

# HISTORY OF POMFRET.

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A

## DISCOURSE

DELIVERED ON THE DAY OF ANNUAL THANKSGIVING, IN THE FIRST  
CHURCH IN POMFRET, NOV. 19TH, 1840.

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BY D. HUNT,  
PASTOR OF SAID CHURCH.

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## AUTHOR'S NOTICE.

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[ It may be proper to state here, that this work has been performed under great embarrassments, and is, after all, but a meager representation of the history of this town. "The fathers have fallen asleep," and with them is lost a great amount of valuable history. The work should have been undertaken twenty years ago. But such as it is, I yield it, at the request of my people, for publication. Errors will doubtless be found in some of the statements which I have made, especially from tradition; but I have no means of detecting them. I have declared what I have supposed after much examination and inquiry, to be the truth. I have hesitated whether to publish it in the shape of a sermon, as it was originally prepared, or simply as a history; but have concluded, on account of my profession, though there is not much in it that resembles a sermon, to give it in its original form. In what estimation such labors of a Clergyman, to gratify his people and their friends will be held by the public, remains to be seen. The author, during his preparation of this work, has been compelled to regard the council of Moses, in the text—"Remember the days of old" &c. ]



## DISCOURSE.

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DEUT. 32: 7—*“Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father and he will show thee; thy elders and they will tell thee.”*

This is a part of the dying address of Moses to the degenerate people of Israel. God had done great things for them and their fathers, but they seemed not to remember “the hole in the pit whence they were digged,” nor “the place in the rock from which they were hewn,” nor the mighty and holy hand that had done it. They had grievously departed from the Lord their God, and forgotten his abundant mercies. And Moses, having now assurance that he cannot go into the promised land, nor remain longer with them, to be their instructor and guide; improves the opportunity in his farewell message, to set their sins and their dangers before them; and to urge them by various, and some awful considerations, to cleave unto the Lord their God. This in the text is one of the motives which he is pleased to lay before them—“to remember the days of old, and consider the years of many generations.”

Great advantage is often derived from a retrospection of God’s dealings with the children of men, particularly with our own ancestors and countrymen. It shows us our origin—it shows us the long-suffering of God towards the wicked and his faithfulness towards those that are obedient—it gives warning to depart from evil and encouragement to trust in the Lord—it is calculated to inspire feelings of gratitude and love towards our great Preserver and Benefactor; and to draw forth expressions of thanksgiving and praise. It was when the Psalmist had been meditating on the history of God’s dealings with his fathers

and countrymen, that he said, "O, that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, for his wonderful works to the children of men," and exclaims "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting,"—"Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee."

With these views of the importance of considering the history of the past, may it not be appropriate, on this anniversary day of "Thanksgiving, Praise and Prayer," to spend a little time in contemplating the history of this town. If we can go over the subject in a proper manner, it may as much as any thing, tend to awaken feelings of gratitude to Almighty God, and lead us to form new resolutions that we will serve and honor the God of our fathers.

The tract of land, originally known as the "Mashamoquet Purchase," and afterwards incorporated as the town of Pomfret, containing fifteen thousand one hundred acres, was deeded by Capt. James Fitch, of Norwich, for the consideration of thirty pounds, lawful money, to Samuel Ruggles, Sen., John Chandler, Benjamin Sabin, Samuel Craft, John Grosvenor, Samuel Ruggles, Jun., of Roxbury, Mass., and six other persons, whom they might choose to be joint proprietors with them. The persons chosen, were John Pierpont, John White, John Ruggles, John Gore, Samuel Gore, and Thomas Morey.

The deed was executed May 5th, 1686. It was signed by James Fitch, and by Owanecho, Sachem of the Mohegan tribe of Indians, and his son Josiah. Whence it appears, that the original proprietors of *this* soil, were careful to obtain the consent of the Indians to their purchase, and to have that consent expressed in writing, upon the instrument by which they held it—a thing not always done by the white people, in obtaining their lands from the Aborigines.

This purchase was confirmed by the General Assembly of Connecticut, with a view to its becoming a town July 8th, 1686. The proprietors employed an agent, John Butcher, to survey their purchase and to divide one half of it into twelve parts of equal value, which were severally assigned to them by lot. The remaining one half they held as joint stock.

Some of these proprietors, it is believed, moved on to their lands as soon as the purchase was made; others at different periods afterwards, and some never came, but sold the divided part, and some the whole, of their shares. The increase of the population here, was not after the manner of some of our Western towns and villages; for as late as 1713, nearly thirty years after the first settlers arrived, there were considerably less than sixty families, probably, not more than forty-five in the whole town.

In 1714, the town was enlarged by the addition of two farms, owned by Jonathan Belcher, Esq., of Roxbury, Mass., containing two thousand three hundred acres lying south of the "Mashamoquet Purchase," in the town of Mortlake,—or what is now a part of Brooklyn—on his petition to have them incorporated with the town of Pomfret; making the whole number of acres then in the town, to be seventeen thousand four hundred.

This "Purchase," it is believed, was once a favorite residence of the Indians. Some families were residing here when the first settlers came; and the remains of their habitations continued many years. Axes and arrows and pestles and gouges and fragments of cooking utensils—all of stone—are often found in the fields in these days. There is also upon one of the hills in this parish, called Chandler hill, the site of an Indian fort.

The soil of this "Purchase" is uncommonly productive for this part of Connecticut; and within its limits, there is but little land which is not arable. Tradition, however, informs us, that when the division into farms was first made, the few bog-meadows, now so little valued, were more highly prized than the uplands on account of the hay which they produced. The surface of the town is uneven, possessing a peculiar arrangement of hill and dale, which in the summer season, when vegetation is fresh, gives to the scenery a charming aspect.

There are three streams of water winding through this town, which retain their original Indian names. The largest is the Mashamoquet, from which the "Purchase" took its original title. The other two empty into this, viz: the Wappoquians, which runs by the burying ground in this parish; and the Nee-

wichewanna, which comes from the hills in the south part of the town.

The early inhabitants of this town were, evidently, persons who feared God and loved the institutions and ordinances of the gospel. This, however, is what we might reasonably expect, when we remember that most of them came from that place where the "apostle" Elliot lived and preached, and diffused his spirit of piety and benevolence, and probably received the seal of the covenant from his hand. Tradition informs us, that before they were able to sustain the means of grace among themselves, they were accustomed to go to Woodstock to worship; and that females walked from the south part of the town—the distance of seven or eight miles, and sometimes in a snow path—carrying their infants in their arms.

As soon as their number and circumstances would admit, they commenced exertions to have the stated ministry of the gospel amongst themselves; and pursued them in the most serious and resolute manner, until the object was accomplished. Perhaps no method will so well illustrate the character of the first settlers of this town, and bring before you their religious history, as to present the records of their doings from the commencement of their efforts until the settlement of their first minister.

At a meeting of the inhabitants and proprietors of the "Mashamoquet Purchase," May 3d, 1713, the following agreement was made and signed by twenty-three persons:

"It being an indispensable duty, as we would aim at the glory of the Lord our God, and regard not only our temporal and civil good, but also, and especially the spiritual and eternal good of our own souls, and the souls of our dear wives and children—therefore, to lay such a foundation, and make such suitable provisions, as that we may have a gospel ministry settled amongst us, and enjoy God in all his holy ordinances—the which that we may do—it is unanimously voted and agreed to, that for three ensuing years, all our public charge in building a meeting house, and minister's house, and settling a minister, and his maintenance, shall be raised after this way, viz: one half on all lands within the township as granted by the General Assembly, and



now belonging to each inhabitant and proprietor of the township so granted, and the other one half of public charge, as aforesaid, on heads, stocks, and other ratable estate. And we also agree that three judicious persons be appointed to give us timely and seasonable advice in any matters of difficulty, either respecting placing the meeting house, or whatever else may concern or conduce to our public peace, and the orderly settlement of our place. We also agree that the Honorable Assembly be petitioned unto, to grant us a freedom from ordinary country charge, or rates, for three years, as has been their custom and favor, to all new towns; and that the General Court or Assembly, order that all those inhabitants and proprietors of land, lying in our township, that shall neglect or refuse to pay their just proportion of public charge, for the next three years ensuing—their dues being suitably demanded—that so much of their land be seized and disposed of, according to law, as may answer his or their just due and proportion of public charge within our township, as aforesaid. Lastly, we desire and empower, our loving neighbors, Lieut. John Sabin, and Sergt. Leicester Grosvenor, humbly to present our petition and pray the General Assembly to put their sanction hereunto.—Witness our hands.”\*

This petition was granted by the General Assembly May 14th, 1713, and all the privileges of corporate towns conferred. It was also ordered that Mashamoquet should be called Pomfret.

October 28th of this year, “the town voted to give an orthodox minister—such an one as shall be acceptable to the people—one hundred and fifty pounds in money for and towards buying his land and building his house—also, to break up four acres of land and plant two with an orchard—and for his salary fifty-five pounds in money for the first year, until such time as there shall be sixty families settled in the town; and then seventy pounds a year ever after, so long as he shall continue his ministerial relation to us. And Ebenezer Sabin and Samuel Warner are chosen to go and bring a minister to preach and settle here. And it is voted, in the first place, that they shall make their appli-

\* See Note, A.

cation to Mr. Ebenezer Williams of Roxbury, and show him a copy of the votes respecting the settling of a minister here; and if he will accept of what is offered and come and be our minister, they shall seek no farther; but if he may not be prevailed upon to come, then they shall make their address to such others as shall seem advisable."

At a subsequent meeting, Nov. 19th, 1713, the following resolution was adopted:—"Whereas, some time since the town employed some persons to wait on Mr. Williams to come and preach among us, who being newly come off from his journey could not be prevailed upon to come, the town expressing their great value for the said Mr. Williams, desire he may be farther addressed by letter, to come and preach with us for the space of six months; which if it may be obtained, the town promise to pay him for that time, such a salary as shall be honorable, and to his satisfaction; hoping that at the end of said time, we may have such experience of each other, as that the providence of God may open a door for his settlement; and it is desired that Mr. Williams will please send his answer."

At a meeting held three months after this, February 16th, 1713, the following was passed: "Whereas the inhabitants of this town at a public meeting some time since, did agree to address Mr. Ebenezer Williams of Roxbury, to come and preach here, for the space of six months, hoping at the end of that time to have such experience of each other, as that the providence of God will open the door for his settlement; and the said Mr. Williams being accordingly applied unto, did in convenient time, viz. December 23d, 1713, come unto us; and has, as much as the providence of God would permit, continued to preach unto us ever since; and now, although the said six months be not near expired, yet, the people, by the little experience they have had of Mr. Williams, are very well satisfied with him; finding him to be a gentleman very agreeable to them, and every way willing to accept of him for their minister, and to let him know what encouragement they will give him to settle with them—accordingly, therefore, they do freely and faithfully promise and engage, that if the said Mr. Williams doth like the town, and

will and shall settle here in the work of the gospel ministry; they will give him one hundred and seventy pounds, in money, towards buying his land and building his house; and for his salary, sixty pounds yearly for four years; and after that to rise twenty shillings yearly, until it shall come to seventy pounds; and then to stand at seventy pounds, per annum, so long as he shall continue his ministerial labors among them."

"And Mr. Williams being personally present; for several weighty and serious considerations, him thereunto moving, particularly for and in the consideration of what the town has now offered him, doth freely and faithfully and sincerely, promise that he will settle in this town in the work of the ministry, and by the grace of God enabling him, will endeavor to discharge aright all the duties belonging to his profession."

The same day it was voted, "that the meeting house should be set on 'White's plain,' which is supposed to be the place where it actually stood; a little north of the road which turns east, at the top of the 'Meeting House Hill.'

In the following June, the proprietors of the town held a meeting in Roxbury; and for the further encouragement of Mr. Williams to settle here in the gospel ministry, voted, "to give him two hundred acres of land, out of their undivided portion."

In the summer of 1714 the meeting house was raised and covered, but not entirely finished; as is evident from a vote passed in town meeting, in August of the same year—"that the meeting house be carried no further at present than to have the floor laid, the pulpit set up, and the doors made and hung, and the windows finished, the body seats and the minister's pew made. The other pews were built by the individuals, who occupied them, and not at the public charge; and were set up from time to time, as they were needed, as appears from various votes of the town granting such privileges to different persons."\*

May 9th, 1715, it was voted, "that the space in the meeting

\* This probably accounts for the origin of the uncomfortable practice of pew-making in the old meeting houses—every man made his own, to box up himself and family.

house at the west end, between the stairs and the door, be the place for boys to sit."

At a subsequent meeting it was voted, "that the second seat in the body of the meeting house, and the front seat in the gallery, shall be equal in dignity; and that the third seat of the body, and the fore seat of the side gallery, be equal; the fourth seat in the body and the second in the front gallery; and that the governing rule in seating the meeting house be, the three first rates that are made in the town."

In 1719, it was voted "to build a balcony for a bell, which Jonathan Belcher, Esq., offered to bestow upon the town." Whether that balcony was ever built, or the bell ever bestowed, there is no record and no tradition.

The time for the ordination of Mr. Williams was fixed by vote of the town, October 26th, 1715, and "Deacon Sabin, Samuel Warner, Edward Payson, Jonathan Hyde, Nathaniel Sessions, and Ebenezer Truesdale, were desired to take care, that a good dinner should be provided, and that all things be carried on in good order."

Respecting the ordination of Mr. Williams, and the Council which inducted him into the holy office, we have no records; neither have we respecting the formation of the church. It is supposed, however, that the church was organized and the pastor installed the same day, viz: October 26th, 1715.

Of the personal history and ministry of Mr. Williams, we have but little knowledge; as he left, almost, no records concerning himself or his people. We know, however, that he was the grandson of Deacon Samuel Williams of Roxbury, Mass. and nephew of Rev. John Williams of Deerfield, who was carried into captivity by the Indians. He was graduated at Harvard College 1709. In a sermon, preached on the occasion of his death by Solomon Williams, D. D. of Lebanon, he is represented as a fine scholar; a sound and discriminating divine; and as possessing great weight of character among the ministers and churches in this part of the State. He was fellow of Yale College, and his connection with that institution was regarded as of great importance. In the latter part of his life, he is represent-

ed by tradition, to have become exceedingly corpulent, so much so that he could not reach his feet; and when he was absent from home on councils and for ecclesiastical purposes, as he often was, his delegate had to perform the office of foot-dresser.

His ministry was highly valued by the people of the town, and the attendance upon it was large, so that, before the societies of Brooklyn and Abington separated, the house could not well contain those who came to hear him; and frequent discussions and meetings were held, respecting a new house.

The state of the church, during his ministry, was evidently prosperous and happy; though there is not evidence of so great a number of conversions, as sometimes take place, in such a congregation. Of the number who united to form the church at first, we have no knowledge. During the first eighteen years of Mr. Williams's ministry, one hundred and ten persons, were admitted to its communion. Of the remaining twenty years, there is no record. No reason is known why an equal number should not have been added during this period.

In the year 1729, and while Mr. Williams was yet in his prime, the inhabitants of that part of Pomfret, known by the name of Mortlake, petitioned the town to be released from the minister's tax; with a view to establish a church and society by themselves. Their petition was granted. A society was formed, and regular preaching set up, in what is now Brooklyn; and a church organized, November 21st, 1734, composed of members, from this church and the church at Canterbury. Mr. Williams officiated on that occasion. This church and society were known for several years, and until they became the town of Brooklyn, as the second church and society of Pomfret. Their first minister was Rev. Ephraim Avery, ordained 1735. Their second, Rev. Josiah Whitney. After the formation of the society of Brooklyn, business respecting the support of the gospel and schools, ceased to be done in the name of the town; and each society managed those matters by themselves. This part of Pomfret, and all that is now Pomfret, constituted the "old," or "first society," and Brooklyn, the south, or second society.

After this, no mention is made of society and church matters, in town books.

In the year 1749, and while Mr. Williams was still living and active as a minister, the inhabitants of the west part of the town, now known by the name of Abington, petitioned to be set off as a society, with a view to their becoming a distinct church and congregation. Their petition was granted and confirmed by the Legislature. Their meeting house was built in 1751, which is the one that has been recently repaired. Their church was organised by Mr. Williams, from members from this church, January 28th, 1753, and was known as the Third Church of Pomfret, until the incorporation of Brooklyn as a town, when it took the title of the Second Church, or the Church of Abington. The line between the two Societies of Pomfret and Abington, as it now remains, is said to have been run by Rev. Mr. Williams.

Mr. Williams died, much lamented by his people, March 28th, 1753, in the sixty-third year of his age, and thirty-eighth of his ministry, in this place. His funeral charges were defrayed by the society. The officers of the church during Mr. Williams' ministry, were his brother Wm. Williams, afterwards of Brooklyn, (as is believed,) Benjamin Sabin, and Philemon Chandler. If there were others, their names are not known.

The children of Mr. Williams were, Samuel—Chester, for many years a distinguished minister of the gospel in Hadley, Mass., and father of the late Rev. Mr. Williams of Brimfield, and of Mrs. Emmons, wife of the late Rev. Dr. Emmons, of Franklin Mass.—Ebenezer, an influential citizen of this town, and a Colonel of the militia in the revolutionary war—Nehemiah, and Hannah, who married General Huntington of Norwich, and was the mother of Generals Ebenezer and Zachariah Huntington, and grand mother of Hon. Jabez W. Huntington, our present Senator in Congress.

After the death of Mr. Williams, the church was destitute of a pastor for three years; though it is believed they had preaching most of the time. Thirty-one children were baptised by the neighbouring ministers. Mr. Russel, afterwards minister of Thompson, preached to this people for some time; and received

a call from them, to become their pastor; but for some reason saw fit to decline.

The Rev. Aaron Putnam then supplied them, and received a call to become their pastor and teacher, Nov. 17th, 1755, and gave his answer in the affirmative, Feb. 8th, 1756, in a sermon from Job 33 : 6. "*Behold, I am according to thy wish in God's stead ; I also am formed out of the clay.*" The time of his ordination, was appointed to be the following March 10th, 1756. Previous to that time, namely, February 25th, a day of fasting and prayer was observed by the church, with reference to the interests of the church, and the preparation of themselves and the pastor elect, for the solemn day of his ordination. Seven of the neighbouring ministers were present ; two sermons were delivered, and Mr. Putnam was examined with reference to his qualifications for the gospel ministry. On March 10th the council convened for his ordination at the house of Deacon Ebenezer Holbrook. Twelve ministers were present, with their delegates. Rev. Dr. Williams, of Lebanon, was Moderator, and Rev. Ebenezer Devotion, of Scotland, Scribe. The council voted unanimously, to proceed to his ordination. Mr. Gleason, of Dudley, offered the first prayer ; Mr. Mosely, of Windham Village, now Hampton, preached the sermon ; Mr. Rice, of Sturbridge, offered the ordaining prayer ; Dr. Williams gave the charge ; Mr. Devotion gave the right hand of fellowship ; Mr. Williams, of Woodstock, offered the last prayer, and the solemnity was concluded by singing the 68th Psalm.

Of Mr. Putnam and his ministry, a great deal cannot be said ; though in many respects it was an eventful period, both to this church and the country. Mr. Putnam was the son of Rev. Daniel Putnam, of Reading, Mass. He graduated at Harvard College in 1752. Of his talents and influence as a minister, judging from what I have seen and heard, I should think he was hardly equal to his predecessor. He published some pamphlets during the latter part of his ministry, which, though they show a christian spirit, and in their design were most excellent, are not indicative of great mental force. Still, it is believed, he was a very useful and acceptable servant of Christ, serious and godly in his

deportment; careful to admonish transgressors, and to maintain order in the house of God. The records show him to have been very thorough, not to say severe, in his discipline. He had high notions of the sanctity of the sabbath, and most scrupulously avoided every thing in sign, word, or deed, that had the appearance of desecrating that holy day. During the latter part of his ministry he lost his health, and finally, his voice; so that for several years before his dismissal, he was unable to preach. During this period he did what he could to fulfil the office of a christian bishop. He wrote sermons, which were read on the sabbath, to the people, by the deacons. He also wrote epistles to members of the church and society, and as before remarked, published a few small tracts for their benefit. But the church and society suffered much, at this time, from the want of a *speaking* preacher, and the regular administration of the ordinances. And what was worse than all; in their attempts to settle a colleague, they became divided and almost extinct. A part of the church and society went off, and settled under the pastoral care of one Oliver Dodge, who was the rejected candidate for the office of colleague, assuming the name of "the reformed catholic church of Pomfret." While this schism prevailed, the town was full of "debates and backbitings and whisperings and swellings and tumults;" and nearly the whole county, churches and ministers and civilians, became implicated in the controversy; and a most violent and disgraceful newspaper and pamphlet warfare, was kept up for several years. During this period, those who adhered to their minister, and to this church and society, used to meet from sabbath to sabbath; a small and feeble band, indeed, in their great meeting house, standing near this place, to pray and read the word of God. One of the deacons would read, and the other would pray, and their poor, speechless minister would show his approbation by his constant presence. It was a melancholy spectacle. The multitude were all gone after the pretender. Those that remained were oppressed and despised; and as they sat around in their several pews, here and there one, they might adopt the language of the prophet, "we are in desolate places as dead men." But though they were few and fee-



ble, the Lord heard their prayers, and in his own time granted them deliverance from their sorrow. Greater blessings than they dared to hope for, were granted them. Dodge, who had been the occasion of all their trouble, and who drew away the people after him, proved, after a while, to be a drunkard and an apostate, one of the vilest ; and his followers became disgusted with him, and weary of their schism, cheerfully returned to the church and society which they had left, and harmoniously united in the choice of Rev. Asa King, to be their colleague pastor. Since that time, no schism has occurred, or any thing unusual, to mar the harmony and peace of the church or society.

When the council were convened for the ordination of Mr. King, it was thought best, by all the parties, that the pastoral relation between the church and Mr. Putnam should be dissolved, and that Mr. King, should be installed sole pastor, which was accordingly done. It was ordered, however, that a stipulated, annual allowance, should be paid by the society, for the support of Mr. Putnam during his life.

Mr. Putnam admitted, during his ministry of forty-six years, one hundred and seventy-six members to the communion of the church, and baptized seven hundred and sixty-one children. His death occurred October 28th, 1813, in the eightieth year of his age. He had two wives. His first was the daughter of Rev. Dr. Hall, of Sutton, Mass., and sister of the late Doct. Jonathan Hall, of this town. She was killed by being thrown from a carriage, in the hollow, a few rods north of this house. His other wife was the daughter of Rev. Ephraim Avery, of Brooklyn. He had one son, Aaron, who was a minister of the gospel, and one daughter, who was the wife of Rev. Samuel P. Storrs of the State of New York. In the year 1760, in the early part of Mr. Putnam's ministry, a new and large meeting house was commenced on the common, directly in front of the one which we now occupy. Some difficulty occurred about moving from the old site, at the top of the hill, and two or three years elapsed before it was ready for public worship. The frame, I am told, stood a year or more, uncovered. Those difficulties, however, soon passed away and all became willing to finish the house and

meet in it, for the worship of their God and Saviour. The officers of the church during Mr. Putnam's ministry, were deacons Samuel Sumner, Ebenezer Holbrook, Jonathan Dresser, David Williams, John Holbrook, Simon Cotton, Caleb Hayward, William Sabin, and John H. Payson.

Mr. King, as before intimated, was ordained pastor of this church May 5th, 1802. He is a native of Mansfield, in this State. He studied theology with Rev. John Sherman and Rev. Dr. Welch, of his native town. Great harmony prevailed during his continuance with this people. In the year 1808, a very extensive and powerful revival prevailed, and "many were added unto the Lord," both in this and the Baptist Society. Mr. King was dismissed June 15th, 1811, on account of ill-health. He was afterwards settled for many years, at North Killingworth, in this State, and is now pastor of the church in Westminster, in this county. During his ministry here of nine years, Mr. King admitted ninety-nine persons to the communion of the church by profession, and ten by letter. He baptized ninety-seven children. His ministry since he left here, has been perhaps, equally successful. During his connexion with this people, the meeting house was repaired, and a balcony was erected, which, I am told, cost the society more than the building we now occupy. A bell was given to the society by Mr. Benjamin Duick, which is the foundation of the one we now possess. Mr. Oliver Grosvenor was chosen Deacon near the close of Mr. King's ministry.

After the dismissal of Mr. King, the people were in a destitute condition, for two or three years. They had a great number of candidates, some of whom they rejected; and others who being invited to settle, rejected them. At length, they were united in giving a call to the Rev. James Porter, who was pleased to accept their invitation, and was, accordingly, ordained Sept. 8th, 1814. The sermon preached at his ordination by Rev. Elijah Dunbar, of Peterborough, N. H., was printed. Mr. Porter is a native of Peterborough, and was graduated at Williams College in 1810. He continued as the minister of this parish until April 23d, 1830, when, on account of protracted ill-health,

there being no prospect of his restoration, so as to perform the duties of the ministry, he was dismissed, greatly beloved and confided in, by the people. He still lives without charge, in Woodstock, in this State. During his ministry of sixteen years, great harmony prevailed. Several seasons of refreshing were granted to the church, "from the presence of the Lord." The first Sabbath School in this town, or in this region, was established in this church, in the early part of Mr. Porter's ministry. Major Asa Copeland was the first Superintendant. Ninety persons were admitted to the church, and one hundred and twelve were baptized. Brothers Job and Zephaniah Williams, were chosen deacons during his ministry.

The year and a half, that intervened between the dismissal of Mr. Porter and the settlement of his successor, was a period in many respects, of great discouragement and trial to this people. Before Mr. Porter's dismissal his health had for some time been feeble, and others had taken the advantage. Sectarian influence was rife and active. The old meeting house had become so dilapidated and uncomfortable, that it must either be repaired or rebuilt. Withal, it was so large and contained so small an audience, that ministers shunned it, fearing that it would soon cause them to "cough their own knell." One or two ministers were called, who rejected their invitations. It was truly, a day of darkness and gloominess. All knees were feeble and all hands hung down. However, the Lord did not utterly forsake them. Under the preaching of a young man, Rev. David A. Grosvenor, now of Uxbridge, Mass., who supplied them for a while, a little season of revival was granted. Twenty-eight persons were brought into the church, and fourteen adults and children were baptized. Thus like Israel of old, "they were helped with a little help." At this period they made preparation to build a new place of worship, and formed their contracts. Some assistance was granted them by their friends abroad.

Oct. 19th, 1831, Rev. Amzi Benedict was installed pastor of the church and society; and the ensuing summer this house, which we now occupy, was built and dedicated in October to the worship of Almighty God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Mr. Benedict is a native of New Canaan, in this State, was graduated at Yale College in 1814, and at the Theological Seminary, Andover in 1818. He was first settled in Vernon, in this State, then over this church. During his ministry of two years and nine months, a very interesting revival was enjoyed by the church. Seventy-seven persons were admitted to the church—seventy-three by profession, and four by letter. Fifty of the above number, I am informed, were admitted in one day. Mr. Benedict baptized forty-five adults and forty-two children. He was dismissed July 15th, 1834. He has since been settled at Manlius, N. Y., and is now Principal of a Female Seminary, in New Haven.

The present pastor is a native of Columbia, in this State—was graduated at Amherst College in 1828, and at the Theological Seminary, Andover, in 1833—was ordained as pastor of this church and people, April 8th, 1835. The number of persons who have been admitted since my labors commenced here, is forty-five—nineteen by profession, and twenty-six by letter. I have baptized forty-four persons—thirty-eight children, and six adults. Deacon Zephaniah Williams died in 1838, and brother Lewis Averill was chosen to fill his place. Probably at no period in the history of this church were its numbers greater than at the present time, though we now number but one hundred and sixty-two. The congregation at the present time, though larger than at some former periods, does not compare with what it was, under the ministry of Mr. Williams and Mr. Putnam, and Mr. King, when the great house, which would hold a thousand persons, was filled above and below, together with the pulpit and gallery stairs. Great changes have taken place. Non-essentials have magnified in the esteem of the people. Four places of worship have arisen in this parish, in a population which were once accommodated in one. We are denounced by one denomination, as having no ordination; by another, as having no ordinances; and by a third, as having too many. But who are right, we or they, “the day of the Lord” will make manifest. However, I am persuaded, there is a greater amount of vital piety, amongst this people now, than in some former years. The

number of professors of religion is much larger than at any former period. The morals of the people, are in some important respects greatly improved, in others they have, probably, declined.

Respecting the church in Abington, I observed, it was organized January 28th, 1753. The number of members which composed it at first, was about forty. The first deacons were Samuel Craft and Edward Ruggles. The Rev. David Ripley was ordained the first pastor, February 23d, 1753. The services at his ordination were performed by the following ministers. Mr. Cogswell, of Canterbury, offered the first prayer; Mr. Devotion, of Scotland, preached; Mr. Stiles, of Woodstock, offered the ordaining prayer; Mr. Williams, of Pomfret, gave the charge; Mr. Cabot, of Thompson, offered another prayer; and Mr. Avery, of Brooklyn, gave the hand of fellowship.

Of Mr. Ripley's personal history, I have been able to obtain but little. He was a native of Windham, in this State—graduated at Yale College—received the Master's degree from Harvard, 1754. He is supposed to have possessed rather superior gifts, as a preacher. The church and society were generally prosperous under his ministry. It is said, that at the time of his death, which occurred in 1785, there was not a dissenting family in the parish, nor one that did not attend meeting. He admitted to the communion of the church about one hundred and forty persons, and baptized seven hundred children and adults. He was the father of Rev. David B. Ripley, late of Marlborough, Conn.

Rev. Walter Lyon was the second minister of Abington. He was a native of Woodstock, in this State—graduated at Dartmouth College 1777, and was made Master at Yale 1782. He was ordained December 31st, 1782. The following ministers performed the services: Mr. Sumner, of Shrewsbury, Mass., offered the introductory prayer; Mr. Paine, of Sturbridge, Mass., preached; Mr. Cogswell, of Scotland, offered the ordaining prayer; Mr. Williams, of Woodstock, gave the charge; Mr. Russell, of Thompson, offered a prayer after the charge; and Mr. Whitney, of Brooklyn, gave the hand of fellowship.

Mr. Lyon was a very conscientious and exemplary minister of the gospel, careful to admonish transgressors, and maintain the authority of the church over its members. Some seasons of refreshing were enjoyed by the church during his ministry. In the latter part of his life he entered very fully into the benevolent operations of the day, and made liberal bequests to the cause of foreign missions and of education for the ministry, also to the society of which he was pastor. During his ministry of forty-four years, he admitted one hundred and four persons to the communion of the church by profession, and baptized two hundred and forty. His death occurred February 11th, 1826. The deacons appointed during his ministry, were Robert Sharpe, Benjamin Ruggles, Joshua Grosvenor, Samuel Crafts, Amassa Storrs, William Osgood, and Willis Goodell.

After the death of Mr. Lyon, the church in Abington was destitute of a pastor nearly two years, when they united, February 19th, 1828, in giving an invitation to the Rev. Charles Fitch, to become their pastor and teacher, which he was pleased to accept, and was accordingly ordained April 30th, 1828.

Of Mr. Fitch, it may be said, that without the advantages of an early or classic education, or any regular theological instruction, he far exceeded, as a preacher, what could have been expected. During his ministry of four years, there was much religious interest among the people, and many hopeful conversions. Fifty were added to the church by profession, and some by letter. He also baptised fifty-two persons, children and adults. Since his dismissal he has occupied free churches in Hartford and Boston, and his sympathies are at present enlisted with the perfectionists and the school at Oberlin.

The present pastor, Rev. Nathan S. Hunt, is a native of Coventry, in this State—graduated at Williams College 1830, and at the Theological Seminary, Andover, in 1833—was ordained pastor of the church in Abington, February 12th, 1834. He is grandson of Rev. Nathan Strong, of North Coventry, and nephew of the Rev. Drs. Strong, of Hartford and Norwich. During his ministry the interests of the church and society have prospered. Twenty-five have been added by profession, and twelve by

letter. He has baptized sixty-two persons. During the past season the society have remodeled their ancient house, and made in it most desirable changes for their convenience and comfort. The present number of members in the church, is one hundred and twenty—thirty-four males and eighty-six females. The present deacons are Elisha Lord and William Osgood, Jun.

Of the Baptist Society in this town, I have, as yet, said nothing. It had its origin in events that took place during the ministry of Mr. Putnam, and in connection with the influence and agency of Rev. Dr. Manning, of Providence. The church, however, was not formed until April 9th, 1806. For many years they had no meeting house, but worshipped in school houses, chiefly in the northeast and southeast districts of this parish. Their present valuable house of worship, was erected in 1821. They have never had, it is believed, any settled pastor; but have supplied their pulpit by annual contract. Five different ministers have served them. They have had several seasons of revival, and of additions to their church. The size of their congregation is very respectable. The present number of communicants is one hundred and forty-two. The whole number that have been added since its formation, is three hundred and twenty-three. Some members of this church have become preachers of the gospel. Their present preacher is the Rev. Warren Cooper.

The Episcopal Society in this town was formed in 1830, while this people were destitute of a pastor, and their house built and consecrated. They have had two or three different ministers, who have supplied them one half of the time, in connexion with the church at Brooklyn. Two members of this church have become preachers of the gospel. Rev. Riverius Camp is their present minister.

The friends Meeting house was built in 1820, during the ministry of Mr. Porter. They had for several years previous to this time, held meetings in a school house near their present place of worship. But few families in Pomfret belong to this meeting. Some from Killingly—some from Brooklyn, and some

from Abington, unite with them in sustaining their mode and place of worship.

Having said thus much respecting the religious history of this town, I will now pass to what I may perhaps call its *literary* or *scholastic* history. It appears, from the records, that the fathers of this town were, like the early fathers of New England, as much engaged to establish and sustain schools, as they were the preaching and ordinances of the gospel, for immediately upon the erection of their meeting house, and while it was yet unfinished, they voted, January 28th, 1719, "to erect a school house, near the meeting house, twenty-four feet by nineteen, seven feet studs, which shall be reared and finished by the next Michaelmas, come twelve month, which will be in the year of our Lord 1721." A committee was also appointed to oversee the affairs of the school in general.

In August, 1723, it was voted, first, that the school house shall be finished with all convenient speed. Secondly, query? whether the town will agree upon this method, as to the places where the school shall be kept in the town; namely, that the school be kept one half of the time in the school house already built, and the other half of the time somewhere, farther northward, in some house which the neighborhood shall provide, and the whole maintained in the same public manner? Voted in the affirmative. Thirdly, query? Whether the town will allow those that live south of Governor Saltonstall's land, their proportion of collector Whitney's rate; which proportion amounts to three pounds, ten shillings and eight pence, towards building a school house for themselves, provided they first erect a school house; also, their proportion of all rates that shall hereafter be made towards the maintenance, provided they keep a school among themselves." These three schools were established almost simultaneously at the north, centre, and south part of the town.

At a meeting of the town in June, 1729, six years later, it was voted, "to raise one penny on the pound to defray the expense of the schools." This also was passed—"Whereas there are sundry families in the town who are so remote from the school houses, that they can have no benefit of sending their children



by reason of the distance of the way ; the town now submits notwithstanding any former vote, that upon the request and application of any number of families to the select men, they shall at their discretion accommodate them with a school, at any part of the town, until the town sees cause to order otherwise." Here then, I see not, why all needful provision was not made for the education of the children and youth of this place. This provision continued to be made by vote of the town until the society of Brooklyn was set off, when it was done by the ecclesiastical society, in connexion with their provision for the support of the ministry. This practice continued, I believe, throughout the State until the appropriation of the school fund of Connecticut, to the purposes of education, when the present system of school societies was decreed. Of the time when the present order of districts was established in the town, I have no means of determining. There is a small fund belonging to the first school society, obtained by the sale of State lands in Litchfield County,\* whose annual interest is appropriated for the benefit of the common schools.

But the early inhabitants were not only the friends of common schools, but of the higher branches and institutions of learning. The first minister of this town, as already observed, was a Fellow of Yale College. His second son graduated there, and others were continually going from this place to the higher schools and colleges of New England, and have been until the present day. At one time, I am informed, there were seven young men from this parish in Yale College, all of whom became ministers of the gospel. Some of the most distinguished ministers and civilians in the country have gone from this town. I have ascertained the names† of about thirty persons from this parish who have become ministers of the gospel ; two of whom received the honorary title of D. D. ; also of three who were distinguished Judges of courts in different States ; three who have been members of Congress, and one, for many years, a Senator of the United States ; two who were reckoned among the most distin-

\* See Note B.

† See Note C.

guished barristers in the State of New York ; and another who has been Speaker of the House of Representatives in that State.\*

In the profession of law, there have never been many who have resided in this place. Two men, however, were ornaments to that profession, Hon. Thomas Grosvenor, for many years Judge of the County Court and State Counsellor, and Sylvanus Backus, long a Speaker of the House of Representatives in this State, and at the time of his death, a member elect to the Congress of the United States.

In the profession of medicine and surgery, this town has not been deficient. Dr. Abbigence Waldo and Dr. Thomas Hubbard, had a high reputation in this and the neighboring States. Others hardly less distinguished have resided in the town.†

Special efforts were made by the early inhabitants of this town and vicinity, to provide themselves with the means of general and useful knowledge. In 1739 a solemn covenant was entered into by sixteen individuals of Pomfret, Woodstock, and Killingly, including the ministers of the several parishes, to pay the sums affixed to their names, for the establishment of a library. One man gave thirty pounds, and four others, twenty pounds each, and the sixteen made out two hundred and fifty-four. (Very liberal we should call that in these times.)

This library association was called "The United English Library, for the propagation of Christian and Useful Knowledge." It was ordered that the books of said library should be kept in Pomfret. Mr. Williams was the first Librarian. After the formation of the society, other individuals joined them. Fifteen persons very soon, who paid into the society one hundred and eighty-five pounds. With these funds, a very valuable library was purchased. They also received presents of books from friends abroad, and from authors. Thanks were voted, as appears by the records, to Rev. Dr. Guise, of London, for his works. In 1745, the library was divided ; the inhabitants of the several towns taking their share of the books and funds, to con-

\* See Note D.

† See Note E.

stitute a distinct library by themselves. General Israel Putnam was admitted to this association, August 27th, 1753, and "paid sixteen pounds, old tenon." The Pomfret branch continued to be sustained for many years. The old case and a remnant of the books, I now have in my possession.

The foregoing statistics sufficiently illustrate the interest which our fathers felt in the cause of education and the diffusion of useful knowledge. May their descendants fear to fall behind them.

I may next refer to their interest in *the cause of civil freedom*. We have abundant reason to believe that the first settlers of this town were firm supporters of the rights of the colonies against regal oppression, and any infraction upon the exercise of civil and religious freedom. The first notice I have been able to find of their feelings in reference to the war of the revolution, is derived from the account we have of a donation which they made for the benefit of the poor in Boston, during the time that the British troops were quartered there. The following letter from the Selectmen of Boston to the Selectmen of Pomfret, dated July 8th, 1774, is an interesting relic, and shows the feelings of the citizens of both places, and the spirit of those times which tried men's souls.

"GENTLEMEN :—By the hand of Mr. Elias Wells we received your generous and kind benefaction for the poor of this distressed town. We cannot enough express our gratitude for this instance of your bounty, in which you have liberally contributed to the relief of many. What you have thus lent to the Lord, we trust and pray that he will pay you again. It gives us great consolation amidst our complicated and unparalleled sufferings, that our brethren in the other colonies show such christian sympathy and true benevolence towards us. That we are greatly distressed, needs no comment. Our harbor blockaded by a fleet of ships; our foreign trade actually annihilated; thousands of poor reduced to extreme want; troops continually pouring in upon us, to insult us in this our distress, is a consideration that must excite pity in the most obdurate. However, although we

thus suffer, we are willing to suffer still more, rather than give up our birthright privileges. With great regard, we are your brethren and most humble servants."

JOHN SEELEY,  
TIMOTHY NEWELL,  
SAMUEL AUSTIN,  
JOHN PITTS, } *Selectmen  
of Boston.*

This letter establishes some facts of great interest. It shows the spirit which operated to produce the revolution, and to secure the liberties of this country. "We are willing to suffer still more rather than give up our birthright." It shows that the people of this town fully possessed that spirit. It shows that they were a benevolent people. "They did liberally." It shows above all, that the fathers of the revolution went to their work in the fear of God ; and were not afraid, in all their correspondence and public acts, to recognise and express their dependence on Him. "The Selectmen of Boston trust in and pray to God !" Who sees such things in the documents of the Selectmen and rulers of these days ?

"Those suns are set. O rise some other such !

"Or all that we have left, is empty talk

"Of old achievements, and despair of new."

A company seems to have been formed in this town, as early as 1774, with reference to the threatening difficulties. Stephen Brown was the Captain, and Thomas Grosvenor, Lieutenant. This company immediately after the news of the battle of Lexington, marched, under the direction of Colonel Knowlton, to Cambridge and was engaged in the memorable battle of Bunker Hill, where three men, inhabitants of Pomfret, were killed, and fifteen wounded. Lieutenant Grosvenor was wounded in the hand.

At a town meeting held March 26th, 1779, the town voted to appoint a committee to supply the families of the poor, whose husbands and fathers were gone into the service. Then the question was put, "whether the town would take any measures to encourage and promote the speedy raising and enlisting of men

to fill up the number to be raised within said town, according to the proposal of the Governor and Council, passed in the affirmative." "Also, voted and agreed to firmly unite among ourselves, and strictly to adhere to the laws regulating prices, and to use our joint and several influences to support and maintain the same as a very important regulation for the support of the army, and preventing every measure, artfully taken, for the oppression of the poor." "Also voted that the sum of twenty-four pounds lawful money be paid each effective man that has or shall enlist into the continental army for three years, or during the war, in this town, by the 7th day of April next, not exceeding eighty men." This money as appears, was raised partly by subscription and partly by tax.

Under this encouragement, seventy-one men from this town enlisted into the continental army. The town paid them a bounty of three thousand four hundred and seven pounds, and for the support of their families, two thousand eight hundred and eighty-nine pounds, in all, six thousand two hundred and ninety-six pounds, or twenty thousand nine hundred and sixty-five dollars, according to New England currency. In addition to this, there were various militia services and expenses, which I have no means of determining.

Three men from this town, were especially distinguished for their bravery and enterprise in the revolutionary war; General Israel Putnam,\* whose history is so familiar to every one that I need not dwell upon it; Captain Stephen Brown, who was killed at the taking of Mud Island Fort; and Colonel Thomas Grosvenor. Of the latter gentleman, I have the following memoranda from the Boston Spectator, of August 6th, 1825, published soon after his death:

Colonel Grosvenor was the son of John Grosvenor, Esq., and born at Pomfret in 1744. He was educated at Yale College, under the Presidency of Mr. Clapp, and afterwards pursued the study of the law, till the measures of the British ministry roused the energies of New England to resistance. At this crisis he did

\* See Note F.

not hesitate what course to pursue, entering at once into the spirit of the times. He accepted a Lieutenancy in Captain Brown's Company, (as before stated,) and was present at the battle of Bunker Hill. He was afterwards in the disastrous conflict near Flatland, on Long Island, when General Sullivan was captured. He was also with the retreating army in its subsequent progress from Long Island to Harlem Heights, Morisania, and White Plains, and in its desponding flight through the Jerseys, and beyond the Delaware. He recrossed the Delaware with that army, and was present at the actions of Trenton and Princeton. In 1778, he was at the battle of Monmouth; and during the subsequent part of that year's campaign, was constantly attached to the main army under Washington. In 1779, he accompanied General Sullivan in his expedition against the Six Nations. In the winter of that year, and of 1780, he first broke ground at West Point, and began a fort at the present site of the United States Military Academy, halting his corps there. The celebrated Kosciusko was the engineer who directed the operations with him at that time.

In 1780, Colonel Durkee retiring from the service, Lieutenant Colonel Grosvenor was promoted to his place. The active duties of Colonel, had been previously discharged by him. About this time he evinced great penetration, judgment, and energy, in detecting and suppressing a dangerous meeting that broke out in the camp near the time of the famous Newburgh letter.

After the disbanding of the army, Colonel Grosvenor returned, like many other distinguished officers of the revolution, to his farm in Pomfret, and immediately laid aside the garb, and the habits of a soldier—habits which he had acquired by seven years experience of toil, and the privations of the camp—with the same apparent ease that they had been assumed.

Colonel Grosvenor appears, throughout his useful life, to have been directed, not by ambition, but the desire to be useful. It is remarkable of him, that he lived after his retirement to his native place, forty years, greatly venerated by all, without ever revisiting the principal scenes of the revolution, with which he

had been conversant, or even leaving the confines of his native State.

He was for more than twenty years, a member of the Governor's Council in Connecticut; and for a much longer time, Chief Judge of the Court of Common Pleas in this County. He was a member of this church at the time of his death, which occurred July 11th, 1825.

I have thus given you an account of the religious, literary, and civil history of this town. Several other topics of interest ought to be mentioned and dwelt upon, if time would permit—such as the hospitality and benevolence of the people; their interest in the cause of temperance; their wealth and enterprise compared with other farming towns; their past and present population; the influences that have operated to change the character of society; the health in former and recent years, and the bills of mortality compared with other towns and sections of the country.\* But to do justice to these topics would carry me beyond your patience, and my own strength. I will just say, however, that the people of this town have ever been esteemed a hospitable and benevolent people. From the day they remembered the poor in Boston, until now, their liberality in the cause of christian benevolence, has abounded. Their efforts in the cause of the temperance reform, were also early and have been thorough and persevering. As their fathers pursued the wolf, which disturbed and destroyed their flocks, until they had effected her destruction, so the children have pursued the monster intemperance by day and night, o'er hill and dale, in church and court, in authority meeting and town meeting; so that, at the present time, the sale of intoxicating drink is not allowed within the limits of this town.

And now let me conclude with a few remarks, appropriate to this subject, and to the services of this day.

1. *We see the blessings of a pious and intelligent ancestry.—*

\* See Note G.

Every community partakes very much of the character of its ancestors. In every town and state and nation, we find traces of their origin. We read their history in themselves. What gave Israel such superiority over all other nations? The piety and wisdom of their patriarchs. What gives this country, and particularly our own New England, such superiority in civil, social and religious institutions? The virtue and intelligence of our ancestors. The same influences wrought here. The fathers of this town were near akin to the first settlers of New England. They were rocked by them in their cradles, and trained under their immediate influence and inspection; and when they came here they brought all those institutions, civil and religious, which the pilgrims came to this land to establish and enjoy. When we look round then upon these churches and schools—upon this intelligent and happy community, and all the social and religious blessings with which we are surrounded, we should remember, this is an inheritance from our fathers. They brought all these things into this place. They came here to prepare them for us. This very occasion of annual Thanksgiving, which has called us together, is their legacy. They taught their children to observe this day, and their children taught another generation; and we, following the same devout practice, meet to day to praise the God of our fathers. Ought we not to venerate the names and character, and cherish the institutions of such ancestors? What true descendant does not feel his heart warming and swelling at the mention of those men, who have transmitted to him such an inheritance, and at the same time resolve never to trifle with his birthright.

2. *We see the faithfulness of God to his Church.*—This has always been seen and known, from the beginning. God proved it to Israel, times without number; and he has proved it to the christian church, in all ages and in all countries. But it is sometimes comforting to see his fidelity in near relation to ourselves. This church, we have reason to think, was planted in faith, and that God adopted it as his own vine. From time to time he has watered it and made it grow. Sometimes it has stood in the



desert, sometimes in the fire. The enemy has trampled on it. But it still lives. Like the bush which Moses saw, it has “burned unconsumed.” And we are now permitted to commemorate its preservation, and consider the years of the right hand of the Most High; when he wrought deliverance for it, and enlargement. Surely, the God of this church is a faithful God. The history of his dealings with it, which we have now reviewed, proves him so. Hence,

3. *We see our obligation to be faithful to Him.*—God has been faithful to our fathers—has remembered their sacrifices and prayers, and preserved their institutions, and brought them down to us. But if we become faithless and unfruitful, his glory will depart from us, and “the candlestick be removed out of its place.” It has been God’s way, when his people have become disobedient and unthankful, to leave them to themselves. So he did with the churches of Asia, planted by the hands of the apostles, and watered by their tears. Once they “flourished as Eden,” but when they became lukewarm and self-confident and rebellious, the blast of heaven passed over them and they ceased to be. O then, let us remember as a church and people, thus far preserved by the good hand of God, our obligations, and be faithful in every duty. Let our works of faith and love abound. Let us be instant in prayer, that these blessed institutions and privileges may be transmitted from us unimpaired, and handed down from generation to generation, till the world shall end.

*Finally. Let us praise the Lord.*—“O, says the Psalmist, that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, for his wonderful works to the children of men.” Surely we have occasion to praise him. His love and works to our fathers and to us, have been wonderful. “He has not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.” “His mercies have been new every morning, fresh every evening, and repeated every moment of our lives.” During the year that now closes, great has been his goodness. He has kept us, as a people, “from the pestilence that walketh in darkness, and the destruction that

wasteth at noon day," he has made rich provision for the sustenance of man and beast, "causing the earth to yield her increase" and "the clouds to drop down fatness." He has "satisfied our mouth with good things." He has also granted us the means of grace and the offers of eternal life through his blessed Son. Many of us from Sabbath to Sabbath, have been permitted to meet in his house, and have blessed foretaste of "the rest that remaineth for the people of God." O let us praise him—praise him for his goodness to our fathers—for his goodness to us—for all his wonderful works to the children of men. "It is good to sing praises unto our God, for it is pleasant, and praise is comely." Praise is the highest, holiest exercise in which we can be engaged. Praise is the employment of heaven. The angels praise. The spirits of just men made perfect, praise. We shall not always pray, but, if we are christians, we shall always praise. And never had we so much occasion to praise God, as now. Let us then anticipate the employment of heaven, and exercise ourselves unto praise. Let us begin to day. This is the day to praise. O, beloved, praise the Lord for his goodness. Say, each one of you, "while I live I will praise the Lord, I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being."

## REFERENCES.

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NOTE A.—The following are the names of those persons who first signed the agreement to sustain the preaching of the gospel, in this town:

|                          |                             |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Benjamin Sabin, (deacon) | Philemon Chandler, (deacon) |
| John Sabin,              | Daniel Allen,               |
| Nathaniel Gany,          | David Allen,                |
| Benjamin Sitton,         | Joseph Tucker,              |
| Samuel Gates,            | Lemuel Taylor,              |
| Edward Payson,           | Leicester Grosvenor,        |
| Samuel Paine,            | Ebenezer Grosvenor,         |
| John Cummings,           | Benjamin Sabin, Jun.,       |
| Josiah Sabin,            | Jeremiah Sabin,             |
| Samuel Warner,           | Stephen Sabin,              |
| Thomas Goodell,          | Ebenezer Sabin.             |
| Seth Paine,              |                             |

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NOTE B.—The State of Connecticut formerly owned lands in Litchfield County; and when they were sold, the avails were distributed to the several School Societies then existing, to constitute a fund, whose annual interest should be appropriated to the support of common schools. The whole amount thus distributed by the State, I have no means of determining. That held by this Society, is three hundred and twenty dollars. The first School Societies in the State, only, received it, and no division was ever made in favor of those Societies that were afterwards set off. The Abington, or 2nd School Society of this town, petitioned the Legislature for a portion of this fund, but their prayer was not heard.

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NOTE C.—The following are the names of those who have become ministers of the gospel, from this town:

|   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| Chester Williams—Hadley, Mass.—son<br>of Rev. Ebenezer. | Joseph Pope—Spencer, Mass.        |
| Ezra Weld—Braintree, Mass.                              | Joseph Sumner, Shrewsbury, Mass.  |
| Joshua Paine—Sturbridge, Mass.                          | Josiah Dana.                      |
| Ebenezer Grosvenor—Scituate, Mass.                      | Eleazer Craft—Craftsbury, Vt.     |
| Ephraim Hyde—Bridgewater, Mass.                         | Abishai Sabin—Monson, Mass.       |
| Holland Weeks—Abington, Mass.                           | John Sabin—Fitzwilliam, N. H.     |
|   | Thomas Williams—Providence, R. I. |

|                                      |                                   |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Elijah Wheeler—Great Barrington, Ms. | Job Hall—Agent American Ed. Soc.  |
| Daniel Grosvenor—Paxton, Mass.       | Charles Dresser—Illinois.         |
| Aaron Putnam, son of Rev. Aaron.     | Erastus Spalding.                 |
| William Morse—Marlborough, Mass.     | A. H. Vinton—Providence, R. I.    |
| Nathan Grosvenor—Chaplin, Con.       | Francis Vinton—Newport, R. I.     |
| George Payson—Kennebunk, Maine.      | Benjamin Congdon.                 |
| Joshua P. Payson—Martha's Vineyard.  | David B. Ripley—Marlborough, Con. |
| Mason Grosvenor—Hudson, Ohio.        | Andrew Sharpe—Willimantic, Con.   |
| Charles P. Grosvenor—Scituate, R. I. |                                   |

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NOTE D.—The following persons, in the legal profession, have gone from this town:

Benjamin Ruggles, Senator in Congress, from Ohio.  
 Elisha Williams, Hudson, New York.  
 Thomas Grosvenor, Member of Congress, from New York.  
 John P. Cushman, Member of Congress, from New York.  
 Seth Cushman, Vermont.  
 Richard Goodell, Speaker of the House of Representatives, New York.  
 Josiah Spalding, Tennessee.  
 David Hall, New York City.  
 J. Prescott Hall, do. do.  
 Horace Dresser, do. do.  
 William Sharpe, Ohio.

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NOTE E.—The following persons have practised as physicians in this town, since its first settlement:

|                  |                   |
|------------------|-------------------|
| Thomas Mather,   | Thomas Hubbard,*  |
| David Adams,     | Benjamin Hubbard, |
| John Weld,       | Darius Hutchins,  |
| William Walton,  | —— Warner,        |
| —— Morse,        | Hiram Holt,       |
| —— Hallowell,    | Daniel F. Mosely, |
| Albigence Waldo, | Alex. H. Vinton,  |
| Elisha Lord,     | Virgil M. Palmer, |
| Jonathan Hall,   | F. L. Wheaton.    |

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NOTE F.—Respecting General Putnam, it would be superfluous for me to say any thing, as his history is so fully before the public. But, as Pomfret was the scene of one of his most hazardous exploits, it may be proper to remark, in connection with his name, that the place where he performed it, still remains, “as at the beginning.” The “wolf-den” (for so we call it) is situated in the southern part of the town, in a

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wild, rocky, precipitous region, well adapted to be the residence of wild beasts. Nor has any change apparently taken place, either in the scenery, or in the cavern itself, from the days of Putnam until now. It still opens its dismal mouth, which is about two feet square, "on the east side of a very high ledge of rocks." The rocks all retain their ancient position. The very trees, many of them, which witnessed the gathering on the memorable night, "with dogs, guns, straw, fire and sulphur," and saw the anxiety and the success of the perilous undertaking, remain there still. This cavern is an object of great curiosity, especially with people from abroad; and scarcely a stranger visits the place, but makes it a part of his business to call there before he leaves. Hundreds, probably, visit it every year.

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NOTE G.—The following table gives the number of deaths which have occurred in both parishes of the town, during the last twenty-five years, and will exhibit the healthiness of the place, compared with other towns and sections of the country. The population of the town is about 2,000. In the first Society, 1200; in the second, 800.

| Years. | Deaths in<br>Pomfret. | Deaths in<br>Abington. | Total in<br>the town. |
|--------|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1815   | 24                    | 9                      | 33                    |
| 1816   | 17                    | 12                     | 29                    |
| 1817   | 18                    | 2                      | 20                    |
| 1818   | 17                    | 11                     | 28                    |
| 1819   | 11                    | 12                     | 23                    |
| 1820   | 17                    | 10                     | 27                    |
| 1821   | 14                    | 11                     | 25                    |
| 1822   | 16                    | 16                     | 32                    |
| 1823   | 12                    | 12                     | 24                    |
| 1824   | 13                    | 17                     | 30                    |
| 1825   | 23                    | 17                     | 40                    |
| 1826   | 18                    | 16                     | 34                    |
| 1827   | 10                    | 6                      | 16                    |
| 1828   | 15                    | 16                     | 31                    |
| 1829   | 9                     | 12                     | 21                    |
| 1830   | 13                    | 10                     | 23                    |
| 1831   | 21                    | 4                      | 25                    |
| 1832   | 24                    | 13                     | 37                    |
| 1833   | 13                    | 15                     | 28                    |
| 1834   | 12                    | 14                     | 26                    |
| 1835   | 10                    | 10                     | 20                    |
| 1836   | 9                     | 12                     | 21                    |
| 1837   | 18                    | 21                     | 39                    |
| 1838   | 9                     | 15                     | 24                    |
| 1839   | 10                    | 17                     | 27                    |
| 1840   | 7                     | 11                     | 18                    |
|        | <hr/> 380             | <hr/> 321              | <hr/> 701             |

The average number of deaths in the whole town, is 28 1-25. Average for Pomfret, 15 1-5—for Abington, 12 21-25. Annual per cent. for the town, 1 2-5.

