The First Church in Exeter,

NEW HAMPSHIRE.

1638–1888——1698–1898.

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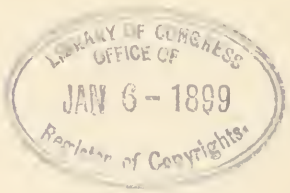
John Taylor Perry

EXETER:

CHRISTMAS, 1898.



The News-Letter Press.
Exeter, N. H.

PREFACE.

ON the 13th and 14th of November, 1898, the First Church and Parish in Exeter celebrated the two hundredth anniversary of the reorganization of the church, and the one hundredth of the house of worship still in use. The true bicentennial dates, and the ones originally designed for observance, were October 2nd and 3rd, nearly or quite corresponding with the old style reckoning of the proceedings in September, 1698. A delay of about six weeks was rendered necessary by extensive repairs and improvements on the church building.

The present volume includes, besides a brief account of the general exercises, first a sermon delivered June 3, 1888, by the late Rev. Swift Byington, then pastor, as the church's contribution to the quadro-millennial celebration of the town, held on June 7th. The discourse was much appreciated at the time of its delivery, and as it dwells almost exclusively on the first organized church and its founder, John Wheelwright, may be regarded as a suitable introduction to the demonstrations ten years later. Mr. Byington, it will be observed, merely repeats the ancient historical statements, without submitting them to a critical analysis. He denies, however, that there is satisfactory evidence of the claim that the church of 1638 died, saying the evidence for that assertion is too negative. His discourse is in itself an assertion of 250 years of existence for our church.

Secondly, the sermon, delivered November 13th last by the present pastor, the Rev. Wilbert L. Anderson, in its subject, "New England Theology as Related to Life and Character," gives to the local observances a more general bearing, and will enable persons, not familiar with the past, better to appreciate the spiritual conflicts of our ancestors.

Thirdly, the address by the Rev. Burton W. Lockhart, D. D., of Manchester, with which the celebration closed, in its eloquent

portrayal of the "Relations of the Church to the Modern World," supplies practical enforcements to the lessons made prominent in a backward look over more than two centuries of conflict and conquest.

Fourthly, the historical paper, while tracing the general progress of the church during 260 years, has for its most important features, first the continuity and virtual identity of the first organized church with its successor. Secondly, a detailed history of the great Whitefieldian secession of 1743, an event, which, although neither side was faultless, was really a heavy blow struck at the union of church and state.

In conclusion it is hoped that the present publication may induce other churches not only to study their past, but to keep their records with systematic care. Through neglect, many important events, when not totally forgotten, are only matters of confused tradition. Through carelessness many church and parish books have fallen into private hands, only to be lost. Such things were perhaps unavoidable a hundred years ago, but it will be unpardonable if they are repeated in the twentieth century.

W. L. Anderson,
J. T. Perry,
G. A. Wentworth,
C. H. Knight,
Sperry French,

Publication Committee.

QUADRO-MILLENNIAL SERMON.

Delivered June 3, 1888.

By the Rev. Swift Byington.

"Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations; ask thy father, and he will show thee, thy elders, and they will tell thee, for the Lord's portion is this people. He found them in a desert land, in a waste howling wilderness; He led them about, and He instructed them. He kept them as the apple of his eye."—*Deuteronomy, 32nd Chapter, 7th, 9th and 10th Verses.*

THE celebration of the 250th anniversary of the planting of the town of Exeter, in which the planting of the Congregational church was neglected, would be like a play of Hamlet with Hamlet left out; it would be a neglecting of the prominent reason for which New England was settled. Exeter was a religious settlement as truly as Plymouth was. If the Pilgrims were forced by their steadfast religious convictions to find a new home at Plymouth, so was John Wheelwright forced by his steadfast convictions to plant the town of Exeter, and at the same time, the First church, of which you are the representatives.

And, first, of some of the circumstances which led to the founding of this town and church, I wish to speak. Eight or ten years after the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth, who were persons of humble position and small possessions, a new colony of Puritans landed at Salem and established themselves, more ambitious than the Pilgrims at Plymouth, many of them persons of education and wealth, bent on founding a commonwealth in the wilderness in which Puritan conceptions of religion should be all controlling.

This colony soon came to include Charlestown and Boston and the regions adjacent, under the name of Massachusetts Bay. They received constant accessions from the Mother Country, grew and prospered. After John Endicott, the first governor of the Salem Colony, came Gov. John Winthrop, of the Boston Colony. John

Cotton, of the church in Boston, was then a prominent minister in the colony. It is said that the town is the social and political unit in New England, upon which our commonwealth rests; but at the beginning, the congregation, not the town, was the basis upon which the fabric rested. No one could vote unless he was a communicant, so that the town meeting was nothing but a church meeting and the deference to the clergy was unbounded, and not only the religious but the social and political authority was in the hands of the clergy. It seems as if the Puritans had certainly attained their object, a religious commonwealth. The clergy were consulted by the governor on every important question which arose, and their counsel was greatly heeded. Every inhabitant was obliged to attend the services of the Lord's day, under penalty of fine or imprisonment. The church and state were one; the government subservient to the clergy, who were a power behind the throne; there were several sermons on Sunday and several often during the week, that the masses of the people might be kept in a submissive spirit, that there might be no departure in thought or opinion from Puritan authority, and that any deviation from or opposition to their standards, might be at once frowned upon and crushed.

In 1636, among other Puritans, came another John, John Wheelwright, to enjoy the privileges and liberties of Massachusetts Bay. He was about 44 years of age and had been in the ministry eight or ten years, in England. In Gov. Bell's memoirs of Wheelwright, I read that he was a fellow collegian in England with Oliver Cromwell at the University of Cambridge, which he entered at 18 years of age, graduating in 1614. "I remember," says the Lord Protector Cromwell, "when I was more afraid of meeting Wheelwright at football than I have since been of meeting an army in the field, for I was infallibly sure of being tripped by him." Cotton Mather said he had heard that "when Wheelwright was a young spark at the University he was noted for a more than ordinary stroke at wrestling." From this it may be gathered, adds Gov. Bell, "that young Wheelwright was of vigorous bodily constitution, addicted to athletic exercises, and not lacking in spirit or resolution." He was a leading man in the Puritan party in England. He was instrumental

in the conversion of many souls and was highly esteemed; but perhaps owing to his Puritan views, which were strongly opposed to the Church of England, he lost his parish, and in April, 1636, sailed for New England. He came not wholly a stranger, for he was acquainted with Rev. John Cotton, the minister of the Puritan church in Boston, and a man of leading influence there.

Some of the members of the Boston church wished Wheelwright to be settled as a second teacher over that church, but this was opposed by ex-Gov. Winthrop, on the ground that Wheelwright was not sound in doctrine. Although Sir Henry Vane (now governor), Winthrop's rival, defended him, it was useless, and the friends of Wheelwright formed a church at what is now Quincy, Mass., and in October, 1636, settled Wheelwright as their pastor at the age of 44. The next January he preached a sermon in Boston on Fast day which gave great offence to ex-Gov. Winthrop and his friends and at length after a long controversy and many trials in civil and ecclesiastical courts, at which Wheelwright took the ground that he had preached nothing but the truth, and that he was not responsible for the application which they chose to make of it, he was sentenced to be disfranchised and banished. This was in November, 1637. He was given fourteen days to leave. Then they turned to his advocates and followers, and served many of them in like manner. Wheelwright left Boston, probably in a coasting vessel of John Clark's, (a sympathizer) for the region of Piscataqua river, perhaps Dover Point, or Strawberry Point, where were already settlements of fishermen, and as soon as the deep snow permitted, came to Squamscot in the spring of 1638, the site of what is now Exeter. In April, 1638, he secured by purchase, or otherwise, an extensive tract of land at Squamscot Falls, embracing what is now Exeter and several adjacent towns, and was now ready to be followed by his friends and followers, who were eager to share his fortunes and plant a new colony in the wilderness. He was soon surrounded by a company of followers large enough to insure the success of his project. The names of more than thirty men appear in the first assignment of land. As soon as some rude sort of shelter had been provided, their families followed, and at once measures were taken to organize a church. A place of worship forty feet square was built

of logs on what was called Meeting-house hill in the northern part of this village, and Wheelwright and eight others applied to the Boston church for dismission to the church at Exeter, which was granted, according to the records of the First church, Boston, on the 6th of the 11th month, 1638, so that, as we see, this town and this First church of Exeter were planted at about the same time in 1638, 250 years ago.

Gov. Bell, in his memoir of Wheelwright, speaks of him as a minister of remarkable learning, power and piety. Mr. Adams, of Quincy, says he was a personal friend of Cromwell and Sir Henry Vane, with a mind vigorous and masculine, and a courage stern and determined even above the Puritan standard of resolution and daring. He spoke the truth that was in him, and could be neither intimidated nor cajoled. In his Fast day sermon, which was preached in Boston, he probably charged upon the Puritan authorities selfrighteousness or Pharisaism, or they took it so, which brought on the trouble which resulted in his banishment, though Rev. John Cotton, the minister of the Boston church, declared that "Brother Wheelwright's doctrine was according to God, wholly and altogether." Winthrop advanced the theory that, "The Corporation of Massachusetts, having bought its land, held it as though it were a private estate, and might exclude whom they pleased therefrom." Gov. Vane left for England, Winthrop was re-elected governor in Vane's place, and Wheelwright was left to the vengeance of Winthrop and the others whom he had offended. So the party of Wheelwright was crushed, the bold were exiled, the timid were terrified, and the power of the Puritan majority was absolute in the land for forty years.

The Rev. Thomas Robbins, who has written a valuable history of the first planters of New England, says, "The people who made the settlement in Exeter, in 1638, were mostly from Boston. Having been regularly dismissed from the church in that town, they immediately united in a church relation on the principles of their mother church in Boston. As they judged themselves to be without the jurisdiction of Massachusetts, they formed themselves into a body politic, chose rulers and assistants, who were sworn to the proper execution of their respective offices, and a correspond-

ing oath of obedience was taken by the people. In this political compact, is seen an instance of civil government in its simplest, purest form. These settlements for many years lived peaceably with the natives, and from the great advantages for fishery were not exposed to the evils of famine."

Gov. Bell, in his memoir of Wheelwright, says, "Under this voluntary system of government the settlement of Exeter flourished and took permanent root. Its members increased; the land was subject to the plow; grist-mills were set in motion by the waters of the falls; and good order seems to have prevailed in a degree unusual in a frontier hamlet." In regard to Wheelwright and his church all I can find is this, "Wheelwright pursued the even tenor of his ways, as pastor of the little church, making his presence felt in every matter of interest to his people and winning each successive year, a greater share of their confidence and attachment. The cause of his leaving Exeter, after about four years of ministry, was the extension of the jurisdiction of Massachusetts to include Hampton, Dover, Portsmouth and Exeter. Massachusetts had not hesitated to annoy him by manifestations of hostility. These little colonies felt their weakness in case of an attack by enemies, and, in 1641, applied to Massachusetts to be under her jurisdiction and protection." Mr. Nathaniel Shute has said they were moved to this by the hostile action of the Indians. Mr. Thomas Robbins says, "They were exposed to the intrusion of vagrants and outlaws from the Massachusetts Colonies, to a constant influx of immigrants and of demagogues invited by their weakness," difficulties from which they were not strong enough to rid themselves. It was in 1642 or 3 that they were received and became a part of the Colony of Massachusetts Bay. Wheelwright left for Wells, Me., early in 1643, taking the best part of his church with him. After about four years, having made peace with Massachusetts, he preached in Hampton, N. H., and was afterwards on his return from a long visit to England, settled at Salisbury, Mass., at the age of 70, and died there at the age of 87, of apoplexy, still vigorous in body and mind until the fatal stroke. There his remains are buried, and in the words of another: "No chiselled monument marks the spot, nor is any needed to perpetuate the memory of the man."

After the removal of Wheelwright to Wells, Me., in 1643, the church of Exeter was probably broken up and prostrate as a regular, formal organization. This irregular state of things continued for seven years. Several ministers were called, but declined. At last, in May, 1650, it was unanimously agreed that Rev. Samuel Dudley (a son of Gov. Thomas Dudley, says Rev. John Smith, the eighth minister of this church,) "is forthwith, as soon as comfortable subsistence can be made by the town for him and his family, in a house purchased of Mr. Wheelwright, the said Dudley is to come and inhabit Exeter and to be a minister of God's word unto us, until such time as God shall be pleased to make a way for the gathering of a church, and then to be ordained our pastor or teacher, according to the ordinance of God." It is on the basis of those words wholly, that it is supposed there was a break in the continuity of this church from 1638, and so it is said that the present First church of Exeter properly dates from its organization in 1698, sixty years after Wheelwright planted it. (I think the evidence is too negative to prove this conclusively.) Mr. Dudley entered at once upon the pastorate, with a salary of forty pounds English money, together with the Wheelwright house and a yard and garden fenced in. A new meeting-house was built in 1652, about the size of the former one and not far from it. This took the place of Wheelwright's primitive log meeting-house and was used as a place of public worship for more than forty years. In 1656, Mr. Dudley was called to Portsmouth, which strained his people up to raise his salary to fifty pounds. The Wheelwright property was fully confirmed to Mr. Dudley, and it was provided that the selectmen of the town should yearly gather up the said sum of fifty pounds, as his salary, and in case they should fail to do so they should be answerable to the town for their default, and should make up what they failed to collect out of their own pockets. At this time every inhabitant was compelled by law to pay the minister's tax as much as any other.

In March, 1668, at a town meeting, it was ordered that Lieutenant Hall be empowered to arrest and sue any that belong to the town that refuse to pay the rate of the minister, and in 1671 it was voted that Mr. Dudley was to gather up his rate himself and to re-

ceive sixty pounds instead of fifty as heretofore, and that the selectmen were to lay the tax, and if any should refuse to pay, Mr. Dudley should get it by the constable. This was soon followed by his withdrawing from his charge, (though he occasionally held religious services in his own house) and in five years, in 1676, the following order was passed the court, sitting at Hampton: "The town of Exeter being presented for letting their meeting-house lie open and common for cattle to go into, this court doth order that the selectmen of Exeter do take effectual care that the said house be cleaned, be made clean enough for Christians to meet in, and the doors hung and kept shut, under penalty of five pounds, and that for the time to come they keep the said house tight and suitable for such a place, upon a like penalty." Mr. Dudley died in Exeter in 1683, at the age of 77 years. He seems to have been as lacking in force as Mr. Wheelwright was full of it, and the church can not be said to have prospered under his ministry. Yet he was an honest and good man, connected by blood and by marriage with some of the principal men in Massachusetts, and was a busy and faithful man according to his ability. (But he had fearfully poor material to work on.)

From this time for fifteen years, Exeter had no settled ministry. A Mr. Cotton and a Mr. Wentworth preached as temporary supplies, during this period, and some others whose names are not preserved. Probably the church as a body, and the meeting house, were badly dilapidated. Finally, in 1697, a new meeting-house was built "of no mean proportions" near where this house now stands, with doors at the East and West ends, the pulpit on the North side, pews around the sides, and in the center the space doubtless occupied by benches. The church was reorganized in September, 1698, with Rev. John Clark pastor, installed with a confession of faith and covenant which we now have, and with 26 members. This organization has been maintained unbroken to the present day.

Thus I have set down concisely and with many necessary omissions for your patience sake, so far as I could find material, the history of the first sixty years of this old church. Very few records of this period have been preserved. The history of the nearly two hundred subsequent years from 1698 can be more readily traced,

though for much of the time the records of this church were poorly kept, and some small part of them have been burned.

As we look back upon the trials and sufferings of our fathers, we are sensibly evident of the gratitude we owe to the goodness of God in keeping us as a church, and in giving us the measure of strength and prosperity which we now enjoy. The Lord's portion to his people. We have all the religious liberty that we deserve. May God keep as the apple of his eye these churches and this town of Exeter, making them more than ever before the glory of our commonwealth, laborers together with Him in all that constitutes the true welfare of man.

THE BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION.

THE figure 8 holds an important place in the annals of the First Church and Parish. Organized in 1638, the church was reorganized in 1698. In 1788 those who had seceded from it to form the Second Church, for the first time since 1743 communed with their former brethen at the invitation of Deacon Brooks of the First Church. In 1798 the present house of worship was built and occupied. In 1838 its interior was remodelled. In 1888 the quarter-millennial of church and parish, as well as that of the town, was celebrated, and in 1898 two days were devoted to the commemoration of events whose interest cannot be overrated.

The first step toward this latest—it is to be trusted not last celebration, was taken at the annual meeting of the church, December 31, 1897. The church committee was there instructed to devise a plan of commemoration and report the same for the approval of the church.

At the annual meeting of the parish, April 4, 1898, a committee was appointed to coöperate with the church committee in arranging a programme.

Little was done unless in the way of informal conference and suggestion until May, when meetings were held and committees were appointed to provide for the various features of the occasion. The reorganization of 1698 was effected late in September, but the change of styles adopted in 1752 threw the dates ten days forward. Hence Sunday, October 2, and Monday, October 3, were the dates selected as near equivalents of the events commemorated. It now became very apparent to all that the interior condition of the church building was not such as ought to exist during festivities of unusual importance, at which many strangers were to be present. Accordingly a building committee, consisting of Messrs. W. Burlingame, W. H. C. Follansby and A. T. Dudley, was appointed. This committee, ably seconded by the pastor, speedily raised the

funds required, approximately $2,500, and repairs and improvements were begun, which were not completed until very near November 13 and 14, the days to which the anniversary had necessarily been postponed. The principal changes were the substitution of new furnaces for the old, and placing them in the cellar instead of on the first floor. This insured the perfect warming of the lower story as well as of the auditorium on the second floor. It also gave space for a toilet room for women and for the enlargement of the kitchen. The vestibule at the front entrance received a floor of hard pine, and was much improved by the removal of an unsightly staircase leading to the upper tower. The two lecture rooms were provided with new and handsome gas fixtures, and by cutting double doors can be made virtually one apartment. The staircases have substituted graceful balusters for their old time board sides and have been made lighter by the removal of headers that obscured part of the windows. New and wider doors were placed at the entrances to the auditorium, which has also received new windows, a new carpet and new pew cushions, and which has been improved by the removal of the back pews to provide a transverse aisle. The wood work and lecture room ceilings have been tastefully painted in soft colors, and noise on the stairs prevented by rubber matting. All that was desirable in the church of 1838 has been preserved, while modern improvements have replaced clumsy and obsolete features. The result has pleased and surprised all, and those who gave so readily and generously have the satisfaction of knowing that their money was wisely used.

SUNDAY.

The services on Sunday morning, November 13, were very largely attended, many members of other churches being present. The building had been tastefully decorated—outside, over the doors, with a shield inscribed "First Church, 1638, 1798, 1898." The auditorium was profusely adorned with the national colors, with another dated shield over the pulpit, with streamers and great profusion of flowers, potted plants and palms. Among the flowers was a vase of beautiful chrysanthemums, sent with "loving greetings of Phillips Church." Music was furnished by the regular choir. The

voluntary and the doxology were followed with an anthem by the choir, "Break forth into joy." The responsive readings were from Psalms 121 and 122. The choir followed with a Gloria, and Romans 8 : 28–39 was then read by the pastor, the Rev. Wilbert L. Anderson. The opening prayer was made by his only living predecessor, the Rev. John O. Barrows, of Stonington, Conn. At his close Mr. Lamson and Miss Tilton sang a duet, "Jesus, Lover of My Soul," and the choir then sang the hymn, "Jesus shall reign where'er the sun." The sermon by the pastor will be found elsewhere in our pages. He closed with a prayer, after which the choir sang "O God, our help in ages past," and Mr. Barrows pronounced the benediction.

At 3 P. M. the Communion was administered by Messrs. Anderson and Barrows. Mr. Street offered prayer and Mr. Bourne read the third chapter of Ephesians. Many of their people were also present as communicants. Mr. Anderson distributed the bread and Mr. Barrows the wine, the cups for the latter being the oldest owned by the church and dating back to the time of the reorganization and the first decade of the eighteenth century. Mr. Barrows, in some very sympathetic remarks, paid tribute to Mrs. Abner Merrill, Mrs. George Gardner, Mrs. William G. Perry, Mrs. Joanna Tilton and other good women he had known during his pastorate, who have since passed to their reward.

A very large Christian Endeavor meeting was held in the evening, over which Mr. A. T. Dudley presided and at which Mr. Perley Gardner read an excellent paper. The Endeavorers of the daughter church were present in a body.

MONDAY.

On Monday afternoon Mr. J. T. Perry read extracts from his historical paper, after Scripture reading by the Rev. E. G. Smith, of Epping, and prayer by the Rev. George Lewis, of South Berwick, Me., and music by the choir. The document will be found in full on subsequent pages. At the close of this service the old silver service and some curios belonging to the church were exhibited. Also a fragment of the old bell cast by Paul Revere, broken about twenty years ago and then sold to the Baptist church to be recast

with its own bell. The piece bears the date of its construction, 1800, and was presented by Deacon Henry C. Moses of the Baptist church with a silver plate, inscribed, "Piece of the Old Town Bell, cast by Paul Revere of Revolutionary Fame, vouched for and presented by Henry C. Moses, Exeter, N. H." This token of good will was gratefully received and awakened much interest.

At 5 o'clock supper was served in the lecture room, the pastor presiding and the venerable Dr. Robie, forty-six years pastor at Greenland, asking the blessing. The Rev. Mr. Barrows was the first speaker called on, and paid loving tribute to the men of his church, as he had done to the women on Sunday, and also referred with respect to the prominent citizens of the town, who were then living. Of his own people he dwelt on his classmate, the late Joseph W. Gale, Superintendent of the Sunday School, Deacon W. L. Gooch and Mr. Abner Merrill and Dr. William Perry, the last named of whom turned his attention to missionary work.

The Rev. J. H. Fitts, of Newfields, spoke for the daughter churches—Newmarket (now Newfields), Epping and Brentwood. He mentioned that Wheelwright spent the winter of 1637–38 at Newmarket with Edward Hilton while on his way to Exeter, and showed that the churches at Newmarket and Brentwood had each presented Exeter with a grand-daughter; that of Brentwood being at Fremont. He eulogized the parish as the sustainer of the church. Rev. John A. Ross, at Hampton, of whose ancient church Wheelwright was third pastor, quoted a sentence from one of his sermons as applicable to the present time as to his own day. Dr. George E. Hall, of Dover, was somewhat satirical, but very sensible and practical in his remarks. He greeted his entertainers as "fellow ancients;" spoke of the old church at Dover and the ancient church of Exeter, and while complimenting the pluck of the historian in claiming for Exeter's church priority over that of Dover, said it was safer to controvert Dr. Quint in heaven than Dr. Quint on earth. He flatly opposed Mr. Fitts's exaltation of the parish over the church. The Rev. George E. Street paid glowing tribute to the Rev. Swift Byington, and expressed the deep affection of his own heart and that of his church, declaring that he would grieve no more at its downfall than at that of the mother.

Dr. Robie, of Greenland, said that Gladstone had not spoken the full truth in declaring that the church rested on the rock of the Scriptures. This is not quite correct. Its foundation is Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and forever. The Hon. Joseph B. Walker, of Concord, told an amusing story of the advice of Dr. Soule to him when he entered the Academy in 1838. Asking a question regarding a difficulty, he was told to grasp the bull by the horns. This is the safest and wisest course and the gist of Exeter teaching.

Principal H. P. Amen of the Phillips Exeter Academy was the last speaker. He told how much an Exeter church had done for him when he came here a stranger boy, and he earnestly hoped the First church would do the same for many generations of Academy boys.

A number of letters had been received, but there was not time to read them, but one telegram was so specially interesting that Mr. Anderson read it. The first signer is the well known physician of Melrose, the second a Boston lawyer, who lives in Lynn, and the third a prominent citizen of Andover, who is likewise a lawyer.

The lineal descendants of Rev. John Odlin living in and around Boston send their hearty congratulations to Exeter's historic church on its 260th anniversary.

CHARLES C. ODLIN.
JAMES E. ODLIN.
WILLIAM ODLIN.

At 7.30 P. M. the church was crowded by an expectant audience, including many persons from neighboring towns besides the invited guests of the occasion. The Rev. B. W. Lockhart's address is given entire in this volume, and hence we will only say that it held the close attention of all who listened to it, and was warmly praised by every one. Seated with the speaker were Messrs. Anderson and Barrows, Rev. Dr. George E. Hall and Rev. H. H. Colburn, of Brentwood. The latter read the Scriptural selection, Isaiah 11, and the opening prayer was made by Dr. Hall. This was followed by the hymn, "Hail to the Lord's Annointed." The voluntary had been followed by "Hear our Prayer," a trio for soprano, alto

and bass, and after the Scripture reading Miss Ellis was heard in a pleasing solo.

The service closed with prayer by the pastor, Coronation by the choir and the benediction by Mr. Barrows. From first to last the commemoration was a great success, and no feature of the programme failed of carrying out its designed object. A number of the younger participants may live until 1938, when Exeter and the church can together celebrate their 300th anniversary.

THE PASTORAL SUCCESSION.

John Wheelwright,	1638—1643.
Samuel Dudley,	1650—1683.
John Clark,	1698—1705.
John Odlin,	1706—1754.
Woodbridge Odlin,	1743—1776.
Isaac Mansfield,	1776—1787.
William F. Rowland,	1790—1828.
John Smith,	1829—1838.
William Williams,	1838—1842.
Joy H. Fairchild,	1843—1844.
Roswell D. Hitchcock,	1845—1852.
William D. Hitchcock,	1853—1854.
Nathaniel Lasell,	1856—1859.
Elias Nason,	1860—1865.
*John O. Barrows,	1866—1869.
Swift Byington,	1871—1893.
Wilbert L. Anderson,	1894———.

* Mr. Barrows is the only survivor of Mr. Anderson's sixteen predecessors.

ANNIVERSARY SERMON.

Delivered November 13, 1898.

By the Rev. Wilbert L. Anderson.

New England Theology as Related to Life and Character.

"Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the Saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the Saints."—*Ephesians I: 15–18.*

ON this anniversary it is well for us not only to review our local history, but also to refresh our understanding of the influences under which this history took form. Among the forces that have entered into the development of the institutions and shaped the character of New England, the first place must be accorded to theological ideas. An appropriate theme for this occasion, therefore, is New England theology as related to life and character.

Exeter, it is true, is not in Massachusetts; but when has it ever been settled that Massachusetts is the synonym of New England? Ideas and influences heed no custom-house on state borders. The abiding traits of New England are found to-day in rural communities rather than in cities. If we would look upon our contemporary ancestors we must go to the farms and villages among the hills rather than to Boston and to Hartford. If we were the smallest community in New Hampshire, hidden in some valley of the mountains, it would be our right to claim a part in the New England inheritance.

Nor is it necessary to claim peculiar intercourse with Massachusetts. We ought, nevertheless, to concede that in early times

Boston was the center and that influences radiating thence diminished in strength with the distance and with the infrequency of intercourse. By either of these tests Exeter is as much a part of historic New England as could be desired.

We are so near Boston that when this country was still a wilderness Wheelwright and his associates found this locality the nearest convenient refuge. Exeter is, perhaps, the earliest instance of the suburban movement that still testifies to the centrifugal forces radiating from the metropolis.

We have been in the habit of claiming that New Hampshire men have contributed largely to the making of Massachusetts; and there must be recognized a special communion between that which is made and its maker. Always there comes back along the lines of emigration the story of life in the new home. If New Hampshire has given of her best to Massachusetts, Massachusetts has made full recompense through the clearing house in which historic balances are adjusted.

But not to dwell upon this, during the seventeenth century this church had for its pastor for thirty-three years the son of the famous Gov. Dudley, one of the two great leaders in Massachusetts Bay during the earliest period. Of the eighteenth century seventy years were included in the long pastorates of the two Odlins, men who were marked representatives of the New England spirit.

I shall assume without further justification of the claim that the prevalent theological conceptions of New England formed the lives and the characters of the men and the women whom we honor today. These beliefs, of which I shall speak, have been held here; these lives have been lived here. While, then, we encourage ourselves with the wider outlook, discerning of what great movements we are a part, we feel the personal interest in what our own ministers have taught the successive generations that have worshiped in this place.

The name, New England theology, properly designates what is distinctive of religious thought in this part of the world. In this narrower sense it denotes the series of doctrines that slowly modified the ideas of the earlier time. In the prophetic succession are included Jonathan Edwards, peer of the profoundest philosophers

and incomparable among mystics; Joseph Bellamy, the eloquent preacher; Samuel Hopkins, warmest hearted of dogmatists; Nathaniel Emmons, absorbed student and inspiring teacher; the younger Edwards; Pres. Dwight, the great expounder of the faith; Dr. N. W. Taylor and Prof. Park, who bridged the gulf and established communication with the modern world. Such men, following one another, each giving voluminous and monumental expression to the truth reshaped in his own thought, are sufficient to give luster to any country.

This New England theology is the Puritan theology, revitalized and adapted to new demands of the mind and heart. So direct is this derivation that it is proper to call all the religious thinking from the settlement of the colonies the theology of New England for the purposes of our discussion.

I.

It is important that we understand, first of all, that the theology of New England is in the closest and most vital historical connections. It is a form of the stirring belief that was everywhere diffused in the heroic days of the Reformation. A single term brings it clearly to mind; we call it Calvinism. The great scholar and statesman of Geneva did not originate this type of faith. Luther held it with less discrimination and more of enthusiasm, reaching his mature convictions while Calvin was still at school. And Luther found this mode of conceiving God and duty the traditional faith of the church. A thousand years before, Augustine had lived what Calvin thought and had embodied in institutions what Calvin recorded in his "Institutes."

It happened that Calvin was at the height of his power in Geneva when Queen Mary began the persecution that drove a multitude of Protestants out of England. There was an attractive and safe place of refuge in the free and tolerant city where the teacher and counselor of Europe was guiding church and state. The result was that a little later Protestant preachers streamed back to popularize the religion whose adoption in England had been scarcely more than a policy of statecraft. It is easy to see why the faith of the English people was Calvinistic.

It is equally intelligible that the Catholic party should violently oppose whatever the arch-heretic of Geneva taught and that whatever was most antagonistic to Calvinism should win favor at the court of the Stuarts and among the clergy advanced to power by the royal prerogative. When fresh persecution drove other exiles across the sea they came out of Calvinistic England. It was one of the plainest sequences of history that the New England fathers held the Calvinistic creed.

It was to them the banner of the Reformation, the symbol of a purified church, the hope of liberty, the guiding star of their holy enterprise in the new world. Calvinism was the most vital thing in that age. It was the life that was in the blood flowing to every part of the Protestant world.

II.

Passing now to a more practical view we observe that this theology took shape under the pressure of the most urgent necessities and the inspiration of the most profound experience. The fundamental doctrine of Calvinism was the sovereignty of God. Like all who have held the Latin as distinguished from the Greek theology the reformers and the Puritans conceived God as king and permitted the majesty of the throne to overawe the heart; but it does not seem to be true that they allowed the monarchical element to predominate in that mechanical sense which excites the criticism of many modern writers. These men so exalted God that the divine will seemed to them the one element that infinitely transcended all others. They reached this conception, not by thinking systematically of monarchical relations, not by analyzing the qualities inherent in a throne, but rather by the pressure of their own necessities. And these were twofold.

When the reformers began their gigantic task they were the weakest of the weak arrayed against the mightiest of the mighty. What was a poor monk that he should assail the papal dominion? And what prospect was there that unknown peasants would be able to dictate the conquering policies of the world? And when our fathers crossed the sea what a venture it was into the solitude of the Divine Presence! In such conditions there was hope only in

God. The King of Kings was the confidence of the humble. It was in this way that the doctrine of the divine sovereignty met practical needs.

Personal salvation in that earnest time was regarded as a task to be prosecuted under like stress. Hell was a reality, heaven was equally vivid to the imagination. To escape the one and win the other called for the most serious battle against an evil world and the corruptions of the heart. Again the divine was magnified. All hope was in God. What he did seemed all, and human power dwindled into nothingness. Cotton Mather says of Thomas Hooker that the very spirit of his ministry lay in points of the most practical religion and the grand concerns of the sinner's preparation for implantation in, and salvation by the glorious Lord Jesus Christ. These Christians magnified and exalted God and redemption. Without reflecting upon the errors involved they cried out in their rapturous contemplation of grace that they themselves were nothing and had no part in their salvation; that they were corrupt, even to utter depravity; that they belonged to a fallen and ruined race; that they could do no good thing; and that when they tried to do good they plunged the deeper into evil and piled mountains upon mountains on the awful masses of their guilt. The typical attitude was expressed by Thomas Shepard when he said, "I was never tempted to Arminianism, my own experience so sensibly confuting the freedom of the will."

When men escaped from this bondage in sin by intervening and unmerited grace, they not only ascribed all the glory to God, expressing their gratitude in the Calvinistic terms, but they used these expressions with a glow of emotion that hid their philosophical inaccuracy. It is an inexcusable mistake to suppose that the fathers of New England were cool, calculating, hair splitting theologians, delighting only in the nicety of their logic and the perfection of their systems.

Jonathan Edwards, to illustrate from the latter time, surpasses almost every other thinker in the acuteness of his definitions and reasonings. But as Dante excels all who have attempted the description of the spiritual world in the marvelous elaborateness of his circles within circles, his glories beyond glories, while at every stage

of his descent and every advance toward the empyrean his heart yearns for Beatrice and at last throbs with the ecstacy of her presence, so this acutest of philosophers leaves upon those who know him best the inspiration of a soul intoxicated with heavenly visions. His own words give the clew. "He that is spiritually enlightened .... does not merely rationally believe that God is glorious, but he has a sense of the gloriousness of God in his heart. There is not only a rational belief that God is holy .... but there is a sense of the loveliness of God's holiness."

Samuel Hopkins, it is said, would sometimes come from his study and walk his parlor floor for the space of two or three hours, pressing his hands together in the most ravishing delight and seemingly in such an ecstacy as to be unable to contain himself.

And we must not think that these experiences of the leaders were exceptional. On the side of the emotions the common people are easily the peers of theologians. These were the habits of mind, these were the moods of New England. Out of this sublime passion, productive of dreams and enthusiasms such as filled the soul of Plato with philosophic rapture, sung, indeed, by Milton in glowing and affluent beauty, came the theology that was like the shining of suns.

III.

And now it has to be pointed out that a sad experience befell this New England. The first and the second generations were made up of picked men and women and their children. The third and the fourth generations showed a decline. The wilderness began to tell on the immigrants. Schools were inadequate. The life was rough and without the stimulating influences of an older society. The grandfather educated and receiving the formative impress in England, the father trained under that cultivated and admirable settler in the woods, were succeeded by children and children's children to whom the old world and its refinements were only a family tradition. It was then that the New England stock took on a hard, prosaic character. A race gifted with the rarest endowment, compelled to drudge for two generations, became the sharpest witted, the most enterprising, the most saving money makers of the world.

But more important was the degeneracy in religion. The early enthusiasm waned. When the tides of love went out the sands were laid bare to be blown by the hostile winds into heaps of arid waste. Errors in the Puritan theology were harmless while love hid them from sight. It was otherwise when the drying of the waters produced a Sahara. Where men had sailed the floods they could not wrestle with the fretful sands. Calvinism is the most inspiring of faiths while it is believed with all the heart by those who feel that they are the chosen of God; nothing so cripples and paralyzes as this same creed apprehended as a rule of fate, handed down as the blighting inheritance of those who question their own election. Saul's armor, that was the protection of the great king's strength, becomes to David the cumbersome burden that he can not bear, the symbol of a ferocious vigor that no longer mounts into the deft swing of the agile arm.

The loss of the original ardor had two results. The first was a stiffening of the characteristic doctrines until they assumed a form that was provocative of unbelief. The infidel, as he has been called, has been a prominent person in the group gathered about the stove in the post office and the country store. This conspicuous unbeliever has had a considerable following among the intelligent as well as from fellows of the baser sort. These men have not been atheists, nor have they always been hostile in heart to the essentials of Christianity. They have been driven into antagonism by the preaching of doctrines illuminated by the cold blue flame of the intellect. which ought never to be exhibited without the warm yellow glow of emotion. The Calvinistic creed, when the life went out of it, became impossible to the candid mind. Within the church itself there was a silent change, that finally appeared in the general leaning toward Arminianism. This type of thought was then scarcely more than a denial of the Calvinistic doctrines. It was the negative that always shadows the positive. This powerless theology crept into the churches. It remained in them in spite of all renewals of faith in the last century until it ripened into a movement that by the union with great positive convictions of the intellect produced the Unitarian church in America, just as the same tendency kindled into flame by the positive convictions of the

heart brought forth the Methodist church. In the early part of the last century there was no sign of these prodigious forces. Arminianism then was a mere protest, filling the churches with the lethargy of the negative.

Worse than the crippling of unbelief within and without the church was the paralysis that came from faith. Calvinism had become fatalism. Men could do nothing to save themselves. They were compelled to wait in anxiety until the signs of regeneration appeared. The substantial and influential men in the congregations in great numbers fell into a fixed spiritual inactivity. They found that they did not have the experiences that were exalted in the traditions of the church and they settled down into content with membership in the parish and attendance upon public worship. So numerous were these persons that never joined the churches, that it became necessary to devise some method by which their children should not be excluded from baptism. The Half-way Covenant, by which it was permitted that the children of parents who were excluded from church membership by their inability to match the demands of Calvinism in their own experience could be baptized, was extensively adopted. Beyond this there was a movement, led by Solomon Stoddard, the predecessor of Jonathan Edwards at Northampton, which proposed to make the Lord's Supper a means of grace to the unregenerate. This never became general, but it shows how the paralysis struck the congregations.

It was in such conditions that Jonathan Edwards led the way for a modification of the Calvinistic theology. His great contribution to religious thought was his doctrine that man has natural ability and lacks nothing but moral ability. By this he meant that there is no corruption in the substance of human nature, all that is wrong being the wrong will. It may be certain, it is not necessary that a bad man will sin and a good man keep to the paths of virtue. Character is the decisive thing rather than the nature. A man is free to do what he wills. Philosophers have not yet agreed whether Edwards taught a doctrine of genuine freedom. Whether he did or not is of little consequence. He believed that his doctrine made men free to determine their destiny; and he preached directly to the will. Those who heard him felt the appeal as some-

thing new, and there was a wonderful response. The aim of the successors of Edwards was above all else to find a place for free will within the Calvinistic system. They ran the whole course from Edwards' doctrine, that a man can if he will, to the last statement of this great controversy, that a man can if he won't. To what extent these theologians have succeeded in reconciling sovereignty and freedom, election and responsibility, it is not our province to determine. It is enough for our purpose that the time of Edwards' preaching was more and more addressed to the will, with the result that the paralysis of effort was broken.

In another direction Edwards opened the way for a peculiar and most interesting advance. He taught a doctrine of love as the substance of moral obligation. Under the influence of his tropical temperament this love became a holy delight in the great system launched into existence and directed by the wisdom and goodness of God. If there was evil in the world it was part of the system that was good. The great hearted Hopkins found this conception in the teachings of his master and he carried it to a point that was one of the glorious developments of life under this theology. Disinterested love was to him the central thing; and by this he meant the heart's right attitude toward all that is, and its consent to the whole system and recognition in it of the divine goodness and glory. If these fathers of New England had divided mankind into the saved and the lost and had contemplated the eternally miserable without sympathy, being absorbed in the exultation of their own happy destiny, we should pronounce them unworthy of admiration. Hopkins saw the line of cleavage as distinctly as any of his time; and then he took the position which was most noble. The system so redounds to the glory of God and in manifesting that glory is so excellent that my heart and will consent to it even if it has been determined from the foundation of the world that I shall be lost. This is the famous test of souls, thrust into tender hearts by what seems a remorseless inquisition. Are you willing to be damned for the glory of God? But it was not the expression of a severe temper. It was the overflow of sympathy for the lost, the vicarious entering into their woe, the self identification with the multitudes that Calvinism had doomed. Here at last, was evidence that the

dark side of the world that Calvinism pictured was appreciated. This was the beginning of the modern sympathy and tenderness that have results that no man can trace to-day.

Along these two highways of thought moved the great succession of dogmas; and here walked the men and women whose hearts and lives responded to the truth. There was on the one hand a new shaping of the conception of the world of good and evil as a whole, of the election of the system which is one magnificent disclosure of the divine glory while inevitable suffering has infinite pity; and on the other hand there was a growing directness in the appeal to the personal will. Men came at last to see that they were the arbiters of their own destiny within this world filled with sin; that they were voluntary sinners in consequence of Adam's fall rather than the powerless victims of his transgression; that their hope was in Christ; not as the mechanical or commercial or judicial substitute for the miserable and the guilty, but as the divine representative, who accomplished in his life and death whatever was needful for the vindication of the holiness and the maintenance of the government of God.

Little by little theology became preachable and liveable. The full result came not until generation had followed generation. The New England mind had to develop new habits of thought. The changes first conceived in the studies of the ministers had to be popularized. At last there rose up on every hand men who could preach the revised theology as they breathed their native air, and congregations that heard it as the expression of their own habitual thought. Then came the era of strong preaching, the period of great revivals lasting almost to our own day. The traditions of power still linger. The older Christians among us were converted as the great truths of this New England theology seized heart and conscience and developed new life in the churches. They tell us that ours are days of feebleness as compared with the splendid scenes of memory. Something must be allowed for the illusion of the past; but there is truth in the comparison so much to our discredit, for then came to its culmination and its fruitage one of the most significant and influential evolutions of thought and life in the whole history of mankind.

IV.

It remains to show what deposit has been left in the New England character by this theology that was the banner of the Reformation, that was the ecstatic expression of profound experience, that became the instrument of an evangelism that ushered in the most marvelous missionary era of nineteen centuries. That this has been a living theology, formed by life and producing life, capable even of the great miracle of passing through death into the fuller life of a glorious resurrection, is abundantly evident.

A group of traits may be named, first, that are the natural outgrowth of such theological training. Here fall our intellectuality, our thrift, our reserve, our self control and caution. The indoctrinating of a people in a system so elaborate and so profound is an education of the most effective kind. The keenness of the intelligence of New England is due in large measure to the constancy with which the noblest faculties have been held to the theological grindstone. To comprehend doctrines so difficult as those of this system, to be versed in the subtle discussion of these incomparable themes, requires mental power and discipline of the highest order. Probably the conditions that made this unparalleled debate possible have passed never to return. These were peculiar problems. They belong to the realm of pure thought. It was not necessary to consult the scientist, there was no occasion to pore over the learned minutia of the critic. To-day the theologian is a specialist, and the layman is told that he can not hope to understand the grounds upon which scholars rest their conclusions. It was otherwise when the whole equipment required was a disciplined speculative faculty and a bible, of which every word was implicitly believed. With the vast increase of learning in our time it becomes a serious question whether intellectual degeneracy may not characterize the popular mind.

A hint has already been given that the thrift of our people is a habit begotten of the stern conditions of life in the wilderness. In fairness it must be added that other peoples have lived in primitive conditions without acquiring this prosperous state. There was a quality in these men and women that made them capable of ab-

sorbing this benefit of poverty. Its source appears when we see that the prosperous have always been the devout worshipers in the churches. The well-to-do attend church to-day; and they have always as a class maintained this sympathy with religion. It is made a cause of reproach that men distinguished for religious earnestness have a remarkable interest in the dollar and an equally notable faculty of getting it and holding on to it. This is traceable to the serious view of life, to the fine sense of responsibility, to the habit of making the use of every hour and every opportunity that is believed to answer to the will of God. One channel for activity is a defect; but if that one channel is excavated to the neglect of others the height to which the water will rise depends upon the supply from the fountain head. That original spring of motive in New England is amid the heights where God dwells. Our thrift is the form success has taken; and it is to our credit that a life replete with power has accumulated great balances in savings banks and has furnished the capital for every useful enterprise.

There is no trait of the New Englander that is more often mentioned than his reserve. That his heart is warm has already been pointed out. That does not, however, appear from any word of his. The New Englander is like those anthracite stoves whose door must be opened before you can see the fire. This sheet iron furnace hammered into form is of a different order from those which are cast in a great heat with a row of mica windows all the way around. There is a clear relation of this habit of reserve to the vast interior world of faith. It is because the inward eye sees so much that the tongue stumbles and can not glibly tell the tale. And when we add that the devout heart is awed unspeakably by the goodness and glory of God we can see why this sense of the Divine Presence checks volubility.

Nearly allied to this is the caution and self control that are the chief elements in the proverbial shrewdness of the Yankee. That spiritual world is not a realm of unbroken peace. It is the theater of endless conflict. Salvation is to be won at great hazard. The strenuousness of the struggle to enter by the strait gate has developed that sober and calculating temper, that habit of measuring difficulties and obstacles, that is essential to the successful prosecu-

tion of any enterprise. The contemplation of life as beset with dangers, the anticipation of every possible predicament and preparation for it, the extrication of the soul from its condition of ruin and peril,—these demands of a severe theology have trained the New Englander until he is the most cautious, the most far seeing, the most calculating of men. He does not act from impulse, he will not trust to luck, he does not become an adventurer until he falls from grace. He will attempt anything and everything that is commended to sound judgment; but before he will lift a finger he will overwhelm you with such a recounting of perils that unless you are versed in the intricate working of his mind you will conclude that he intends to do nothing.

Passing now to the influence of particular doctrines, it is a commonplace of historical generalization that Calvinism has been a chief means of extending democracy. A familiar representation is that all men, the tall and the short, are an indistinguishable crowd as seen from the height from which God surveys them. Certainly, when men train themselves to think of God as all in all and man as the mere dust of the balance, the distinctions between class and class are insignificant. Calvinism humbles the proud. If God elects whom he will, the poor, the despised, the outcast may sit in the highest rooms, while the tyrants and all the arrogant of earth are cast into outer darkness. It is impossible to calculate the influences in favor of democracy that have emanated from the spiritual world; and of all the forms of faith none has done more to cast down the oppressor and to exalt the oppressed than that which makes the sovereign will of God the arbiter of destiny. Who, that is the elect of God, can be rightfully excluded from the responsibilities and privileges of citizenship on earth?

This reaction of otherworldliness is precisely what democracy needs. The democracy that urges no claim beyond the needs of the flesh, that is content with an equal chance for the bread and the butter of the earthly life, is poor stuff as compared with the love of liberty and equality and justice that is founded upon the eternal truths that gird the throne of God. God is sovereign, therefore men are free; and there can be no abiding and fruitful democracy that does not receive its Magna Charta from the King of Kings.

The New England town-meeting was the natural expression of the political life of the men whose hearts were set upon obedience to the government of God.

Once more, if we seek the origin of the uncompromising conscience of New England, we trace it to the profound recognition of the will of God. Cromwell was the most splendid example of Calvinistic conscience. The Puritans were slaves of conscience, and under that mighty mastery they turned upon the world to bring it into the same subjection. Their spirit remains as the permanent sensitiveness to evil, as the undying passion for reform. The power of the New England conscience is the marvel of our history. Nothing in the nation is finally settled until it squares with the uncompromising voice of God in these trained souls.

But yet more worthy of admiration is this might of conscience maintaining its sway in the individual heart. The New Englander, with his rare intellectual keenness, with his trained caution, with his thrift and genius for success, with his habitual secrecy, escaping from the bonds of conscience, would be a diabolical man. Nothing in this world would be safe against his superior power. He would gather to himself the richness of the world, he would head the movement for an imperial dominion of the earth in his own interest. But out of his theology is born a spirit of obedience to the will of God and a love for all sorts and conditions of men as sharers with him in the infinite beneficence, as partakers with him in the divine justice, and this man that might be the despair of earth, restrained, impelled, brought into harmony with God by his conscience, becomes the consecrated servant of mankind, and makes it the chief aim of his heart to glorify God in being useful to his fellow men.

One thing more may be added. The New Englander is a dreamer, a builder of castles in the air. Practical as he is, he is a visionary and an idealist. Nothing stirs him more than the sight of the city of God coming down out of heaven. This is the spur of invention, for nothing that is less than perfect can be long endured. This is the stimulus of industry, for this man will toil till his muscles wither with age to possess a home which will answer to the dream of his heart. This is the source of social theorizing that

tears down and builds anew the conceptions of what ought to be, until these cloud lands grow into masses that fill the sky and become portentous of storms that will cleanse and renew the world. This ideality is the inheritance from the founders who came to the new world to establish a state which would be the earthly counterpart of the New Jerusalem. The light of that sun which is the shining of God irradiates these ever gathering mists, and the shadowy forms they hold within their depths grow luminous with the splendors that are not of earth.

For what practical end is this protracted discussion? The right understanding of history is important, and I know not where to find any system of thought that has been more caricatured and misunderstood than the Calvinistic theology. One who comprehends the historic connections, the relation to experience, the process of reshaping under practical demands, and the incalculable contribution to the formation of the best type of character the world has seen, is in position to avoid the errors of a noisy ignorance.

But we can not pause with an increased light for the understanding. When we come to see what men and women cherished this faith we are filled with admiration. We do not accept for ourselves all parts of this creed; but there is not an element in it that, contemplated from the right point of view, is unworthy of respectful and loving appreciation. Its excesses and errors have a charm when we see them blooming with life. We may not transplant every wild flower to our gardens; but there is not one that opens its sweet face to the sun, not one that sheds its fragrance on the eager air, that we do not love. But to prize flower or faith aright it is necessary to look upon it in the dewey freshness of life. Neither the herbarium of the botanist, nor the dusty lore of the dogmatist is a substitute for the luxuriant verdure and the glory of color that made the fields of earth reflect the infinite meadows of heaven in which blossom the beautiful stars.

Nor can we rest content with understanding and appreciation. We go on to take for our lives the powers of the spiritual world here displayed. The path along which these men and women walked is that radiant highway that grows brighter and brighter

unto the perfect day. This truth was a guide not alone for the life that is, but for that which is to be. This may be a straight and narrow way, but it leads to life. Heaven has not been caught up in the swift revolutions of the stars and borne to new latitudes and longitudes amid the rolling spheres, so that in the new times new charts are needed and new readings of the compass. Heaven is where it has always been, where the paths of righteousness meet, where the courses traced by conscience end, where all voyages inspired by faith, and impelled by love, and cheered on by hope find their haven. The New England theology is based upon two great truths that belong to all righteousness and all faith, truths as abiding as God and man. God is sovereign. Man is responsible. The divine will is law and human duty is obedience and submission. Doing the will of God is now, always has been, forever will be an essential element in religion.

To this we do well to add with equal emphasis the other great doctrine that God is Father, and man the child of the paternal love. The makers of New England never lost sight of the fatherly goodness of their God, although it was not the formative principle of their creeds. The pendulum of history has swung far to the other side; and now men magnify the divine fatherhood, imperfectly remembering the divine sovereignty. Let us do neither the one nor the other. Shall we not take the truth of the New England theology and the truth of modern thought and subject our lives to all the blessed influences alike of the throne and of the heart of God?

When the eminence and the transcendence of God are united then the world will attain a perfect theology. God is in the world, as science and literature teach; he rules the world, as conscience and revelation declare. Until that great day when all truth shall be radiant in a single sun and the God who is light shall appear as one in whom is no darkness at all, that which has been wrought in the lives that give splendor to New England will bear enduring witness to a radiant portion of the everlasting truth. These centuries of heroic struggle to find out God and do his will have not been in vain. Out of their labor and faith have come visions of truth, which dissolving under the light of new times and blending with other forms of glory will abide in the final unveiling of God.

TO THE READER.

AS suggested in the general preface to this volume, my purpose is to give a history of the First Church in Exeter, and to make that church central to all the subjects introduced. It would be impossible to trace the progress of a parish without some reference to the town, with which it is coeval and was once co-extensive, without mentioning the secular affairs of this locality. It would be equally impracticable to attempt to describe the secession of 1743 without adding some facts regarding the origin of the "Great Awakening," and its results in other communities. I have, however, avoided multiplying extraneous details as far as is consistent with an intelligent and intelligible presentation of the subject. I have striven to be impartial in all that I have written. I am a chronicler, not a partisan. If I have made strong claims for the continuity of the church of 1638 it is because that continuity has been assailed, I think unjustly, and because the figures in the denominational Year Book would lead one to think that Exeter had no church at all for sixty years preceding 1698. In Dr. Hazen's invaluable Congregational and Presbyterian Ministry and Churches of New Hampshire, the First church of Exeter is thus credited: "1st ch. org. 1638. New org. 1698, Sept. 21." If nothing more can be done, why should not a like entry appear in the Year Book? This would seem scant justice, but it is certainly much more suggestive of fact than the complete burial of over half a century of ecclesiastical history. Whether or not I shall be thought to prove my full case—the chronological equality of Exeter with Hampton and Dover, Samuel Dudley's pastorate of thirty-three years ought not to be relegated to oblivion in a Congregational record book.

The history of the great conflict of 1743, and many years following, has always been attractive to me. My boyhood was spent among relatives and other elders who had conversed with participants in the controversy, or with their children. I heard very many

interesting facts, and caught something of the spirit of the eventful period. I have myself personally known at least one of the spectators of Whitefield's last service, held at Exeter September 29, 1770.

I ought to be able to do justice to all sides alike, for curiously enough I am a lineal descendant in the same degree of the principal contestants—great-great-grandson. First of John Odlin, second of Peter Gilman, through the marriage of his daughter, Mrs. Strong, with Woodbridge Odlin, third of Daniel Gilman, Peter's cousin, through the marriage of his grandson, my maternal grandfather, Nathaniel Gilman, with the daughter of Woodbridge Odlin. I am also related, but more indirectly, though through two lines of descent, to the Rev. Daniel Rogers, whose intrusion and irregular installation, or, if one pleases, ordination, gave the Odlins and ecclesiastical purists generally so much annoyance.

Under these circumstances I can hardly be charged with partisanship, though I ask no one to accept my judgments as infallible. With respect to the history of the First church, after the reorganization of 1698, I have been assisted by its records, which detail that reorganization, but, with the exception of a single item of little importance, contain nothing earlier than 1743, the year of the secession. The parish records begin with 1755, just after the New parish had been set off. The earlier transactions of the parish were, doubtless, noted in the town records, for the town was then the parish. These have been reproduced in the New Hampshire Provincial Papers, especially in Volumes IX and XI, which are devoted to town affairs. From the dates above mentioned, both parish and church records are continuous and pretty full, though I have occasionally been compelled to look elsewhere for additional or illustrative facts.

The parish records of the church of 1748 are gathered in a single volume, used by the parish of the church of 1813 to a date beyond the period included in my investigations. The church books of the organization of 1813 begin with that year and have been kindly placed at my service. Supplementary to the above is the manuscript testimony of my father, the late Dr. William Perry, who came to Exeter at the beginning of 1814, and was familiar with the men

and events he describes. In regard to a still later period I have purposely avoided detailing the conflicts of one or two troubled pastorates in the First church. The difficulties were entirely personal, and involved no issues of permanent importance, except to antiquaries, who may study them in two or three ephemeral and one-sided pamphlets. To the mass of people they have no interest, as all concerned are dead.

What I have written has been gathered, frequently by piecemeal from many sources, generally indicated in the text or in notes. I have already indicated my obligations to the Provincial Papers and local church records. To these I may add as specially useful Bell's History of Exeter and Life of Wheelwright, for outline facts; Dow's History of Hampton; Quint's 250th Anniversary of the First Parish in Dover; Bouton's Discourse at Fiftieth Anniversary New Hampshire General Association; Tracy's History of the Great Awakening; Farmer and Moore's Historical Collections; Lawrence's New Hampshire Churches; Hazen's Ministry and Churches of New Hampshire; South Berwick, Maine, church records; Stevens's History of Methodism and various lives of Whitefield. This list might be lengthened materially were I to mention all the books in which I have found something. Of the strictly contemporaneous authorities consulted the most important are: The Result of a Council of Ten Churches convened at Exeter January 31, 1743 [-4], Boston, 1744, and An Account of the Remonstrances of the Church in Exeter and of a Number of Neighboring Ministers against the Installment (so called) of Mr. Daniel Rogers over a Number of Separatists belonging to Said Church, Boston, 1748. Both of these pamphlets and the manuscript of the first sermon preached by Mr. Rogers after his installation are included in the Bell collection of our Public Library.

Very interesting, for the side lights which they throw upon the conflict of 1743 and after events, are the interleaved almanacs of the Rev. Daniel Rogers. For the free use of these I am much indebted to John Ward Dean, Esq., of Boston, and the Historic Genealogical Society, of which he has long been a prominent official. Besides four or five earlier records, beginning with 1730, a good many of those jotted down during the thirty-seven years of Mr.

Rogers's Exeter pastorate have been preserved, viz.: 1748, 49; 1751-55; 1759; 1762; 1764, 65; 1767; 1769; 1775-80; a few pages of 1781; 1782; 1784 interleaved, but with no entries; and 1785, the year of the diarist's death, quite imperfect.

I have also to thank the Hon. Joseph B. Walker, of Concord, and Miss Mary R. Jewett, of South Berwick, Maine, for cordial sympathy and help in my work. As may be supposed, only a small part of my paper was actually read. I have, however, retained the hortatory style of the closing part, possibly at the expense of dignity in the estimation of the reader.

J. T. P.

Exeter, December, 1898.

THE CHURCH'S HISTORY.

By John Taylor Perry.

A LITTLE more than ten years have passed since our good town of Exeter celebrated its attainment of two hundred and fifty years of existence. As coeval with it, our parish, whose church was the first Congregational organization actually founded in New Hampshire, Hampton church having had a previous existence in Lynn, Mass., also celebrated its quadro-millennial. The changes of two centuries and a half, with special reference to the period between 1638 and 1698, were then eloquently portrayed by our pastor, the Rev. Swift Byington, who has since joined the founders and many generations of worshippers in a world toward which we are all rapidly moving.

My task differs essentially from that of Mr. Byington. In the limits of a sermon he could take only a bird's-eye view, and the spirit of the celebration demanded a concentration on the foundation years of church and parish. It is my province to chronicle in detail those events of the church's entire history which seem most worthy of commemoration, with as much impartiality and strict adherence to truth as is possible to a mortal pen. I shall try to be a faithful historian rather than a philosophical critic. My field is primarily the reconstructed church of 1698, but I cannot wholly pass over the consideration of what was then reorganized, and a church, whose parish was long identical with the town, cannot be understood without frequent references to the parish and town movements. Hence I must begin with an account of

The Original Church.

Exeter and the First church owe their existence to the Rev. John Wheelwright, born near Saleby in Lincolnshire, England, about 1592. After his graduation from Sidney College, Cambridge, he

entered the ministry of the church of England, but in about ten years was silenced by his bishop for Puritanism, and, accompanied by his second wife, and five children, landed at Boston in 1636. He was a man somewhat given to controversy, and fearless in the expression of his opinions. Consequently, like his contemporary Blaxton, the pioneer settler in the vicinity of Boston, though at first popular, he soon found the Lord's brethren as meddlesome as the Lord's bishops had been. He came into trouble through Anne Hutchinson, the wife of his own wife's brother William. Mrs. Hutchinson was a woman of much talent, but tenaciously held peculiar views and diffused them very incautiously. She gathered the women together, and at frequent meetings developed sentiments somewhat like those of the higher life advocates of the present day. Had she confined herself to spiritual abstractions, she might have passed unchallenged, but she joined, with her supposed clearer revelations of truth, sharp arraignments of the ministers and elders of the province, alleging in no measured terms that they were unsanctified and consequently unsafe guides. A prodigious opposition was aroused, and her doctrines were stigmatized as antinomian—that is, teaching that under the gospel dispensation believers are not bound by the moral law. Whether or not such an inference could logically be drawn from some of her incautious utterances, there is no reason for thinking that either Mrs. Hutchinson or her followers, who included many of the most devout Bostonians of both sexes, favored immorality, or even laxity, under a sanctimonious guise. The times, however, were not favorable for the tolerance of any departure from the generally received beliefs, and a grand heresy-hunt was instituted. A Fast day sermon, preached by Wheelwright, was deemed sufficient cause for his banishment, and Mrs. Hutchinson shared the same penalty. He went to New Hampshire, and she to Rhode Island, while many of her masculine followers were made to surrender their firearms and swords—among others John Odlin, an immigrant and the grandfather of a future pastor of Exeter.

Wheelwright and a few followers reached Exeter on the third of April, 1638, five months before Mr. Bachiler and his church came from Lynn to Hampton. They soon concluded two treaties with the

Indian owners of the soil. One of these made the Merrimack river the southern border of the grant, while the other began three miles farther north, the object being to escape trespassing on Massachusetts soil. If worse came to worst, the smaller limit only would be claimed. Northwardly, the grant extended to the limits of Dover, including much of the present town of Durham. These many square miles were gradually diminished, so that the Exeter of 1698 included only our present town, and the Newmarket, Newfields, Epping, Brentwood and Fremont of our own day—a diminished but still large and dangerous parish for the supervision of a single pastor. In 1697 an ambush lay in wait back of the Newmarket road, which by accident was scared away. In 1707 a Mr. Folsom was shot by Indians on his way from the present Newfields to the northerly part of the town, and in 1711, two or three men were either killed or captured near the junction of the Brentwood and Epping roads, just beyond the plains.

But to return to Wheelwright and his followers, of whom over fifty came with or soon after him with their families. They founded a town, and speedily began to gather a church, antedating a few weeks, perhaps months, the building of the first house of worship at Hampton, and the temporary church organization—deemed irregular by the Massachusetts authorities—of the turbulent Captain Underhill at Dover some weeks more. Underhill's church had two pastors, one Baptist and the other Congregational, and was superseded by a strictly Congregational organization in 1641-42. Exeter was Congregational from the first. That the Exeter church was in existence in 1638 is shown by the action of the church in Boston of which many of the colonists had been members. On January 6, 1639, it uses retrospective language in conditioning the dismissal of Wheelwright and eight others to "the church at the falls of the Pascataquack" to the point "if they be rightly gathered and ordered." Full satisfaction of this doubt was obviously afforded the Boston brethren, for on March 3, 1639, they dismissed unconditionally five other persons to the Exeter church, one of them being Wheelwright's wife.

Dr. A. H. Quint, who, as we shall soon see, is an uncompromising champion of the priority and regularity of the church at Dover,

says in his Dover bicentennial of the above recorded action: "Some claim was formerly made that this (Exeter) church was formed in 1638; but as the records of the First church in Boston show the dismissal of Rev. John Wheelwright and others to form this church as not taking place until January 6, 1639, it is manifest that the organization could not have been in 1638." In reply to this it is sufficient to quote the following impartial statement by ex-Governor Bell. Referring to the gathering of the Exeter church, he says:

"We assume that this was done before December 13, 1638, because the fact is recorded in the past tense in Winthrop's contemporaneous History of New England, under that date. The time of the formation of the church is not there given, but the facts recited would imply that it must have been in existence for some weeks, if not months before that date. It probably included in its membership all, or nearly all, the adult persons in the settlement. The members of the newly gathered church wrote to the church in Boston, no doubt, in the autumn of 1638, asking for the dismission of Wheelwright therefrom, in order that he might be their minister; but as Wheelwright himself, for obvious reasons, did not join in the petition, the elders of the Boston church declined to lay the proposal before the members. Upon this being made known to Wheelwright he sent his own request to the same effect, which reached the elders early in December; and thereupon on the sixth of the following January the Boston church dismissed Wheelwright."

That there may be no possible doubt on the subject, I quote Winthrop's precise utterance, dated, as Governor Bell says, December 13, 1638:

"Those who went to the falls at Pascataquack gathered a church and wrote to our church to desire us to dismiss Mr. Wheelwright for them for an officer; but because he desired it not himself, the elders did not propound it. Soon after came his own letters, with theirs, for his dismission, which thereupon was granted. Others also (upon their request) were dismissed thither."

It will thus be seen that, unless the completed consent of the Boston church was essential to the existence of a church in Exeter, Dr. Quint's argument is based on a mere technicality.*

*Dr. Quint, beside rejecting the continued existence of our church, coolly says (address, p. 56): The original First was the third church in New Hampshire. Of course, Dover was the first, while in his later days, we are told, he had become convinced of the non-existence of a valid connection between the Lynn and the Hampton organizations, and perhaps of later breaks. A learned antiquary, he was often over pugnacious, a kind of historical *Athanasius contra mundum*.

Wheelwright remained in Exeter until 1643, when Massachusetts asserted jurisdiction over the new settlement, and, as a banished man, he removed to Wells in Maine. In 1643 he made some concession to the Massachusetts authorities, apologizing for harsh language, but not acknowledging that he had been heretical. Governor Winthrop helped on this settlement, believing, as he publicly said, that, while a favorer of the movement against him, "he did love that brother's person and did honor the gifts and grace of God in him." In 1647, after his restoration to favor, he disappointed his Exeter flock by taking charge of the church in Hampton, where he remained eight or nine years. He returned thence to England, where he stayed till the persecution under Charles II broke out. Coming back to New England, he was called to the church of Salisbury, Mass., where he died in office in 1679, aged about 87. He was able and energetic, but hardly ranked among the peace makers of his day. He was obviously better qualified to found a town and a church than permanently to rule either in a spirit of love and forbearance.

After his departure from Exeter, and the conclusion of the one year's service of Mr. Thomas Rashleigh, of Boston, who declined to stay longer, the church was afflicted with dissensions. These may have arisen from the dissenting views of the "antinomians," whom Wheelwright had left behind, and the orthodox, who had lately come in. Hardly had Mr. Rashleigh gone, than an invitation was proposed to the Rev. Stephen Bachiler, who had lately left Hampton under somewhat suspicious circumstances. This plan would probably have been acted on, had not the Great and General Court of Massachusetts interfered. Its injunction shows that grave differences existed among the Exeter people, so that harmony was for the present impossible, and its language seems to imply that Mr. Bachiler was the candidate of a faction ready to organize by itself. I quote:

"Whereas it appears to this court that *some* of (the italics are mine) the inhabitants of Excetter do intend shortly to gather a church and call Mr. Bachiler to be their minister, and forasmuch as the divisions and contentions which are among the inhabitants there are judged by this Crt to be such as for the present they cannot comfortably and with approbation proceed in so

weighty and sacred affaires, it is therefore ordered that direction shall forthwith be sent to the said inhabitants to deferr the gathering of any church or other such proceeding until this Cort or the Cort at Ipswich upon further satisfaction of their reconciliation and fitness shall give allowance thereto."

The General Court also sent a committee to look after the church. Just what was done history fails to record, but the continued activity of the people in securing preachers shows that they were neither dead nor dismayed, and also appears to indicate that they were backed by the approval of the General Court. The commission had apparently found or placed things in a satisfactory state. Presiding Elder Hatevil Nutter, of Dover, is believed to have supplied the pulpit pretty frequently, and unsuccessful calls to the pastorate were made to Mr. Tompson, of Braintree, Mass., in 1648 and Mr. Emerson, of Rowley, Mass., in 1649. In 1650 this persistency—which is certainly remarkable in a church which, according to some authorities, was disbanded and died in 1643—was rewarded by the acceptance of the Rev. Samuel Dudley, a son of Governor Thomas Dudley, and ancestor of all who bear the name, and of many who do not, in and about Exeter. The town's call was made May 30th, and Mr. Dudley was promised the house bought of Mr. Wheelwright, with a fenced in yard and garden, a cow house, some meadow land and an allowance for needed repairs. His salary was to be forty pounds a year payable in corn and English goods. To raise the needed amount of money, makers of staves and other products of the lumber, which was then the chief article of traffic, were assessed a certain number of shillings per thousand, the percentage varying from one shilling and sixpence to four shillings, according to the article made.

The old meeting-house, which stood somewhere between Captain Furnald's and the railroad track, was probably a very rude affair, since its successor, promised to Mr. Dudley, was to be only twenty feet square.* Many of the early settlers were evidently

* The Hampton boundary commissioners appointed by the General Court of Massachusetts report in 1653 the existence of the new meeting-house. In 1664 the town voted to build a lean-to against it and in 1668 an official was given full power to arrest and sue any inhabitant who refused to pay the ministerial tax. Yet it is claimed by the Dover authorities that there was no church in Exeter, for in 1676, while Mr. Dudley was pastor, the town was prosecuted at the Hampton court for letting the meeting-house lie open and cattle go in. The selectmen were ordered to keep the doors shut. Nothing more was heard of the matter. Bell thinks it the

buried around these primitive places of worship, for when clay was taken thence to make bricks for the house now occupied by Mr. Stephen F. Gale, fragments of human bones were found in abundance. Mr. Dudley was an able man, but he had a hard field to till. In 1655 his contract with the town was annulled, as the people found it hard to pay him. Still, he continued preaching until he received a call from Portsmouth, which startled the community into an appreciation of his value and opened their pockets. They not only raised his salary to £50, but made the selectmen responsible for its collection. If the public generally did not make up all deficiencies the town officials must do so. In 1671 this strange provision was abrogated and the minister's salary made £60. Mr. Dudley died in 1683, and was buried, it is thought, on the hill back of the gas works.

From 1683 to 1693 the pulpit was supplied by the Rev. John Cotton, of Hampton, and Ruling Elder William Wentworth, a member of the combination under Wheelwright, and ancestor of the colonial governors and Exeter's professor of the same name. Elder Wentworth's formal term of office extended from 1690 to 1693, when his declination of further service, on account of his advanced age, led to the movement toward reorganization, the culmination of which is our more immediate subject.

A Question of History.

Before describing the formalities of the reorganization of 1698, we must offer additional reasons to show that the date of 1638, conceded to Hampton and Dover in the denominational Year Book and General Association reports, can be claimed by Exeter also, though denied by these official manuals and the existence of any church here previous to 1698 coolly ignored, as, to quote Quint once more,* "a claim that the present church, formed in 1698,

"result of an accident of a day exaggerated to the court by some malicious mischief maker." The incident reminds one of the instances of neglect and desecration of Episcopal churches in Virginia in the last century described by the late Bishop Meade. Yet though the misdoings were protracted, and not exceptional as in Exeter, no one has ever contended that the Virginia churches went out of existence. Two years after the occurrence above mentioned the town appointed four tithing men, the first in its history, which it would hardly have done had it only a cow house to guard.

* Memorial address, note p. 56. Bell's History, p. 167.

was a reorganization of the church which expired in 1643, and of which not one soul was 'reorganized,' is too absurd to need a reply." We shall soon see how this is.

The existence of a pastorate of thirty-three years, several supplies, and various earnest, if unsuccessful attempts to procure a minister by our people have already been mentioned. There were two pastorless breaks, but, as has been shown, these periods were covered by supplies or marked by active hunting for a pastor. Once in the seventeenth century Hampton was without a minister for a longer period, but no fair minded person on that account denies the continuity of its church. Unless an unbroken succession of all ecclesiastical formalities is essential to the maintenance of a church's life, Exeter is entitled to the same consideration as Dover and Hampton. The descendants of those founders of the church of 1638 who remained in Exeter maintained worship all along and were heard of again in 1698.

But there is also positive proof of a direct connection of the churches of 1638 and 1698 by two links. Elder William Wentworth, who signed the politico-religious combination of 1639, drawn up by Wheelwright, lived until 1697, only one year before Mr. Clark's ordination over the reorganized church, and three years after Mr. Clark had not only agreed to come, but had supplied the pulpit for some months, if not years. Only a delay in determining where people should sit prevented the full reorganization of the church many months earlier. As one of the first settlers, and as long acting pastor, Elder Wentworth must have been influential in directing the new movement, and helped to shape the second organization as he did the first. Was not he a genuine and important link? Nor is the Elder the only link. A second is found in William Moore, who came to Exeter in 1639, lived there all the remainder of his life, which did not end until 1699 or 1700. His respectability is shown by his being placed fourth in the list of twenty-six persons, headed by the pastor, who formed the reorganized church, and was not among seven of the number who had been dismissed from the Hampton church. There is no indication that anyone of the entire twenty-six was admitted as a new convert. Moore's name does not appear among

the signers of Wheelwright's politico-religious combination of 1639. He may have come later in the year or, like some others, may have objected to certain of its provisions. It is evident that he must have been an established church member previous to 1698. If not at Hampton, where but at Exeter? and if there was no Exeter church after 1643, his membership must have antedated that year.*

The alleged limitations of our church life to a period beginning with 1698—there can be no such restriction of the parish—is mainly based on the town's call to Mr. Dudley, who is asked to come "until such time as God shall be pleased to make way for the gathering of a church, and then to be ordained;" also on the already quoted injunction of the General Court of Massachusetts regarding the call to Mr. Bachiler. If this last proves a break in all church life, it covers at most only the period between 1644 and 1650, since the call of the latter year could only have been made after unity had measurably been established. A similar break of about ten years is held by no one, unless Dr. Quint, to invalidate Hampton claims to continuity. When Mr. Dudley came to stay thirty-three years, he was admonished to look toward reorganization. He may and may not have moved in that direction, but it is hardly to be supposed that the sacraments were not administered, and that no converts were received on public profession during a third of a century. It can scarcely be doubted, though, through the loss of records, much must be left to conjecture, that something having the great essentials of a church existed and that Mr. Dudley especially tried to fulfil the expressed wishes of those who called him. Was it likely that the Gilmans and their kinsmen the Folsoms, who had left England to secure the free exercise of their zealous Puritanism, would have lived in Exeter over forty years without enjoying Christian ordinances? Already settled and well to do, the one family in Ipswich, and the other in Hingham, Mass., is it reconcilable with their known characteristics that they should turn their backs on churches and select for their abode a churchless frontier town? What was true of these important families was true of others, no doubt. John Folsom, son of the original settler of the same name, was a deacon. When elected we

* Bell's History, p. 30. First Church records, p. 1.

do not know, but if not until 1698, he must have reached fifty-seven when chosen.

It is very probable that in some minor respects the old church was not perfect in its organization according to the Congregational high churchism of the Mathers, and the Rev. John Clark graduated from Harvard under Increase Mather's presidency. A few years later, Judge Sewall wanted to refuse Thomas Hollis's gift for a professorship simply because Hollis was a Baptist. Such ardent zeal for every jot and tittle of polity no doubt inspired the elaborate proceedings of 1698. But why should technicalities be urged against Exeter, and waived in behalf of Hampton and Dover? If our records are lacking, we are not so very much worse than are the other two churches which were the only Congregational ones outside of Exeter until Portsmouth's first Congregational organization came into being in 1671.* It is folly to look in seventeenth century transactions for anything like the regularity involved in the nineteenth from over two hundred years of conflict and hardship. Neither Hampton nor Dover has a consecutive series of seventeenth century records, Hampton's most important being some facts regarding the settlement of Wheelwright in 1647, and a list of members during Seaborn Cotton's pastorate not far from a quarter of a century later. But how is it with Dover? Can her church endure a test by which, according to Dr. Quint, both Exeter and Hampton have been tried and found wanting? The church in Dover has next to no records of its own previous to 1718. The town records show, however, that worship of some kind was established very early, but the first recorded vote concerning regular Congregational church privileges is of 1644. It orders fishermen to serve church officers with the first fish they catch. Another vote, "*apparently* of 1643," says Quint's address, declares that Mr. Daniell Maud and Mary his wife shall have a certain house, "provided he continue amongst us teacher or pastor, if it please God to call him to it." Dover was settled in 1623, and after 1633 some kind of worship was maintained, but there was great disorder, Episcopalian and Baptist ministers, against whom disgraceful charges were made, being prominent in ecclesiastical affairs. In 1638, in December,

* Portsmouth had Episcopal worship much earlier.

probably, Captain Underhill, governor of the town, gathered a church and placed over it Hansard Knollys, a Baptist. In 1640 Thomas Larkham, a zealous member of the church of England, raised a party against Knollys. Underhill was a turbulent man, who had been banished from Massachusetts on charges of heresy and immorality, and the people, disgusted with him and his pastors, applied to Massachusetts for a minister. In response to this request, the Rev. Daniel Maud, already mentioned, was sent to Dover and became the first regularly settled minister of the town in 1641-42. The foregoing statement is confirmed by a seventeenth century authority, Captain Edward Johnson's "Wonder Working Providence," which was published in 1654. The author lived near Boston, and evidently kept himself well informed as to what was going on all over New England. He says, after mentioning the application and its being granted, that,

"They (the people of Dover) have been partakers of the benefit hitherto, having also the benefit of some ministers to preach unto them till it pleased God to fit stones by the continual hewing of his word for his temple work, and *they gathered a church according to the rule* of the word, and called to (the) office of pastor one Mr. Maude both godly and diligent in the work."

Then follows a brief description of Dover's river privileges and timber resources, which appears to show that Captain Johnson had been on the spot. Dr. Quint's address furnished no facts to refute this contemporary author. It has also been noted by some that there were signs of a break or at least delay in the succession of pastors later in the seventeenth century, between the death of the younger Reyner and the installation of the Rev. John Pike. I shall not insist on this, however, as I think I have shown that the three oldest churches are so nearly alike in regard to their early history, as to be placed pretty much on the same footing. Her two sisters cannot afford to deny Exeter the same consideration that they demand for themselves.

The Reorganization.

The long and able, though much hampered pastorate of Mr. Dudley, had taught the people of Exeter the value of a settled ministry. They were also better able to support as well as ap-

preciate a pastor. The forests were being cleared and families of wealth, such as the Gilmans, Folsoms and Coffins, had come in. Mills had been built and a brisk river business with Portsmouth and points beyond had started. The citizens of Exeter were generally religious, and the spirit of the original settlers was as devout as that of the colonists of Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay. If some of the later comers were more secular, or even "lewd fellows of the baser sort," they were in the minority in both numbers and influence. Hence, when it was found in 1693 that Elder Wentworth could no longer serve it, the town resolved to have a permanent minister. On the 23rd of June, Counsellor John Gilman and Biley Dudley, the latter a son of the deceased minister, were chosen to visit the neighboring ministers and consult them as to a choice. They no doubt received definite advice, for they soon announced Mr. John Clark—some authorities affix an *e* to the name, and some, the Harvard triennial among others—omit it. He was a grandnephew of the late Mr. Dudley on his mother's side and son of Nathaniel Clark, a prominent citizen of Newbury, Mass., ancestor of most of the name in this vicinity.* A new committee, consisting of Mr. Gilman, the Hon. Peter Coffin, and Mr. Robert Wadleigh, was then authorized to arrange with Mr. Clark regarding a settlement, and having reported progress, was later empowered to settle the terms of a preliminary trial of six months. This proved successful, and on the strength of it, Mr. Clark took unto himself a wife. The chief statistics of his life may here be given. Born 1670, he was graduated from Harvard College in the class of 1690, ranking socially ninth in a class of twenty-two members. Married June 19, 1694, at Newcastle, Miss, or as she was called, Mrs. Elizabeth Woodbridge, daughter of the Rev. Benjamin Woodbridge, who was nephew of the Benjamin Woodbridge, who, graced by honorary degrees from both Harvard and Oxford, heads the first class ever graduated from Harvard, that of 1642. Her mother was a daughter of the Rev. John Ward, of Haverhill, Mass., son of the once famous Nathaniel Ward, of Ipswich, author of the "Simple Cobbler of Agawam," and the "Body of Liberties," which last

* Bell's History; Clark's Descendants of Nathaniel Clark, of Newbury; J. W. Dean's Descendants of Thomas Deane.

formed the basis of the constitution of Massachusetts. Her father was a son of the Rev. John Woodbridge and Mercy, daughter of Governor Dudley, and sister of Anne Bradstreet, New England's early poetess. The Rev. John Cotton, of Hampton, officiated at the nuptials, after a fashion which would create a sensation in our day. He preached the young couple a sermon, which I have seen, and which fills about thirty printed pages. It is entitled "A Meet Help, a Wedding Sermon," and has three texts. One of these enforces purity on the bride in very peremptory tones; the second is not less emphatic in warning the groom against infidelity to his vows, while the third is more general. These texts would seem more appropriate to the inmates of a reformatory than to a grave young minister and a minister's daughter. Tastes change, and we do not have long sermons at nineteenth century weddings. Either from great caution on both sides, or perhaps on account of the delicate health of Mr. Clark, he was not installed until September, 1698, and as he died in 1705 of consumption, his ministry was of brief duration. He was much beloved. The town paid his widow his salary for a full year, and built him a monument near the church, which some years later it repaired. It has now disappeared from view, but its chiselled tribute has been handed down:

"A prophet lies under this stone,
His words shall live, tho' he be gone,
When preachers die what rules the pulpit gave
Of living, are still preached from the grave.
The faith and life which your dear Pastor taught
Now in the grave with him, sirs, bury not."

Few will regret that such doggerel lies several inches under earth, though the leveling of the graves in our yard about ninety years ago by the will of a single prominent citizen has obscured history, and was, though unintended, a grave wrong to relatives and friends.

To return to the settlement. A new meeting-house was planned to be erected on the same lot as that now occupied by ourselves. As is usual in removals from one neighborhood to another, there were no doubt excited arguments *pro* and *con*, but, during the sixty years just ending, population was more and more centering about

the mills at the falls. At an earlier date it had appropriated the higher ground where the first and second churches were built. The new structure was not ready until December, 1696, and next came the vexatious and irritating problem of seating the congregation according to their supposed social rank. Two referees from out of town were chosen, in order that impartiality might be practised. In case of disagreement they were authorized to select an umpire, and they were to have the advice of four prominent citizens as to the real standing of people. Among the four was the venerable William Moore before mentioned, who ought to be acquainted with his subject, as he had been in Exeter since 1639. More than a year passed, and yet the momentous question was not settled. So in February, 1698, a new committee, consisting of Mr. Moore, John Smart, Biley Dudley, Kinsley Hall, and Samuel and Moses Leavitt, put their shoulders to the wheel, having full power to do as they wished. It is pleasing to note that Messrs. Hall and Moses Leavitt were the first provided for. Mr. Hall placed himself, his wife and five children at the west door, and Mr. Leavitt and family sat next to Hall on the left. No plan of the building remains to tell us whether this selection was in the direction of self denial or of chief seats. As, however, several other prominent citizens had seats by the various doors, it is probable that locations, which promised to facilitate escape in the event of an Indian raid, were in favor. Mr. Clark was given a salary of £70, one hundred acres of land in case he lived in town ten years,—the property to go to his heirs in the event of his previous death,—and he was promised a parsonage, the right to which he relinquished in 1699 for an equivalent of £100 in money. A few months later, a bell was bought, and the practice of morning, noon and nine o'clock at night ringing, still in vogue with slight modifications as to time, was established.

But we have passed beyond the reorganization which it is our special object to commemorate to-day. On the 7th of September, Old Style, corresponding to the 17th according to our New Style reckoning, a solemn fast was observed. On the Sunday before the ordination the church was reorganized. The full account forms the earliest of our church records and is followed by a gap of forty-

five years. Not until 1755, the year after Elder Odlin's death, do parish entries begin.*

Under the head of The Order of Proceedings in Gathering a Particular Church in Exeter, the church record says:

"After conferring together, and being mutually satisfied in each other, we drew up a confession of faith, and the terms of the Covenant, which we all signed the Sabbath before ordination. And having sent for the Rev. Mr. T. Hale [who preached the ordination sermon] Mr. Woodbridge, Mr. Pike, Mr. Rolfe, Mr. Cotton and Mr. Toppan, who accordingly came; and on the twenty-first of September, 1698, Mr. Hale, Woodbridge, Pike and Cotton laid on hands, Mr. Pike praying before imposition of hands; Mr. Woodbridge gave the charge, Mr. Cotton gave the right hand of fellowship; and we were by the elders and messengers of the several churches owned as a church of Christ, and John Clark declared to be a minister of Christ Jesus.

"Now follows the confession of faith and church covenant that was assented to and signed by those who embodied into a church. We believe in one only, eternal, living and true God, who is infinite and unchangeable in being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth, distinguished into, and subsisting in three glorious and undivided persons, who are the same in substance and attributes, equal in power and glory; yet distinguished by their relative and personal properties into God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.

"That this God is the maker, preserver and governour of all things in Heaven and earth; that Man, whom God made after his own image in knowledge, righteousness and holiness, by sin is deprived hereof, and made liable to all the miseries of this life, to death itself, and unto eternal destruction.

"We believe that when the fulness of time was come God, the Father, sent his only eternal son, Christ Jesus, true God and equal with the Father, to take upon him the nature of man, that consisting of and subsisting in two natures and one person, he might be a fit Mediator between God and man, and an efficacious Redeemer of God's elect; Who being the Prophet, Priest, and King of his church, suffered death, was buried and continued under the power of death for a time, rose again, ascended into Heaven with his body, wherewith he sits at the right hand of God, the Father, interceding for the faithful, and from whence he will come to judge the whole world at the last day. There shall be a resurrection of the just and unjust at the last day.

"We believe that Christ hath sent his Holy Spirit to enlighten, call, renew, and sanctify all those that are given to Him, by His word; and that the benefits of Christ's mediation, as the pardon of sin, salvation and life eternal, &c., are to be obtained in the way of faith and repentance; and that Christ Jesus

* There is one slight exception to the above statement regarding the church records. On September 24th, 1713, the church voted to name publicly members delinquent without cause in making up accounts with the deacon.

hath appointed the signs and seals thereof, now, under the New Testament, Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

"This God in Christ Jesus we take and avouch to be our God; and do covenant by the help of His Spirit and grace to cleave unto this God, whose name alone is Jehovah, as our chiefest good, and to the Lord Jesus by faith and gospel obedience, as becomes his covenant people forever. And we do solemnly promise and engage before God, Angels and men, to make the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ [even the Holy word of God] the rule of our walk and actions; and also duly to attend all those ordinances which Christ hath instituted in His Church and commanded to be attended by his people; and truly to countenance, and faithfully to submit to all regular dispensations of this Church of Christ, and to perform enjoined and respective duties to God and man, the Lord assisting."

This agreement and creed is signed by the following persons:

John Clark, Pastor.	Thomas Dudley.
John Gilman.	John Scrivener.
Peter Coffin.	Nicholas Gilman.
William Moore.	Richard Glidden.
Thomas Wiggin.	*Elizabeth Gilman.
Kinsley Hall.	*Elizabeth Clark.
Theophilus Dudley.	Judith Wilson.
Samuel Leavitt.	Margaret Beal.
Biley Dudley.	*Sarah Dudley.
*Moses Leavitt.	*Deborah Sinkler.
John Folsom.	*Deborah Coffin.
*Henry Wadleigh.	Sarah Lowell.
Jonathan Robinson.	Mehitabel Smith.

Seven of the above, whom we have starred, came from the Hampton Church, as did, perhaps, afterwards, John Scribner, Mrs. Tipping, Goodwife Bean, Mrs. Mary Gilman, Mrs. Elinor Wadleigh, Sarah Sewal.

Of this creed the late Mr. Byington said that it was an excellent one, and that he would like to use it with some slight modifications and additions. The list of the signers, who were apparently all members of some church, at least professed Christians, suggests the inquiry where the eighteen not dismissed from Hampton were members, on the supposition that some kind of church did not exist in Exeter during the past half century. A few of them were sons of the first settlers, while others had been residents of the town for fifty years or more. They must have had some previous oppor-

tunity of membership. If not in Hampton, where else but Exeter? Portsmouth and Dover were both too far off for any regular attendance. The heading given to the Council is in striking verbal accord with that bestowed by Johnson on Mr. Maud's church at Dover. Do the words mean the same thing in the two cases?

Mr. Clark was very popular, and everyone mourned when he died July 25, 1705. He had three sons and a daughter. Benjamin, the oldest son, married a sister of Sir William Pepperell, went to sea, and died comparatively young, but left children. Nathaniel died a young man and childless. Ward, who was minister of Kingston from 1725 to 1737, lost his wife and two children by the terrible throat distemper of 1735. Deborah married Dr. Thomas Deane, Exeter's oldest permanent physician, and became the ancestor of the Deanes, once so numerous in this town. The Gardners are her descendants in the female line. She lost four children within four weeks of the throat distemper, the extent of whose ravages can be estimated from the fact that of the first forty patients in Kingston none recovered. Of 113 deaths in that town 96 were of children under 10. The disease was a very malignant type of diphtheria.

Of the many stones in our churchyard—the third yard in historical succession; the first being near the original church in the Furnald neighborhood, and the second that behind the gas house—the only one visible is that of the wife of the Rev. John Hale, of Beverly, Mass. After the death of Nathaniel Clark, father of the Rev. John, his mother married Mr. Hale and on her death she was buried in Exeter. The stone, which is scarcely legible, reads

"Mrs. Elizebeth Hale, Relict of ye Reverend
Mr. John Hale, Late Pastor of ye church in
Beverly and Sometime wife to Nathaniel
Clark Esq Late of Newbury Dec'd, who died
March ye 15, 1716 aged 71 years."

The Odlins.

On the death of Mr. Clark, the town appointed a committee to look after ministerial supplies until August 31, when a day of humiliation was observed. The original committee was then en-

larged to provide preaching for three months, and in November, the first committee was empowered to search for and recommend a permanent pastor for the town's approval. On the first Monday of April, 1706, the town ratified the committee's selection of Mr. John Odlin, of Boston, and a larger committee, including that which had found the man, was entrusted with the arrangement of terms, Mr. Odlin having accepted the call. His salary was to be £70 a year, with the use of the parsonage lands and meadows, a settlement of £100 to be paid within a year in three installments; £5 a year for wood, and any money contributed by chance attendants on public service.

As Mr. Odlin's pastorate lasted over forty-eight years, and was characterized by events which shook the religious and social institutions of the town to their foundations, it seems expedient to interrupt the course of our narrative with a few biographical facts and a brief survey of the religious conditions of his day. He was born in Boston, November 18, 1681, and was the grandson of John Odlin, a cutler, who was disarmed during the antinomian excitement, and the son of Elisha Odlin, one of the deacons of the Third or Old South Church. Of Elisha, his fellow deacon, Judge Samuel Sewall writes in his diary under date of September 14, 1724.

"Last night died my good old Christian neighbor and friend Mr. Elisha Odlin, sensible and calm to the very last. He was born July 1, 1640, upon the same lot in Newbury street, where he all along lived and now died in the 85th year of his age." Judge Sewall was also one of his bearers. John Odlin was a member of the class of 1702 in Harvard College, and his name was placed eighth in a class of thirteen, according to the prevailing system of thus indicating a student's social position. Just how soon, after the negotiation, mentioned above, he began preaching in Exeter, is not known. He was not ordained until the 12th of November, 1706, but on the preceding 21st of October he was married to Mrs. Clark, the widow of his predecessor, at whose house he boarded. Unless his courtship was an unusually rapid one, he must have lived with her several months, and of course supplied the pulpit during that time. His first wife was mother of all his children, viz.: First, John, a deacon of his father's church, sometimes called Captain John,

born November, 4, 1707. He was married, but left only daughters, so that he did not perpetuate the name. He died, according to Rogers's diary, July 15th, 1782. Second, Elisha, born November 16, 1709; a graduate of Harvard in 1731, for a time a resident of Exeter, where he filled various town offices, and later minister of Amesbury, where he died in 1752. His children were brought to this town, and from one of them were descended the families of Odlins, a half century ago so numerous in Exeter. Third, Dudley, a physician, born September 22, 1711, died unmarried February 13, 1748. He built the house now occupied by Mrs. Charles H. Bell; his father's dwelling standing on the site of Mrs. B. L. Merrill's residence.* Fourth, Samuel, died in his infancy, being born and dying in August 1, 1714. Fifth, Woodbridge, born April 28, 1718, a Harvard graduate of 1738, and later colleague with his father.

Mrs. Odlin died December 6, 1729, and on the 22nd of the following September her husband married Mrs. Elizabeth Briscoe, a daughter of Samuel Leavitt, and the widow, first, of Captain James Dudley, a son of the Rev. Samuel Dudley, and now the occupant of the solitary riverside grave on Mr. Carlisle's land, on the Newmarket road, nearly a mile below the village, and, second, of Captain Robert Briscoe, who lived with his wife on the Leavitt estate, now owned and occupied by the Gilmans on the easterly side of the river. The second Mrs. Odlin died January 23, 1754, ten months before her husband.

Mr. Odlin seems to have inherited wealth, and to have added to what was bequeathed him. He was a large land owner in Brentwood as well as Exeter, and one of the proprietors of Gilmanton, and his frequent prominence at councils and conventions, as well as the publication of one or more of his sermons, shows that he was a leading man in ecclesiastical circles. This is indicated by our New England manual of precedence—the Harvard Triennial. Elisha was placed seventh in a class of thirty-three members, while Woodbridge stood sixth in a class of thirty-two. Their father, as

* Dr. Dudley Odlin, though he died prematurely, seems to have held a high position. One evidence of this is the inscription of his death on the silver waiter of the Hon. Theodore Atkinson, of Portsmouth, an honor carefully restricted. The Rev. Daniel Rogers called upon him in his last illness in spite of his being the son of a hostile pastor. See Brewster's Rambles about Portsmouth, second series, p. 64.

will soon appear, combined integrity with tenacity, not to say obstinacy of purpose, a frequent characteristic of the Odlin race down to our own day.

A Gathering Storm.

Up to 1740, a period of thirty-four years, Mr. Odlin's pastorate had been peaceful, and almost perfect harmony seems to have existed between himself and his people. There is evidence of this in the frequency and liberality of the additions to his salary, though they were in part only just compensations for a rapidly declining currency. There are other proofs of his wide influence and of the great respect in which he was held, but on these it is unneccessary to enlarge. Of specially exciting events there were few after the peace of 1713, except the earthquake of 1727; the completion of the fourth meeting-house in 1731, and the sore throat epidemic of 1735. Newmarket had been set off as a new parish in October, 1727, but for several years later it seems to have been in some way dependent on Exeter.

"The First Parish in Exeter" held a meeting in November, 1728, at which it was resolved to build a new meeting-house very nearly on the same site as that occupied by our present structure. A year later it was decided that there should be two galleries, one above the other, and as many pews constructed as there were persons willing to buy. The house was to be sixty by forty-five feet.

In the town meeting of March, 1730, those inhabitants of the First parish desirous of having a steeple were authorized to build and put up one by private subscription. The building was first occupied on the 28th of August, 1731—Thanksgiving day. The Folsom family even at this early day had become noted as builders, for John Folsom was the master workman. The pews, thirty or more in number, had been previously sold at prices that look very high, but the currency was much depreciated, so the £21, the largest amount received, was hardly half that sum in gold. These pews ran round the sides of the auditorium, and there were also ten similar "reserved seats" in the lower gallery. The steeple was subscribed for and built by thirty-nine well to do citizens, who, in 1739, sold it to the town for just what it had cost—£115. This

steeple blew down in 1775, and was replaced at town expense. When the new house was completed, the old one, which stood by its side, and in which the people had continued to worship, was taken down and built into a town hall, which stood pretty nearly where Court street now ends in Front street between the Boardman property and the Squamscott House. The new church building seems to have been not quite satisfactory in one respect, since, in 1733 the town authorized any person to lower the pulpit eighteen inches at his own expense, provided the pulpit was left in as good order as it now was.* Instead of a clock, an hour glass was bought to stand upon the pulpit. The real town clock of that day was a tall one, bought in England for Mr. Odlin by Governor Benning Wentworth, and now owned by Dr. W. G. Perry. It stood in the pastor's house, where all who wanted to know the time of day looked in and set their watches, if they had any. The town bell was no doubt timed by this ancient chronicler of hours and minutes.

While all appeared to be harmony, a change came, fully to understand which we must look into Mr. Odlin's surroundings, so different from our own day. In 1740, and indeed for nearly eighty years subsequent, though there was some relaxation after the Revolution, church and state were legally and minutely united. This was easy while there was only one denomination, but when sects multiplied dissatisfaction ensued, and in 1819 church and state were severed.

In the first half of the eighteenth century, all the inhabitants of New England, with very few exceptions, were convinced Congregationalists. The towns were divided into parishes, and every male or female adult was taxed for ministerial support as much as for that of the government. The question of the amount of the ecclesiastical rate came up at every town meeting, and the man who failed to pay the minister's tax was liable to a seizure of his goods and imprisonment for debt, if his assets failed to produce the required amount. In those days settled ministers were unquestionably the autocrats of church and town. Frequently in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries they were taxed on a different

* Bell's History, p. 179-82.

basis from other citizens, and their word was law on many other than theological subjects.

Ostensibly the high Calvinistic doctrines of the Pilgrims and Puritans were everywhere preached, yet there had been a change, a letting down in rigidity, and unhappily an abatement of fervor in many places. A few earnest men mourned in the last half of the seventeenth century that the children had fallen from the level of their fathers, but they were unheard, and the multitude welcomed the decision of the Synod of 1662, that a special belief that one had been converted and an approach to the Lord's table were not necessary to having his children baptized, provided he "owned the covenant," and was of orderly life. Even adults could be baptized without professing conversion or becoming communicants. This Half Way covenant, as it was called, proved to be a soporific to many consciences, and was long a bane to the churches in New England. To this easy going practice was added a kind of spiritual slothfulness on the part of many ministers. There was not so much a denial of the old fashioned doctrines, as a dislike to look into them, dulling of their edges when cited and an increase of emphasis on the importance of a good life, without reference to any doctrines at all. The conservatives of the day called their latitudinarian brethren Arminians, though a denial of predestination did not necessarily prove fatal to pungency, as John Wesley and his followers were soon to prove. The new departure men of the day preferred to be known as moderate Calvinists, and to this class John Odlin apparently belonged. Some of his manuscript sermons are described by those who have read them in the light of modern ideas, to be orthodox enough in their doctrinal outlines, but, judged by his actions, he was content with an unimpassioned presentation of Biblical truths, and a calm and regular discharge of his pastoral duties; having no tolerance for what he deemed "enthusiasm."

As it was in Exeter, so was it throughout New England, during the comparatively prosperous years which followed the conclusion of the "Queen Anne" war in 1713. The colonies had no wars to agitate them; Indian atrocities had ceased, except in frontier districts; trade was increasing; the churches in most towns were freed from any denominational competition; the standard of public

morals was fairly high; open unbelief was scarcely heard of, and all the machinery of religion was in fair working order. Yet earnest religious life was becoming more and more rare. Except for the great earthquake of 1727, which scared hundreds into the churches, only in many cases to show that fear, not penitence, had driven them there, there were few conversions. There was wide spread torpor, mourned by an earnest few. Deep convictions, which God's spirit can alone arouse, were lacking. The ice was first broken in the winter of 1734-5, after the preaching of a series of solemnly doctrinal sermons by Jonathan Edwards, at Northampton, Mass. One of the first converts was a young lady who had been a leader in gayety, and whose change of life surprised everyone. The work soon spread among old and young, until there were over three hundred converts in Northampton alone. The interest extended to many towns in western Massachusetts and Connecticut, but seems largely to have been confined to that region. Published accounts were circulated, however, and no doubt reached those in Exeter who were hoping for a like blessing from on high.*

It is not unlikely that a conviction may have reached some of Mr. Odlin's people, after they had read the news from Northampton, that there was something lacking in the food which he dispensed to them, but there is no record of any dissatisfaction, and he still reigned supreme over all his original parish, save Newmarket, which had been set off in 1727, and provided with a church a few years later. The pastor was approaching his sixtieth year and began to feel the need of a colleague. His youngest son, Woodbridge, had been educated at Harvard, by verbal tradition partly at the expense of the town, though I have failed to discover any recorded confirmation of the fact, and had then studied divinity. It was the general, though it appears not the universal feeling, that he was the best man to assist his father. On the 4th of January, 1741, a paper was numerously signed, requesting Mr. Woodbridge Odlin to become assistant to his "honored father." Some of the signers were persons who within two years seceded from the church, partly on the ground that the Odlins did not preach the full gospel. Whether there were other candidates for

* Tracy's Great Awakening; Edwards's Narrative of Surprising Conversions.

the place, does not appear, but that the invitation was an influential one is evident from the fact that the young man declined to receive a call which the people of Biddeford, Maine, were about to make him, and turned from his chances in many other places in which he had preached. So said town agents Nicholas Perryman, James Gilman, and Zebulon Giddinge in their successful protest to the colonial legislature of 1744, against the establishing of a new parish in Exeter.

George Whitefield.

The cause of this change of base must now be set forth. It is unnecessary to say more of the Rev. George Whitefield than that he was born in England, in December, 1714, was educated at Oxford, where he was allied with the Wesleys and the other founders of Methodism, passed through deep religious convictions; became an evangelist, preaching with unequalled eloquence, including Benjamin Franklin, Lord Chesterfield and David Hume among his admirers, and with a frequency that would appall most preachers; that he several times crossed the Atlantic and drew unprecedented crowds to hear him wherever he preached, from Maine to Georgia, and died, worn out with his labors, at Newburyport, September 30, 1770, having preached his last sermon in Exeter on the preceding day. His first visit to New England began September 14, 1740, when he landed at Newport, R. I., and reached Boston on the evening of the 18th. He was then not quite 26 years of age, full of holy zeal, very trustful of his fellow men, not prudent in all his methods, and having the habit of recording events and feelings in a journal, which was printed in installments, with a fearlessness that eventually gave him much trouble. He was not faultless, but a more thoroughly consecrated and impressive preacher never lived.*

* The literature regarding Whitefield is abundant. Gillies, Belcher, Philip and Tyerman are among his biographers. His own journals and "The Life and Times of Salina, Countess of Huntingdon" also supply many details. He was satirized in an indecent farce by the comic actor Foote and in the Rev. Richard Graves's "Spiritual Quixote," which, however, was more an attack on his work than himself. Benjamin Franklin and David Hume have also furnished interesting and, on the whole, laudatory pictures of him. For a keen reproof of one of his possible mistakes by a warm disciple, the Rev. Nicholas Gilman, see Arthur Gilman's Gilman Family, p. 61.

Cowper well describes him in these oft quoted lines:

"Leuconomus (beneath well sounding Greek
I slur a name a poet must not speak)
Stood pilloried on infamy's high stage,
And bore the pelting scorn of half an age,
The very butt of slander, and the blot
For every dart that malice ever shot.

* * * * *

Now, Truth, perform thy office; waft aside
The curtain drawn by prejudice and pride,
Reveal (the man is dead) to wondering eyes
This more than monster in his proper guise.
He loved the world that hated him; the tear
That dropp'd upon his Bible was sincere;
Assailed by scandal and the tongue of strife,
His only answer was a blameless life;
And he that forged, and he that threw the dart,
Had each a brother's interest in his heart.
Paul's love of Christ, and steadiness unbribed,
Were copied close in him and well transcribed.
He followed Paul; his zeal a kindred flame,
His apostolic charity the same.
Like him, crossd cheerfully tempestuous seas,
Forsaking country, kindred, friends and ease;
Like him he labored, and like him content
To bear it, suffered shame where'er he went.
Blush, calumny! and write upon his tomb,
If honest eulogy can spare thee room,
Thy deep repentance of thy thousand lies,
Which aimed at him have pierced the offended skies;
And say, Blot out my sin, confessed, deplored,
Against thine image in thy Saint, O Lord!"

Whitefield's success in Boston was astonishing. The churches where he preached were crammed to overflowing. Most of the ministers, and even the Governor, were at his beck and call, and he had 8,000 hearers when he preached on the common. He went out to Cambridge and addressed the college students, then numbering about 100. He was well received, but did not like all that he saw and very injudiciously made known the fact in his Journal. He found a low state of morals and poor discipline; that the tutors neglected to pray with the students, and that the young men

read bad books. More foolishly still he publicly affirmed that there were a good many unconverted ministers around Boston. This was unbecoming in a young man, and showed something like a conviction of his own infallibility. Yet by the time his labors ended about thirty ministers confessed that they had no experimental knowledge of the truth they preached until they heard Mr. Whitefield. Among these was Daniel Rogers, who was destined to exert a strong influence on the religious life of Exeter, where his last thirty-seven years were passed. He was possessed of some property, was a grandson of President Rogers of Harvard College, a son of the Rev. John Rogers, pastor of the First church at Ipswich, Mass., a brother of Nathaniel, his father's colleague, and of another John Rogers, pastor at Kittery, Maine. Daniel and a sister, afterwards Mrs. Coggswell, were twins and were born August 8, 1707—New Style. He was a member of the Harvard class of 1725. His brother Samuel and his cousin Daniel, later minister of Littleton, Mass., were his classmates, as were also the Tory punster, the Rev. Mather Byles, the Rev. James Pike, of Somersworth, and the Rev. Timothy Walker, one of the founders of Concord and first pastor of the town. The young Rogerses belonged to what Dr. Holmes called the Brahmin caste of New England, and were placed third, fourth and fifth in a class of forty-five members. Our Daniel had the highest place of the three. After his graduation he became a tutor at Harvard, and his earlier journals show him to have been a young man of social habits, specially fond of fish dinners, and a frequent visitor among the best families of Boston and Cambridge. He was licensed to preach, and filled pulpits on Sundays at Andover, Marlborough and other places, earning as high as ninety pounds a year, but often finding it hard to collect his pay. He seems to have been somewhat easy going until the time of Whitefield's first visit, when he and all his family became devoted followers of the evangelist. Whitefield stopped at Ipswich on his way to Portsmouth, and was the guest of the elder Mr. Rogers, who, he was glad to know, was a descendant of his namesake the martyr, a claim that has latterly been discredited. He preached to several thousand people there, and says in his journal "the Lord gave me freedom, and there was a great melting in the congregation." Old Mr.

Rogers was ever after his friend. July 2, 1743, being unable to be present at an assembly of divines in Boston, he sent a written attestation in favor of Whitefield and Tennent. He died December 28, 1745, in his eightieth year.

Early in life, Daniel began to keep diaries in interleaved almanacs, chiefly those of Nathaniel Ames, which to-day seem hardly less curious than the manuscript records inserted in them. He maintained the practice about as long as he lived. Many of them have been lost and others burned in a fire. Their entries largely relate to the weather, but give no thermometrical figures, but occasionally they refer, though very briefly, to interesting events. The earliest which exists is that for 1730. Next come 1732, 1734, 1737 and 1738. Thence there is a hiatus until 1748. He tells of his settlement here, but for his early relations with Whitefield we must depend on the testimony of other persons.

On July 13th, 1742, Mr. Rogers was ordained as an evangelist—"a vagrant preacher," his opponents said, at York, Maine. Fleet's paper, the *Boston Evening Post*, of November 22d, alleged that he called the elders and pretended messengers of some of the neighboring churches to ordain him to be a vagrant preacher to the people of God in this land, contrary to the peace of our Lord, the King and head of His church, and to the good order and constitution of the churches in New England as established by the platform.

The *Post* gives the initials of the officiating ministers, who seem to have been Mr. Moody of York, Wise of South Berwick, John Rogers of Kittery, and G—m, possibly Gilman of Durham. The action was very unusual, since the Cambridge platform authorized only pastoral ordinations.* Mr. Rogers's relatives, however, all sanctioned what he had done. We shall have occasion to renew his acquaintance and quote his later diaries a little further on.

Whitefield, after leaving Boston in 1740, did not visit Exeter. He came very near it, however, preaching successively at Newburyport, Hampton and Portsmouth at the beginning of October. At the last named town he says he had "a polite auditory, but so very unconcerned that I began to question whether I had been speaking to rational or brute creatures." He was a little dejected, but

* Tracy's Great Awakening, p. 330.

adds: "God, to comfort my heart, sent a young man crying out in great anguish of spirit: 'What shall I do to be saved?'" He thence went to York, where he found a sympathizing friend in the pastor, the Rev. Samuel Moody. Returning to Portsmouth, he had much better success than on his first visit, and at Hampton was not so much impeded in his utterance by a high wind, as at his previous service in that place.

It has come down orally that quite a number of Mr. Odlin's leading church members attended some of these impassioned meetings, and were powerfully affected, as were all who listened to him, by the great evangelist. It is said that one man, in wealth and official dignity, perhaps, the leading citizen of our town, literally rolled in the dust in agony of soul as the sharp arrows of conviction struck him. Many others were as deeply affected, and Mr. Odlin was earnestly besought to give the evangelist an opportunity to speak. This was refused and preachers favoring the awakening were also excluded from the pulpit, for the senior Odlin was unequivocally opposed to the work of Whitefield, and his son was found to side with his father. What one party esteemed a glorious work of grace was set down by the other as hurtful enthusiasm. There is no doubt that Whitefield's attack on the college whence both the Messrs. Odlin had graduated exerted an influence, but the criticisms on the father's preaching must have frozen any sympathy which either felt for the new ways. When an old parishioner and friend assures his pastor, twenty years his senior, that he had never heard the gospel until it was proclaimed by a young Englishman, he cannot be surprised if the minister does not appear anxious to share in the benefits of the recently discovered gospel method.

Mr. Odlin, the majority of the inhabitants of Exeter, and many very respectable ministers were of the same opinion. They were suspicious of Whitefield as an Englishman and Episcopalian, for denominational fences were much higher then than now. His new methods seemed as wild as did those of the Salvation Army when its movements began, to conservatives of our own day. Pastors were then rulers of their parishes, and resented all intrusion upon them. Whitefield had no regard for barriers of any kind, believing himself called to preach the gospel everywhere by an authority superior

to all human laws. In the interval between 1740 and 1743 the Exeter parish had twice been weakened by the long resisted establishment of Epping in 1741, and Brentwood in 1742,* as distinct parishes, and subsequently Exeter lost a goodly amount in ministerial taxes. This did not put her citizens in good humor. The agitation by the disaffected followers of Mr. Whitefield, and their demands for innovations on the old ways added to this wrathfulness. The majority were sure that the minority would split the church, and the seceders certainly said and did much that did not accord with loyalty to their pastor, or with the time honored polity of New England, and sometimes, it must be confessed, with the charity that "thinketh no evil." Unless justified by the goodness of their cause, they were a fractious minority.

There was reason for this arraignment. To mention an instance near at hand, the neighboring church in Stratham had been thrown into disorder by those who complained of the want of sympathy with the revival shown by the Rev. Henry Rust, the first settled minister of the town. Many withdrew to enjoy the ministrations of Mr. Joseph Adams, an ardent evangelical. The conflict was sharp for some years. Mr. Rust and his adherents tried to prevent the formation of a second church by legal measures, but in vain. Mr. Adams was ordained in 1747, and two years later Mr. Rust died. By 1756 both parties had cooled down enough to make concessions to each other, and reunited under Mr. Adams as minister of the whole town, a position which he enjoyed for nearly thirty years. In 1742 all was turmoil, with many fanatical excesses in various places. For these Whitefield was not responsible, but they caused doubts to spring up in the minds of many who had sympathized warmly with the awakening, while they gave opportunity to its opponents to confuse good and bad in their censorious judgment. The Rev. Nicholas Gilman, Jr., a native of Exeter, was an ardent supporter of the revival. He was settled at Durham in 1742, but in a few years became carried away with excitement,

*The opposition to the setting off of Brentwood was especially bitter and protracted, and the differences as to the location of a church between the residents of different sections of Brentwood weakened their cause and delayed its success. For the full documents in the case, see Provincial Papers, Vol. IX, and for a connected narrative B. A. Dean's Annals of the Brentwood Church and Parish.

allying himself with wild fanatics, and finally dying of consumption in 1740, at the age of 40. He is buried in Exeter, in the old cemetery on upper Front street. His extravagances no doubt kept his father, Judge Nicholas Gilman, from joining the seceders, to whom all, or nearly all, of his sons had allied themselves.*

No concession being shown on either side, the lines of demarcation were soon sharply drawn in Exeter. During 1741 and 1742 some futile attempts were made to reach a basis of agreement, but it was in vain to quote the conclusions of church polity to men who believed that the Holy Spirit had made new disclosures to them. The more radical Whitefieldians did not hesitate to assert that Mr. Odlin did not preach the gospel, and that he and his son were wicked opposers of a glorious work of grace. They even thought it wrong to attend the preaching of either.

On the other hand, the supporters of the Odlins could call attention to the fanaticism of James Davenport and other professed imitators of Whitefield. The crazy Davenport—he afterwards recovered his senses and recanted—was arrested at Boston for declaring that the greatest part of the ministers of that city were carnal and unconverted, and leading their people blindfold down to hell. He escaped punishment on account of his obvious insanity. In Connecticut the New Lights, as they were called, were making confusion in many parishes, and setting up conventicles of their own. Harvard, and a little later Yale College, which had been much stirred up by the imprudent utterances of Whitefield's published journals, had declared against the revival. Dr. Chauncy, one of the ablest ministers of Boston, had struck heavily at it in his Seasonable Thoughts, while Jonathan Edwards published a strong book on the other side. The Awakening had lost some of its aggressive force by 1743, though it maintained a vigorous, defensive warfare in the communities in which it had gained the upper hand. On

* For an account of Nicholas Gilman's extravagancies see Tracy, p. 336. His descendant Arthur Gilman, in his "Gilman History," gives only the favorable events of his career, which was very creditable until he lost his mental but not moral balance. He was a member of the Harvard class of 1724 and interleaved and annotated a biennial catalogue of 1733. Sibley, in the preface to his "Harvard Graduates," says of these memoranda, "They were very brief and not always correct; but of some graduates they furnish the only information that has been found."

the 25th of May, 1743, the General Convention of Congregational Ministers in Massachusetts met at Boston, and by skilful engineering, adopted a report as the general conviction of that body, which testified strongly against errors in doctrine; disorders in practice, such as the itinerancy of pastors and candidates; lay preaching; the ordination of evangelists; separation from churches, etc. It did not deny that under the operations of the Divine Spirit persons might become excited, but emphatically recommended continuance in the old churches and the old ways. It was signed by the Secretary, and left the impression that no one dissented from it. The friends of the revival, on finding themselves made apparent champions of a statement in which they did not believe, called a special convention of ministers for July 7 in the same city, to which supporters of the revival in and out of the state were invited. Nearly one hundred were present, the sessions covering the following day. Twenty-eight letters from absent sympathizers were also read. The revival was warmly indorsed, though the accompaniment of human frailties was admitted, and its beneficial results were described at length. The people were also warned against extravagances. The document, which in fervor and definiteness most favorably contrasted with the cold generalities of the May convention, had sixty-eight signers at the meeting, and forty-five absentees by letter. Other signatures came later, and a few of the signers accepted the report in substance and with reservations. Many prominent names were appended from all over New England. New Hampshire furnished John Tucke, of Gosport; John Blunt, of Newcastle; David McGregore, of Londonderry; Joshua Tufts, of Litchfield; Amos Main, of Rochester; Ward Cotton, of Hampton; James Pike, of Somersworth; Joseph Adams, of Newington, and William Shurtleff, of Portsmouth. To these may be added Jeremiah Wise, of Berwick, Maine, as he will appear later in the narrative, and Jonathan Edwards, of Northampton, Mass.* The Messrs. Odlin were evidently sustained by the other New Hampshire ministers. There were one or two who tried to be friendly with both sides, but most were like Mr. Rogers's classmate, the Rev.

* Tracy gives the actions of both conventions and also the full list of members and attestors.

Timothy Walker, of Concord,* whose only published sermon was specifically anti-Whitefieldian.

On the whole, the second convention represented the best, because most Christian thought of New England, but it lacked the official prestige of the convention of May 25. Posterity, nevertheless, has generally concluded that the truth was more nearly told in July 7 and 8. With all its drawbacks and blunders, the Great Awakening aroused New England from spiritual torpor and decorous formalism.

By 1743, nearly, if not quite one third of the voters of Exeter were known as determined opponents of the settlement of Woodbridge Odlin. They recognized him as a courteous gentleman, but believed that beneath a smooth exterior there was determined hostility to some fundamental doctrines of revelation. The aggrieved minority held frequent conferences, and prayer meetings, and sought opportunities for hearing men of their own type of belief at home and abroad. The day for decided action came when at the annual town meeting, March 28, 1743, an article inserted in the warrant on the petition of seventy-one voters was passed. It authorized the appointment of a committee to treat with Mr. Woodbridge Odlin on the question of his settlement. The committee consisted of Nicholas Gilman, Thomas Wilson, Benjamin Thing, James Leavitt, Stephen Lyford, James Gilman, and Nicholas Perryman. The committee was a strong one. Its chairman was 71 years old, a man of large property, a major and a judge. On the other side were his sons Samuel and Daniel, and his cousin, Colonel Peter Gilman. Mr. Perryman was Exeter's earliest and at the time perhaps her only lawyer. Messrs. Leavitt, Thing, Lyford and Wilson were all men of position and influence. On June 21, the Rev. Woodbridge Odlin accepted the town's invitation, his salary being £37, 10 shillings, lawful money; £50 yearly for the first four years of his settlement, and £65 a year after his father's death, and the use of the parsonage. The salary of the elder Odlin was reduced to £50, but the town engaged to repair his house. The ordination was held on the 28th of the

* In his diary for 1782, Mr. Rogers has the following marginal note not dated, "N. B. We have heard of Mr. Walker's death, my classmate, minister at Concord."

following September, the minority having appealed to the church members in vain for their interference or for the discussion of a reconsideration of the call. The senior pastor preached the ordination sermon from Colossians, 1 : 28, "Whom (Christ) we preach, warning every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus."

At a meeting of the First church held November 16, 1743, to see what members of the separated brethren had to say before the church as matter of grievance they read a paper, which they refused to give to the pastor on the ground that they had no copy of it. The church demanded a copy, which was promised, and the meeting adjourned. December 5, 1743, it was proposed to the separates to hold a joint council, but this they refused, though it was repeatedly urged. A week later, the meeting having been adjourned to give them more time, they still refused. The church then called the council of ten churches hereafter described.*

The opposition had been beaten about two to one at the March town meeting, and had thereupon ceased attending the old church. But they were no more freed from pecuniary responsibility than would be any taxpayer at the present day who disapproved the erection of a new town hall or was opposed to the town's electric light contract. An extract from a warrant, issued in his Majesty's name to church rate payers in the colonial days, will show where the seceders found themselves:

"And if any person or persons shall Neglect or Refuse to pay the sum or sums he, she or they are assessed in this list you—the collector—are to Distrain on the goods, chattels or Estate, of the Person or Persons so Neglecting or Refusing to the value thereof, and the Distress or Distresses so made you are to keep by the space of Four Days at the cost and charge of the owner or owners thereof, and if they do not pay the sum or sums within said Four Days then the said Distress or Distresses so taken you are to expose and openly to sell at Publick Vendue for the payment of the sum or sums and the incident charges."

If any more money came from the sale it was to be returned to the delinquent, but where there were no goods and chattels the collector was "to seize the body or bodies of him, her or them so neg-

* First Church records.

lecting or refusing and commit them to the common goal of this county and there to remain till he, she or they pay the sum or sums whereat they are assessed, with the incident charges." The person thus committed could get out of jail only by payment or by an abatement of their tax by the Court of Quarter Sessions, but all delinquent parties were to have fourteen days' notice before the distresses were made, unless it was suspected they were planning to move away. The same statute continued to exist after independence was achieved, but it was laxly enforced as sects multiplied, and before the repeal of 1819 was in a dying condition.

Yet the severance of church and state was even then carried only by a small majority, and after a fierce struggle. The act declared that any denomination had the right to form societies empowered to levy taxes on the polls and estates of its members, but ruled that no person should be compelled to join or support or be classed with any church or religious society unless his express consent had been previously obtained. It was provided also that, after giving written notice of withdrawal to the clerk of a religious organization, the withdrawing member should no longer be liable for any of its future expenses. Compulsory membership in some one denomination no longer existed, though for many years the existing parishes, ours among them, continued to assess their members, instead of asking for their voluntary subscriptions, as at the present day.

Meanwhile the seceders must render tribute to the Odlins, though they could not sit under their preaching. Forty-four voters had declared in writing against the settlement of the younger Odlin. They represented about one-third of the freeholders of the town, but in wealth and prestige a great deal more. Without indorsing the regularity of their proceedings, some of which were utterly incompatible with church order, or accepting all their judgments, which were not always charitable, it was certainly very unwise and unjust to persist in ordaining Woodbridge Odlin in the face of so much conscientious objection. All hope of a readjustment was not immediately abandoned, though, according to the First church statement already quoted, the seceders fought shy of their former brethren. They declined a joint council, but had one of their own,

of which we have no full report, but which encouraged them to form a church and build a meeting-house. This they did.* The First church, as has been seen, or more strictly the town, for church and parish were in league, had its council of ten in January, 1743-4, but as both gatherings were exparte, each only influenced the side which called it. The churches called were the First of Kittery, Maine, and Andover, Mass.; the Second and Third of Salem; the First of Dover; the First of Bradford, Mass., Nottingham, Newcastle, Rye, and Second of Newbury, Mass. The meeting was held at Mr. Odlin's house. After prayer, "solemn prayer and supplication," the report says, the council adjourned to the meeting-house. Everything was of the cut and dried order, as nearly all of the ministers were open opponents of the revival. The seceders' council was condemned, and the reasons for the dissatisfied members' withdrawal, viz.: The refusal of the pastor to admit certain preachers into his pulpit; his discountenancing the "subject of a glorious work of grace;" the settlement of Woodbridge Odlin, and the pastor's refusal to call a church meeting, except on certain conditions, deemed objectionable by those who asked for it, were all pronounced insufficient, and the seceders' refusal to join in the present council was wrong and contumacious. Consequently, the pastor and the "standing brethren" were completely sustained. It will be observed that the churches of Portsmouth were not present at this council. They were known to sympathize with the revivalists and may have attended their exparte council.†

At the March meeting of 1745, the seceders asked the town to release them from paying taxes, on the ground that the signers of the petition "could not sit under Mr. Odlin's preaching to spiritual satisfaction." They had erected a meeting-house at their own cost, and asked for relief from paying taxes to support the church they had left. Their request was denied, and in the following July they transferred their application to the colonial legislature at Portsmouth. Here it met with no better fate. The town appointed Nicholas Perryman, James Gilman and Zebulon Giddinge

* After a day of fasting and prayer, the New church was organized July 7, 1744. It is surprising not to find a mention of this in Prince's Christian History.

† Council of ten churches.

to oppose the petitioners, and they did so in a long paper which contains nothing additional to what has already been given in substance. The original petition was signed by fifty-four persons and the replication to the town's remonstrance by Samuel and Peter Gilman, the first, oldest surviving son of Nicholas Gilman, chairman of the committee who engaged Woodbridge Odlin, and the latter his cousin. The fifty-four names appended to the petition doubtless included the forty-four men who voted against the younger Odlin, and some more.*

The First church did not stop its efforts with the adjournment of the council. On March 4, 1744, Deacon Wilson, Nathaniel Bartlett, James Gilman, Zebulon Giddinge and Joseph Wadleigh were appointed a committee to confer with a committee of the Separates to bring about a reconciliation, but nothing seems to have been effected.†

The contest set families at variance. John Deane, a grandson of the first Mrs. John Odlin, was among the seceders. Benjamin Thing, appointed to serve on the committee which called the younger Odlin, seems to have changed his base, for he was one of the petitioners. Dr. Thomas Deane, father of John, and son-in-law of Mrs. Odlin, was at first quoted on both sides. Though his name does not appear on the petition, he is mentioned in 1755, as one of the members of the New parish in the act constituting it. John Phillips, then a young man of twenty-four, and husband of Nathaniel Gilman's widow, is half way down the list, as is also Nicholas Gilman, Jr., a younger brother of Peter. He was the founder of the seceders' Pious Use Fund, and was destined to die in 1746, nine years before the New parish had a legal existence. There are four Dudleys, three Folsoms and three Things among the signers, a fair proportion of those well known families, then so numerous, but indicating that many of their relatives were on the other side. Of the then almost numberless Gilmans, there being four Daniels and about as many Nathaniels, with a liberal sprinkling of Nicholases, Trueworthys, Calebs and Jameses, the secession carried, perhaps, a quarter—but that the richest—while the Leavitts,

* Provincial Papers, Vol. IX. The names of the fifty-four are given later.
† First Church records.

Robinsons and Emerys were staunch conservatives, only one each of the two first named families and none of the latter being enrolled among the dissentients.

Mr. Whitefield came to America again in 1744, arriving late in the year at York. It was during this visit that his controversy with the colleges came to a head, and through their influence some ministers who had formerly supported him, turned the cold shoulder. He had also a long discussion with Dr. Chauncy, of Boston. In the course of this he frankly confessed the mistakes he had made on his first visit, but failed to conciliate the Harvard faculty. In 1768, however, after the burning of the college library, Whitefield collected and presented the college with many valuable books and for this they politely thanked him. Several conventions of ministers passed resolutions against him. Among the signers of one of them were Messrs. Gookin, of North Hampton, and Fogg, of Kensington, but their action was rather personal than official.* In March, 1745, he made his first appearance in Exeter. He preached twice to his followers in spite of Mr. John Odlin's solemn warning to keep out of his parish. In May, 1747, the seceders, who had a meeting-house, and a quasi parish established by an exparte council, but not recognized by law, called Mr. John Phillips, whom they had elected ruling elder, but he declined the pastoral office. Originally intended for the ministry, he felt, after hearing Whitefield, that he never could become an acceptable preacher.

In 1747, on the 28th of July, the Convention of Ministers in New Hampshire, which was superseded on the basis of the Westminster Catechism, in 1809, by the New Hampshire General Association, was founded at Exeter. Sixteen ministers of Rockingham and Strafford counties were present, largely opponents of the

* The influence of Yale college, whose President had taken strong action against the revival, doubtless inspired the Declaration of the Association of the County of New Haven, February 19, 1744-45 It charges Whitefield with enthusiasm, false doctrines, uncharitableness and slander, as recreant to his Episcopal vows in working with Presbyterians and Congregationalists, and as generally a disturber of the church. It also quotes with unction these words of the Rev. Nathaniel Eells, of Massachusetts. "I verily believe that God in judgment and not in mercy to this people hath sent him again into this country." Whatever grounds there may be for doubting Whitefield's good judgment in some particulars, the attack on him in the Declaration is so violent and sweeping as to deprive it of all weight. We have not cited some of its bitterest allegations.

evangelistic movement, though any declaration regarding the faith of the members on points of doctrines was avoided as inexpedient. The Rev. John Odlin was elected moderator; the Rev. Henry Rust, of Stratham, clerk, and the Rev. Jonathan Cushing, of Dover, assistant clerk. The object of the meeting was said to be the promotion of harmony, peace, and good order among the churches, and to guard them against everything that might shock their foundation or corrupt their doctrine. After introductory proceedings, a committee was appointed to propose something to be laid before the ministers tending to promote the great ends of the meeting. The two Odlins headed the committee, which consisted of five members. Next day it reported that "Whereas there has been divers errors in doctrine of late, propagated by some ignorant and enthusiastical persons and preachers, encouraged contrary to the rules of peace and holiness, *Resolved*, that we will to the best of our ability, both in our public ministrations and private conversation, maintain and promote the great and important doctrines of the gospel, and take particular notice of several doctrinal errors which have more remarkably discovered themselves of late." These errors are said to be: 1. That saving faith is nothing but a persuasion that Christ died for one in particular. 2. That morality is not of the essence of Christianity. 3. That God sees no sin in his children. 4. That believers are justified from eternity. 5. That no unconverted person can understand the meaning of the Scripture. 6. That sanctification is no evidence of justification. The resolution further pledges the convention to be earnest in exposing and opposing these errors and investigating the opposite truths. They will discourage ignorant people who set themselves up as teachers; approve no candidates for the ministry till they are recommended by an Association and have preached for some time. New members were then proposed; some routine business was transacted, and the meeting adjourned to meet in Hampton in October. The organization proved a good one, and was especially useful in helping the foundation of Dartmouth college and in supplying destitute localities with ministers, but he who reads between the lines can see that the discouragement of evangelistic work was a main object with the founders. The organizers of the Association

in 1809 thought the old body decidedly defective from the religious standpoint, but the Associations of late years have given that preponderance to denominational business, which was made a cause of complaint about ninety years ago.*

Installation or Ordination.

In 1748 the continued depreciation of the currency led to the salaries of the Messrs. Odlin being more than doubled, but the great event of the year was the settlement of the Rev. Daniel Rogers as pastor of the New church, which stood on the ground now occupied by Col. W. N. Dow's residence.

On the 30th of August ministers and delegates came to Exeter for the purpose of installing Mr. Rogers as pastor of the New church. His supporters claimed that he had already been ordained at York, while his opponents, as we have already seen, denounced his ordination as a sham, since it only constituted him an evangelist, and not pastor of a particular church as required by the Cambridge platform. The churches invited were that at Berwick, now South Berwick, Maine; the Second church at Kittery; the First at Ipswich; Somersworth; Second church in York; the Presbyterian church of Londonderry; and the Second church, Portsmouth, and "The Separates," of Newbury, Chebacco, Mass., and Stratham. These delegates were generally as much champions of the revival and of the new church as were the members of the council of ten their opponents. Before acting, the Rev. Messrs. Jeremiah Wise, of Berwick, and James Pike, of Somersworth, the latter a son-in-law of Judge Nicholas Gilman, and also a classmate of Mr. Rogers, waited on the Messrs. Odlin, and asked them whether they would leave the questions at issue to a joint council. To this they consented, and appointed a committee of their church. The seceders refused to join in the council, saying their installing council was already formed. Messrs. Wise and Pike then withdrew, but next day, August 31, Mr. Rogers was installed by his relatives, Messrs. John Rogers, of Kittery, Nathaniel Rogers, of Ipswich, and Jonathan Parsons, of Newbury. Upon the refusal being known, the Messrs.

* For Report of Convention Meetings, see Farmer and Moore, and N. H. Historical Society Transactions.

Odlin sent a protest addressed "to any ministers or others, that are or may come to assist in the proposed ordination of Mr. Daniel Rogers within the limits of the First parish in Exeter." The protest asserts, first, that the seceders had no just cause for withdrawal, and their manner of going out was irregular; secondly, they had no regular dismission, and violated a prior obligation; thirdly, they had refused to join in a council; fourthly, they were inconsistent in admitting that they could hold occasional communion with the First church as an orthodox church of Christ—if so, why not stated communion?; fifthly, in settling a minister a regard ought to be had to the neighboring churches. For these reasons, the delegates were asked to desist from the ordination. Appended to the protest were the opinions in reply to questions by the Odlins asked of various neighboring ministers, who held that the views of the protest were all right, and that the seceders ought to retrace their steps and ask forgiveness of their former pastor and church, for accusing them of being opposers of the glorious work of God's grace. The signers were Revs. John Moody, of Newmarket; Ward Cotton, of Hampton; Jeremy Fogg, of Kensington; Nathaniel Gooking, of North Hampton; Elisha Odlin, of Amesbury, son of John Odlin, and Robert Cutler, of Epping.

As we have shown, the protest did no good. A contemporary pamphlet account of the affair says:

"No reply being made to the above remonstrances, the pastors of the church in Exeter, with a number of neighboring ministers, went to the Assembly and tho't proper there to bear testimony against their proceedings. Accordingly one of the pastors urged it upon the moderator either to read the church's remonstrance to the Assembly, or give him liberty to read it. To which the moderator reply'd that the way was clear to them, and that 'twas no proper time to dispute now. They would dispute it at a proper time and place. Upon which one or more of the neighboring ministers urged that the remonstrance which they had sent to the Council might be publicly read to make it evident to the Assembly that they bore solemn testimony against the unwarrantable proceedings of the day. To which it was answered that it was not sent in seasonably (altho' it was sent to the Council about an hour before they went to meeting). Upon this the moderator, the Rev. Mr. John Rogers of Kittery, immediately proceeded to the charge, without giving any further opportunity to speak (tho' often requested). Upon which the pastors and neighboring ministers withdrew, thereby testifying their disapprobation of said

proceedings. Thus we have exhibited some things relating to the unaccountable procedure of said ordination."*

An entry on the records of the South Berwick church shows very clearly the perplexity in which good people, who favored the revival but dreaded irregularities, were placed. On receiving an invitation to send delegates to Mr. Rogers's ordination, the book says it was decided not to do so, but to send a letter giving the reasons for declining. This was doubtless the view of the pastor, Rev. Jeremiah Wise, who was as sagacious as his name would seem to imply. Before this could be done, papers were sent saying that the "Separates," the term is Mr. Wise's, had proposed a mutual council to the Messrs. Odlin, and that the offer had been accepted, but there was a disagreement as to the selection of churches, the fault being with the Odlins. Thereupon, the Berwick church reconsidered its action and sent its pastor with two delegates, with instructions to act if the case was as represented; otherwise, not to act. The delegation went to Exeter and he recorded it. "Upon conversing with the Messrs. Odlin and the committee of the standing part of the church, finding that they were ready to join still with the Separatists in calling the joint council, which the Separatists' society were now unwilling to join with them in, we thought we were prevented joining in the ordination. So we withdrew from the Council and did not act." This fully explains the course of Mr. Wise as mentioned above.

Mr. Rogers delivered his first sermon after his installation from Psalm 133, setting forth the blessedness of brethren in unity, but making no direct reference to the troubles through which he and his associates were passing.†

It is hard for people of our own time to conceive the intense excitement which the persistent rebellion of a third of the supporters of the constituted ecclesiastical authority must have occasioned in Exeter, then a town of about 1600 inhabitants. Every non-evangelistic taxpayer was interested in preventing the legal recognition of the new church, for the Messrs. Odlin had a life hold on all

* Remonstrances of the Church in Exeter, 1748.

† Mr. Wise's action did not alienate Mr. Rogers, for he visited him at his home in Berwick, a few years later.

voters and property holders, and if a third of the debtors were released, the whole burden would fall on the remainder. As things stood, the separatists, while indulging in the luxury of a new minister and meeting-house at their own expense, must still pay tribute to the First church. A few refused to perform this double duty, and were sent to jail. There was no doubt a good deal of browbeating on the one side, and irritating profession of special righteousness on the other, but too many of the seceders were men of wealth as well as worth, to make persecution easy. A heavy blow had been struck at the standing order, and many of the safeguards of the ancient polity had been trampled upon. It is undeniable that the methods of the departing brethren could not be justified except by a higher law. Whether they were actually doing evil that good might come, is a question which will find various answers, but there was no doubt a mixture of good and evil on both sides.

A New Parish.

In 1752, and probably in other years closely following the council, the seceders' petition for release from the First church was again made, only to be rejected, but on the 20th of November, 1754, their chief opponent, John Odlin, died of a fever after a fortnight's illness, at the age of 73. He was beloved by the majority of his townsmen until the last, for the day after his death it was voted to raise £100 for his funeral expenses, and this in the less depreciated new tenor notes. He was a man of dignified bearing, strong mind and stronger will. His worst mistake, conscientiously committed no doubt, was his misunderstanding and persistent opposition to a great spiritual movement. Had he given it reasonable encouragement and not persisted in taking his son for a colleague, he might have checked its extravagances and yet reaped the benefit of its fervor.

The senior Odlin's death was no doubt a help to the seceders, for in September, 1755, the legislature organized its adult adherents into the New Parish, and the town made rather a feeble opposition through Messrs. Zebulon Giddinge and John Rice. Thenceforward the seceders were freed from paying taxes to support the church

they had left. Their charter ordered Samuel Gilman to call them together for parish organization on the 27th of October, 1755. The "inhabitants of the town of Exeter exclusive of all the parishes thereof" also met on the 27th, on a special call to assess the polls and estates in the town of Exeter agreeable to an act made and passed September 18, 1755. Nicholas Perryman, Exeter's earliest lawyer, presided, and James Leavit, Jonathan Gilman and Charles Rundlet were chosen assessors.*

The Nicholas Gilman of the above catalogue was a grandson of Mrs. Odlin's supporter of the same name who died in 1749, and the widow Mary Gilman was the widow of the Rev. Nicholas, before mentioned as minister of Durham, who died in 1748, and was a son of the elder Nicholas.†

The tax list of the First parish for 1755 is apparently lost, and the oldest now accessible is that of 1772, which probably does not vary much from that of seventeen years earlier, being drawn up during the pastorate of Woodbridge Odlin, and while the leaders of the secession were still alive. It contains the names of 299 taxpayers, of whom fifteen were women. The list of 1794, when Mr. Rowland was in the enjoyment of his first popularity, and after the return of prominent men who had been members of the New parish, has a total of 327 persons assessed. Of these twenty-seven are women or estates, leaving just 300 male taxpayers. In 1763 an act was passed at the request of the First parish, authorizing the choice of assessors, a right which seems to have been imperiled by the founders of the New parish.

All was not yet plain sailing. Many, indeed most, of the churches

* The list of persons authorized to form the New parish corresponds very nearly to that of the fifty four petitioners of 1745, in names as well as number. I quote it in preference to the earlier one as showing those who were seceders on mature conviction: Peter Gilman, Samuel Gilman, Thomas Dean, Theophilus Smith, Daniel Thing, John Lord, Robert Light, Josiah Gilman, Samuel Gilman, Junr., John Phillips, Daniel Gilman, Nicholas Gilman, Thomas Lord, Benjamin Thing, Abner Thurston, Josiah Ladd, Nathaniel Folsom, Sumersbee Gilman, John Dean, Richard Smith, Richard Smith, Junr., Samuel Smith, Josiah Barker, Abner Dolloff, Samuel Dolloff, John Robinson, Junr., Peter Robinson, John Harris, John Gilman, Junr., the widow Mary Gilman, John Lougee, Junr., Edward Colcord, Nicholas Smith, Jonathan Judkins, Robert Lord, Eliphalet Lord, Stephen Thing, Joseph Stacy, Jonathan Young, Benjamin Rogers, Stephen Palmer, John Leavit, Joseph Smith, Wadleigh Cram, Edmund Lougee, Dudley James, Trueworthy Gilman, Thomas Piper, Elias Ladd, Daniel Gilman the 3rd, Nehemiah Gilman, James Thurston, Junr., and William Harris.

† Provincial Papers IX. First Parish records.

thought the installation of Mr. Rogers—they called it ordination—highly irregular and possibly void. A council was held at Exeter, July 31, 1755. It was a mutual one between the two churches, and from the new church joining in it, it was apparent that it did not feel altogether sure of the denominational tenability of its position. The churches called were Ipswich, Third; the two churches in Cambridge, and the Third in Gloucester, Mass. The finding was as follows (those desirous of reading it in full will find it on page 295, of the ninth volume of Provincial Papers):

1st. Notwithstanding any grievance, the brethren of the new gathered church (so called) may have met, we judge their manner of withdrawing communion was disorderly. 2d. We judge the reflections of the separating brethren upon the late pastor and the other brethren of the church (calling them opposers of the work of God's soverain grace, &c.) to be unbecoming, savoring of an uncharitable spirit, &c. 3d. If they have received members of other churches who are under admonition, their practice is utterly inconsistent with the order and peace of the churches and in order to reconcilation they should deny such members further fellowship. Should they comply with the recommendations, the First church was urged to recognize the new organization as a church of Christ, and its pastor (so called,) as a minister of Christ, and receive the members to communion and other ordinances, as if they were brethren of other churches. This was to be done on condition that the new gathered church (so called,) shall manifest its acceptance of the judgment of the council and a readiness to practice agreeably thereto. If this were done, the First church was counselled to forgive the seceders whatever had been offensive in their late transaction, notwithstanding the exceptionable steps taken toward being formed into a church state. On the 4th of August, the new church accepted the result, in the following action:

At a meeting of the New Gather'd Church of Christ in Exeter—August 4th 1755. Voted that we consent and accept of the judgment and Advice of the Council mutually chosen by us and the first church of Christ in said town,—as is contained in their result dated August 1st 1755—and sign'd by the Rev. Samuel Wigglesworth as moderator—and we hereby manifest our Readiness to practise agreeably thereto. Voted likewise,—that a copy of the above be sent

to the Revd Woodbridge Odlin to be communicated to the First Church of Christ in Exeter.

SAMUEL GILMAN, DANIEL THING, JOHN PHILLIPS } Ruling Elders in behalf of the Church.

There is no record of any action by the First church, but there is reason for believing that its attitude was not very conciliatory. The spirit of controversy had not yet cooled down, and fraternity is a plant of slow growth.*

The election of October 25, 1755, at which representatives in the Assembly or Legislature were chosen, was strikingly in contrast with the ceremonious good order of earlier and subsequent meetings, which, until within the last sixty years, were always opened with prayer by a minister. Peter Gilman and John Phillips, both leaders of the secession, were declared elected. Great excitement ensued, and it was maintained that they had been chosen by fraud. According to Ephraim Robinson, a member of the old parish, the polls were closed before a number of people had an opportunity of voting, and the meeting was carried on with the greatest confusion and irregularity that he had ever seen. The Assembly ordered the returns to be set aside and a new election to be held. At this Peter Gilman was re-elected with Zebulon Giddinge, an old parish man, as his colleague. The irritating results of the recent emancipation of the new parish were no doubt the cause of most of the trouble. Henceforth for about a century—the phrase is now rarely used—the warrants for the annual meetings of the First parish were addressed to "all the legal voters of the town, exclusive of all the parishes (or sometimes 'any parish') that is, of all which had been set off beginning with Newmarket."

* One of the seceders, Samuel Gilman, Jr., a younger brother of Col. Peter Gilman, on September 9, 1771, wrote a long and contrite letter to the Rev. Woodbridge Odlin asking readmission, saying he had professed the Christian faith in the First church and, though he had gone off with the disaffected brethren, had ardently desired reunion and had never felt satisfied with the step he had taken. He therefore asked for readmission. Among other things, he said that he had been truly desirous that an accommodation might be brought about, and to that end labored with all his might for the joint council held in the year 1755, but was disappointed, "the result of that council not answering the end." The continued non-intercourse shows that Mr. Gilman was right in the conclusion I have quoted. Mr. Gilman, who must not be confounded with his elderly cousin, Samuel, one of Rogers's ruling elders, brought no dismissal from the New church, but as he says, I leave "not as a new member but a returning brother," in fact as a rebel who laid down his arms.

November 18, 1755, an event occurred which scared for the time being both parishes into solemnity. I quote Mr. Rogers's diary:

"In the morning abt half an hour after 4 of the clock we were awaked with a terrible earthquake, which was followed with ye space of an hour with 3 or 4 rumbling noises. People here roused and flockt to our meeting house in the morning when prayer was made and a word of exhortation given. P. M. A great assembly at Mr. Odlin's meeting and a sermon. 19. The terrible Noise was heard 2 or 3 times. In the evening we had a large assembly at our meeting house and the sermon. 20. The noise was not heard. 22. This evening abt 8 o'clock we had another shock of the earthquake, wh. shook the house and was worse than any except that on Tuesday morning. 23 [Sunday] Extemporized and was greatly assisted. December 1, [Sunday] A young man cried out, under conviction which was the occasion of another young man's awakening. 20. Something shake of earthquake, but God spares us yet."

We may remark in passing, that Mr. Rogers makes no record of the legalizing of the New parish, of the opposition to his installation, or of the election trouble. Of the council he merely says that it sat with closed doors, and that it decision was announced in Mr. Odlin's meeting-house, after a sermon by Mr. Appleton, and was read by John Phillips. He says nothing of its purport.

The consequences of having two churches, where only one was needed, are thus described by an acute observer who lived in the days when everybody must be a member of some parish and pay legally imposed taxes for its support:

"At this period all the disputes arose from the jealousies and anxieties to gain new recruits to their respective membership. On the 1st of April, when the last day for change in relation to the societies came, there was great watchfulness and no small anxiety manifested to induce migratory characters to settle down on their respective preferences. I have no recollection of any effort more than that of the tongue brought to bear on individuals. The same effects from a needless multiplication of churches have continued to our own day, though state and town laws do not assert their authority.*

The records of both parishes abound in notification of transfers of memberships, beginning soon after the New parish had a legal existence. The clerk of each parish was expected to make known to his brother official any change which the secessionist member

*Unpublished Ms. of Dr. William Perry.

had announced to him in writing. These notices vary in form and tone. They are sometimes brief and dignified; sometimes eccentric in grammar and orthography, and occasionally involve a rhetorical kick at the deserted organization. Their members are also suggestive of the comparative popularity of the two parishes at the time they are written. Thus, during Woodbridge Odlin's pastorate the coming and going currents about balanced each other. There was a noticeable increase of dismissals from the Old to the New parish during the latter half of Mr. Mansfield's stay. This was followed by an influx from the New parish during the closing decade of the eighteenth century, with a reaction at the beginning of the present century, after Mr Rowland had lost his popularity, the dismissals being given to persons desirous of joining the Second parish, with its new church, or the Baptists or Universalists. From 1800 to 1828 Mr. Rowland lost many more hearers than he gained. Yet in the early months of 1814 Deacons Isaac Williams and Thomas Odiorne and over a dozen other members of the "Old Upper" church and parish, who were not satisfied with the new church organization of December 24, 1813, announced themselves at their first opportunity members of the First parish. There were a few notices of comers and goers recorded during the first year of Mr. Smith's pastorate, but since then there have been only a few strategic memoranda inscribed during the stormy period of the administration of Mr. Williams. The practice is virtually obsolete. The following are a few specimen notices:

EXETER, March 26, 1791.

This is to signify my intentions to belong to that part of the town (or Parish) over which the Rev. Mr. Rowland is minister.

Your humble serv't,

JOHN TAYLOR GILMAN.

EXETER, March 19, 1793.

I hereby signify my desire to belong to the Town-Parish in Exeter.

JOHN PHILLIPS.

EXETER, March 30, 1797.

I hereby signify intentions to belong to the religious society of which the Rev. Mr. Rowland is minister.

JOSHUA BARSTOW.

EXETER, April 30, 1810.

To Dr. Joseph Tilton, clerk of the Town of Exeter. Sir: It is my intention to leave the Rev. Mr. Rowland's Parish, and join the New Parish in this town, and you will please to communicate this my intention to the proper officers in the different parishes.

CHARLOTTE HAMILTON.

EXETER, March 30, 1811.

Please to put me to the lower parish for minister's tax.

DANIEL S. JONES.

The writer of the following petition was apparently somewhat mixed:

Doctor Joseph Tilton, clerk of the town of Exeter, exclusive of any parish or otherwise lately called the First or New Parish in said Exeter: Sir, I wish to take my name from the Books of said Parish not being willing to belong there any longer. Please to act in this agreeable to your regulations that I may not be taxed again in said Parish.

JOHN J. PARKER.

EXETER, 28th of 1829.

After church organization in October, 1800, lists of Baptists were furnished to the First parish church as members of the new organization. On March 31, 1810, a catalogue of twenty-nine, and on April 4, 1811, thirty-seven persons "signified" their desire to become members of the "Universalian Society," claiming all the rights and privileges of a regular religious society "which has bylaw provided." This organization fell in pieces, to be reorganized about ten years later; meanwhile quite a number of the thirty-seven returned to their original church.*

PARISH ANNALS.

With the death of John Odlin his son Woodbridge became sole pastor of the First church. He had not the intellectual force of his father, and was cast in a gentler mould. Notwithstanding his opposition to the revivalists, he is said to have been a very spiritually minded man, and was a thorough gentleman in his man-

* The latest trace of the existence of this First Universalist organization is the following note addressed to the Clerk of the First Parish, Dr. Joseph Tilton. "I am not satisfied with Mr. Rowland's preaching. I shall join the Universalists. I do wish to have my name recorded on there (Sic) list. Exeter, March 20th, 1820."

ners. His pastorate was quiet and uneventful until his death March 10th, 1776, in his fifty-eighth year, and the seventieth since his father came to Exeter. His salary averaged 100 pounds, lawful money, being occasionally cut down ten pounds, and once or twice raised to 125. He was an earnest sympathizer with the national cause, but never seems to have reciprocated the efforts of Mr. Rogers to promote good feeling between the churches. With him the only sincere repentance would be the breaking up of the irregular organization and returning to the old church. While they failed to bring forth such fruit, the conciliatory and apologetic utterances of the seceders counted for little. But Mr. Odlin's view of the case was that of most of his people and of the majority of New England ministers. The old alliance of church and state was slow to yield to voluntaryism. It was not until 1771 that the people of the First parish perceived that the institution of a new parish had changed their relation to the town. At the annual parish meeting, held on April 1st of that year, it was voted that the assessors "purchase a book for the recording of the affairs of that part of the town, over which the Revd. Mr. Woodbridge Odlin is pastor, that then the present clerk transfer or copy out of the town book all that relates to said part of the town that has passed since that the New parish has been set off by act." Thus began that definite parish existence, which was to be further limited by the legalized entrance of other denominations into the field at the opening of the nineteenth century.

The Half Way covenant was in use during Mr. Odlin's ministry, and the additions to the full membership of his church were only thirty-six in a pastorate of thirty-two years. The baptisms were 1,276, mainly but not exclusively of children. He married Abigail, daughter of Colonel Peter Gilman, one of the chief opponents of his settlement. She was a widow, having married in 1749 the Rev. Job Strong, pastor of the South church at Portsmouth. He died in 1751 of an attack of colic a few hours after he had preached a sermon on the text: "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death," etc. Jonathan Edwards preached Mr. Strong's ordination sermon, and stopped at Exeter on his way to Portsmouth, calling on Mr. Rogers, as the latter mentions in his diary.

Mr. Odlin left several sons and daughters, but no descendants bearing his family name are now living save the children and grandchildren of his grandson the late Peter Odlin, of Dayton, Ohio, who was an eminent lawyer. The parish paid its pastor's funeral expenses and gave his widow twenty-five pounds.*

In the following July, after holding a fast, in which the Association of Ministers, in session at Hampton, was asked to join, the parish called the Rev. Isaac Mansfield as pastor, and the church took a like action. Mr. Mansfield was ordained October 9, 1776, and was dismissed September 18, 1787, by a two-thirds vote, having lost confidence by "imprudence"—supposed to be intemperance. He soon after returned to his native place Marblehead, where he became a magistrate. He died in 1826, aged 76. He was a graduate of Harvard in the class of 1767. During his pastorate twelve persons were admitted to the church and 1245 baptized. The Half Way Covenant was obviously in full operation. At his ordination the Rev. Mr. Thayer, of Hampton, preached the sermon.

In 1777 steps were taken at a parish meeting to stop the noise made by boys in the gallery, and thenceforward, until very recently, two or more tithing men were annually elected to discharge this duty, their usual pay being exemption from parish taxes. When Mr. Mansfield's dismissal followed the ordeal of a vote to which he had submitted the question of his going or staying, the council consisted of only three churches, Kensington, Portsmouth and

* Mr. Rogers says under date of March 10th, 1776: "Helped Rev. Woodbridge Odlin, deceased. 14th, Snow and rain in the morning. Rev. Mr. Odlin's funeral was attended. Mr. Fogg (of Kensington) prayed with a great congregation in the meeting-house. 22d, Dined with the selectmen; P. M. visited Mrs. Odlin. 28th, A full congregation of Mr. Odlin's people. I was assisted."

Mr. Odlin's marriage to Mrs. Strong, Peter Gilman's daughter, was performed by the Rev. Paine Wingate at Hampton Falls, October 23d, 1755, while her father was leading 300 men to Crown Point. In the state of feeling between the churches the marriage was somewhat remarkable. It was the result of a very early attachment. Mr. Odlin was fourteen years older than his wife, and when a young man in his early days used to take her, then a little girl, into his lap and playfully called her his wife. She married Mr. Strong, but lost him in two years. The old fondness revived, and she became a wife of the man against whose ordination her father protested and seceded. These facts came to me orally. After his expedition Colonel Gilman was made a brigadier, but his friends often used his old title. Almost the only one of his family to be such, Peter Gilman was a Loyalist during the Revolution. He was seventy years old at its outbreak, and to the conservatism of age, added a conscientious belief that he was bound by the many oaths he had taken when accepting commissions in the royal service. His Toryism was of a quiet character, and the only notice taken of it was ordering him not to leave Exeter without permission of the Committee of Safety.

Greenland. Its findings avoided the main issue by merely saying, "We are constrained by duty and love to testify the sense we have of the valuable ministerial gifts with which God hath furnished Mr. Mansfield, and which have been well approved, not only among his own people, but by the churches in this vicinity."

The most important event of Mr. Mansfield's ministry was the gift to the parish in 1778, by Mr. John Rice, of his house on Centre street, where the present parsonage, built in 1790, now stands, and certain lands on the Little River, now mainly occupied by the residences of Messrs. Fuller and Francis, and by houses erected by Mr. Follansby. The bequest was to take effect on the death of his wife. She died in 1785, and added to the property a wharf and some houselots. Mr. Rice's will conditioned his devise on the continuance of the parish, and its constant support of a regular learned minister. In case of a lapse, the property was to be appropriated for the benefit of a grammar school in Exeter, forever.*

Daniel Rogers and the New Parish.

We must now glance at the fortunes of the New parish, and can do so most intelligently by tracing some of the movements of its pastor. There was no official intercourse between the New parish and the First, though after the first irritation subsided, there was a pretty kindly feeling between the members of the organizations—between some at least—and Mr. Rogers seems to have done his best to conciliate the Messrs. Odlin. He came to Exeter early in 1748, and preached several months before giving the brethren a final answer. A few days after his arrival we find the entry: "January 8, visited Dr. Dudley Odlin, sick." He uses the same word, "visited," in relation to both the Messrs. Odlin, father and brother of the sick man, whose burial is thus mentioned under February

* In 1780, by a vote of the church, Mr. Rice's widow surrendered the custody of the communion ware to Deacon Brooks. It consisted of four pewter flagons, four pewter dishes and ten silver cups of different dimensions, one table cloth, and two napkins. The ladies, who have been in search of two long spoons for removing foreign substances from the wine, said to have been given by a Miss Hall early in the eighteenth century, will see by this note that nothing appears to have been known of any spoons in 1780. They must have disappeared before or have been apart from the communion ware. About fifty years ago the church voted to use unfermented wine if it could be obtained, but this idea was not carried out until the present decade.

18: "Doct. Dudley Odlin's funeral was attended." He visited John Odlin in company with his father-in-law, Rev. Dr. Foxcroft, of Boston, whose daughter Anna he had married November 3, 1748. He had heard Woodbridge Odlin preach the day before he visited his brother, and he quite frequently attended the lectures at the First church, where sometimes the father, sometimes the son, and occasionally some neighboring minister officiated. He also mentions occasional fasts at the First church as well as his own. He never gives the texts nor any criticisms. Once he mentions making a religious call on Mrs. Fogg, wife of a First church deacon. He "visited" John Odlin once during his last illness, and Woodbridge Odlin, when also attacked by fever some years later. How many of these visits resulted in an interview we are not told. He never mentions receiving any visits from the Odlins, and it is evident that his relations, at least his official ones, with surrounding churches were not very pleasant. He frequently exchanged with Mr. Adams, the Whitefieldian minister of Stratham, but rarely, if ever, with any others but Massachusetts friends. He seems always to be in good temper, and remarks with obvious pleasure that he had a large audience on Sundays when the First church had no service. His pay was largely in wood, provisions and groceries of all kinds, but he received some cash. His chief friends and counsellors were Colonel Peter, Major, later Colonel Daniel, Ruling Elder Samuel, Josiah Gilman and John Phillips. In his later years he often visited Deacon Isaac Williams and Dr. Gilman. He almost invariably calls the first two by their first names alone. When Colonel Peter marched with 300 men to Crown Point in 1755, Mr. Rogers went a little ways with him. On his return he had to dine with him, and next day with Major Daniel, just as he says John Wentworth did in 1767. He mentions the death of the first Mrs. Phillips in 1765, and announces the widower's second marriage in the simple words, "Mr. Phillips returns a bridegroom."

Mr. Rogers began attending the state conventions, heretofore described, about 1764, at Greenland, and in 1766 preached before it at Portsmouth. This seems to have been about his earliest full recognition by the ministry. He was a good pastor, an indefatigable visitor of the sick and suffering, but he visited his friends at Ips-

wich, Kittery and Boston more frequently and for longer periods than most modern congregations would endure. He was very fervent and is constantly being "helped," "lifted" and "assisted," but appears to have been a good and kind hearted, if not brilliantly intellectual man. In 1754 he enjoyed a second visit from Whitefield, after working with him in Newburyport and other places.

The diary says under date of August 25, 1754:

"Mr. Whitefield preached in the morning at Mr. Haven's, Portsmouth, at noon at Greenland, towards night at Stratham. Came to my house and lodged. 26, He preached in our meeting-house. P. M., He preached in the street before it. P. M. he went to Newbury."

Whitefield had been preaching twice or thrice daily for several days before Mr. Rogers captured him. In 1764 he was in Portsmouth again, and Mr. Rogers expected a visit. He stopped short at Greenland, however. His next and last appearance in Exeter was September 29, 1770. He preached his final sermon standing on a board placed over two barrels just in front of the house next above the present memorial stone. Some accounts say his discourse was one of his most eloquent, but an intelligent local attendant on the service was disappointed, the speaker being very feeble. Probably both accounts are true, the eloquent passages being followed by exhaustion of voice and lungs. Whitefield died next morning in Newburyport of asthma. He ate his dinner at Daniel Gilman's, the present Tilton house in the triangle between Front and Linden streets. No doubt Mr. Rogers dined with him. He next saw him a corpse, and officiated as one of his bearers at Newburyport.*

Exeter's population increased little, if any, during the Revolution and the years immediately following, and the growth of both

* Stevens's "Methodism" tells a story of Whitefield's last hours which is so beautiful that one would like to believe it, but the omission of any such occurrence by all his earlier biographers, including his traveling companion, inspires a doubt. Instead of going directly to bed on the night of his death as he intended, and as other authorities say he did, he took pity on the crowd of bystanders who filled the entry and the sidewalk, and candle in hand pleaded with them to be faithful Christians until the candle sank into its socket and went out. The daughter of the Rev. Mr. Parsons, with whom the evangelist staid, is made responsible for this fact by Dr. Stevens. If true how could silence have been kept at the funeral, as the facts have been omitted from numberless eulogies? Whitefield's bones are still preserved in the church of which Mr. Parsons was minister.

churches was small. Some of Mr. Rogers's best supporters died during his life; others did not long survive, and, as no one took their places, the parish became weak, and the tide began to turn toward the First church. The death of Daniel Gilman just mentioned was quite remarkable. He had always prayed for a sudden death, and had kept his affairs in such a condition as to be ready for the call whenever it came. His wish was gratified, for he fell dead with apoplexy in 1780 in the old Upper church.* By a singular coincidence a relative soon after died suddenly, also in church, though it is not said that his case was an answer to prayer. These two deaths so alarmed John Taylor Gilman, a grandson of Daniel, that apparently thinking that church deaths might be catching in the family, he did not enter a house of worship for many years. This he told a relative of mine.

Mr. Rogers suffered much from broken health during his later years. He lost his wife in 1770, and on the tenth anniversary of her death said in his diary, "I mourn a widower to this day." In 1782 he lost his "dear twin sister Coggswell." On May 5th of that year he was for the first time "at public worship after five months," adding "on account of a nervous disorder." His journal for 1785 is very meagre and sad in tone. On January 3rd he wrote, "Departed this life the Hon. Col. Samuel Gilman in the 87th year of his age." 7th, "I preached a funeral sermon on Hebrews 6 :12, on the death of Dear Col. Samuel Gilman." 5th, "Old Deacon Fogg of the First church visited me." The subsequent entries are few and far between. He died December 9, 1785, having survived all his

* Mr. Rogers in his diary, under date of Oct. 15th, 1780, give the following account of Colonel Gilman's death: 15, I preached A. M. and P. M. Just as I had read the beginning of the 89th Psalm to be sung, Col. Daniel Gilman, attempted to rise to sing, dropped down and died in a moment without a groan, sob or sigh, I believe to sing in heaven. 17th, I attended Col. Daniel Gilman's funeral, was assisted in prayer. Lord make to know mine end, etc.

I may quote in this place as well as any other, Mr. Rogers's repudiation of the Half Way covenant. The fact is interesting, though it hardly belongs to the history of the First church. "April 30th, (1780). Sunday, was graciously assisted. Memo. Stayed the church and informed them that I could not proceed in the way of baptizing children of parents neither of them visible Christians." This action may have had something to do with the following vote July 8, 1781, of the First church, though the Half Way covenant prevailed till the end of Mr. Mansfield's ministry in 1787 and later; "Voted that for the future adult candidates for baptism stand propounded for a time. Memorandum. It was agreeable to the church that in general such should stand propounded one Sabbath, viz.: be baptized the next Sabbath but one after propounding;" yet it was agreed that this should be referred to the discretion of the pastor.

particular friends save Colonel Peter, who died in 1788, aged 83, and John Phillips and Isaac W. Williams, who were younger men, Deacon Williams especially.

After Mr. Rogers's death the two parishes felt that in union there was strength. Antipathies had cooled, and in 1786, within a year of the venerable pastor's decease, resolutions were passed by both societies, expressing a desire for reunion, and after the First church dismissed Mr. Mansfield in 1787, both united in hiring one supply for the pulpit. A special arrangement was made with the selectmen for apportioning the taxes. On March 29, 1788, both churches communed together at the invitation of Deacon Brooks of the First church, for the first time since the exodus of 1743. For months afterward there was united worship, and both societies joined in a call to the Rev. David Tappan, of Newburyport, Mass., but as there was not absolute unanimity he declined. A great opportunity was thus lost. The New church was asked to join the First in a call to the Rev. William F. Rowland, but declined, and made a vain effort to secure for itself the Rev. Samuel Austin, of New Haven, Conn. In 1792 it settled the Rev. Joseph Brown, an Englishman of Lady Huntingdon's denomination of Calvinistic Methodists. He was thoroughly orthodox, but had some English habits which his people did not like. Realizing this, he voluntarily closed his pastorate in 1797. He was the last settled minister of the New church, which still continued to hold services, but with waning congregations. In the early nineties, in spite of Mr. Brown's presence, and the non acceptance of Mr. Rowland by the New church, reunion appeared not very far off, and the movement was finally checked, not so much through Mr. Brown as through the unfortunate choice of a pastor by the First church.

A New Pastor and Meeting-House.

The anxiety for reunion impelled the First parish to secure a pastor of confessed ability, and he was thought to be found in the Rev. William Frederick Rowland, born at Plainfield, Conn., May 26, 1761, and a Dartmouth graduate in 1784. His salary was to be four hundred Spanish milled dollars, and this was supplemented in many years by gifts varying from fifty to one hundred and fifty

dollars voted by the parish. He was ordained June 2, 1790. It had been voted in that year to build a new parsonage, and the present structure was erected on the site of the old one. The latter was exchanged for bricks, furnished by Mr. Theodore Moses, and removed by him to serve as his dwelling house on what is now Park street. The new house was three years in building. In 1793, one hundred pounds were voted for the repair of the meeting-house; and again in 1795 it was announced that any large repairs would cost too much. In April, 1796, the sum of four hundred pounds was appropriated for building purposes, and Deacon Brooks, Benjamin Lamson, Dr. Samuel Tenney, John Rundlet and Nathaniel Parker were appointed a committee to prevent the boys from playing around the meeting-house. Finally, January 22, 1798, at a special meeting, it was decided with only two dissenting votes, to build a new meeting-house. A large committee was appointed to value the pews, and J. T. Gilman, Oliver Peabody, Nathaniel Gilman and Ebenezer Clifford were designated a committee to report a plan or plans. On February 6 a plan was brought forward and accepted. Messrs. Nathaniel Gilman, Eliphalet Giddings, Ephraim Robinson, Samuel Tenney, Gideon and Benjamin Lamson and Ebenezer Clifford were appointed to buy lumber, build a new house, dispose of pew rights, take down the old building, and to appoint some person or persons to take charge of the business.

The next mention of the house is in the report of a meeting held January 19, 1799, when arrangements were made for the disposal of pews thus far unsold, and for the purchase of an eight hundred pound bell. On February 4th, the assessors were empowered to hire $3,000 for building expenses. At the regular annual meeting of the parish, April 1, 1799, it was ordered that such of the pews in the gallery as shall not be sold or rented, next week, be fastened up by the assessors. It has generally been thought that the new house, which has been much admired, had for its architect Mr. Clifford, but he co-operated with a Mr. Johnson, who may have furnished the specifications. This statement, Mr. Alfred Conner had from his father, who worked on the structure, but Captain Clifford, noted for his experiments with a diving bell, certainly had

some supervisory authority. In 1800, either Mr. Johnson or Mr. Clifford built for Dr. Tenney the house that used to stand just below the church, and is now moved across the river and occupied by Mr. D. W. Baker. Mr. James Folsom, grandfather of our Mrs. Hall and Mrs. Head, was master builder of the church. The parish paid him more than his contract.

The bell, which superseded one bought in 1763, after much discussion, bore the inscription "Paul Revere, 1800." When broken up some twenty years ago, its fragments were bought by the Baptist church and melted up with their own bell, also a Revere one. Just in time for this record, Mr. Henry C. Moses has presented our people with a fragment of the old bell on which the date appears. He has fastened to it a silver plate, vouching for the genuineness of the fragment. The gift is an illustration of the donor's thoughtfulness and good will.

The church building was purposely made large, for, though erected by one parish, it was expected that it would soon hold all the worshippers of the town, and there seemed grounds for this hope. The parish records show a great number of prominent accessions. Among others, Attorney General George Sullivan joined the parish, and John Phillips and wife both the parish and the church. Though one of the most prominent seceders of 1743, Dr. Phillips had become an earnest advocate of reunion, and so remained until his death in 1795, in our membership.

The parish had reason to be proud of its house, but gradually lost hope of its pastor,—why, I prefer to give in the words of one who was contemporary with him during much of his life—the late Dr. William Perry, though I am inclined to believe that a difference of religious tenets, though perhaps unperceived on either side, must be added as a source of trouble to Mr. Rowland's admitted intellectual deficiencies.

I quote the record as I find it:

"Before the new meeting-house was finished, Mr. Rowland, by neglect of personal effort in the study, not only had lost his first popularity, but that reputation for supposed intellectual ability which had been the foundation of it. I believe I might say all of the more intellectual part of his society had become dissatisfied, and wanted a separation, but he appealed to the pride of

the other. The first class wrote him a letter, stating their feelings, but he took no farther notice than to reprimand them as not willing to hear the truth. This reflection was so constantly repeated that, as might be expected, a secession eventually took place, and all the malcontents left. Thus a kind of peace was restored. Those who remained considered themselves a body fighting for the true gospel, and the effect of all this was to modify the style of Mr. Rowland's preaching so as to conform to that which was styled Hopkinsianism. The rank and file of the society made no objection to this changed style of preaching that I ever heard of, and he took advantage of the quiet disaffection which followed this changed relation of affairs to indulge his natural temperament, which was natural mental inactivity. The preaching after the secession and the stimulus which higher intellectual auditors had or might have inspired, was reduced to mere talk and doctrinal assertion, which was submitted to for several years. After a while, those who sustained Mr. Rowland in his former trouble grew weary under his present performance. Many left the society, and the minister said if they were dissatisfied they had better leave. The consequence of all this was that the society had become so reduced and dissatisfied that the people felt impelled to force a separation."

A Second Secession.

If the above judgments appear rather severe, there is other contemporary evidence of Mr. Rowland's disregard of the signs of the times. Many, but not all his leading men had seceded, when at a parish meeting, called by a number of influential members, March 18, 1805, resolutions were offered by United States Senator Nicholas Gilman, affirming the existence of discontent, as evidenced by the withdrawals that had already taken place. Serious apprehensions were entertained of the departure of many others, and it was evident that Mr. Rowland's usefulness was at an end and an obstacle to the "desire to have the two parishes of the town united under the ministry of one person." Accordingly, a committee ought to be appointed to wait on Mr. Rowland and ask him to resign. Instead of adopting this recommendation the meeting simply ordered that it be recorded. Mr. Rowland staid, and Mr. Gilman soon followed his friends into the New parish. He was an earnest advocate of reunion, and offered to give $1,000 to the church when it should be effected.

Mr. Rowland had always felt that he was settled for life, and his residence in Exeter for thirty-eight years made it difficult and unpleasant to deal with his case. Finally, however, he called for a

colleague. This was refused him, and he requested, and was granted, a dismission December 5, 1828.* He was twice married, first, to Sally, daughter of Colonel Eliphalet Ladd, of Portsmouth, and second to Anne, daughter of Colonel Eliphalet Giddings, of Exeter. After leaving the parsonage, he occupied Colonel Giddings's house, now owned by Dr. Gerrish. He died in it, June 10, 1843. He left a son and three daughters, all of whom died unmarried.

The New Second Church.

We must now return to an earlier event in Mr. Rowland's ministry to which our authority refers, but does not describe. At the opening of the present century, all, or about all the leading people in town were members of the First church or parish. The New church was at its last gasp, and only a few persons, generally aged, represented the parish. Mr. Rowland offended in various ways his principal hearers. Some, like Dr. Benjamin Abbot, principal of the Academy, who during Dr. Phillips's life was so decided a Trinitarian as to convert a young lady† from Unitarian views. Judge Jeremiah Smith and Judge Samuel Tenney were inclining to the new departure of the day, which finally blossomed into a Unitarian denomination. Others, like the Gilmans, had also private grounds for dissatisfaction, and in short the want of tact already mentioned had provoked a feeling which every act of Mr. Rowland, though well intended, was sure to increase. The secession began in 1803, when Governor John Taylor Gilman, Joseph Smith Gilman, Judges Jeremiah Smith and Oliver Peabody, Attorney General George Sullivan, Gideon Lamson and others declared themselves members of the New parish. They were followed later by Dr. Benjamin Abbot, Josiah Coffin Smith and others, and a process began by which Mr. Rowland's flock was gradually depleted. Some of these men later changed their parish relations once more; among them Mr. Sullivan, who made a

* Mr. Rowland was not invited to the council which installed Mr. Hurd, but Mr. Hurd was moderator of the one which dismissed Mr. Rowland.

† Miss Mary Emery, eldest sister of Mrs. G. L. Soule. The statement is from her own lips. She said Dr. Abbot's change of views was not until after the death of Dr. Phillips.

religious profession late in life and died a member of the First church. To quote Dr. Perry once more:

"After the departure of Mr. Brown, a successor was not obtained; I do not know that the society felt able to meet the expenses of a new settlement. So the pulpit was occupied by different individuals as they could be obtained. This continued till the new organization started farther on. It must be remembered that the full orthodox doctrines, as preached by Whitefield, were retained by the [2d] church, and were the only acceptable ones permitted to be heard in that meeting-house. It must be remembered and kept in mind that these individuals who [later] seceded from the First society, though not professing to leave on account of Mr. Rowland's religious belief, still held views very different from him. I suppose that they were Unitarians, though not adopting that name. After they had joined this new society and paid for the support of its preaching, they thought they ought to have the privilege of selecting such preachers as suited them. The reply to this request from the deacon was 'oil and water will not mix.' After some time the new comers became the majority. When they were the most numerous, and their religious views were predominant, all of the old members of the church left, some for the First church [Sixteen, including two deacons, joined the First church in a body], some for the Baptist, and, I think, some few did not unite with any society. The church thus became apparently and virtually extinct. The society continued as before to meet, sometimes in the meeting-house, and at other times in the Academy hall; sometimes having preaching, at others reading, and at others no services. Such Sabbath service continued till Mr. Hosea Hildreth became instructor in the Academy. He was a licentiate, and endeavored to supply the society as far as he could consistently with his duties in the Academy. He sometimes preached, and others he supplied by exchange. The society thus waded along without any organized church for some years, when Mr. Hildreth urged the society to have an organized church formed. This was done by a council of the neighboring ministers. Thus the present Second church came into existence, not one of the old members uniting with it."*

This view of the origin of the present Phillips church as a secession from our own, and not a continuation of the Rogers church, is shown to be correct by the proceedings at this organization. The call of the "Associated Brethren," as the seceders from Mr. Rowland's ministry had come to denominate themselves, plainly asks the neighboring ministers to convene for the purpose of "organizing them into a church." When the ministers assembled

* There is something like a coincidence between the existence of the original Second church and the ministry of the two Odlins. Each lasted sixty-nine years and a few months. It may also be mentioned that there is not now living in Exeter any person bearing the name of Odlin.

a paper was read, signed by Dr. Abbot and Mr. Hildreth, which said:

"The Lord's supper has not been administered in this parish for several years, and but very seldom for a much longer period, although applications to have it administered were repeatedly and urgently made. In the mean time, nearly all the members of the *church* have attended public worship and communed elsewhere. And since the discontinuance of the ordinances, we do not find that any regular church meeting has been held or any act proposed by the church indicating its existence. About sixteen months ago, we, the undersigned, called upon the elder of the church and made a formal request that we might be permitted to transfer our connection with the churches to which we belong, to the church in this parish. His reply to us was, that nothing could be done about it. We have, moreover, repeatedly conversed with the elder and other members of the church, upon the unfortunate state of religion in the parish, and expressed our earnest desire that some measures might be taken for the revival of the ordinances, and our perfect willingness to assist in bringing about so happy an event. Several of the Associated Brethren and Sisters have for a long time been wishing, and felt it their duty to make a public profession of religion and to attend and enjoy the communion. Under these circumstances we deemed it criminal to remain any longer inactive."

The council, which was composed of men holding both conservative and advanced views—there was yet no Unitarian denomination—decided that the applicants should be "instituted as a church," and forthwith proceeded to its organization December 24, 1813. The candidates for membership were all seceders from the First church or parish, not a single person representing the old organization, which indeed had declined to receive some of them. Thus the present Phillips church has only a parish connection with the church of the seceders of 1743, and started with a creed to which the latter would have objected as deplorably weak.* The First church mourned the loss of several prominent supporters and their families, and may still regret it. Yet it is questionable whether the

* Second Church records, 1813. To these may be added the distinct statement (Hist. Gen. Register, Vol. 1) by the late Rev. Dr. French of North Hampton, who was a member of the organizing council of 1813. In a correction of an erroneous date regarding the church of 1744, he says: "This is not the church of which the Rev. Mr. Hurd is pastor." While 1813 is unquestionably the year in which the present Phillips church was born, the absence of all mention of the pre-existing organization leaves the reader of the Year Book in doubt of the time when the New parish came into being. This point I have considered in my preface. For another view of the case see Rev. G. E. Street's Commemorative Discourse, Dec. 23d, 1888.

seceders, had they remained through these years of doctrinal upheaval which closely followed their departure, might not have brought theological dissensions into our ranks. If an adherence to the doctrines of the Reformation and the Pilgrim Fathers was desirable, as the majority of members thought, our church was safer without, than with able representatives of aggressively opposing views. This may appear to some a sour grape view of the exodus, but I have thought the idea worth presenting by way of suggestion.

We have nothing farther to say of our neighbor and youngest daughter, save that by the somewhat rapid change of views from Unitarianism to Orthodoxy of her first pastor, the excellent Isaac Hurd, the church was saved to conservative Congregationalism, though many of its earlier male members retained Unitarian views through life. This fact occasionally made Dr. Hurd anxious, and once during his pastorate he called on his neighbor, the Rev. Roswell D. Hitchcock of the First church, and said that he was apprehensive that a Unitarian colleague might be chosen for him. If this were done he should transfer his membership to the First church. His fears proved groundless, for the thoroughly Orthodox Rev. Asa Mann was selected for the place. The succession of pastors since Dr. Hurd's time has been strictly Congregational, and a warm hearted and energetic female membership has much more than overbalanced any remains of liberalism which may have survived the exodus of 1854 to form a distinctively Unitarian church. Since Mr. Rowland's resignation, the official relations of the First and Second churches have been unembarrassed and courteous on both sides.

Our church's youngest daughter has now reached the mature age of eighty-four years and eleven months, having long survived her elder sister. Her mother's house has abundant room for her, and not many years ago signified the fact. She has preferred, however, to build herself a new and separate habitation, and we all trust that she may prosper in it. If at any future time she should change her purposes, she will find the latch string still out, and that all the unpleasant events of 1743 and 1805 have been forgotten, the memory of kinship alone remaining in the maternal heart.

Denominational Multiplication.

When Mr. Rowland came to Exeter in 1790, he had the field almost to himself. The situation had not much changed in 1800, unless in the increasing weakness of the New parish. Not until some years later was he to look for rivalry in this quarter, and much of his trouble was self made. There were a few non-aggressive Quakers in town, and a stray Roman Catholic or Episcopalian, but neither of these last two was to organize a place of worship until the new century was half gone. If Methodist zeal had penetrated Exeter, it was working quietly and did not organize until Mr. Rowland's pastoral days were over. The same is true of the Christians. The Baptists, now so strong, organized in a dwelling house on the Plains, in October, 1800, but for some years their notices of withdrawal from the First parish were few. By 1810, they were frequent and numerous enough to alarm a zealous minister, who thought his own domains were being poached on. The Universalists, as has heretofore been shown, organized in 1811, but they were not in full strength until about 1828. They were numerous and aggressive in the thirties and forties, but in 1854 were glad to unite with some Unitarian seceders from the Second church. The First parish has not only been reduced in territory, but has supplied members to half a dozen churches within its own home field. Baptists, Methodists, Unitarians, Christians, Episcopalians and even Roman Catholics have forsaken her communion, and still she flourishes under a division of authority, less arbitrarily but still as really, as when she was monarch of all she surveyed.

During Mr. Rowland's pastorate, the Half Way Covenant happily went into abeyance. He received one hundred and twenty-eight members during his thirty-eight years' pastorate, and baptized two hundred and ninety-five infants and adults. His two most successful years were apparently 1817 and 1827. Fifteen persons were received in the former year, and ten in the latter, to church membership. A very abstract creed, to be found in the church books, was probably written by him. That of 1829, to be found in our church manual, is, substantially at least, the form known as the Piscataqua Association's. It remains unrepealed, though candi-

dates are now asked to subscribe only to the shorter and simpler form. For nearly thirty years of his ministry, attendance and payment were still compulsory. For many years after the law had been repealed, churches continued to tax attendants on the old system, and now when only voluntary offerings are received we still continue to call our officials assessors.

A Spiritual Pastorate.

The church was not long in finding a successor to Mr. Rowland. The Rev. John Smith, who had filled a pastorate in New Jersey, had been preaching in Portsmouth on a temporary engagement to much acceptance, and he won special favor with those members of our own church who heard him. He was a native of Weathersfield, Connecticut, and a classmate at New Haven of the Rev. Dr. Bouton, of Concord. He was thirty-three years of age when he came to Exeter. He was installed March 12, 1829, and great preparations were made for the eventful day. There was to be no ordination ball given by non church members, as when Mr. Rowland was ordained, for this form of commemoration, though not uncommon in the latter part of the eighteenth century, had gone out of favor in the more serious epoch of Mr. Smith's entrance upon office. The conflict between Orthodox and Unitarians was then at its height, and the conservatives took a much stronger position against what they deemed "vain amusements" than is held by the great mass of their successors. Still, the occasion was to be duly magnified. There were to be a procession, of which Major George Gardner, father of Mr. John E. Gardner, was announced as Chief Marshal, and a musical programme of unprecedented grandeur. The latter feature was a marked success. Such an array of bass viols, violoncellos, violins, flutes, clarinets and trombones was seldom gathered together, and a listener declared that the volume of melody was so great that he expected to see the roof of the church rise and sail off on a current of sweet sounds. The day of the organ was not yet. But alas for the procession! A heavy fall of snow took place a day or two before the 12th, and a driving rain followed. The streets were veritable water courses, and those who attended the services mostly went in sleighs. Even these did not

escape wet feet, for the water covered the bottom of many of the sleighs. At the installation services Mr. Hurd gave the right hand of fellowship; the Rev. Nathaniel Bouton preached the sermon, afterward published, and the Rev. Mr. Miltimore, of Newbury, offered the prayer of ordination.

The latter twenties and earlier thirties were years of special religious interest in all parts of the country. There had been a reaction from the cold scepticism which followed the French revolution, and the existing controversy with Unitarianism led to increased emphasis on the doctrines, and specially on the influences which separated man from God. This fact as well as Mr. Smith's fervor must be taken into consideration for a full understanding of his success, which was unprecedented in this vicinity as far as winning converts from the world was concerned. He had no doubts, questions of criticism never troubled him. He accepted the Bible as the word of God and its teachings in their literal sense. He spoke from the heart, setting forth what he deemed to be truth, and clothed his thoughts in language which was intelligible to the least instructed. He had no profound philosophical theory to maintain, but his simple and sincere utterances magnetized his hearers. He was also an affectionate and indefatigable pastor, full of kind sympathies and liked by old and young, though his solemn warnings were not always acceptable to youthful gayety. The fruits of his work soon began to appear. Ten persons were added to the church during the nine months that remained of 1829, including the Attorney General of the State, the Honorable George Sullivan. The soundness of his conversion was evidenced by the fact that, while during his previous life he had often yielded to the hereditary vice of his race by becoming profane when excited or irritated, he was never known to swear after uniting with the church. In 1830 there were eighty-three accessions, most of them on confession of faith. In 1831 there were forty-two additions; in 1832, eighteen; in 1833, ten; in 1834, twenty-one. The majority of the converts were women, but many men were secured to our membership, who for years afterward were liberal and intelligent supporters of the church. It is noteworthy that a large percentage of the male converts were full grown men, not children from the

Sunday school. Mr. James Odlin was thirty-eight years of age; Esquire John Kimball, a noted surveyor, and father of our Mr. John H. Kimball, was fifty-nine. Both these gentlemen brought their wives with them. Freese Dearborn was fifty-one, and his wife fifty, when they made joint profession. James Folsom was forty-five when he joined the church and his wife accompanied him; his brother Josiah united at thirty-seven; Thomas Lovering was thirty-eight; James Rundlett was twenty-six. His wife, our oldest living member, came into the church in Mr. Rowland's last year as Miss Eliza Ann Lord.

During the last two years of Mr. Smith's ministry, the accessions dwindled to five and seven respectively, showing, perhaps, that the impressible elements of his congregation had all been gathered in. He was much liked and respected by his people, but he apparently felt that a change would be better for him and them, and early in 1838 announced his acceptance of a tract society agency. He was dismissed at his own request, February 14, 1838. He had baptized one hundred and thirty-nine persons, infants and adults, and had admitted one hundred and eighty to the church—that is sixty-two more in nine years, than had Mr. Rowland in thirty-eight years. After about ten years' absence from the state, Mr. Smith returned to be installed at Kingston, July 26, 1848, and dismissed, September 18, 1850. He resigned to settle at York, Me., but in a few years returned to his native state to pass his remaining days in pleasant retirement furnished by his sons, born in Exeter, who had become wealthy citizens of New York. He died February 20, 1874. About the time of his going to Kingston, he preached to his former people. The church was crowded, and all were interested to see and hear their old pastor once more. He was greeted with much warmth, as he always was when he came over from Kingston. His pastorate is still recalled by the few who remember it as a golden period, when the church was filled with new converts, when its outward activities had the flavor of novelty, and when the spiritual wastes of a generation past were blossoming with the growths of a new life.

Up to Mr. Smith's coming, the church had no place for prayer meetings and no convenient accommodations for a Sunday school.

This was while our present auditorium was still a two story affair with a great surrounding gallery. Accordingly several gentlemen, in and out of the parish, united soon after Mr. Smith's coming in erecting the building on parsonage ground, which now constitutes the double dwelling of Mrs. Byington and Mr. Vroom.* It was two stories in height, and was used as a young ladies' school during week days, for the Friday night prayer meeting, and for Sunday school purposes. Before its erection, prayer meetings were held in private houses, and the parish meetings for many years in the court house. After the removal of the old court house, burned in 1841, to Court street, the parish met in the vestry until the lecture room was constructed in 1838. The vestry was subsequently sold to a syndicate, which used it for school purposes. It was then bought by the parish, and was the subject of many votes between 1868 and 1872. It was finally converted into its present form, at the cost of a debt of $2,800, long a burden, but happily paid off more than ten years ago.

Up to 1815-20, the church edifice was never warmed. Stoves were then introduced, as in other places, against considerable opposition. People generally acquiesced in the maintenance of a freezing temperature, though the following article in a warrant of 1780, during Mr. Mansfield's pastorate, shows that there were some complainants.

"To see if the Parishoners, when met, will pass a vote that the Rev'd Mr. Mansfield shall not read a Portion of Scripturs at the Beginning of service on Sundays, or Else Expound what he Reads, by the reason that of the inhabitants Living very remote and in Cold weather: it being very tedious to set in the Cold, not that we Despise the Gospel or Scripture, but we can set by our own fires & read [or] Cause it to be Read in our own houses as well to our understanding as to Sit in the Cold Except he Explains what he Reads."

No action was taken on this petition, which was probably intended as a hint. In Mr. Smith's day, big stoves, with long funnels, were in use.

* The vestry was divided into twenty-seven shares, valued at $14.21 each. The subscribers were, Sherburn Blake, six shares; N. Gilman, Jr., six; William Perry, three; Theodore Moses, two; J. T. Burnham, Joseph Boardman, Josiah G. Smith, William Odlin, Peter Chadwick, John Rogers, Theodore B. Moses, Robert and Henry Shute, George Sullivan and Francis Grant, one each.

Never was a minister greeted more cordially and hopefully than the Rev. William Williams, who was installed May 31, 1838. His salary was larger than that of any of his predecessors and of one or two of his immediate successors, being $800 and the use of the parsonage. Mr. Williams in his acceptance expressed forebodings of coming disappointment, which were sadly fulfilled. His pastorate, after a very successful first year or two, became very stormy and finally ended in his dismissal October 1, 1842. It would be useless and worse to enter upon the details of a controversy which ended in the secession of about twenty members, several of them prominent, to the Second church. There were faults on both sides, as is almost always the case, but it is only fair to say that Mr. Williams was of a very arbitrary disposition, had had troubles in former settlements, and, as I was a few years ago told by one of his relatives, there was insanity in his family. Setting aside some peculiarities, which were probably inherited, he was a preacher of rare ability and a man of a great deal of magnetism. He was born in 1797, was a graduate of Yale College, and like Mr. Rowland, Mr. Smith, Mr. Fairchild, Mr. Barrows and Mr. Byington, was a native of Connecticut; and like all, except Mr. Rowland, who was a Dartmouth man, and Mr. Barrows, who was an alumnus of Amherst, a graduate of Yale College. After leaving Exeter, Mr. Williams became a physician at Salem, Mass., and died in 1860, from blood poisoning caused by a cut from his razor.

A New Auditorium.

Before continuing to trace the pastoral succession, it will be well to refer to a change, much desired by Mr. Smith, but which was not carried out until the beginning of Mr. Williams's ministry—the remodelling of the interior of the church edifice, which was one of the conditions of his acceptance. The room with its high roof and big and nearly empty gallery was, he said, too much for his throat. The people, who had suffered from imperfect warming, were generally favorable. The old church, which a few of us remember, was arranged much like its two galleried predecessor. The principal pews, square and unpainted, but mellowed by time into a rich brown hue, ran close to the walls, while the less stately

"slips" filled the middle of the floor. The pulpit was a "three decker," painted white to match the sounding board, now hung below, which had been taken down at the period of my earliest recollections. The pulpit stood just in front of the wall pew in which the Misses Bell now sit, being backed by the handsome arched window invisible from within, but still to be seen out of doors on the rear of the church building.

The alterations began in July, 1838, and were chiefly made by James and Josiah Folsom, sons of the master builder of 1798, and kinsmen, if not direct descendants of the earlier master builder of 1731. In all these erections and changes, the Folsoms showed themselves "cunning workmen," much like the scriptural Bezaleel. The old auditorium, whose acoustic difficulties were a leading cause of Mr. Smith's resignation, was last occupied on July 4th, when Judge Jeremiah Smith delivered his oration in commemoration of the two hundredth anniversary of the settlement of the town. On the 8th, the Second parish cordially invited the First church to worship with it while repairs were going on, suggesting as an alternative its willingness to give independent occupation of its house to our people on alternate Sundays. This courteous action was met in the same spirit, and the First church and parish "voted unanimously that this society entertain a high sense of the Christian civility tendered them by the Rev. Mr. Hurd's society, as contained in their resolution and vote, and that they accept their first proposition to unite with them in their house in the public duties of the Sabbath, during the time our house is undergoing repairs." A few weeks later, when the pews had been demolished and the upper floor laid, but while all else was still incomplete, the church was occupied for another secular purpose, viz.: The celebration of the completion of Dr. Abbot's fifty years of service as Principal of the Phillips Exeter Academy. There was a grand banquet over which Daniel Webster presided, and the proceedings were convivial as well as literary. Quite a number of the larger boys of the town invaded the premises after the feast was over, and some of them became considerably elated by tasting too freely of the leavings of the punch served by the illustrious banqueters. Such a use of a church building would not now be tolerated in

any community, but our fathers attached little sacredness to their places of worship; meeting houses were often court houses. The legislature was in session in the predecessor of the present house, when the famous paper money mob of 1786 endeavored to overawe the members. In 1833, when the noted Cilley will case was on trial, and a multitude wanted to listen to the opposing arguments of Daniel Webster and Jeremiah Mason, the court adjourned from the court house to avail themselves of the larger accommodations offered by our present church building. Indeed, nobody but Roman Catholics and Episcopalians called their houses of worship churches. Our ancestors contended that *ecclesia*, the Greek word for church, always meant the assembly, and not the building. Old advertisements always spoke of Mr. Smith's or Mr. Hurd's meeting house. After our alterations were completed, however, it was voted that the auditorium for Sunday worship should be used for religious gatherings only, while the lecture room below should be let for any commendable purpose, and in it lyceum lectures were delivered for many winters, and the Democratic new departure in the direction of anti-slavery was held within its walls in 1845. The new room was thought to be very elegant. The pews were painted pea green inside, and the unpainted walls and ceiling were hard finished plaster. The pews had doors, afterwards removed, and they were numbered with gilt letters, on black Japanned tin plates. There was no uniformity of pew cushions or carpets, each owner exercising his own taste.

New hymn books were introduced, Lowell Mason's Church Psalmody superseding Watts' and Select Hymns. The book chosen was one of the worst products of hymn tinkering ever published. There was no congregational singing, but in place of this there were fine choirs in those days, and paid singers were rare exceptions until later years, when others beside leaders were paid. The Hall family through three generations was famous for its musical powers, as had been that of Deacon Josiah Folsom, until all his handsome and agreeable daughters were married off, a process completed about the time of the alteration. Their sister, Mrs. John T. Gordon, and their brother, Josiah Henry, still remained. Mr. Henry R. Hall, a man of fine presence, and a magnificent voice,

was long a leader. Until an organ was bought, about eight years later, instrumental music was supplied by Messrs. Kinsley Hall, John C. Gerrish and others. There was good singing in those days, but space and memory would fail me if I were to add to Messrs. L. M. Dow and Joseph S. Robinson, the latter almost a son of thunder in vocal strength, the succession of those who made melody, and to whom all the congregation turned their faces before the last afternoon hymn. In those days in the forenoon only a prayer and benediction followed the pastor's sermon.

Before the church was remodelled, nearly all the pew holders relinquished their property to the parish. About sixteen declined to do so, and a committee of gentlemen not belonging to the parish appraised the value of their pews, and they were duly compensated. When the new pews came to be sold, the now almost empty wing pews, known to our Methodist brethren as the "Amen Corner," found a ready sale. There were some large families to whom the exceptional length of these pews seemed a special advantage. They are now more than half deserted, yet in 1838 Mr. Joshua Getchell paid the third highest price of any pew sold, and chose the location he specially desired just at the head of the north aisle. Tastes have changed in sixty years, not only in regard to wing pews, but to those in the body of the church. The chief seats in the synagogue were those near, but not quite up to the pulpit. The first and second choices went to Mr. Thomas Moulton and Mr. John Gardner, the latter buying two pews directly opposite to each other two thirds up on the central aisle, so as to accommodate his son's family. But I must not attempt to catalogue pew holders, for I should surely make some mistakes and be guilty of unpardonable omissions. It is enough to say that nearly every pew was owned and occupied twice on a Sunday, the afternoon services being a little better attended than those of the morning. Some of the well-to-do brethren bought three or four pews to encourage the sale.

In course of time various improvements were made in the interior. The walls and ceiling were frescoed, and plated numbers replaced the tin ones. An organ was bought in 1846 at a cost of $575, all but $85 of which was promptly paid, and the remainder

after a reasonable interval. In 1868-69 measures were taken for further repairs and improvements, and up to April 4, 1870, the sum of $1,196.60 had been expended. On Mr. Byington's first coming he took a house on Lincoln street, the parsonage having been let. As soon as it was empty, in 1872, it was repaired, or rather remodelled, at a cost of over $4,000. The church building had also been slated.

In January, 1875, on a Sunday morning, the church took fire and narrowly escaped destruction. The repairs thus necessitated caused an expenditure of $1,172.24, which was raised by subscription.

A clock with four faces was placed in the tower by the town, after a vote in 1848, authorizing it, on the condition that the clock be kept in perfect order and all damages be repaired at public expense.

In 1858 it was voted in parish meeting that the deacons be requested to retain one dollar from monthly concert collections for missions to pay for wood and lights. This little piece of economy is strikingly in contrast with the generous expenditure in other quarters.

In 1896, the tower, first thrown out of the perpendicular in 1815 in a great gale, and afterward more warped by the jarrings of the daily bell ringing, was straightened at an expense of over $1,500.

Our Later Pastors.

The contentions over Mr. Williams were a heavy strain on the church, and a long rest seemed needed for the subsidence of the excitement which the discussion had occasioned, but new trouble awaited our people, though of a different kind. The Rev. Joy Hamlet Fairchild, who was installed September 20, 1843, and whose short labors were crowned with much success, was early in 1844 openly charged with gross immorality during a former ministry. He at once resigned, was tried and convicted by a council of Massachusetts ministers, in whose jurisdiction the alleged offence had been committed. He then appealed to the civil courts and was tried and acquitted. Public sentiment was divided

in the case, though most of his Exeter people doubted his guilt. He is certainly entitled to the intermediate Scotch verdict of "not proven." He died February 21, 1859, aged about 70.

Mr. Fairchild was succeeded, November 19, 1845, by the Rev. Roswell Dwight Hitchcock, born in Machias, Maine, August 15, 1817, and a graduate of Amherst College. He was an exceptionally able, and sometimes brilliant preacher, and his subsequent career as professor at Bowdoin College and president of the Union Theological Seminary is familiar to all. His pastorate in Exeter lasted until July 7, 1852, and was interrupted by a year spent in Europe in 1847-8. He was a slow and painstaking writer, and many of the sermons which he delivered as a supply in New York were his Exeter ones, remodelled perhaps, but in structure the same. He exchanged a good deal and was not fond of pastoral work, but his people were proud of his reputation for scholarship. He died June 17, 1887, on the same day as his successor, the Rev. Elias Nason.

The Rev. William Downs Hitchcock, no relative of his predecessor, a native of Vermont, and, if I recollect rightly, a graduate of Middlebury College, was ordained October 5, 1853, and died of typhoid fever, November 23, 1854. He lacked the scholarly attainments, and probably the talent of Roswell D. Hitchcock, but his short ministry gave good promise. There was unusual religious interest among some of the younger members of the congregation during the summer of 1854. The parish paid Mr. Hitchcock's funeral expenses, erected a stone to his memory in the new cemetery, and paid his widow a quarter's salary. He left no children.

The Rev. Nathaniel Lasell, born in Schoharie County, N. Y., February 14, 1820, was our next pastor. He was a graduate of Williams College, and of Presbyterian antecedents. His ministry lasted from June 19, 1856, to June 12, 1859, and was quiet and harmonious. It covered the revival period of 1858, and the accessions to the church were larger than they had been since the earlier years of Mr. Smith. Forty-five persons were added to the church between 1857 and 1859, mostly by profession. Mr. Lasell's withdrawal was at his own instance. He died in 1880, at Amesbury, Mass., on the sixtieth anniversary of his birth.

The Rev. Elias Nason, a graduate of Brown University, was installed November 22, 1860. He was dismissed May 30, 1865, just thirty years previous to the death of his successor Mr. Byington, and died at Billerica, Mass., June 17, 1887, as we have seen, on the same day as Dr. R. D. Hitchcock. Mr. Nason interested all his hearers, was a genial and companionable man and noted as an antiquarian. He was much liked during the earlier years of his pastorate, but some of his people having become disaffected, he resigned, and though asked to do so, refused to withdraw his resignation. Thirty-one were added to the church during his pastorate.*

The next pastor, the Rev. John Otis Barrows, was a native of Mansfield, Conn., a graduate of Amherst and formerly pastor at North Hampton, whence he came to Exeter. His pastorate began December 5, 1866, and ended October 6, 1869, at his own request, that he might enter the foreign mission field in Turkey. Returning to this country on account of ill health of his wife, he is now settled at Stonington, Conn. Seventeen were received into the church during his ministry. Of all the sixteen pastors who have preceded the Rev. W. L. Anderson, Mr. Barrows is the only survivor and as such warmly welcomed at our commemoration.

The year and five months, which intervened between the dismissal of Mr. Lasell and the installation of Mr. Nason was exceeded by the interval between the retirement of Mr. Barrows and the coming of the Rev. Swift Byington, born at Bristol, Conn., February 4, 1825, and a graduate of Yale in 1847. He was installed June 2, 1871, just eighty-one years to a day after Mr. Rowland. During the long period between 1869 and 1871 our people exhausted all the arts, and experienced all the weariness of the wretched system of candidating, on the principle that no candidate is to be accepted unless every individual's preference is fully met. Mr. Byington was not one of the competitors, but was sought out in his pastorate at Stoneham, Mass., and brought to the notice of the church and parish by a few leading members, some of whom had asked him to come to Exeter in 1855. His letter of declination on that occasion was so original and characteristic as to demand reproduction in full, though to save time and space, I have

* Mr. Nason was a scholarly and patriotic man, and versed in local and antiquarian history.

merely called attention to an occasional passage in one or more of the many pastoral missives of the past century. Mr. Byington at the time of writing was only thirty years old, and was already enjoying the reputation as a gifted sermonizer which he retained until his death:

West Brookfield, Mass., January 1, 1856.

To the First Congregational Church and Society, Exeter, N. H.

I have given to your trustful invitation, extended, and I hope thorough consideration. The subject reduces itself to this one question: Shall I choose what is agreeable or what is duty? You offer me what amounts to 1200 dollars a year with vacation earnings, or 400 dollars more than I now have. I have no vacation here. The work would be no harder than I make my work here. There are many more local attractions in Exeter, which I need not detail. The people—I should not expect to find the like, on all accounts, anywhere else. But my people would be, in their condition just now, broken to pieces. They depend greatly on my poor services; they cannot spare me, and I can do more good here, as things now are, than in Exeter. Many men will readily go to you; not many good men would come here. The ministers, whom I have consulted here and elsewhere, are against my going. All things considered, in spite of so many allurements to go to you, duty sternly says, stay here.

You may be assured that I regret as much, and probably more than you, to give up so noble a prospect, but it will not harm you, I hope, to have waited. Spare me a place always in your kind remembrances, and believe me, with much respect and gratitude, most truly yours in the great cause we love,

Swift Byington.

The manliness displayed in this letter was a characteristic of his entire ministry, which was harmonious, with an admiring and attached congregation for about twenty years. When that period was completed in 1891, the event was duly celebrated, for no pastor since Mr. Rowland had served half that time. Soon after the celebration, Mr. Byington's health began to fail, and though he speedily rallied from the first attack, the existence of cerebral trouble became obvious. Assistants were employed and a long rest was granted him, but finding recovery hopeless, he resigned his ministry April 2, 1893. The resignation was accepted with resolutions expressing the deep sympathy of the society for his affliction, and offering the use of a house belonging to the parish and adjoining the parsonage, for the joint lives of himself and wife, with the

addition that he need not vacate the parsonage until it was needed by his successor. The remainder of Mr. Byington's life, which ended May 30, 1895, was spent in retirement. His strength gradually declined, but he was cheered by the sympathy of his people to the last. During his pastorate about one hundred and forty persons were admitted to the church, most of them on confession. About thirty of the whole number came in after the Mills meetings in 1887, and the next largest number during a period of exceptional interest in 1874. During Mr. Byington's illness the pulpit was supplied by E. H. Byington, D. D., and later by the Rev. W. D. Leland.

Soon after Mr. Byington's resignation, viz., in May, 1893, the Rev. Wilbert Lee Anderson was invited to preach and administer the communion. He was so well liked as to be asked to come again. After filling the pulpit for two or three Sundays, the church and parish invited him, with great unanimity, to supply the pulpit until the parish meeting in April, 1894. Before that period arrived he was unanimously called to the permanent pastorate, and installed February 15, 1894. Mr. Anderson is a native of East Berkshire, Vt., and a graduate of Oberlin College. He has been previously settled at Stowe, Vt., and Muskegon, Mich., and can well afford to be judged by his works in his present position. All his people feel that to his energy and judicial ability the present occasion will owe much of any success that it may have. The situation and outlook of church and parish are very encouraging and the pastor's share in this is gratefully recognized.

Deacons and Sunday School.

The earliest deacon of whom we know anything was John Folsom, who died early in 1715. Whether he entered upon office before or after the reorganization of 1698 is uncertain. He was born in 1641. No doubt, some of the Rev. John Odlin's deacons seceded in 1743, but a Mr. Wilson, first name unknown, was still in office in that year. Samuel Fogg was elected April 3, 1746, and was in office about half a century, perhaps a few years more, but the date of his death is unknown. John Odlin, the pastor's oldest son, was made a deacon September 4th, 1747, and remained

in office until his death in 1782. Samuel Brooks served from November 6, 1766, to his death in March, 1807. Next in order was Samuel Gilman, elected April 27, 1810, and died August 27, 1838, aged 86. During his late years he was very deaf and sat in the tall pulpit, using a large ear trumpet. Josiah Folsom, who lived in the house, now owned by Mr. Hunnewell on the Hampton road, where his father, who died at 95 in 1820, had lived before him, was elected April 3, 1812. He and his associate, Oliver W. Osborne, chosen January 19, 1832, seceded after the resignation of Mr. Williams. Deacons William Perry and Sherburn Blake, elected on the same day as Mr. Osborne, retained their positions, at least nominally in the case of the first named, until their deaths. Deacon Blake died October 25, 1847, aged 74, and his colleague January 11, 1887, aged 98 years, 22 days. Benjamin Gordon and William L. Gooch were both elected July 7, 1846. Deacon Gordon died May 23, 1866, aged 68, and Deacon Gooch served until September, 1895, a period of 49 years. His age was 79. William P. Moulton and Thomas E. Folsom were chosen July 3, 1866. Deacon Moulton died March 5, 1888, aged 67, and Deacon Folsom October 8, 1892, aged 73. Matthew S. Pike was elected March 1, 1888, and died September 28, 1889. He was the first deacon to be elected to fill a specified term—seven years. Joseph W. Merrill was chosen to occupy the vacancy, and is serving on a second term of five years. Charles E. Smith was elected successor to Deacon Gooch and is still in office.

Robert Raikes, of England, has the credit in public estimation of having founded Sunday schools, late in the last century. He certainly gave the work a powerful impetus, though his plan was to collect ragged children from the streets and have them instructed on Sundays by paid teachers, something quite different in detail, yet akin in spirit to the modern system. Yet there were Sunday schools for youths among the Godly German settlers of eastern Pennsylvania not far from 1750. In Exeter, Deacon John F. Moses started a Sunday school in connection with the Baptist church in 1817. It has had a continuous existence to this day. If he was first in the field, which is quite likely, since few men have been more active in the Master's work than he, other schools very

speedily followed. The Exeter *Watchman* of May 5, 1818, contains the following: "A friend to Sunday schools would express his satisfaction of learning that two schools were opened in this place on the last Sabbath, and that they were numerously attended. * * It is hoped that the good examples of the last Sabbath will very shortly be imitated in all the school districts of the town."

One of these schools may have been that belonging to this church. At that date there were only three churches—the Baptist and the two Congregational, though the last two may have begun earlier, and the schools noticed in the above paragraph have been private and approved enterprises. It can only be said with certainty that our school was founded about 1817 or 1818. The following list of superintendents is chronological, but defective as regards the earlier incumbents: John T. Burnham, Woodbridge Odlin, Amos Tuck, Stephen H. Piper, Stephen Badger, Jr., Deacon W. L. Gooch, William P. Moulton, Dr. E. P. Cummings, Charles James, Charles E. Lane, J. W. Gale, Sperry French, Capt. J. C. Dutch, J. W. Merrill, Jr., Charles H. Knight, H. P. Robinson, A. T. Dudley, S. G. Morse, E. F. Bottger, W. E. Merrill and Albert N. Dow.

A Christian Endeavor society was organized in 1886, and a junior branch of the same in 1892.

Benefactions.

All along in their history the church and the parish have had large and generous givers, and it may be, as in the case of the widow's mite, many a humble and most self sacrificing contribution. There may be churches which have made more of a specialty in their support of missions and other outside objects, but few, I think, have surpassed ours in all around liberality. First in order of our large givers, was Mr. John Rice, who in 1778, in the midst of the Revolutionary war, gave us a parsonage and lot and farm land, then of much more relative value than now. Good old Mr. Thomas Moulton in 1851 bequeathed us the $400, now in the form of Boston and Maine stock, worth much more money. In 1870, Mr. Woodbridge Odlin gave the parish its iron fence, at a cost, if I am not misinformed, of $800 or thereabouts, and a year or two

later he was thanked by vote of the parish for other generous gifts. He had always been a liberal supporter of all the interests of the church, and his later contributions were the more significant as he was then attending another church. At his death in 1879, he left $2,000 to be given to the churches if they united within ten years. They did not.

The Merrills, father and sons, may be termed annual benefactors, so regular and liberal were their contributions to church and parish uses for many years, that is to say as long as they lived. The first to leave special post-mortem bequests was Charles A. Merrill, who left in his last will in 1886, $2,000, the interest of which was to be devoted forever to the support of preaching, and $2,500 to purchase the organ which still guides our songs of worship. In 1897, Dr. Abner L. Merrill, for many years a resident of Boston, who had in various ways, and notably by the placing of a stone tablet on the front of the church, recording the dates of its origin, organization, etc., shown his care for the place where his parents worshipped, added a gift of $1,000 in memory of the past, and of his lately deceased brother, Henry R. Merrill, of Boston, the interest thereof to be devoted to the support of preaching. On October 14, 1898, Dr. Merrill made still another gift in the form of bonds to the amount of $2,000, as a special memorial of his father and mother, whose Christian example he believed to have been of special help and encouragement to their children.

In 1897, Mrs. Rebecca (Woodman) Page, widow of the late James G. Page, bequeathed $300 to aid in supporting the services of the church, which sum has been properly invested.

In 1831 the parish gave the Granite Bank, adjacent to the church, a virtually perpetual right of way through its yard to the rear of the bank premises, on a payment of $100 and a nominal rent. The syndicate, composed of members of the parish, which now owns the bank property, surrendered this lease to the parish as its contribution to the bicentennial celebration.

It is difficult to select a few names from a long catalogue of worthies—not seventeenth or eighteenth century men and women, but those who have been prominent since the events of 1838, and are still remembered by our older members. In choosing, omis-

sions will inevitably occur, and humble and little known persons of both sexes may rank higher in the spiritual standard than those who are mentioned. My choice may not always be the best that could be made, and I may forget what I ought to remember, but I shall do my best. First come the generous supporters, usually with families that overflowed their pews. There was Abner Merrill, of whom I shall speak a little later, occupying with his wife, daughter and many sons, at least two pews; James Folsom with a household about balancing in numbers that of the patriarch Jacob, and his brother Josiah with sons and daughters; the Sullivan family; the Odlin brothers, James, William, Benjamin and Woodbridge; Deacon Sherburn Blake, called from his prominence in the town where his earlier years were spent, the Duke of Raymond, always accompanied to worship by nearly a dozen children and grand children; the big Kimball and Robinson families, which filled opposite corners on either side of the pulpit; Joshua Getchell, always a liberal supporter of church and parish; Mr. Thomas Moulton, an aged member, strong and eloquent in prayer, in spite of occasional rhetorical lapses; the two generations of Gardners; the Hon. James Bell's never empty pew. These and a few others specially rise up in my memory. I shall not enumerate those who left us in 1843, though some of them are well worthy of commemoration, but I will pass to a few other names. Deacon Benjamin Gordon was a worthy shoemaker of the old fashioned integrity. I once called at his little shop, when on a visit from the west, to sew a tear in my shoe, and waited until the work was done. Asking the price, he replied with evident compunction that he must charge nine cents, as the price of thread had advanced. Most of his craft would have thought a quarter of a dollar ridiculously low; John T. Burnham, of stalwart form, prized by his townsmen as a school-master when people generally acted on the Solomonic injunction, "foolishness is bound in the heart of a child, but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him." Joseph Boardman, who, with all his family, have joined the church above; Benjamin Lang, who, though not a church member, manifested more than human grace in the splendid patience with which he bore protracted family affliction of the most trying kind; Deacon Thomas Folsom, one of those genuinely good men, whom

neither rain nor shine could keep from week evening meetings; Freese Dearborn, as grim of countenance as his first name would seem to imply, one of the seceders of 1803 to the New parish, but later a convert under the appeals of Mr. Smith—these are another catalogue gathered under no special rule.

Sitting nearly together were the families of Josiah Folsom, John C. Gerrish and Henry Shute. There was Timothy Tilton, a fine frosty haired man six feet in height, long our faithful sexton; there was little Mr. John Kennedy, who fought as a British soldier in the West Indies; Major Charles Parks, town bell ringer and one of Mr. Tilton's predecessors. Major Parks was the town's general factotum and as tithing man was long supplemented and at length succeeded by Abraham Towle, whose green spectacles were the terror of bad boys in the gallery and even in the pews.

Of noble women there were not a few, but their almost stealthy way of doing good prevents one from even a general mention of their names.

Later, the Rev. Mr. Cummings, John S. Wells, Joseph T. Porter, Samuel S. Thyng, Robert C. Thomson, John Bellows, John C. Dutch, William H. Robinson, came to prominence. Some of these have handed down the mantle of willing and effective service to their children. Of the living I may be excused from speaking, especially as I have been compelled to pass unnoticed many well worthy of mention, but some of these have been named elsewhere. It would be a delicate matter to me to become the critic or even the dry chronicler of my father's relations to the church and parish. Yet I feel that it would be false modesty to omit adding a few words to the occasional mentions of his name which have already appeared. Born in Norton, Mass., December 20, 1788, Dr. William Perry came to Exeter, February 22, 1814, and soon after joined the First parish, uniting with the church in December, 1817. Although the wife he married in 1818 and the acquaintances whom he first made were nearly all connected with the New parish, he remained steadfast to his first choice. His first year's ecclesiastical tax was seventy-four cents, but it had grown tenfold when compulsory taxation ceased five years later. None who knew him are ignorant of the fact that he gave largely under

the voluntary system, that he was at least as much interested in church affairs as in his chosen profession, and that he was prominent in settling several pastors, some of whom he afterward helped unsettle. He was a man of strong convictions and in many respects wise in his judgments. If arbitrary in some of his methods, he had a kindly and even tender heart, and was as much a spiritual as a physical helper to many of his patients. If he made mistakes, this is not the place to discuss them.

A close friend in ecclesiastical matters and in other ways was the late Abner Merrill, who died in 1877, aged 86. He came to Exeter from Amesbury about the same time as Dr. Perry from Norton, joined the parish in 1816, and, with his wife, became a communicant in 1831. A man of few words, he gave and thought largely and wisely for the good of the church, and as we have already seen, left an example of liberality, which his children have not forgotten or failed to improve; emphatically a clear headed man of business, his counsels and encouragement availed much for church and parish in troublous crises. These, and all those catalogued with them have followed the majority of their pastors to the grave.

I have now traced the fortunes of the First church in Exeter through sixteen pastorates, covering, for the period between Wheelwright's arrival and Mr. Anderson's settlement, a space of 256 years. I make no claim to have written a full history of the church through that long period. At best, I have only blazed a path through the woods, leaving vast spaces on either side still overgrown by the vegetation which grows up as time moves on and men forget. I lay no claim to originality, for plain facts are matters of research, not of invention. I have merely endeavored to speak the simple truth. History has been styled philosophy teaching by example. I have submitted an array of facts from which the public can generalize as well as myself. I shall make no attempt to point a moral further than to say:

First, that the woes denounced against those at ease in Zion are as likely to come at the dawn of the twentieth century as in the days of the Jewish theocracy.

Secondly, that the liberty enjoyed under our Congregational sys-

tem should never be allowed to degenerate into the license of censoriousness and self assertion.

Thirdly, that our most successful church life has not followed flights of oratory or the setting forth of profound philosophy, but has attended rather the plain enforcement of the vital truths of religion.

Fourthly, that growing up and out of a town church, we have not sufficiently tightened the bonds of a close Christian fellowship. In this respect we hitherto have been placed at a disadvantage with more modern organizations, founded for a specific purpose, and stimulated by the necessity of hard work and personal sacrifice. "Know ye not that ye are brethren" is an admonition that should ring in all our ears.

Ages ago Homer sang:

"As is the race of leaves even such is the race of men. Some leaves the wind sheds upon the ground, but the fructifying wood produces others, and they grow up in the season of Spring. Such is the generation of men; one produces and another ceases to be."

Let us heed the lesson. The past is irrevocable. We cannot predict the future, but we can modify, if not shape it by serving well the present. Let us work while it is day, for the night is drawing nigh to all of us, wherein no man can work. So doing, with God's blessing, we shall not live in vain for ourselves, or for our dear old church.

THE CLOSING ADDRESS.

Delivered November 14, 1898,

By Burton W. Lockhart, D. D.

The Church and the Modern World.

I HAVE chosen as a fitting theme for this occasion, The Church and the World, and I suppose I ought to begin by telling you what I mean by the church. I forewarn you that I shall give you a very catholic definition. I shall not exclude Greek or Catholic church. For although I believe the Congregational church approaches most closely to the simple, free, spiritual churches of Apostolic days, I am disposed to acknowledge the Christian idea in other churches as well. By the church, then, I mean that loving fellowship of men in God which refers to Jesus Christ as founder and supreme teacher. It is a loving fellowship, because its great aim is to bring peace and good will on earth. It is a fellowship in God, because the vision of the Father and faith in Him is the creative and welding power of the fellowship. It is a fellowship, because the spirit of Christianity is against isolation and selfish individualism. One man cannot constitute a church. The spiritual truth of the church has its seat in the individual spirit. In this sense the kingdom is love, joy, peace in the Holy Ghost. But the church is the fellowship of believers; it is the household of God.

There is a feeling abroad to-day that the church as an institution may be neglected if only we keep its spirit. The transcendental or idealist movement of thought in New England laid great stress on the idea, but tended to undervalue the embodiment of the idea. Thoreau, for example, despised the state so much that he would not pay the poll-tax. He had such a contempt for society and all its institutions that he dwelt like a hermit, wandering alone

like a rhinoceros, to use a Buddhist phrase. He was an extreme illustration of the tendency of that movement to idolize the idea, and underestimate institutions which embody the idea. And many good people to-day think they, too, can pass by the church door, and live in the spirit, and commune with the divine thought all the better for it. But a truer philosophy shows us that God's ideas are all embodied. The idea or soul creates a body for itself, and the body gives the idea or soul the necessary conditions of self-realization. The body without the soul is a corpse; but the soul without the body is an abstraction.

Neither on earth nor in heaven can a worthy idea be found which has not embodied or is not striving to embody itself. Ideal existence is only beginning. Substantial existence, embodied existence is the goal. The idea of the loving fellowship of men in God may have occurred to some of the great prophets. But though the greatest idea that ever entered the mind of man, greater than that of the state, which is the friendly fellowship of men under the sovereign conception of law, it was powerless until Christ gave it a body. Since then the actual fellowship has been surely changing society from a horde of warring persons into a household of God. And we live in a day when the church's voice is crying to all far-off wandering tribes that they are called to be no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens of the saints and of the household of God. It is the church as a fellowship actualized, not as a fine idea, that we believe in, love and work for, and regard as eternal. For in heaven as on earth souls will forever exist in loving fellowship and in God.

It is the most noteworthy fact of history that the church of Christ has made the real life of the world now for a period of nearly nineteen centuries. Christ called the Kingdom in His time a mustard seed; yet it grew until it spread over Europe. In the time of the Apostles it was but a little candle with how tremulous a light in that thick darkness of paganism; yet it quickly became a beacon fire of hope, of inspiration and guidance to the leading races of the world. The church's conquest of paganism is the chief romance and miracle of all history. Gibbon tried to account for it on purely rationalistic principles. For example, he said that the Christians

believed so firmly in immortality that they were willing to die, nay often anxious to die as a witness to the truth of the gospel. Consequently the repressive measures, usually sufficient to stamp out a noxious element, had no effect on them. But Gibbon does not explain on naturalistic principles how there came into the world so new, so strong a faith in immortality, such a "magnificent disdain of death," as led simple hearts and bare hands to beat back the violence of a hostile world by endurance and courage, and to establish a church against which the gates of hades, the forces of dissolution which destroy races and creeds should not prevail. I defy anybody to explain it on those principles. Those men saw a divine vision, and dreamed a divine dream. The heavenly host was not hidden from their eyes, and the powers of the life to come girt them with strength. The difference between naturalism and supernaturalism is for practical purposes, thus: Naturalism asserts that there are no personalities in the universe above man; supernaturalism asserts that the universe is a hierarchy of personalities subsisting in the infinite personality, God. Between these two theories there is an abyss deeper than plummet ever sounded. It was the entrance with power into man's life of the supernatural that established the church, and it is the faith and vision of the supernatural that continues to be her life. As a mere school of ethics the church never could have taken root. As a mere school of ethics the church never could have assimilated races and cultures. As a mere school of ethics the church to-day is shorn of her characteristic strength. For the church lives on a supernatural foundation. She stakes her credit and her existence on the two truths that man is a spirit living in a universe of spirits—under the redemptive providence of an Infinite Father of Spirits.

No less a truth than this can explain the stupendous influence of Christianity in history. When Augustine, the monk, landed on the shores of Kent he carried the divine fate of England in his hand. In the figure of the Puritan standing bold against the desert and the sky we see written the history of America, so far as it has been written, its sense for righteousness, its family virtue, its insistence on the rights of man, its bloody wars for liberty. The great poems of Christendom have been Iliads of the soul, sung by a Dante, a

Milton, a Tennyson. Architecture and painting went to the church for a theme and a soul. Music, which is the last born of the muses, and which flowered in an age of negation, went to the eternal sources for her chief delight, to the Bible for her themes, to the soul immortal for her subject. Even war and diplomacy have eddied about the church. Napoleon at the height of his power made peace with the church of France. The iron hand of Bismarck in the now famous Cultur-kampf struck vainly against the Catholic church of Germany. It avails not that you use violence against the soul, for the soul is strengthened from inexhaustible sources.

I come now to my main proposition, that the church is the world's friend and absolutely necessary to its welfare. I am aware of the maxim which exclaims with the Latin poet: O religion! to what great evils hast thou been able to persuade men. But we must remember, as Mr. Mulford says, that Christianity is not one of the world religions—a cultus and a superstition; but uniquely a revelation of the redemptive love of God. We must also admit that the church in history has done evil as well as good. No institution in the world can wholly escape corrupting influences. Hardly was the church established when Greek speculation imposed creeds upon her which were alien to the spirit of fellowship. Later Roman imperialism imposed a polity on her which was equally foreign to her feedom and fellowship. So, too, Jewish ecclesiasticism imposed a priesthood and a sacramental system that were hostile to her pure spirituality. Finally the state made her one of its own departments and degraded her to secular uses. Yet in spite of all this, the church was the one harbor of refuge for the poor and the oppressed during the thousand years of feudal wars.

No more important event has happened to the modern church than her complete separation from the state. We remember that it was the church defying the state and attaining its own liberties, that fought the battles of political freedom in Holland and Scotland; that founded the Republic of America; established free schools; broke the fetters of the slave; abolished the injustice to women and children of old legislation. It is the free church, pulsing with the free life of Christ, that will gradually purify herself

from old superstitions and spiritual tyrannies, and realize more perfectly than ever before the fellowship of men in love and in God. Only we must be patient. This will take time. We must remember that the whole known history of our race is included within sixty life-times, and yet science predicts that the sun will sustain life on our planet for a hundred million years. Optimism is right. But the faith that there are short cuts to welfare is wrong. The church will not be destroyed. She will become more and more simple and pure, and a more and more unmixed blessing to mankind. Meanwhile it is plain to see that she serves the world in three highly necessary functions.

The church is necessary to the world, because the world, like the individual, needs a conscience, an oracle of God. The church is the conscience of society, and though by no means infallible, yet on questions of righteousness is apt to be right. Where she is wrong it will be found that the world has terrorized her into violence to the divine voice that whispers in her heart.

Two years ago the political jingoes seemed bound to involve this nation in war with Great Britain over the Venezuela question. Some eminent senators said such a war was certain to come within a decade anyway. But the church proclaimed with one voice, "There can be, there must be no war over this question." When the peremptory message of President Cleveland reached England, on a Saturday, the churches of Great Britain, on the Sunday following, from highest prelate to obscurest minister cried out, "There can be, there must be no war over this question." And there was no war. The church, acting as the conscience of the nation, probably saved Anglo-Saxon civilization from a fratricidal strife that might have put back the wheels of progress a century. But when the question arose of a war with Spain, there was a difference. For the vision of a country murdered and starved, in the midst of which Rachel was crying for her children as of old, was not lightly to be put by. Not yet has the church adopted the policy of non-resistance, and the church was with the nation in demanding the liberation of Cuba. Thus twice within two years has the church acted as national conscience and her action has been sound.

And just now what is the attitude of the church toward our new

policy of imperialism; a policy that involves the rule of subject peoples, and a large navy and army, and complication with the quarrels of Europe? The church is against that policy. For she clearly sees that the work of America is to done in this hemisphere, yes, on this continent, not with weapons of war, but with the peaceful arms of morality and intelligence applied to the grave tasks of a free government. As the nation's conscience the church does not enter the realms of art, science and finance, except as these involve moral ideals. But like the Jewish prophets, she must speak the living word of God about justice and liberty. If she is great and brave enough to enable America to demonstrate to the world that the Republican form of government will work and abide the test of time, she will have established a new claim on men's gratitude. One hundred years' experimentation in self-government has taught us that success is a very simple question of moral fibre. Wisdom is needed. But all the genius of Ancient Athens, and the valor of Ancient Rome, without the righteousness of the Christian conscience, will not save this Republic from the forces of disunion and decay.

The church is necessary to the world because of her teaching function and her body of truth. We have already come to see that it is not science that can save us. Let us not rail against knowledge, even when she teaches us how to kill, and loads us with costly tools for murder, and whips the toiler on to keep pace with the march of invention. Truly as Tennyson said:

> On her forehead sits a fire.

The knowledge of phenomena and their laws has created a new era for men, of lordship over things, but not lordship over the soul. We who know of gravitation, of electricity, of the indestructibility of matter, of the interconvertibility of forces, find it just as difficult as our fathers did to forgive, to live with a pure heart, and to die without fear. The man who feeds (all day long) a machine, finds it just as difficult as his fathers did to see the infinite value of life, and feel its wonder, and rejoice in its unfading bloom. For science deals with things, but religion deals with the soul, and alone possesses the key to life's high secret and its treasure of

strength and peace. Therefore in the heart of Godless knowledge a canker grows and spreads into social institutions until it seems sometimes as if many aspects of our modern life were a hideous mechanism without a soul.

No, it is not science, the knowledge of things, that can save us, we must know the Father, and the worst thing that could happen to America, this dear land where holy truth has fought so many battles to victory, is not war, nor pestilence, nor the subversion of the Republic by a new autocracy. But the worst thing that could happen, the greatest conceivable loss would be the fading of the name and gospel of Christ out of the memory of men; so that no mother should thenceforth teach her child to say, Our Father; so that no preacher should point to that divine human life as every life's ideal; so that no lover of peace and fellowship should ever be able to quote the words, "A new commandment I give unto you that ye love one another;" so that no sinful man could ever see the face of the forgiving God through the kind eyes of the great brother; so that no weary earth-pilgrim could fall on sleep with the words, "In my Father's house are many mansions;" so that no sorrowing ears could hear with the fall of the clod on the coffin, the words, "I am the resurrection and the life." Yes, that would be the greatest calamity. Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. And the sufficing word, the word to the heart, the word to the highest reason, the word to the unchanging need of the world is Christ.

The church is necessary to the world, because society needs a seminary for the training of souls in the principle of vicarious suffering. Society, as at present constituted, needs martyrs. Some must die that others may live; mothers for their children, statesmen for the welfare of the nation, missionaries for the salvation of souls. The church is the Lamb of God, constantly dying for the world, constantly providing a sacrifice, constantly bearing the sins and sorrows of the people on her heart. The severe and constant sacrifice of the noblest spirits for others has been sustained by the vision of God as cross-bearer, who carries the burden of us all, and walks with us to the perfect victory through the dark night and the heavy way. Thus far the missionary has never been wanted for the

loneliest venture in the most distant lands. Thus far we have never wanted statesmen who were willing to give their genius and life, like Sumner, to the task of national righteousness. Thus far we have not wanted teachers and preachers who wrought not for the penny but for the love of the Lord of Truth. Thus far we have not wanted holy mothers and fathers who counted their own life and welfare less dear than their children's. The list of the martyrs has grown very long, and out of their sacred melancholy has sprung the joy of the world. But take the great mother of vicarious suffering away and life would shrivel. The courage which drives a man to risk his life in battle is not the same courage which led Sumner to devote his genius to liberty and peace, or Livingstone to offer his life upon the altar of a dumb and forgotten continent. To die! a tiger can do that. But to die for a wretched brother man requires something godlike in the victim.

And when I think of the church in this light all that is false in her past and commonplace in her present fades away. The wrangle of creeds and sects, I hear it no more. But I see before me only the grave mother of those great souls who have built up morals, education, liberty. And seeing her and her splendid sons, I take courage and say, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul! hope thou in God." The church is still the most glorious spectacle in this tumultuous world. Above her waves a banner of hope for humanity, which has never been lowered since it was unfolded, and as we see the old flag float there, white as heaven in the dusk and smoke of the world, shall we not join that ancient profession of loyalty and cry, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."