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THE SWORD SHEATHED;

— OR —

The Service of the Sanctuary the Security of the State.

A DISCOURSE

DELIVERED AT THE

Centennial Celebration

OF THE

ADOPTION OF THE NAME AND CONSTITUTION
OF THE STATE,

WINDSOR, VT., JULY 8, 1877.

By Rev. Calvin B. Hulbert, D. D.,
President of Middlebury College.

[Advanced sheets from the Vermont Centennial Volume]

RUTLAND, VT. :

TUTTLE & CO., OFFICIAL PRINTERS AND STATIONERS TO THE STATE.

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The sword sanctified by the service of the
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DISCOURSE.

Patriotism is a virtue. In the ancient Jewish state it was enforced as an obligation. It was love of country, raised to a religious principle, that caused the Psalmist to exclaim, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning; if I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth: if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."

Nor can it be accounted an irreverence to say that our Lord himself was influenced by the patriotic sentiment. He was a Jew; and He must have felt a sense of personal dishonor in the odium that had accumulated upon His nation in its wasting and melancholy decline. He was "the *man* Christ Jesus;" and a patriotic, as well as a divine, emotion ~~that~~ must have stirred His heart in the pathetic cry, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"

In apostolic history, a form of christian life was enjoined everywhere so comprehensive as to embrace the well-being and prosperity of the state. "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. * * * For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. * * * Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience's sake. For this cause pay ye tribute also. * * * Render therefore to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor."

Loyalty is a part of piety. No citizen can discharge his duties to God without fulfilling, as involved in them, his obligations

to the state. Politics and ethics, patriotism and religion, have an associated and interdependent existence. The question is sometimes raised, whether human government is of divine origin and sanction. The reply is easy. It is as divine as anything which God has created and ordained to exist. It is as divine as the Connecticut River, or the Green Mountains: it is as divine as man's nature, as human society, as the social instinct, as commercial interdependence. It is no more a device of man than is the constitution of his being. For God to create man as he is, is for Him to create the necessity of organized society and of government. In furtherance of His personal rights and interests, God has made every man to be a part of a great whole. He belongs to a system. No choice of his own, no social caste, no civil distinctions, can detach him from it. Linked with the world around him by the law of his nature and the decree of his God, every plan of isolation is abortive. On the principle that the less is comprehended in the greater, we may say, without peril of perverting the Apostle's utterance, that, as related to the civil state, no man liveth to himself and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the state; and whether we die we die unto the state; whether we live therefore, or die, we are the state's.

Holding, then, that the religion of christianity comprehends in its beneficent reign in the earth not only all religious and moral, but as well, all political interests—that politics, properly defined, cannot be divorced from religion or religion from politics—I have accepted your courteous invitation to give on this commemoration of the Hundredth Anniversary of the Birth of the State and of the Adoption of the Constitution, what you have been pleased to denominate “a christian and patriotic discourse.” We are agreed that there need be no schism in a discourse characterized by these terms; and that the whole may be in harmony with the sanctity of the day on which we are assembled.

Nor is this a novel position we take in charging the Pulpit with obligation of service to the state. We only assert a principle which we have received as a lawful inheritance from the fathers. It had its origin in English soil. It came across the sea in the May-Flower. It created the atmosphere in which we first lived and moved and had

our being. One hundred years ago, this village, hardly matured beyond the rude beginnings of a frontier settlement, was honored with what has become an historic glory as the seat of the Convention that gave birth to the State organized in a Constitution. On that occasion the Pulpit, true to its mission, made itself a partner in that elemental strife through which both the state and the country were passing. For a text it seized with an almost divine felicity upon the Golden Rule; and with great clearness and force, and with direct application to the times, enunciated that fundamental doctrine of a biblical theology—*the universal brotherhood of the race*.

It is a happy circumstance and suggestive of the wisdom of the preacher that a sermon should have been given on that occasion upon a text which is itself a divine compendium beyond any other inspired passage, of all social and civil rights; and which contains principles of equality and humanity deeper and broader than can be found in any human digest of political principles. It has in it none of the pomp and circumstance of a human declaration of rights. It has never been called a glittering generality. Though an orb of light, only a few of its rays were permitted to gleam on its surface. They who first heard it spoken on the Mount of Beatitudes, did not discover its repudiation of the arrogant claims of kings and chieftains. It was among the collateral, but inevitable, results of our Lord's teachings in this text, as in others, that He made His hearers appreciate their manhood. By degrees He removed the disguise in which kingly misrule had plied its arts; one by one He exhumed the buried and down-trodden rights of man. "Be not deceived"—this injunction was included in the spirit of the Redeemer's instructions—"ye are men; your origin is God; your nature is divine; your destiny is eternity; having in you the powers of an endless life, they take hold upon the powers of the world to come; your first allegiance is to the King of Kings; your second to the human magistrate." Thus speaking, our Lord rolled an immense burden upon the individual conscience, and awakened in man a sense of the worth and dignity of his personal being. To tell men, all men—the masses—the common people who heard Him gladly,—valued by their rulers heretofore

for their brawn and muscle,—that the personal rights which they accord to others, they may claim to themselves, was to evoke in the individual soul a consciousness of personal worth which was destined ultimately to startle and upheave the nations like the throes of an earthquake, and to impel them forward in the direction of republican simplicity in government with the energy of a storm-driven sea.

Such now is the import and the comprehensive range of the text, employed here a hundred years ago; and the sermon preached from it, disclosed eighteen centuries of growth of the human mind in its study upon it. We meet to-day not to repudiate but to accept the Golden Rule as thus expounded. Stirred by the sentiments of patriotism enkindled by our National Centennial, yet fresh in our memories, we gather here on historic ground, amidst these tranquil scenes and proud memories, to reassert reverently its principle as the basal rock on which has towered for the century the superstructure of our Commonwealth.

In casting about for a text fitted to express the thoughts that crowd upon our minds, a text which will link us into closer fellowship with the noble men and women, who laid the foundations of empire among these hills, while at the same time it imposes on us the obligation to enter into their labors and prosecute their enterprise, I could find none more suited to my purpose than two passages, which, without violence, can be read as one:—

Ezra v : 11, and I Chronicles xxii : 5. "We are the servants of the God of Heaven and earth, and build the house which was builded these many years ago :"
 "and the house that is to be builded for the Lord must be exceeding magnificent, of fame and of glory throughout all countries,"

The first of these passages contains the manly words of Ezra and his associates in answer to the carping criticisms of the Samaritans who laughed them to scorn for their attempt to rebuild their ancestral temple, then lying in ruins. The second discloses King David's conception of the temple when it should stand forth in all the glory of a consummate art, "exceeding magnificent, of fame and of glory throughout all countries."

I. It will best serve my purpose to call your attention at the outset to the origin and service of the *literal* house spoken of in the

text. You are not unfamiliar with the Scripture narrative. Instigated by the Arch-Enemy of man, King David numbered the people. This he did without the divine warrant; it is supposed in the spirit of national pride, possibly with a view to military conquest. "And God was displeased with this thing," and He gave to the king his choice, a three years' famine, a three months' conquest over Israel by the enemy, or a three days' pestilence under the direction of an angel of the Lord destroying throughout all the coasts of Israel. David chose the last as being more directly connected with God as its agent. The pestilence came. Seventy thousand fell, leaving as yet the inhabitants of Jerusalem measurably unscathed. At this juncture the destroying angel took his place in mid-heaven over Jerusalem. "And David lifted up his eyes, and saw the angel of the Lord stand between the earth and the heaven, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over the city. Then David and the elders of Israel, clothed in sack-cloth, fell upon their faces. And David said unto God, Is it not I that commanded the people to be numbered? Even I it is that have sinned and done evil indeed; but as for these sheep, what have they done? Let Thy hand I pray Thee, O Lord, my God, be on me and on my father's house, but not on Thy people, that they should be plagued." "Then the angel of the Lord commanded Gad to say to David, that David should go up and set up an altar unto the Lord in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite." Instantly obeying, David with the elders of Israel, left the royal palace. Though having ground enough on his own premises, he was required to go some distance from his residence, down the mount, through the city embraced in the intervening valley, and beyond what were then the city limits, and up Mount Moriah, to erect an altar in a locality which he was required to purchase, but which years before had been consecrated by Abraham's faith and the angel's interference. This mount, overlooking the city entire, was owned and occupied by Ornan, a rich husbandman, an aboriginal inhabitant of the land. The summit of the mount was a remarkable rock, irregular in outline but of level surface by natural conformation, containing some two thousand square feet,—the rock on which Abraham built his altar, and which possibly constituted

the ground-floor of the Holy of Holies in the temple which afterwards rose on the spot. This rock was used at this time by its owner as a threshing-floor.

Just before the arrival of the king, Ornan, engaged with his four sons in threshing, had discovered in the heavens the destroying angel with sword drawn, and with his sons, had sought in dismay a hiding place. On the approach of the king, however, he came out and bowed himself to David with his face to the ground. "Grant me," said David, "the place of this threshing-floor that I may build an altar therein unto the Lord that the plague may be stayed from the people." Ornan promptly complied, and with a view to stay the pestilence with the least possible delay, proposed to the king to take, without compensation, the oxen at hand for sacrifice, the threshing implements for wood, and the wheat on the floor for a meat-offering. Though every moment's delay extends the ravages of the pestilence, David pauses to protest against receiving all this as a gift. "Nay, but I will verily buy it for the full price, for I will not take that which is thine for the Lord, nor offer burnt offerings that cost me nothing." Ornan receives the money and the whole estate passes into the hands of David. The king now hastens to build an altar unto the Lord and to place his offerings upon it. This done, he calls upon the name of the Lord in prayer and supplication. "Then the Lord answered him from heaven by fire upon the altar of burnt-offering." "And God said to the angel that destroyed, it is enough: stay thou thine hand." "And the angel put up his sword again into the sheath thereof." Then was the pestilence stayed. "*When David saw that the Lord had answered him in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite, then he sacrificed there and said,—THIS IS THE HOUSE OF GOD AND THIS IS THE ALTAR OF BURNT-OFFERING FOR ISRAEL.*"

By the divine command to seek that mountain summit, by the gift of fire from heaven to consume the sacrifice, by the sword of the angel sheathed and the pestilence stayed—possibly by other intimations—King David settled into the conviction that God had expressed His pleasure that the national temple, soon to be erected to His glory, should stand on that twice consecrated spot. Keep in mind that the tabernacle which Moses built,

and which had traversed the wilderness, was at this date in the high place at Gibeon. But after what had taken place in the threshing-floor, David, "could not go before it to inquire of God ; for he was afraid because of the sword of the angel of the Lord ;" which must mean that he either feared the judgments of the avenging angel, if he went beyond the protective influences of his newly erected altar ; or that he accounted it morally unfit to go to Gibeon after God had so expressly designated Mount Moriah as the place for him to inquire and to worship. Be the occasion of his fear what it may have been, it is obvious that he understood from what had occurred that God had designated the location of the national temple ; and in a place that gave it a peculiar consecration by virtue of the old altars which it was made to enclose.

The altar of sacrifice, erected as many suppose at God's appointment upon the apostasy of the race, in the incense of whose savory offerings the supplications and praises of His people ascended to Him, had long been the leading idea of all worship, and of all places of worship. Therefore it was fittingly made the procuring cause, the constructive idea and the essential glory of the national temple. Not the edifice then, but the altar in the edifice and the sacrifices offered upon it in the devout and holy worship of the assembly,—were the things of chiefest interest. It is the altar that sanctifieth the gift ; and the temple, itself a gift to God, was sanctified by the altar which it enclosed and upon which it was virtually laid as a sacrifice. Now I call you to witness that the service which David's altar rendered in sheathing the sword of the avenging angel and in staying the pestilence, is the identical service which the temple, embodying that altar, was to render in defense of the Jewish nation through the succeeding ages. The worship of Jehovah in the place of His habitation was the appointed means of protecting the nation against assailing angels and desolating judgments. It threw as it were the ponderous walls of the temple around the nation and included it entire within the impregnable fortress of God's protective favor. When the Psalmist called upon the people to walk about Zion, and go round about her ; tell the towers thereof ; mark well her bulwarks ; consider her palaces ; that they might tell it to the generation following, he had reference

not so much to the impregnability of the temple as to the defensive power of that system of religious faith and practice expressed in it, and which, warping through the nation, gave to it its unity of life, and thus enclosed it within battlements and ramparts which no assaults from without could disturb. In Solomon's prayer of dedication we can see to what national uses the worship of the sanctuary was to be applied. If Israel, because of their sin, should be put to the worse before the enemy; if for the same reason the heavens should be shut up and there be no rain, and dearth prevail in the land; if there be pestilence, if there be blasting, or mildew or locusts, or whatsoever sore or sickness there be, the only hope of alleviation and prosperity must be sought for in prayer and supplication in the sanctuary. The national temple, thus devoted to penitential and reverent service, was the national bulwark and defense. And it is historically true, that so long as the worship of the temple continued unbroken, and was the resort of the people in times of calamity and peril, the nation retained her integrity. When at length the temple worship declined into a formal service; when the people lost their interest in it; when religiously they became disintegrated, and finally established places of rival worship, then not one, but a multitude of destroying angels appeared in the heavens with swords drawn and for a prolonged period, and judgment succeeded to judgment till the nation once embraced in an impregnable security was delivered over to the most appalling catastrophe that ever befell a people.

Such now is the house spoken of in the text; and such its origin and use. "We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and build the house that was builded these many years ago." Exulting in the honor of entering into the labors of the original builders as though continuing their work, they sought to reproduce a temple, which, in its pristine splendor was acknowledged to have been "exceeding magnificent, of fame and of glory throughout all countries,"—a temple which, rebuilt, should give to the nation again restored from a wasting captivity, the protection of the overshadowing wings of the Almighty.

: II. Let me now remind you that this house which was builded these many years ago, and which commanded a universal admiration,

has been uniformly conceived of by biblical scholars as a type. It did not exist for its own sake. It was a prophecy in stone. It was destined to wax old and vanish away. Coming together on the Mount without the sound of either hammer or axe or any tool of iron, it has been interpreted as shadowing forth the silence and the completeness with which the spiritual structure of the christian church has ascended.

And consider that this spiritual house, like its type, finds its procuring cause and constructive idea in the altar of sacrifice which was laid as its foundation. It is the old Jewish altar advanced to a higher dignity by the kind of offering sacrificed upon it. Now it is the Lamb of God on the altar of the Cross. When we see the Sword of Justice, which, in the heavens above Mount Sinai, awoke against the Shepherd Whom God calls His fellow, satisfied in the Lamb slain on the Cross, and returned to its sheath, then *we follow the example of David and sacrifice upon the same altar in the gift of ourselves and all that we have, and exclaim, "THIS IS THE HOUSE OF GOD AND THIS IS THE ALTAR OF BURNT-OFFERING FOR ISRAEL."* What the tabernacle and the temple were successively, to God's ancient people, such is the Person of the Son of David to all who receive Him as the Incarnate Word. The Logos that dwelt in and irradiated the Son of Man, is the Shekinah of the temple. First the original pattern given to Moses in the Mount that had burned with fire, then the pilgrim tabernacle of the wilderness, finally the temple fixed and resident on Mount Zion,—these were the types; the Word made flesh and tabernacled among us, the temple of His body destroyed, raised the third day and vanishing from our sight, then the temple of the Christian Church—the Redeemer's other Self, His bride, His spiritual body—in a sense the incarnation of the Spirit—a temple rising neither in Jerusalem nor yet at Gerizim, but anywhere in the earth where the christian assembly meets for worship,—these are the antitypes.

God laid in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, precious, elect, chief corner. To command our confidence it was visibly cut out of the mountains without hands—out of Mount Sinai and Mount Moriah, out of the Mount of Beatitudes and of the Transfiguration, out of Mount Calvary and the Mount of Ascension. This

stone is the old rock of the wilderness which followed Israel and quenched their thirst, and which rock was Christ. It is the Rock in which Israel triumphed; "their rock is not as our Rock, our enemies themselves being judges," but which they themselves afterwards repudiated as a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense. It is the stone of infinite magnetic attraction, and that promised, if lifted up, to draw all men unto it, and by assimilating them to it to increase until it should fill the whole world. Thus the mystic temple of the christian church is built upon a foundation-Stone and of stones. "To whom coming as unto a living Stone, ye also as living stones are built up a spiritual house." While Caesar's army was battering down and removing the very foundations of the ancestral temple, the christian church, its antitype, under the supervision of "a greater than Solomon," was going up throughout the apostolic world in the labor of builders who wrought noiselessly in the use of weapons not carnal but spiritual, and mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds. Its members "having access by one Spirit unto the Father, are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the Chief-Corner Stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord." From that day to this, out of the very stones of the desert God has been raising up children unto Abraham, "for they that are of faith are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." Imbedded in nature's quarry, or sunk in the hole of the pit, or scattered on the heath, these living stones are drawn together by influences sweeter than those of the Pleiades and by bands mightier than Orion's. As stones living, that is, instinct with the very life of the Divine Magnet, and polished after the similitude of a palace, and gleaming with inward and reflected light, they congregate upon the Foundation; and by the architectural instinct of the life that pulsates therefrom, they take their appropriate places in the structure, and are builded together a living temple wherein God dwells, and which forever resounds His praise. Their relation to the Chief-Corner Stone is such that they are destined to be changed into the same image from glory to glory, until

the house of God which is the *Ecclesia* of the living God glows and irradiates throughout its entire extent and to its utmost turret and pinnacle with the beauty of Him who is loved and adored as the King of Glory.*

From this it appears that the house spoken of in the text includes very much more than the temple that was going up at Jerusalem. The Jews were building better than they knew. Under its imagery and in the light of the christian dispensation we see rising the spiritual structure of God's Kingdom of Grace in the earth. In the fullness of time the Jewish commonwealth, having fulfilled its course and accomplished its mission, evolved from within itself as the envelop, a more spiritual and therefore a more simple and universal religion, a religion which disclosing the power of the Spirit, shall possess "a matchless inherent energy which space cannot confine, which time cannot exhaust." Teaching a more advanced and therefore a more truthful doctrine concerning the nature and government of God, the new faith forbade the confinement of worship to the old centers. It consecrated all localities. "Neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem." Would you worship the Father, you must do it not here nor there, but in spirit and in truth. The house of God which is the ecclesia—the worshipping assembly—becomes thus multitudinous and cosmopolitan. There is a tendency in human minds to worship God in the sanctuary; but not because He is in the material structure in distinction from any other place, or in exclusion of Him from any other place, or in any more of His essential glory than He wears in all places. His omnipresence and infinitude forbid it. He is always present at every point and in all His entirety. He will receive a spiritual service offered to Him in one place as soon as another. Wherever a soul cries unto Him in the midst of what darkness or loneliness soever of forest, or dungeon, or sick chamber, God is prompt to hear. The wandering traveler cannot spread his tent at night, the shipwrecked mariner cannot drift on his floating spar, the wounded soldier cannot creep to a thicket, where God is not, and where His ear is not open to the voice of his supplication. No walls and arches can be

* I Peter ii: 4—6. Lillie *in loco*.

piled so high, no ornaments can be clustered upon them so sumptuously, no majesty of proportions, no carefulness of detail, no solemnity of consecration, can so set apart one building as to retain within it Him who filleth immensity.* God dwells not in houses made with hands but in the congregations of His saints who worship Him in spirit and in truth. "Ye are the Temple of God;" not beams and pillars and rafters adjusted, but souls knit together in love and adoring worship. It matters not where such worshippers meet, whether "in Grecian temples or Indian pagodas; in barbarian amphitheatres or Turkish mosques or medieval cathedrals; in Puritan conventicles or Quaker meeting-houses or floating bethels or barns, or lumber-rooms or log huts;" whether on the seashore, the open prairie or within the leafy avenues of the forest;—anywhere where God's people meet for His worship, there God is, for they are His temple. "Ye who are Mine, and who meet for My worship in one place and with one accord, *ye are My House*; and I will be with you and dwell in you; and My spirit of light and of love, shed abroad in your hearts, that shall be the perpetual Shekinah."

III. These worshipping assemblies, multiplied abroad in the earth, centers of light irradiating its darkness, offering unto God evermore a penitential and reverent service—one in spirit with the offerings made by King David in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite,—are the appointed conditions on which God commands His destroying angel to return his sword to the sheath thereof, and stay the swift avengers of His justice. What David's altar was in returning the sword of vengeance to its scabbard and arresting the footsteps of the desolating pestilence; what the temple was in after years, on that same spot, as a protection and defense to the nation in its varying fortunes, such are the worshipping assemblies in every christian state, in staying the progress of divine judgments, and in multiplying the peace and prosperity of its people. Let christian worship cease, let Sabbath congregations disperse and assemble no more, and how soon would

* A few passages are here recalled from a sermon by Rev. Richard S. Storrs, D. D., at the dedication of the Broadway Tabernacle, New York.

a land, whose blooming luxuriance now gives forth the savor as of a field which the Lord hath blessed, be transformed into an Acedama! Blessed the day to the inhabitants of earth, when angels with swords drawn and destroying in all its coasts, shall hear the divine mandate, "It is enough; stay ye your hands." But of this we may be assured, that such a reprieve will never be granted and avenging swords be returned to their sheaths, until the sons of men, in the worship of the sanctuary, shall receive the proclamation of that other angel, extraordinary and plenipotentary from the court of heaven, seen in apocalyptic vision, "flying in the midst of heaven, having an everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people."

Such now is the spiritual house which God's people are building in these last days. If interrogated now as of old as to what they are doing, they will respond, "We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and build the house that was builded these many years ago, and the house to be builded for the Lord must be exceeding magnifical, of fame and of glory throughout all countries."

Nor is this a small house which they are building, and of few apartments. It is large and ecumenically expansive. It is our Father's house and there are many mansions in it, equal in number to all the detachments in the sacramental host of His elect. If it were not so, our Redeemer would have told us, and forbidden this multiform aspect of His visible kingdom. He would have said here and not there, this and not that. Imposing on all His people the one universal bond of perfectness which is charity, He has given them, as having entered it by the door, the liberty of His house, to go in and out and find pasture.

IV. This line of thought prepares me to say that we cannot contemplate to-day, in these memorial services, the religious history of our state, except as we consider it as a part of this universal whole of God's kingdom of grace among men. It is constituted of the overflow and out-propagating stock of this kingdom. It belongs in the succession of the Redeemer's triumphs of grace in the earth. The men and women who found their way into these northern parts were of the Pilgrim type. They brought with them the ancestral faith, the moral ideas and traditions and usages of the religious

communities in which they were born and nurtured. By a law as inevitable as gravity, they adhered to the conditions of the christian home—the family Bible, the family altar, and “their hymns of lofty cheer.” They came not to escape, but to bear religious responsibility; therefore they came sustained by the prayers and sympathies and benefactions of the christian communities they left behind. Thus they were handfuls of corn on the tops of these mountains, and the fruit thereof has shaken like Lebanon. Endued with power from above, they were the elements of a christian empire. They came hither not more to build houses for themselves and their little ones, than to erect upon enduring foundations among these hills the superstructure of the Lord’s house. In the main they were entrenched in the stronghold of a biblical theology and disclosed in their characters, the virtues and excellencies of the christian faith. They believed in God, and in the communion of saints in His worship in the home and in the sanctuary. Hence we find scattered among the new settlements, in what were called the New Hampshire Grants, prior to July, 1777, eighteen organized churches. Of these fourteen belonged to the Congregational order, and were located respectively in Bennington, Newbury, Westminster, Guilford, Pomfret, Brattleboro, Thetford, Rutland, Chester, Fayetteville, Weathersfield, Putney, Marlboro and Royalton. The remaining four gathered at that early date, were Baptist churches, and were located one in Shaftsbury, one in Pownal and two in Guilford. These eighteen churches, you will observe, were organized within the limits of five of our now existing counties, to wit: Bennington, Orange, Rutland, Windham and Windsor. From this it appears that at the date of the state’s organization, no churches had been formed in the territory embraced afterwards in the nine remaining counties. What the aggregate membership of these eighteen churches then was, we are not informed. Nor have we any means of learning the number of christian people in the state at this time not gathered into churches, or the number of clergymen laboring among them. Of this, however, we may be confident, that there was pervading the rapidly growing communities of the state on either side of the mountains, great religious wakefulness. The cardinal doctrines of christian theology and experimental piety were everywhere studied and discussed. The

controversy was heated and prolonged. Calvin and Edwards and Hopkins and Bellamy were household words. Baxter and Bunyan and Watts were as needful as the daily sunrise. The old religious creeds and ponderous theological treatises constituted a part of the furnishing in every home. Missionary societies in Massachusetts and Connecticut contributed much towards grounding the state in the christian faith. Better than earthly treasures, they equipped and sent forth into these new settlements a large number of educated ministers of a devout and heroic mold, who, following the apostolic example, went everywhere preaching the word, looking after the sheep scattered in the forests and among the hills, and organizing them into churches. What had been accomplished by these labors prior to the state's organization, cannot be measured by the simple fact that at that date eighteen churches had been established. Seed-corn had been sown broadcast everywhere among the settlements and was springing into harvest. So that we find that before the close of that century—within twenty-three years—there were added to the number of the eighteen original churches, one hundred and one. Of these, sixty were of the Congregational faith; thirty-five—counting only to 1790—were of the Baptist order; three were Methodist churches,—not counting the Vergennes and Essex missionary circuits; two were Episcopal; and one was a Free-Will Baptist church. This gives us one hundred and nineteen organized christian churches in the state at the beginning of the present century. It cannot but awaken our admiration and our gratitude, to mark the rapidity with which the state was settled, and the eagerness with which christians labored to infuse into it the leaven of inspired truth and to give it a high moral and religious character.

V. Though no part of the history of this commonwealth is more interesting, still I cannot call your attention beyond a brief moment to the extent of the service rendered to the state by the ministry and the churches during this elemental and formative period. But this much I hasten to affirm, that from them issued the chief organizing and constructive forces in the state. They everywhere insisted upon the credibility and divine authority of the Scriptures; the personal agency of God in the natural and moral government of the world; the worth of prayer as a divinely established organ

for human use in securing beneficent ends; the natural depravity of the human heart and the necessity of its regeneration; the sufficiency of the atonement to meet the sinner's wants; the irreparable loss of the soul rejecting the atonement through this life; the observance of the christian sabbath in the worship of the sanctuary; the careful training of children in christian nurture and admonition; the sanctity of the sacramental and judicial oaths; the inviolability of the marriage relation; family worship as maintaining the integrity of the home; the divine authority of the state and the prompt and vigorous execution of its laws; and thus insisting, they believed, with all saints, in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; in Jesus Christ His only Son, our Lord; and in the Holy Ghost. They believed in the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sin, the resurrection of the body, and in the life everlasting. To them God was no abstraction, but the most intense of all realities; who created nature and antedates nature and is above nature, and who makes her in all her manifoldness and complications an organ through which He acts to the comprehension of His creatures, whose laws are His mandates and accomplish His bidding. Therefore their faith was a working force in their daily life. It gave a determinate character to their domestic, their literary and civil institutions. In this they were true to the spirit of the Pilgrim settlers of New England, of whom it has been said, "They would have put a man into the pillory who should have so insulted their consciences and expressed the degradation of his own, as to deny the obligation of the state to conform to the same standard of right with that which should govern the individual. They consulted the ministers of religion in the framing of their constitutions and their statutes, at the very time when their care against priestly domination was so vigilant, that they forbade the clergy to solemnize the rite of marriage. They fought the battles of the state, with Bibles in their knapsacks. They expounded the Institutes of Moses and sung the Psalms of David, on the eve of their victories." They were one in that biblical faith of New England which so suffused the colonies at a later date as to move "that act of the American Congress, by which at the height of the Revolution, side by side with appro-

priations for the purchase of gunpowder, there stands an order for the importation of twenty thousand copies of the Scriptures."

Resting thus in the Supernatural, and wielding forces that were spiritual, the pioneer clergymen of Vermont taught a system of truth which intensified individual being, and compelled each man to see at one glance, his worth and his peril. In enforcing the doctrine of the new birth, they inaugurated a process of symmetrical elevation, which, beginning in the profoundest depths of the soul, advances in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man. But since each man is a part of humanity, such truths taught set to work a power diffusive among men like gravitation among the stars. It gave authority to the social virtues. It created forces which became constructive elements in society and the world. Elevating the individual, it was a power in the family, and through the family in the community, and through the community in the state. Speaking of the ideas which an evangelical and faithful pulpit is sure to start into life, a living scholar, in a convention sermon before the Governor and Legislature of Massachusetts, says, that "like Christianity, these ideas are spiritual, and they take on social and civil and political forms. They are constructive ideas. They work in building institutions, customs, forms and reforms of government much as the instinct in the bee-hive works. From the intensity which the christian theory of manhood gives to individual being, start forth as collaterals such ideas as the equality of the race, the brotherhood of man with man, the nobility of woman, the inhumanity of war, the odiousness of slavery, the dignity of labor, the worth of education and the blessedness of charity. Institutions which are the consolidation of such ideas, Christianity drops from her open hand in and around the homes of men, for the healing of the nations. And the point of significance is that the nations never get them from any other source."*

Such were the original builders in Vermont; and they builded better than they knew, for they were workers together with God.

* Professor Austin Phelps, D. D., Andover Theological Seminary, 1861.

If they did not turn the world in these regions upside down, it was because they were present at the laying of its foundations and saw that it was placed at the start right side up. Their influence, working silently like the occult forces of nature, permeated all the forms of life in which the early settlers expended their energy. It was felt as a power in aid of the religious and secular press; it created everywhere the spirit of good neighborhood; it gave ascendancy to reason in the town meetings; it enforced wise legislation; it awakened reverence for law; it elevated the authority of the court and gave dignity to the decisions of juries; it called into being a philanthropic public spirit, and made the people wise in forecasting their institutions of every kind, and energetic in building them and liberal in their support. It rebuked indolence, immorality and improvidence. It created a spirit of industry and honorable competition. Felling the forests, building rude cottages in the clearings, erecting churches and schoolhouses at every corner, and teaching the water-wheel to flap its wings in every mountain stream, it multiplied everywhere through all these valleys and among these hills, the sure sign of thrift in the accumulation of property and in intellectual and moral advancement. It was under such religious training as this, and through it as their instrument, that the pioneer inhabitants of this commonwealth acted their part as the servants of the God of heaven and earth, in building the house that was builded here these many years ago.

But consider that the house on which they toiled, and which they occupied, and made their munition of rocks, was left by them incomplete and fragmentary. Passing away, they transmitted it to us as an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away; not that we may occupy it in luxurious repose, but in laborious industry upon it for its completion. Hence should the interrogatory, propounded by the Samaritans to Ezra and his fellow-laborers, be put to us to-day, our reply could be fittingly given in the exact language of the text. "We are the servants of the God of heaven and earth and build the house that was builded these many years ago." Nor should we give this reply except under an inspiration caught from the original, and now advanced, conception

of the structure, as it shall stand forth at length in its divine completeness, "exceeding magnificent, of fame and of glory throughout all countries."

But who are the persons embraced by the term *we*, and who take to themselves the title of "servants of the God of heaven and earth?" I reply that the term is used in the widest generality and embraces those of us, citizens of the state, who are Episcopalians, and who have forty-eight churches and missions and not less than three thousand communicants; those of us who are Baptists, and who have one hundred and three churches and eight thousand communicants; those of us who are Methodists, and who have one hundred and sixty-two churches and fourteen thousand three hundred and fifty-five members—not counting probationers; those of us who are of the Congregational order, and who have one hundred and ninety-six churches, and—including absentees—twenty-one thousand eight hundred and seven members; and besides these, those of us as well, who are communicants of any other denominational faith not here included, and even many of us who are not communicants in any church, and yet who love our Lord Jesus Christ and coöperate with those who are;—numbering, all told, above five hundred churches, and having over fifty thousand believers;—these are they whom we denominate "the servants of the God of heaven and earth," and who are now building in the state, the house which was builded these many—these hundred—years ago.

And now why did our fathers labor to build this house, this spiritual house, this house of many mansions, and why do we, their descendants enter into their labors and prosecute the enterprise? This house has been a costly structure to rear; and, built not of refuse material, hay, wood and stubble, but of silver and gold and precious stones, it has involved an immense outlay. Why all this expense?

My reply is obvious. Our Fathers built this house, and we succeed them in the work, for the self-same reason that actuated King David, in his extremity, to erect his altar in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite; and that reason is identical in spirit with the one that united all Israel afterwards to build, inclosing that

altar, the most costly and splendid structure ever reared by the hand of man, namely, to supplicate the favor of heaven and stay the divine judgments. Like King David, we refuse peremptorily to offer unto the Lord that which costs us nothing. In building this habitation for the Mighty God of Jacob, we feel that we cannot lavish upon it an excess of treasures. Our gratitude demands this costly and perpetual outlay. But consider that as David's grateful expenditure brought an immeasurable benefit to him and his nation, so our gifts and labors, expended as grateful incense in building the House of the Redeemer's Spiritual Kingdom, bring us a return even in this life, which eye hath not seen nor ear heard neither hath entered into the heart of man to conceive.

To begin with the lowest form of good, consider the worth of the sanctuary in enhancing the material prosperity of the state. What was real estate worth in Sodom after righteous Lot withdrew? What was it worth in Palestine when the temple-service ceased to be an expense to the Jews? What would it be worth in Vermont had our fathers neglected to build the Lord's House and maintain the public worship? Again, the absence of the sanctuary is the presence of superstition and brutal barbarity. Destroy our churches and disperse our worshipping assemblies, and Vermont would soon be shorn of her glory and lie a melancholy waste. The angel of desolation would hover over her every home, with sword drawn. Besides, the sanctuary is the repository of spiritual strength and beauty. It is the headquarters of the Captain of our Salvation. It is the magazine of the Divine Forces. Thence issue forth civilizing ideas. It defends against private and public calamity. It delivers us from the three-fold woe of ignorance, superstition and crime. It creates and fills the state with the atmosphere of christian virtue. It is affluent of everything that is lovely and beautiful and of good report. It reaches in its ennobling influence every fibre and function of the state. It guides and purifies the currents of national life and health. It nerves the right arm of labor. It purifies the fountains of justice. It gives authority to the decisions of juries. It elevates and sweetens social intercourse. It exchanges the insane fury of the mob in the street for the discussions of freemen met in civil council, and supplants unreasoning force by the sover-

eignty of intellectual power. Under its dominion the spear gives place to the pen, the bayonet to the book, and the reign of "chaos and old night" to the majesty and authority of law.

There is no form of evil which this house does not defend us against; there is no virtue in human character, no ornament in civilized society, no glory of the state, which it does not originate and foster. At the very start, when the flood-gates of French infidelity had been lifted and its baleful waters were coming in upon the infant state like a deluge, an earnest ministry raised against them its mighty standard and rolled back the sulphurous tide. "There were giants in the earth in those days." "Sit down, thou bold blasphemer, and listen to the word of God," was the language of Father Dewey in the Bennington pulpit, to Ethan Allen, who, taking exception to what had been taught in the public service and vocally declaring it false, rose in his seat to leave the house. *And the veteran hero obeyed.* British cannon had no such authority.

If this, then, is the House which our Fathers built,—this its unspeakable individual, social and public worth—let us build on; build in grateful remembrance of the past, build in confident hope of the future.

Nothing now remains in this service but to extend to Your Excellency, Sir, the Governor of the state and to the Gentlemen of your Staff; to His Honor the Lieutenant Governor, and the Honorable Council—Members of the Legislature; to the Gentlemen of the Bench and the Bar and the Press and the Learned Professions; to the Teachers of our Schools of Learning; to the Citizens of Windsor, whose hospitality is so generous; and to you All, Ladies and Gentlemen,—the salutations of the hour. These we extend to you, subdued by the solemnities of the day, by the remembrance of the distinguished virtues of our ancestors, and the absoluteness of our dependence upon the Divine forbearance and support. Our lines are fallen to us in pleasant places and we have a goodly heritage. Our Heavenly Father has wrought hitherto; and our Redeemer has wrought; and our fathers and mothers have wrought; and they have transmitted to us a rich inheritance. As we belong to a goodly brotherhood in entering into their labors so we have accorded to us a solemn trust. Our state occupies but

a small spot within the bounds of the Republic ; but small as Vermont is, she is a good deal to us. We love her ; her green hills ; her mountains and valleys and streams ; her heroic and noble history ; her institutions, and her patriotic devotion to the Federal Union. That we may throw around her the defensive Arm of the Almighty and defend her from the assaults of the avenging angel ; that we may perpetuate her in honor through another century, and augment her influence in the sisterhood of the States, let us apply ourselves, with all diligence to this prolonged service—the building of the Lord's House in the state ; and if we do not see it in our day “exceeding magnificent, of fame and of glory throughout all countries,” let us remember that this is its destination ; and that, by and by,—it may be in the far distant ages—the builders shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying Grace, Grace unto it”—shoutings which will die away only in the hallelujahs of the eternal reunion of all who have toiled in its erection.

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