. Wigglesworth's death. In the same year the people elected Mr. Jeremiah Wise, and also a Rev. Mr. Corvin.

After this repeated attempts were made to obtain a pastor; and proposals were made to Rev. *Peter Thacher*, Mr. *Clap*, Mr. *Nath. Googen*, Mr. *Tufts*, and Mr. *Joseph Parsons*. The pulpit was supplied, during this time, by different persons, while the parsonage remained in the occupancy of Mrs. Wigglesworth. In 1708, Mr. *David Parsons*, was elected and settled, though not without some disapprobation. The particular situation of the church and parish at this time cannot be learned from the records; but it is evident that all hearts did not vibrate in unison. At the time of Mr. Parsons' election, 'a committee was appointed to present a petition to

the General Court, concerning an order of the Quarter Sessions, respecting Mr. Thomas Tufts.' Also, twelve men entered the following protest against the vote of the town.

'We above named, doe enter our desent against your proceedings this day, because we doe consider it as a contemte of authority, and we doe thinke we are not abel to maintain two ministers at once.'

Mr. Parsons officiated until 1721, when he left, and Rev. Joseph Emerson was settled, and continued here in the ministry until his death, in 1767.

Rev. Peter Thacher became the minister in 1770. In 1784 he obtained a dismissal, in order to assume the office of pastor in the Brattle street church, in Boston. The Brattle street church gave this town £300, or \$1000, in order to procure Mr. Thacher's release.

In 1787, Rev. *Adonirum Judson*, (father to the Baptist foreign missionary of that name,) was settled in this town.

In 1792, Rev. *Eliakim Willis*, formerly of the south parish, became minister of the united parishes. In 1795, Rev. *Aaron Green* was ordained colleague pastor with Mr. Willis. Mr. Willis died in 1801, and Mr. Green was dismissed in 1827.

Nothing can be said concerning the former ministers of the town; save a brief history, which I have been able to gather from several fragments, of Rev. Mr. Wigglesworth, and Rev. Mr. Emerson.

REV. MICHAEL WIGGLESWORTH was a popular minister in the times in which he lived, being cotemporary with the famous Cotton Mather. 'Mr. Wigglesworth* was educated at Harvard College, from which institution, he received his degree of Bachelor of Arts, in 1651, soon after entering upon the twentieth year of his age. Having completed his theological studies, he was ordained minister of the church in Malden. Respected in the pulpit for his modest, though lucid and energetic exposition of the scriptures; esteemed in the social circle for the suavity of his manners, and beloved by very many to whom, in their youth, he had been the faithful friend and counsellor, it was with deep regret that he yielded to the necessity which demanded his temporary separation from the people who had committed themselves to his spiritual guidance and direction, and with whom he was linked by ties of the most tender affection. The hand of disease was upon him, and its blighting influence could be successfully resisted only under a milder sky than that of his own New England. A partial restoration to health enabled him to resume his station at Malden, though ever after he was frequently obliged to desist, for weeks in succession, from the

* For this sketch of Mr. Wigglesworth, I am indebted to Mr. Kettel, who has given it in one of his volumes of 'Specimens of American Poetry.'

active duties of the profession. But these intervals were not misspent. He devoted them to medical researches; and the needy found him as ready in imparting his skill for the benefit of the wasted frame, as he had been in affording relief to the mind oppressed with grief, or cast down by disappointment.'

Mr. Wigglesworth was a poet. And 'when the weakness of his lungs disqualified him for preaching, he would strive, with his pen to render truth attractive, by investing her with the garb of poesy.' His compositions, to be sure, would not vie with the smooth flowing measure of the poetry of the present age; but 'they contributed, nevertheless, mainly to the formation of that character for unbending integrity, and firmness of resolve, for which we almost venerate the old men who laid the foundations of our republic.'

'*"The Day of Doom,"* is the title of Mr. Wigglesworth's largest poem. It went through six editions in this country, and was republished in London. It comprises a version, after the manner of Sternhold and Hopkins, of all the scripture texts relative to the final judgment of man, and contains 224 stanzas of 8 lines each.' Mr. Wigglesworth died in 1705. at the age of 74. Cotton Mather wrote his funeral sermon and epitaph. The following is his epitaph.

EPITAPH.

The excellent Wigglesworth remembered by some good tokens.

His pen did once meat from the eater fetch;
 And now he's gone beyond the eater's reach.
 His body once so thin was next to none;
 From hence he's to unbodied spirits flown.
 Once his rare skill did all diseases heal;
 And he does nothing now uneasy feel.
 He to his paradise is joyful come.
 And waits with joy to see his Day of Doom.'

Rev. JOSEPH EMERSON was ordained minister of the town in 1721; and labored here until 1767, when he died, at the age of 67. The following record is made of his death.

'The Rev. Joseph Emerson, consort to Mrs. Mary Emerson, who had been in the Judgment of charity a faithfull minister here, and that for the space of forty and five years, deceased in the evening of the 13 day of July, 1767, very soon after lying down to sleep, who was cheerly and in health before.'

Soon after his death, his son, then minister at Pepperell, preached a sermon upon the occasion, before the congregation with whom Mr. Emerson had labored, in which he thus speaks of him. 'It pleased the sovereign spirit of God, early, very early, to sow the seeds of grace in his heart. By a blessing upon the endeavors of his parents, he might be said to fear the Lord from his youth. If I do not misremember, he was able to pray in the family, in the absence of my grand-

father, before he was eight years of age to the edification and astonishment of those who attended on the exercises of the family. He was admitted into college, when he had but little more than finished his thirteenth year. He began to preach to general acceptance before he was eighteen. He was but about twenty-two at the time of his ordination; and he continued here for forty-five years, without being taken off from his public labors, but two Sabbaths.'

Mr. Emerson's labors, both public and private, were quite abundant. He zealously inculcated practical piety, as the basis of all happiness. His efforts were attended with success; and he was beloved and esteemed by all who knew him. Though an extensive division of the parish took place during his ministry, he was not reproached by any as being the cause. His character may be emphatically comprised in the language of his son:—'He was a Boanerges, a son of thunder, to the workers of iniquity; a Barnabas, a son of consolation, to the mourners in Zion.'

The style of Mr. Emerson's preaching was in accordance with that of his time. Several of his discourses upon particular occasions were published, and obtained considerable circulation. Seven sons and three daughters followed him to the grave.

REV. PETER THACHER was a minister of very popular talents and his removal from the town was a circumstance very much to be regretted.

REV. ELIAKIM WILLIS long enjoyed the confidence and esteem of both parishes; and was a sound and solid supporter of that system of faith which he advocated.

The town early made provision for schools, though very limited when compared with the extended operations of the present day. The system which they adopted was varied according to circumstances. Sometimes the town selected the school master, and at other times empowered the selectmen to make a selection. Probably a school was kept in town previous to 1691, although no record of the choice of a teacher is made until that date. The school at this period and for some years afterwards was kept in a private house, or in a building termed the watchhouse.

In 1702, 'John Sprague was appointed school master for the year ensuing, to learn children and youth to Read and Wright; and to Refmetick, according to his best skill; And he is to have £10 paid him by the town for his pains. The school is to be kept for all ye inhabitants of ye town, and to be kept at four severall places, at four severall times, one quarter of a year in a place.'

An *itinerating school* would be quite a novelty at the present day.

The school was in the charge of different teachers at different times. Grants of money from 20s. to £3 per annum,

with the benefit of the scholars, were made by the town, leaving the teacher to fix the price of tuition upon each scholar, until the free school system came into operation, and opened an effectual door for general instruction.

A history of these masters of the 'ferule and the birch' of ancient days, would unquestionably be interesting. No doubt many an unruly urchin has turned pale and clenched his chattering teeth, beneath the knitted brow and the flashing eye of his schoolmaster, who in after years would stand unquailed amidst the thundering of cannon and the death groan of the fallen. Many of those who were employed as teachers figured also in the affairs of the town; and they could measure land, hold the plough, or handle the axe, with as much skill as many a more modern master can his grammar or arithmetic. But their history cannot be given. They have gone to the dead, together with their pupils, and their names, registered upon the yellow pages of a time-worn record, is all that tells what they were.

Concerning one who held this responsible station in more recent times, a brief notice has been gathered from some who hold him in their thoughts, as one would hold a trace of memory over which the rude march of time has been for fourscore years. This is the '*good old master Nathaniel Jenkins.*'

Mr. Jenkins was elected to office in 1751, and filled his station with great propriety and dignity, a long series of years. His occupation was that of a shoemaker; but the guardians of the town, discovering in him some qualifications necessary

'To teach the young idea how to shoot,'

earnestly solicited him to accept the office of schoolmaster. He hesitated at first; but his health being rather inefficient for the performance of his ordinary business, he concluded to acquiesce in the proposal. To prepare himself for his vocation, he entered as a pupil to Rev. Mr. Emerson, for about a year; in which time he obtained a knowledge of the languages, and being approved by several clergymen, he entered with zeal, upon the performance of the duties of a schoolmaster. He is represented as a pious and useful man; though, in his school, making quite a free use of his *corrective powers*. He enjoyed the confidence and esteem of the people; and at his death, left a name ever to be praised—that of a *good man*.

In former years, the town was without those humane regulations which after times have adopted, in relation to the poor. It was once the custom to support paupers by disposing of them to the lowest bidder. It is hard to reconcile this procedure with sound policy; and however well the poor might

be provided for, this practice has at least the appearance of cruelty. And who would relish the idea of being disposed of by the hammer of the auctioneer, when hoary hairs, and withered limbs, and chill penury, had disabled him from procuring a maintenance?

The first mention of a plan to alter the condition of town paupers, is contained in a proposition which was laid before the town, to unite with Cambridge, Medford, Woburn and Reading, in building an alms-house, in 1753. This plan did not gain acceptance. But soon after, the town made provision for the establishment and occupancy of an alms-house.

The following extract is worthy of a place in connection with this subject :

‘On a Thanksgiving Day, was £4 3s. 8d. money collected by a free contribution, and committed unto the hands of ye Town Treasurer, Edward Sprague, Esq. or his successor; and to be disposed of by order from the selectmen, for the use of the poor of this town. Date ye 23 of Feb 1696-7.’

This record ought to be preserved and repeated upon every like occasion, as an example of kind and benevolent remembrance of the children of misfortune. And though you may not be called upon for a ‘free contribution of money,’ you should as freely give of the abundance of the delicacies which an indulgent Providence has enabled you to provide for yourselves, to those who this day may be found with nothing but the cold comfort of poverty.

The following record, showing the rate of taxation in 1796, may not be uninteresting :

‘Oxen and horses at 3d. per. head; cows, 2 1-2d.; three years old, 2; two yearlings, 1 penny; sheep, £4 the score; plow land and medo, 1 penny per. acre; pasture land, 1-2 penny; housing by estimation.’

There were one hundred and sixteen taxable persons in 1757, according to an invoice taken at that time; and the highest assessment, including polls, rents, estate and faculty, was £7 9s. 6d.

The following extract will show the value of some articles a century since :

‘An account of sundry necessaries provided for Bethial Wilkinson, by the selectmen of Malden, April the ninth day 1733.

‘to one pair of tow Sheets, £1 10s. 0 to one pair of shoes £00 12s. 0 to one apron and hankerchief £00 9s. 6d. To a Petty coat and making £00 15s. 00. To two caps and makeing £00 6s. 00. To two cotton and lining Shifts £1 10s. 3d. The aforesaid clothing purchased by the five pounds money which insign Joseph lynde paid for the yuse of the town of Malden when chosen constable excepting 2 shillings and 9 pence worth of said things entered by order of the selectmen.’

At this age of the world, men did not *buy* offices; but paid to get rid of them. The world has surely undergone a most remarkable change since that time.

Having consumed so much time upon some facts and circumstances embraced in the early history of the town, and yet having but glanced at a few prominent features, we pass to some interesting incidents of a later date.

That unjust and ill-timed measure, the infamous Stamp Act, which Great Britain laid upon her North American colonies, was the power that first struck the chords of American hearts, and caused a vibration, which, though it broke forth at first in the low, half stifled moan of '*Slavery!*' ultimately swelled to the echoing voice of '*Freedom!*' and sounded even to the uttermost verge of the continent. The inhabitants of this town, as well as their friends and countrymen in other places, had always manifested their attachment to the 'powers that be,' and were still ready to support their well bestowed title of loyalty, with unremitting zeal, so long as the conduct of the mother country deserved their countenance. At an early period of the disturbance and disquietude of the colonies, our citizens sought every laudable means to bring about a just and equitable reconciliation. They were represented in the General Court, and to their representative they gave such instructions as in their deliberate judgments they deemed suited to the emergency. They felt their own weakness, and the strength of their bond of allegiance to their sovereign, and they would not rashly put forth a hand to sever the ties that bound these infant colonies to the mother country. Therefore, they imposed upon their representative the imperious duty of supporting, maintaining and defending his most sacred majesty; yet inflexibly to resist all oppressive measures; manfully to repel all infringements upon those rights with which the God of nature had invested man; and resolutely to contend for American rights and American privileges.

When it was found that liberty must be obtained by force of arms and shedding of blood, the noble hearts of our fathers were strongly nerved for victory or death. Deliberations now increased in number and in interest. In 1776, the citizens adopted the spirited resolutions, in concert with many other towns, concerning the memorable *tea act*; and evinced not only a readiness to resolve, but also a firmness to act in every measure calculated to preserve and perpetuate their birthright of freedom.

When every attempt to remove the galling yoke of oppression had failed of success, and the shrill notes of war began

to resound along the valleys and over the hill tops of New England, our town assumed a most interesting aspect. In retrospect, imagination would portray our forefathers as laying aside their honest and peaceful vocations; forgetting the endearments of home, save that that home must be *free* to render it dear; and girding on the implements of war, and going forth in the matchless strength of injured rights and privileges, to wrest from the grasp of tyranny, that boon which heaven itself had not a right to subvert. But our limits will not permit us to dwell upon this spirit-inspiring era, as we could wish. Our hearts would glow with delight could we reiterate the patriotic instructions which were given to the Malden representative, at different periods during this commotion, as well as the true-hearted pledges the inhabitants gave each other, to defend their rights to the last extremity; but we can only glance at these scenes.

While the crisis gradually drew on, our ancestors were not inactive in preparation. They provided for the approaching emergency, by appointing a committee of safety; organizing an alarm list, or body of minute men; frequently calling out the militia; and keeping a constant guard at arms. With an eagle eye they viewed the movements of the invading forces; and in anxious suspense, awaited the signal to repel aggression. On the eve of the battle of Lexington, the cry of 'The regulars have gone to Concord! up and to arms!'—broke in upon the midnight slumbers of the people, as it echoed far away through street and lane. The rallying point was soon gained; and the militia, under Capt. Benj. Blaney, commenced their march to Concord; while the alarm list, comprising about sixty men, under Capt. Nayler Hatch, repaired to Beacham's point. Capt. Hatch's company remained at their station during the day, and returning to town at night, a number requested leave to go to Concord; and before morning, they were on their way to join their friends and brethren in battle.

Notwithstanding Britain had so long curled her lip in contempt of our country's just claims, our father's did hope for an amicable adjustment of affairs; and though stern necessity compelled them to take up arms, there can be no doubt, that, when the die was thus cast, fear and trembling took possession of many hearts. Our ancestors were not born in the 'tented field,' nor cradled in a soldier's hammock, nor taught to answer echoes from a cannon's mouth. And however great might be their trepidation, an equal frenzy would seize upon us, if the like scenes were to form a part of our experience. Many parted with their friends at the hour of

trial, expecting to meet them no more on earth. But the guardianship of heaven was their shield and their buckler; and after contending like freemen in freedom's cause, they were permitted to return to the embraces of their friends, though clad in all the 'pomp and circumstance of war.'

The tragedy at Concord was soon succeeded by the more bloody one of Bunker Hill. To the inhabitants of this town the scene must have been one of deep and painful interest. Not only could they hear the thunder of the distant cannon, and the deafening report of musketry; but to them, the flash that lit up the pathway of the 'leaden death,' which that day entered many a noble heart, was vividly visible, even while lying upon their beds! From the prominent elevation in the centre of the town, called 'Waitt's Mountain,' the march and countermarch of the contending armies, was distinctly perceived. Many of the people had taken position there to behold the fearful sight. From the more southern parts of the town, men were seen to fall in the midst of battle array!

For a moment let the mind dwell in contemplation upon these scenes, as they appeared to those who have gone before you. Ascend some overlooking eminence, and gaze upon an assemblage of men, wrapt in the smoke of battle, and stained with the sweat of toil, and the blood of friend and foe;—or throw yourself upon a bed, surrounded by the gloomy silence of night, and fancy the flash of cannon and musketry, streaking, in pale gleams, along the walls, or gliding, like a spirit phantom, across a sleepless eye;—then reflect, that a father, husband, son, or brother, is mingling in this tug of war;—and when imagination has extended itself to the utmost, but the faintest vision of the reality has been gained.

Energetic operations were at no time wanting on the part of the inhabitants of this town. A fort was thrown up at Beacham's Point, near the place now occupied by Mr. Van Voorhis; another enclosed the house near which Mr. Nathan Lynde now lives; and the house and barn were occupied by a company of men from this town, under Capt. Hatch, who held the appointment of captain of the town's guard. Apertures were made in the buildings thus occupied, through which the men were able to fire upon the approaching foe.

Some crumbling remains of these fortifications are yet visible near the junction of Malden main road and the Newburyport turnpike. They are almost the only remaining vestiges of those interesting scenes. Like them, most of those who occupied them, have been broken down by the unsparing hand of time, and have mingled with the trodden dust. One individual, Mr. Amos Sargeant, alone remains, of those who

composed Capt. Hatch's company, at the time of the occupancy of these fortifications. A fading remnant of perhaps half a dozen of those who were in any part of this perilous contest for freedom, is all that remains among us, to tell how nobly they toiled;—and these too will soon vanish away, and we shall look in vain for those to whom we can say 'tell us of these things.' But when they go hence, peace be to their memories! And may the wind that shall sigh amid the tall grass, which may grow over their cold pillows, bear back their spirit of patriotism to the bosoms of their children, and their children's children!

In this glorious struggle, the men alone did not take part. The female portion of the community were anxious to gain a laurel; and though unused to the stern service of musket or sword, their assiduity in providing for the comfort and wants of those who took the field, claims a meed of praise. Many a female whose fingers tapered as mechanically as those now gloved to sweep a parlour, was then honorably employed in running musket balls, or filling cartridges. A noble example for their daughters!

Our ancestors remained firm and undaunted through all the scenes of turmoil incident to a protracted war. Success ultimately crowned their laudable efforts. In process of time, the clangor of war gave place to the silken voice of peace. Our fathers hailed with rapture, the successful termination of this conflict; and with their countrymen, sat down in quietude, beneath the spreading branches of the Tree of Liberty.

But in the fairest picture of human existence, there are dark and shadowing pencillings. It is even so in this case. Just as the swelling notes of rejoicing were gushing up from many a thousand hearts; when the sword had scarcely been washed of the reeking blood of the enemy; or the people borne the fruit of peace to their lips; an ominous cloud arose, and the war of coming tempests was heard in the political horizon. Inland commotions agitated the state, and threatened death to our freedom while yet in the cradle. It is well known that attempts were made in different parts of the state, from the year 1783 to 1786, to prevent the exercise of the courts of justice; and that in 1787, the famous *Daniel Shays* headed a body of insurgents, with an intent to get possession of the military stores, &c. At this juncture, the people were groaning under a heavy debt and enormous taxes; and this, together with the unsettled state of the country, probably produced this dissatisfaction. Malden was not the immediate theatre of this commotion; but its citizens were on the alert; and in their deliberations, resolves, and conduct, exhibited convinc-

ing proof of their determination, resolutely to support the government, not only against foreign aggression, but also against all internal enemies, by a commendable promptitude in furnishing their quota of men, and raising a proper amount of money, to remunerate those who were called forth to defend the constituted authorities of the country. But this scheme, so rudely devised, failed in its object; and they soon had the satisfaction of seeing this nefarious plot overturned with but little bloodshed; peace and harmony restored; and the rights of the people promoted.

A civil war, is the most unhappy incident in the history of any Republic. But in this instance, as it was throughout the period of our country's trials, the smiles of a kind Providence were her safeguard; and this circumstance was so wisely overruled, that it eventuated in the adoption of the Federal Constitution.

It was the spirit of true republicanism that carried the inhabitants of this town to the polls, in the midst of those troubles, to which we have adverted. It was this spirit which guided them in their deliberations upon the articles composing the constitution, and led to its adoption: Nor has it expired in the lapse of time, but yet lives to defend and preserve that constitution.

A biography of those who held conspicuous stations in the town, during the war of 1775, would be read with interest. But we have no means of gaining but a very slight knowledge; and that little is confined to a few characters, and has been gathered from almost dispersed fragments. A few individuals will here be noticed.

Capt. Ebenezer Harnden was a man of extensive influence in the town; and filled several public offices, at different periods of his life. He represented the town in General Court, for a number of years. He was a representative when Malden sent forth those spirited instructions, which were quoted by our reverend orator, on the last anniversary of our Nation's Independence.* *Capt. H.* died in 1786.

Capt. John Dexter was town clerk several years, and was appointed a delegate to the provincial Congress at Concord, together with *Capt. H.* He was an active and efficient man during the war.

Capt. Benjamin Blaney commanded the company of militia from this town, at the battle of Lexington. His father was

* Rev. Mr. Cobb of the Universalist church, in his excellent Oration, July 4, 1831, presented the document above alluded to; and the enterprise of several individuals has since produced a beautiful Lithographic Print of this patriotic charge. It deserves a place in every family in the town.

a magistrate of some note, and was found dead in the road when returning from the discharge of his duty in 1751. Capt. Blaney was prompt in duty, and persevering in effort. He removed from the town in the latter part of his life.

Capt. Isaac Smith was many years a representative. He was bred at sea; and both as a citizen and public man sustained an untarnished reputation. He is said to have been one of the most influential members of the General Court; and was universally esteemed for his refinement of feeling, and christian-like disposition. He could not boast of exalted parentage, as the basis of his honor; as I think he was taken from the alms-house in Boston, when quite a boy, and put to sea. But this, instead of being a deterioration of his character, adds a brilliancy to the fame he subsequently gained. He formerly occupied the house now owned by Jesse Upham; but afterwards moved to the south part of the town. He died in 1795.

Dr. Jonathan Porter was a physician of considerable repute in the town. He was originally a shoemaker; but by close application, he obtained a knowledge of the science of medicine, and rendered himself useful in that vocation. He died in 1783.

Dr. John Sprague practised in medicine in this town, for about thirty years. He was a surgeon's mate in the first eighteen months of the war. Afterwards, he entered on board a privateer, and was captured and carried into Ireland. He was a son of Phineas Sprague, and brother to the present Phineas Sprague, senior, and died in 1803.

Capt. Nayler Hatch, who commanded the alarm list, was much at sea in the early part of his life. He was a stout-built man, rather rash in temper, and fiery in zeal.

Mr. Phineas Sprague was a resident in the north part of the town, and a most daring advocate of American rights. He was quite advanced in life, at the breaking out of the war; but one of the individuals connected with Capt. Hatch's company, mentioned as starting for Concord in the night, after having lain at Beacham's Point during the day. Mr. Sprague was very deaf; but his heart was as impervious to fear, as his ears were to sound. And when the rest of his party were flying from the view of the enemy, he was seen upon a piece of rising ground swinging his hat, and shouting victory! He died in 1805.

Ezra Sargeant and *Benjamin Green, Esquires*, were persons of honorable influence in the town; and men to whom the citizens often looked for counsel and instruction. They were among those who long aided in steadying the ark of our

liberties, and contributed their portion of talents and zeal to the public welfare. Mr. Sargeant died in 1810, at the advanced age of 81. Mr. Green is still living.

It is a matter of regret, that the record of men and matters, connected with the most memorable period of our country's history, is so incomplete. Had proper care been taken, in this respect, what feasts of story might be served up for the present generation. And let me here suggest, to every young person especially, the propriety of taking notes of the principal occurrences of the times in which they live; and also of the most active and influential men. This practice would subserve a valuable purpose.

The small pox made its appearance in the town, in 1778, and continued several months. A number of persons fell victims to its rage, though the town took active measures to prevent its spread.

It was again introduced here in 1792, when numbers were vaccinated. A pest-house or hospital was provided both in the north and south parts of the town. That in the north part, was the house now occupied by Charles Cummings; where about forty persons were confined with the disease. This hospital was under the care of Phineas Sprague, senior.

Very little regularity existed in respect to laying out roads, until after the establishment of peace. Formerly, the inhabitants appear to have struck out a passage way, where it could be done with the least trouble, with very little regard whether strait and level, or zig-zag and hilly. Some traces of old roads yet discernable, one might suppose from their crookedness, were originally marked out by the wandering track of a herd of cattle.

Great improvement, in this respect, is now visible. The county road which now forms the main street, was laid out in 1806. It forms a most excellent road, running north and south through the town.

Since 1775, a number of roads have been petitioned for and laid out in different parts of the town. The road leading from Malden to Saugus, by Daniel Boardman's, was laid out in 1789. The road by Jesse Upham's was extended to Chelsea line in 1796.

The erection of Malden bridge, over the Mystick river, at the place formerly known as 'Penny Ferry,' in 1788, furnished to the community a convenient medium of communication with Charlestown and Boston, far preferable to the old mode of crossing in a boat. If any method could be devised, whereby this bridge could be rendered free from toll, incalculable advantage would accrue to this town.

Much excitement has prevailed at different periods in the town, since 1695, concerning the passage of ale-wives from the tide water up to Elk pond, in the north part of the town. Much time and money have been expended upon this subject, to little or no purpose.

The meeting house which was the source of so much controversy about a century ago, was built with one gallery, but afterwards another was built above the first. The present brick meeting house was built in 1803. A bell, for the use of the town, was given by 'Lord Timothy Dexter,' of eccentric memory. The following vote of thanks was presented him :

'Voted, That we are deeply sensible of the honor done by Timothy Dexter, Esq. in the donation of the large and elegant bell which he has presented us.

'That we hope long to retain a grateful remembrance of our obligations to him ; and unanimately request Mr. Dexter to accept our sincere thanks for the honor conferred on the people of his native town.'

Upon an examination of the records, it is apparent that the former inhabitants of the town, generally availed themselves of the privilege granted them, of exercising their elective franchise. When at the polls they elected such men to fill the public offices, as possessed qualifications to promote the best interests of the town. That a spirit of unbroken unanimity always characterized the elections, is not to be supposed ; nevertheless, the offices were filled ; and with men, too, whose repeated re-election bespeaks for them the confidence of their constituents. The town's representatives maintained an influence in the General Court not at all discreditable. Many of them were elected a number of years in succession ; others were honored with re-elections at different periods.

Our ancestors esteemed it a duty and privilege to be at the polls. This is as it should be. It is an exploded doctrine, that it is a matter of little consequence, whether the electors do or do not exercise their rights in this respect. Men ought individually, then and there to express their opinions and wishes, by their votes, unbiassed by sectarian feelings, and free from the fetters of prejudice. To be sure, it might not be expedient to fine a man for non-attendance, as was done anciently ; but that man deserves scorn, who presumes to complain of what was done at the polls, while he was wilfully or unnecessarily absent.

Since the establishment of our nationality, important improvements, in many respects, have been made. Great and beneficial alterations have been effected in relation to the school system ; and valuable and necessary immunities for

gaining useful information are afforded the rising generation. School houses have been erected in the several districts, commodiously and pleasantly situated. Schools are continued through the greater part of the year, in all the districts. The number of schools has greatly augmented; and children now enjoy very exalted privileges in comparison with their ancestors. Other improvements can, and will doubtless be made. In 1829 the town furnished in public and private schools, from 450 to 500 scholars;—aggregate time of keeping school in the year, by males, 25 months; by females, 37 months;—the amount of money expended, was about \$2000. The present state of the school operations would not vary much from this statement.

A very neat and commodious alms-house, with a pleasant farm, is now owned by the town, and improved for the comfort and support of the poor. This establishment supports itself, to within \$500 per year; and, no doubt, will eventually produce all that will be requisite for the support of the town's paupers.

Within a few years, a temperance society has been formed, and is now in successful operation. A goodly number of the inhabitants are enrolled upon its lists, as the advocates of the principles for which it contends. Before this society, addresses are delivered at stated times during the year; and these, combined with other means employed by the society, have contributed to enlarge its sphere of influence to a very honorable extent.

Before the establishment of this society, the evils of intemperance were sorely felt in this place. Intemperance was moving on, and exhibiting its deathly effects in frightful colors, and with rapid strides. But an apparent change has been produced in the moral atmosphere; and many have been saved from the filth of inebriation, and clothed again in their right minds, by means of the society's exertions. Nevertheless, much yet remains to be accomplished. The noble work in which this society is engaged will undoubtedly be performed. With all my heart I bid it God-speed—till no drunkard's grave shall be found to disgrace our burying yards.

Thus, briefly, we have noticed some of the more prominent occurrences connected with the history of the town. Now, casting our eyes abroad, we find ourselves inhabiting a pleasant village containing 2000 inhabitants; we behold our happy dwelling places, smiling in the midst of contentment; our townsmen sitting under their own 'vines and fig-trees' unmolested; the different branches of manufacture and agriculture industriously pursued, and bringing in riches and comfort to those who toil;—health and prosperity brighten-

ing the faces of all around us;—the sanctuaries of the Most High, reminding us that God is the Lord, while they point us to the skies, as our final rest;—and the different religious sects striving to further on the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ.

A succinct account of the different religious orders will now be presented. The principal items of information embraced therein, have been politely furnished by official members of the respective societies.

The church and society, known by the title of Congregationalist or Orthodox, was the first church organized in the town. It was gathered in 1648. The clergymen previously mentioned were pastors of this church; as for many years this was the only denomination in town. In 1651, this church called a minister to the pastoral office, without the consent of the neighboring churches, and without permission from the legal authority; and for this transgression, the General Court imposed a fine upon them.

In 1680, upon an occasion of fasting and prayer, an instrument composed by the famous and venerable Mr. Wigglesworth was solemnly adopted.

In 1727, the church renewed covenant on a day of fasting and prayer, occasioned by a great earthquake.

This church consisted of ninety-eight members, fifty-one males, and forty-seven females, in 1772. During the dark and discouraging period of the war, the members of this church followed the general custom of the times, in setting apart special seasons of fasting and prayer, that God might remove his judgments from the land.

A confession of faith and covenant, drawn up by Rev. Mr. Willis, was adopted in 1792, at the time the union of the two parishes was effected. This instrument is yet in force in this church.

No circumstance demanding particular notice occurred in the history of this church, from the last mentioned period, until after the dismissal of Rev. Mr. Green, in 1827. Since that time, unhappy differences and divisions have sprung up, which continue yet to exist, between the parish and the church;—divisions and contentions, too, as they always will, exist where they may—which have marred the peace of the community, and robbed society of that moral beauty which adorns it when ‘brethren dwell together in unity.’

In 1828, the Rev. Mr. Cobb, a clergyman of the Universalist faith, was elected minister of the parish. Soon after this, the church met and agreed, that in consequence of the late doings of the parish, in employing an Universalist minister

they would unite together and stand by each other, together with such other persons as might associate with them, for the support of orthodox preaching, in the popular sense of the term. They have steadily persisted in carrying this resolution into effect; and have constantly maintained public worship ever since. They may have considered themselves *unhoused*, yet not *couched*; and whether they deem their grievances as a counterbutt, remains to be seen. Their place of meeting has been part of the time in Capt. John Sargeant's hall; and part of the time in the hall of the brick school house, where they now continue to worship. At the time of the installation of Rev. Mr. Cobb, the church presented a remonstrance against the proceedings of the parish, but were not heard.

Since they left the meeting house, they have added to their number thirty-three; twenty-nine by profession, and four by letter. The whole number of members is now eighty-six; twenty-four males and sixty-two females. The greatest addition ever known to have been made at any one time, was on the 6th of Nov. 1831;—twenty-three were then added by profession. Rev. H. McClure is the present minister.

The church and society of Universalists, under the pastoral charge of Rev. Sylvanus Cobb, dates its establishment in 1828, the time referred to in the account of the orthodox church; though there were individuals of this faith in the town, for some years previous. Several individuals, then connected with the orthodox church, united with other members of the parish, constitute this denomination. This society claims the rights and privileges of the first parish in Malden, on the premises that they are now, and have long been by legal provision, members of this parish; and though they may have changed their religious sentiments, that they have never changed their relation to the parish: that they have never reorganized the church, but have engrafted on what remained of the old stock. The bone of contention existing between this and the orthodox society, seems to have originated from the dilemma into which custom and law have thrown them and others in like situations. The matter appears to stand thus: the *church* has a right to choose the pastor of the *church*, but not of the *parish*; on the other hand, the *parish* have a right to choose a minister of the *parish*, but not of the *church*. Consequently, if there is not a concurrence of these two bodies, in the election of a minister, a breach is sure to take place; and that too, without leaving room for an impeachment of motive on either side. How this evil can be remedied, best becomes those who devised the system to decide.

This society has had not only all those usual difficulties, perplexities and prejudices, always attendant upon the development of new systems and designs, to contend with ; but have also been burdened with unpleasant and heavy litigations. Steadily and perseveringly, however, they have continued on their course, manifesting an attachment to their system of faith, which charity should, at least, resolve into conscientious motives. They are in possession of the parish meeting house, funds, &c. and have gradually increased in numbers, since their establishment as a people.

The Baptist church in Malden was instituted in 1803. Whether a society for the support of preaching of this order was long in existence before that date, I am not apprised. The church was formed with sixty-four members ; of which fifty-two were the fruits of the revival that year, under the preaching of Rev. Henry Pottle, who was the first pastor, and continued in that office until 1807. Rev. William Bentley and Rev. Eli Ball, successively supplied the pulpit for about three years after Mr. Pottle left ; but were not considered pastors. Rev. Jason Livermore became the pastor in 1811 ; after him, Rev. Mr. Wydow supplied the pulpit for a period. In 1815, Rev. Ebenezer Nelson became pastor, and continued such until 1824. Rev. John Cookson succeeded him, and officiated about two years, when he resigned. Rev. John N. Brown, was pastor from 1826 till the present pastor, Rev. Avery Briggs, assumed the charge in 1828.

The rate of increase in this church may be learned from the following statement. In 1820, Mr. Nelson baptized seventeen ; in 1824-5, Mr. Cookson baptized thirteen ; in 1827, Mr. Brown baptized twenty-five ; Mr. Briggs in the first year of his ministry baptized six ; in the second ten ; in the third, (previous to the late revival) one ; seventeen in all. Since the four days meeting held by this church, Mr. Briggs has baptized forty-six. This church is the largest in town, consisting of about one hundred and seventeen members. Their meeting house was built in 1803. Their ministers have been active and zealous in their calling. This society has not been retarded in its growth by internal dissensions, as have some others ; but undoubtedly has had its trials and perplexities in common with their christian brethren of other denominations.

Our attention is next called to the introduction and progress of Methodism in Malden.

Soon after the introduction of Methodism into New England in 1791, a class was formed in Lynn. The excitement which this subject produced, induced many of the neighboring inhabitants to hear the doctrines taught by this sect. The veneration

able *Jesse Lee* and his coadjutors, occasionally preached in the south part of the town, soon after this period; and succeeded in forming a class of fifteen or twenty members; but they were never organized into a church. The venerable *David Waitt*, the blind man occasionally seen at church, was a member of this class, and is the only survivor. The unsparring fingers of death gradually thinned away this class; and the spirit of Methodism awoke not again, until the voice of productive circumstances called it forth in 1813. At this time, politics raged to an excessive degree, and while some of the adjoining towns were under the banners of Federalism, Malden ranged itself under that of Republicanism. The minister of the town effected an exchange with a clergyman of a neighboring town, who was noted for his federal principles. The discourses of that day were of a heated, political character, and came strongly in collision with the feeling of a major part of the citizens of that part of the town, called the north end. A short time after, a proposition to obtain a minister of the Methodist denomination, and establish preaching in the school house, took effect; and Rev. Timothy Merritt, then a member of the legislature from Maine, was obtained, and officiated here for a number of Sabbaths. These were the circumstances which produced the resurrection of Methodism here, and led to the formation of the several churches of that faith now among us.

After Mr. Merritt returned to Maine, Rev. Thomas F. Pierce officiated principally until the fall of 1813, when Rev. Ephraim Wiley became the minister. Under his ministration, in the spring of 1815, a revival commenced; and in the summer following, a church was formed on the principles of the Methodist Episcopal church. Mr. Wiley remained until 1818; and was succeeded by Rev. Orlando Hinds, who officiated one year. During his stay, a meeting house was built. Rev. Isaac Jennison succeeded Mr. Hinds; and a second revival took place, by which the church received an accession of several members; and which also gave rise to another branch of the church. After Mr. Jennison retired, Mr. Wiley again labored with the people; and Rev. Leonard Frost, Rev. Mr. Steele, Rev. John Adams, and Rev. Samuel Norris, successively labored on the station.

Some occurrences in the year of Mr. Norris's appointment, planted a seed of evil in the community at the north part of the town, and in after times its shoots came forth as thistles to the naked feet; and its fruit was like 'vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes.' Mr. Norris vacated his station much against the wishes of the people of his charge; and this

movement induced many to suppose that error and undue influence formed the bulwark of Methodist principles; and therefore a contention arose upon the propriety of a change of system. Matters, however, were so accommodated that the people united in worship, under the care of Rev. Thomas F. Norris and other local preachers. Rev. G. W. Fairbanks received an appointment here in 1827, and was succeeded by Rev. La Roy Sunderland in 1828; at which time the congregation became dismembered. Rev. Ezra Sprague was appointed to the station in 1829; and was succeeded by the present incumbent in 1830.

The frequent bursts of disaffected feeling which occurred from the time of Mr. Norris's removal, until the division of the society, tended to produce many petty jealousies, and bitter animosities. Whatever may be the causes leading to discontent, the prevalence of such feelings are alike to be dreaded by every lover of harmony; because it is a fact beyond question, that while dissensions of this nature are abroad in a community, virtue never prospers and religion never thrives. How this matter will eventuate, the disclosing hand of time can only reveal. It is not the prerogative of man to meet out to the actors in those scenes, the measure of their blame. Each one can judge for himself, whether he is deserving of much or little censure, when in honesty he decides, how well or how poorly he has fulfilled the royal law, 'Do to others as ye would that others should do to you.'

This cloud of darkness, which constrained the church to cry out, we are 'perplexed but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;' eventually gave place to a bow of hope that threw its irradiating arch athwart the lowering skies, and lit up the pathway of expectation. Though reduced to a mere handful, they found themselves still able to support the means of grace. Their exertions have been crowned with success. Peace and prosperity have brimmed their cup for the last two years; and it is written upon the walls of their Zion, 'those that love thee shall prosper.' The church has nearly doubled in numbers since the summer of 1829; only six have died since its first organization; and it now comprises fifty-two members, divided into two classes, with their respective leaders.

Two individuals, formerly members of this church, are now successfully engaged in publishing the tidings of salvation to their fellow men.*

The Methodist Episcopal church, in Malden Centre, originated as follows. In 1816, an individual, now a member of

* Rev. Federick Upham, and Rev. Warren Emerson.

this church, moved from the north part of the town to the centre, who, with his wife, were the only Methodists in that part of the town, excepting Mr. Waitt, before alluded to. They continued to live in the love and fellowship of the church of their espousal, without receiving any accession to their number, until the year 1820. At this time a revival commenced in the north society, and extended to the centre of the town. Several persons now withdrew from the Baptist church, and one from the Congregationalist; who, together with several others, were formed into a class. These, like many in similar circumstances, had many difficulties to encounter, and many prejudices to overcome. Being without a house of worship, they met in the school house hall, and were supplied a portion of the time with preaching by the minister of the north church. Receiving a gradual accession of numbers, they proceeded to erect a meeting house, which was dedicated in 1825. Rev. Joseph Marsh labored very successfully with this society at this time; and to him belongs much praise for his activity and perseverance in providing a house of worship. The first preacher who resided with them, was Rev. Ebenezer Ireson, who came in 1828. Rev. John T. Burrill succeeded him, and remained two years; and gave place to Rev. Timothy Merritt, the present minister. This church has had its seasons of adversity and prosperity. It has moved onward under the guidance of the day-star of hope, and sat down in tears, amid the darkness of clouds of disappointment. It has received a gradual increase of members; and the whole number is now fifty, divided into two classes.

From this church, also, two individuals have gone forth as ministers, and are recognized as 'workmen that need not to be ashamed.'*

Since the organization of the last named church, another has been formed in the north part of the town, known by the name of Reformers or Protestant Methodists. This denomination is distinguished in its policy, for its opposition to the form of government existing in the Methodist Episcopal church. With the merits of the question in controversy, it is not becoming to meddle in this place.

The individuals composing this denomination were among those who saw fit to dissent from the customs and usages of the old church, during the period alluded to, as a season of unhappy jarrings in the history of the first Methodist Episcopal church. The circumstances which produced the first feelings of dissatisfaction, did not cease their effect during the time which elapsed from Mr. Norris's removal until 1828; but also

* Rev. Aaron D. Sargeant and Rev. Aaron Waitt.

led to a protracted war of opinion, which resulted in the formation of this church. For several years the people continued to meet together, though for the most of the time, the views of many individuals were at variance, and the assembly was divided into two contending parties. The question of strife was again and again covered and uncovered, and inflamed and quenched. The right of possession of the meeting house became a matter of warm dispute; but when it was ascertained that the deeds thereof asserted its definite relation to the old church, even beyond contradiction, the dissenting party, in 1828, withdrew, under the Rev. Thomas F. Norris, from the former place of worship, and occupied the district school house. The parties, however, finally referred their difficulties, by mutual agreement, to a committee of arbitration; both parties giving written pledges to abide by the decision of the committee. After the decision was reported, the reform party returned, and the meeting house was occupied in concert; the respective ministers preaching alternately.

The decision did not meet the approbation of the dissenting brethren, as it was not such as they hoped for; and in the course of a very few weeks they withdrew from all connection and fellowship with the old church, and established a distinct place of worship. This society afterwards purchased of the district the old school house, then vacated by the erection of a new one; and after removing and enlarging it, it was dedicated as a place of worship, by Rev. Mr. Norris, in 1830. The Rev. Mr. Norris is the officiating minister—having under his care a church of about 17 members.

Having presented, according to my best information, a sketch of the past and present state of the town, I have fulfilled my design. The spirit of prophecy is not mine, and I shall not attempt to pencil the scenes which coming years may develope. But may I not, without incurring the charge of arrogance, present a few thoughts which ought to engage the reflection of every good citizen?

Upon retrospection, we discover occurrences both of a pleasing and painful nature. You view your progenitors, leaving their native country; braving the dangers of a long voyage, and the subsequent trials, privations and sufferings attendant upon a settlement in a wild waste; that they might enjoy the liberty of conscience, and the blessings of freedom. They planted the tree of liberty; and watched each shooting tendril with the utmost solicitude. When the ruthless hand of a proud invader would pluck up that tree by its roots, they extend the arm, all-powerful in self-defence, and palsy the

grasp of rude oppression. When the voice of peace was reverberated along our shores, your fathers' arms were bared—though on them might be seen,

‘Gouts of blood
Which were not so before,’—

to repair the wastes war had made, that with their children they might sit down, and enjoy the fruits of their bloody toil. And beholding them thus, who will not ‘rise up and call them blessed?’

There are dark spots, too, in the picture before us; and wisdom would dictate, that we strive to avoid leaving the like stains upon the canvass that may exhibit our doings. Whether the town has been more given to litigiousness than towns in general, I do not undertake to decide. It has been convulsed by internal commotions, and torn and dissevered by outbreking disaffections. Experience, too, has taught some of you, how very sore these things are, and how much their recurrence should be dreaded. Strive, then, to avoid the faults and mistakes which others, or even yourselves may have committed, by seeking in concert those things which make for peace, and will promote each other's good. As fellow citizens, and as christians, you are not to live for yourselves alone. Man ought always to study the happiness of his fellow man. In all the affairs of life, and in intercourse with each other, you will find mutual concessions necessary. To secure peace, the flames of strife must not be fanned, but quenched; envyings and jealousies must not be indulged, but suppressed. One section of the community has no right to claim more than its fair proportion of advantage. All cannot think alike upon the different subjects which come before you; but every individual should feel himself as helping to make up one whole. Therefore, be ever ready to give others the same liberty of expressing their opinions, as you claim for yourselves, both at the polls and upon religious subjects. As you are aware how easily strife and angry passions are excited, it becomes you to mark well your own footsteps.

As members of the different churches and societies, you have much cause for thankfulness. Though you may have received individual and collective chastisements, you have not been swept away as with a ‘besom of destruction.’ Those who once said, ‘we will not have this man to rule over us,’ have returned, saying, ‘Thy God shall be my God; and thy people my people.’ You have seen the church built up, and the borders of Zion enlarged.

Remember your place is at the feet of Christ. Be not vainly lifted up in your own imaginations; for God dwelleth with the

meek and the humble, but abhorreth the proud look and the dissembling tongue. At your firesides recount the dealings of God; and 'tell ye your children of it; and let them tell their children, and their children another generation.'

Extend the hand of christian kindness to those who may differ from you; and be always ready to meet them on gospel premises, and on no other. Set an example of patience and forbearance to your children, while you are contending 'for the faith once delivered unto the saints.' In all your associations, remember that those who would successfully 'strive for the mastery, must be temperate in all things.' And wrestle not for corruptible crowns; but for a diadem unfading and imperishable.

Remember, my brethren, young and old, that you form a part of that glorious superstructure, whose foundations are deep and broad, now rising up to the astonishment of the world; and whose burnished pillars are glistening in the sunbeams of piety and love. If you stand each in your lot and place, then shall your 'sons be as plants grown up in their youth; your daughters as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a temple;' AND THE LORD GOD SHALL BE A GLORY IN THE MIDST.
