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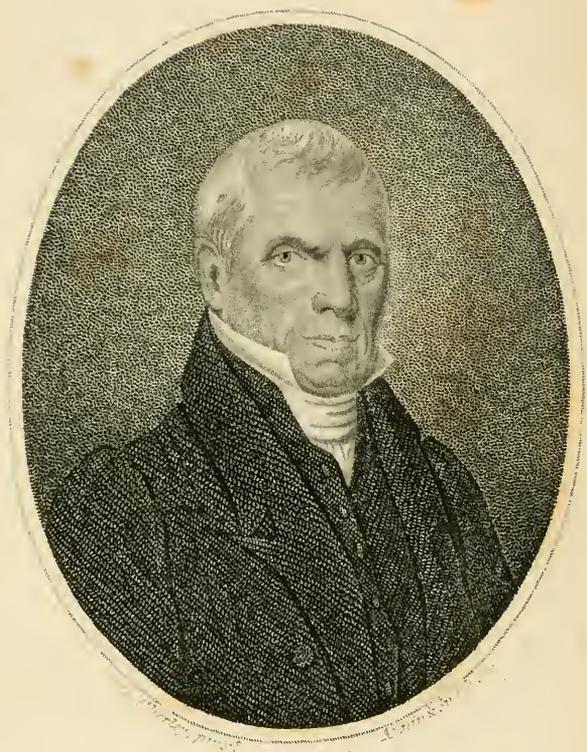




Class _____

Book _____





REV.^d JOHN PEAK.

MEMOIR

OF

ELDER JOHN PEAK,

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

" This shall be written for the generation to come."...DAVID.



Boston:

PRINTED BY J. HOWE, MERCHANTS ROW.

1832.

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Entered, according to Act of Congress, on the 20th day of April, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty-two, in the Clerk's Office of the District of Massachusetts.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

Boston, April 12, 1832.

Having been informed, by the Rev. JOHN PEAK, that he intends to publish a brief narrative of the principal events of his life and ministry, we cordially express our approbation of the plan, and our confidence that the book will be entitled to entire credit, and will be interesting and useful. The author belongs to a class of ministers now rapidly diminishing, who, in times and under circumstances less favourable than the present preached the pure Gospel of the Saviour with simplicity and godly sincerity; and who, by the blessing of God, were the instruments in converting many souls, and founding many of our most flourishing Churches. He has been infirm for several years, and is now aged. He is unable to labour regularly in the ministry, and has no resources for his support in his declining age. We hope that his book will meet with an extensive and ready sale; both because he needs pecuniary aid, and because the members of our churches may be profited by reading an account of some of the trials through which the cause of truth has made its triumphant progress, and young ministers may be excited, amidst their superior advantages, to imitate the humble piety and self-denying zeal of their predecessors.

L. BOLLES,
DANIEL SHARP,
JAMES D. KNOWLES,
WM. HAGUE,

Worcester, April 2, 1832.

Dear Sir, I have often regretted that we know so little of the character, labours and privations of the early Baptist Ministers of New England. I was, therefore, gratified to learn that you contemplated publishing a

memoir of your life. It will throw light on the early history of the Baptists in an interesting section of Vermont and New Hampshire. The first sermon I recollect to have heard was from yourself, and founded on Job vii. 6; "My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and are spent without hope." It was at a funeral in my neighbourhood, when I must have been six years of age. Soon after, while seeing a woman weaving, and noticing the rapid motion of her shuttle, I found a difficulty in believing that time flew as rapidly. Experience, however, has corrected my error. How is it, that every year seems shorter than the preceding one?

I sincerely wish that your last days may be serene, and your death peaceful; and I hope that the publication of your memoir may afford you some pecuniary aid: a circumstance, quite desirable to most of those ministers who bore the heat and burden of the day.

With great respect, I am, &c.

JONA. GOING.

Charlestown, April 17, 1832.

My dear Friend, I do sincerely hope, that the account of your life, which you have informed me you intend soon to publish, will prove not only interesting and valuable to the Christian public, but a source of pecuniary aid to yourself, which aid, under your many bodily infirmities, you now very much need. The Lord grant that his blessing may attend you, and that the evening of your days may be serene and happy, and the hour of your departure, the introduction to a glorious immortality, through the grace of Him who became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be made rich.

Affectionately yours,

HENRY JACKSON,

Pastor of the First Baptist Church, Charlestown, Mass.

Rev. JOHN PEAK.

PREFACE.

IN attempting to write a sketch of the principal events of my life and ministry, no attempt will be made at an affected style, to amuse the fancy of the reader. Were the writer capable of eloquence of style, it would not accord with the object of giving a plain narrative of interesting facts.

To one who, through infirmities of age, has of necessity become less active, it affords a kind of melancholy pleasure, to call to mind seasons long since past; especially such as were connected with a chain of events exciting alarm and foreboding fears of some dire calamity, and yet terminating in a desirable and joyful manner. The forbearance and kindness of our heavenly Father, have been very great, which ought to be acknowledged with humble and devout gratitude; calling to mind numerous instances of the interposition of divine goodness, manifest in the preservation of a poor sinful creature, excites in me at this moment the tender emotions of overflowing gratitude to our gracious Benefactor.

It appears to me a difficult task for an old man to write a faithful impartial history of his own life. It is truly delightful to speak of the riches of divine grace in which I have been led to hope, of

the consolations of CHRIST, the comforts of love, and fellowship of the Spirit. It is cheering to the believer, to contemplate the glories of the SON of GOD, his attributes, offices, work of redemption, intercession, promises, &c. ; but I have nothing good to say of myself. If I proceed to mention some things which I have experienced of the good hand of GOD, upon me, and his blessing granted to give my feeble ministry success, I wish no one to entertain the thought that it is my object to set forth myself as an example to others, for I wish no one to live such a life ; to say the least, in every thing I have come short, and in many things offended.

In attempting such a history, another difficulty presents itself. By the great fire at Newburyport, in 1811, my dwelling house was burnt, and therewith the best part of my manuscripts. This I have ever felt a great loss ; and now, if I proceed, I shall feel the want of those papers to assist my memory in reciting some interesting events, as well as names, dates, numbers, &c. This circumstance will be admitted as an apology for any deficiencies as the necessary result. With these preliminaries, if life and health is continued, I think to proceed to write a brief sketch of my life, to which I am stimulated by the advice of friends, whose judgment and candour I am accustomed to hold in the highest estimation.

MEMOIR OF ELDER JOHN PEAK.

CHAPTER I.

I WAS born in Walpole, N. H. September 26, 1761. My father and mother were natives of Woodstock and Ashford, Conn. In the summer of 1755, my father and grandfather, in company with John Kilborn, his son and daughter, went from Connecticut to said Walpole, before a grant of the town was obtained, with a view to occupy the meadows which had been left by the Indians. After their arrival they were informed that the French war had commenced. They built themselves a block-house for their defence, and continued to work on the land. Several hundreds of the Canadian Indians soon arrived; for several days they made violent assaults upon the house and then left the region. Our friends, having guns and ammunition, made the best defence they could. One bullet entered a crevice of the building, wounded my grandfather, of which he died the fourth day. Dr. Belknap, in his History of New Hampshire, gives an account of this event,

but by mistake spells my father's name Pike. Afterwards the adventurers returned to Connecticut.

My father enlisted into the king's service, and was stationed for some time at Crown Point. He returned to Connecticut at the close of the war, in 1759. He married, went to Walpole, and resided there about four years. It is believed that I was the second English child born in that town.

My parents moved from Walpole to Claremont, with two children, before the town was incorporated, about 1764. At that time there were but about five or six log cabins in that now populous and flourishing town. Here my honoured parents commenced their residence in the wilderness, erected their cabin, cut down the forest, cultivated the rich soil, and lived to see the wilderness become a fruitful field. For a time, the first settlers endured great privations. According to my recollection, I never saw any school till I was in my eleventh year, but my mother took great care to teach her children, so that I had become quite a reader.

About the year 1767, by the kind and diligent attention of my good mother, I had committed to memory the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, the Apostle's Creed, with a portion of the Westminster Assembly's Shorter Catechism, portions of the Holy Scriptures, some of Watts' Divine

Songs for children, &c. The truths hereby impressed on my mind, led me to some solemn contemplations on the being and attributes of the great Creator. It appeared to me that he made the heavens and earth, and all creatures and things which exist; that the great all-seeing eye of God was upon me by night and by day, and that he knew all my secret thoughts and actions; that every transgression of his holy commandments, even in thought, was a great sin in his sight, and exposed transgressors to a dreadful punishment. At times, these reflections filled me with great horror, for I saw that I was guilty of disregarding the holy Sabbath, disobeying my parents, and in not telling the truth, &c. I endeavoured to remove my fears by repeating my prayers, with resolutions to avoid those sins in future. But instead of any reformation, it appears to me that I became gradually more and more hardened in sin; and the forbearance of God, that I was not cut off in my sins in early childhood, seems the more extraordinary, because it is evident that I sinned against greater light than many others at this age. And I think that children are capable of receiving good impressions from religious instruction at an earlier period than has generally been apprehended.

About 1770, the people became so numerous, that they held two meetings for

public worship; one Episcopalian and one Congregational. In the latter, a church was gathered, a minister settled, and my parents were members. Now, according to custom, the children must be dedicated in a public manner by a ceremony called baptism. My parents had five to pass under the solemn rite. I do not recollect any serious thoughts on the subject; I felt, however, a kind of boyish diffidence in being thus exposed before the assembly, was glad when it was over, and thought little more of it. Thus I pursued a wicked course till my good mother was taken sick, and languished with a consumption about eighteen months, and died Dec. 30, 1774. The gospel gave her great consolation and hope in the near approach of death. She frequently talked very affectionately to her children, telling us that she hoped to be happy after death, and that we must prepare to follow her. I being the oldest, she said more to me and my sister, two years younger, than to the rest, though we all by her request were frequently arranged by the bedside to hear her addresses. She exhorted us to remember our Creator in the days of our youth; to seek first the kingdom of heaven and the righteousness thereof; to render due respect and obedience to our honoured father; to be affectionate, kind and attentive to the younger children, &c.

For a while after her decease, the solemn admonitions, warnings and affectionate council of a dying parent, had some effect on my mind. I now was more constant in saying my prayers, and abstained from some vicious habits; read the Holy Bible more, which I had read through more than once. These serious impressions by degrees wore off, and it grieves me to think what a careless wicked course I pursued for many years. Not without frequent checks of conscience, for I could not divest myself of the conviction that the great all-seeing eye of Jehovah was ever upon me, and that he hated wickedness, and is jealous for the honour of his name, and will bring us into judgment. Although I sometimes took his name in vain, and indulged in profane language, in imitation of profane persons with whom I associated, yet, afterwards, it filled me with horror to reflect on my wickedness. But such was the deep rooted depravity of my heart, my love to the pleasures of sin, and such my aversion to true religion, that I lived in neglect of its duties, and became more and more hardened in iniquity; and yet so blinded by self-flattery as to indulge the vain thought that I was not so wicked as many of my associates; and when some of my superiors were injudicious enough to pronounce me a good hearted innocent young man, I was quite elated, and thought much of myself.

Thus I went on deceiving myself and being deceived. At other times, when I was re-proved for some presumptuous sin, I was filled with bitter remorse and fear lest I should be wholly given over to ruin. I was much addicted to sinful pleasures, and vain amusements, but felt but little guilt on this account; for such indulgencies were considered by old people innocent amusements and civil recreations.

I proceed to give some account of a scene of affliction which I endured, the painful effects of which, I have felt to this day.

In April, 1775, the revolutionary war commenced in the battle at Lexington. Now the whole country was in a state of alarm, and my mind was fired with the ambitious thought that I should soon be old enough to pass muster, and enter the field of contest. But while the spirit of war was beating high in every pulse, and I was about to offer myself as a volunteer, I was, in Dec. 1777, taken down with a violent attack of the rheumatic fever; an indescribable pain seated in my right hip, so great, that for several days and nights I was deprived of the exercise of my reason, and for thirty or forty days was unable to turn myself in bed. But as the pain subsided, I began to move, and in March was able to set up and walk with crutches, but found my hip joint was dislocated, my knee placed forward horizontally at about right an-

gles, with my body erect. In July following, having received but little sensible relief by the applications of Dr. Stearns, who had attended me, I had a desire to consult Dr. Chase, of Cornish, who was famed for great skill. I rode very slow on horseback, with both feet on the left side, in great pain. When I arrived, the doctor took me off in his arms, laid me on a bed, examined my hip, and told me it was out of joint. I requested him to put it in place; but he told me that it could not be done. It had been out so long that a large callous was formed about the joint, and so hard that it could not be broken. This information was to me painful beyond description; I could hardly endure the thought that I must be lame as long as I lived. The doctor tried to cheer me by saying he would give me a strengthening plaster, and that in a little time I should gather strength and walk about spry, but must be lame. The kind doctor put me on a horse, and I set off for home with a heavy heart, having three miles to ride in great misery, with a gloomy prospect before me. I wept most of the way home. When I arrived at my father's house, in attempting to get off the horse, I fell, with my lame hip upon the hard ground. So great was the shock, that my pain was beyond description. I thought I could live but a few minutes. My friends took me up and laid me on a bed, when I

found my hip was set in place. I thought but little of my pain for joy of heart that my leg was straight with the other. For several weeks I was in a very feeble state, but gained strength slowly till I was able to walk with a staff; and being unable to work on the farm, was sent out of town to school. By this circumstance I obtained a better education than I should have done if I had been able to work.

I continued to gain strength till May, 1778, when I commenced labouring on the farm, attended with pain. But hoping, as I was told, that I should work off my complaints, I persevered till June, when I was again attacked with the rheumatic fever, in consequence, as I suppose, of standing in cold water to wash about forty sheep. My pain was not so great as I had endured, but was seated mostly in my left hip; I was unable to move, or be moved but very little for about two months. I lay mostly on my back, a part of the time bolstered up. I amused myself by reading sundry volumes and making straw hats, which were in great demand during the war. About the last of August, I was able to walk a little with a staff, but found my left hip was twisted partly round in the socket, and so it has remained to this day.

It was now concluded that I should never be able to obtain a livelihood by labouring on the land. Having read several volumes

on medicine and surgery, I had a great desire to study with a physician, but my father had no income but that of a small farm, and had been at great expense by sickness, and was some involved, therefore he thought he could not well support me in my favourite studies, but consented that I should enter as an apprentice with a shoemaker or tailor; I chose the latter. I was bound an apprentice to Mr. Charles Bowen, of Charlestown, N. H. in Sept. 1778. As to the state of my mind, during my painful afflictions for near two years before, it gives me pain to relate the fact that I was in a most hardened stupid state. I have no recollection that I ever seriously prayed to God for relief in all my distress; or that I had any serious concern for my soul's salvation. I do not remember that I had any proper sense of my guilt and wickedness, and yet I know I was very wicked, for I murmured against God, was unreconciled to his government in the kingdom of his providence. I suppose I concealed my feelings in a great degree from my friends, for I do not recollect that they reproved me for my impatience. Instead of murmuring, I had much cause for gratitude; my parents were indulgent, my good step-mother did every thing she could to ease me in my distress; my brothers and sisters were kind, and I wanted for nothing that my good friends could do for me.

When I arrived in Charlestown, I found myself in the midst of a very profane wicked people. I soon heard more profaneness, and saw more drunkenness, gambling and boxing, than I had ever witnessed before. At first these outrages shocked my feelings; but after a while I became more indifferent to them; sometimes I was the object of ridicule, because I could not go all lengths in their blasphemous and horrid wickedness. This, however, was not on account of any goodness in me, for I was destitute of any religious principle, but was in some measure restrained by a kind of tormenting fear. Perhaps this prevented me from being caught in any of their quarrels or drunken frolics. To what was called civil recreation and innocent amusement, I had no objection. Thus I went on, misimproving precious time, and treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath, and was doubtless more guilty than others who went to greater lengths in outward wickedness, as I had convictions of my accountability to my Maker, which I could not wholly shake off. Mr. Bowen, with whom I lived, was a very industrious, sensible, honest man, and a good workman.

After I left Mr. Bowen, by agreement, a short time before I was twenty-one years of age, I went to Piermont, N. H. fifty miles up the river, North of Claremont. Here I was invited by some friends who

had recently moved from Charlestown, to set up my business. Here I was associated with a kind, civil and industrious people. I had now so far recovered my health and the use of my limbs, that I was able to walk several miles at a time without a staff. By my industry, I soon became able to purchase a few acres of land near the meeting-house, on which I built a house.

In 1782, I was married to Miss Esther Stow, daughter of Major Josiah Stow, of Bath, N. H. I was now happily situated with a cheering prospect of obtaining a comfortable living; but like the people with whom I associated, I lived according to the course of this world; thought very little of a future state, or of the salvation of my soul; I seldom heard any thing of a religious nature except what I heard from the pulpit, and that was not interesting to me. I do not remember that my mind was ever impressed on the subject of religion in any special manner while I lived in Piermont, but once; that was when, for the first time, I heard a Baptist preacher in Bradford, whose name was Haynes. His solemn and faithful address deeply affected me. I felt myself a wicked, guilty creature. I resolved, and really thought for a few hours, that I should lead a new life. But alas! in a short time I became as careless as ever. Thus I continued till my honoured father came to see me, and proposed that I should

sell my place and move to Claremont, and occupy a part of his house, and take the care of his farm. He was feeble in health, and although I had two brothers, one of them was a surveyor of land, and the other a blacksmith, neither of them inclined to have the care of the farm. His proposals were, that he would give me a warranty deed of half the farm, taking to himself a lease during his life, on condition that I should take good care of the whole farm and stock, oxen, cows, horse, sheep, &c. and pay over to him one half of the income annually. It was not expected that I should work much on the farm, but by my trade procure labourers, oversee the business, &c. It was understood that I should build on my half of the farm and occupy it as I might think best. After due consideration, I consented to his propositions; sold my place; and my wife and little son, nearly two years old, moved to Claremont, in March 1785. Now I engaged in business with alacrity, procured timber, boards, nails, glass, bricks, &c. for building my house; carried on a share of a brick-kiln, and as the spring advanced, hired labourers, repaired fences, ploughed up the rich soil, planted, sowed, and tilled the ground with all diligence. The season was favourable and the ground brought forth abundantly. Thus we went on pleasantly,

till my attention was specially arrested by the great subject of religion.

It is now proper that I should give some account of the state of religion in this town.

There were at this time three meetings in which public preaching was attended; one Congregational society, large and respectable; Rev. Augustus Hubbard was their minister, but I believe he was never accused of being overmuch righteous; one Episcopalian, large and respectable; Rev. Mr. Barber was their minister, who afterwards joined the Roman Catholics. The other an infant Baptist society, Mr. John Peckins, about thirty-one years of age, had been a respected citizen in the town for several years, but had lately professed a change and united with a Baptist Church in Woodstock, Vt. and licensed to preach. He lived near us, and set up a meeting in a vacant dwelling-house in our neighbourhood. Here we attended, and most of the people in the vicinity. He was considered an able zealous preacher, and the place was generally well filled with attentive hearers. But he was hated, and had evil things said of him by many of the ungodly, for his plain and faithful preaching. His doctrine was considered by many as new; for, till he rose a witness for the truth, the necessity of a change of heart and life, was seldom named, and the most dangerous heresies were boldly advocated. The mor-

als of the people had been progressing from bad to worse since the commencement of the war. But there were a few who could witness for the truth, and their number increased.

In the next chapter I shall give some account of the exercises of my mind, which led me to hope in the mercy of God.

CHAPTER II.

I SHALL now proceed to give some account of the exercises of mind which led me to hope in the mercy of God.

According to the best of my recollection, when I first heard Mr. Peckins, I went in as dark and stupid a state of mind as usual, and even felt a contempt for the man who should attempt to preach without college learning, and I had no thought of attending his meeting constantly. But when I had heard him, I knew not what to think of his preaching; for I perceived that many things which he said were true; and yet I said to a godly woman, that a man as ignorant as Mr. Peckins was, ought not to preach; at which her countenance fell, being grieved, as I suppose, for the hardness of my heart. But the more I heard him, the more I was convinced that he preached the truth of the Bible more clearly than I ever had heard. Sometimes I was affected to tears, at other times my heart would rise in opposition to the doctrine, and yet I thought it was in accordance with the Scriptures of Truth. Again I would feel so much impressed under a sermon, that I would resolve on amendment of life; but still pursued the same course. I became much attached to

the meeting, however. I collected a company of young people, set up a singing school, and led the singing in public. I was often so deeply impressed under the preaching that I wished myself out of meeting, that I might give vent to my tears; but when I was out of meeting, I seldom felt inclined to weep; but often had very solemn meditations while I reflected on my sinful guilty state. I could not suppress the fear that I should be given over to a reprobate mind, if I was not already. All this time, from March till August, it appears to me that I had no proper sense of the evil of sin, or of the infinite beauty of holiness; but was tormented with a guilty conscience, and with my opposition to the truth of God. Thus I continued to be more or less anxious on this momentous subject, till the 8th of June, when, for the first time, I heard the late Dr. Baldwin preach in Claremont, from Ephesians, ii. 12. "That at that time ye were without CHRIST, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." The reading of the text made a deep impression on my mind. It struck me sensibly that I was the very character there described. The preacher illustrated the subject in a very clear manner, and addressed the people in a solemn, affectionate and impressive style. I listened with astonishment and ad-

miration. Mr. Samuel Lewis, a man near fifty years of age, in a very audible manner, related his experience, as a candidate for baptism. He was brother to the late Elder Abner Lewis. This was the first Christian experience I had heard. The assembly was large for the place, many pious people having come from neighbouring towns, who appeared to be much animated. They sung a hymn on the sufferings of CHRIST, and another on Christian union, in a manner I had never heard before. As they moved out of the house, they formed a circle around Mr. Baldwin, on the ground before the door, and he conversed with them individually. Many of the young people were much affected. I wished to hear all he said, but endeavoured to keep at a cautious distance, not wishing him to speak to me as he did to others. As he advanced toward me, I moved round in his rear. At length he turned suddenly and took me by the hand, and asked my name. I told him. He replied, that "it is a matter of no consequence what your name is, if it be written in the Lamb's book of life." He said no more to me, and I retired. But this was as a nail fastened in a sure place. Eternity, with all its dread realities, seemed to lie open to my view, and this life, with all its fascinating charms, appeared an empty shadow. I could no longer indulge in vain and trifling conversation as before. I now commenced a most inveterate con-

troversy with the doctrine of salvation by grace. I could see no consistency in this doctrine with my accountability. This rendered me very unhappy. I attended, however, regularly to my business; nothing of this kind suffered by my neglect; but I went about the fields in deep solitude. I could not give up the holy Bible as divinely inspired. I read and pondered on the Scriptures with deep solicitude; but when I read the ninth chapter of Romans and first of Ephesians, and some other parts of like import, I wished them out of the Bible. I thought if the doctrine there stated was true, it did more harm than good. But I have since found that it was because I was unreconciled to God, that these truths rendered me unhappy. Now I can see that if all those holy truths, with which I was then displeased, could have been annihilated, there would have been no salvation for me. Thus I continued, without disclosing my thoughts and feelings to any person, till some time in July, when the before-named Mr. Samuel Lewis invited me to walk with him in the garden, and there very tenderly inquired into the state of my mind in regard to the great subject of religion. In reply, I frankly told him, that I had come to this conclusion, that if I could know that God would save me from the wrath to come, I would devote myself to his service the remainder of my life. But he told me I would

never know whether he would save me from the wrath to come, till I submitted myself into his hands to be at his wise disposal without reserve or condition. But this gave me no relief, for I could not understand how I could give up myself to the service of God, till I knew that he would save me. The truth of the case is, I had no love to him or his holy service. Thus my mind was involved in moral darkness, and I felt myself so awfully wicked and guilty, that I did not dare to pray for divine help. One morning I rose early, after a sleepless night, and set off to have some conversation with Mr. Peckins. I found him in his garden; and after exchanging a few words, I told him I wished for a little conversation. He invited me into the house, and asked me what subject I wished to converse on. I told him I could not understand the consistency of the doctrine he preached. "In what respect?" said he. "I understand you to say, that all men are entirely depraved, destitute of any thing spiritually good." "Well, is not this sentiment according to the Bible?" "I do not know but it is, but I want to see the consistency of the system; for I understand you to say that we are bound in duty to repent and believe the gospel." "And, is not that according to the word?" "Perhaps it is, but you say again, that we are dead in sin, and dependent on the Holy Spirit, to quicken us and work within us all that is

well pleasing in his sight." These, and other difficulties I named, to which he replied in a very kind and tender manner, and closed by saying that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, &c. expressing his desire for my everlasting good. As I left him, I felt elated with vanity, thinking that I had nearly confounded him with my strong arguments. But I had scarcely advanced thirty rods from his house, before a powerful conviction came over my mind, that my contention was not with the minister, but with God! I was now convinced that the sin-extenuating pleas I had employed, only rendered me more vile, and if I did not acknowledge the justice of my condemnation, I could not acknowledge grace in forgiveness. If salvation be by grace, then it is not of debt. If not of debt, then God is under no obligation to the impenitent sinner. If the sinner is so at enmity against God, and in love with his sins, that nothing short of the divine influence will incline him to forsake his sins and turn unto the Lord, then he is at the disposal of the Sovereign of the universe, as clay is in the hand of the potter. Here I was brought to a stand. I was dumb with silence. Every refuge failed me. I reflected on my broken vows, promises and resolutions, calls and warnings, which I had slighted. I was overwhelmed with deep solemnity. For a few days I was inclined to think that I was

given up to a reprobate mind. I had no hope, nor much fear. I could neither weep nor rejoice. With such views and feelings, on the 6th of August, 1785, I went into the field to perform an hours work alone. Here I had such views and manifestations as I have never been able to describe. My mind seemed suddenly illuminated, and I was led to contemplate the holiness, love, goodness and wisdom of God, displayed in the wonderful plan of salvation, in a light I had never viewed it before. I had considered the subject in detached parts; but now my mind was led to contemplate the great plan of God's everlasting love, as one uniform consistent whole. The Lord JESUS CHRIST appeared a Lamb slain, in the divine purpose, from the foundation of the world; set up from everlasting, as the glorious Mediator between God and man. In him I beheld the majesty and glory of the divine attributes, to meet in perfect harmony, and shine forth in the most illustrious manner; full of grace and truth, and able to save, to the uttermost, all that come to God by him. In the covenant of redemption, a kingdom, or church, was made sure to him, to be gathered out of this apostate world. When upon earth, he appeared IMMANUEL, God with us. The tokens of divine majesty, attended him through life. In a word, he appeared to me one with the Father, equal in glory and power, and alto-

gether lovely. In my imagination, I beheld glorified saints and angels casting their crowns before him, in humble prostration, adoring and worshiping the eternal SON of GOD, while all heaven resounded his praise. Several passages in holy writ were brought to my recollection; some of which, were as follows: "Great is the mystery of godliness. GOD, manifest in the flesh." "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory." "Glory to GOD in the highest, on earth peace, and good will toward men." "GOD was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." "Blessed is the people, that know the joyful sound," &c. My mind was so absorbed in the subject, as I stood by a tree, that I seemed to think of nothing else. I recollected that my father rode to the field, and spoke, but I had no recollection of what was said by him or me. On inquiry, he told me that he asked me a question, but I took no notice, and he rode away. As I returned from the field, I thought of my ingratitude and great unworthiness, with tenderness. I wept freely, while I thought of the goodness and forbearance of GOD. I entered a room by myself, took the holy Bible, and opened at the 9th of Romans, which I had often read with very different feelings from what I then possessed. As my eye passed over the chapter the views I had entertained in the field were brought fresh to my

mind, accompanied with many tears. I retired to the orchard, fell prostrate on the grass, and gave vent to my tears and groans. It appeared to me a marvellous thing, that the sparing mercy of God had preserved so great a sinner so long. As yet, I had no thought that I was interested in the great salvation, or that I ever should be; and yet I returned to the house deeply impressed with a sense of the great duty of family worship. Besides my wife, who was now under great concern for her soul, I had a pious sister and a young man in my family. It was now a grief to me that I had so long neglected my duty in this thing, and yet knew not how I could commence family prayer. But, after much conflict, I resolved I would commence. On Sabbath morning I rose early; and as I sat reading the Bible my pious sister told me that breakfast was ready. I said I would try to pray. She said her heart should join with me. This affected me. With great perturbation I commenced, and uttered a few sentences, which greatly relieved my mind in this respect. This day I went to Windsor, six miles, to meeting, and heard preaching with different feelings from what I had ever done before.

Lord's-day, August 9, on my way from Claremont to Windsor, I beheld the power, wisdom and glory of the great Creator, displayed in a manner I had never before

realized. The whole earth appeared to be full of the glory of the Lord. In the forenoon Mr. Peckins preached. I thought I never heard him preach so before. The same sentiments which I had formerly disliked, were now excellent. But when I heard Mr. Joel Butler, whom I had never seen, I was astonished beyond measure. Text, 1 John, iv. 8, "God is love." He illustrated the sentiment by showing that love is manifested in the works of creation and providence; in the moral law, which requires us to love God and one another: In conformity to this law, we should honour our Maker and improve our mental powers to the highest possible degree, and render ourselves and one another truly happy; and there was no way in which man could so directly and fatally destroy himself, as to break over this wall of love, and trample upon the authority of his Maker:—The love of God is manifested in the gift of his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life:—The love of God was manifested in the stupendous work of man's redemption. Here he was very solemn and interesting. The love of God is manifested in the awaking, convincing, renewing and sanctifying his people, and shedding abroad his love in their hearts:—And it is also manifested by its fruits and effects upon the subjects of it, inclining them to love God,

and the children of God, and his holy worship and service:—It excites in them enlarged desires, benevolent concern for poor souls, who know nothing of this love:—They are hereby moved to pity and compassion, and fervent prayer and earnest supplication for poor Christless sinners, that they may be saved:—The love of God prepares his people for heaven, the world of love:—There they will be perfect in love, and that for ever:—It is manifested also in its perpetuity, &c.

He closed with suitable addresses to the different classes of his audience. The assembly was large for a private house, and even thronged. I stood during the sermon. When the preacher commenced I was in an opposite part of the assembly from him. But the discourse was so congenial with my views in the field three days before, my contemplations in the morning, and my present feelings, that I was swallowed up with it. Not knowing what I did, it seems that I urged myself through the crowd by degrees, step by step, till I found myself, at the close, by the table, opposite the preacher, bathed in tears. For a moment, I was surprised and mortified. I tarried to witness the communion of the saints, which appeared to be a feast of holy love. While I beheld the solemn scene, several passages of holy writ came to my mind, such as the following: “Entreat me not to return from

following after thee ; for thy people is my people, and thy GOD is my GOD," &c. "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity," &c. "As often as ye do this, ye do show forth the Lord's death till he come." "We know we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," &c. I now felt inexpressibly happy in contemplating the character of GOD. It was a pleasure to think I was in his hand, and at his disposal ; yet I did not entertain a hope that I had experienced the new birth. After the public exercises were passed, one of the brethren asked me whether I had a hope in CHRIST ? I said no. Another asked me whether I loved the Lord JESUS CHRIST ? I said no. But instantly I felt a check that I ought not to have said no ; for I knew these things appeared different to me, and that I had delight in them. On my way home, pondering on these things, when my good sister Mary asked me to relate some of the exercises of my mind ; I frankly told her some of the conflicts I had passed through, and the views I had experienced in the field three days before, &c. While I was relating these things, I thought I had experienced a great change in my views and feelings, and began to hope it was a saving one. When I arrived home, after dark, I was surprised to find my parlour filled with people. There was at this time more than

common attention to religion; but I suppose my good step-mother had told some of the friends that I had prayed in the morning, and on this account they desired to see me. They made some inquiry respecting the meeting. I told them something of what I had seen and heard, in which they appeared to be much interested. At length my good mother came to me, and, whispering, asked if I was going to pray that evening; if so, they would stay in the room, if I was willing. I then read a chapter, and prayed with as much freedom and deliberation as I have commonly done since. From this happy evening I have cherished a hope, through grace, to this day. Now I felt myself as in a new world; the holy Bible was a new book, more precious than gold; therein did I meditate day and night, with inexpressible delight; all creation smiled around me. O, how my affections were drawn out to the people of God. What pleasure did I enjoy in the society and conversation of Mr. Peckins and his wife, and others who appeared to know the grace of God by happy experience. The preaching of the gospel was like bread to the hungry. My mind was soon led forth in great anxiety for the salvation of my fellow sinners. I was often affected to tears while pleading for them at the throne of grace. Several young people were now under concern for their soul's salvation; and several

had obtained hope in the gospel. I was encouraged to hope the good work would continue and prevail till a great multitude should be gathered into the kingdom. Conference meetings were now attended, in which I spoke and prayed with much tenderness. I was much affected with the distinguishing goodness of God to me. As I went about the fields I used to sing,

Why was I made to hear his voice,
 And enter while there's room?
 While thousands make a wretched choice,
 And rather starve than come," &c.

I was now forward to converse, and in various ways, contended for what I thought was the doctrine of CHRIST. I prayed with great fervency and exhorted with fluency, and thought I prayed in the spirit, and that all I prayed for would be granted. When I compared myself with some old professors who, doubtless, knew a thousand times more of the deceitfulness of sin and of the devices of Satan than I did, but did not manifest that glowing zeal I was so animated with, I had but a mean opinion of them; and rather than to fall away into that inactive stupid state I viewed them to be in, I should choose to die as I then was; and to help on the delusion, some professing Christians spoke injudiciously in high terms of my engagedness. Thus I went on, till I was quite elated with what has been called spiritual pride. In great mercy I was

soon brought to see my great error.† The first that I perceived of this wretched state of mind was in prayer. Like the pious Indian, "I had lost my humble." I could use the language of prayer, but was in a great measure destitute of devotional feeling, which I thought I had enjoyed. Now I was led to review my past exercises, and found so much ignorance, mistake, error and pride, that I could discover but little, if any thing, that could be approved in the sight of God. Indeed I had, for a time, serious doubts whether I had not deceived myself with a false hope. I mourned before the Lord as one that walked in darkness. I saw in some measure my error, and thought if the Lord would in mercy once more bless me with the light of his countenance, I would be more humble and watchful. But I saw myself so vile that I feared I must walk in darkness the rest of my days. I had never before so clearly seen my "heart so deceitful above all things, and so desperately wicked." I now searched the Scriptures with particular reference to my present case. That passage in Job, xlii. 5, 6, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes," gave me some relief. Again, Isaiah vi. 5, "Then said I, wo is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell

among a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts." This also gave me some comfort. But the 7th of Romans cleared up the subject to my mind. Now I had more clear views of the holiness and purity of God, his law, &c. I had also a greater and more clear sense of the infinite evil of sin, and of the depth of iniquity and deceitful workings of my own heart. Since that time I have considered those views and feelings among the evidences of a gracious state; and that we have no more true religion than we have of genuine humility. "The more thy glory strikes mine eye, the humbler I shall lie;" or, as the ancient Puritans used to say, "the saint has high and exalted thoughts of CHRIST, and low and abasing thoughts of himself."

The late experince I had had of my own weakness led me to a greater sense of my dependence on divine teaching. I found it necessary to take heed to the divine word; to watch and pray, lest there be in me a wicked heart, departing from the Lord. I now highly esteemed the society and counsel of older and more experienced Christians. The duty of connecting myself with some church now occupied my thoughts. Baptism was talked of by the converts. I was in doubt. I conversed with my father, and told him I could find no proof for infant baptism in the Bible. He thought he could,

if he could remember; but he said he had a poor memory. I searched the Scriptures for myself as impartially as I could; examined the accounts of household baptisms, and other Scriptures named in support of the practice, and found no evidence for it. I read the New Testament through with special reference to this subject, and found no precept or example, or even any reference to any such thing; but I found satisfactory evidence in precept and example for professing believers being buried with CHRIST in baptism. Therefore I fully renounced infant sprinkling as nothing more than a human invention, and something worse than nothing, as it is worse to speak falsely, than to say nothing. †

In September, the beloved Baldwin came to Claremont, and preached in the evening. After sermon, three persons offered themselves as candidates for baptism. The last was a very understanding, respectable lady, between forty and fifty years of age, by the name of Rich. She told a clear gospel experience. When she closed and took her seat, her husband stepped between her and Mr. Baldwin, and said "this is my wife; I forbid your baptizing her." Mr. Baldwin replied in a very calm manner, saying, "I suppose, sir, you are willing to give your reasons why you forbid her baptism. Do you think your wife is a Christian?" Mr. Rich replied in a hasty man-

ner, "yes, she is a Christian, and has been baptized by as good a minister as you are, and she would be no better for your baptizing her." Mr. Baldwin inquired whether she was a member of a Congregational church; she said she was. By Mr. Baldwin's advice she concluded to delay her baptism till she could inform the church and ask a letter of dismissal. Thus the matter rested for the present. But Mr. Rich, as afterward related, had a restless night. As he returned from meeting, reflecting on his uncivil and unchristian conduct toward Mr. Baldwin and his own wife, he was overwhelmed with shame and remorse. He was half convinced that the sentiment he had opposed was correct, and that he was fighting against God, and could not answer for his conduct before his final Judge. A sermon was delivered at Capt. Cook's tavern, next morning, before baptism, from Solomon's Song, i. 8. Mr. Rich's mind was powerfully impressed by the recollection of the following words of holy writ; "This is the way, walk ye in it." About two months after this, Mr. Baldwin visited us again, and baptized Mr. Rich and his wife, a young lady named Lucy Marks, and myself. After sermon, a large concourse assembled at the river side, and the ordinance was administered in a very solemn and impressive manner. Mr. Rich, and many others, wept the whole time during the services.

I now went on my way rejoicing; found wisdom's ways to be ways of pleasantness, and all her paths, paths of peace. Mr. Baldwin now resided in Canaan, N. H. and was at this time on his way to the Warren Association, where he reported, as I was told some years after, that he had baptized a young man in Claremont, that he expected would be a preacher of the gospel. But at this time, I had no thought that I should ever attempt to preach. Being encouraged by my good friend, Mr. Peckins, I frequently prayed after sermon, and sometimes delivered an address to the people at the close of the meeting, exhorting my fellow youth with much tenderness to remember their Creator in the days of their youth, &c. This excited much interest in the minds of the people; some in favour and some against my practice in thus exhorting the people. In the course of a few weeks a number of young people found peace in believing. Deacon Jacob Rice, his wife, and several other respectable people, left the Congregational church and were baptized by Mr. Baldwin, and by Mr. Jedediah Hibberd, of Lebanon, N. H. New instances of conviction appeared from week to week. The increasing congregation, with great attention, listened to the preached word. The prospect was very encouraging that the good work would continue and abound.

Thus I proceeded till I came to the knowledge of a report that was current among the people, that I was about to commence in the work of the gospel ministry. This tried my feelings, and for a while prevented my speaking in public, lest thereby the report should be confirmed in the public mind; for as yet I had no thought of any such thing.

But I met with a great disappointment in my worldly plans, which for awhile caused me some trouble. I was sensible that my father was dissatisfied with my becoming a Baptist, as I thereby had renounced all he had done for my salvation in dedicating me to God by sprinkling, at about ten or eleven years of age. He attended my baptism, but told some one that he had rather have followed me to my grave. But, as he had said very little to me on the subject, and as he always appeared pleasant and satisfied with my management of the farm; and was considered, by all that knew him, to be a man of strict integrity, I had not the least thought that he would fall from the contract he had made with me, to give me a deed of half his farm, &c. But when I told him that I had prepared materials for building a house, had engaged a carpenter, and wished the writings might be completed as had been agreed on, his countenance fell. He hesitated awhile, and then said, "he thought

there were buildings enough on this little farm." I understood his determination, and said no more. I soon sold my lumber, &c. and moved out of his house. Some time after, I asked him for the use of his oxen a little while. He said his oxen had a great deal to do. I left him much grieved that the conduct of one of the kindest of parents had so changed towards me. We divided the produce of the farm without the least difficulty. I was careful not to ask him for any favour.

For some weeks my mind was depressed on account of the disappointment. But I was enabled by prayer to look to the Lord for support and direction. That word, Psalm xxxvii. 5, was some comfort to me then, and has been many times since; "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust thou also in him; and he shall bring it to pass." And also those precious words of our Lord, Matthew, xix. 29, "And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life."

It was not long after this disappointment before I began to feel impressed with the thought of entering upon the work of the ministry. But as I felt myself destitute of the necessary qualifications for so great a

work, I endeavoured to dismiss the subject for the present.

The good work of the Lord continued to prosper. Mr. Peckins was ordained in Claremont about January, 1786. He baptized my beloved wife in March, and others soon after. An ecclesiastical council was convened about July this year, when those of us who had been baptized on the profession of our faith, united together in solemn covenant, and received the fellowship of the council as a regular church of CHRIST. Our number was about seventeen. For a season we walked in the order of the gospel as a little band of brethren, bound together by the cords of love. But about February, 1787, I removed my residence to Woodstock, Vt. and joined a Baptist church in that town. Mr. Joel Butler was their Minister. Mr. Peckins soon left Claremont, and settled in Rockingham. After a few years he left that people, and settled in Chelmsford, Mass. where he is still living, is about seventy-eight years of age, and has not preached for several years. Mr. John Parkhurst is now the beloved pastor of the church in Chelmsford. Other members of the little church in Claremont, removed into the state of New York, and others were removed by death, so that they were unable to maintain public worship, and the cause languished for many years, till about eight years since, when the Lord

revived his work of grace in that town. A Baptist church was constituted about the year 1824. Since then, they have become large and respectable. They have a splendid meeting-house, and a full congregation in the centre of the town. Mr. Leonard Tracy is their beloved pastor, is much respected, and his labours greatly blessed.

CHAPTER III.

WHEN I had been received a member of the church in Woodstock, I found myself connected with a very respectable brotherhood, consisting of a goodly number of well informed, gifted brethren, living in Christian union. The minister was absent the greatest part of the time, and after a few months left this people and settled in Templeton. But the church kept up public worship, and a considerable assembly attended. Their order of exercises were, 1st, singing; 2d, prayer; 3d, singing; 4th, reading the Scriptures; 5th, remarks on what was read, or exhortation and prayer, as the brethren felt freedom. Many were edified and comforted in these meetings. Here I enjoyed great freedom in exhortation and prayer. Being invited, I took up a large portion of the time. And yet I did not feel satisfied. My mind was now so completely taken up on the subject of preaching that I could think of little else. One text after another would seem to open to my understanding, so that I thought I could preach from them. The Scriptures were very precious; I read them with

great delight, and meditated therein day and night. I slept but little, and when I did sleep I sometimes talked in my sleep, and preached so loud as to wake my wife and others in the house, when my wife would awake me.

I frequently dreamed of preaching. One instance I will here notice, although I never placed much dependence on it, and seldom ever mentioned it.

I dreamed I went to a certain private house where I expected to hear a sermon. When I arrived, the exercises were not begun, and I saw no preacher. I thought I asked a young man that stood by the door whether the preacher had come. He said, yes, you are the preacher; the people have met expecting to hear you preach. Then, as I thought, I stepped into the room and looked round upon the people, who appeared to be in a remarkable smiling mood. The congregation seemed to consist of old gray headed people and young people. I thought I could discover a contemptuous smile on every face, as though they held the preacher in great contempt. In my dream I thought I stepped to a table, took up the Bible, and turned to the following text and read it, Isa. iii. 9, "The show of their countenance doth witness against them; they declare their sin as Sodom, they hide it not. Wo unto their soul! For they have rewarded evil unto them-

selves." I proceeded in my dream to illustrate and improve my text. 1st. Men's countenances witness against them when their general deportment, or conduct, was contrary to the word of God. As the countenance distinguishes the person, so the conduct the character. If they make a mock at sin, or trifle with sacred things, their conduct witnesseth against them. 2d. The sin of such transgressors is of a heinous nature, like the sin of Sodom. The wo of the Almighty is upon them. Such bold transgressors injure themselves more than they injure any other being. They have rewarded evil to themselves. And while I thus addressed them in my dream, I thought the people became very solemn; many were affected to tears. I closed my discourse, walked away a few rods and awoke; and, behold, it was a dream.

As I reflected on it, I recollected no other performance in the meeting but preaching, and had recognized none with whom I was acquainted. But what seemed the most extraordinary was in reference to the text. I might have been able to recollect that there were some such words in the Bible, but could not have repeated them, or told where they were, only I had dreamed, &c. Lest I should forget, I arose, struck a light, and found the text, Isa. iii. 9, as I had dreamed. This, however, I relate only as a dream; and although it had some

effect on my mind at the time, yet I was far from being decided as to what was my duty in this case. At times I retired to the forest and walked among the trees, pondering on the subject; and, before I was aware, would find myself preaching to the trees. Sometimes I concluded I would engage in the work. Then again a sense of the greatness of the work, the responsibility attached to the sacred office of a gospel minister, and my unworthiness, want of talents, learning and experience, would so overwhelm me that I would think I should never attempt to preach, and would then try to put the subject out of my mind. But very soon, some text would engage my thoughts, and I would have a sermon all arranged. Thus I was like a man trying to get to sleep; the more he tries, the more wakeful he is. The painful suspense in my mind became more distressing. I prayed earnestly that, if it was my duty to go forward in the work, the Lord would make it plain; or if it was not my duty, that he would remove the subject from my mind. At length the question was in some measure settled, and I commenced the great work in a way I had not thought of.

That text in Job, xxv. 4, "How then can man be justified with God?" had for several days and nights laid with great weight on my mind. I felt a desire for an opportunity to state the question and attempt to

give a scriptural answer. As yet, I had not revealed my mind on this subject to any person. My dear wife had for some time suffered with anxiety for fear that I should take up preaching; but now, having seen my perplexity, as she supposed, on this subject, she told me she was willing I should preach if I thought it to be my duty. On Sabbath morning I put a small Bible in my pocket and went into meeting, intending, if opportunity presented, to read the chapter and make my remarks on the question, &c. One of the deacons, as usual, commenced the meeting by singing, prayer and reading the Scriptures; but instead of addressing the people himself, as he had done before, he called on me to speak. I gladly embraced the opportunity. I did not take the Bible out of my pocket, for fear it should be called preaching. I repeated the text and stated the question, with its difficulties;—the holiness of God; his infinite justice; the righteousness of his holy law; the sinfulness of man, &c. In answer to the question mentioned, the complete satisfaction of the atonement accomplished by the death of CHRIST; the covenant of redemption; the work of the holy Spirit, in making application of the Saviour's merits, &c., I spoke with freedom and much feeling thirty or forty minutes, and left speaking with many thoughts unexpressed.

At noon the deacons came and requested me to take the lead of the meeting, and speak to the people as I felt freedom. I chose a text, and through the exercises I enjoyed freedom of thought and speech. I had less feeling than I had in the morning; but was deliberate, and perhaps more edifying to the people. The deacon desired the church to tarry after the congregation retired. And, without consulting or examining me on the subject, the church proceeded and voted, unanimously, to give me a letter of license as a candidate for the gospel ministry. This was done in April, 1787. Now I felt at liberty to go forth, and, in my feeble measure, proclaim the glorious truths of the gospel of CHRIST to my dying fellow men.

A number of young people were now under concern for their salvation. Mr. John Peckins came and preached a powerful sermon; after which, while I was exhorting the people, there was much weeping and sobbing through the assembly, which increased till at length many broke out into a loud cry, which continued for an hour or more. We had something similar at a meeting the next day, but we had to lament over the most of those who made the greatest outcry; for they soon returned to their former courses. But others brought forth fruit. One young lad, by the name of Ora Butler, son of Elder Joel Butler, who ap-

peared to be awakened at that time, has since become a Baptist minister in the state of New York.

I continued to preach in Woodstock, and in towns adjacent, till I received an invitation from the Baptist church in Windsor, Vt. I removed my family to this town in November, 1787, and became the stated preacher to this little church of eleven members, containing only five males. We held our meetings in a private house, two miles West of the village, in the East parish. At this time there was no settled minister in this parish. Our place was soon filled to overflowing. During the winter there was an increasing attention among the young people. Toward spring some were brought into gospel liberty, and could recommend the Saviour to others. I felt my heart very much drawn out in prayer for the dear youth. And I was often, melted into tenderness while urging upon them the love of our dying Saviour. Nor was I satisfied with praying for them in public, but I agonized in secret. There was a delightful water-fall in a pleasant grove, at a little distance from my dwelling, where I spent many precious seasons in prostrating myself before the Lord, mingling my feeble voice with the sound of many waters, in humble supplication for the blessing of God to descend upon the souls of the people to whom I preached the word. But sin

was mixed with all I did. I often thought that it was presumption to look for a divine blessing to attend the labours of one so weak and unworthy as I was; and yet, if any were brought to rejoice in hope under my preaching, this wretched heart would be seeking self-praise. But the Lord wrought wonders; and by the month of May, a considerable number were made to rejoice in hope, and were ready to offer themselves as candidates for baptism.

Now the church thought of calling me to ordination. I trembled to think of it. I felt need of more knowledge and experience, before I should be set apart by the laying on of hands. I thought it doubtful whether a council would think it expedient to ordain one every way so deficient. But the church plead necessity; ministers of the denomination were scarce; it was difficult to obtain an administrator, &c. I submitted the subject to the judgment of the church and council. By the request of the Baptist church of CHRIST, in Windsor, a council met on the 18th day of June, 1788. After examination, they voted to proceed to ordain me as pastor over that church. The following ministers took part in the public services, viz. Elder Joseph Cornell offered the introductory prayer; Elder William Grow, preached the sermon, from Matt. xxviii. 19 & 20.; Elder Ebenezer Bailey, offered the ordaining prayer, while

ministering brethren present, laid on their hands ; Elder Joseph Cornell, gave the charge, and Elder Joseph Call, gave the hand of fellowship. Elder William Grow, was moderator ; and Elder Joseph Call, clerk. Elder Henry Green, of Wallingford, and Elder Stephen Royce, of Landaff, also several brethren, as messengers, attended the council. This ordination took place in the Congregational meeting-house. The assembly was large. The public services were performed with great solemnity and propriety.

The next Sabbath I baptized several of the young converts, and soon after more ; and so continued to do for about four months, when I had baptized about thirty. The greater part of those who joined the meeting and the church after the first year, came from the West parish. Our meetings increased till no building owned by any of the society could contain the people ; and our meetings were removed from Sabbath to Sabbath to different parts of the town, that each part might have a share of the privilege of attending the meetings. For a time our meeting was held in a large school-house, in the West parish, containing a spacious hall. But the place was soon too strait for us.

Rev. Peletiah Chapen, minister in this parish, was dismissed about January, 1789, and was baptized sometime after by Elder

Ezra Wilmoth, in Plymouth, N. H. The Congregational meeting-house was now unoccupied. Some gentlemen in the parish advised the Baptist society to apply for the use of it. But my friends, expecting there would be objections made against it, no application was made by them. At length, some gentlemen of the parish, called a parish meeting of their own accord. Almost the whole parish attended. After the meeting was opened, a motion was made to invite the Baptist church and society to meet in their meeting-house, when they had no preacher, and a vote passed. A committee chosen at the meeting politely waited on me and presented the invitation. I gave them thanks, and told them I would lay the matter before my people at a convenient time. I was afterward informed that there were only three men that opposed the vote, and they were violent. They were Mr. W. R., Mr. S. T., and Mr. J. N. Mr. W. R. holding a large hickory staff in his hand, said thus, "Whenever there is a meeting held in this house, I calculate to attend. I set near the pulpit, and always have this staff with me; and I presume that P. will not get by me into the pulpit." Mr. S. T. said he had rather see h—fire in the pulpit than to see P. there. Mr. J. N. said he wished to G—the meeting-house was in flames.

Now the reader will notice what followed. In a few days after this, I was requested to preach at the funeral of a very respectable old lady. The man with the large staff was there to hear me for the first time. He placed himself directly before me, and appeared as though he expected to look me out of countenance, and I did not know but he would; for I felt myself like a stripling before him. But I had not proceeded far in my discourse, before he began to look down, and then looked up with water in his eyes; at length, he bowed down and wept during the remainder of the sermon, like a child that had been severely chastised. He soon proposed to the church of which he was an officer, to concur with the vote of the parish, which was promptly done; he gave me a copy of their vote, invited me to his house, became a constant hearer, friend and benefactor, as long as I lived in the town. About one week after the parish meeting, Mr. S. T. had a little daughter so badly scalded, that it died in a few hours. I was called to attend the funeral. The parents were much affected, but said very little till a few months after, when their only son, five years old, playing about the mill-pond, fell in and was drowned. I attended the funeral of the child, by request of the parents. Now they were in great trouble, not on account of the death of their children only,

but for their own souls, lest they should die in their sins and be lost for ever. They both obtained hope, through grace; and a few weeks after the death of their little son, I baptized them near the spot where he was drowned. Mr. J. N. came to me about two weeks after the parish meeting and informed me that his wife, having heard me preach some time before, was in great trouble of mind; and had a desire to converse with me. He requested me to preach at his house and spend the night with him, &c. I complied with his request. His wife soon rejoiced in hope, and was baptized; he became very friendly, and with his family attended our meeting ever after. Thus the Braker came up before us and opened an effectual door that no man could shut. The difficulties being all removed, we peaceably took possession of the meeting-house, and enjoyed it uninterruptedly as long as I stayed in the town. Almost every family in the parish, and many in the East parish, attended our meetings, and members were added to the church from Hartland, Wethersfield and Reading, adjoining towns.

In addition to my labours in this town, I travelled and preached among the destitute in different parts of this State, and New Hampshire.

Soon after I was ordained, I journeyed to Coos, by the way of White River. I

preached and baptized in Royalton and Bethel; went to Tunbridge and preached in Mr. Benedict's barn, in the morning, and was surprised to see so many people collect, so early in the day, in such a wilderness part of the country. They heard as for eternity. One young man and his wife came five miles from Randolph on foot. They were very urgent that I should go home with them, and preach in the afternoon at their house. They entreated me with tears till I consented. Soon after I set out for their dwelling I came to a deep stream, drove my horse through and walked over on a log. Having rode several miles in the woods, by marked trees, I came into a path among the new settlers, and to the young man's house. As we were passing he sent notice of my preaching in every direction. The men came from their labour, as the message found them, while rolling burnt logs, &c. about as black as Africans. They were all attention. Before I closed my discourse, the tears had made white paths down their cheeks. After sermon, a gentleman, a little better clad than the rest, invited me to go home with him, but it was two miles out of my way; and being weary, I thanked him and declined. The young man said he should be glad to have me tarry with him if he had entertainment for me; but he had nothing for me to eat, and no

where for me to lodge. I asked him if he had bread and milk? Yes, said he, we have bread and milk, and that is all we have. I told him I wanted nothing better, and could lodge myself. My young friends were new settlers in the region; had built a log cabin, but it was not finished. About half the floor was covered with split logs, flat side up; the rest was bare ground; the roof was covered with bark, and a space left open for a chimney; a space for a door, but none hung. After evening worship, I ate my bread and milk with good relish, laid my saddle for a pillow, wrapped my great coat about me and laid myself down on the split logs. Being weary, I slept soundly. I rose early, felt refreshed, and was on my horse before sunrise. The kind young man piloted me into the great road leading to Coos. He was much affected when we parted; and I expected never to see him again in this life. But about three months after, I visited the town again, by special request, and baptized the young man, his wife, and two of his neighbours. I suppose this was the first time this holy ordinance was administered in Randolph.

I pursued my journey, arrived in Ver-shire, and preached in the evening. Next day I rode to Corinth, and preached. The next day I rode to Bradford in the forenoon, and was informed by my friend, Mr. Pickett, that he had received the notice I

had sent him, and had appointed a meeting in his barn, at 2 o'clock, P. M. and I might expect a large assembly. This was within a mile or two of my former residence, in Piermont. The thought of preaching to my former acquaintance, brought a trial upon my mind. I retired, and tried to pour out my soul for divine assistance. The people assembled before the time. While I was waiting for the arrival of the time appointed, and looking on the great assembly, every eye seemed to be fixed upon me, as though it was a strange thing that I should appear among them in the character of a preacher. Nor was it less strange to myself. While I could recognize almost every countenance, and think how much of my precious time I had spent with them in sin and vanity, I said to myself, how can I preach to this people? All was still as night, till one broke silence by asking me how long it was since I had experienced religion. I then arose and prefaced my public exercises with a brief account of my experience. The people appeared very attentive. I took for my text, these words, "Let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably." I endeavoured, by scriptural arguments, to show the necessity of having grace to serve God acceptably. I spoke with freedom and much affection, and the power of the Lord attended the word; many souls in that as-

sembly, I have no doubt, were convinced of their sinful and lost state.

The next day I preached in Mr. Solomon Bailey's barn, in Piermont. His mind was deeply impressed with what he heard the day before. Here a large company of my former acquaintance assembled. I felt great solicitude for their salvation. I preached from Malachi iii. 9, "Ye are cursed with a curse; for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation." I have reason to believe that many received lasting impressions at this meeting. I conversed with many personally, who were affected to tears, particularly Mr. D. H. with whom I had spent many evenings in civil recreation, while he was a member of a church. I asked him what his motives were in joining the church. He said he thought he had better be a hypocrite than nothing. I reminded him of the awful woes our Saviour denounced upon hypocrites. He appeared tenderly impressed; and at parting, he requested an interest in my prayers. I felt much for him. He afterwards wrote me a long and interesting letter; giving me a very satisfactory account of his Christian experience, and joyful hope.

On this journey I preached in Haverhill, Bath and Landaff. On my return I preached in Lyme. Here I had a distant relation, by the name of Broughton, whom I had not seen. When I had inquired him out, he

entertained me kindly. I preached to a small assembly in his house. Thirty-five years after, I became acquainted with the excellent Nathaniel Kendrick, D. D. Principal of the Hamilton Institution, N. Y. who told me that he heard me preach at the meeting in Lyme, and that there he received some of his earliest impressions on the great subject of religion, at twelve years of age. I then returned to my family and flock, and found them all well.

The prosperity of our Denomination in this State, about this time, is eloquently and justly stated in Rev. David Benedict's History, vol. i. p. 333, as follows. "Between the years 1780 and 1790, thirty-two churches were planted in Vermont, so that, together with the two which had been planted before, there were at the last mentioned date, thirty-four churches in this State, in which were twenty-eight ordained, and fifteen licensed preachers, and their whole number of communicants was about sixteen hundred. Elisha Ransom, Elisha Rich, Joseph Cornell, Thomas Skeels, Hezekiah Eastman, William Bentley, John Hibbard, John Peak, Caleb Blood, Aaron Lealand, Isaac Beal, John Drew, Isaac Webb, Henry Green, Isaiah Stone, and Joseph Call, were among the first Baptist ministers, who settled in this State; and by whose laborious and evangelical exertions, the early churches were planted."

For a time there was no minister in Windsor, except myself, and demands for my labours were increasing daily. As the church and congregation of my particular charge had now become comparatively large, it was thought they were able to give me a comfortable support, so that I might devote myself to the ministry of the word among them. And after we occupied the meeting-house, and the parish generally attended my ministry, I did expect that something of the kind would be done. But at length I was convinced that the people intended no such thing. I had leave to be absent a part of the time, as duty might require; but this afforded me no pecuniary relief; for I received almost nothing when I itinerated. I had expended nearly all I had accumulated, before I commenced preaching. I came to a conclusion that I must commence business as a tailor, or my family must suffer. But, to take off occasion, I mentioned it first in church-meeting, by way of asking counsel, whether it was advisable for me, under existing circumstances, to set up my business as a tailor. Brother B. replied promptly, "no, by no means, but give thyself wholly to the ministry; there was work enough without setting up my trade." Brother T. replied, that "he wished that I could give myself wholly to the work of the ministry; but my family must be supported, and if I

was required to give myself wholly to these things, they ought to raise a salary of eighty pounds for my support." Brother B. replied, "that would spoil me, by making me a hireling," &c. No resolve was passed.

I soon agreed with a carpenter, to build me a shop. I had procured, partly by the help of friends, seven acres of land, principally covered with wood; on which was a small house and barn, a garden, and some fruit trees, located on a large road near the meeting-house. I entered into partnership with a steady and trusty young man, who was a good workman, and took three female apprentices. I agreed to furnish wood for the shop, board him and the apprentices, work myself part of the time, or when I was at leisure; the profits to be equally divided between me and my partner. We had work enough and prompt pay; found it profitable, and went on in peace and quietness. My people were wonderfully pleased to see that I could maintain myself and family. But my shop took too much of my attention. After about two years, my partner set up in business by himself, in Claremont. Now I must give up the shop altogether, or attend to it more closely than ever.

CHAPTER IV.

AFTER my ordination I felt, more than I had done before, the want of learning and theological information. Had I realised before I commenced preaching, as I now did, how deficient I was, and how difficult it would be "to do the work of an evangelist" without further preparation, I think I could not have commenced. But I had now vowed to the Lord, and could not go back. I wrote with much feeling to my good friend and brother, Mr. Baldwin, expressing my trials; and received a kind answer. He tried to encourage me to persevere in the good work; saying, that all ministers had trials; some in one way, and some in another. He recommended several books for my help. I obtained Butterworth's Concordance; Locke on Human Understanding and Ontology; Watts' Logic and Improvement of the Mind; Mason on Self Knowledge; Blair's Lectures on Rhetoric; Claud on Sermonizing, with Robinson's Notes; some part of Gill and Henry's Expositions, &c. &c. These books I obtained, one or two at a time, as I found it practicable.

I read them with avidity, and felt much satisfaction in studying them, in connection with the word of God. Indeed, I saw more of my ignorance than I had realised before. But I found I was not alone. The world of mankind in general are involved in darkness, in respect to things temporal and spiritual. But knowledge is attainable. Some have attained a good degree of it, and I was eager to pursue it. But, my public engagements; my family; my shop; all pressed into my mind! How could I pursue the desired object! Sometimes I laboured till late in the night to redeem time to preach the next day. Then I would think I must leave this people and go to some place, where I could be sustained, and devote myself to the sacred work, which I loved above every other employment. But I was affectionately attached to the people gathered under my labours, and I did not think it was for want of affection or ability that they did not support me; but it was the covetous policy of the day, that deemed it wicked for the people to give, or the minister to receive any thing for preaching. Study and learning were esteemed worse than useless.

These unhappy prejudices were doubtless strengthened by the arbitrary measure pursued in some towns, of taxing the Baptists for the support of ministers of other denominations. An attempt was made

about this time to obtain a law of the State, for a general assessment for the support of preachers, similar to what had been attempted in the State of Virginia; which was boldly advocated in a large number of publications in the newspapers, by a reverend clergyman. But these pieces were answered in a very able, candid and forcible manner, by a reputable Baptist, Dr. Fletcher, of Cavendish. His clear refutation of the arguments employed by the clergyman, and his powerful appeals to the public in defence of religious liberty, put to silence the clergyman; and the object of a general assessment, for the present, was given up. Dr. Fletcher was an eminent physician, and judge of the county for many years. The celebrated lawyer of the same name in Boston, is the son of the judge.

In the years 1790 and 1792, there was an extensive revival in the Baptist churches, in the East part of the State of New Hampshire, extending more or less into about twenty townships; and only five Baptist preachers in all that region. I was solicited to visit them. At length a preacher came to see me, directly from the great field, and urged me to go and see the destitute people.

We had at this time an ordained brother in the church, who was esteemed as a good man and an able preacher. He had been

out of health, but was now able to preach, and generally supplied the pulpit in my absence. I commenced my journey to the East part of New Hampshire, in June, 1792, taking with me a certificate of which the following is a copy. "The Baptist church of CHRIST in Windsor. A recommendation, to whom it may concern. This may certify, that Elder John Peak, our much beloved and faithful pastor, has been legally set apart to the work of the ministry of the word, and ordinances of the New Testament, and is well reported of with us, not only by the church, but by the people in general, and we do hereby recommend him, as such, to all Christian people wherever he may journey, believing that his gifts will make his way for him; hoping that, through divine goodness, he may be instrumental of winning many souls, and of comforting God's people. Done by order of the Church, Windsor, Vt. June 1, 1792.

Attest, NATHANIEL KENDALL, *Scribe*.

I preached in New Salisbury, Deerfield, Lee, New Market, Exeter, Stratham, Kingston, Southampton, Newtown, Amesbury, Plastow, Haverhill, Sandtown, Brentwood, Sanbornton, &c. I preached before the New Hampshire Association, in Deerfield. There were four times as many people assembled as could get into the meeting-house; but those within, heard with great attention. And wherever I ad-

dressed the people, I had large assemblies, and deeply affected hearers; and saw a great number of young converts, and many precious youth in tears, under a painful sense of their guilty, perishing state.

The people overwhelmed me with their kindness. I received three formal invitations in different towns, to become their stated preacher. I was from home about thirty days; rode about three hundred miles; preached thirty times; arrived in health, and found all well. Thanks to our Preserver. The cash received for services on this journey, amounted to more in value than all I had received in the year past.

I returned home on Saturday. Mr. Joshua Smith, a licensed preacher, came with me from New Hampshire, and spent the Sabbath with us. At his request, the church met at noon. He, having been with me most of the journey, related to the church something of the happy state of revival in New Hampshire, and the want of ministers; the manner in which my labours had been received; and read to them the invitations presented me. He told them he did not know what I would think was duty to do in the case; but if I should ask a dismission from my pastoral charge, he hoped they would cheerfully grant my request; for he thought it would be very wrong for them to require me to stay with

them, and confine myself to my shop to support my family, when Providence had prepared the way for me to be supported, so that I might devote myself wholly to the sacred work. The feelings of the church were such that they wept to excess. However, little more was said for a while. I visited the region in New Hampshire again, and made arrangements to remove my family to Deerfield, in January, 1793, and then returned and asked my dismissal.

Now the trial came on, and was deeply felt by the church and myself. Some said one thing and some another. But one thing was more talked of than any thing else. Several individuals had generously subscribed towards paying for my lot and buildings. It was said that when the subscriptions were given, it was expected that I should stay with them during life. Although no such stipulation was ever mentioned, yet they thought it to be wrong in me to hold the property and leave them. I had concluded what to do in this case, and told them I could satisfy them on that head, when they were ready to come to a decision on the question. But no decision was obtained till Elder Shephard, of Brentwood, and Elder Ransom met with the church to give advice on the subject. These aged ministers plead hard on opposite sides. Elder Shephard, who had come one hundred miles to attend this meeting,

plead that my labours were needed in the county of Rockingham. Elder Ransom plead that I had a wide field of useful labour in Windsor and vicinity. He did not see how I could be spared from that region, &c. After this, the church met to decide the question. To satisfy all parties, I presented the deed of my place as a parsonage, to be held in trust for the church, on condition that the church pay me twenty pounds, the cost of the shop I had built on it. This the church accepted by vote, and appointed a committee to take the deed and have one prepared for me to sign. All which was agreed to; and they voted to grant my request of dismissal from my pastoral office. But at a subsequent meeting, Brother Joseph Parmenter made a motion to reconsider the vote to accept a deed of my place. He plead with tears. He thought it cruel, after I had laboured five years for their good, and had received very little, except what had been given toward my place, to take that from me he thought very wrong. Since he had reconsidered the subject he had not been able to take usual repose. He spake with so much good feeling and propriety, it took effect. The vote was so amended as to require me to pay back the subscriptions to all who might require it. To this I agreed, and took back my deed; sold my place to Mr. Ezekiel Pearsons, for ninety pounds. By

my order he paid over to almost every subscriber the full amount of their subscriptions. Here we may see what a poor creature man is, when left to himself! Although these things transpired near forty years since, there may be some who can testify to the truth of these facts who are still living in Windsor. But I always felt a tender solicitude for this people, and have enjoyed as much of the sweetness of Christian fellowship with them as, perhaps, with any other people. The little church of eleven members had now increased to seventy-five, comprising some of the most wealthy people in the parish; and they might have had a large and able society to aid them in supporting a minister, but they thought it wrong to enter into any covenant with the people of the land for the support of public worship. —

At the time of my ordination, the church voted to pay me fifty dollars per year, and this to be assessed on the members of the church, according to ability. About three years after, their committee met for settlement with me, and found they were fifty dollars in arrears. This they requested me to relinquish, and they would be punctual in future. I consented; but never had a settlement with them after. I conclude they owed me fifty dollars when I left them, which they never paid. Mr. Donahough, a very respectable Irish gentleman in the

parish said, "Mr. P. had served the people five years for just nothing at all; for all he had received of them would not more than pay the extra expense he was at in consequence of being their minister." I suppose this was very near the truth; for, from Saturday to Monday my house was frequently thronged with loving friends, who came from a distance to attend meeting. After all, I do not lay the whole fault to the people. Perhaps I was as much or more to blame than they. Had I clearly understood their duty, and my own, and faithfully instructed them in this momentous part of revealed truth, it might have been better for them and me.

I left our good brother, Elder Roswell Smith, to preach to them, who continued with them some years, and then went to the upper Province in Canada, where he was living lately, and has been very useful. He was born about 1754.

The church have since understood their duty better, and have done it cheerfully, I trust, and have prospered more since I left them than before. They have become two bands. In the East parish they have an elegant brick meeting-house, with steeple and bell, and a large church and congregation. Rev. Lealand Howard is their pastor. They have built a spacious meeting-house in the West parish; but I do not

know who is their present pastor. May the Lord give them prosperity.

My friends in Deerfield, N. H. sent three double sleighs, and removed my furniture. After paying all demands against me, I owned a good span of horses and a sleigh, with which I took my wife, her sister, and my two children, and left Vermont. We arrived safe in Deerfield, January 12, 1793.

Here was a branch of the Brentwood Baptist church, under the pastoral care of their much esteemed Elder Samuel Shephard. They had a decent new meeting-house, and an overflowing congregation. I agreed to preach to them half the time for one year. The precious revival which commenced the year before, still continued.

During my preaching to this people, I baptized twenty, or more, who united with this branch; among whom was Mr. William Bachelder, a native of Boston. He had prepared for college, but was disappointed in his expectation of entering, by the death of his father. He had married the daughter of Mr. Benjamin Sanborn, of this town. Here he lived and taught a school, for which he was well qualified. He obtained a hope while he attended on my ministry. Soon after he was baptized, he was licensed as a candidate for the ministry. He was born in the year 1769. But more of him hereafter.

Besides preaching in this town, I preached in most of the adjacent towns, and in some at considerable distance. I frequently went to preach, baptize and administer the Lord's supper in places where they had no pastor.

A happy revival took place in the town of Bow, under the preaching of Mr. Joshua Smith, a licentiate. I was sent for, to baptize; and, although it was in the dead of winter, the excitement of the people was such that a great assembly met; a large company came in sleighs from Concord, in a thick snow storm, to see the wonderful sight. A space was cut in the ice on the mill-pond, and I descended into the liquid grave and baptized two, Mr. Rogers and his wife, the 2d day of February. On the 16th of April I baptized sixteen, on the 11th of August, eleven, and in the month of October, four; all in the town of Bow. This was the commencement of the church in that town, which is large and respectable.

There was a church in Hopkinton, but no pastor. By their request I visited them several times. I rode there on Saturday, in the month of April, arrived after dark, and called at a small house where I was unacquainted. There I learned that the meeting was appointed in the West part of the town, in a barn. I was now at a distance from my friends, weary and chilled

with the cold. I accepted of the kind invitation of the stranger, to stay the night. Next morning I went to the place of meeting. When I arrived, I found a large house and barn; went into the house, but the people felt no interest in the meeting. I tied my horse to a post, and there he stood till night. A large assembly met in the barn. After sermon, Benjamin Darling, Esq. his wife, and another lady, related their experience, and were received as candidates for baptism and membership; went directly, some distance, to Contoocook river, and administered the holy ordinance. On my return I stepped into a house and obtained a small dry biscuit; walked to the barn and preached to a solemn and attentive congregation; received the candidates into the church by the hand of fellowship, and administered the holy ordinance of the Lord's supper. I had not changed my raiment. I had been much animatèd in my labours through the day; but after meeting I felt chilled. As the kind stranger's house was the nearest place I could go to, I went there for the night. The good woman furnished me with a change of raiment and dried my clothes. I had a good nights rest, and next day rode home. I do not know that I received any great injury by this imprudent conduct. Imprudent I call it, for so it was, if not presumptuous. I hardly feel justified in

mentioning it, but conclude that there is not much danger that any prudent minister will ever imitate the example. Brother Darling was afterwards chosen deacon, and proved faithful, but is gone, I trust, to enter into the joy of his Lord. Deacon Young, a good brother in this church in Hopkinton, gave me a good brass eight-day clock, as compensation for my labours among them.

I now felt myself happily liberated from worldly cares; my friends in Deerfield being able, willing and ready to grant me every indulgence. An effectual door was open. I had more calls than I could comply with. Wherever I went was kindly entertained. In many places I saw evident tokens of the divine presence in rendering the word effectual in awakening the impenitent, and comforting mourners. In Candia I baptized seven at one time, and four at another, and I know not how many more at other times, who were added to the church in Deerfield. I went to Goffstown, preached, and baptized seven, and assisted Rev. Samuel Fletcher and others in constituting a church. I preached in many towns in the counties of Rockingham and Stratford, and saw much of the good work of the Lord.

In August, Mr. Nichols, of Woburn, came to Deerfield and spent a Sabbath with us; and, as an agent for the Baptist

friends in Woburn, he requested me to visit them. I spent a Sabbath and preached with them in September. From thence I went to Attleborough, and attended the Warren Association. Here I became acquainted with some venerable Baptist ministers, of whom I had only heard before, viz. Stillman, Backus, Hynes, Pitman, Foster, Williams, Briggs, Moffit, &c. The opportunity was peculiarly precious to me. But the introductory sermon delivered by my highly esteemed Brother Baldwin, from Acts xx. 23. "Take heed therefore to yourselves, and to all the flock," &c. was most interesting. O! with what heart-felt satisfaction and delight did I listen to the sermon, notwithstanding it made me ashamed of my own work. Being invited, I preached in the evening, and most of the ministers of the Association were present. I went from the Association, in company with Mr. Baldwin and others, to Boston, which I had not seen before. I was delighted with the conversation of the pious people with whom I became acquainted; preached in Mr. Baldwin's meeting-house, and returned to Deerfield.

While I resided at Deerfield, I preached several Sabbaths in Newtown. When I was with them I generally appointed the Sabbath when I would come again. On one of these appointments, my wife was so unwell on Saturday, that I did not think it

proper for me to leave home. But engaged Brother William Bachelder to go in my room, who was then a licensed preacher. He consented, on condition that I would go in the morning, if I could leave home. My wife was so much better in the morning, that I concluded to go. I sat out early, had twenty-five miles to ride on horseback, and arrived just as Brother Bachelder was commencing the services. He was overjoyed to see me. He had preached but a few times. The meeting-house was full to overflowing. I preached twice, leaving Brother Bachelder to preach with them a few days. I returned to my family that night; but being detained to converse with anxious inquirers, I did not set out till near sun-down, so that I had most of the distance to ride after dark. My meditations were such that I hardly realised the distance. It seemed to me a strange thing that one so unworthy as I was should be permitted to hope in the mercy of God; that I was supported in performing so much labour; that so many were disposed to give their attention to my feeble communications; and that there was so much reason to hope that the word by me dispensed, one so inadequate to the sacred work, was blessed to precious souls.

Towards the close of the year, I began to think of complying with the urgent request of the people at Newtown, to take

up my residence with them. In Deerfield were three licensed Baptist preachers; Brethren Peter Moore, John Prescott, and William Bachelder; all esteemed, but more especially Brother Bachelder. His wife's parents were wealthy; great friendship subsisted in the connection; and I thought, if I left the town, he would be likely to stay with them; and I was not pleased with the idea of being pastor of a branch of a church.

Newtown is a small town situated in the South-east corner of New Hampshire, ten miles from Newburyport and six from Haverhill, Mass., and twenty-five from Portsmouth, N. H.; is about three miles square, and contains about eighty families. The inhabitants consist chiefly of industrious, wealthy farmers. They had a decent meeting-house, recently repaired, and near it lived an aged Pedobaptist minister, who had formerly been their preacher many years. I believe he was never accused of being super-Calvinistic. There were a few members of the Pedobaptist church living in the place, but most of the people were of the Baptist sentiment. They had for a long time been destitute of stated preaching. Here was a Baptist Church, formed as early as 1755. Mr. Backus informs us "that the Baptist church in Newtown, N. H. was small in its beginning; was gathered out of a society of separate

Pedobaptists, in 1755, and was the only Baptist church in the State, for fifteen years; that Walter Powers, father to the late Walter Powers, of Gilmantown, was ordained its pastor the same year it was constituted; that it increased for a while under his ministry, and then fell into difficulties and divisions, which interrupted its harmony, and finally terminated in its dissolution." Benedict's History, vol. i. page 316.

CHAPTER V.

THERE were a number of members belonging to the Baptist churches in Haverhill and Brentwood, who resided in Newtown and vicinity, and others whom I had baptized, who were desirous of uniting in constituting a church in Newtown, providing I would consent to become their pastor. Most of the people of the town united in forming a Baptist society for the support of preaching; but the greatest part of the society belonged to the towns adjoining, viz. Southampton, Kingston, Plastow, N. H. and Amesbury, Mass.; in all about 160 rateable polls.

The people in Deerfield were punctual in fulfilling their engagements, besides making me presents, such as I had not been accustomed to receive. We parted in harmony.

My friends in Newtown provided me with a comfortable house, and I removed my family there in January, 1794. I agreed to preach to this people and to the Baptist people in Woburn, alternately. I commonly tarried at each place two weeks at a time, as they were nearly thirty miles

apart. I had the happiness to see some fruits of my labours in both societies, but by far the greatest in Woburn. Here was a very kind, loving people. When I first came among them there was no regular church or society; but a considerable number, belonging both to the church and society in West Cambridge, soon formed a society, and began to make arrangements for building a meeting-house. Till their house was finished the meetings were held in the upper story of Capt. Edgell's house, which was unfinished, but was fitted up with pulpit and seats, and was filled mostly with young people.

The excellent Mr. Thomas Green had been pastor of the church in Cambridge for a number of years. About this time he left them and went to Danvers, and afterward to North Yarmouth, Me. where he died, about 1816, much beloved and lamented.

While the society were building their meeting-house in Woburn, the Holy Spirit was shed upon the people, and a happy revival commenced. The sudden death of a young man, by the name of Benjamin Edgell, 21 years of age, was a mean of awaking many. On his birth-day, being in company with his young friends who had met for civil amusement, he fell and expired instantly! He was a young man of promise, of fine appearance and much

beloved; in many respects he left but few equals in the town. He was the son of Capt. Edgell, owner of the house where we held our meetings. Rev. Thomas Baldwin preached at his funeral, from Job xxi. 23, 24; "One dieth in his full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet. His breasts are full of milk, and his bones are moistened with marrow." Mrs. Edgell and several of her children, soon after the death of their beloved Benjamin, experienced a gracious change and were baptized. Mrs. Edgell lived to a great age, much esteemed for her piety and exemplary life. She departed this life in 1829, in a happy state of mind. Her son, John Edgell, is an esteemed member of that church. The good work continued several months. During the season I baptized thirty-five persons, some of them lived in South Reading, where Brother Baldwin baptized several persons.

After this precious revival, the church was for a time called Cambridge and Woburn Church, and at length became two distinct churches. I continued to preach to this people till October, 1795, when I agreed to preach stately in Newtown.

Mr. Ames, the aged minister, had moved out of Newtown, and his farm, near the meeting-house, was for sale. Some of my friends united and purchased it for my accommodation, and finally sold it to me for nine hundred dollars. It contained forty

acres of land, with good buildings, orchard, &c. From the first of my preaching in this town I had a larger congregation than I had at Deerfield or Woburn. I now called the attention of the brethren to the subject of constituting a church, which was accomplished in February, 1796, containing, to the best of my recollection, about twenty-five members. We adopted for our constitution the articles of the Second Baptist Church, in Boston, and had them printed. The people of the town became more attentive to my preaching, and generally attended meeting, with many others from the adjoining towns.

About this time there appeared in the church an unusual spirit of prayer for a revival of religion. I rejoiced to see a few anxious persons, and more solemn attention to the word in the congregation. I felt much tender concern for the souls of my people, and devoted my whole attention to preaching, prayer-meetings, and visiting from house to house, conversing and praying with the tender minded, and others.

We had a meeting at Mr. Plummer's house, in Amesbury, on a week-day. I preached from Isaiah xxxiii. 22. "For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our law-giver, the Lord is our king; he will save us." The time was come for the Spirit to be shed down upon the people. A considerable part of the assembly were so

deeply impressed with a sense of their sinful, lost state, that they could not conceal their distress. After a few days others were found awakened in like manner. Some, in a short time, were brought to rejoice in hope. Thus the good work continued to extend until it appeared in several towns, around us.

We had frequent church-meetings to hear the experience of young converts. I often had the pleasure of administering the holy ordinance of baptism, and for several months we never failed of admitting members into the church at our monthly communions, so that within about one year the church had more than doubled in number. I hired the work done on my farm, so that I devoted my time to my sacred calling; and had great encouragement thus to do; for my people were able and willing to give me a good support, and would sometimes turn out, *en masse*, and mow down my grass or hoe a field of corn, gratis. And above all, the Lord granted success to my poor labours. When I contrasted my present situation with what it was in Windsor, I felt myself under great obligations to humble gratitude and praise to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, for all his goodness to me and my family. But this heart! this wretched heart! how insensible! how unfeeling under all the condescending kindness and mercy of our heav-

only Benefactor. Taking a retrospective view of those happy days during the reformation, it appears to me that I enjoyed more freedom in preaching the gospel, and more heavenly consolation in my mind, than I had for some years before, for so long a time together.

After a few months, conversions and additions to the church were less frequent; but union and peace continued in the church and society. The church joined the New Hampshire Baptist Association this year, June, 1796. Among those who were baptized and added to the church about this time, were two brethren who afterward became preachers, Mr. John Merrill, and Mr. David Tuxbury, both of Amesbury. Mr. Merrill, commonly called Capt. Merrill, was forty-five years of age or more when he was baptized; was a man of business, and possessed considerable property. It was a matter of astonishment to his neighbours that he should join the Baptists, and still more that he became a preacher. After trial of his gifts, the church thought proper to give him license. He was a man of good sense, and of a kind and amiable disposition, although he was possessed of some singularities. He was more acquainted with men than books, but was generally thought to be pious, and scriptural in his views of gospel truth. He could speak audibly, and declare what he

knew without intimidation. I do not know that he ever made great sacrifices to labour extensively in the gospel field; but he preached occasionally wherever he was invited. He has finished his course and gone to give an account of his stewardship, and I trust has entered into peace.

Mr. David Tuxbury was about eighteen years of age when he professed faith in CHRIST. Not long after this, I had the impression from his communications, that in some future day his mind would be led to think of preaching. I was intimate with his respectable family, had baptized his mother and several of his sisters; and his father and two of his brothers have been baptized since. I intimated to David's father what might be expected concerning his son; and suggested the propriety of sending him to school, as his opportunities had been limited. But the good man thought there was no danger of any such thing, and put him to a butcher, which business he followed about ten years, and accumulated a handsome interest; then, as he has told me since, his mind was so much exercised on the subject of preaching, that when he went to market with meat he would forget his customers and pass them, and return with his meat unsold.

Mr. Tuxbury relinquished his business, entered Philips Academy, at Exeter, and tarried one year, at his own expense. The

church called him to ordination in the summer of 1811. Dr. Daniel Sharp preached the sermon. I shall have something more to say of him hereafter.

In December, 1796, my beloved brother, William Bachelder, was ordained and settled as pastor of the Baptist church in Berwick, Me. I was called to attend the counsel and requested to preach the ordination sermon. I arranged a sermon in my mind as well as I could, but when the time arrived for me to deliver it, I felt straitened through diffidence. Here were a number of aged brethren in the ministry, Shephard, Hooper, Powers and others, older and more experienced than myself; a very large assembly before me; was in a part of the country where I was a stranger; and a sense of my responsibility altogether bore me down, and led me to cry to the Lord for help. But soon after I commenced, my burden was removed, and I spoke with freedom and much tender feeling. In addressing the different classes of my audience both ministers and people were much affected. Text, 2 Tim. ii. 15; "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

Soon after my return, I received a letter from Brother Bachelder, informing me that his people had expressed a desire to have the sermon printed. This perplexed me;

for I had expected no such thing ; had little or nothing of it written ; did not know that I could recollect it correctly, and doubted whether it was best to consume time and paper with it. After all, I thought it would be a fine thing to see a sermon of mine in print. I went to work, and, by the help of a young collegian, made out a copy, showed it to a minister who heard it delivered, and he pronounced it a good copy. I then committed it to the press, and derived some pecuniary advantage from the sale of it, if nothing else.

I had before this compiled a small hymn book, which passed three editions ; had written several circular letters and some other things, which were printed ; but in preparing this sermon for the press, I was more deeply impressed than ever with a sense of my want of literature. I was now led to pay more attention to English grammar, composition, &c.

I had been told by some Pedobaptists that the want of learning was the cause of my being a Baptist. Being thus stimulated, and having a young gentleman boarding with me part of the time for two years, as a school-master, who had been educated at Harvard University, I now resolved to improve the opportunity to learn Latin and Greek. I procured suitable books and commenced, but never learned much ; and most of what I learned I soon forgot. But

I found that a very few Greek words were sufficient to put some cavillers to silence; one divine said he had not looked into his Greek Testament for five years. Another said he never understood it so as to be able to translate.

Being chosen by the people, I went Representative to the General Court for the years 1799 and 1800. While I was in Court a bill was brought before the House for a general assessment for the support of gospel ministers, which was committed, and I was chosen on the committee. I was opposed to the passing of any law of the kind, but did not know how to prevent it in the House, but by rendering it as odious as possible. When the committee met, I moved to have the clause struck out of the bill which excepted the Quakers, and argued in favour of my motion, that the Quakers had equal privileges with other citizens, and why should they be exempted from assessment any more than others who might be as conscientious as they. The clause was struck out, and the bill presented and read before the House for information, and a time appointed for the second reading. I afterward saw a Quaker, belonging to the House, and told him the object of striking out said clause, and wished him to stimulate his friends to raise all possible opposition to the bill. My object was accomplished, and the bill defeated.

But I found many things unpleasant to me in being connected with the General Court. John Adams was now President of the United States, and Thomas Jefferson was candidate for election the next year. Politics ran high, and parties were violent in their opposition. I became dissatisfied in having so much of my mind and time taken up with these things, and declined being a candidate for another year.

The state of our church and society was harmonious, although there were not many anxious minds among us. But our young converts appeared to walk worthy of their profession. Four years after the church was constituted, it contained about seventy-five members.

While I resided in this town, I frequently preached in Exeter, Stratham, Methuen, and East parish of Haverhill. Since then, respectable churches have been constituted in all these towns, and others not far distant. The church in Exeter was constituted while I was living at Newtown. Dr. H. Smith, I. Stone, J. Bradley, S. Lovell and myself were the ministers present. Thus the cause of truth was prevailing around us; and I had gained means to pay about three hundred dollars toward my farm, with fair prospects of paying the whole. But about January, 1801, a sad change in our circumstances took place. A dark cloud overwhelmed all our outward

prospects. One of my neighbours, with whom we had ever lived on terms of friendship, and who generally attended our meeting, although he had been a member of the old church under parson Ames, a well read man of good abilities, and I ever considered him a systematic, thorough-going old fashioned Arminian, about sixty years of age, several of whose children and grand children are members of the Baptist church, of a still quiet turn of mind, and from whose influence I apprehended no danger, went one Sabbath out of town to hear a Methodist preacher, and was so well pleased that he invited him into town, to preach a sermon in the meeting-house. Many attended, and he engaged to come again and again. At length a town meeting was called to see if the town would grant the use of the meeting-house to the Methodists a part of the time. They settled the question by taking every man's name who were in favour of the Baptists, and the names of those who were in favour of the Methodists; and the use of the meeting-house was granted according to the number of each party, which gave the Methodists about nineteen Sabbaths in the year, which they never failed of improving. Our house was crowded with people, whether I preached or the Methodists. The people were now in great bustle and contention. When meeting closed on Sab-

bath noon, the men would meet on the green before the house, and stand and dispute with great warmth till worship commenced again. This they did Sabbath after Sabbath.

The Methodist preachers came, one after another, to fill up their time for occupying the meeting-house on the Sabbath, and sometimes on other days. I sometimes heard them at their lectures, but never on the Sabbath. I attended a lecture in the meeting-house when the preacher exhibited a copy of our church articles of faith and practice, animadverting on several parts, and condemning them in harsh terms. But I never replied or spoke in any of their meetings. When it was their turn to have the meeting-house, I preached in a private house or barn, but more frequently went out of town. Thus we were in a confused state. The Baptist society, as such, had no claim on the meeting-house; that was the town's property. The Baptist people in town were sufficiently numerous to have voted the house to themselves at any time, but they could not justify themselves in so doing.

The best part of our society lived in other towns, who, after this contention arose, took themselves off. Some of them were our ablest supporters, so that more than half of my support failed. The church generally, whether in town or out,

kept together. Two or three individuals, however, were disaffected and withdrew, and were excluded.

These circumstances led me to conclude that I must dissolve my connection with this people, however painful; for if I tarried I should not only fail of paying for my little farm, but should lose what I had paid. If the society had agreed to unite in building a meeting-house as they were abundantly able, they might have done very well; but under existing circumstances, I concluded it my duty to ask a dismission, and sell my farm, and accept of the invitation of the Baptist church and society in Barnstable.

I sold my farm for about what I gave, parted with my people in great friendship, and removed to Barnstable, in November, 1801. The people in Newtown have continued the same policy. The Baptist people have had the house more than any other society.

About ten months after I left Newtown, I made them a friendly visit, and was told that the Methodists had not preached in town since I left them. The church obtained Elder Samuel Ambrose, who continued with them a year or two. Elder Otis Robinson and others preached to them occasionally. But they had preaching but seldom till Elder Tuxbury was ordained, in 1811; after which he served them as

pastor till 1829, when they were in a very low and afflicted state. By the request of Elder Tuxbury and the church, I spent about ten weeks with them in the fall of 1829, and had a church-meeting and communion season. During Elder Tuxbury's ministry among them for eighteen years, they had made him very little compensation for his services. Some misunderstanding existed among some of the members of the church, and I tried to effect a compromise, but found it a difficult case, and turned their attention to the subject of building a meeting-house; drew them a plan of a house, and a plan for building by shares; called a meeting, when the plans were approved and about half the shares taken up. A committee was chosen to prosecute the business. They compensated me generously for my services, and I left them with ardent desires for their prosperity. They have since completed their meeting-house, which is a very handsome and commodious building. Elder Harris is their pastor, and they are blessed with union, increase and prosperity.

CHAPTER VI.

I VISITED the people in Barnstable, in the month of October, 1801, by the request of their committee, received their proposals and accepted them, and commenced my labours with them the next month. The church was constituted in the year 1772, by Elder Backus and others. It had never been large, and now contained about sixty members. The society was respectable. In the infant state of the church they had the labours of Elder Abner Lewis, who resided with them a few years. They had also the labours of Elder Isaac Case, soon after he commenced in the ministry. About the year 1789, Mr. Enoch Eldridge, from Harwich, was ordained their pastor. He continued with them, greatly beloved and esteemed, till his death, in May, 1801.

This church and society had been greatly embarrassed with taxes for the support of Pedobaptist ministers. Richard Lewis, Esq. now in the 82d year of his age, has been a great benefactor to this church and society, and his wife was a beloved member. He had his horse taken by the constable for a Pedobaptist minister's tax, and

sold at auction. A friend bid off the horse and returned it to him. The constable came with the overplus money and offered it to Mr. Lewis, but he refused it, and has never received it since. This was the last instance of the Pedobaptists making distress on any of the Baptist society for minister's taxes.

Soon after this, Mr. Lewis was chosen one of the Selectmen of the town, which office he held twenty-five years in succession, when he resigned. The society had a small meeting-house in the village of Hyannis, which they enlarged in 1802, and the same year assisted the Pedobaptists in erecting a decent one story building in Oysterville, in the South-west part of the town, seven miles from Hyannis, where the Baptist society have had preaching one Sabbath in a month ever since; other societies have generally occupied it the rest of the time.

I carried with me to this town about three hundred dollars, and had two horses and two chaises. I bought four acres of land near the meeting-house, on which I dug a well and paid for it, but did not intend to build till I was able. But my friends advised, and agreed to assist me, which they did beyond my expectation, so that I built a good house, barn, &c. All the cost was twelve hundred and fifty dollars, when completed, in 1802.

But while we were thus smiled upon in temporal things, we were visited with sickness. We had now four children. We had left our oldest son in Boston, with Mr. Samuel Chamberlin, who took him into his store. Our two daughters and little son were taken sick with the measles; my daughters recovered; but my son, after the measles subsided, was taken with a fever, and died in May, 1802, aged three years and four months.

This was a distressing event. Mrs. Peak was very feeble. For about two weeks I was not absent from the child more than two hours at a time, day or night. On the Sabbath before he died I had a tender time in preaching from "What I do, ye know not now, but ye shall know hereafter." We had been called to part with one son in Windsor, in the year 1789, aged one year and twenty days, to this we had given the name of John; to the last that died, we gave the name of John Stow. Both these little sons had very much gained the affections of their parents; but after this, it seems that my children never appeared to me as before; they appeared like dying children. I hope we did not murmur against the Lord, but we were grieved. After this, my wife was unwell and under the doctor's care, during the time we remained in Barnstable.

From April 1802, till April 1804, a kind of epidemic fever raged in Barnstable and vicinity. In some neighbourhoods half the people were sick, and a great number died. The oldest people did not remember so distressing a sickness. Our society was scattered over the towns of Barnstable and Yarmouth. I was constantly called to visit the sick and dying and the house of mourning. I attended some lectures, but there was no special attention to religion. I was favoured with health till August, 1804.

On the second Sabbath in that month, I preached at Oysterville. In the evening I was taken with a violent pain in my head, back and limbs. The next day was wet and rainy, so that I stayed another night at the house of my good friend, Benjamin Hallet, where every thing was done to give relief that friendship and kindness could dictate. But my distress continued, or rather increased, with sudden changes of heat and cold. Tuesday morning was fair, and I got into the chaise with a young gentleman and sat out for home; but I rode in great misery. I calculated much on stopping at a kind of half-way house, where I had a friend, and rest myself for a few minutes on a bed. But great was my disappointment, to find the house shut up. I laid on the ground and rolled over and over, but got no rest or ease. I got into the chaise and reached home. I took my

pen and wrote a line to the doctor, five miles off, informing him that I had a fever, and wished to see him as quick as possible. I gave it to my son who was then present, and he went immediately. I have a recollection of Dr. Savage being in the room, and saying that he should not have come till morning if I had not wrote the billet. But I was soon deprived of the exercise of my reason, and so remained seventeen days before I began to amend. I was favoured with momentary intervals of reason, in which I realised that I was very sick, but did not feel alarmed. For many days together I did not speak a loud word, and for some weeks was unable to turn myself in bed. They gave me nothing for nourishment for fifteen days but wine and water. I craved clear cold water, but the doctor strictly forbid my having any water. I perfectly remember his coming one afternoon and setting down by my bed; I was thinking of water. I was so weak that I could only whisper. I beckoned, and he leaned toward me. I asked him which way he came? He said, by Baxter's mills. Did you let your horse drink? Yes. Will you be as kind to me as you are to your horse? Tears came in his eyes. After a little pause he said, "my dear friend, you shall have water as soon as it will be safe for you, but you have been so long in a state of starvation and suffering under this

burning fever, that if you were to drink cold water it might throw you into a violent relax, and then all the medicine in the world could not save you." I happened to have reason enough to feel the force of his remarks, and troubled my friends no more about water. But I had strange imaginations. I heard that Mr. Bangs Young was dead, a particular friend, and one of my society, who was taken with the same fever at the same time that I was. At the same time I heard that Mr. Lewis had a child drowned. My mind was greatly agitated through the night. I thought Mr. L. was digging a grave in my room on the back side of my bed; had completed it, and deposited the coffins of Mr. Y. and his own child in the grave. I beckoned to Mrs. G. L. who was watching with me, and whispering, told her what was going on. She appeared surprised. I told her it was a fact; she might look and see. She took the light and walked round the bed. I thought I turned over and pointed her to the coffins in the grave. The good woman did not attempt to undeceive me, but said she had great influence with Mr. L. who was her husband's brother; she would persuade him to remove the dead, fill the grave, and put all in order as before. This satisfied me, and I was composed.

For several days I was unable to move myself in bed; my wife was so sick that

she was unable to get into the room to see me. But about the 17th day my fever came to a crisis, and I began to amend. I distinctly remember how rejoiced I was when I awoke in the night and perceived that my hair was wet with sweat. From this time the fever subsided, but I found myself extremely weak. My flesh was reduced to such degree that my friends beheld me with astonishment. After I was able to sit up in bed I looked in a glass, and was so affected at the sight of myself that I wept like a child. It was about two months from the time I was taken sick before I was able to preach.

When I first attempted to preach after my sickness, I was so broken and confused in my communications, that it was said that I spake like one that had lost all recollection. It was thought by some of my friends, for a while, that I should never regain my former state of mind. But, through infinite goodness, I gained strength of body and mind, and pursued the great work of preaching the word. But my dear wife grew nothing better, but rather worse. She had two of the most eminent physicians in the county, who frankly told me that if I wished my wife to live, I must move her off the Cape. They said she was debilitated with a hectic, and threatened with a pulmonary consumption; the air on the Cape was too bracing for her constitu-

tion, &c. This advice was given in January, 1805. From this time I thought much on the subject of removing my family to some other part of the country; but it was a trying subject. I had been here but a few years; was well situated; unembarrassed; had a good support, a kind people, and an increasing society; treated with attention and respect by other societies; my people, who had been liberal in giving me assistance in building, &c. would be greatly disappointed. But, on the other hand, I had been familiar with sickness and death in my family and congregation, ever since I had lived in the town; the state of religion was very low, and no signs of a revival; only twelve had been added to the church by baptism while I had been with them. I felt myself in a lonely situation, at a great distance from former acquaintance, and but one Baptist minister within forty miles. But I apprehended the climate was unfavourable to the health of myself and family.

In May I went to Boston, and consulted with my good friend and brother, Dr. Baldwin, who informed me that a Baptist church had been constituted in Newburyport, a week or two before, which was in want of a pastor. I soon had an invitation and visited them; and, although they were in an infant state, and very feeble, they were very desirous of my coming to reside

among them. I soon came to a conclusion, sold my house and land for something more than it cost, and removed to Newburyport, in October, 1805. My youngest daughter was taken sick on the road. I left her and her mother at Dr. Samuel Chamberlin's, in Boston, and took my daughter Ploomy with me to Newburyport; received my furniture, which came by water, set it up in my hired house, and soon returned to Boston, where I found my daughter dangerously sick of a typhus fever. Dr. Jackson paid the utmost attention to the child, but it languished and died, aged twelve years and two months.

The death of our dear Pamela was matter of inexpressible grief to the bereaved parents and lonely brother and sister. It was affecting to look upon our lonely daughter, who was but about seventeen months older than her sister Pamela. They were nearly of a size, and their mother had dressed them alike. They resembled each other so nearly, that our intimate neighbours could seldom distinguish them. But now one was taken and the other left. Oh, what a breach was made in our little family! I suppose she brought the disorder from Barnstable. She had a hoarseness and thirst which increased on the journey, but she complained very little till we arrived in Boston. Our friends in the city sympathised with us in the most affection-

ate manner. Dr. Jackson gave in his bill of attendance, amounting to thirty dollars. The funeral was attended from Dr. Baldwin's house. Dr. Stillman prayed. A kind friend had his tomb opened, and made me welcome there to deposit the remains of my child, in the North part of the city, within a few rods of where I am now writing. We tarried over the Sabbath, and desired prayers at Dr. Baldwin's meeting.

We now set out for Newburyport and found our house and goods in safety. But oh! the gloom now cast upon every surrounding object, and all our earthly prospects! Of five beloved children we had two only left. Our son had married Miss Sally, the youngest daughter of Richard Lewis, Esq. of Barnstable, where he lived.

I was now afflicted with hoarseness and a distressing cough for several weeks. Our daughter was taken sick soon after we arrived in Newburyport, and remained under the doctor's care for two or three months. My beloved wife, in her weak state of health, almost sunk under her repeated troubles.

CHAPTER VII.

THE Baptist church, with which I now commenced my ministerial labours, was constituted in May, 1805, consisted of eighteen members, chiefly males, and was called Newbury and Newburyport Baptist Church. They held their meetings in a school-house within the bounds of Newbury, in a district called Joppa. As yet they had no society connected with the church for the support of preaching. They adopted the articles of the First Baptist Church in Boston. They were but a feeble band of loving disciples. I agreed to serve them one year for no other compensation than a weekly contribution, on condition that the meeting should be removed to the centre of Newburyport, whenever a convenient place should be obtained.

A society was soon organized, and application made for the use of the town-house, which was granted. Our congregation now increased four to one. The contribution at Joppa, amounted to about one dollar per week, and at the town-house, to nearly five on an average. But some of our good brethren in Joppa, were incommoded by

the removal of the meeting; but I visited them often and preached at their houses, and they soon became reconciled. The attention of the people increased through the winter, and our prospects were more encouraging.

In the spring, my daughter had recovered her health, and her mother enjoyed better health than she had done for some years. I had strength to preach frequently in different parts of Newbury and Newburyport; and the holy Spirit attended the word to the conviction of some of the young people.

The members of the church were blessed with a spirit of prayer, and our prayer meetings became frequent, and very interesting. I held an inquiring meeting at my house on Monday evenings. In May and June, we had several candidates for baptism and membership, who were received. Brother Thomas Crocker, now deacon of the Baptist church, was among the first who were baptized.

Thus the good work progressed, so that in about one year, the church had doubled in number. Among other converts, who were baptized, was our much esteemed brother, John Butler, now pastor of the Baptist church in North Yarmouth, Me. He was about eighteen years of age, and an apprentice to Mr. William Holliday, shoemaker, and an Episcopalian. John's pa-

rents belonged to a Congregational church in town. I conversed with them respecting John. Mr. Holliday was very cordial, and gave a good account of John. But old Mr. Butler was displeased; he did not doubt John's sincerity, but said he should forbid his being baptized. I told him that he could act his pleasure; but advised him not to forbid it, but try to convince him of his error; for John was old enough to believe and act for himself; and if he forbid it, perhaps it would make no difference respecting his being baptized. He concluded not to forbid, but try to convince him. I baptized John and three of his sisters. The parents became friendly and joined our society. Mr. Holliday joined our meeting, and his wife united with the church. Thus we were made to rejoice, and give thanks to the Lord for the triumph of truth over error.

Mr. Nathan Ames was also added to our church. Both these young men were approbated as preachers, and were afterwards ordained; Mr. Butler at Hanover, Mass., and Mr. Ames at Sutton, N. H.; the latter is now pastor of the Baptist church in Washington, N. H. and both have been, and continue to be useful labourers in the Lord's vineyard.

Mr. Herbut Marshall, shortly after he was baptized and joined the church, was approved as a candidate for the ministry;

was educated at Brown University, and called to ordination by the Baptist church in Woburn. He afterward went to the State of North Carolina, where he died. A son of Deacon Thomas Crocker has been licensed by that church, and is now at Newton Institution, preparing for the work of the ministry. There may be others that I can give no account of.

The town-house was removed, and we obtained the use of a building called the Tabernacle, which we occupied till we were provided with a meeting-house. As early as September, 1806, our society began to consult on the subject of building a meeting-house. At length they had nearly come to the conclusion to build a cheap wooden house, in Lime Street, toward the South part of the town. But at one of the society meetings, a number of respectable merchants of the town came in, and remarked that it was not good policy for this young and flourishing society to build an unsightly wooden building in a remote part of the town; but if the society would agree to build a good brick house in a central part of the town, they would pledge themselves to assist in the undertaking, and could engage for a number of other gentlemen.

This was considered unexpected encouragement. The committee was enlarged by adding some of these gentlemen, and

they were directed to make inquiry and report. At an adjourned meeting they reported a lot in Liberty Street, cost \$2375; a plan of a house to be built of brick, 70 feet by 60; and a plan for building, by dividing the cost into one hundred shares. All of which was approved, and agents were appointed to obtain subscribers. Sixty shares were soon taken up.

The proprietors had a meeting and requested me to obtain subscribers or donations in other towns. I obtained a number of shares in Boston, Charlestown and Haverhill; and that generous benefactor, Mr. N. Brown, of Providence, gave one hundred dollars. At length, when about ninety shares were engaged, the proprietors resolved to proceed, and appointed a building committee. The work was commenced in April, 1807, and was completed in July, 1808, and cost about \$16,200. It was dedicated, and our church took possession.

Now a serious difficulty arose. The pews were appraised so high, in order to meet the cost, that but few of our society were able to purchase. Some of our society had invested nearly all their property, hoping to receive it again when the pews were put to sale, but were now sadly disappointed. The political state of the country was distressing and alarming. The embargo and non-intercourse laws depriv-

ed merchants, sailors and mechanics of employment. The proprietors had obtained an act of incorporation, and stimulated our society to become incorporated. The proprietors had advanced a large amount, and were impatient to have it refunded. At one of their meetings, they came very near getting a vote to change the meeting-house to some other denomination.

One unknown benefactor, through the agency of Mr. Harris, late of Charlestown, gave the church the princely donation of one thousand dollars, and several proprietors in Boston and Charlestown, nearly as much, amounting in all to near two thousand dollars, to be vested in the meeting-house, to be holden in trust for the church; that thereby the church might, by the aid of the society, be able to retain the government of the house. Now the proprietors agreed to take up their shares in pews, and thus bring the business to a close. After this, the pews were sold, and our congregation increased rapidly.

In 1809, we were favoured with tokens of a gracious rain of righteousness, which continued about two years, and increased our church to about eighty members.

For nearly six years after we came to this town, my wife enjoyed much better health; but in June, 1810, her health began to fail. She languished under a hectic fever and pulmonary consumption, and

died March 5, 1811. Some account is given of her in the Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine, vol. iii. p. 52. It is in vain for me to attempt a description of my feelings on this occasion. I endeavoured to commit my case to God, and to console my lonely daughter under the great loss she had sustained in the death of a pious, discreet and affectionate parent.

April, 1811, our society contained two hundred rateable polls. At their annual meeting held this month, they voted me a salary of six hundred dollars, which was done with much harmony and good feeling. This was very acceptable to me; for I had, by sickness and otherwise, spent what money I brought from Barnstable, about seven hundred dollars, and was some involved; but now my prospects were encouraging. The church was in peace and prosperity, receiving accessions monthly. But "we should suspect some danger nigh, where we possess delight." Little did any of us think of a destructive conflagration, so nigh, that should demolish our meeting-house, consume my dwelling, and spread desolation and ruin all around us!

I returned from Boston on the 30th of May, late at night, and found, as I expected, my young brother, John Butler, and sister Nancy Payn, at my house, waiting to be joined in marriage. Next morning our friends took their leave of us. The

young woman had lived in my family about two years, highly esteemed ; but now my daughter was all the company I had.

My daughter went to spend the day with one of our good sisters, and I walked round the town to visit the sick. About sunset we met at our habitation, as we had agreed. After family worship, being weary, I retired a few minutes before nine o'clock. My daughter was reading in an adjoining chamber. I had scarcely composed myself, when we were alarmed with the cry of fire !

Having no documents at hand, I shall, according to the best of my recollection, give some account of this destructive fire. It commenced in the loft of an unoccupied stable, in a street called Merchants Row, in the care of a sheriff, near the market, at a considerable distance from the house I occupied, in Middle Street, owned by Capt. John Denney.

The first discovery of the fire was a few minutes after nine o'clock, on the evening of the 31st of May, 1811. At that time there were probably more than one hundred people walking in the streets. Instantly a large column of fire burst through the roof of the wooden stable, and ascended to an astonishing height. The engine companies were directly at their posts. My daughter and I locked our door and left the house. She went to a near neighbour's, and after telling her that the fire

would not reach our house, it being at a great distance, and a large range of brick buildings intervened, I went and joined the ranks and handed buckets. Instead of the engines prevailing to extinguish the fire, it prevailed on them. Such was the heat that the ranks were broken and retreated for a new stand. I then returned to my house, by a different route, and found my daughter with the key in the door; but such was her agitation that she was not able to unlock it. As we entered the house, I told her not to meddle with any thing, but keep watch; for I was confident that the fire would be extinguished before it reached us. She made no reply, but went deliberately to work and packed up her glass, crockery, clothing, &c. ready to be removed. At length, I perceived the fire entered the further end of our street. I now began to prepare to remove my goods to a place of safety, packed my library, and took down my clock and two bedsteads. Our friends came to our assistance and conveyed them to a room we had hired for evening meetings, in Capt. David Farnham's house, in School Street, some by wheelbarrows, but mostly by hand. Before we had removed all our goods, the fire blazed upon the roof of our house, and we were obliged to leave. Our best chamber, containing some of our most valuable

furniture, clothing, &c. we were obliged to leave untouched.

We left the house about three o'clock, A. M. and went to the house where my goods were deposited. Here I saw what affected me more than any thing I had seen during the doleful night. My dear daughter Ploomy had manifested great fortitude and discretion till now. When I arrived I found the dear child sitting on some part of the furniture, giving vent to her grief in a flood of tears, groans, sighs and sobs! This unmanned me. I was too much affected to attempt to comfort her. I left the house and walked toward the fire. I went into Mr. J. Dunyon's house, ascended to the top of the roof, where I had a fair view of the whole field of fire. Here I saw the roof of our meeting-house tumbling in, leaving the brick walls principally standing. But what an awful sight! Bright flames ascending to a great height; explosions of powder, spirits, &c.; vast columns of cinders and flames ascending in quick succession to the clouds; a dense smoke ascending from the burning of tar, rosin, pitch, &c. formed thick clouds which spread over the town in awful majesty. The roaring of the flames accompanied with wind; the sound of the trumpets and voices of the firemen; the crash of buildings; the cry of the sufferers for help to secure their goods, and the increasing pro-

gress of the conflagration, altogether was the most appalling scene I ever witnessed. I now joined the ranks, and continued to hand buckets till sunrise, within sight of where my house stood the evening before, but now demolished. Before the fire abated, companies of engine men had arrived from Salem, Beverly and Haverhill.

There had been very little rain for several weeks, and every thing combustible was uncommonly dry. Soon after the fire commenced, the wind blew fresh from the West. The destructive element continued its desolating ravages more than half the distance from Market Square to Federal Street, and from Middle Street to Merrimack River, containing about two and a half acres, comprising a large portion of the most ancient, wealthy and commercial part of the town. Thirteen wharves with their stores, and about ninety dwelling houses were consumed. The whole number of buildings destroyed was two hundred and forty. The estimated loss about one million of dollars.

The fire continued to rage and extend till day-light, when the wind shifted to the East, and brought on a sea turn or fog, when it was easily got under and extinguished. Much property was consumed in the streets for want of means to convey it away. Goods to a great amount were deposited in our meeting-house as a place

of safety, it being brick, and at a distance from where the fire commenced; but all was destroyed, either in the house or in the streets.

By the polite invitation of Rev. John Giles and his people, I preached in his meeting-house the next Sabbath after the fire; in the morning, from Isaiah v. 24, "Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have cast away the law of the Lord of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel." I do not recollect the text employed in the afternoon, but the object was to comfort the afflicted who put their trust in the Lord.

Before the next Sabbath, we made application for the use of the Court-house, as a place of worship, and obtained it. We soon began to consult on the subject of obtaining a meeting-house. Our society were not able to build. They had been great losers by the fire, beside what property they had in the meeting-house. Of one hundred families that were burnt out, eleven belonged to our society. The loss of Capt. Joseph O'Brien was estimated at thirty thousand dollars. He had been our greatest benefactor, but now his property was reduced to a trifle. The most of our society consisted of young people who had

not much property. The town appointed agents to travel in different directions, to solicit donations for the relief of the sufferers. The donations were very liberal, amounting in all to more than one hundred thousand dollars. This noble charity was honourably distributed among the sufferers, according to an equitable rule adopted by the town. Some who had property and means of obtaining a living, received very little, though their loss might have been great. Others received nothing, whatever their loss might have been. Some of the aged and infirm, who had lost all their property, received perhaps, seventy-five per cent. As to the distribution of the donations, I think there was not much dissatisfaction expressed by the sufferers, unless it was in private, and without cause. But all this did not aid our society, in obtaining another meeting-house. We had a church-meeting, and tried to humble ourselves before the Lord, and pray for divine wisdom and direction. At length the church unanimously adopted a plan of operation, provided that our society should concur. The society met, and concurred with the plan proposed by the church, and I received an appointment as follows :

To the Humane and Benevolent of all distinctions; the following statements and solicitations are humbly submitted by the Baptist Church and Society of Newbury and Newburyport.

IT IS HEREBY CERTIFIED, That we have suffered largely by the late unexampled conflagration. Eleven families were turned into the streets, and their habitations consumed. Twenty-one stores and shops, exclusive of barns and other buildings were also destroyed, which were owned or occupied by members of this Society. But we most regret the loss of our once delightful place of worship, which fell a sacrifice to the devouring flames. It was a neat brick building, seventy feet by sixty; had been completed only three years; and cost more than sixteen thousand dollars. It was well filled with the young and rising part of the community, more than eighty of whom are members of the church. Our loss is small compared with the whole town; but when compared with any other society, it is large in proportion to our wealth. The loss of the society and of individuals, as estimated by a committee appointed by the town, amounts to \$46,085. We are unable, in our present circumstances, to rebuild our meeting-house; yet we feel constrained to make the attempt, if we may be encouraged by the aid of a generous public.

Therefore, we have appointed our beloved pastor, the Rev. JOHN PEAK, our agent to solicit and receive such donations as the wealthy and benevolent may be disposed to bestow, for the purpose of erecting a place of worship for our accommodation. The smallest sum will be gratefully received, and faithfully applied.

Done in Church-meeting, June 10, 1811.

HENRY MERRILL, }
 JESSE DORMAN, } *Deacons.*

NATHAN AMES, *Asst. Clerk.*

In Society Meeting, June 11, 1811. Read and approved. Signed by order of and in behalf of the Society,
 JOSEPH O'BRIEN.

The society agreed to pay my expenses, and pay me four hundred dollars at the end of the year; and I consented to relinquish the salary of six hundred dollars, voted me in April preceding. The expenses of preaching in my absence to be paid by contributions. I purchased a horse and chaise, and took my departure on the 12th of June, and made but short stops, till I arrived in West Greenwich, R. I. Here the Groton Union Baptist Association was in session, and a large number of ministers and private Christians were here assembled; but I knew none of them, except Brother William Bentley, who was all attention to me, and conducted me to a kind family where I was well entertained. Here I became acquainted with our beloved brother, Bela Jacobs, now pastor of a church in Cambridge. I preached before the association, and told my mournful tale. They called for a contribution instantly, which was generous; and afterwards I received considerable sums from several of the churches composing the association. Having the company of brethren, I went to Norwich, Con. where I spoke to the people in their meeting-house. I spent the next Sabbath in Lebanon, and preached. Mr. N. Dodge laid my case before the people, and obtained a contribution.

On Monday, I rode to Hartford, and went to the house of Deacon Bolles. As

soon as he ascertained who I was, having heard the pitiful story by his daughter, the wife of Dr. L. Bolles, he sat down and gave vent to tears of sympathy. This unexpected feeling in a stranger, wrought powerfully on me; so that a few minutes passed, before we had much conversation. But I found him a most heavenly-minded Christian, and his household an emblem of Paradise.

The Baptist Church in Hartford were in trouble. Their pastor had a short time before resigned his connection with the church, and they were without a pastor. They attended promptly to the subject of my mission. I went to Suffield, and preached twice, Mr. Caleb Green proposed to collect something shortly, and forward it to me, which I received.

I returned to Hartford, and heard Mr. Lorenzo Dow preach in the Baptist meeting-house. I felt grieved for the people, that they should hear such a perversion of the gospel. The next evening I spoke to the people, and then pursued my way to New Haven. Here I found kind, affectionate Christians, but unable to advance more than a hospitable entertainment.

Arrived on Saturday, at Elder Asabel Morse's, in Stratfield, and learned that he was gone to Huntington, where he was to preach the next day; rode there next morning, nine miles, with one of the breth-

ren; preached part of the day; joined the communion with them; had a happy season, and received their bounty.

On Monday I pursued my way as far as Rye, where I staid the night, and received the good man's dollar. I am sorry I have forgotten his name.

On Tuesday, 2d day of July, I arrived in the city of New York. I went to the house of Elder John Williams, pastor of the Baptist church in Olive Street, and presented a letter from Dr. Baldwin. He received me kindly, and wished me to preach that evening. I put up with Deacon John Withington. He and his lady paid me every attention, and more than I could wish.

I had the statements, &c. which I received from the church and society, printed in handbills, and presented some of them to the brethren; but was told that they could not encourage me that I should obtain any thing in New York, for they were poor, and the churches were all in debt, &c. But the ministers and deacons were to have a meeting in a few days, when they would take my case under consideration. I continued with them about a week, and preached every evening, and three times in different meeting-houses, on the Sabbath.

On the 4th of July, I called on Mr. Parkinson, gave him a letter from Dr.

Baldwin, and presented him a handbill. He read with a sad countenance, and said he was sorry for me, and my people, but it was not possible for his people to help us. The church was in great difficulty. They had been at great expense in lawsuits, and perhaps must be at more expense. But he wished me to preach for him the next Sabbath and break bread to the church. This I consented to do in the afternoon of the next Sabbath.

This, Independent day, I dined with Brother Smith, in Broadway, in company with Brother Benjamin Hallet, of Barnstable, Brother Daniel Sharp, of Newark, and other good brethren. After this, I visited some of Mr. Parkinson's people, and presented my handbill. One gave me ten dollars, others five, &c.

When the time came for the ministers and deacons to meet, I took care to be with them at the close of their meeting, and made inquiry respecting my case. One of the ministers remarked, they had taken my application under serious consideration, and considered it an important case, and were very sorry that it was not in their power to render my people some assistance. But their churches were poor, their meeting-houses involved in debt, and they had been hard run with applications for assistance for poor churches in the back country, and had concluded to attempt no more

collections for others, till they had got their churches freed from their embarrassments. I told them, I did not doubt but they made a very honest plea; but I thought I should obtain a generous collection among them. I was not begging for myself, but for the poor saints. I had been preaching constantly since I had been in the city, and expected to be generously rewarded. I calculated to leave the city next day, and to return in seven or eight weeks, when I expected to make application to their generosity with success. Beggars should be humble; yet they must be bold and persevering, if they would expect to obtain. Well, said they, we do not blame you, get something if you can.

I went in company with Brother Daniel Sharp, to his house in Newark, N. J. Preached in his meeting-house, a beautiful edifice lately erected; for the accomplishment of which, Brother Sharp had travelled and collected among his friends in the South; but his people were in trouble, in consequence of the but too successful efforts of certain disorganizing preachers, in diffusing a kind of Antinomian spirit, causing a division among the people; which was very discouraging to the pastor. I told him, that if he found he must leave that people, I had no doubt but the Third Baptist Church in Boston, would gladly re-

ceive him as their pastor, as Rev. Caleb Blood was about to leave, for Portland.

At the request of that people, he came to Boston, about the close of the year. From that time to the present, his labours have been owned and blessed to a numerous church and congregation. From Newark I went to Brunswick, and was kindly entertained by Judge Runyon and his lady, excellent disciples. I preached in their meeting-house, received their bounty, and proceeded on without much delay till I arrived at Holmsburgh. Here I was kindly received by Deacon Thomas Holmes; visited Dr. Samuel Jones, pastor of the Baptist church in lower Dublin, where Deacon Holmes belonged; received encouragement of something when I returned; left my horse and chaise with the good deacon, who conveyed me to the city of Philadelphia, nine miles. I called on Dr. Rogers, who received me with Christian kindness, and told me that something would be collected for me, but I must call on Dr. Stoughton. He attended to my case with his usual affability and kindness. He said I might expect a generous contribution; he would assist me what he could, but he was so situated that he should not be able to pay that particular attention to the subject that he should be pleased to, as his people had commenced building a meeting-house in Sansum Street, which would cost

forty thousand dollars, and he had to beg the money to carry on the work. But Dr. Rogers was very well acquainted in the city, had many friends, and had no engagements to prevent his giving me all the assistance I needed; and I could not have a better man for the business, and he would, he had no doubt, cheerfully lend me his aid. All which I found strictly true. The good old Dr. R. advertised my object in visiting the city, had the same particularly stated in four Baptist meeting-houses, and took me by the arm, from street to street, and from house to house, for about two weeks. I preached about every evening, and three times on the Sabbath in different meeting-houses.

I left the city in the stage, and went to Wilmington, where I was kindly received by Elder Daniel Dodge, a native of Woodstock, Vt. We soon became acquainted. His people had recently been favoured with a very precious work of grace. After I had delivered a sermon in his meeting-house, he stated my object, and informed the people that I would call on some of the citizens the next day and receive their subscriptions. After which, he invited those who had lately been received into the church to pass round and speak with me at the foot of the pulpit stairs. They directly formed a procession through the aisles of the house and passed me in one di-

rection, giving me an opportunity of taking all by the hand and wishing them God speed on their heavenly course. I observed to them that it would be a great wonder if they all obtained the crown of victory, and exhorted them to diligence, watchfulness and prayer. I do not recollect the number, perhaps forty-five, more or less, and nearly all in the bloom of youth. It was a delightful scene. The subscriptions amounted to \$130 44, which was great for that society.

From Wilmington I took passage in a vessel to Newcastle; then by stage to Frenchtown; thence by water to Baltimore, and called on Elder Lewis Richards, pastor of the First Church, as soon as I arrived, and preached for him that evening. Brother Richards informed the people of my business, and wished them to be prepared for a liberal contribution next Sabbath. Next day I went to see Brother John Healley, pastor of the Second Baptist Church, and preached to his people. He gave similar notice for a contribution next Sabbath. I then called on some of the wealthy and liberal, and received their individual subscriptions. An aged brother, Wilson, President of Baltimore bank, took my subscription book and after asking some questions, very cheerfully put down his name for fifty dollars. I spent the forenoon of the Sabbath with the Second

Church, and the afternoon with the First Church. Amount of subscriptions and contributions, \$178 26. The pastors of these churches, and the members, appeared to be all made up of kindness.

I returned to Philadelphia and finished my collections, amounting to the noble sum of \$770. I left this delightful city, and noble citizens, where I had spent about four weeks and preached thirty times; gained an acquaintance with many eminent Christians and several excellent ministers; received such attention and respect as I had not been accustomed to, beside their unexampled liberality to my afflicted people. With tears of gratitude I gave them the parting hand, wishing them the blessings of Heaven.

I took passage in a stage to Holmesburgh. The good Deacon Holmes had recruited my horse finely, made me welcome to the keeping, and went with me to Lower Dublin, where I preached that evening in Dr. Jones' pulpit. The contribution amounted to thirty-four dollars. Here I parted with my good brother, Deacon Gourly, who had kept my company thus far from Philadelphia.

As I passed through New Jersey, I visited the Baptist church in Scotch-Plains; called on Brother Brown, their pastor, an excellent young minister, but labouring under some discouragements. I preached

to his people, received their donations, and came to Brother Sharp's, in Newark; tarried and preached to the people and received their liberality. Next day I rode to the city of New York, August 9. As kind Providence had ordered, the ministers and deacons of several churches were met for consultation. When I entered their room they took me by the hand like loving brethren, and rejoiced in my safe return. Brethren Williams, Maclay and Wycoff, began to solicit me to preach to their people that evening, the next Lord's day, &c. I told them I could not engage. "But, when are you going to leave the city?" "To-morrow morning, if I cannot obtain leave to beg." They consented that I might beg, and Brother Maclay would walk with me the next day; and I consented to preach. We called on a number of friends in the course of the day, who contributed very cheerfully; none refused on whom we called; three ministers gave five dollars each. Deacon John Withington walked with me one day. We called on Col. Rudgar, who cheerfully gave twenty dollars. I continued with them about five days, and collected \$235 50.

I left the city on the 17th of August. My good Brother Withington and his lady were pleased to favour me with their company as far as the town of Rye, where they introduced me to their Christian friends;

to whom I preached and received their free-will offerings. Returned through New Haven, Westfield, Wollingford, Middletown and Seabrook.

From Seabrook I passed over the ferry to Lyme, where I spent the Sabbath with Elder Asa Wilcocks, and preached to the people of his charge, a respectable church and congregation in a prosperous state. Thence I rode to Stonington, and was kindly received by Elder Elisha Chesebrough; preached to his kind people, who afterwards sent their donation to Newburyport. I arrived on the Island of Newport, August 29; preached in three meeting-houses on the Sabbath, and received their liberal donations.

While I staid in Newport, I was kindly entertained at the house of my beloved brother, Elder John Gibson, who, with his wife, were all kindness and affection. He told me that when he heard me preach at the widow Eldridge's, in Harwich, Cape Cod, in July, 1802, he was an Arminian Methodist preacher, and occupied a meeting-house near the widow Eldridge's; and that the greater part of his people attended the meeting. I took for my text, Titus iii. 5; "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." The object of my discourse was

to show the gospel method of salvation, negatively and positively. 1st. Why are we not saved by works of righteousness which we have done? Because, first, our works are not perfect, as the law requires. If we offend in one point, we are guilty in all. We have all sinned and are under the curse of the law. Therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified. If righteousness could be obtained by the law, then CHRIST died in vain. But can we not be saved by works of righteousness in obedience to the gospel? What is gospel obedience? Holy love, unfeigned faith, godly sorrow for sin, unreserved dedication of ourselves to the service of GOD. We cannot conceive of any thing short of this, being acceptable works of righteousness in obedience to the gospel; but such works are scriptural evidences of being in a state of salvation, as being the genuine fruits and effects of a work of grace upon the heart, and therefore cannot be the cause of our salvation. Therefore as saith the text, Not by works of righteousness which we have done.

We come now positively to show that salvation is obtained by, or according to the mercy of GOD, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.

The mercy of God is manifested in the unspeakable gift of the SON of GOD to suffer and die for us; to bear our sins in his

own body on the tree. The mercy of God is manifested in the work of the holy Spirit, in accomplishing the great work of moral purification by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the holy Ghost; a glorious work of grace which was never accomplished by any other agent. I closed my illustrations in an experimental address to different classes of the audience, with freedom of thought and much tenderness of spirit. Elder Abner Lewis prayed, and the meeting was dismissed.

Mr. Gibson observed to the congregation as they were dismissed, that they had heard solemn truths from the stranger. He said he should not have spoken, in all respects, as the preacher had done; but did not wish to enter into a dispute; but would advise the people to gather the good and cast the bad away. He told me that he was displeased when I named the text, for he expected I would attack his Arminian system; and he felt during the sermon as if his foundation was shaken, and was apprehensive his people would feel so too; for, if this doctrine be true, his was not true. Therefore he thought proper to give the caution to "gather the good and cast the bad away," thinking that he could reinstate himself in his former views when he should retire. But the more he read and meditated, the more he was convinced that

his former views of doctrine were unscriptural. At length he came to the conclusion that salvation is of grace, and not of works, neither in whole or in part; and when his Arminian plan was given up, he gave up infant sprinkling with it. He left the Methodist connection; went to Warren, R. I. and was baptized by Elder Luther Baker; was approbated and set apart as a regular minister of CHRIST, in our denomination, and continued to be respected as a consistent free-grace Baptist minister, for twenty-seven years, till the day of his death, about the first of the year, 1831.

Having finished my collections in Newport, I hastened to Providence, and found the liberal minded citizens of this ancient Baptist town ready and willing to contribute of their abundance to the relief of my afflicted people. I preached on the Sabbath to the first and second churches. They had public contributions in both churches, which, together with their generous private subscriptions, amounted to one hundred and forty dollars.

I now hastened to Boston, to attend the Boston Baptist Association, at their formation. Here I met my dear daughter Ploomy, in good health. Thanks to God for preserving Mercy. We enjoyed a precious season in the Association, having very encouraging intelligence from the churches. It did my heart good to hear

the preaching and witness the union of effort for the advancement of the kingdom of CHRIST.

In my journey I had discovered a want of union among churches and ministers, which led me to appreciate, more highly than ever before, the love, peace and harmony which has ever marked the progress of the churches in this region.

From this happy meeting, I went in company with my daughter and others to Newburyport; deposited my money in the bank for safe keeping; spent one Sabbath with my people; took my daughter with me and went to Portland, in company with my beloved brother, Elder Elisha Williams, and daughter; left my daughter in Portland, and pursued my journey to Brunswick, where we were kindly received. Brother Williams and myself preached on the Sabbath, by the request of Elder Benjamin Titcom, the beloved pastor of the church. Leaving this place, I rode to Hallowell, on Kennebeck-river, preached to the people, and went to Redfield, where I met the Bowdoinham Association. I was invited to preach, and had leave to state the circumstances of my afflicted people, and distribute my handbills, which received attention.

I then returned to North Yarmouth, where I met with the Cumberland Association, and had opportunity to make my

communications in behalf of my people. Many felt much for the sufferers who were unable to grant pecuniary aid. Elder Caleb Blood delivered an interesting sermon. With him I had been long acquainted, and highly esteemed him as an able and faithful minister of CHRIST. But when Elder Thomas Green addressed the throne of grace in humble prayer, my very soul was melted within me. I wept with holy joy; it seemed as though Heaven had come down to earth, and that the house was full of the glory of the Lord. I had not seen him for about fifteen years, and it affected me to see that he was growing old.

I spent a Sabbath in Portland with Brother Blood and his people, took my daughter and returned to Newburyport, glad to be released from the fatigues and anxieties of journeying from place to place.

CHAPTER VIII.

I RECEIVED liberal donations from a number of the Eastern churches, but I am unable to state the amount. I delivered the money that I had collected, to the Treasurer of the church and society, and took his receipt, to the amount of two thousand dollars, exclusive of all expenses.

About the last of October I hired a house in Olive Street, collected what furniture we had saved from the ravages of the fire, and commenced house-keeping with my daughter.

Now we began to consult on the subject of building a meeting-house. The first thing was to agree on a site for the building. The old lot, with all the ruins thereon, belonged to the first proprietors. Apprehending there would be a difference of opinion as to what part of the town the house should be built, a meeting of the church was first called; a committee of three was appointed to circulate subscription papers; one of which was directed to obtain subscribers for building in the centre of the town, one for the South part, and one for the North part. Adjourned

for one week ; then met to hear the report of the committee ; when it appeared, that for building in the centre of the town no subscription could be obtained ; for building at the South-end, one man subscribed fifteen dollars ; for building at the North part of the town, near Olive Street, five hundred dollars had been subscribed.

We then agreed to request a society meeting, and submit the location to the decision of the meeting when church and society should convene together, as the money had been collected by their united direction ; and as the society included the church, and was so incorporated, such a meeting would be legal. As a prudential step, one of our deacons had, by private contract, secured an eligible lot near Olive Street. At the society meeting sixty voters out of seventy were in favour of said lot. Thus the matter was settled. Some were dissatisfied, and we had serious difficulties to encounter. But, on calculating the travel of all who belonged to the meeting, it appeared that the lot selected was very near central.

A plan for building the meeting-house fifty feet by forty-two, with gallery, was approved ; a building committee appointed, and the work was commenced in April, 1812. But sometime before this, we had a difficulty of another kind. It had been insinuated that the proprietors of the first

house would claim the money I had obtained to indemnify their loss. At length a respectable committee called on me, and presented an order, authorized by the proprietors, directing me to pay to A. B. C. committee, &c. the monies that I had received by donations, that the same might be divided among the proprietors, according to their several losses, &c. I remarked to the committee that I had not been authorized by the proprietors to solicit any donations for them, and have received none, and had none for them. And gave them an answer to their order in writing, of like import.

I consulted with our benefactors in other towns on this difficult subject. Some advised us to offer them the money, on condition that the proprietors would rebuild the house. Others advised that we have nothing to do with the proprietors. But, to satisfy all parties as far as possible, the church chose a committee, which attended a proprietor's meeting, and proposed to pay over to the proprietors the funds we had on hand, providing they would rebuild the house. This proposal was rejected. The church owned about two thousand dollars worth of pews in the first meeting-house, for which nothing was received. The land with the basement story, bricks, &c. were all sold for the benefit of the original proprietors. Some years after this, one of

the proprietors commenced a civil process against the society, but lost his case, and thus the matter ended. I have been thus particular, wishing to give satisfaction to all concerned.

After the building was commenced, I called on Dr. Bolles' society, in Salem, and received their very noble subscription, amounting to \$440 17. I continued to collect in Newburyport and neighbouring towns, as I had opportunity, till the house was completed, about the last of July, having been about fourteen weeks in building. The cost of the house and land was something less than four thousand dollars.

Without parade the house was dedicated to the service of God, with fervent supplications for the divine blessing on the church, congregation, the word which shall be dispensed there, and on our kind benefactors.

The society have never sold the pews, but assessed six hundred dollars annual tax on them, and offered them for rent. The society were now in debt for the house something less than four hundred dollars, which was hired, and security given on the meeting-house.

It may be said that this house was built in troublous times. In addition to the difficulties which have been mentioned, a great national calamity now took place. Within a few days from the time that our

meeting-house was finished, war was declared between our nation and Great Britain.

As a church we were troubled on another account. Several members of the church had separated from us, being dissatisfied with the location of the meeting-house. By the request of the church, an ecclesiastical counsel met with us from the churches in Haverhill, Newtown, Danvers, Beverly and Salem. After hearing all that the offended members had to offer in defence of their separation, the counsel unanimously decided that the proceedings of the church and society, in regard to the meeting-house, were regular and consistent; and with tenderness, and in the most affectionate manner, exhorted the disaffected members to return to their place. And their labours were not in vain. Three of the members present acknowledged their fault at the time and were restored, and others soon after. The church was now blessed with peace and harmony, and our prospects were in some respects encouraging. Prayer meetings revived, a considerable number of young people brought to the knowledge of the truth, and were received by baptism. I now felt myself under great obligation to praise and adore the God of all grace for the success which had attended the efforts that had been made to re-establish the church and congregation in a place of worship. I had no other

thought but to spend the remainder of my days with this people, who had been principally collected under my poor labours, and were very dear to me.

The people of other societies were more cordial than they had been. Some of them contributed generously toward our meeting-house. Under these circumstances I was impressed with a sense of my responsibility, and desired to devote myself unreservedly to the service of my Lord and Master.

For more than one year after the death of my dear wife, the thought of a second marriage had occupied my mind very little. I could think of no one person more than another with whom I could feel willing to be associated in this relation, till I was informed of the death of my respected friend, Mr. Samuel Chamberlin, of Boston. This put me upon thought of the widow. I had been some acquainted with Mr. and Mrs. Chamberlin. My son had lived in the family as an assistant in the store. One of my daughters was sick and died in their house. We had been favoured with a good understanding between the two families, but it was a subject I could talk but little of to any one. I had one friend whom I had been in the habit of consulting in difficult cases. Dr. Baldwin was at this time in a lonely state, having been called to part with his loving wife five

or six months before. I ventured to inquire of him concerning the widow Chamberlin, who was a member of his church. He spoke favourably of the widow. After this I had occasion to go frequently to Boston to collect money, get furniture for our meeting-house, &c. In short, the negotiation was so conducted that none of my good friends in Newburyport had any knowledge or suspicion of the concern till the town clerk got the intelligence and made it public. We were married August 25, 1812. My daughter was married the next month, to Mr. Abijah Wheeler. Having obtained a comfortable dwelling near our meeting-house, I was comfortably settled once more in domestic life.

In many respects our prospects were encouraging; but the war raged, which caused great distress to the inhabitants of Newburyport. The total stagnation of every branch of business caused a large portion of our active young men to fly to other parts of the country to seek employment.

Our meeting-house was soon filled with attentive hearers, and frequent additions were made to the church. But under existing circumstances, my people were able to do but very little for my support. During the hard struggle we passed through, I had expended all I had when I came to Newburyport, about seven hundred dollars. Still I felt disposed to continue my

feeble labours with this afflicted people, and trust Divine Providence.

The destitute situation of several towns in the county of Rockingham, N. H. led me to comply with the request of the people to visit and dispense the word of life to them, and to administer the ordinances. In some of these places a divine blessing attended the word; I baptized a considerable number at different times in Exeter, who united with the Baptist church in that town. I assisted in constituting a church in Deerfield, and gathered a Baptist society in Chester, both which have prospered. These little excursions into the country, in which I was absent four or five days at a time, interrupted my studies. This was matter of regret, as I had been absent a considerable part of the time since the destructive fire, and had made considerable addition to my little stock of books.

But my attention was now taken up with new publications. A very warm dispute existed among Congregational ministers. Formerly they had all professed to be united, Calvinists, Hopkintians, Arminians and Socenians, forming one grand convention, comprising all the Congregational ministers in the State of Massachusetts. But at length their discordant sentiments appeared in public view, particularly relating to the doctrine of the Trinity. One party denominated themselves Unitarians; the

other, Orthodox. Sometimes Unitarians styled themselves Rational Christians; intimating that it was peculiar to them to believe in one God, and that they only were rational Christians. Some of these writers laboured to prove that our Lord JESUS CHRIST was but a mere man, and even doubted his pre-existence, and the vicarious satisfaction of his death upon the cross. Another class of these writers would admit of the pre-existence of our Lord, and that he existed before all worlds, even in the beginning; and that by him the worlds were made; that he did partake of the Divine nature, and is a Divine person; and so is entitled to the worship of saints and angels; but yet is not equal with the Father; but had a beginning; has derived his existence from his Father, and is therefore limited and dependent; yet is to be worshiped! These writers too claim the appellation of Unitarians. But how can this be? They worship at least two divine beings; one self-existent and eternal; the other has but a derived existence, and is dependent. Whether they are entitled to the exclusive appellation of rational Christians, let those who possess the power of reason judge.

When the contention commenced there were but few Calvinistic Orthodox Congregational churches in Boston or vicinity. But a division took place, and Orthodox churches have been constituted in Boston,

and through this and the neighbouring States, to a great extent. Thus evangelical truth has been promoted.

This dispute had very little effect on any of our churches, no one of them changed their ground, to my knowledge, in all the Eastern States. Two or three preachers were seduced by error, and disowned by the churches.

During the war the people of Newburyport were frequently alarmed by the enemy's vessels hovering on our shores. Government vessels were stationed in our harbour to guard the town. The labouring part of the community were reduced to great straits for want of profitable employment.

The attention of the people of our society to the great concerns of eternity, which appeared encouraging a year ago, still continued. A considerable number were added to the church, which was cheering to our hearts.

After the fire, the church was considerably diminished by removals, deaths and other ways. But this year it increased to its former number or more. Notwithstanding the unpleasant circumstances attending the war, we had many mercies which demanded our humble gratitude. We were favoured with health, and had peace and harmony among ourselves. When we took a retrospective view of the scenes of deso-

lation we had passed through, and compared the present with the past, we were constrained to exclaim with adoring gratitude, "God hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad." While a dark cloud was spread over the political horizon of our nation, there were some favourable events which raised cheering hopes that this distressing war might speedily be brought to a favourable termination.

The unexpected success of our valiant little navy in capturing the enemy's armed vessels on the high seas, astonished the world! And the victories won upon the Lakes were hailed with joyful surprise! A large army of the enemy on the West of Champlain, in the State of New York, were compelled to retreat into Canada before our valiant militia; and another army was compelled to leave Baltimore in haste, embark on board their shipping and hurry away, leaving many upon the ground. These events tended to unite and encourage the defenders of our national rights.

But whatever may be the event of national contests, we are sure that our King shall reign and prosper. His kingdom shall spread from sea to sea, and fill the earth.

A young man by the name of Benjamin Lane, a native of Newburyport, and an apprentice to our esteemed brother, Robert Robinson, who removed to Lynn after

the fire, professed a gracious change and united with the Baptist church in Salem, of which Dr. Bolles was pastor. He afterwards removed his connection and was received a member of the Baptist church in Newburyport, and soon after licensed as a candidate for the ministry. He spent some time in the school under the care of Dr. Chaplin, in Danvers; afterwards married a daughter of Elder Elliot, of Mason, and went to the West. He possessed some promising gifts for usefulness. But I have heard nothing of him for several years.

Mrs. Peak went with me to Barnstable, to see my children, where we found something of a revival among the people; but they were much afflicted by the war. For their resources, their dependence was almost wholly on fishing and coasting; and the enemy had possession of the Islands of Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard; had landed at Bass river, five miles from Hyanis, and some other places on the Cape; and demanded large sums of money of the inhabitants; so that, beside suffering great privations by the war, they were in constant fear. At length, January, 1814, the heart-stirring news arrived of Jackson's great victory at New Orleans; and soon after the glad tidings of peace. Some difference of opinion had existed among our fellow citizens in regard to the declaration of war, and some attached blame to our ru-

lers. But after the news of peace was confirmed, all parties were disposed to cultivate friendship, forgetting former dissensions. All were upon the alert to engage in different kinds of business. Some too hastily engaged in speculations which turned out to their disadvantage. Failures in trade were common.

I had a demand against a gentleman in the county of Barnstable for nearly five hundred dollars, who was considered to be wealthy; and I was daily expecting to receive a payment, when I received his letter informing me that his creditors had broke upon him and taken possession of all his property; and he was sorry to say there was nothing left for me to the amount of five dollars. After some years I gave up his notes, upon receiving less than the interest due on the principal. This, with other losses of a similar nature, reduced me to penury. I had nothing left but household furniture and books. My horse and carriage would not amount to more than my debts. My people were less able to give me a support than they were the year before. As there was no encouragement for mechanics in town, our young men continued to migrate to different parts of the country for employment; but the infirm and dependent mostly remained with us. Under these circumstances, our prospects in a pecuniary point of view, were discour-

aging. Mr. Abijah Wheeler left the town, with his family, in October, 1814, and went to Troy, N. Y. This was trying to our feelings beyond description, having lived in near neighbourhood ever since they were married. They were kind and attentive to us indeed; they were almost every thing we could wish in children; and dear little Julia Ann, now fifteen months old, had very much engrossed our affections. He was in the grocery line, and was thought to be doing as well as others with a small capital; but he concluded he could do business to better profit in Troy, and has prospered very well. He had been quite a benefactor to our society. Besides aiding in a pecuniary way, he served as clerk of the society, and led the singing in public worship to great satisfaction. When they came to take their leave of us I had not fortitude enough to conceal my tender feelings. I endeavoured to commit them to the protection of our heavenly Father; imploring his blessing upon them.

Now another trying case must be recorded. I have mentioned that the society, when the meeting-house was finished, hired from three to four hundred dollars to settle the bills. The money was called for. In November, 1815, one of the society's committee came to me, saying that they had received a letter from a lawyer, requesting the payment of the money due

from the society, to Mr. M., and appeared to be alarmed, apprehending that their private property might be attached to secure the society's debts. I endeavoured to quiet his fears, and went to see Mr. M. I asked him whether he was in want of money? He very pleasantly replied, "no more than common, but did not like his security; it was unpleasant to hold a mortgage on a meeting-house; if he had good men's notes and the interest paid regularly, he would let it lie." I requested him to suspend the matter for a few days, and I would inform him whether any thing was likely to be done. He readily consented. A meeting was called; but no possible plan could be devised to raise the money, unless the pastor would undertake another journey and beg it. This was an unpleasant task in the cold season; and I knew not where to go for help but to the same people who had given liberally for the same object already. It was thought that the money might be advanced by individuals within the bounds of Newbury and Newburyport, without injuring themselves, families or creditors, if they were willing. But no method could be thought of to make them willing.

Rev. Edmund Reice, the pastor of one of the Baptist churches in Baltimore, had some time before this been with us about ten days, and preached about as many ser-

mons to our great satisfaction, while waiting for a passage to St. Johns by water. He, learning the circumstances of the debt on our meeting-house, advised and urged me to come to Baltimore, for he had no doubt but that I should get the money. But that was five hundred miles distant; and yet I could not expect to raise the sum short of that. I left it with the people to obtain preaching in my absence and sat out on the fifth of December, 1815.

CHAPTER IX.

WENT to Barnstable and spent one Sabbath, and collected about thirty dollars. The next Sabbath I spent with Brother J. Grafton, in Newton; received a trifle. On Monday evening I arrived in Worcester, spent the night with my good brother J. Going. The next night I put up at a tavern in Westown, but was much bewildered in the darkness of the evening before I found a shelter. The next day I arrived in Belchertown, and put up with Brother Peas, pastor of the Baptist church in that place, and preached in the evening. Next day, Thursday, I arrived in Goshen, preached at a tavern kept by a Brother Williams, who, with his wife, belonged to the Baptist church in that town, of which Elder Hubbard was pastor, and was at the meeting. I was happy in the short acquaintance I formed with him and his people. He has since that time preached on Martha's Vineyard and at Middlebury, but is now with his beloved people in Goshen.

Here I shall record a marvellous thing. After I had delivered my sermon, in which

I enjoyed freedom, Brother Hubbard spoke and prayed. At the close of the meeting sister Williams, the lady of the house, addressed the people in the following manner: "My friends and neighbours, permit me to say to you, that my dream has come to pass. Some weeks since I dreamed that the pastor of the church which lately lost their meeting-house by the great fire in Newburyport, came here and preached a sermon in our house, greatly to my edification and comfort. I consider it nothing but a dream, and perhaps I should not have mentioned it at this time, if I had not told my dream before to some persons now present. I might have forgotten it but for the comfort I enjoyed in my dream, which continued many days," &c.

I know not how the good woman came to dream, as it appears she did, for her story was confirmed by those present who had heard it before. I had seen Brother Hubbard some years before, but knew not where he was, nor any thing of the people in Goshen, till I was informed by Brother Peas, in Belchertown, the day before. It is said by Elihu, Job xxxiii. 14, "God speaketh once, yea, twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night," &c. Alas there are many who appear not to perceive that God is speaking to them in his holy word, even when they are literally awake. But it is said of

such, "They are like the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear." Psalm lviii. 4.

Friday, Dec. 22, left these kind friends and rode to Windsor, called on Brother Asa Niles, who resided in that town, and preached to a small society. I addressed the people in the evening in a school-house. Next day rode to Cheshire, where I preached to the people three times on the Sabbath. They had a decent meeting-house, but no minister. They cheerfully contributed to the object of my mission. On Monday, the 25th, rode to Sand-lake; on Tuesday noon arrived at Mr. Abijah Wheeler's, in Watervliet or West Troy, and found my children and grand children in good health. I spent about two weeks very pleasantly in this region; preached in Troy, Lansingburg and Albany, and received about fifty dollars. On the 9th of January preached to the Baptist church in Albany. My daughter and her husband were present. They returned to Watervliet that evening.

Monday, January 10, set out from Albany for the city of New York, with a horse and chaise. The snow was about one foot deep, and the weather extremely cold. I was careful to guard myself against the cold, but the frost touched my face in three places, so as to peel after a few days, and was very tender during the cold season. When I arrived at the high lands there fell

a snow about two feet deep, so that there was no passing for one day. After being detained two nights at a tavern, I moved slowly on, but found it difficult with my wheels. As I proceeded the travelling became better, so that I reached Peekskill on Saturday, and kept Sabbath with a Presbyterian minister, and preached three times in his pulpit. He was a young man of good accomplishments and apparent piety. His people made a small collection.

In Poughkeepsie I preached and received a trifle. I was detained two days in Mount Pleasant by a great rain; preached and received a small donation. The next Sabbath I preached in the city of New York, and stayed there about three days; passed through the State of New Jersey and arrived at Deacon Thomas Holmes', in Holmesburg, on Friday morning. Here I was introduced to Elder Jacob Griggs, pastor of the church in Lower Dublin, an excellent brother. He advised me to go as far as the State of Virginia, where he had preached several years and was well acquainted. He gave me a letter of introduction to Elder Robert B. Semple, of Brewington. Here I left my horse with good Deacon Holmes, took stage and arrived in the city of Philadelphia on Saturday evening.

On Sabbath forenoon heard Dr. H. Holcome preach on the infinite fullness of the

Saviour. By his request I preached in the afternoon from John, i. 16. "And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." The doctor took a seat in a pew. As soon as I had closed my sermon, he rose and complimented the preacher and sermon in a style most extravagant, such as I had never heard before, and would never wish to hear. By the invitation of Deacon Sheelds I spent the night with him, he gave me ten dollars. I took the stage and rode to Baltimore. Here I tarried two weeks. Brother E. Reice engaged me to supply his pulpit, and was absent two Lord's-days. After he returned I had some conversation with him on the subject of my mission. He said he was afraid to mention the case to his people, for they had just commenced building a large meeting-house which would cost about forty thousand dollars; and they had the greater part of it to collect of individuals. About this time Elder John Brice arrived in the city, from Richmond, Va. who very affectionately invited me to go to Virginia, and encouraged me to hope for success.

About the first of February, I rode to Washington, where I tarried several days and received thirty dollars. I tarried in Alexandria over the Sabbath. In Fredericksburg I was overtaken by Elder Brice. We took the stage in company early in the morning, and arrived at Brother Brice's

house in the evening, seventy miles. Here I laboured ten days in travelling from one part to another of this extensive city; collected one hundred and thirty-three dollars, and preached about ten times.

From Richmond I went to Hanover, Brewington, Salem and Providence, and collected about seventy-six dollars. The hospitality of the Virginian Baptists exceeded any thing I had experienced; I rode about one hundred miles without expense; and their attention to my poor preaching was beyond what I had ever met with. The churches that I visited were very large. In the church in Richmond, I was told, were fifteen hundred members; eleven hundred of them coloured people. In Brewington I attended a communion season in company with Brother R. Semple, pastor, and two other ministers. When we arrived at the poor unsightly meeting-house, in the midst of a grove of pitch pines, there were several hundreds of gentlemen and ladies walking among the trees. As we entered the house I perceived that every seat was occupied except the pulpit; the seats were moveable benches; a pale fence ran through the house to separate the white from the coloured people. The people in the grove soon stepped into their coaches and rode away. After eleven o'clock we commenced worship. When I had preached, to which the people gave

great attention, the pastor addressed the people on the subject of the holy communion in a very appropriate, instructive and solemn manner. I did not perceive that any of the assembly left their seats, but all appeared to partake of the holy ordinance, about four hundred. Thus ended the public services of the day. In four weeks they would expect their pastor to visit them again in like manner, for he had the pastoral care of four churches; so that ordinarily each church would hear twelve or thirteen sermons in a year, and pay the minister no salary.

On Monday I attended a funeral service with Brother Semple, which appeared singular to me. They are not in the habit of sending for the pastor at the time of burying the dead, but wait till he comes in his turn to their church. They either fill, or half fill the grave. If but half filled, when the pastor arrives, they form a procession and move to the grave, attend prayer, &c. We had about five miles to ride. When we arrived a very large assembly had collected, and Mr. Semple was informed that the grave was filled. Then, said he, we have nothing to do but to attend worship; and we both preached without intermission.

I should have mentioned that the communion was administered in the most humble style, the cups and plates were crocke-

ry. And in their families they study neatness, plainness and economy. I had opportunity of forming a short personal acquaintance with a large number of the Baptist Christians in Virginia, and entertain a very high opinion of their devotion, exemplary piety and consistency of character. I believe that the greater part of our brethren would cheerfully free their slaves, if they knew how it could be done with safety.

My highly esteemed friend and brother, Robert B. Semple, left me with James Webb, Esq., States Attorney General, and a beloved brother in the Baptist church of King and Queen county. He was near seventy years of age. He took me into his carriage, with his lady, and conveyed me to Upper King and Queen, fifteen miles, where I preached at twelve o'clock, 5th of March, to a large assembly, who were deeply impressed under the word. We had a pleasant ride, and some interesting conversation. He lamented the evils of slavery in a religious, moral and civil point of view; but did not know how the desired reform could be effected. He said they were in great want of good schools, colleges and academies; and especially they needed more ministers, who were men of talents, learning and piety, who would devote themselves to their calling. They needed information and a disposition, he

said, to adopt some proper method of giving ministers a regular support, &c.

After he pointed out to me where a number of Baptist brethren lived, I asked him where the Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Methodists, &c. lived? No where here, said he, there is no meeting kept up within thirty miles of this place, but by the Baptists. I will show you, said he, an Episcopalian church directly. We soon came in sight of the ruins of an old brick meeting-house; the walls of which were fallen to within a few feet of the ground; in the midst of it stood a wild poplar tree, forty feet high. He gave a brief history of their downfall. Before the reformation, five years ago, said he, there were a number of Methodist meetings kept up in this region, but in that revival they fell in with the Baptists.

I preached next day in Providence meeting house. The next day I arrived and dispensed the word to an assembly in Col. Todd's tavern, in Caroline county. The next day, Saturday, Brother Todd sent his servant with a carriage to convey me to Fredericksburgh. Here I spent the Sabbath and received the kind attention of Brother Alexander Walker and lady, with whom I had tarried and preached a few days before I went to Richmond. I cherish an affectionate remembrance of these kind friends. The amount received was \$32.

Returned to Alexandria. Here I saw about twenty of our Newburyport friends who had come to this city since the conflagration. The collection amounted to thirty-one dollars thirty-six cents. From this city I went to Georgetown in a horse boat.

I had preached in the city of Washington, in Brother O. B. Brown's pulpit, by the request of Brother S. H. Cone, who was at that time chaplain to Congress, and he had appointed to preach that evening. On my return I arrived just in season to attend Brother Cone's weekly lecture. He urged me to preach, saying he had taken cold and was not well, &c. I told him that a pulpit sweat might do him good. He preached much to my satisfaction.

I received of the friends in Washington thirty dollars. Now I had several hundred dollars of Southern paper on which there would be ten or twelve per cent. discount if I carried it to Massachusetts; therefore I consulted Capt. John Peabody, of Georgetown, formerly of Newburyport, and engaged him to lay it out in flour, get it insured and consign it to Mr. Henry Merrill, of Newburyport. On which I gained something besides saving the per centage, freight and insurance.

When I arrived in Baltimore, Brother Reice wished me to preach to his people the next Sabbath. I took lodgings with

my beloved Brother Lewis Richards, the senior pastor of the first church, and a part of the time with Deacon Carnehan; and kinder friends I never knew than I found in Baltimore.

While I was in the city, Dr. Stoughton and several other ministering brethren arrived. By invitation all the Baptist ministers in the city took breakfast with our respected Brother Wilson. While we were at the table some one spoke of my making a collection in the city. Brother Reice, to intrench himself, or please his friends, said to me, "If you attempt to make a collection I will oppose you." I asked the brethren, what I ought to do with this little man; he had been to Newburyport, became acquainted with my people, and understood that our meeting-house was under a mortgage and the people were unable to redeem it. He advised, and even urged me to come to Baltimore, and said he had no doubt but that I would receive enough to redeem the meeting-house. By his advice I have come and you hear what he says. This caused a smile and nothing more was said. Brother Reice left the city to preach to some destitute people, and I staid two weeks, and collected one hundred and thirty-six dollars seventy-four cents; left my kind friends in a steam-boat; stopped at Wilmington, March 28, and receiv-

ed a collection which had been made, amounting to thirty eight dollars twenty-five cents.

The next Lord's-day I was in Lower Dublin. The first Lord's-day in April I preached in New York, and the next Sabbath I preached near Strafford Springs, in Connecticut, and on the 17th of April I arrived at my habitation in Newburyport, and found my family in good health. Thanks be to our heavenly Benefactor for his preserving goodness.

CHAPTER X.

WITH the avails of my tour to the South, after deducting my expenses and compensation for my time, and all the arrearages due to me for past services, I took up the mortgage on the meeting-house and wholly cleared the society from debt. I then told the society, that as they had assessed six hundred dollars on the pews, which were nearly all occupied, if they would engage to pay me four hundred dollars per year, I would have no further claim on them.

This I expected they would do, although I cannot say that they made any formal engagement to comply with the proposition. Thus the subject rested. When the collector received any money for pew rent, he punctually paid it to me on receipt.

I continued to baptize till the summer of 1813, when I became so debilitated in my limbs that I thought it prudent to desist from the practice, but not from the principle. It is such a bright emblem of the resurrection of the dead, and especially of the death, burial and resurrection of our blessed Lord and Saviour, that it has uni-

formly been a very precious ordinance to me, whatever others may think of it.

Before my house was burned, I had a catalogue of all whom I had baptized, with the names of the people and the towns. But now I cannot state the number particularly; I think however, that I have baptized more than one thousand, in the States of Vermont, New Hampshire and Massachusetts. Some, undoubtedly, became apostates, but I hope a greater number have proved themselves faithful and successful ministers of the gospel of CHRIST.

After my return from Virginia, in 1816, I had but a small income; had I not received assistance from my country friends, where I made short tours, dispensing the word, I could not have staid with my people so long as I did. Great credit is due to the collector and treasurer, Mr. J. C., who was indefatigable in his endeavours to collect the dues on the pews; but he was able to collect but a part.

In January, 1818, by my request, the committee met at my house, and I disclosed to them the state of my affairs and requested them to favour me with their best advice. They were kind and sympathising, and agreed to deliberate on the subject and give me the result. I saw the chairman of the committee a few days after, who told me that they had consulted on the subject, and concluded that the case was so difficult

that they could give me no advice, but referred the case to my judgment.

Now I soon came to the painful conclusion that I must leave this loving and beloved people, not knowing where I should find another home. However I made no conversation on the subject. I concluded to ride and visit the churches. First I went to Barnstable, where my son lived. When I arrived, in the month of June, the good people received me with all the cordiality they ever had done, and appeared to regret that I ever left them. Mr. Simeon Coombs was their pastor at this time, but intended to be released as soon as he could consistently. In short, I was satisfied that if the people knew that I could leave Newburyport, there would be a door opened in Barnstable for my poor labours; but I gave no such intimation. On my return home, I consulted my good old friend, Dr. Baldwin, who advised me to go to Barnstable if they would receive me, saying that I had persevered at Newburyport longer than he had thought I would, considering the troubles I had met with. Dr. J. Chaplin, then about moving from Danvers to Waterville, and other good ministering brethren, gave me the same advice. I arrived home on Saturday, and on Monday morning I informed the committee that I expected to be released from my pastoral charge in three months from that time.

Then by letter I informed my son at Barnstable, what had transpired. I soon had a letter from Elder Coombs, urging me to come to Barnstable, if I could leave Newburyport, and another from the clerk of the church and society, requesting me to commence my labours with them at the expiration of the year for which they had engaged Mr. Coombs, &c.

A church meeting was called to attend to my request, which I stated, and offered my reasons. I told them that during the thirteen years I had served them, I had rode thirty-five hundred miles in their service, and collected \$3500, including \$900 collected in their society, which I had paid over to their treasurer, without making the society any expense. And during my residence with them I had expended \$1000 for the support of my family, in addition to all that I had received of the people. But now I had no means of supporting myself and family any longer in the town. For these reasons, and not for want of regard for the people, I was compelled to ask a dismissal from my pastoral charge.

The senior deacon addressed the church, and said they had heard the pastor's request, and his statements as reasons for the same, which he believed very correct; that he was sorry to part with him, and he did not know of any one in the church or society that wished him to leave. Yet he

thought the request was reasonable, and they would do wrong not to grant it. By vote the request was granted. This was a time of great tenderness with the pastor and people, a season not soon to be forgotten. With humble prayer we commended each other to the grace of God, and parted in Christian friendship.

In August, 1818, I removed my family to Barnstable, and was kindly received. In October, Elder Coombs resigned his pastoral office, and I was elected pastor of the church without debate or discension. Thus was I situated with a people with whom I was well acquainted and of whose friendship and affection I could entertain no doubt.

During the ministry of Mr. Barnabus Bates, for about five or six years, both the church and society were much enlarged. The church now consisted of about two hundred and sixty members, and the society contained two hundred and twenty rateable polls. The society extended over a district sixteen miles in length from Bass river on the East, to Katuet on the West, and from the North, to the South side of the Cape, interspersed with other societies. Individual members of the church resided in most of the towns in the county of Barnstable, which contained all the towns on the Cape below Plymouth and Wareham, fourteen in number.

At this time there was but one other Baptist church in the county, which was in Harwich, was the first planted and contained about an equal number of members with the church in Barnstable. Rev. James Barnaby was now their pastor, under whose able and indefatigable labours they had greatly increased and prospered. He left them in 1819, much to their grief. He preached awhile in New Bedford, in Salisbury, and in Deerfield; but is now happily settled as pastor of the Baptist church in Danvers. His labours have been owned and blessed to souls in the several places where he has dispensed the word of life.

In September I received the distressing news of the death of my beloved daughter Ploomy Wheeler. I had previously received a letter informing me of her being very sick of a fever, and was waiting with painful anxiety for further intelligence. The letter containing the sorrowful tidings was handed me by Brother Benjamin Hallett, of Oysterville, at his house on Sabbath noon. As I read, I exclaimed, the child is dead! What child? said Brother H. I gave him the letter and retired to give vent to the overflowings of grief. I had to preach in the afternoon. I endeavoured to compose myself and improve the solemn event for the benefit of the young people in the congregation, many of whom had

been acquainted with my daughter in childhood. I did not change the subject I had contemplated, but accommodated it to the occasion. The text was Psalm lxxii. 12. "For He shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper."

My daughter was a member of the Baptist church in Troy, under the pastoral care of Brother Summers, who sent me a consoling letter, giving an account of the happy and peaceful state of mind she possessed in her sickness, and the near approach of death. She left an affectionate husband, and three children to mourn their loss, and a large circle of Christian friends who lamented her death as one greatly beloved. "It is the Lord, let him do as seemeth him good."

I had a large field for ministerial labour open before me, and in some measure felt my need of Divine assistance both in body and mind, to enable me to perform the important duties of the responsible station. The centre of the church was in Hyannis, a pleasant little village in the South-east part of the town, where stands the meeting-house, and near it I purchased a house and garden, and secured the payment by mortgage.

The church was in a very languid state when I came to them, some of the members walked disorderly, and for a time we

had some difficulty in maintaining proper discipline. But a happy revival of religion commenced in the spring of 1819. The good work first appeared in Rev. Enoch Pratt's society, in the North-west part of the town, about nine miles from Hyannis. Mr. Pratt is a pious Orthodox Pedobaptist minister. He sent a messenger requesting me to come and assist him. I went, and preached every day from Monday till Saturday. The holy Spirit wrought powerfully upon the minds of the people; many were deeply affected under a conviction of their guilty, lost state; a deep solemnity reigned through the crowded assemblies, in stillness. As the fruits of this good work I suppose about fifty were added to that church who professed to have passed from death to life, and about forty to another Orthodox church in the South part of the town.

At length the heavenly influence was felt in Hyannis, which put new life into the church. A goodly number of young people were awakened and brought to hope in the Saviour. Elder Coombs, who still lived in the town, was very useful in the reformation. He baptized twenty who joined our church, two of whom were his children, Stephen and Hannah Coombs. Stephen is now a useful pastor of a Baptist church in New Chester, N. H. He obtained his education at Mr. Farnsworth's

Academy, in New Hampton. Besides those who joined with us, Mr. Coombs baptized ten or twelve who joined the Chick-woket Orthodox church. These had been sprinkled in infancy. Mr. Sturtevant, the pastor of said church, immersed about as many who had not been sprinkled. The method in which he proceeded was new to many who witnessed it. He led the candidates into the water, wet his hand and laid it on their faces, then pronounced the solemn words, "in the name," &c.; then he put them under water, leaving them to get out as they could. One instance was that of a young female; as she rose to the surface of the water, the administrator being gone ashore, appeared to feel herself lost and made off into deep water, and for a moment was thought to be in danger of being drowned. A good old lady in the crowd, in her fright exclaimed, "Where are all the old Baptists, will they let that young woman drown?" Let no one think this an exaggerated tale, it is sober fact, as scores now living in Barnstable can testify. I was sitting in my chaise at a short distance and saw the whole transaction. But it happened in this case as it has with other individuals who have tried to please every body. Neither Baptists nor Pedobaptists were pleased with this novel attempt at accommodation. Some of the parents of the young people thus baptized were offended,

and some of the candidates were dissatisfied. The administrator might be satisfied with his conduct in this instance, but I doubt whether any others could be found who would, in all respects, justify such a course of procedure. I have heard Mr. Sturtevant preach the gospel with satisfaction, but when he undertook to support unwritten tradition he was led astray.

At a church-meeting Elder Coombs brought up the query whether the church could not consistently invite those to occasional communion who had been baptized, although they had joined a Pedobaptist church? I felt an objection to the proposal, but at the same time felt a delicacy in making strong opposition to it, and as I did not think the motion would prevail, I said but little. After some debate, the motion was put, and carried by a small majority, in such general terms as "to invite all to our communion who had been baptized on profession of faith, and were in good standing in any evangelical church." This was opening the door so wide, that at one communion season, the members of four denominations, besides our own, joined. A number of the members of the church withdrew on account of the innovation. The difficulty existed about one year, till we had obtained the opinion of the Warren Association, disapproving the practice, when a vote was passed disannulling the

former vote. The church was now restored to their former order, and travelled on in harmony.

Three or four months after the commencement of the precious revival in which Elder Coombs was much engaged, the good man was taken sick of a fever of which he died in October, 1819, aged 59 years. He professed religion in his youth, commenced in the ministry in early life, and maintained an exemplary course of conduct to the close of his earthly pilgrimage. His amiable disposition, fervent piety, good judgment, ready invention and long experience, appeared in some measure to supply the deficiency of a classical education. It may be said of him as was said of the prophet Daniel, "He was of an excellent spirit and greatly beloved." He left his pious widow and thirteen children to mourn their loss. His remains were conveyed to our meeting-house where I delivered a funeral discourse to a large and deeply affected assembly, from 2 Timothy, iv. 7; "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

The church in Harwich was destitute of a pastor for about two years, after Mr. Barnaby left them, and they frequently called on me for assistance. I was often requested to preach in Pocasset, Falmouth, Wackwoyt, Brewster, Orleans, Chatham, &c. There were not far from seven hundred

professed Baptists belonging to the two churches of Barnstable and Harwich, scattered up and down the Cape; and for a number of years there was no regular Baptist minister in the county, but myself. If I could have truly rejoiced in all my labour, I might have had joy enough.

Elder David Curtis preached in Harwich about three or four years, and his labours were attended with a blessing to the people in Harwich and towns adjoining, but he went to New Bedford in 1824, and the same year our young brethren Stephen Coombs and Otis Wing, were ordained, and preached for a short time in the county; Brother Coombs in Harwich, and Brother Wing in Brewster, Orleans and Chatham, and was instrumental of raising a church in each of these towns. But these young men left the region and entered seminaries; Brother Wing at South Reading, and is now the successful pastor of the Second Baptist Church in Haverhill; Brother Nymphus Handy was ordained and went to Halifax, where he still resides. Brother Handy and Brother Coombs were members of the church in Barnstable.

CHAPTER XI.

A VERY extensive and powerful revival of religion commenced in Hyannis, in 1823, which continued about two years. In the month of April we were favoured with some tokens for good. The members of the church were excited to set apart a day to meet for special prayer for a gracious rain of righteousness. Much deep feeling for the salvation of precious souls was manifested in humble confessions of backslidings, fervent supplications and affectionate exhortations. Soon after this interesting meeting, some young people were awakened to a deep sense of their guilty, lost and perishing state, and were brought to rejoice in hope. A few days after the good work commenced, and before any had professed to be brought into gospel liberty, I set out a journey into the State of New York, which I had previously appointed. When I returned, a meeting of the young converts was attended and about twenty gave the reasons of their hope. Fourteen were baptized by Elder Curtis, at the first administration, and afterwards five, six and seven at a time, till about forty were re-

ceived; and the next year a number more were added. But the good work was not limited to our society or denomination. The work extended into the lower towns as far as Chatham and Orleans. In some of these towns the work might have commenced before it did with us. The Orthodox Congregationalists and Methodists shared largely in the revival. As the fruit of this gracious rain, six Baptist churches were constituted in the county within about two years. These were in Falmouth village, Wockwoyt, Yarmouth, Brewster, Orleans and Chatham. Four of these have erected good meeting-houses, namely, Yarmouth, Brewster, Orleans and Chatham. I had preached frequently in all these places before there were any Baptist churches constituted, and was well acquainted with the people. I shall not give an account of the rise of all these churches, but will give a sketch of one of them.

In one of my tours down the Cape, I was favoured with the company of our late beloved brother, Elder Isaac Kimball. We called on Rev. Mr. Johnson, of Orleans. I had some acquaintance with him, and considered him a pious, experimental preacher. I had been told that a precious revival had recently visited his people, in which the minister and a considerable number of the church had professed to have experienced a gracious change. He received us kindly,

and requested one of us to preach his sacramental lecture the next day, to which we agreed. The next day I left Brother Kimball to pursue his journey down the Cape, and I returned from Eastham to preach the lecture. I preached to a large, attentive assembly. Text, "I know my sheep, and am known of mine." As I passed out of the house, I was met by a gentleman who invited me to go home with him who said his name was Rider, a member of the Second Baptist Church in Boston, and the only Baptist in Orleans. I went; his neighbours assembled, and I preached from "It is good for us to be here." I noticed several circumstances attending the transfiguration of CHRIST, which rendered it good for the disciples to be present. 1st. It was a prayer-meeting. 2d. CHRIST led in their devotions. 3d. He appeared in his glory. 4th. Moses and Elias appeared with them. 5th. The prayer-meeting became a conference-meeting. 6th. The subject; they talked with him of the decease which he was shortly to accomplish at Jerusalem. 7th. A cloud overshadowed them. 8th. A voice out of the cloud, &c. There were a number of the leading influential members of the church present. They exhorted, prayed and sung, and said it was good for them to be there. Next day Mr. Johnson said, he and I must have an exchange.

About this time, as I understood, the church had appointed a committee to draw up articles of faith to be adopted, for although the church had been standing more than an hundred years, they had never adopted any articles of faith. I was told by two of the committee that they proceeded very well till they came to the article of Baptism. Here they were in difficulty. They could find no proof for infant sprinkling. After deliberating on the subject for some time, they reported to the church that two of them had become Baptists and wished to be released from serving on the committee; but the church thought it better to add two more; and in a short time they, all five, and their wives, became Baptists. A church was formed in July, 1826 or 1827; and in one year from the time of its constitution it had increased from eight members to thirty-two, under the ministry of Mr. Otis Wing. In 1828, they erected themselves a very neat and commodious house of worship. I had the pleasure of preaching in it one Sabbath before it was finished.

The churches in Falmouth and Yarmouth were constituted of members dismissed from the church in Barnstable. That in Falmouth has never had a regular pastor. Elder Simeon Crowell is the pastor of the church in Yarmouth. He was ordained to the work of the ministry by

the church in Barnstable, and continued a member there, till he and the other members were dismissed for the purpose of constituting the church to which he ministers. It is small, and I conclude that very little is done for his support.

I have now to record a sorrowful event which none can fully realise but those who have experienced the same. My son, Samuel Adams, was taken sick while attending as crier of the court in Barnstable, May 7, 1824, and brought to my house in Hyannis, six miles from his residence, on Point Gammon, where he had the care of the light-house. At first his physician pronounced his disease to be the lung fever, afterward the typhus fever. He continued to languish for forty days, when he expired June 16, 1824, aged forty-one years and three months. For several days his friends were not apprehensive that his sickness would prove mortal; but about ten days before he died, his case was considered dangerous. Now his anxious wife and afflicted father, with his children and other sympathising friends, were much affected with the distressing scene. He was not considered to be pious, but had many friends. He was favoured with the exercise of his intellectual powers, and appeared to realise his danger. He gave directions and made what arrangements he could for his family. He manifested deep anxie-

ty for his immortal interest. His pious companion was more anxious for his precious soul than for herself or children. The anxiety I felt for my dear and only child from day to day, when by him and when retired, I still have fresh in my memory, but I labour in vain to describe it. Frequently did we bow around his bed in humble supplications, while he, his parents, his wife and children, all were bathed in tears. He spake of his wicked life and hard and unyielding heart with much tenderness, and with sobs and tears would ask his weeping father whether he thought such a great sinner could be forgiven.

Seven days before he died, early in the morning, as I approached his bed-side, he spoke with cheerfulness, and said, "Father, rejoice with me. God is merciful. He has appeared for me. I have had a happy night in thinking on his love and mercy. I can give myself into his hands, and can give you all up, parents, wife and children. I can leave you all with the Lord," &c. Thus he continued in much such a state of mind till his reason failed, a little before his decease. I stood by him to the last, and felt a degree of calm submission. But the next day in my retirement, I had a fit of weeping come over me, which lasted for an hour or more. I was grieved that I was written childless, and when I thought of the condescending goodness of our heavenly Father,

that we are permitted to indulge some hope for my son, the tears of gratitude would flow afresh. I think I indulged to excess, but it was my weakness, and how much selfishness there was in my exercises I cannot say; but I hope the bereavement has been overruled for my good. He was interred from the meeting-house. Three ministers attended. Mr. Bailey preached an instructive good sermon, and more parade was exhibited on the occasion than I desired.

My son left his widow, three sons and two daughters. His oldest son was twenty, his second eighteen, and the youngest six years of age. The ages of his daughters were thirteen and eleven years.

When my daughter died, in 1818, she left two daughters and one son, aged about five, three and one years. Of eight grand children, five have been baptized on profession of faith since the death of their parents. My son's widow departed this life in April, 1829, greatly lamented, as she had lived respected.

By agreement the society removed their old meeting-house and erected another on the same site, 60 feet by 40, with a tower, in which they have since hung a bell. The house was completed in December, 1825, and cost \$4000. From this period the church and society have increased and prospered. Elder Enoch Eldridge, their first

pastor, was called by this church to ordination. The other ministers whom they have set apart to the sacred office, are Elders Shubael Lovell, Barnabas Bates, Simeon Crowell, Nymphus Handy, and Stephen Coombs. E. Eldredge Chase and Jas. Marchant were licensed by the same church. Elder Edward N. Harris is now their pastor, and his labours are greatly blest.

I had now been in the ministry more than forty years, and had been obliged to walk with crutches about five years. The labour devolving upon me was greater than I could well perform. I knew the relation between me and the people must soon terminate, and I thought the motion had better come from me than from them. As it was a time of peace and harmony in the church and society, I thought it a favourable time to make the request as it respected the people and myself. Therefore, after giving the church and society three months notice, I obtained an honourable dismissal, and separated on friendly terms, April, 1828.

Under the patronage of the Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Society, I preached in the county three months. Here were eight churches and but one pastor, viz. Elder S. Crowell, of Yarmouth. I preached, attended church-meetings and administered the Lord's supper in Falmouth, Wockwoyt, Harwich, Brewster and Orleans, and preached in many other places.

I was in debt and my house under mortgage, which must probably be sold for less than its value if I did not redeem it. I let the case be known to my friends in Hyanis, who gave me about fifty dollars. I then came into Boston and vicinity, supplied Brother Leverett's pulpit five weeks, and visited other churches in the region; and, by the liberality of my friends, was enabled to take up the mortgage on my place, but could not keep it and pay all my debts. I stated the case to some of my Christian brethren, who advised me to sell my house, remove to South Reading, and take a boarding house for the accommodation of students of the Baptist academy about to be established in that town, and supply occasionally the destitute churches in the neighbourhood. As I did not think of engaging to preach regularly with any people, I thought it best to comply with this advice, and accordingly sold my place for \$500, paid my debts, and removed to South Reading in October, 1828.

While I resided in Reading, I preached to the destitute during the summer, but in cold weather was unable to travel abroad.

In March, 1830, I made a settlement with my boarders, and found that my income fell short of my expenses \$150, in seventeen months. I gave up my large boarding-house, sold my horse and chaise, a part of my furniture and library, paid

my debts and removed to Boston, the last of March; obtained a good house in Federal Street; tried to get boarders, but could not succeed. After making trial three months, I gave up the boarding-house, the rent of which was about \$300 per year; removed into a cheap tenement and gave up the idea of getting a living by taking boarders.

The African Baptist Church, in this city, of which Elder Thomas Paul had been pastor, was now destitute of a preacher. By their request I commenced in April and continued to labour with them nine months, and was assisted by the Massachusetts Baptist Convention. This church had been in a prosperous state, but was now reduced to only twenty-three members in the church, and not so well united as was desirable. The whole congregation on the Sabbath contained, perhaps, forty or fifty people, old and young.

They were wonderfully pleased to have me preach to them. My first object was to obtain a union among the members, which was accomplished after considerable effort, by the kind assistance of my beloved brother, Elder William Collier.

Now the prospect was more encouraging. Backsliders returned, confessed their wanderings, and were restored. Some were received by letter, others were baptized by Brother Collier, and added to the church.

There were a few instances of hopeful conversion, and others anxious; so that for a time they were in a prosperous, happy state. When I left them, in January, 1831, the number in the church was forty-nine, and the congregation consisted of about two hundred. They had obtained a man of colour, by the name of Washington Christian, who they expected would become their pastor, so that I was happily released.

I went to South Reading and preached three weeks, in February and March. Then I laboured one week in Canton and three in Sharon. In April and May I spent six weeks in East Stoughton, Canton and West Bridgewater. During the summer, I laboured four weeks in Canton, four weeks in Randolph, three in Middleborough, two in Barnstable, and one in Hanover. After the first of September, I preached in South Reading, Pelham and Newtown, N. H. East Haverhill, Salisbury, Newburyport, Wenham, Malden, West Bridgewater, and several other places, and attended five protracted meetings. Of some of the people to whom I preached I received a generous compensation, of others little or nothing. For a part of the time I preached to the poor and destitute.

I arrived home from West Bridgewater the last of November, much fatigued. Since that time I have attempted to preach

but a few times, and have earned nothing. Had it not been for the assistance of kind and benevolent friends I must have suffered great inconvenience, at least. In the fore part of the winter I was very unwell with the influenza, followed by a distressing cough, which continued for several weeks. Since the cough has left me I have had a debility on my lungs, which I never realised for so long a time before. But through Divine goodness I am now favoured with better health.

Since the first of March I have employed myself in writing this work, which will be approved by some, and set at nought by others. But if each of my friends should take one copy, at the low price affixed, I shall be able to pay the printer and have something left.

CHAPTER XII.

CLOSING REMARKS.

THE contrast between the state of religion and religious privileges now, and what they were forty-seven years ago, is very great. Mr. John Aspland published a register of the Baptist denomination in the year 1791, and another in 1794. Previous to publishing his second register he travelled seventeen thousand miles in the United States, to collect materials for the work, as stated in Benedict's History of the Baptist denomination, vol. ii. page 266. The number of communicants of the Baptist churches in the United States in 1794, as stated by Mr. Aspland, amounted to a little more than sixty thousand. Therefore, I conclude, that we may estimate the number, at the period to which I allude, 1785, at not far from fifty thousand; but now we number about four hundred thousand.

At the former period we were a minor sect and oppressed by other denominations; but now, if we except the Methodists, who frequently baptize by immersion, we are the most numerous of any sect of Protestant Christians in the United States of America. To what shall we impute this astonishing increase? Not to civil authority; for this, in the several States, has generally been in the hands of our opponents; and where the Baptists have had the rule, as in Rhode Island and Kentucky, they have uniformly disclaimed all coercive measures in religious matters. Not to the influence of literature; for at that early period there were but few men of learning in the denomination; a few venerable men, such as Stillman and Skillman, Smith and Manning, and perhaps as many more, included all the Baptist ministers

in the New England States, who were considered classical men. Not in consequence of possessing superior wealth; for, although there have been some wealthy, liberal Baptists, ever since I have been acquainted with them, yet they have generally been an afflicted and poor people. Not because they have formerly laid any wise or deep plans for the increase or reputation of the denomination; for they have been the most improvident people that ever prospered. Till recently they have had but one considerable literary institution, in any measure under their control;* and that has had but very little direct bearing upon the denomination. Their ministers have been greatly neglected in their education and support; and, in some instances, they have too much neglected the education of their children. As a certain writer has said on another subject, the cause of the prosperity and increase of the Baptists, "must be made out in some other way." Our Lord and Saviour promised his people to send the holy Spirit to lead them into the truth, John xvi. 13. "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." It will be admitted by evangelical Christians, that, since the commencement of the present century, an extraordinary rain of the holy Spirit has been poured upon the churches. It will be granted also, that the holy Spirit never leads into error, but in proportion as individuals are brought under the influence of this infallible guide, they are led in conformity to the inspired word. It is thought that hereby the Orthodox have been led to take a decided stand in defence of the doctrine of CHRIST, against latitudinarian errors. No good reason can be offered why the holy Spirit should not lead Christians into practical truth as well as doctrinal. Hence it has been the policy of the advocates for unwritten tradition, so far as it respects gospel baptism, to dissuade young Christians from investigating the subject. But truth never shrinks from the light. The Baptist churches have been favoured with a happy share of the heavenly influence, which has blessed our nation; and in those

* Brown University.

seasons of the special influence of the holy Spirit their distinguishing sentiments have prevailed more than at other times. It is thought that the same blessed influence has had considerable effect on individuals of other denominations in this respect. Within fifty years, members have been excluded from the fellowship of churches for the crime of denying "the divine rite of infant baptism."

Formerly our denomination was taxed for the support of preachers of other sects. But the scene is wonderfully changed. We now have liberty to worship where we choose, and pay our money where we please. Now, instead of fines, prisons, whipping and banishment, some Pedobaptist churches seem to esteem it a great acquisition, if they can persuade a single Baptist to join their communion, whether male or female, informed or uninformed; and some of their ministers even condescend to go down into the water and immerse such candidates as cannot be satisfied with sprinkling or pouring, provided they have not been sprinkled in infancy; and in some cases they have been so condescending as to immerse those who had been sprinkled on the faith of their parents, and so become anabaptists or rebaptizers, baptizing the same person twice, if they hold both to be baptism. They have condescended still further, in partial conformity to our sentiments. In some of their churches they hold members in full communion who renounce infant baptism altogether, and consider it to be nothing more than a human invention; and in some instances they have revised their articles of faith, or church covenant, and left the article of infant baptism out, that they may gain the more.

Some of these circumstances, I mention, not to prove our sentiments to be correct, for this we are fully able to do from the holy Bible, our opponents being judges, but to show the vast contrast between the present and the former days. Surely a milder day has dawned upon the Baptist church. We have nothing to fear from any arguments which will ever be produced by people of such accommodating principles, and such latitudinarian practices as here noticed.

The general government under which we live is after our own model. When I was in Virginia, I was informed, that Thomas Jefferson when a young man, occasionally attended a Baptist meeting, which was held once in a month near his plantation, and frequently invited the preacher to his mansion. Mr. Jefferson having become acquainted with their form of church government, the preacher asked him how he approved of it. He said he thought it the best that was ever adopted, and that, if all churches would adopt the same, there would be no persecution; and he had thought that if these colonies should ever separate from the British government, it would be the best form of government for them to adopt. This acute philosopher and great statesman lived to see the great work accomplished.

If all the state governments are not as yet strictly conformed to the general government, so far as liberty of conscience is concerned, we pray that the desirable object may be obtained.

Perhaps there is no nation which enjoys such religious liberty, and at the same time such good government and order, as this nation is blessed with. The present is justly styled the age of improvement, in things temporal, but especially in reference to the great interests of morality and religion.

The benevolent societies now in operation are a rich blessing to this generation, and their memory will be handed down to future generations as the wonder of the age.

The Bible Societies in Great Britain and America commands our first admiration. Wherever the precious truths of that holy, sacred volume are disseminated and cordially received, it prompts the human mind to every good work. Thousands and millions of the children of men have learned, by blessed experience, that the holy Scriptures are able to make us wise unto salvation, through faith in the Lord JESUS. No man is against the Bible till he finds that the Bible is against him. But when he finds himself reprov'd, by that holy Book, for an ungodly course of life, if his conscience is so enlightened by the inspired pages as to realise that accord-

ing to that divine testimony he is exposed to endless woe, for his great wickedness, and at the same time is not disposed to repent of, and forsake his sins, and seek pardon through the merits and mediation of the Lord JESUS CHRIST; then he will labour to discredit the word of God. He must repent and embrace the gospel, or live unhappy if he cannot discredit the truth of the revealed word. But in so doing he increases his guilt by considering the God of truth as a liar, and fastens the chains of moral darkness more strongly on his mind. This he does to quiet and encourage himself in wickedness; but his sin and guilt remains. He must awake and come to judgment.

But the word of the Lord shall prosper in the thing whereto it is sent. The precious truths contained therein, being brought to bear on the mind, makes known the only possible way of salvation.

Tract Societies, which are now in operation throughout Christendom, are little silent messengers, carrying precious portions of divine truth to thousands to whom living preachers could have no access, and have been blessed to the souls of many who were sunk in moral degradation. Thereby whole villages, that had been destitute of the ministry of the word, have been incited to seek for, and have obtained the preached gospel. Christians, moralists, statesmen and philanthropists, should all patronize the Tract cause. One evidence of the importance of the Tract cause may be gathered from the alarm manifested by the enemies of evangelical truth to the circulation of these faithful and successful monitors.

Sabbath Schools and Bible Classes, with their libraries, have been, and are productive of increasing good to our youth and children. If the youthful mind is early imbued with religious knowledge, it will be more abiding and have a more direct bearing upon the heart and life than what is acquired at a later period.

The Temperance cause is one of the benevolent enterprises of this age of improvement. The success which has crowned the efforts of the friends of temperance has surprised the public. We have been slow to

learn ; but now it is clearly demonstrated, that distilled spirits are not only unnecessary but injurious to body and mind, to be used as a drink by people in health, and for invalids. It is now manifest, from diligent and faithful investigation, that by far the greatest part of the pauperism, poverty, wretchedness and crime, with which this nation has been afflicted for years past, can be satisfactorily traced to the use of ardent spirits as a drink. Information on this important subject is rapidly spreading through this country, has extended across the Atlantic, and is promoting a wonderful reform in some of the nations of Europe. It is believed that moderate and temperate drinkers will soon generally abandon the traffic and use of it altogether, as thousands have done, and then the reform will be effected, and the degrading calamity be removed.

The great Missionary enterprise is an honourable trait in the character of this improving age. In primitive days nothing distinguished the disciples of CHRIST more than their fervent zeal and untiring efforts in promoting and extending the kingdom of CHRIST. For this object they, with undaunted fortitude, exposed themselves to the cruel rage of furious persecutors. And is the sublime subject of less magnitude now? Certainly not. The excellency of the gospel is the same, the salvation of immortal souls of equal importance. The work of the holy Spirit is the same, and produces like fruits. The command to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature is still in full force. The missionary spirit is no other than the spirit of CHRIST, operating, in some feeble measure, in the hearts of Christians, exciting them in tender compassion to pray, and do something to promote the eternal interest of our benighted fellow men.

It is a great honour to be employed as instruments, and the most successful is but an instrument, in promoting that kingdom which is destined to become exceeding great, and fill the whole earth ; a kingdom of righteousness and peace ; an everlasting kingdom.

It is thought that those churches, which have engaged most heartily and liberally in aid of the missionary cause,

have been the most prosperous in things spiritual and temporal, and are able to do more with less inconvenience now than when they first had their attention turned to the subject; while other communities or individuals who have treated the subject with dislike, or neglect, have sunk into a cold, languid, declining state. They may support reputable characters as sober industrious citizens; they may lay up wealth for their posterity; but if they are not influenced by a benevolent concern for the souls of their fellow men, they will feel as if they could not be at the expense of supporting preaching every Sabbath; or, if they could have it without expense, but few will attend; and such as do attend the preached word, seldom profit by it. They think lightly of the forms of religion and less of the power. The love of this world has so much engrossed their attention that they think but little of souls, their neighbours, or their own.

The kingdom of CHRIST is a rising cause. The King must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The church has partially awaked to action, but the friends of CHRIST will shortly be cheered by beholding greater things than has yet transpired, by the triumphs of evangelical truth. It has been said by Dr. Carey, the indefatigable and successful missionary of Serempore, and celebrated linguist, who was born October, 1761, that he hoped that his grand children would live to see the kingdom of CHRIST set up in all nations. But if wise men cannot look into futurity so as to define with accuracy the day or the hour when the kingdom shall appear in its glory, yet we have the sure word of prophecy wherein we may trust with confidence. The fulfilment of the past is a pledge for the future.

Every revival of pure religion is an accession to the cause of missions. Older Christians are led into more enlarged views and clearer understanding of their duty, and are more ardently desirous of the advancement of the cause of CHRIST and the salvation of their fellow men. They now see more clearly the connection between the divinely appointed means and the great end to be accomplished thereby. As their hearts are en-

larged with the love of CHRIST, their desires are increased for the salvation of immortal souls. The more they are blessed with the quickening influence of the holy Spirit, the more will their affections be taken from earthly objects, and placed on things above, on the right-hand of GOD, where JESUS is. Hence they will more devoutly pray, "Thy kingdom come;" they will more cheerfully bear the cross, and devote their talents, influence and property to promote the spread of the gospel.

Late revivals of religion have brought a vast amount of influence to bear upon the great object of missions, by the conversion of a great number of young people; among whom are many young men coming forth into the ministry, in answer to the prayers of the church. Within a few days I have been informed, by unquestionable authority, that eleven pious young gentlemen who were about to graduate from the flourishing literary institution at Hamilton, N. Y. have resolved to offer themselves as candidates for the Burman Mission; and several others purpose to do the same when they have completed their studies at the institution. While I was meditating on this surprising intelligence, and thinking how they could be supported, a friend stepped in and informed me, that within a week ten thousand dollars had been received into the treasury for the Burman Mission!

If we meet with such cheering events now, when the Christian church is not more than half awake, what wonders will be witnessed when all shall unite, as the heart of one man, in the promulgation of the gospel of peace! When all who are called by the name of CHRIST shall come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty!

The time may soon arrive when the great company of the saints shall be as zealous, industrious and persevering in advancing the kingdom of peace and love, as worldlings are in amassing wealth, or as warriors have been in shedding blood. Yea, it is even so now with a goodly number, and their number is daily increasing; and that degree of success attends their labours, which, in the view of Christians, proves the fact, that the Lord approves of, and blesses them in their work.

Learning has greatly revived of late through this country. The advantages for obtaining an education are very great now, compared with what they were fifty or sixty years ago. The Baptist denomination are taking a lively interest in the education of such young men as are approved as candidates for the gospel ministry. And the undertaking has prospered beyond the anticipations of some of its most hearty friends. The Northern Baptist Education Society is worthy of the patronage of the whole denomination. Entire confidence is placed in the managers, as men of talent, integrity and diligent attention to the best interest of the society, professing and manifesting a warm attachment to the gospel in its primitive purity. I say thus much, not to flatter, or to seek favour, but because truth demands it, and because I think the object of the society is worthy of more patronage than it has received. It has been honourably sustained by a few churches and individuals in a very generous manner, but by a few only, compared with what might come forth in this cause.

The importance of an enlightened and intelligent ministry in this country is daily increasing, because the people are improving in knowledge, as it respects both the friends and enemies of evangelical truth. If public teachers are not proportionably advanced in literature and intelligence, their influence will be small, if not pernicious. As far as my knowledge extends, there is not a Baptist church in the New England States that would not prefer a man of good education for their minister, other things being equal.

The old maxim that "ignorance is the mother of devotion," is too stale for this enlightened age. A man cannot teach that with which he is unacquainted. I have suffered much in my feelings through the whole of my ministry for the want of an early education. And now I shall soon put off this tabernacle, the love I bare to the glorious gospel, the Christian ministry, the souls of men and my junior brethren, leads me to speak thus plainly.

The amount of responsibility resting on our highly favoured young men, who, as candidates for the sacred

ministry, are sustained as beneficiaries, is very great. The professors and teachers of our Theological and Academical Institutions, are such as to secure the full confidence of the public. If young men who are favoured with such advantages do not make improvement, it will be thought that there is some great deficiency in them.

Much is expected of our young brethren. We hope they will bear in mind the professed object of their studies and live continually under the salutary influence of the fear of the Lord, which is a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death. Then the godly examples, pious counsels, affectionate admonitions and diligent instructions of those who have the charge of their education, will not be lost upon them.

If any pious youth who is seriously impressed with the subject of the sacred ministry, and has not come to a conclusion on the subject, should cast his eyes on these pages, I will offer a word for his consideration. I would ask the young man, what is the principal motive which influences his mind to contemplate the great work? Why is the office desirable? Is it because, like **Moses**, you choose to suffer afflictions with the people of **God**? or is it on account of some worldly considerations, such as being surrounded by an admiring multitude listening with smiling approbation to your eloquent declamations? or do you contemplate being placed in easy circumstances, freed from perplexing cares? Can you feel sure that you are moved to engage in this holy work, by the love of **CHRIST** exciting in you a tender compassion for the souls of your fellow men? that you desire to spend and be spent labouring for their eternal interest, and this, although you should thereby be exposed to poverty and reproach, or persecution.

But I proceed to another evidence of being called to the work. Such an one will have an experimental knowledge of the gospel way of salvation which shall correspond with the word of **God**. It is thought to be inconsistent to suppose that the king should call one to bear tidings, and give him no tidings to bear. Those who are called of **God** to preach the gospel are favour-

ed with some spiritual understanding of gospel doctrine. They have a scriptural understanding of the entire depravity of the human heart, and of the infinite glory of the SON of GOD; of the redemption by his death on the cross, whereby he becomes the end of the law for righteousness to all that believe; of the work of the holy Spirit in renewing the heart, and reconciling the sinner to GOD by the application of the merits of CHRIST; and of the souls being sealed to eternal life by gracious adoption. Thus he sees, that salvation is not of works, but by grace; and that all such are kept by the power of GOD through faith unto salvation. A knowledge of these truths, with the doctrine of eternal judgment, are essential qualifications for a preacher of the gospel. If these precious truths are excluded from our ministry, it is of little consequence what else we preach.

Some, no doubt, with selfish motives, have entered into the high office as professed ministers of CHRIST, of their own free will, making no pretence to a special call of GOD to the office; and perhaps there are some who are highly esteemed among men as eloquent preachers, who make no pretensions to experimental religion. Such have plead scriptural example for unconverted men engaging in the ministry. Judas has been named as one of the twelve apostles who took part of the ministry. There is, however, no certain proof that Judas ever preached the gospel. But there is ample proof that he was a devil; a thief, and had the bag; a traitor, and sold his master; that he went out and hanged himself, and went to his own place; and that it would have been good for that man if he had never been born. Some people will think it an unfortunate circumstance for such gentlemen that they did not select from the Scriptures a more reputable character to hold up as an example, if such an one could have been found. However, if they choose to consider Judas their precedent in their ministerial course, we shall not dispute their claim. "Let them alone, they be blind leaders of the blind, Matt. xv. 14. "They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them," 1 John iv. 5. But, when CHRIST "putteth forth his own sheep, he

goeth before them, and the sheep follow him ; for they know his voice ; and a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him ; for they know not the voice of strangers," John x. 4, 5. If unrenewed men, from worldly motives, take upon themselves this sacred calling, they will be known to the children of light by their fruits. They will teach for doctrine the commandments of men, and the blind only will be deceived and led astray by blind leaders.

But those who are called of GOD to preach the gospel of CHRIST, are divinely illuminated, and able to discover, in some measure, the majesty and glory of the gospel, and something of the awful responsibility attached to the ministry of the word ; they will apprehend something of the difficulties and opposition attendant on the faithful preaching of the doctrine of the cross, and will enter upon the great work with fear and trembling, feeling their dependence on divine aid. But he who rushes into the ministry in a state of moral darkness, ignorant of human depravity and the doctrine of salvation by grace, has no thought of preaching a doctrine that will give offence to the carnal mind, and perhaps will not. If he should preach to a people as ignorant of the power of true godliness as himself, it might be said as it is written, "like people like priest." Under such circumstances he may obtain the reward, which, above all others, he most ardently desires, namely, the praise of men ; for he loves the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and to be called of men Rabbi, Rabbi.

But, my young friend, for whose instruction and warning I have alluded to these things, I hope better things of you. I hope your mind is imbued with a rich experience of the grace of GOD, which has taught you something of your own weakness, sin and guilt, and led you, with adoring gratitude, to contemplate the glorious gospel of the blessed GOD. I hope the glad tidings of good things has elevated your affections from earth to heaven, and that the love of CHRIST is constraining you to seek the good of his chosen, the everlasting salvation of your fellow men. I hope the GOD of nature and grace has so richly endowed you with natural and spiritual gifts,

which, under the sanctifying influences of the holy Spirit, shall render you an able minister of the New Testament, not of the letter but of the spirit. If in great conflict you are ready to say, "who is sufficient for these things," recollect the words of our blessed Lord and Saviour, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." If a dispensation of the gospel is committed to you, it will have a wonderful effect on your mind; the subject will absorb your thoughts by day and by night, when you lie down and when you rise up. See Paul to the Corinthians, 9th chapter, 16th and 17th verses, "For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of; for necessity is laid upon me; yea, wo is unto me if I preach not the gospel. For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward, but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me." If you are thus called of God to go forth as an ambassador for CHRIST, to pray men to be reconciled to God, and are not disobedient to the heavenly vision, the church of God, comprising his witnesses, will joyfully bid you welcome to the cross and the crown. The school of the prophets will cordially receive you and kindly grant you every assistance that may be requisite, that you may "study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." The saints will bid you God speed, and follow you with their prayers, that you may be the honoured instrument of bringing many sons to glory. You will now join a host of pious young men, looking forward to the same sublime employment, who will sympathise with you in your conflicts, fears and anticipations. The more there are of such valiant youth who are strong in the Lord, coming forth as labourers, the greater the encouragement. What are two or three hundred candidates in the American churches, and as many thousands of gold and silver poured into the Lord's treasury, when compared with the moral darkness that now envelopes the inhabitants of this continent, and five or six hundred millions of immortal souls involved in all the horrors of paganism! These nations must be brought under the influence of the blessed gos-

pel and given to CHRIST JESUS our Lord for a possession. He who hath promised will do it, by means of his own appointment. Happy are they who are chosen to be co-workers with him. Remember your field of labour is the world; the commission to labour therein is from on high. "Go ye, therefore, into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; he that believes and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not, shall be damned."

How great the contrast between the present and past! When I was hesitating whether I should engage in the ministry, mine was a rare solitary instance. In all that region of country I knew of no one who was exercised in a similar manner; and I never disclosed my trials till after I had commenced preaching and was licensed as a candidate for the ministry. At that early period there were not in the New England States under the patronage of our denomination any of those benevolent institutions which are now exerting a salutary influence on the community, such as Bible, Tract, Sabbath School, Missionary, Education, and other Societies. At that time there were but eight Baptist churches on the sea coast, between Merrimac river and the lower part of Cape Cod, where there are now forty churches, and most of them are in a rising prosperous state. Perhaps the increase has been nearly in the same proportion through the Eastern States. Let us then, with deep humility, and unfeigned gratitude, praise and bless the GOD of heaven for all his goodness and wonderful works to the children of men, and especially for the enlargement of the borders of Zion; and that our poor forfeited lives are protracted to witness the wonderful change in favour of religious liberty; to witness the glorious revivals of religion, and the extension of religious privileges. The good Lord keep us humble. Let us bear in mind that it is not for our sakes that he is doing these great things in the earth, but for his own namesake. He is of one mind and changes not, and will do all his pleasure.

If we believe that the great Head of the Church has given it in trust to us, as a denomination, to preserve

inviolable the doctrine, order, ordinances, discipline and fellowship of the visible kingdom of CHRIST, against all the inventions, innovations and corruptions of an ever-varying world; if we believe this, let it be seen that we are as steadfast and immovable in these days of false charity and cringing flattery, as were our ancestors when they were assailed with the more terrific arguments of banishment, imprisonment and stripes.

The improvements which have been made, are considerable; yet in proportion to our number and strength, we are in the rear of some other denominations in some important respects. Particularly we are deficient in our efforts to promote literature and missions. Individual benefactors and communities have contributed liberally, some have done a little, others less, and others nothing. But we hope and trust the march will be onward, until all the tithes shall be brought, with willing minds, into the Lord's treasury, and thereby prove the faithfulness of him who delights to bless his people.

In the course of my life I see much to lament, even in what relates to my duty as a Christian and a minister. It appears to me that it may be imputed to my want of spirituality and faithfulness in dealing with immortal souls, that I have been no more successful in advancing the kingdom of CHRIST in the conversion of my fellow sinners. I lament that I have not, in my general walk, deportment and conversation, set a more holy example before the world. It should humble me as in the dust, that I have been so little influenced by the love of the Saviour in the performance of my duties as a Christian and a minister. It has appeared to me a strange thing that the word, dispensed by one so unlike what he should be, was blessed to any. And yet, it has been very evident that the word has been made a lasting blessing to others when I had very little enjoyment in my own mind. Again, when I have been more than ordinarily animated in preaching, I have calculated that some great good would be accomplished, and have looked for events that I have never seen. Thus I found that I had been walking in the light of my own fire and in the sparks that my hands had kindled, as though the

great JEHOVAH was dependent on my frames and feelings for the accomplishment of the great work of saving sinners.

“ My frames and feelings ebb and flow,
And when my hope depends on them,
I reel and stagger to and fro,
And die amidst the dying frame.”

If it were best, all things considered, for us to know, in this life, we should know what amount of good is effected by the means we are directed to employ. But this does not concern us so much as to be found in the faithful discharge of our duty. The great day shall declare it, and then it will not be said, “well done, thou great and successful,” but “well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.” What we most need is to have the heart established with grace, that we may serve God acceptably, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. Let us consider him as our example, righteousness and strength; thus having faith on the Son of God, we may commit our way unto the Lord and he will bring it to pass. Then shall we walk in the light of his countenance, and rejoice in the God of our salvation. The Lord help us to keep our attention fixed on this worthy object, this mark for the prize. Nor let us turn off our eyes to gaze, admire and speak of our shining graces, gifts, or attainments, lest the glorious Sun of righteousness be eclipsed to us, and we walk in darkness.

Such is the pride of man that it is congenial with the vanity of his mind to think more highly of himself than he ought to think. It is gratifying to the man of pride to consider himself of vast consequence in the kingdom of CHRIST, especially if he can fancy to himself the honour of being turnkey, to take into the kingdom and turn out whom he will. It will be natural for such an one to lord it over God’s heritage, and to think that nothing is done well that is not done by his order or permission.

Another institution must be mentioned, which has caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy. About the year 1790, Rev. T. Baldwin, then pastor of the second

Baptist Church in Boston, who was always ready to every good work, made a motion in the Warren Association, that a resolve pass in that body, that there should be an annual collection at the commencement of its sessions, for the relief of indigent widows and orphan children of deceased Baptist ministers, within the bounds of said Association, which was cordially adopted and is continued to this day, and in all other Baptist Associations in the Eastern States, which have proceeded, directly or indirectly, from the Warren Association. In some of these bodies, besides granting timely supplies to the needy, the funds have increased to a considerable amount.

I am deeply impressed with a grateful sense of the kindness of my brethren, friends and benefactors, who have cheerfully granted prompt assistance whenever I have let my straits be known, and who have, in many instances, prevented and surprised me with unexpected relief. The Lord reward them a thousand fold for all their kindness.

Considering myself standing, as I do, upon the verge of time, and expecting soon to stand before my final Judge, where my motives will pass an impartial scrutiny, when the applause or disapprobation of erring mortals will be of little consequence to me, I have used plainness of speech on the preceding subjects. I have written for the generation to come.

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