

THE SURE AND ONLY FOUNDATION,

WITH HISTORICAL NOTICES.

A

CENTENNIAL DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED BEFORE

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

AND

SECOND PARISH,

IN

PEPPERELL, MASS., JANUARY 29, 1847.

BY DAVID ANDREWS,

PASTOR OF THE CHURCH.

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1847.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,

In accordance with the vote, passed this day by the church, before which your late Centennial Discourse was delivered, and as its chosen organ, we have the honor to request of you a copy for the press.

Yours respectfully,

HENRY JEWETT,
N. CUTTER,
DAVID BLOOD.

Pepperell, February 4, 1847.

Deacons JEWETT, CUTTER and BLOOD, }
Committee of the Church. }

DEAR SIRS,—In deference to the judgment of the church, which it is my privilege to serve in the gospel, I consent to the publication of the Discourse, delivered at the late Centennial, with the same desire, that led to its preparation,—that the Divine Head and sure support of the church may be honored, and the faith and hopes of his people in Him confirmed. With permission, an *appendix* will be added; also an extract from Rev. Mr. Emerson's sermon on the death of Whitefield, showing *implicitly* his own faith, and some further testimony in relation to Rev. Mr. Bullard's faith. Otherwise, the discourse shall be given to the public as it was delivered, dedicated to the cause of truth, especially among the youth of the congregation, with the prayer, that they may gratefully and cordially receive the faith of their earlier, as well as later ancestors, and like them, live to glorify their God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Truly and obediently yours,

D. ANDREWS.

Pepperell, February 5, 1847.

DISCOURSE.

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; IN WHOM YE ALSO ARE BUILDED TOGETHER FOR AN HABITATION OF GOD THROUGH THE SPIRIT. Eph. 2 : 20—22.

WE this day celebrate the one-hundredth anniversary of “The church of Christ” in this place.* Though it may not have attained to more than half the age of some of its elder sisters in the land, it may have equalled the eldest of them in the debt of gratitude, contracted to the common Head of all. His aid has been richly granted through every period of its history.

It is fitting on such a staid point, as we have now attained, to review

“The growing labors of the lengthened way;”

to recount the dealings of Heaven with those worthies, who brought up the ark of God among the early settlers of this town, and with its successive defenders until the present time; and to attempt to re-produce the fading impressions of the Divine Goodness.

* See notes A and B, Appendix.

In studying the history of the Christian church, we do well to look at the nature of its foundation, and the principal elements of its perpetuity. This has led to the choice of our text. Here we have the true basis, the great builders, and the glorious structure "fitly framed together, until it groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord." In the sacred writings we are struck with the frequent recurrence of figures in relation to the church, drawn from architecture. The church is a building,—a temple with its deep, strong foundations, its elect cornerstone, its symmetrical and polished superstructure, its pillars and its top-stone. The Scriptures were written in architectural ages. Then those vast and imposing edifices, whose ruins even are now the admiration of the scholar and the antiquary, stood erect, and by their grandeur overpowered the beholder. No work of art made so deep an impression upon the Jewish mind, as the temple of Solomon, which is said to have glowed under the bright sunbeams, as though divinely transfigured. Where the apostles went "for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus," no objects of sense were so impressive, as those mighty masses of stone and marble, whose symmetry, sublimity and beauty proclaimed the praises of genius and the honors of fanciful divinities.

The human mind, whether composing under the influence of Inspiration, or unaided genius, naturally weaves into its work those vivid impressions, which it has received from objects that have deeply interested and moved it. Hence the source of those beautiful and expressive figures of which our text is an instance. Paul, in reminding the Ephesian converts, of their new relations and privileges in connection with so well founded and stable an institution as the Christian church, naturally represented this divine structure under the figure of a magnificent edifice. It would be forcible and impressive. Ephesus was noted for its splendid specimens of architecture. The far-famed temple of Diana was there.

The apostle declares to these converts a very interesting

transition. No longer aliens, but fellow-citizens with all the sanctified, they had been admitted into that society, where all the originally discordant materials are blended into one harmonious whole. To change the figure, they had become polished stones in God's spiritual temple—the church, founded by prophets and apostles, whose chief corner-stone was Jesus Christ. Upon this foundation this structure was then rising, and is still in great majesty, splendor and beauty of proportion, “for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” He formerly dwelt and manifested himself in a material temple, now in a spiritual—his church, where all its parts feel his presence and share its glory.

Our text states the true and only basis of the Christian church. If it has a divine foundation, here it is certainly revealed. It is now proposed to consider this foundation;—the needful evidences, that any body of men, claiming to be a church, are upon this basis;—then to append historical notices of the church of Christ in this place, in which we trust it will be seen, that this church was originally placed, and has continued to rest upon this foundation.

Let us consider *the foundation*. What is it? Our text calls it, “the foundation of apostles and prophets.” The idea does not seem to be, that these distinguished instruments formed an integrant part of the basis upon which the church rests, as some suppose. They always shrunk from such an assumption. In this declaration of one, all would concur;—“Other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” They never attempt to interpose themselves. If the “rock,” upon which Christ would build, was really Peter, he could mean nothing more, than the priority and energy of Peter's preaching, as instrumental in first gloriously developing the Christian church. Peter himself presents Christ, as the “elect, precious corner-stone” upon which believers “are built up a spiritual house.” Christ never intended to give his

glory to a mortal, nor lay, beneath his own everlasting structure, so weak and perishable a support. If so, Inspiration is not consistent with itself. The prophets and apostles were conjointly builders in laying the foundation, that was to bear up the church with its embosomed millions, through unlimited ages to come, God the great architect and supervisor, and Jesus Christ the chief corner-stone,—the principal foundation. Says one, “the strength of buildings, lies in their *angles*; the chief corner-stone unites and compacts them; it is, therefore, the principal tie and support of the whole edifice. Now Christ is the chief corner-stone; the main stress of the spiritual building rests on him, who, by his death, hath united the different constituent parts of it into one compact, regular building and temple.”

How were the *prophets* concerned in laying this foundation? They foretold the Messiah in just the character and relations in which the apostles subsequently presented him. There is perfect harmony in their work. The development of the Messiah in the Old Testament is in accordance with the same principle upon which God, in his works, so uniformly proceeds; that is, by an ascending series and regular gradation, to a perfect development. The earliest and faintest intimation of hope, that the ruins of the fall should be restored, were an obscure promise, that human flesh should invest one mighty enough to bruise the destroyer. As an additional beam of hope, a great prophet—a Shiloh was predicted, “unto whom the gathering of the people should be.” The light increases in the Psalms, and concentrates in the later prophets into one glorious Sun of Righteousness, rising upon the people with healing in his beams. Isaiah clears up every lingering doubt; he gives a perfect vision. He gives a portraiture as of one who had already lived, and left in his works the materials for his own biography. He reiterates the language of God—the first figure of the kind in the Bible;—“Behold I lay in Zion

for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure Foundation. He that believeth, shall not make haste." He represents the person, bearing this relation to the spiritual Zion as "by his righteous knowledge, justifying many; for he should bear their iniquities." Jeremiah expressly and repeatedly calls him "the Lord our righteousness." With this character and office the representations of "the lesser prophets" agree. Malachi closes up the ancient canon with a startling prediction, that this divine messenger should "suddenly come." Thus much did the prophets, to lay the only and sure foundation of the Christian church.

What did the *holy apostles* to confirm and complete the work of the prophets in laying the foundation? Peter unequivocally declared to those, who assumed to be builders, but who had rejected this divine "Head-stone of the corner;"—"there is not salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved." He reminded believers, that Christ was the "chief corner-stone, elect, precious, laid in Zion; that those, who believed on him might never be confounded." Paul said by the grace of God given unto him, he had laid this foundation; other foundation could no man lay; let the man who should attempt it be accursed. So taught all the apostles. "The beloved disciple" represents the blood of Christ, as the only means of cleansing from all sin. Christ, the golden link between prophets and apostles, unites and consolidates all their work into one grand proof, that he is the Eternal Rock upon which the church stands.

This then is "the foundation of apostles and prophets." Is the church safe upon it? Let the unerring truth of God;—let all the ransomed millions, that have stood unshaken upon it amid the convulsions of society, the wreck of nations, the failing of all earthly hopes, and the assaults of hostile legions,

answer. It is a "Stone," prepared by the counsels and wisdom of Eternity. It were as easy to upturn the deep foundations of the eternal Throne, as to destroy this foundation. Men may reject it; they may insist that it is finite and perishable, like what is human, but still it stands, firm as the pavement of heaven. Said the eloquent Davies; "Here is a stone, that can never moulder by the waste of all-consuming time. Parian marble, and even the flinty rocks decay; the firm foundations, the stately columns, the majestic buildings of Babylon and Persepolis, and all the magnificent structures of antiquity, though formed of the most durable stone, and promising immortality, are now shattered into ten thousand fragments, or lying in ruinous heaps. But here is a foundation for immortal souls, immortal as themselves."

This STONE has been thoroughly "tried," as a basis for the church, in every possible form and by every possible power. Christ's meekness was tried by the abuses of cruel men, but never yielded to resentment. His obedience was tried and found perfect; to do his Father's will, was his delight. His love and zeal in his appropriate and chosen service ever glowed like an unquenchable flame. His love to sinners was tried, when, in their behalf, the grand problem was left to him of reconciling the due operation of both justice and mercy, so that no great interest should suffer, and yet the penitent believer be saved. He solved it by baring his own bosom, and suffering justice to bathe its sword in the heart of mercy. When the Father "laid on him the iniquities of us all," and hid his face, though his anguish extorted a cry, that must have silenced the very harps of the angels, yet he bowed his head in submission and in love. His ability to save, to the uttermost of their guilt, myriads of sinners sinking into perdition, has been fully proved. The general assembly and church of the first-born in heaven, with their ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, have been heard on

earth, exclaiming with a loud voice, saying, "Worthy is the Lamb, that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people and nation; and hast made us unto our God, kings and priests." Thus has this foundation been well tried, and found unto praise; tried by the arch-apostate, to his everlasting confusion; tried by God, the Father, and found true to the "eternal covenant;" tried by man in his enmity, and found divine in his patient endurance; tried by poor, perishing man in his contrition and sorrow, and in the wreck of all his hopes, and found "mighty to deliver." Well then may this sure foundation be precious to those that believe.

Such being the basis upon which the church stands, Christ may truly say of his church,—*"I bear up the pillars of it."* He unites and sustains all its parts. He incorporates and unites into one orderly, beautiful structure, and diffuses his own grace and polish over all the heterogeneous materials, gathered from palaces, cottages, and caves of the earth. Thus the church, *"fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord, for his habitation through the Spirit."*

There is no possibility of mixing any foreign properties in this divinely laid foundation work of the church. The least human admixture vitiates the whole. To join our own works to Christ's,—our own righteousness to his, is to lay down by the side of this eternal and precious foundation-stone our own unsightly and worthless rubbish of *"wood, hay and stubble."* This work of laying supposed human goodness and merit in juxtaposition with Christ's, is the fundamental, fatal mistake of multitudes in our own day. Says a truthful and beautiful writer on this subject,—*"Apostles, prophets and all, are but sinking sand without him. Their righteousness and strength are nothing. In him all their doctrines terminate; from him they derive all their efficacy. Take away this corner-stone,*

and immediately all the saints in heaven fall from their glorious elevation; the saints upon earth, that are gradually rising heavenward, sink to rise no more. Take away this corner-stone, and this glorious, living temple, that has been building for so many ages, *breaks to pieces, and covers heaven and earth with its ruins!*"

Thus we have the exclusive and grand basis of the Christian church. There may be a "church without a bishop," but no true church without this divine foundation. Otherwise, it is but a sinking mass of motley clay. A true church demands for its foundation a Saviour, whose name is "Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the *Eternal Progenitor*, the Prince of peace; God manifest in the flesh;" one who was in the "beginning with God, and was God, but who was made flesh and dwelt among us;" "*very God and very man*," in mysterious union; one, whom the saints and angels in glory might worship, as "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person;" one, who in counsel with the Father, could found the church, that was "to make known the manifold wisdom of God, in ages to come, to principalities and powers in heavenly places,"—"that all should honor him even as they honor the Father." Such is he, who is styled, "THE LORD, OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." He has brought in *everlasting righteousness*, and thus sustains every visible and invisible believer.

We come now, to consider what are *the needful evidences*, that any body of professed believers are upon this foundation. In other words, *what constitutes a Christian church?*

In order to establish this claim, *Christ must be received, as the only prophetic and apostolic foundation, as already explained.* Other foundation can no man or body of men lay. Christ is both support and head to his body, the church. He must be received as *first*, not merely in the sense of a divinely

commissioned teacher, an example and a martyr; but as really “the end of the law for righteousness” to every believer; as the divinely appointed and accepted substitute for the sinner in the matter of law and justice; as in the highest sense divine, that his infinity and all-sufficiency may be concerned in securing the great and general interests of the divine government, while he atones for the sins of a lost race; as in a proper sense human, that he may be a perfect Mediator, having a fraternal sympathy with man in his weakness, trials and temptations. “Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also took part of the same. He took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham; because it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High-priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted.”

In the next place, a church, in order to establish the needful claim, must cordially receive *certain doctrines necessarily implied in thus receiving Christ.*

The doctrine of a proper distinction in the Godhead follows as an unavoidable resultant of thus receiving Christ. In some way incomprehensible to human reason, though not contrary to it, while the Father and Son “are one” in unity of nature and attributes, there is a distinction, so that the Father, when he revealed his Son, could say, “this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased,” and the Son could say,—“Lo I come,” in obedience to the Father’s will.

The ruined and helpless condition of the human race in consequence of sin must receive moral assent. Else there could be no ground of necessity for the incarnation and expiatory suffering of the Son of God. If mankind are not radically defective, as transgressors, then there could be no great moral emergency, demanding “Immanuel, God with us,” in the sense of an atoning Saviour. This doctrine is clearly taught

in the Bible. "All have sinned,—all the world have become guilty before God." This is the reason why Christ tasted death for every man; this prepares the way for us to be "justified freely by God's grace, through the redemption that is in Christ."

In the true doctrine of Christ, there is also implied a necessity of repentance and the moral renovation of the soul. There is a proper distinction between godly sorrow for sin and regeneration; but, as in the first instance, the one implies the other, we may now forget this distinction. It is not difficult to perceive, the race being so related to the law of God, as to furnish a ground for the death of Christ, that there exists an absolute necessity for a great moral change, to fit the soul for heaven. The death of Christ, as a simple fact, however solemn and interesting, could not both open heaven, and qualify men to enter. It removed restrictions and hindrances, while it left a great work for the Spirit to perform. Hence the great doctrine Christ propounded to Nicodemus. Hence too the correlative doctrine of the Holy Spirit, as a distinct agent, to renovate and sanctify the soul, and make the work of Christ effectual. Without these fundamental doctrines there can be no living, spiritual church.

Again, another needful evidence, that a church is upon the true basis is, *that it exhibit spiritual union and symmetry*. Otherwise it does not show "the image and superscription" of Him, who sitteth King in Zion. In Christ, all the building must be "fitly framed together," that it may grow unto "an holy temple in the Lord." To produce this spiritual union, symmetry and beauty, the members must be moulded into the same image by the Spirit of the Lord. This furnishes the ground of union in views, feelings and spiritual pursuits requisite in the family of Christ. It leads to, and promotes mutual love, one of the main elements in a true church, without which it has no grace nor comeliness. This kind of affiliation also implies holiness in the members, which blends all into harmony.

This kind of union and symmetry also implies *proper discipline* in the body. That church, which neglects it, will certainly, under the action of depraved agencies upon it, soon appear disfigured and uncomely. It will have unseemly blots upon its character, and parts hanging about it, that are not homogeneous. It is not essential to the being of a true church, that it be perfectly pure. Man cannot separate all the alloy from the pure metal, but must leave that work to Him, who “shall sit as a Refiner and a Purifier.” Yet no church can neglect the rules of Christ, and prosper. If a church is duly attentive to those graces and to that discipline, which secure this needful spiritual union and symmetry, it will be luminous and impressive in its example, and fruitful in its deeds, Christ’s index,—“By their fruits, know them,”—will point to that church as his own.

It is necessary, to continue and promote this spiritual order, beauty and fruitfulness, that the institutions and ordinances of religion be uniformly maintained. The preached gospel and public means of grace are essential to the vitality of the church. God has made them requisite to the progress of his cause. Without the spiritual husbandman, the garden of the Lord soon becomes like the field of the sluggard; the plants of grace are “choked, that they become unfruitful.”

The last evidence to be adduced, as requisite to prove the validity of a church, is *satisfactory evidence to good men, that God dwells in it by his Spirit*. The members of the true church “are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” The church is God’s dwelling. The Holy Spirit diffuses his influences through all its parts. The needful proofs of this indwelling of the Spirit to “the spiritual, who discerneth all things,” that pertain to essential truth and religious order, are the true piety, devotedness and happy influence of the church; the production of a supernatural loveliness and

beauty of character in prominent parts of the church, which make it "beautiful as Tirzah, and comely as Jerusalem." These characters are the beautiful garments of the spiritual Zion. This superhuman loveliness and beauty of character consists in that inimitable combination of graces and fruits of the Spirit, which compose the character of an eminent child of God. They are—"love, joy, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." The presence of God in a church, by his Spirit, is made evident to *a good man*, by the production and growth of these graces.

Sometimes God makes his presence known by an extraordinary effusion of his Spirit upon his people, when their feelings are unusually tender, solemn and devotional; when they are observed "to love each other with a pure heart fervently;" and when their prayers and sympathies are affectionately called forth with reference to those, neglecting their personal salvation, and living in sin. These "times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord" afford indubitable evidence to good men, that God is in his *holy temple*, beautifying, enlarging and strengthening the place of his glory.

Such are thought to be the most prominent proofs needed, to show that any body of men, called a church, are upon the only and Divine Foundation, laid by prophets and apostles, "Jesus Christ himself being the CHIEF CORNER-STONE." Unless a body of men, claiming to be a church, can exhibit these proofs with greater or less clearness, how can they establish their claim? There may be the form but it is *lifeless*. It is a dry tree. The winds of heaven may sigh through its well-proportioned branches, or they may make sweet Æolian music, but, it remains a dead tree still. It has no sweet fragrance to diffuse around; it has no good fruit to shake to the earth. The husbandman prunes it, and digs about it in vain; it stands a sad monument of life, that once was, but is now gone forever; lost, perhaps, by the stealthy workings of an enemy

at the root, or by the criminal neglect of those responsible for its good preservation.

If the foregoing be true, two remarks, naturally suggested, will be fitting and proper before proceeding. They will be offered in the briefest manner possible.

First, we learn the true way by which a church is to perpetuate itself. It is by standing firm upon the "SURE FOUNDATION." It must consistently maintain, and practically apply those very obvious *doctrines of grace*, that cluster about the great central doctrine, that the Divine Redeemer died to atone for the sins of men, and to bring in everlasting righteousness. Against such a church, neither the sophistries and blandishments of error, nor "the gates of hell" can ever prevail.

Secondly, we learn why, in the lapse of time, the light of so many of the Puritan churches went out in darkness. They were wisely and well built upon the "Rock, Christ Jesus." Their pillars were those great and cardinal doctrines, inseparably connected with the doctrine of a vicarious and atoning Saviour. But they suffered themselves imperceptibly to slide, or to be gently drawn, from the "Sure Foundation." They became careless of their birthright, when one much younger, claiming affinity, took it from them. Now, like a petrified man, they lie in mournful, though in gorgeous state.

It gives us unfeigned pleasure to find assurance, that this church to-day celebrating its Centennial, was at its origin, "built upon the Foundation of apostles and prophets." To its pious founders, the Chief Corner-stone was *precious*. It is grateful to find, that it early gave, and has continued to give pleasing proofs of being a ~~free~~ church of Christ; that a most kind and gracious Providence cherished and watched over its infancy, promoted its growth and its strength, and has ever preserved it upon its original basis. This will be sufficiently evident, we trust, as we now trace its history from its origin.

HISTORY OF THE CHURCH.

More minuteness of detail will be proper in giving the incidents of early times, especially of the first period, than of the later periods. These, if they have not less to interest, are better known. Brevity, therefore, upon the second and third periods of the history of the church of Christ in this place will be excusable.

EARLY SETTLEMENT OF THE PLACE.*

It appears from ancient deeds still extant, that settlements in Groton, west of the "Lancaster River," now the Nashua, were begun about 1720 or '21, first in the northerly and easterly parts of what is now Pepperell. The number of families increased, till in 1738, there were from thirty to forty families on the west side of the river, where we find the first intimation of a desire to become a distinct precinct. There, these families, joined by the people residing in the north part of Groton, and what is now Dunstable, made an earnest attempt to get "set off" from Groton for this purpose, but failed. The town opposed the measure from a probable unwillingness to lose, at once, all the northern and western portions of its territory. It is interesting to notice in the petition of these families, at this time, to "The Great and General Court" of the Colony, and also in the petition to the same body from the people on this—the west side of the river in 1742, which was successful, that the principal reason given, why their request should be granted, was their "distance from preaching, they being from six to eight miles from the house of God, so that their families were, in a great measure, deprived of religious

* See Note C. App.

privileges." Their petition was granted June 26, 1742, O. S.* This petition states, that there were then, *west of the river*, forty families. It seems, therefore, that their *value of the gospel* led the early settlers of this place, to seek a separate existence, and ultimately led to a distinct town. Indeed tradition tells of a woman, previous to this, walking eight miles in the winter *on snow-shoes*, to hear the word of God preached. It should be stated, that when the second attempt was made to get set off, as a precinct, exclusively by the people, who lived on the west side of the river, the town of Groton made no opposition to the measure, but readily voted assent.

ORGANIZATION OF THE PARISH AND FIRST PREACHING.

The first parish meeting, of which there is record, was held Jan. 19, 1742.† This was not till after the people were regularly "voted off" by the town of Groton, which was in the year 1741. At this meeting there was a regular organization, with a full complement of officers, and a grant of £10, "to Defray the necessary Charges, Risen and Arising in Sd. Parish." Doubtless regular preaching was then contemplated. Ever since that time the organization has been perpetuated.

The first vote, to obtain preaching, was passed Feb. 16, 1742,‡ when a committee was chosen, "to Provide Preaching till ye last day of April next." The following vote passed March 15, 1743, gives the first hint of regular meetings on the Sabbath, though there doubtless was preaching ere this. The previous vote renders it probable. "Voted to Abate Enosh Lawrences Rates, provided ye Parish have ye Benefit of his House to meet in on Lords Days." In September of the same year it was "Voted to hier preaching from ye first Sab. in Nov. till ye last Sab. in April next," and "to have Preaching at ye house of Nehemi'h Hobart in Sd. Parish." Tradition says, that the house of Enosh Lawrence, where it is very

* See Note C. App.

† See Note D. App.

‡ See Note D. App.

probable the first preaching of the gospel in this place was enjoyed, stood in close proximity to the site now occupied by the large store building in the East Village; and that the house of Nehemiah Hobart stood on "the river road" nearly opposite the one now tenanted by Mr. David R. Shattuck. The Sabbath meetings, for a considerable time, seem to have been alternated between these two houses by regular periods. Preaching was henceforth enjoyed at stated times, until the settlement of a minister.

The following most interesting vote, as developing a happy feeling of dependence upon divine aid at that early period, was passed March 13, 1744, nearly three years before a church was constituted, and a pastor settled. "Voted to keep ye last Day of March Instant a Day of fasting and Prayer to Almighty God for direction in ye Important affair of settling a Minister. Chose ——— a Com'er to take advice of the Neighboring Ministers, and to invite them to assist in Sd. Fast, and to make Provision for them." God noticed and approved of their piety and smiled upon their endeavors. It is probable, that Mr. Wm. Vinal was then preaching for them, as about a month later we find the precinct voted him a call, to settle with them in the work of the ministry, though no church had then been gathered. Why he did not comply, does not appear. As at this time, there was a serious diversity of opinions with respect to locating the meeting-house, perhaps he thought the people unprepared to settle a minister, though they needed a spiritual counsellor the more.

FIRST MEETING-HOUSE.

The enterprise of building a house of worship was contemplated, as soon as Groton consented to the existence of a distinct parish. As already intimated, the town, at first, seems to have been disinclined to grant the request of the petitioners, probably because it was then proposed to cut off all the North part of the town.

At the second meeting of the parish, held February 16, 1742, it was "voted to build a Meeting-House in Sd. Parish. Voted that the Meeting House should stand at the most convenient place, near Jo Blood's fording—so called." Blood's ford was near the present site of the lower paper-mill on Nashua river. The reason of this intended location, was to accommodate the people in the north part of Groton, who were desirous of being united with the parish, as we learn from the joint petition of seventeen hundred and thirty-eight to "The Great and General Court," and as we also learn from the following vote, passed one month after it was voted to build the meeting-house;—"Voted to Receive the People on the East side of ye River, that have Petitioned to be annexed, to us, Provided they will consent to have the Meeting-House set at ye most Convenient Place on ye West side ye River near ye Bridge next below Jo Bloods fordway so called." The people in the west part of the precinct were dissatisfied with this location of the house; thinking it much too far east, they remonstrated. At a meeting, held September 6, 1743, it was therefore "voted to reconsider the vote, that was past Concerning the Place, that was first pitcht upon for ye setting of a Meeting House in Sd. Parish, voted to set the Meeting House at the end of three Quarters of a mile, Northeast of the Center of Sd. Parish, or at the next Convenient Place. Voted to Build a Meeting House, forty two feet Long, and thirty feet Wide, and Twenty feet High."

Committee after committee was appointed, and a surveyor employed, to run the lines of the precinct, and find the centre. This was done, and *the determinating line* run, three quarters of a mile due northeast from the centre. The spot was thus fixed upon by the majority, who lived in the easterly part of the place. Materials were gathered there, to some extent, for erecting the house; but the people of the westerly part, headed by Mr. Moses Woods, were so decidedly opposed to the location, and the gathering clouds of discontent looked so omin-

ous, that, to end the controversy and secure the peace and union of the parish, it was agreed, during the season of '44, that a reference of the "vexed question" should be made to "The Great and General Court." November 23, 1744, it was "Voted that Peleg Lawrence and Josiah Sartell be a Com'er, to go to The Great and General Court Concerning ye having a Meeting House Place in Sd. Parish." The court were propitious, and appointed a committee to survey the place, and locate the meeting-house. The parish chose a committee to "show the Court's committee the inhabitants of the place," and the limits of the precinct. Some time during that year, it appears, that the committee from the General Court sat in the place, and decided upon the site now occupied by the old meeting-house. February 19, 1745, the parish "Voted to set the Meeting House on ye Place that ye General Court *prefixed*."

The happy result of this decision is best learned from the pastor, subsequently settled. He says, in his sermon at the dedication of the second meeting-house;—"There is one thing I can't but mention, as a kind interposition of Divine Providence, tho' considered as such by very few at the time, and that is;—The fixing the place for The Meeting House, by the Court's committee; tho' at first contrary to the mind and vote of the majority of the inhabitants, yet proves now to be with much more equity, and where all seem to be universally contented with. Had it been erected in the place designed, and where the timber was drawn to, what trouble, change, and 'tis very likely contention, we must have been exercised with before this day."

The building was soon erected, and probably occupied first during the early part of the season of 1745. No record of a *dedication* is found. Probably, as the building received what finish it finally had, by *piece-meal*, through a period of six years or more, it never was formally consecrated to its hallowed purpose. The building was a very simple and unique structure.

The following ~~notes~~ will develop the order and "the glory of the first house," in which the pious fathers rejoiced to worship Him, who dwelleth not in temples made with hands. "September ye 14, 1744, Voted that Sd. Committee frame, Raise and board the outside and shingle ye Roof, Lay the under floor, and make suitable Doors, and hang ye Same." This done, and its *exterior* seems to have been completed, as we find no further orders respecting it. The committee were directed, March 6, 1745, "to build the Pulpit and ye Body seats below." This done, definite spaces upon the lower floor were allotted to individuals, according to their rank, as "payers of rates." There they could accommodate themselves with such kind of seats, as suited their convenience or taste.

January 28, 1746, a committee was chosen "to seat the Public Meeting House," and it was ordered, that "Sd. Com'ee. Set off the Pews, [or pew-ground, or as it is called in another place] to the Highest Payers in ye three last Rates — upon their being obliged to build their own Pews, and the Ministerial Pew, and to seal the Meeting House as high as ye Girts all Round." The committee laid out the ground floor, as directed, *in feet and inches*, and reported each man's position and portion to the parish, which was accepted and recorded. March 5, 1746, it was "Voted that Windows be cut, where needed, Provided they that cut them Maintain them upon their own Cost, that they be no Parish Charge." March 1, 1749, it was "Voted to finish the Building the seats in ye Gallery, and to Seal ye Meeting House from ye Gallery floor up to the beams." One week afterwards it was "Voted to Glaze ye Public Meeting House, and to provide boards to Lay Loose on ye floor over head;" and again, "Voted to seat the Public Meeting House by the three last years Pay." This "seating of the Public Meeting House" was done every few years, so long as it stood. "March 6, 1750, Voted to give ye Men that are seated on ye fore Seats below, Liberty to set a

Row of Banisters with a Rail stop before ye fore Seats at their own Cost and Charge."

Under date of March 6, 1754 we find the order of leaving the house from the gallery. This order was probably occasioned by some disturbance and haste among the less orderly ones in leaving the house of *God*. "Voted that the fore seat of the Front and Side Gallery go out first, and then the second seat in the front and side Gallery." June 5, 1755, a committee was again chosen, "to seat the house." Their instructions were, to do it by the customary rule, "having a due regard to age, and not to Degrade any man." The young men were granted some privileges at this time. It was "Voted what was past Last meeting, Concerning the Young Mens Pews above *Stand good*. Excepting this—they are not to Raise the Floor hier than to be good standing, voted that the Young Men in the Front have Liberty to make two Windows, and Raise their Standing level with the Floor."—This memorable Sanctuary was occupied, doubtless by very humble and happy worshipers, about twenty-five years, when it was sold to the architect of the second, by him removed to his farm, converted to the unworthy purpose of a barn, and afterwards burned to the ground. This we learn from Mr. E's sermon at the dedication of the Second Meeting-House.

ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH.

In the first volume of the "Church Records" stands the following;—"A church was gathered January 29, 1746—7, * which was kept as a Day of Fasting and Prayer by the Parish. Mr. Trowbridge and Mr. Emerson assisted. There were fifteen signed the Covenant before ordination." The following vote, found in the records of the precinct, corresponds. "January 19, 1747, voted that the last Thursday in this month be kept as a Day of Fasting and Prayer to Almighty God for his

* See Note D. App

Blessing on us in ye Great affair of Settling a Gospel Minister over us."

Here is a fact worthy of being kept in perpetual remembrance. The earthly foundations of this church were laid, and the first pastor introduced to his work with fasting and prayer. Who can doubt, that in consequence of this, rich spiritual blessings have descended upon the successive generations of the church, then founded?

One of the fifteen, who originally signed the covenant, never took up his connection, where he belonged, and the church subsequently voted to have no responsibility with respect to him. So that he never came into full communion with the church. Of the fourteen others, eleven were dismissed from the church in Groton, of which Rev. Caleb Trowbridge was their pastor. The other three probably came into the church on profession of their faith, as there is no record of their dismissal from any other church. Those, who originally signed the covenant, were all male members, Elizabeth Shed, the first female, was received on the seventh of June following. We see, then, that the church was formed principally by a colony of eleven men from the Groton church.

The following will give a succinct view of the early state and regulations of this church. Provision was made the first year of its existence, by a tax upon all the members, for a small church fund, to supply the communion table and for charitable purposes. It was the custom of the church to fix upon a sum, which each member should pay into the treasury at each reception of the elements. For a few years the deacons were exempted, but eventually the tax was imposed upon all. At one time, it was made the duty of each to enclose the sum paid, and to write the name of the contributor upon the envelope. Widows were soon freed from this tax.

Very early the church adopted the practice of meeting *with their families*, on Friday previous to the sacrament for religious worship, and preparation for the approaching solemnity.

This custom—so fitting and commendable—of holding religious services preparatory to the communion, never has been abandoned in this church, though the good primitive practice, of *bringing the household along with the believing heads of the family, is too much forgotten.* It was the custom, from the first, for the church to choose a standing committee, to aid in managing church business. In process of time, it was ordered, that all business should come before the church through this committee.

No person could be admitted to the church without giving credible evidence of “the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Spirit.” A relation of religious experience before the church was required. The church was induced, during the long period of religious declension, in the second stage of its history, to lay aside this salutary practice. It was soon revived again however, virtually, in the third period of its history, and has been continued to the present time. No person, belonging to another church, could commune with this more than one year, without a transfer of relations. This practice was continued throughout the ministry of the second pastor. Discipline was very strict, and Scriptural, care being taken to follow the directions of the Saviour and his apostles. Misdemeanors, which we might now regard as slight, were noticed by the church. No member was allowed to be long absent from church ordinances without an assigned and good cause. Charges, when entertained against a member were presented in writing, generally with the names of the witnesses appended.

Infant and household baptism was universally and invariably observed by believing heads of families, generally while the children were quite young. The pastor not only kept a record of all the baptized children in the place, but he kept a list of all the unbaptized children from year to year. Heads of families, as was very common at that day, were permitted “to own the covenant,” and have their children baptized; but

when this was done, both parents and children were considered and treated, as amenable to the church, and subject to its rules, though they could not thereby come to the communion. This practice was probably found to be abused, as in 1767, the church voted unanimously, "that no person shall be propounded in order to own the covenant, but who, after examination, it appears to ye pastor and ye standing committee of this church, that it is through tenderness of conscience, dare not come to ye Lord's Table." This probably explains the original design and the origin of this practice of "owning the covenant." It was designed to bring certain important privileges within the reach of those, who gave evidence to those qualified and authorized to judge in the case, that they were Christians, and yet through the weakness of their faith, dared not to take upon them the obligations of a Christian profession. Christian heads of families, universally maintained family worship. They covenanted to do this, when joining the church, saying—"we promise to keep up the Worship of God in our Families, that our Houses may be Bethels wherein the Morning and Evening Sacrifice shall ascend."

Admonitions and confessions for "scandalous sins" were public on the Sabbath. Any *baptized* person, or one, who had "owned the covenant," when falling into "scandalous sin," was called to account, like those in full communion, showing that the church regarded all baptized persons, as sustaining a responsible relation to it, and under its watch and care.

It was the custom of the church, to induct its deacons into office with a charge, exhortation and prayer by the pastor in open church meeting. It is to be regretted that this practice, which appears to be scriptural, should so generally have been laid aside in the congregational churches. I cannot forbear to mention that, at two different times in its early existence, the church kept a fast on account of the mental bereavement of one or two of its members, showing "if one member suffered, all suffered with it." Indeed, its spirit of fraternal sympa-

thy, and humble dependence on God, as evinced by its seasons of fasting and devotion, was one of its most delightful and impressive features.—Such is a correct view of the early and, in a measure, of the continued state of this church, as drawn from the records left by those, who have been set over it, as *watchmen*.

SETTLEMENT OF THE FIRST PASTOR.

The Rev. Joseph Emerson,* the first pastor of the church, was ordained Feb. 25, 1747, about one month after the formation of the church, having been admitted to it on the morning of his ordination. His ministry seems to have been eminently successful and happy. He admitted one hundred and ninety-six persons to the church, averaging nearly seven a year, during the entire twenty-nine years of his ministry, though the population of the place was then small. The youngest member he admitted was seventeen, and the oldest sixty years of age. The years during which his labors seem to have been more signally blessed, when there seems to have been something like a *revival of religion*, were the years '58 and '71. Ten in each of these years made a profession of their faith. There was no year when Mr. E. had not the pleasure of receiving some to the church. There seems to have been quite a uniform growth of the church, and, in general, a happy state of religious feeling during his entire ministry. He baptized eight hundred and seven persons, solemnized one hundred and seventy-three marriages and sat, with delegates from his church, on twenty-six councils. It is abundantly evident from the productions of his pen, the good name, and the happy influence he left behind him, that he was a staid friend to his people, a good citizen, a faithful pastor, perfectly sound in the faith of his Puritan fathers—"the faith once delivered to the saints," a decidedly evangelical and spiritual preacher, and ardently devoted to the religious culture of his assigned field.

* See Note E. App.

He had a spirit and a faith in perfect sympathy with Edwards and Whitefield, those divinely honored instruments of promoting so extensively the kingdom of Christ and the revival of "pure and undefiled religion" previous to, and about the middle of the eighteenth century. Of this the following is proof, taken from his sermon, preached Oct. 7, 1770, just one week from the death of Whitefield, in honor of whom it was delivered, from Ps. 12; 1. He says, in closing this discourse,—“What hath particularly led my tho'ts to this subject at this time is ye melancholy news we heard ye last week of ye death of yt eminently zealous, pious and faithful minister of J. C.—ye Rev. Mr. George Whitefield, who was suddenly called out of this frail state, to his everlasting rest—last Lord's day morning. Mr. Whitefield, of whom you have heard so much, is dead! His voice, which has charmed so many thousands of hearers, will be heard no more! He is gone 'where the wicked cease,' &c.—We may well cry now—*'Help Lord; for a godly man hath ceased, for a faithful one hath failed from among ye children of men.'*” He then gives some account of his origin, education, and early preaching in England, quotes at length the worthy character, and the account of his great success, which the infidel Hume, gives of Whitefield in his history, in which Hume says, “Whitefield's chief doctrines were, the absolute necessity of a new birth; that man, of himself, was unable to accept the terms of salvation, without the immediate influences and call of the Spirit of grace; that an unregenerate person could have no more notion of these inward feelings, than a blind man of colors; that good works are of no avail,” &c. [in original acceptance with God, thro' the righteousness of Christ.] Mr. E. then proceeds,—“This we may look upon as the testimony of an enemy, and therefore true. Thus ye good man began in preaching up ye *peculiar doctrines of grace*, as original sin, ye ignorance, stupidity, inclination to all evil, and disinclination to all good, which is in every person by nature, which he used

to express, in his strong, figurative way, by saying man, in his natural state, was *half beast and half devil*, which, if I was to fault, it would be by his ascribing too great an honor to ye man, as allowing him too great a proportion of ye beast;—the necessity of regeneration, of ye influences of ye spirit of God, justification by faith, ye perseverance of ye saints and at ye same time, he was as earnest in pressing upon his hearers ye necessity of holiness. Thus he began his ministry, and to his dying day he continued in ye same.—In England he was the instrument of beginning a reformation. When he first made a visit to this country, his labors were very much blessed, which with the labors of some itinerants, who followed, produced one of the most glorious reformations yt this land ever experienced, ye happy effects of which are evident to this day. Upon the whole, I look upon him, as one of ye most extraordinary ministers, who have appeared upon ye stage, since ye Apostles' day. But he is gone!—I can't but think 'tis our duty to embalm his memory." He then invokes his brethren in the church to pray earnestly for their own minister, "that he might be alike zealous and faithful in all his work, and not labor in vain, but be able at length, when his master should call, to give up his account with joy, saying—*Behold here am I, and the children, which God hath given me.*" From this extract, it is perfectly evident with what kind of ministers he sympathized, what doctrines he loved and preached, and with what deep and tender interest he looked upon "*revivals of religion.*"

He was remarkable for his orderly and systematic habits, as all the writings and records he has left fully prove. His talents and accomplishments were such as to render him popular in the circle of his acquaintance and labors. He lived in "times, that tried men's souls," but showed himself a true-hearted patriot, and he infused his own spirit into the people of the town. He passed with his people through trying scenes among themselves. He says to his people in a manuscript

sermon, preached at the dedication of the second meeting-house; “In your infant state, you were preserved from the barbarous enemy;”—meaning the savages, that early infested the place;—this was a frontier place. “Since my residing here, we have had garrisons and soldiers allowed us by the government; we have been obliged to carry our arms to the house of God, when we assembled for worship.”

The years 1755, 6, 7 and 8 will be ever memorable in this place for that most distressing and fatal sickness, that regularly visited the place, as the warm season returned. This was at the time of the war with the French and Indians, in which the colonies were engaged. The town was then obliged to furnish its proportion of men and means for the war, which, at such a time, was a severe draught. During the year '57, from the first of July to the middle of October, there were *two hundred and ninety sick, twenty-five of whom died*. The district then numbered ninety families. Mr. Emerson himself was disabled by severe sickness several months. The third of Jan., 1760, was observed in the place to commemorate the goodness of God in terminating the sickness. The pastor then preached a Thanksgiving sermon, which was published, in which he says;—“In these four years, there were above five hundred and forty persons sick; one hundred and three died,—no less than forty-eight heads of families, and sixty-four grown persons. How great was our distress for two years especially, in the height of the sickness! How was the Husbandry neglected for want of Hands! Some of the fruits of the Earth left to suffer, if not perish for want of Ingatherers, and we obliged, notwithstanding, to furnish our whole *Quota* for the war!—How did the sick suffer for want of attendance! How fast did the graves fill! How were widows and widowers, fatherless and motherless children multiplied among us! One of the years, there were near two hundred confined at the same time; your Pastor at the point of Death, and confined from the House of God four months! How many

circumstances concurred to make it a day of darkness and distress !” In all these perils and distresses, the heart of the good man was knit in love and sympathy with his people.

Before he was gathered to his fathers, he had the joy of seeing a more spacious and commodious house erected for divine worship, and of dedicating it to the only living and true God, *the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*, and to the inculcation of that gracious system of faith, which he and his church so firmly believed and loved.* In this second house he faithfully preached the doctrines of grace to his devoted people for five years, when, after a sickness of several weeks, he died on the Lord’s Day, Oct. 29, 1775, aged 51 years, having been the only minister of the place about twenty-nine years, and always having lived in peace and harmony with his people.

Tradition says, that during the season of ’75, he visited the American army, then investing Boston, drawn there by the unquenchable ardor he felt in the cause of his country, and by a large representation of his own people then there ; that he offered the first prayer heard in the American camp ; that there he contracted a cold, which induced the disease, that terminated his valuable and useful life. His loss was greatly lamented by his people and the entire circle of his friends. He left a widow, much respected and beloved, and five children, four sons and one daughter, to mourn at his grave. His people made a record of his death, as well as an inscription upon the tablet over his tomb, which evinced their sense of his worth, and how sincerely they deplored their friend and pastor.

We have been minute, thus far, in giving the history of the church, and in delineating the character of its first pastor, because he was so deeply concerned in laying its foundations, and in moulding its future character, and that of the people. Early incidents are also less familiar, and are fast fading away. On such an occasion as this we naturally recur to the infancy of this church and people. More brevity in relation to later periods will be excusable.

* See Note F. App.

SETTLEMENT OF THE SECOND PASTOR.

After the death of the first pastor, the people were without a minister nearly four years. Their attention seems to have been much absorbed in public affairs. It has been already seen, that Mr. Emerson deceased at the opening of the American revolution. As their records show, the people of this place were deeply interested in the cause of freedom, in holding meetings, to supply men and money for the war, and in corresponding with committees of the General Court. This might have been one reason for the long delay in filling the great void made by the death of their pastor. They seem to have sustained regular preaching. In the Autumn of '76, Mr. Joseph Emerson—son of their lamented pastor, who had graduated at Harvard College a little time previously, supplied the pulpit for a period longer or shorter. He seems not to have lived long, to wear the mantle of his father. In the spring of '78, the church and town concurred in giving Mr. Jonathan Allen an invitation to settle with them, but the union was not consummated. In the following Spring of '79, the church and town united in inviting Mr. John Bullard of Medway, a graduate of Harvard University, to settle with them in the gospel ministry. He gave a favorable answer in July, and was ordained Oct. 18, of that year, to the very general satisfaction of the church and people.*

Rev. Mr. Bullard's connection with his people was long continued and happy. As with his predecessor, nothing occurred to interrupt the general harmony. This period, however, was not distinguished by so much apparent success, as the one, which preceded, and the one which followed it. Mr. Bullard's ministry reached two periods in which the country was engaged in war with Great Britain. It covered the entire period of settling the affairs and principles of the General and the State governments after the Revolution, as also the

* See Note G. App.

entire period of one of these wars. The public mind was, therefore, turned in another direction, than to spiritual and personal religion. It was a time of general declension throughout the land. In this feeling, this church and people, like a great many others, too strongly sympathized. In this respect the more limited success of this period is explained. Mr. Bullard admitted to the church one hundred and fifty-six persons; baptized five hundred and fifty-six; solemnized four hundred and twenty-nine marriages; and, with delegates from his church, was called to aid in twenty-six councils. Nothing of a very marked character seems to have occurred during this period, if we except the commencement of Sabbath school instruction in the place. It appears, that, some time in the season of 1819, Mrs. Lucy S. Cutter, wife of N. Cutter, M. D., assisted by some other ladies, who were greatly encouraged and aided by their pastor, opened Sabbath schools in three different places in the town. In this, we discovered the feelings of Mr. B. towards a very important and useful institution, when it was very unpopular, except among evangelical Christians. His death, in about two years, interrupted these mutual labors in behalf of the children. They were resumed on the settlement of the third pastor, and have since been continued systematically.

The Rev. John Bullard died Sept. 18, 1821, aged 65 years, having nearly completed the forty-second year of his ministry in this place, honored and esteemed by his people and friends in life, and truly lamented in death. Attempts have been made to show an affinity between him and an order of religionists, whose ~~love and~~ "liberal views" he seems never to have adopted. It is probable, that his theological views were of a medium character. While he did not receive some of the stronger points of a Calvin or a Hopkins, yet he held fast to all those distinguishing doctrines, which are received in common by all evangelical Christians. While there is abundant evidence of this, there seems to be none to the contrary. That

he was a decided Trinitarian, as his creed still extant proves, seems to be generally conceded. This concession carries more with it, than is sometimes supposed. *Trinitarianism* does not often stand out in unsupported isolation, like a sturdy pasture oak, to breast alone hostile winds and other agencies. It gathers around it a kindred growth. So it did in this good man's faith. The following expression in the covenant, which Mr. B. always used in the church and which he probably wrote himself, as it was introduced with him to the church, it must be confessed, has a strong Calvinistic complexion;—"You humbly and penitently ask of God forgiveness, thro' the blood of Christ, for all your sins, whether *original* or actual."

The following is substantially the character given him by one of his nearest brethren in the ministry, the Rev. Eli Smith of Hollis, who was contemporary and familiar with him *twenty-eight years*, and is still living in the full possession of his memory and all his mental powers.—"The Rev. John Bullard was above mediocrity as a man of talents, was affable in his manners, popular in his address, and acceptable as a preacher, not only to his own people, but in the neighboring towns. In his theological views he was a decided Trinitarian, called himself a moderate Calvinist, and always ranked himself with the evangelical clergy. Though once somewhat prejudiced against 'Reformations,' yet, *in the latter part of his life, became decidedly more favorable to them, and more spiritual in his preaching.*" This testimony, especially the latter part, is substantiated by living and very intelligent members of his church, who, of course, must know his "*doctrine and manner of life*" among them. That Mr. B. was any thing but verging to *loose views* in the latter part of his life, is evident from the fact, that on his death bed, to his attending physician, alluding to what is called "liberal christianity," then developing itself in the vicinity, "*he deplored the errors, that were creeping into the churches.*" It is known to members of his

church still living, that he sympathized strongly with some feeble churches in this vicinity, that were obliged to secede and to submit to great sacrifices to save their faith and consciences, on account of "liberal movements." In 1815, when the cause of missions in this land was young, and ridiculed in certain quarters, as *Utopian*, he preached and published a sermon—the only one he seems ever to have published—in which he boldly advocates this cause, meets objections, and enforces the duty of giving to sustain it.

The following is from the Rev. Ebenezer Hill, of Mason, a man every way qualified to inform us of his contemporary. "With respect to the orthodoxy of my esteemed friend and Brother, Rev. John Bullard, I say that our acquaintance was long and intimate. It began even before my entering the ministry, and continued until his death; and in all this time, I never even suspected him to be unsound in articles of faith usually considered orthodox.—I know of nothing to lead any one to suspect Mr. B. to be in sentiment anti-trinitarian, unless it be that almost peculiar urbanity, which led him to treat all men of learning and of fair moral character as friends and companions." This must be a poor ground of suspicion as to heterodoxy, and yet it seems to be about the only one. The Rev. Humphrey Moore of Milford, N. H. says,—“It is my opinion, that Rev. John Bullard, of Pepperell, belonged to that class of ministers, called Orthodox.”

It is an interesting fact, that the last official act Mr. Bullard performed, was to aid in ordaining Rev. George Fisher over "The Calvinistic church and Society," in Harvard,—a church, that for conscience' sake, and the enjoyment of that "faith once delivered to the Saints," had left the place, where their fathers worshiped, and sought anew an habitation for their God. He did this act, and came home to die. In six days he was a corpse, and his spirit sought its rest in heaven. He left a widow and eight children, four sons and four daughters, to mourn the loss of an affectionate and devoted husband and father.

SETTLEMENT OF THE THIRD PASTOR.

Within about a year after the decease of Mr. Bullard, the church and town again concurred in calling a pastor. Mr. James Howe of Jaffrey, N. H.—a graduate of Dartmouth college, and of Andover Theo. Seminary, was the object of their choice. He was inducted into the pastoral and ministerial office Oct. 16, 1822.—Mr. Howe's ministry was an eventful one; *a trying and a joyful one*. As to its *peculiar* trials, we have no disposition to bring them under review on this occasion. They have had their place, and produced their effects in the great moral drama upon which God looks with so intent an eye. As to its joys, their antitype is now his in heaven. He is most worthily embalmed in the memories and affections of this people; his record too is there, as well as on high. They have, likewise, his character happily portrayed and published in his funeral sermon, preached by the Rev. G. Fisher, so that it is enough, only to give the leading facts and results of his ministry.

It has already been intimated, that Mr. Howe was settled over the whole town. His connection continued undisturbed, till May 11, 1831, when the following vote was carried in the town by a small majority. “*Voted to excuse Rev. James Howe from preaching six sabbaths in the course of the ensuing year, and permit the pulpit to be supplied on those sabbaths by ministers of other denominations.*” * This is the town record of the vote.—Their pastor thus excluded from his pulpit, the church, together with all its officers, which then numbered some two hundred members, sixty of whom were males, soon withdrew from the town, considered as a parish to aid in supporting the gospel. The following stands upon the Church Records, Vol II., under the date of Jan. 26, 1832. “Whereas the Town, or First Parish, have, by various measures, mani-

* See Note H. App.

fested their hostility to that system of faith to which this church has adhered from its formation, and does now regard as the 'faith once delivered to the saints,' and whereas our Pastor, the Rev. James Howe, is about to dissolve his ministerial relation to said Parish, and no prospect remains of our being permitted longer to hear this faith preached in the Public Meeting-House of the Town; therefore, voted, that this church cease to worship in the Public Meeting-House in this Town, after next sabbath."* Only one male, and three or four females lingered behind. A large majority of the "church-going people" followed the pastor. These transactions led to the formation of the "Evangelical Congregational Society," to which the church at once allied itself for mutual aid in supporting the gospel ministry, and of which Mr. Howe was publicly recognized as the minister, by a council mutually called Feb. 1, 1832. 'They also led to the erection of this house of worship, which was solemnly dedicated, Oct. 31, 1832, to the One only living and true God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The Spirit of God was remarkably poured out upon this church and people during Mr. Howe's ministry. There seem to have been as many as three or four different effusions of the Spirit from the year '26 to '36, though it appears somewhat like one continued revival with occasionally renewed divine impulses. During these ten years, there were admitted to the church, three hundred and seventeen persons. Mr. Howe, admitted in all four hundred and nineteen persons to the church; administered three hundred and ninety-three baptisms, more than half adults; solemnized one hundred and fifty-four marriages, and rendered assistance in forty-three councils.

His connection with his church was ever harmonious and happy. In 1837 and '8, having been laborious in his master's service, probably too much so for his strength, for about fifteen years, the disease, which finally terminated his eventful

* See Note B. App.

and useful life, began to steal upon him. He preached, however, more or less, as his health would permit, until the spring of '39, when he requested his people to relieve him from the care of the pulpit, which they with sorrow consented to do. He received a colleague Jan. 29, 1840, and died in office July 19, 1840. Like the first pastor of the church, he departed to his heavenly rest on the Lord's Day. He died tranquil and happy in the same faith, which he had loved to commend to his people, as the best support in death. He left a widow and five youthful children, three sons and two daughters, in deep grief at his early death, and their irreparable loss. Widow Harriet, relict of Rev. James Howe, and four of the children still survive, the youngest son having died in nine months after his father. (For the subordinate officers of the church see note I. App.)

There was a limited revival of religion under the preaching of Rev. C. Sherman, assistant supply in the spring of '39, and there has occurred one more general, since the settlement of the present pastor. The list of church members now stands about three hundred and ninety. With eighty-six, admitted since the present pastor was ordained, there have been connected with this church, in these hundred years, eight hundred and fifty-seven souls. "WHAT HATH GOD WROUGHT!" He can make "*a little one a thousand, and a small one a strong nation.*"

In closing this discourse, the following thoughts are presented, suggested by studying the history of this church.

In its ecclesiastical polity, this church has always harmonized with the genius of our free institutions and with the spirit of the Bible. It has been self-governed. There never has been any holy despotism over it, less divine and authoritative, than the Bible. It has had *bishops*, but only in the scripture sense,—“Not as being lords over God's heritage, but as ensamples to the flock,—to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased

with his own blood." "*Primus inter pares*," has always been their maxim. The church, at its origin, adopted the leading principles of government and discipline, contained in the "Cambridge Platform," that New England *palladium* of church rights. It has stood one hundred years upon this basis, and found it firm, and finds yet no good reason to exchange for one, that gives more power to man, while it takes it from God. It has always been able to take care of itself and maintain gospel order, even without the aid of a council. It has aided in *one hundred and six councils*, and been happy to receive, as a recompense, the aid of only *five*. The power and adaptation of this system has been thoroughly tested by trying cases of discipline. In the years 1794 and 5, when some of its principles were brought into debate, and some of the brethren, for a long time, "withdrew from public worship and church fellowship," it was—"Voted, *mem. con.* to restore and settle peace among us, that the church agree to govern themselves in matters of order and discipline by the Cambridge Platform, with the following exceptions." These exceptions related to the "power of the magistrate to punish idolatry" and the like. May the descendants always be as wise and successful, as were the early fathers in church government and discipline.

Again, this church, and the people sympathizing with it, *have, from the first, sought a ministry, that would faithfully expound Puritan theology.* They have done this, because they have believed it to be originally taught by God. The ministry, which a people seek and cheerfully support, is an exponent of their own religious faith and sentiments. The whole town concurred with the church in supporting such a ministry for more than three quarters of the past century, and when at last it signified a different wish, and virtually struck off the church and its pastor, a new parish, of similar views with the church, was formed, and has continued to act in harmony with the church in maintaining such a ministry.

This church and people have ever sought and sustained a ministry, that would *unequivocally* teach men their entire sinfulness and unfitness for heaven without a spiritual change of their desires and affections; the hopeless condition of man without an Almighty and atoning Saviour; the love of God, the Father, in sending his co-eternal Son into the world, to taste death for every man; the condescension and love of the Son, in being “made flesh to dwell among us, and to suffer for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God;” the love of the Holy Spirit, in making effectual, upon the hearts of all truly penitent and believing ones, Christ’s great work of redemption, and after they have experienced “the renewing of the Holy Spirit,” in enlightening, sanctifying and comforting the people of God.

That the pastors have taught, and the people, generally, as cordially received these and their related truths, no candid man can doubt, who is at all familiar with the history of this church and people, its sainted pastors, and with the sacred formularies the church has put on record.* It may be true, that this church never ascended to *Hyper-Calvinism*; neither has it ever descended to *Sub-Arminianism*. *New England theology* has been its meat and its drink, upon which it has grown to its present stature and strength. May it ever continue to thrive upon this *bread from heaven*.

Further, this church and people have ever maintained the primitive principle of permanency in the sacred relations of pastor and people. The modern *rotating principle* never has been introduced among this people. Of their own free will, they have taken measures to prevent it. They have ever made their own conditions for the settlement of their ministers, and it is eminently to their praise, that they have ever proceeded upon the *primitive principle of Congregationalism*, in settling their pastors for life, or during their ability to dis-

* See Note J. App.

charge the duties of their office. In the settlement of the third and fourth pastors, at least, they have made grateful provision for a limited period of sickness; and lest they themselves might not prove just and impartial judges of their minister's ability at any time, to discharge the functions of his office, they have made provision for an unprejudiced reference from abroad. The "six month's notice"—that entering wedge to trouble and schism—they have wisely kept far from them and thus avoided an incalculable train of evils.

This church never has had occasion to call a council, except to settle a pastor, or to recognize one as the minister of a new parish, he being already pastor of the church; never to settle difficulties, nor dismiss a minister. All the previous pastors of this church have died in office among their "own people," who received their "first love," and their sacred dust sleeps in the common receptacle of their people's dead, awaiting that voice, which shall reanimate the whole. Who can repress the reflection,—"*happy is the people, that is in such a case,*" when so many churches have been kept in a ferment, or convulsed and rent by the opposite course. All experience in the churches of our order is found to be in favor of the very principle upon which this church and people have ever acted. May they scrupulously guard against innovation here; may they never find *good cause* to abandon so conservative and salutary a principle, and one, we doubt not, which has done so much, to prevent the multiplication of sects in the town.

Finally, this church has ever given pleasing evidence to *good men*, that it was *a branch of the Lord's planting*. This evidence must always consist in the superior virtues of a religious life, and in the "good fruits" of such a life. This vine has borne these rich clusters, not in every period alike rich and beautiful, it may be; and where is the natural vine, that does? If the vine has its *seasons*, of showing its nature and fecundity, you do not condemn and consign it to the flames. Let us

judge thus justly of what grows in the Lord's vineyard. Planted in so poor a soil as is the christian church, though its "Husbandman" be divine, we are not to expect every germ will grow up to mature life, that every blossom will turn to "good fruit." Looking with such charitable allowances upon this church, that has passed through every vicissitude of a century to its present strength, the pious heart exclaims, "*What hath God wrought!*"

The good man, whose candor and spiritual judgment qualify him for the office, can discover happy proofs, that God has dwelt and walked with this church, in very many of its aspects;—in its early spirit of reliance upon divine aid, and in its delightful spirit of fraternal sympathy, union and love; in its sound faith and steady growth; in its pacific spirit and gospel order,—never has it been torn by internal dissensions;—in its steady support of gospel ordinances; in its sustaining life through a long night, when the light of so many of the Puritan churches became extinct; in the glorious refreshings, that have followed since the year 1827, which have resulted in the hopeful conversion of between four and five hundred souls. Some of these revivings were granted in most trying times; one, when this church and people were without a sanctuary, and one, when the pastor—Rev. Mr. Howe,—was laid aside, by dangerous sickness, in another place. We trust too, that it has not been, "as salt having lost its savor," in the community where God planted it, but has shed a healthful and saving influence upon society. As another evidence, that its spiritual Head has poured his grace upon it, it has shown, that it felt itself "*a debtor to the world,*" in the great cause of christian benevolence, having contributed, for the last seventeen years, a yearly average of \$526,46, in all \$8,949,80. May love and zeal in this cause never abate, but greatly increase. Another evidence, that God's blessing is in this church, exists in the fact, that his Spirit has so generally sustained his people in the trying hour of death, when human hopes are wont to fail. In many instances, the present pastor has admired the

power of Divine Grace, to sustain the soul of the christian in the last conflict. It has been the most delightful part of his labors to serve at the bedside, and see that, "*precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.*"

Such is the evidence, speaking from the history of this church, in behalf of its humble claim to a resting-place upon the "Sure Foundation;"—such the proofs of its having, from the first, there abode firm and unshaken. One hundred years ago, a little band undertook the glorious enterprise of *laying the foundations for many generations* in this, then, pathless wilderness. Were they not well chosen? Have they ever been removed? *Let good men judge.*

Brethren and Sisters of this church and members of this congregation, descendants of those, who, a century since, began to build a living, spiritual temple in these wilds, as an habitation for our God through the Spirit; behold, with admiring gratitude, *the works of the Lord, and the wonders he hath wrought!* Contrast the far past and the present. What a change since your fathers, "with their staff," passed over yonder *Jordan*. The lurking savage was here then. The memory of their garrisoned houses, and unwelcome defence, while worshiping God in that humble sanctuary, tells their hardships and their dangers. But the wilderness has become a fruitful field. Angels look down on dwellings of comfort, neatness and peace, where the fathers and the mothers prayed with but a poor defence from the piercing blasts of those early winters. The more stately and commodious temple of God now encloses the children of a distant generation, if not upon the identical spot, where the fathers worshiped, and led their children to the altar, yet upon the very spot, where some of them prayed, and taught their children, "the beginning of wisdom." On every hand, we see the fruits of their sacrifices.

While they sowed what you, entering into their labors, are permitted to reap, what is your duty? Gratefully cherish their memories, cultivate their virtues, imitate their examples

of piety and self-sacrifice; defend their good names, and their well authenticated faith, which you inherit in the right line of descent, born, as we would hope many of you are, not simply of their blood, *but of the will of their God*. Rest, therefore, upon the same FOUNDATION, having the SAME CORNER-STONE,—the only hope for the church and the world. Lead your children there, that they too may find *a sure and an eternal resting-place*. May the young among us look upon the past and learn; may they see, and appreciate the inheritance just descending to them; may they heed their responsibility, look to Christ, and receive from him the needful qualifications, to transmit the invaluable legacy.

A century of the experience, the joys, the sorrows and the trials of this church are passed; its conflicts are over, its trophies of grace are sealed. We rejoice to believe, that in all their works and the results of the same, the fathers of this church are honored. May you their descendants, and your children after you, so hold and use the sacred deposit of faith and of privileges left you, that when your posterity shall celebrate the next centennial of this church, your faith and your works may be found unto praise.

Brethren and friends, who are the guests of this church at the table of the Lord to-day, we welcome you to a participation in our holy joys.* We greet you on this occasion with something more than the common feeling of spiritual kindred; we recognize in you the lineal descendants, by a spiritual genealogy, of those, who a hundred years ago, bid their brethren, the fathers of this church, go in peace with their blessing. It is one of the most delightful reminiscences of this occasion, that there was no strife between *Abraham and Lot* on that day. If there *was* any, it was only among their "~~head~~ men." There is not a trace on history, nor a lisp from tradition, that there was any variance on the subject of forming a *new tribe* on this "side of the flood." When the little colony would go

* See Note K. App.

out in the name of their God, to adventure the new enterprise, the *elders* said; "Go in peace, my son, and the Lord be with thee."

You see the issue. We invite you to join in our holy gratulations, and with us render united praise to God. You represent the fathers; you have with us inherited the common faith; you have a place upon the Sure and Only Foundation, there abide forever. Now may these sisters, who dwell so near together, dwell ever in love. Let both cherish and defend their common Faith. Deposit this faith in the hearts of your children, through them send it to theirs, and thus on, till the last generation of the spiritual seed, standing upon these beautiful hills and valleys shall behold, THE GLORIOUS APPEARING OF THE GREAT GOD OUR SAVIOUR, AND IN A MOMENT, IN THE TWINKLING OF AN EYE, SHALL BE CHANGED, AND WITH THE AWAKENED FATHERS, BE CAUGHT UP IN THE CLOUDS, TO MEET THE LORD IN THE AIR, SO MAY WE ALL BE EVER WITH THE LORD.

APPENDIX.

NOTE A.

Those duly authorized, to arrange for the centennial, in fixing upon the day, chose to take the calendar months, as they have been made to stand in the business world by the proper civil authorities, during one hundred years past; that is, to fix the day at the end of one hundred *civil years*. In doing this they were not without a precedent, and it brought two interesting anniversaries together, *the founding of the church, and the settlement of the present pastor*. This appeared to them to be a good and sufficient reason, why they might make the above arrangement. In this way they were also relieved from an embarrassment into which they would have found themselves thrown by adopting the only other alternative, that of having the celebration just at the expiration of one hundred *solar years*. They have been publicly and repeatedly charged with having made a *fatal mistake*, because they did not adopt this latter course. About this they feel no concern. They chose their day, and if they made a *mistake, they made it on purpose*. But suppose they had adopted this other alternative of marking off just one hundred *solar years*, in order to get the true time of the centennial; they would have found this *true*

time at the *dead of night*, between the light of February ninth and tenth. At the time the English Parliament adopted the N. S. the real difference between O. S. and N. S. was eleven days and nearly *one half*. The difference was just eleven days at the *beginning* of the eighteenth century. The O. S. ~~was~~ ahead of the N. S. one day in 128 years, so that in 1752 *nearly* one other half day was gained, and the *real* difference was as already stated. Those who understand the subject of style, know how this increase is dropped out of the N. S. and the style connected by a settled rule at fixed periods. But in order to get a definite period of *solar or true time*, when the limits, or the dates, fall into these two different styles, the *real* difference of the styles at the *first date* must be known, and this difference must be added to the N. S. Thus, to mark off just 100 years of true time from January 29, 1747 O. S. the *exact* difference between the styles *then* must be known, and added to January 29, 1847. It will be found, that this would bring the termination, at the *dead of night*, between February 9th and 10th, and if just one hundred years of *true time* must expire, before a centennial can be true and valid, then there has been no centennial in the place, and the christian fathers have not been honored. But as this was not the doctrine of the *Committee of Arrangements*, they find themselves happily relieved from this uncomfortable embarrassment by *their* rule of calculation.

NOTE B.

Exception has been taken to the *name*, as exclusive, by which the church is designated in this discourse. For this the Author is not responsible. He takes the name as he finds it upon the church records, (See Ch. Records, Vol. II. Title.) None but the church itself can change its name. It seems, that for one hundred years, this church has seen no good reason to do this, as no other name, during all this period is found upon its records. As in the process of time, any new order developes itself, whether in connection with an old or a new Parish, it is at liberty to distinguish itself by whatever epithets it pleases.

But by adhering to its original name, we do not understand the church, in view of *civil* and other changes, that have taken place, to claim any thing further than its original *faith*, and *spiritual privileges and descent*. It makes no ambitious claims to rank in the place, in the eye of the law, *as now construed*, or to be a *legal church*. This kind of priority and legality, it knows it lost by the very act of *adhering to the original faith*;—by remaining in the line of spiritual descent;—by disclaiming the domination of the popular will, and by going where it could enjoy its original faith and spiritual privileges untrammelled. A *legal church* in this state, since the “*Judicial Legislation*” of 1820, is one, which remains, no matter whether majority or minority, or one newly formed, in connection with the town, or with the existing parish. Otherwise, it has no *civil rights*, unless incorporated by a special act of the Legislature. Says Chief Justice Parker, in behalf of the Supreme Court of Mass. in the decision of the noted “*Dedham case*,”—“churches, as such, have no power but of divine worship, church order and discipline.” Again, “as churches, there is not appertaining to them any *civil rights* or privileges.”—“A church *cannot subsist* without some religious community to which it is attached.” By “religious community” he means, *Parish*. Now who, till 1820, ever conceived the idea, that a christian church is the creature of a Parish,—that it can neither exist, nor continue, independent of a parish! Hear these same *Judicial Legislators* farther—for there was no *statute law* upon which the Dedham case was decided.—“If a church may *subsist* unconnected with any congregation or religious society, it is certain, that it has no legal qualities, that it can-

not control property—" &c. "The secession of the *whole church* from the Parish would be an *extinction* of the church; it is competent to the *members of the Parish*, to institute a new church, or to engraft one upon the old stock, *should any remain*; and this church would succeed to all the rights of the old, in relation to the Parish. The only circumstance, which gives a church any legal character, *is its connection with some regularly constituted society*. Those, who withdraw from *the society*, cease to be members of that particular *church*," &c. Is not this a new method of excommunication, unheard of by Jesus Christ and his apostles, or by any body of christian men, till the embodied wisdom of the "liberal" court in this State so declared, October, 1820. For this decision and these extracts, see Mass. Term Reports, Vol. xvi. p. 488, and onward. A Lawyer, reviewing this case in 1829, says;—"This strange and unexpected decision, which has shocked the plain sense of good men, wherever it has been known, has never been well received or acquiesced in, by the bar, or by intelligent Lawyers of the Commonwealth." He says further, "we regard this decision and its *doctrine*, as mere assumption, or *Judicial Legislation*." He informs us what he means by this, by showing, that the decision was unsupported by any *statute law*,—that it was built mainly upon a *construction* of the 3rd Art. of the constitution, adopted in 1780, which plainly never was intended to rob the churches of their long enjoyed rights.

Now in view of this, what is a church in a *civil* sense, or in other words, a *legal church*? It is a creature of the Town, or the Parish, perfectly subservient to the popular will. Like the chameleon, it must take its hue from that to which it is attached, and without which, says the learned court, it cannot exist. How grateful to the *true* churches of Christ, that such was not his decision, nor that of his apostles. A church that would become thus subservient, and take its faith from the present phase of society, or expression of the popular will, in the estimation of all good and christian men, would be unworthy the name. What! shall a church turn weather-vane to the popular will for the sake of "civil rights and privileges," and "control over property?" Would not God then disown it? Says a Lawyer, with respect to the results of the above decision, "Literally the churches are 'speckled birds' among us;—they are like so many ciphers, in arithmetic, which count well at the right, but nothing at the left. If they will worship in such a Meeting-House, and under such a Minister, as the Parish shall provide for them, they are, numerically, something: if they choose to provide a Minister and a Meeting-House on the opposite side of the way, they are, numerically, nothing. We do not believe our fellow citizens are prepared to acknowledge this new logic to be genuine; for *law* it is not. It is a kind of *chap-logic*, by which the whole binding force of the Statute is done away." Surely under such circumstances this church has no ambitious claims for *rank* or *legality* to present. It yielded them, when it deliberately *chose* its ancient faith and spiritual inheritance, rather than "civil rights" and "control over property." These latter, they decided, in 1831, to yield up, rather than the "faith once delivered to the saints."

NOTE C.

The design of these historical notices extends no farther, than the history of religion in the place is concerned, and that, no farther than is connected with the original church. Every thing beyond is left, lest we should interfere with the appropriate province of others, or with a Town celebration; if the *true time*, for a Town centennial can be fixed upon. The author has the following facts from C. Butler, Esq., of Groton. Pepperell became a Precinct,

June 26, 1742, a District, April 12, 1753, and he finds no evidence, that became a Town, till the general Act of the Legislature, in 1786, makingt all the then *Districts* in the state, *Towns*.

NOTE D.

It is not *certain*, whether these dates are made in the *Gregorian*, or *Julian* style. In the latter, the year commenced on the 25th of March. If these dates were entered in this latter style, then the *first Parish meeting*, and the *first vote concerning preaching*, occurred in 1743, N. S., as the year '43 N. S. had then begun. But as they stand as *single dates*, (and not thus, 1742-3, as was usual, if N. S. was not to be understood) the inference is, that they are to be understood in the Gregorian, or N. S. The organization of the *church*, falling between January 1st and March 25th, is indicated on the record in both styles, so far as the beginning of the year was concerned, thus, Jan. 29th, 1746 / 7, the year '46 being O. S. and '47 being N. S.

NOTE E.

Rev. Mr. Emerson who was a native of Malden, Mass.,—the son of Rev. Joseph Emerson, minister of that place,—was born August 25th, 1724, O. S., graduated at Havard College, A. D. 1743. At his ordination in P. Rev. Dan. Emerson, his brother-in-law, of Hollis, offered the first prayer, his father preached from 2 Tim., 2 : 1. Rev. Caleb Trowbridge, of Groton, gave the charge ; and Rev. Phineas Hemenway, of Townsend, gave the right hand of fellowship. When the precinct invited him to settle in the ministry, they voted to give him “ £120 settlement, in Bills of the last emission, and £62 10s. salary, new tenor, yearly, and 30 cords of fire wood, cut and delivered at his door.” The next year, the Parish procured him “ 40 acres of land within half a mile of the Meeting-House,” and voted to increase his salary “ £12 10s., when the Parish should number 100 rateable families,” which was done in 1756. Until 1767, his salary was rated upon the prices of certain articles of store goods and provisions, which rendered it very variable, and caused much perplexity. It was then fixed at £73 6s. 8d. much to his relief and satisfaction.

NOTE F.

The decision to erect a new house was made in 1767, and for two years the people gathered materials, as they could. The dimensions were as follows : “ said Meeting House to be 60 feet long, 45 feet wide, and 20 feet high,” with “ porches.” Attempts were made to have a steeple, but failed. It was finished and dedicated March 8, 1770. Mr. E. preached from 1 Sam. 7 : 12. In this discourse he traced and commemorated the good providence of God with him and his people.

NOTE G.

At the ordination of Rev Mr. B., Rev. Dr. Chaplin, of Groton, offered the first prayer. Rev. Dr. Prentiss of Medfield preached from 2 Tim. 2 : 15. Rev. D. Emerson of Hollis, offered the consecrating prayer and gave the charge. Rev. Mr. Whitney, of Shirley, gave the right hand, and Rev. Mr. Farrar of New Ipswich, closed the solemnities with prayer.

NOTE H.

When this movement was made, it was attempted to justify it by charging Mr. H. *with breaking a solemn promise*, made before his ordaining council, that he would exchange with Clergymen of "liberal sentiments." As this charge has recently been reiterated in public, the publishing committee have requested the insertion of the following testimony, to refute the above calumny. The Rev. Messrs. Fisher and Farnsworth of Harvard and Boxboro, who were both on that council, say that, when something was said in the council on the subject of exchanges—a minority of the people opposing his settlement because he was not liberal enough—'Mr. H. signified his *willingness*, to exchange with the Clergy of the ordaining council, *so far as he knew them*; but being a stranger in this vicinity, he declined committing himself.' This agrees substantially with Mr. H's own account of the matter to his colleague about the time of the settlement of the latter. Rev. Mr. Bennett, of Woburn, also on the Council, recollects no such promise. Mr. H. *did* exchange with the members of his Council, so long as he thought proper, and thus fulfilled his liberal intentions. Rev. Humphrey Moore, of Milford, also on the council, says, "It is my opinion, based on what recollection I have, that he expressed willingness, to exchange with ministers in that region, whose characters were good, and who were in regular standing. By this I did *not* understand, that he *promised to exchange with Unitarians*. If afterwards, for reasons existing in his own mind, he refused to exchange with Unitarians, it is my opinion, that he did *not* violate truth, or good faith." No other living members of the Council have been inquired of, but there are others, who might be, and who would doubtless corroborate the above. But the testimony of four credible witnesses must be true, and therefore this *illiberal* complaint is seen to be groundless.

NOTE I.

The following is a list of the Deacons of the Church, with the dates of their induction into office. Those marked with the asterisk are now living.

Jeremiah Lawrence,	} Jan. 11, 1748.	Edmund Parker,	Oct. 8, 1773.
John Spofford,		Nath'l Hutchinson,	} April 23, 1789.
Peleg Lawrence,	Aug. 23, 1754.	Nath'l Lakin,	
Josiah Fiske,	Oct. 4, 1754.	Jonas Parker,*	} Aug. 15, 1805.
Thomas Lawton,	Aug. 3, 1759.	Edm'd Jewett,	
David Blood,	April 9, 1752.	David Blood,*	} Oct. 29, 1832,
Daniel Fiske,	April 23, 1773.	Ne'h. Cutter,*	
		Henry Jewett,*	January 4, 1844.

NOTE J.

The original covenant has Luther's great doctrine of the Reformation, in the following words, a doctrine, which distinguishes, as much as any other, all evangelical denominations from others;—"acknowledging him our alone Saviour,—accordingly we *wholly disclaim our own Righteousness, in point of Justification, cleaving to Him for Righteousness, Grace, Life and Glory.*" If this is not distinctive Orthodoxy, what is?

NOTE K.

The Union Church in Groton, with its Pastor, Rev. Dudley Phelps, was present by invitation, on account of the original relation, which subsisted between the churches in Groton and Pepperell, the one having been formed from the other.